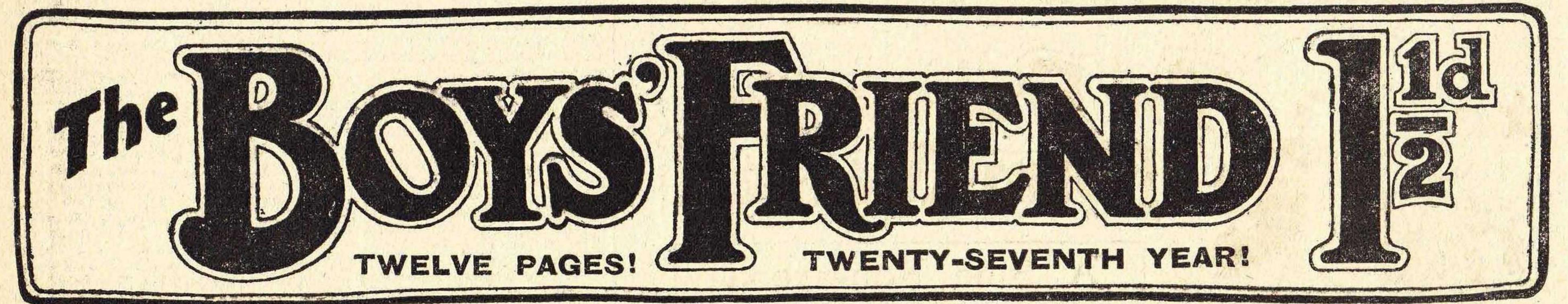
The Article on Page 175 Will Help You to Determine Upon a Career!



No. 1,036. Vol. XXI. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending April 16th, 1921.



FORM-ROOM FROLICS!

Mr. Oliphant was a strong upholder of the motto, "All work and no play . . ." and consequently, when he took the Second Form by storm, he encouraged the juniors in such cheerful little games as leap-frog, and horse-play generally. Mr. Wiggins, usually so calm and collected, was practically hidden behind his desk, gazing on the scene in abject amazement.

How to Increase Your Salary-See Page 180!

A GRAND LONG COMPLETE TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & Co.!



Fine Rookwood momme

By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter. Exasperating!

"Cheeky rotters!" snorted Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Smythe again!" growled Jimmy Silver. "I'll jolly well scrag him!" It was time for morning lessons at Rookwood School, and the Fourth door. On the dark old oak of the big door, an inscription had been l chalked, in large capital letters. It was a rather startling inscription, and extremely exasperating to the members of the Fourth Form. ran:

THIS WAY TO BEDLAM!

There were exclamations of wrath on all sides from the juniors. From the direction of the Shell room, farther up the corridor, there came a loud chortle. Smythe & Co. of the Shell were standing there, looking towards Jimmy Silver & Co., with grinning faces.

"You did this, Smythe, you rotter!" bawled Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's mop up the passage with Silver had to explain. them!" exclaimed Raby. "There's just time before lessons."

"Hold on!" said Jimmy Silver. "Oliphant may be along any minute,

"Bother Oliphant!" snapped Lovell, "I'm jolly well going to sir-"

scrag Smythe. Back up, you fellows."

fellows. "Cheese it!" said Newcome.

"Here comes Mr. Oliphant." Lovell paused.

A tall young man, with an eyeglass gleaming in his eye, had turned into the corridor, and was coming | along to the Form-room.

It was Mr. Oliphant, the new master of the Fourth.

the presence of a Form-master was not feasible, and Arthur Edward Lovell restrained his just wrath. All the juniors looked round at Mr. Oliphant.

The new Form-master had arrived at Rookwood School the previous day, and his arrival had caused astonishment, not to say consternation, in the ranks of the Fourth. The juniors did not know in the least what to make of him; even "Uncle James" of Rookwood was at a loss.

Every eye turned upon the tall. young man, with an almost painful interest.

Mr. Oliphant looked very bright and cheerful that sunny April morning. He seemed to be enjoying life at Rookwood School.

He was in the same elegant attire in which he had appeared the previous day. The juniors had expected to see him in cap and gown; but apheard everything, had heard that Mr. Oliphant had had to borrow pyjamas from another master the night before. But there was nothing surprising in the non-arrival of his baggage; the playful manner and customs of the i

railways were only too well known. There was a dead silence as Mr. | begin. Oliphant arrived at the Form-room door, the juniors respectfully making | and thoughtful mood. He fumbled way for him. What he would say, at the master's desk; he looked about and do, when he saw the chalked inscription on the door, was a matter I It really looked as if he did not know of breathless conjecture.

"Good-morning, my boys!" said Mr. Oliphant heartily.

"Good-morning, sir."

"Why-what-what is this?" chalked door.

new master's face. A startled look | whether you can do the same." came into his eyes, and his cheeks paled. He cast a look round him | ruler. that could only be described as

"Bedlam!" he said. "This way to back. were gathering round the Form-room | Bedlam! What does this mean?" | The Classical Fourth gazed at him

"I-I think it is a-a joke of some fellow, sir," stammered Jimmy Silver. "A-a joke?" "Yes, sir."

Mr. Oliphant's face darkened. "What does it imply?" he asked. "Explain at once, Silver!" Jimmy Silver hesitated.

Smythe & Co., no longer grinning, crowded into their Form-room to get out of sight. They did not want to interview Mr. Oliphant on the subject. Their little joke had been intended for the Fourth, not for the Form-master.

"Do you hear me, Silver?" rapped out Mr. Oliphant.

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"Then tell me at once what this means," rapped out Mr. Oliphant. There was no help for it. Jimmy

"You-you see, sir, the fellows know that before you came here you were tutor to Lord George St. Leger, who-who-"

"Who what?" "Who-who's supposed to be potty,

"What?" "I-I mean, balmy, sir; that is to Newcome caught Lovell by the say, a little mad, sir," stuttered arm, as he was starting up the pas- Jimmy Silver. "It got out, sir. that sage towards the grinning Shell you were tutor at St. Leger Place, and-and that your pupil was a young man who wasn't right in his head. So-so some of the fellows make out for a sort of joke, sir, that -that the Head picked you out for that reason to take the Fourth-that's all, sir. They've nicknamed our Formroom Colney Hatch, and Bedlam, and so on. Only a fool joke, sir."

"Scragging" Adolphus Smythe in at Jimmy Silver strangely. "I-I see! You-you have, then, heard of | your boko?"

-of Lord George St. Leger-" "Only what I've told you, sir," said Jimmy Silver, his eyes on the Form-master's face.

room door.

"Yes, sir."

places. They were in a state of sup- most freezing manner. "I venture pressed excitement. The previous to remark, sir, that it is astounding day they had seen little of their new -quite astounding, sir, for a Formmaster, but what little they had seen appointhad made an extraordinary impression on them. The suspicion that Mr. Oliphant-like his former pupil at St. Leger Place—was not quite right in the head, had forced itself on their minds. Putty Grace opined that pottiness was catching, and that Mr. Oliphant had caught it. parently Mr. Oliphant's baggage had stranger suspicion was in Jimmy not yet arrived. Tuffy Muffin, who | Silver's mind. So it was in a very unusual mood that the Classical Fourth of Rookwood settled down to

The 2nd Chapter. An Amazing Morning in the Form-room!

Mr. Oliphant seemed in no hurry to

He appeared to be in a troubled him, and he whistled once or twice. how to begin.

The juniors could only stare. "A-a-aren't we going to work, sir?" asked Rawson.

"Work!" said Mr. Oliphant. "My Mr. Oliphant's eyes fixed on the | dear boy, why work? Let us improve

The juniors watched him breath- | manner. I have never taken a class before. But I think we shall get The good-humour faded out of the on. Now, Silver, watch me, and see

Mr. Oliphant had picked up a big

He proceeded to balance it on the tip of his nose, holding his head well

petrified. Apparently Mr. Oliphant had had some practice in balancing things on his nose. It was not one of the usual items in a Form-master's training. Certainly no master at Rookwood School had ever been seen to behave

in such an extraordinary manner In the midst of a frozen silence on the part of his pupils, the new master balanced the ruler, skipping to and fro to keep it in position.

There was a tap at the door, and Mr. Oliphant jumped. But he kept the upright ruler balanced. The door opened, and Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth, looked in.

Then Mr. Greely jumped. He jumped and he stared. The sight his eyes beheld seemed to daze him. Jimmy Silver saw Mr. Greely pass his hand before his eyes, as if he cheerily in the chortling. doubted his vision. Instead of taking the Fourth through their classical studies, the new master was hopping about in front of the form balancing a ruler on the tip of his nose. No wonder Mr. Greely doubted the evidence of his eyesight.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Greely at last.

Crash!

The ruler went to the floor. Mr. Oliphant turned round, and smiled | Head," he answered. "I prefer to genially at the astounded gentleman | dodge the old duck. See?" in the doorway. He did not seem at I all put out by being discovered in such an extraordinary attitude.

"Ah, Greely!" he exclaimed. "Trot in, Greely, old sport!" "Wha-a-at?" ejaculated the scan-

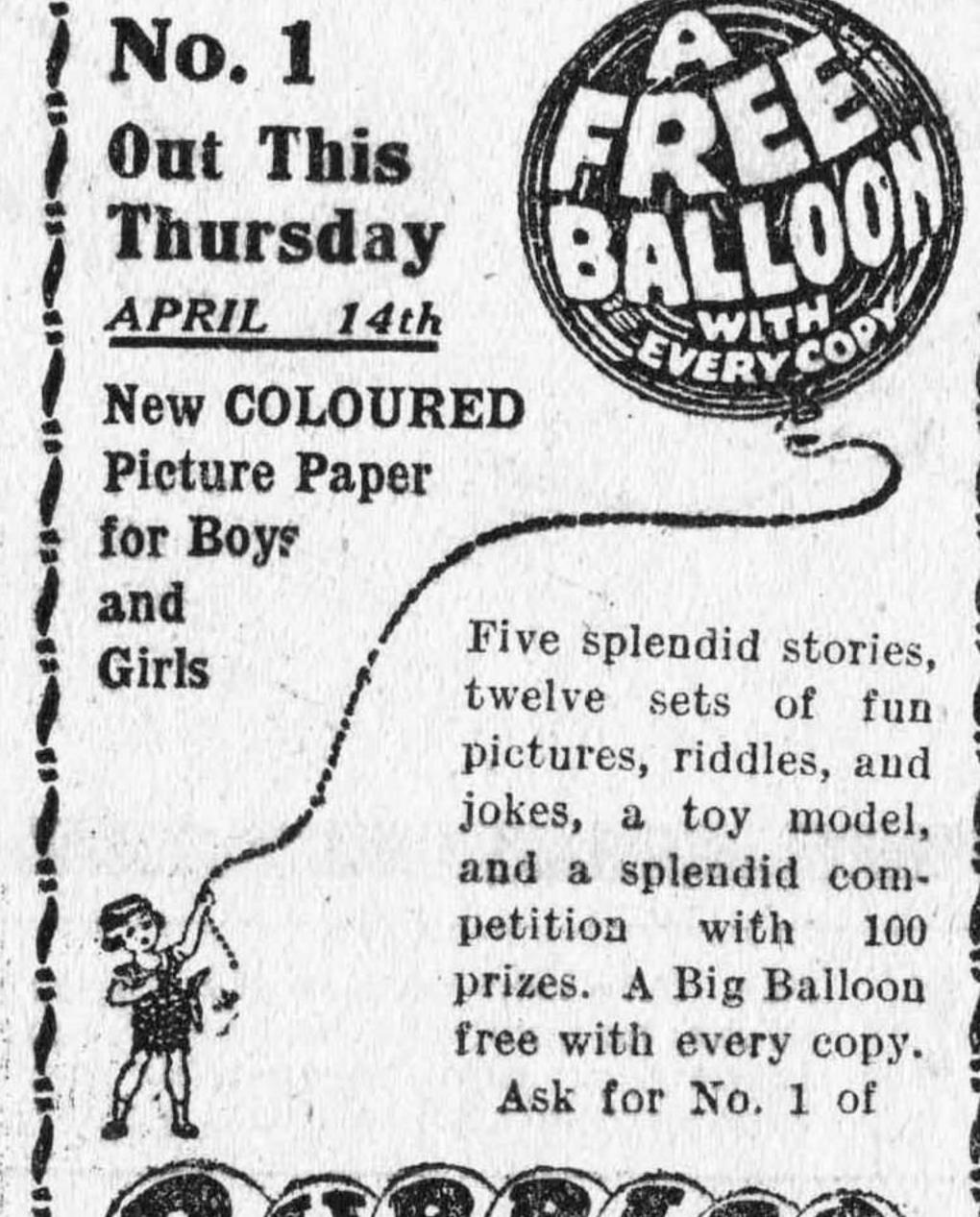
dalised master of the Fifth. "Oh!" said Mr. Oliphant, looking Oliphant. "Don't be bashful! Have | Hand me that ruler, Silver!" you ever tried balancing a ruler on | Jimmy Silver handed over the

"My-my what?"

"Boko!"

"Sir!" shouted Mr. Greely.

"Quite a game, you know!" con-Mr. Oliphant threw open the Form- | tinued Mr. Oliphant. "I've done it a lot at St. Leger Place. I liked it "Take your places; boys! Silver, better than studies. They generally you may take a duster and wipe that let me do as I liked, except clear off. nonsense from the door." But I cleared off at last. Ha, ha!" "I fail to understand you, Mr. The juniors went quietly to their Oliphant," said Mr. Greely, in his



master to play such childish tricks in the presence of his pupils."

"Nonsense, old fellow!" said Mr. Oliphant breezily. "Try it yourself! I'm sure, with your enormous boko,

" Sir!" "With your enormous boko, you would find it quite easy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Classical Fourth. "Those-these personalities, sir

--- " stuttered Mr. Greely. offence, dear boy-no offence," said Mr. Oliphant. appeal to you as a sane man, sir-hope you are sane-'

"Sane?" yelled Mr. Greely. "Yes, sir, sane! I distinctly hope you are sane," said the new master. "You do not look it! There is a glitter in your eyes I do not like! But I hope you are sane! Now, sir---'

"Unless you are out of your senses, Mr. Oliphant, I cannot understand this at all. I refuse, sir, to enter into such a frivolous and foolish discussion, sir. If the Head should hear you talk in this strain, sir, I am convinced that your appointment at Rookwood, sir, would be instantly cancelled!" thundered Mr. Greely. "Dr. Chisholm, sir, would not hesitate to immediately terminate your stay here!" said Mr. Greely, splitting an infinitive in his breathless indignation.

"You don't say so!"

"I do say so, Mr. Oliphant, most decidedly. I am surprised-shocked unhappy Lord George," he said. "I -astounded! However, I will not bandy words with you, sir. I came in to give you a message the Head asked me to deliver. He desires to see you in his study immediately, in reference to a letter he has received by the morning's post. That is all, sir! will now withdraw, sir!" snorted Mr. Greely. "And I leave you, sir," he added, with crushing satire, "to play any childish tricks you please to amuse your pupils, sir!"

And Mr. Greely withdrew, and closed the door with a slam.

The 3rd Chapter.

Trouble for the New Master! Jimmy Silver & Co. chortled as the Form-master withdrew. The plump and pompous master of the Fifth had certainly received the surprise of his life. Mr. Oliphant joined

"Ha, ha, ha! We will now proceed!" said the remarkable new master.

"If you please, sir-" Jimmy.

"Well, my boy. Speak out!" "Mr. Greely said that the Head wants to see you, sir," hinted the captain of the Fourth.

Mr. Oliphant laughed. "But I do not wish to see the

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "But he will come here, sir," said

Valentine Mornington. "Let him come! Let 'em all come!" said Mr. Oliphant cheerily. "If the mountain will not go to Mahomet, Mahomet must come to "Wedge in, dear boy," said Mr. | the mountain. We will now proceed.

> ruler. The astounding new master proceeded to balance it on his chin, watched in silence by the Classical Fourth Some of the juniors were grinning, for the sight was comical enough: but some of them looked troubled. For it was only too clear that Mr. Oliphant was not in his right senses. Evidently he was perfectly good-tempered and harmless, but certainly he was not quite sane. With the body of a man he had the intellect of a child, and undoubtedly should never have been left to his own devices. That such a man could ment to a mastership at Rookwood was impossible; and the only alternative was, that there was some mysterious mistake, and that he was not really Mr. Oliphant at all. Cecil Oliphant was a Master of Arts of Oxford, and assuredly this gentleman was not fitted to take his place in the Third Form.

> The Form-room door opened, and the ruler crashed to the floor. It was Dr. Chisholm who entered this time. Mr. Oliphant stooped and picked up the ruler and laid it on his desk. Fortunately, the Head had not seen it balancing on his chin. He supposed that the young man had dropped the ruler from his hand.

> With a strange and startling change, the infantile young man became, at sight of the Head, grave and composed, as suited his years and his position. The sudden change made the juniors blink. Mr. Oliphant advanced politely towards the Head.

> requested Mr. Greely to ask you to step into my study, Mr. Oliphant," said Dr. Chisholm coldly. "I fear I must have misunderstood |

man, with grave seriousness. "I understood him to say that you would step in here to speak to me."

"Oh, it does not matter!" said the Head, satisfied with that explanation. "I have received a most extraordinary letter by the morning's post, Mr. Oliphant."

"Indeed, sir?" "Yes, indeed! Yesterday," said the Head, "I received a telegram from St. Leger Place, purporting to come from you, announcing that your arrival would be delayed, as your pupil, Lord George St. Leger, had disappeared and taken your papers. I acquainted you with the fact. Now, sir, I have received a letter, signed with your name, bearing out the statement in the telegram.'

"Is it possible?" "Not only possible, but true," said the Head. "This letter refers to the telegram of yesterday, and further states that the unhappy young man has not yet been recaptured, and that Mr. Oliphant does not feel justified in quitting St. Leger Place until he is found. Now, sir, what does this mean, since you are here?"

Evidently the Head was deeply per-

Mr. Oliphant shook his head sorrowfully.

"I informed you yesterday, sir, that the telegram was a hoax of the have no doubt that this letter is another hoax."

"It is in your hand, Mr. Oli-

"My hand, sir?"

"It is in the handwriting you have used in our previous correspondence,

The juniors listened breathlessly. The Head seemed unconscious of their presence. His eyes were fixed on the new master.

Mr. Oliphant nodded. "I cannot sufficiently express my regret, sir, that you should be troubled in this way," he said. "Lord George, as you know, is not quite sane. He has a trick of imitating hands. No doubt he has imitated my hand, and written you this

letter, in order to cause me annoyance here." "It is extraordinary," said the Head. "Is not the young man kept under proper control by his family?" "I fear, sir, that the control may have relaxed since my departure," said the young master. "Of course, sir, you are not bound to submit to

these annoyances. I am prepared to

resign---" "Not at all, Mr. Oliphant," said the Head, kindly enough. "It is no fault of yours. But undoubtedly these insane tricks must cease. shall communicate with St. Leger Place, and ask that the unhappy young man be prevented from playing these extraordinary pranks."

Mr. Oliphant looked startled. "Will you leave that to me, sir?" he asked. "I-I think that a veguest from me to Lord Woodwode, the unhappy young man's father-"

"As I have received the extraordinary telegram and letters, I think I had better deal with the matter, Mr. Oliphant," answered the Head

"Oh! Very good, sir."

The Head quitted the Form-room. Mr. Oliphant bowed him out, and closed the door after him." The juniors watched the young man breathlessly. His sunny, infantile cheeriness was gone. There was a deep cloud on his face. "Silver!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir." "The game's up, Silver." "Is-is-is it, sir?"

"I fear so," said the new master, shaking his head seriously. "You see, the old sport is going to write to St. Leger Place. That will but the lid on, won't it?"

Jimmy drew a deep breath. "Uncle James" of Rookwood was certain of his suspicion now-that the new master was not Mr. Oliphant at all, but Mr. Oliphant's "potty" pupil, who had come to Rookwood in his name. The telegram and the letter from St. Leger Place were genuine; and if the Head had seen the new master in his lighter moments the Head would have seen the truth at once. But in the Head's presence the young man had exercised self-control to a perfect degree -somewhat like a lunatic in the presence of a stern keeper.

Mr. Oliphant paced the Formroom, his hands in his pockets, evidently in troubled cogitation.

"It's plain enough, you chaps," Jimmy Silver murmured to the Co. "The telegram yesterday said that Lord George had bunked, and taken Oliphant's papers with him. Of the shining hour in a more agreeable some about Mr. Greely, sir," said the young course, he'd heard talk about Mr. Oliphant's appointment here, and he was just sane enough to bag Oliphant's credentials and bolt. I dare say Oliphant was too busy to keep a sharp eye on him; or perhaps he had already handed him over to another keeper who was careless. The man who wired from St. Leger Place is Oliphant right enough, and this fellow--".

"Is the potty young man Oliphant was looking after?" murmured Lovell.

Jimmy nodded.

"That's how I figure it out," he Head. said. "It's the only thing a fellow can believe. You can see he's not a tutor or a Form-master, and that he's as mad as a hatter."

"He keeps it up wonderfully before the Head," said Raby.

"Insane cunning, that's all. You can see his poor old brain is rocky," said Jimmy Silver. "The question is, ought we to tell the Head? He ought to be taken care of; and goodness knows what he may do next!" Lovell whistled softly.

"The Head hasn't a suspich," he said. "I can fancy his face, if we went to him and told him his new master was potty!"

"But what the thump-" "Hallo! He's going!"

Mr. Oliphant—if he was Mr. Oliphant—crosed to the Form-room door and opened it. He glanced back affably at his pupils.

"Boys, you will take a holiday to-

day."
Yes, sir!" "Oh crumbs!"

"Clear off!" said the new master, throwing the door wide open. He led the way into the passage, and the juniors followed him fast enough. Jimmy Silver & Co. streamed out into the sunny quadrangle in a buzz of excited discussion.

The 4th Chapter. The Head Makes a Discovery!

Buzzzzzzz! The telephone-bell buzzed in Dr.

Chisholm's study, and the Head hurried in and lifted the receiver. It was half an hour since Dr. Chisholm had rung up the exchange for a trunk call to St. Leger Place. A feminine voice from the exchange informed him nonchalantly that he was "through."

"Is that St. Leger Place?" asked the Head into the transmitter. "Yes. Who is speaking?"

"Dr. Chisholm, at Rookwood School," answered the Head. desire to speak to Lord Woodwode very particularly." "Please hold on, sir!"

A minute later a rather thin and aged voice came over the wires.

"Dr. Chisholm, Lord Woodwode is speaking. Do you wish to speak to Mr. Oliphant?" " Eh?"

"I understand that Mr. Oliphant has been appointed to a mastership in your school."

"Quite so; but--" "You must excuse the delay in his

arrival, sir. My unhappy son---" "I fail to understand, my lord," said the Head tartly. "There has been no delay in Mr. Oliphant's arrival that I am aware of." "What?"

"Mr. Oliphant arrived here yesterday _____;

"And is here now," snapped the Head. "I have called you up, my lord, to inform you that I have received a telegram and a letter from St. Leger Place, sent in Mr. Oliphant's name, but apparently despatched by some person for a hoax. I---''-

"Allow me, sir," came the thin, troubled voice. "There is some mistake. Mr. Oliphant is here."

"Wha-a-t?" "My unhappy son, who was in his charge, was handed over to the care of a new tutor," said the thin voice. "Unfortunately, proper care was not taken. He has eluded us, and is still at large, his whereabouts unknown. He has taken with him many of Mr. Oliphant's private papers, and without them Mr. Oliphant does not care to leave. Moreover, he very kindly wishes to help me in this very painful situation."

"Sir," stuttered the Head, "do you mean to tell me that Mr. Oliphant has not left St. Leger Place at

"Certainly, Dr. Chisholm."

"Then who, sir, is the person who has come here in his name, furnished with his credentials?" exclaimed the Head.

"Good gad! What do you tell me?" The thin voice on the wire was very agitated. "A-a person with Mr. Oliphant's credentials-"

Lord Woodwode. "If it is a young | in!" added the Head, as there came man with Mr. Oliphant's private papers, it can only be-but describe him---'

Published

Every Monday

"Good heavens!" muttered the Head, aghast. A glimmering of the dreadful facts came upon his mind. "Dr. Chisholm, kindly describe

him; I am waiting-" "A young man, sir-a tall young

man, with an eyeglass---" "Thank Heaven he is found! It is Lord George."

"Lord George!" stuttered

"Undoubtedly! Who could have imagined that the unhappy boy would play such a trick?" exclaimed the old lord. "No doubt he had heard talk about Mr. Oliphant's appointment to Rookwood, and he was very disturbed and cast down at parting with his tutor, to whom he was deeply attached. He did not like his new keeper; I-I mean, tutor. This mad freak must have come into his mind-to escape! He has taken Mr. Oliphant's papers—evidently with his extraordinary prank in his mind! My poor, poor boy!"

Dr. Chisholm set his lips hard. He was feeling anything but sympathetic towards the "poor, poor boy," at that moment. The thought that he had entertained a lunatic unawares was distinctly disturbing.

"Do you mean to say, Lord Woodwode, that the young man here is your son, Lord George, who is not in his right mind?"

"Evidently, Dr. Chisholm. I-I must apologise for the trouble given l

a loud knock at the study door.

Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth, entered. Mr. Greely was as red as a turkey-cock, and evidently in a towering rage.

"Dr. Chisholm!" he spluttered. "Well, Mr. Greely?" said the Head coldly. "Calm yourself, please. What is the matter?" The Head of Rook. wood never displayed emotion himself; and he disliked the display of it in others.

"That-that person, sir-" stuttered Mr. Greely.

"What person?" "Mr. Oliphant, sir! It is not to be tolerated!" gasped Mr. Greely. "Unless he is out of his senses,

The Head started.

"Have you noticed anything unusual—anything peculiar—about Mr. Oliphant?" he asked.

Mr. Greely snorted. say so, when I found him balancing a ruler on his nose-"

"A ruler!" said the Head faintly. "On his-his nose."

"Yes, sir, in the Fourth Form room, sir, before the boys, sir; and he had the audacity, sir, to suggest to me to do the same, sir, and alluded to my nose as a boko, sir!"

"Bless my soul!"

however. But when he intrudes into the Fifth Form room, sir-" "Has he done so, Mr. Greely?"

breathed harder.

"I-I think he is in the Second-Form room, sir," stammered Mr. Greely. "I-I seem to hear a

disturbance--" "Bless my soul!"

The Head whisked away, with Mr. the Fifth were left in a buzz of amazement and alarm.

> The 5th Chapter. Exit Lord George!

The Second Form at Rookwood had the surprise of their lives that morning. They and Mr. Wiggins and dear old Eutropius were having a morning together. And then the door opened, and Mr. Oliphant sailed

Having distinguished himself in "I should say so, sir! I should the Fifth Form room, Mr. Oliphantor, rather, Lord George-was looking, like Alexander of old, for fresh

worlds to conquer.

The hapless young man was in a beaming good temper, happy as a sand-boy, but one glance at his face was enough to show that his wits were wandering. The news that the Head was communicating at once with St. Leger Place had shown the young man that his strange game was "What this—this person does in his up; and with that knowledge came own Form-room, sir, is not my affair, an end of the self-control he had exercised at intervals, with the peculiar cunning of the insane. Now he was Lord George in his proper "He has, sir! He is there now! I person-harmless, good-tempered, in-

The Head glanced at the fragments | sane!" said Lord George, blinking of a large and expensive globe that very seriously at the scandalised Mr. strewed the Form-room floor. He Wiggins. "There is a look in your eye that I do not quite like!"

"Oh dear! Sir-Mr. Oliphantwhat-what--'

"I scarcely think that you are sane, sir," continued Lord George, still with the same owlish look of seriousness at the astounded Mr. Greely at his heels, once more, and | Wiggins. "If you are sane, sir, why do you wear that beard? That very extraordinary beard, sir! Are you aware that you look a great deal like a goat?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Second Form, involuntarily.

"Silence!" stuttered Mr. Wiggins, crimson with wrath. "Be silent! Sir, if you do not-do not depart immediately---'

"Like a billy-goat!" persisted Lord George.

"Leave this Form-room, sir!" thundered Mr. Wiggins.

"My dear old bean, nothing of the kind! I do not intend to clear until they send Oliphant after me!" said Lord George cheerily. "Now we are

going to have a holiday." By this time, the whole Second Form was on its feet, and leap-frog and other games were the order of

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Mr.

"Now go, sir!" said Lord George. "Clear off! Buzz! Make yourself scarce, sir! You bore me! Get out!"

He advanced upon Mr. Wiggins, who backed away tremulously behind his desk. To his great relief he caught sight of the Head and Mr. Greely in the corridor.

Chisholm—Mr. Greely! Help!" he stuttered. "This-this man is-is out of his senses-this-this Mr. Oliphant-"

"Leave him to me, Mr. Wiggins," said the Head quietly. He entered the Form-room.

To the amazement of the fags, Lord George was trying to balance an inkpot on the tip of his nose, concentrating his attention upon that difficult feat, as if it were the most important business to be done in the universe. The Second Form watched him breathlessly.

Dr. Chisholm laid a firm hand upon the young man's shoulder.

Crash! The inkpot went to the floor, and there was a splash of ink on the Head's gown. Dr. Chisholm did not heed. He compressed his grasp on Lord George's shoulder. "Come with me, Lord George!" he

said quietly. The young man looked at him, and his weak and wayward spirit was quelled by the stern, commanding face. Like a lamb he followed the Head of Rookwood from the Form-

The excitement at Rookwood that

day was intense.

The amazing proceedings of the new master were breathlessly discussed up and down the old school. And when it became generally known that the supposed new master was not Mr. Oliphant at all, but his "potty" pupil, who had taken his papers and impersonated him, the amazement was still greater. Early in the afternoon Mr. Oliphant—the genuine article-arrived, a pale and thoughtful young man, who certainly did not look anything like so jolly a fellow as Lord George. He was shut up with the Head in his study for some time, where Dr. Chisholm, with some difficulty, had kept Lord George quiet

The quadrangle was crowded with curious fellows when a closed car drove away at last, with Lord George and Mr. Oliphant in it. The window of the car suddenly opened and a head was put out, and Lord George's smiling face looked round at the Rookwood fellows.

"Good-bye, old beans!" he called out cheerily.

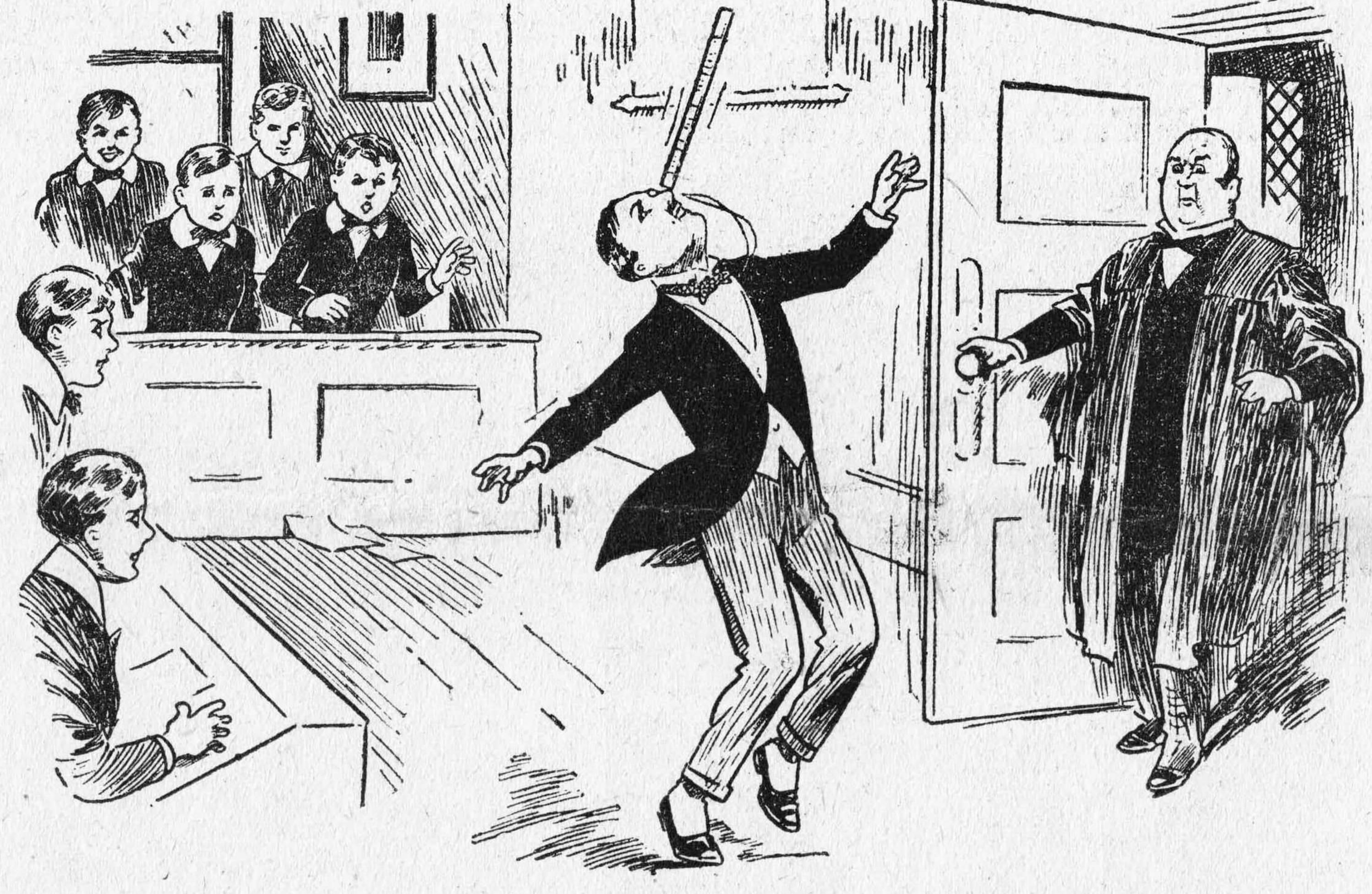
Then he disappeared suddenly, apparently jerked back into the car by his companion.

"Good-bye, sir!" shouted Jimmy Silver & Co. They had had an amazing time with their new master, but they liked him, and wished him well. And they gave him a cordial send-off.

Afterwards they learned that Mr. Oliphant was keeping his post at St. Leger Place, and that his appointment to Rookwood was cancelled. Apparently his peculiar pupil could not do without him, and he had acceded to the old lord's request to remain as "tutor." And so, save for his brief visit that afternoon, the real Mr. Oliphant did not come to Rookwood at all. And so the Fourth Form at Rookwood, for the present, were still without a master.

THE END.

with Mr. Oliphant's credentials—" man seemed—seemed quite himself, head, sir!" breathed Hansom. "It Wiggins, backing away. "Really—" quite calm and collected in every fell off, sir, and smashed. Then he really—" really—" way. I can scarcely believe it. Come went." went." You do not seem to me quite Monday's Boys' FRIEND. It's great!)



"Now," said Mr. Oliphant, "Silver, watch me carefully, and then see if you can do the same." So saying, the new master picked up a ruler and proceeded to balance it on his nose. The Classical Fourth gazed at him petrified. This was certainly not one of the usual items of a Rookwood master's curriculum.

"It is extraordinary! But surely he cannot have taken up the duties of

a Form-master?" "He has done so."

"Upon my word! But his mind is very backward-his education necessarily imperfect; it is quite impossible that he can have performed a master's duties-quite impossible. It is amazing that he could deceive you in an interview, really, sir--"

The Head bit his lip.

"Will you have the extreme goodness to detain him, until he can be sent for, Dr. Chisholm?" went on the old lord. "I cannot apologise sufficiently; but you realise how distressing this is to me. Mr. Oliphant shall come as fast as the express can bring him, and take the unfortunate young man off your hands."

"Very good, sir!" snapped the

He put up the receiver, his mind in a whirl. Amazing, astounding, as it was, it was evidently true; he had been taken in by a man who was not sane, in the guise of the Form-master his agents had engaged for him. The Head's face grew purple at the thought.

"Bless my soul!" he murmured. "But-but is it possible? The young

you; but did you notice nothing-did, He has dismissed his own Form, sir, I fantile, and utterly irresponsible. He you not observe any wandering in the | and has entered the Fifth Form room, | came into the room at a run, and poor boy's talk, in his manner--" | and interrupted lessons, sir," gasped | "Not in the least!" snapped the Mr. Greely. "I would have ejected him, sir, but I did not care to cause a display of hooliganism, sir, before the boys. But this is not to be tolerated. I have come here, sir, to Rookwood—" as headmaster of

"Follow me, Mr. Greely," said the Head hurriedly.

its close. As a rule, Dr. Chisholm's I rather liked him." motions were slow and stately and impressive; but he was almost running as he reached the Fifth Form rcom, in his anxiety to know what was transpiring there. He breathed hard as he entered.

"Mr. Oliphant---" "He's not here, sir!" gasped Hansom of the Fifth. The Fifth Formers were all on their feet, pale and startled annd staring. "I-I think there's something wrong with him,

sir; he's ill, or something-" "What has happened?" gasped the

"He-he was turning somersaults, sir," stuttered Talboys of the Fifth. "Turnin' over round and round the Form-room, sir--"

"And jazzin'!" gasped Lumsden. | Are you mad, too, old top?"

Mr. Wiggins, the master of the Second, spun round to stare at him inquiringly.

"Sorry to interrupt, sir," said the new master.

"You need not interrupt, Mr. Oliphant," suggested Mr. Wiggins, looking at him in surprise.

"The fact is," said Lord George, "I have given my Form a holiday! He rustled away to the Fifth Form | Ha, ha! They will have to work room, with Mr. Greely snorting at his | hard enough when the other fellow heels. The career of the astounding | comes-what? He made me work new master at Rookwood was nearing | sometimes. Not a bad sort, though!

> "Wha-a-at?" "Boys," exclaimed Lord George, "jump up! Up with you! It's a holiday to-day! This old donkey has bored you long enough!"

The Second Form sat dumb-

founded. In their heart of hearts, as it were, they fully agreed with the young man's statement; but they were dumbfounded, all the same.

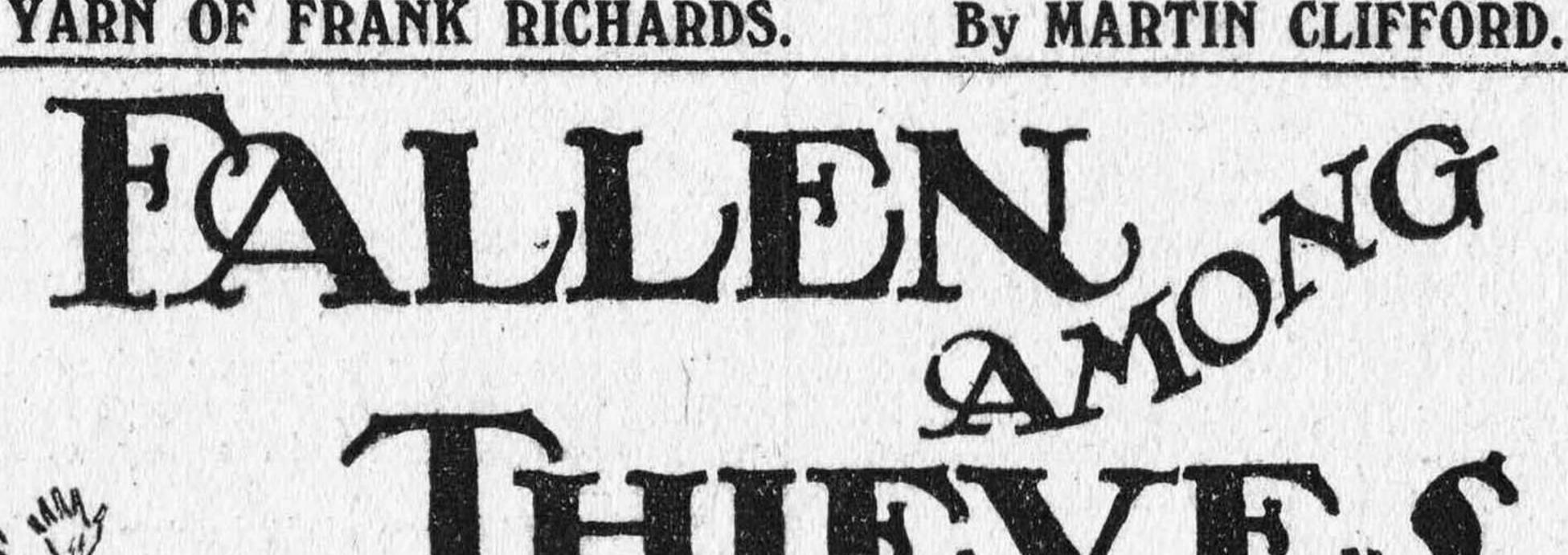
"Sir!" spluttered Mr. Wiggins. The new master wagged a forefinger at him. "You ring off, old bean!" he said.

roared Mr. Wiggins. "Exactly!" said Lord George, in a confidential tone. "You've hit it!

"Sir! Are you—are you mad?"

"And balancin' the globe on his "Good heavens!" gasped poor Mr. | (Look out for "Form-master and

A SPLENDID LONG COMPLETE YARN OF FRANK RICHARDS.



A FINE TALE OF ADVENTURE IN THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.

The 1st Chapter. Pests of the Prairie!

"Le Conteau-" "Hush!"

"But-" "Silence, I say!"

Frank Richards wondered if he was still dreaming as the muttering voices came to his ears through the thickets.

It was sundown. The red sun was already behind the western hills, and shadow stole over the plain. Frank Richards had been tramping all day on a trail marked by hoof-prints, which led, in the dim distance, to Kicking Mule Camp. But the settlement was still many miles distanthow many he did not know-and he had given up hope of reaching it that night. Where the trail ran by the border of a timber belt the wearied schoolboy had thrown himself down in the thickets to rest.

He had closed his eyes, and he awakened again with muttering voices in his ears.

He wondered who the speakers were.

screen of larches, but evidently they were close at hand.

The muttering ceased, and Frank raised himself quietly to his feet. He peered through an opening in the thicket, and saw the two figures suddenly. One was a burly, roughbearded fellow, clad like a trapper; the other, a smaller man, was a darkskinned half-breed, whose black, glinting eyes were fixed on the thicket that hid the schoolboy from sight.

Frank Richards drew a quick

breath.

One glance was enough to show him that he had fallen upon two of the toughest characters in all the Canadian West. And he could see, too, that his presence in the timber was known.

"I guess it was a mink, or a lynx, perhaps. Le Couteau," said the burly man. "I guess---"

The half-breed made a fierce gesture.

"Silence, I tell you, Yreka Bill!". he muttered savagely. "There is someone in the timber. Ah!"

He made a sudden spring, and the larches crackled and parted. A moment more and he was upon Frank Richards. The schoolboy started back and began to struggle as a fierce grasp was laid upon him. The half-breed whipped out a knife from his belt-a long, sharp "couteau de chasse," from which, apparently, he derived his grisly nickname. Yreka-Bill came trampling through the thicket after his comrade.

"Hold on, pard!" he ejaculated. "It's a kid---"

"Let me go!" panted Frank Richards. He ceased to struggle as the cold !

steel flashed before his eyes. He was unarmed.

"Stand where you are!" Le Couteau released him, his black, I fierce eyes searching the schoolboy's face. He was evidently astonished to discover the schoolboy in the lonely 'timber belt, far from any town or

settlement. at Frank, as astonished as his comrade.

"Who are you?" rapped out Le business at Kamloops." Couteau. "Don't make a move to get away! It will be your last step

f you do!" "My name's Frank Richards," answered Frank quietly.

"Where do you come from?" "Cedar Creek." "Cedar Creek! Where is that?"

answered Frank.

"On the Thompson River,"

Thompson River here," said Le shot of the timber." Couteau harshly. "You have no horse. How did you come here,

then?" Frank "Tramped!" answered bitterly and briefly.

"You are a schoolboy?"

"Then you have run away from your home?" said Le Couteau.

The half-breed eyed him doubtfully and savagely. Frank Richards did not make a movement. He had no chance of escape, and he was at the mercy of the two ruffians.

He was wondering, too, what they were doing in the timber by the lonely trail. That they were there for no good purpose was clear enough from their looks and from their alarm at discovering that they were not alone under the trees.

Le Couteau made a motion with his hunting-knife, and Frank felt a cold chill run through him. But the darkskinned ruffian held his hand.

"The kid'll do no harm, I guess,

Le Couteau muttered an oath. and hands in his checks before he | Creek. parts with the dust?" he muttered. "We can't afford to leave a witness to mosey into Kicking Mule with the news. Pardieu, I do not want a

cattleman's rope round my neck!" The other ruffian seemed to hesi-

Frank Richards' heart throbbed. That muttered exchange of words told him all he needed to know-that the two bulldozers were there on the trail for a robbery. He knew that his life hung on a thread.

Yreka Bill laid a heavy grasp on l Frank's arm-a grasp that was almost | Pequod by the heels, and clean him | affray, for there was as powerful as that of a grizzly bear. out!" Le Couteau turned and strode back to the edge of the timber, whence you, kid," grunted Yreka Bill. he could watch the plain in the sinking light. Yreka Bill followed him, with the Cedar Creek schoolboy in I his grasp.

The 2nd Chapter. The Catspaw!

Frank Richards waited.

The half-breed was scanning the plain; and Frank, following his glance, caught a glimpse of a moving figure in the far distance to the south, along the dusky trail.

A horseman was approaching from the southward, evidently bound on his way up to the camp of Kicking

He was too far off for recognition; indeed, only a keen eye could have discerned him at all, so far, in the waving grass.

But the half-breed's eyes glinted as he turned back to his companions. "C'est lui!" he muttered.

"Black Pequod!"

"Mais oui! It cannot be anyone else-but we shall soon see. He is riding fairly into our hands-with five thousand dollars in bills in his belt." "What the thunder is he doing The half-breed's eyes glittered. "He here?" exclaimed Yreka Bill, staring has sold all his horses-he has none with him, save the critter he is riding. Black Pequod has done good

"And I guess we're goin' to do good business hyer," grinned Yreka Bill. "If he passes in range, I guess brace of shakes."

"You are forty miles from the answered. "He will not ride within

"Then I reckon we'd better get on the hosses---"

"Wait!" The half-breed turned to Frank Richards. His black, glinting eyes smile. "Let it be so. A thousand searched the schoolboy's face.

"Listen to me, boy," he said. "You can be useful to us. You see that rider out on the plain-" "I see him," answered Frank.

"He is Black Pequod, the French-Canadian horse-dealer of Kicking Mule. I watched him yesterday in Kamloops; I am waiting for him now. You savvy?".
"Yes."

"He has five thousand dollars, or more, in his belt. He is not going to carry it into Kicking Mule Camp!" grinned the half-breed. "But Black Pequod is a bad man in a tussle, and if we ride him down, it will be shooting-and one or both of us may get a bullet, as well as the horse-dealer. You understand?"

Frank Richards nodded.

His heart was like lead in his breast. They were hidden from him by a pard," muttered Yreka Bill. "Rope | He realised that he was to be asked him to a tree and put a wedge in to take a part in the robbery of the his mouth till the horse-dealer's horse-dealer; in what way, he could passed. He won't be able to give not yet divine. But he knew that a the alarm, I reckon." refusal meant one swift, savage thrust of the half-breed's knife, and the end "And suppose Black Pequod resists; of all things for the runaway of Cedar

Evidently the half-breed had concluded from his having tramped forty miles to get away from his home, that Frank was a bad lot, and as such should be prepared to help them.

Frank choked back the angry indignation that rose to his lips. His life was in this ruffian's hands; and life was dear.

"You can help us, and if you succeed. I swear that you shall share in the loot," continued the half-breed. | their plunder Frank's "Boy as you are, you shall finger five hundred dollars if we lay Black | job instead of a desperate

"I guess that's good enough for "What do you want me to do?"

gasped Frank Richards. He controlled his face well; the half-breed was watching him like a lynx. Frank was playing only for time, now-for a chance to escape. Once out of reach of the ruffian's long

knife, it would be a different matter. "You will show up on the trail, and speak to the horse-dealer," said Le Couteau.

" But---' "Listen to me. He will not suspect you-a schoolboy. You will lead him into the trap easily enough." Frank panted for breath.

So that was to be the task assigned to him-to lead an unsuspecting man into an ambush, for robbery, and perhaps murder. And still he did not allow his face to betray his horror and indignation. He knew that his real thought, if revealed, would be the signal for his death. Instinctively he played a part, under the halfbreed's searching gaze; and nodded in reply to Le Couteau, with a thoughtful air.

"But how?" he said. "You will tell him that your father lies in the timber here, injured by a fall from his horse-"

"My father?" said Frank. "My father is not in Canada." "Fool! You will tell him so!"

"Oh, I-I see!"

"Your father lies in the timber we can drop his hoss with a shot from | injured, and his horse has run away," | the timber, and run him down in a | continued Le Couteau. "You beg | timber, and Frank saw him to help. Black Pequod is a hard him drop his hand on his Le Couteau shook his head. | man, but he will not refuse. It will rifle. But he relinquished "Black Pequod knows there is not take him far out of his way. He | the weapon again as he danger on the plains, for a man with will come with you. You will point saw that the stranger five thousand dollars in his belt," he out the place—" was an unarmed boy.

"And?" gasped Frank.

"He will be seized as soon as he is in the trees," said Le Couteau. 'That is all. You savvy?" understand!" said

Richards, in a stifled voice. "Five hundred dollars

succeed." Frank breathed hard.

member that you are within range from the timber, and I will shoot you down like a covote!"

"But-" panted Frank. "Yes or no?" said Le Couteau

gruffly. Frank restrained his desire to dash

his fist into the villain's swarthy face. His only object now was to bull the suspicion of the half-breed, and get out of his reach.

"You say the horse-dealer has five thousand dollars on him?" he asked calmly.

"Yes, yes!" "You offer me five hundred---" " Vrai!"

"That isn't good enough!" said Frank, speaking with a coolness that surprised himself. "I shall take as much risk as you. Make it a thousand dollars; and little enough, too!"

Yreka Bill burst into a guffaw. "I guess that kid was born for the business, Le Couteau," he said.

"Soit!" said Le Couteau, with a dollars from the horse-dealer's belt for your share, boy, if you succeed." "Try me," said Frank.

"Then go!" With a beating heart Frank | day in Kamloops. So they are lay-Richards stepped out of the trees and | ing for me on the trail?" strode away towards the horseman.

The two ruffians, keeping under cover, watched him, rifle in hand. "I guess the kid'll do the trick. Le la suspicious stare. Couteau," muttered Yreka Bill. "And if he lands Pequod in our

hands, he will earn the dollars." Couteau, showing his white teeth in | into entering the timber. I was to a savage grin. "But fingering them | tell you that my father lies injured will be a different matter. Nous | there, and ask your aid." verrons."

Yreka Bill chuckled and nodded, and then the two ruffians watched in | silence.

> The 3rd Chapter, In Deadly Peril!

ing, as he strode away from the you doing here alone on the plains?" timber. Behind him were the two "Tramping," said Frank. "I have ruffians, ready to shoot him down without mercy at a sign that he intended to fail them.

But for the moment he

was safe.

It was evident that the prairie thieves shrank from an open encounter with Black Pequod, if they could avoid it, though they were prepared for any desperate step rather than losing help promised them a safe doubt that the schoolboy could have performed the trick with success, and led the horseman into the ambuscade.

Frank Richards, of course, had no intention of doing anything of the kind. He had fooled the half-breed to escape the thrust of his knife, and for no other reason. His intention was to warn the horse-dealer of his peril as soon as he came within speaking distance.

There was no doubt, then, that the ruffians would ride out of the timber to try the chances of a conflict, two to one; and upon the result of that encounter Frank's life hung. The peril was terrible, though probably not greater than in trusting to the good faith of Le Couteau.

Peril or not, Frank would have died a thousand deaths rather than have acted as catspaw to the prairie thieves.

He moved quickly across the trail and out on the grassy plain, aiming to intersect the course the approaching horseman was following.

Black Pequod sighted him as soon as he left the

He was still at a little distance when Frank Richards reached a spot directly ahead of him. There the schoolboy of Cedar Creek halted for Frank | the horseman to come up.

He was at a considerable distance if you from the timber now, easily within sight of the watching ruffians, however. But it was doubtful whether a "But if you try any trickery," said | rifle-shot would be effective in the Le Couteau, in a hissing voice, "re- dying light. Frank Richards had to risk that.

> The horseman came up at an easy trot. His horse showed signs of fatigue. Black Pequod had ridden far that day.

Frank held up his hand, and the horse-dealer of Kicking Mule drew rein. He came to a halt, staring down curiously at the schoolboy, who stood knee-deep in the grass.

"Thunder! What are you doing here?" exclaimed the horseman. "Lost yourself on the prairie, kid?"

"I have a warning to give you, answered Frank Richards quietly. "Don't look towards the timber while I speak-they may shoot if they know you are on your guard.

Black Pequod started. But he did not look towards the timber; his sharp black eyes remained fixed on Frank Richards' face.

"What's that yarn you are spinning?" he asked.

"You are in danger," said Frank. "Who's in the timber?" "Two rascals. They call one another Le Couteau and Yreka Bill."

Black Pequod smiled grimly. "I know them. I saw them yester-

"And what have you to do with them?" asked the horse-dealer, with

Frank coloured. "Nothing, except that they found me in the timber and threatened my "He may earn them," said Le life. They expect me to trick you

The horse-dealer muttered an oath in French.

"And I should have gone into the trap," he said. "I should not have distrusted a boy. Sacre bleu! What is your name?"

"Frank Richards." "Mine is Gaston Pequod. I shall Frank Richards' heart was thump- not forget this, my boy. What are

> no home now. I-I was going to Kicking Mule to look for work." Black Pequod smiled.



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LASTS LONG Wrigley's Ltd., London, S.E.1. only two of them?"
"Yes." "Have they horses-I guess they

"Yes-hitched in the timber." "I reckon they'll ride out if they don't get me into the trap."

"That is what they mean," said Frank. "They think you have five thousand dollars in bills in your helt."

"Le Couteau kept his eyes open in Kamloops," said Black Pequod. "But I have more than that, garcon. But Le Couteau will not finger a cent of it. You are unarmed?" "Yes."

"And on foot?" said the horsedealer. "Sapristi! If I ride on you will be left to their mercy, and after warning me-"

Frank, shivered. "I'm ready to take my chance," he said quietly. "I knew what I was

risking." Gaston Pequod laughed.

"But I shall not leave you here," he said. "I guess Black Pequod is a hard customer, but he knows how to help anyone who helps him. I will turn my horse towards the timber, as if I were going to ride there—as if you had told me the yarn they expect. Get up behind me. You can

"Oh, yes!" said Frank, with a

"Mount behind me, then, and hold on to me--and mind you don't fall," said the horse-dealer.

He swung his horse round towards the trees in the distance, and Frank clambered lightly up behind him.

In their ambush, Le Couteau and Yreka Bill exchanged a grin of satisfaction.

They had no doubt now that the schoolboy had played the part they expected; that the horse-dealer was about to ride into the trap.

But the next moment a change came o'er the spirit of their dream. As soon as Frank was mounted behind him, Black Pequod wheeled his horse suddenly, struck it with the whip, and started at a gallop, with his back to the timber.

Thud, thud, thud! At a racing pace the horse-dealer dashed away from the timber out

into the wide plains. Le Couteau uttered a fierce oath. "He has tricked us!" said Yreka Bill hoarsely. "He's warned Black Pequod, and he's making a run for

"The horses!" hissed the halfbreed. "Quick!"

Yreka Bill rushed to unhitch the horses in the thicket, while the halfbreed raised his rifle and took careful aim at the fleeing horseman.

The distance was considerable, and growing greater every moment, and the sun was almost gone. With as good an aim as he could contrive, Le Couteau fired.

A puff of white smoke came from the timber, and the crack of the rifle rang across the plain.

Difficult as the shot was, the halfbreed came very close with it.

Frank Richards felt the wind of the bullet as it whizzed by him; a foot more to the left and it would have passed through his body and that of the horse-dealer in front of

But a miss was as good as a mile. Black Pequod gave no heed to the shot. He lashed on his horse into greater speed, to put a wider distance between him and the timber. The animal was fatigued, but for some time the speed was kept up. Frank Richards, clinging to the horse-dealer to keep his seat, ventured to glance back over his shoulder.

Yreka Bill and Le Couteau, mounted now, came riding out of the timber with furious faces.

They were driven now to their last desperate resource, an open attack. without cover, on the dusky plain. They were two to one, for the unarmed schoolboy did not count; but the outcome was by no means a certainty. With their rifles gripped in their hands, they rode savagely on the track of the horse-dealer, gaining upon him at every stride of their horses. Their mounts were fresh, and Black Pequod's steed was fatigued with a day's ride, and was doubleloaded. So far as the race went it could only end one way, and in a very | the revolver gripped in his hand. But | short time. But at the end of it the he could not shoot. Black Pequod get, you half-breed skunk?" said very differently without the interhard-faced horse-dealer, wary and desperate, remained to be dealt with.

Crack, crack! The pursuers fired together, but the leaping of the horses made aim too difficult. The bullets flew wide.

Black Pequod glanced back. His hard, tanned face was unmoved. His life had been passed in horse-dealer's iron nerve.

"I guess they're gaining fast," muttered Gaston Pequod. "I guess the shooting will tell soon. But they haven't got the dollars yet. It will be a fight on the plain. Can you shoot, boy?"

"Yes," panted Frank.
"Good!"

Published

Every Monday

Black Pequod reined in his horse. "Jump down!"

Frank leaped to the ground. The horse-dealer dismounted a moment later, and dragged his steed down into the grass.

He threw himself down, and Frank Richards followed his example. Only | gave a hoarse cry of pain. their Stetson hats showed over the

The horse-dealer drew the revolver from his belt, and passed it to his young comrade.

"If you can shoot. I guess that will be useful if they get close," he said. "Do your best, kid."

"Rely on me!" said Frank quietly. He slipped the revolver into his right-hand jacket-pocket. His heart was beating very fast, but he was cool and collected. The horse-dealer, with his rifle extended before him, finger

on trigger, watched the prairie thieves as they came on. Le Couteau and Yreka Bill fired again, and the bullets I ploughed up the earth close at hand. Crack!

Black Pequod pulled the trigger. He had the advantage of a good Strong and wiry as the half-breed was, target for his fire as the horsemen | he was gradually overcome, and forced | came galloping on. Yreka Bill was | down in the grass. The horse-dealer's a little in advance of his confederate, | heavy knee was planted on his chest, | sent the schoolboy staggering, and he and it was upon him that the horse- | pinning him down, and under it Le | fell in the grass, and the heavy belt dealer's rifle bore.

Frank felt his heart leap as the cat.

the desperate struggle would have ended fatally for the horse-dealer. But Frank was there, and his nerve did not fail him. He raised the revolver to a level.

"Hands up!" he rapped out. Yreka Bill, with a curse, plunged on towards him.

"Stop!" Still the ruffian came on, and Frank Richards pulled the trigger.

Crack! The knife went spinning from Yreka Bill's grasp as the bullet struck him above the elbow. The ruffian

"Now stop!" shouted Frank Richards, his eyes blazing over the levelled revolver. "Another step | and I'll send a bullet through your

Yreka Bill stopped at that. He was helpless now, and the loss of blood from his wounds was overcoming his brute strength. He sank

into the grass, and lay groaning. Frank Richards turned to the struggling pair by his side. But his help | was not needed by the horse-dealer.

Black Pequod was getting the better of the struggle.

The half-breed had drawn his knife. but the horse-dweller had twisted his wrist till he dropped it, and they were fighting without weapons, and the horse-dealer's size and strength told. Couteau wriggled and spat like a wild- rained blows on the moaning half-

Black Pequod gripped him by the collar of his shirt, and dragged him over. He grasped the belt in his other hand.

Price Three Halfpence

Then he lashed and lashed, with the wretched prairie thief wriggling and panting and howling in his merciless

grasp Frank Richards looked on grimly.

It was less than the rascal deserved for attempted robbery and murder, less than he would have received at the hands of the sheriff. But it was a terrible punishment. The heavy leather belt was a formidable weapon in Gaston Pequod's hand, and he did not spare the half-breed. The blows rained on the wretched ruffian, till Frank Richards was fain to turn away his eyes from the grim scene.

Le Couteau's struggling had ceased now, his howling had died into faint moans, and he hung helpless in the grasp of the horse-dealer, while the blows still rained down.

Frank Richards felt that he could stand no more at last, and he started

forward. "Stop!" he exclaimed.

the horse-dealer did not heed, Frank caught at his descending arm. Black Pequod gave him a dark and threatening look.

"Let up!" he said harshly. "He's had enough," said Frank. "You're killing the man! Let him alone now-let him alone!"

"Stand back!" With a rough shove, Black Pequod

reckon I'm seeing you safe to Kicking Mule. Jump up behind me!"

Frank Richards hesitated. "The wounded man yonder-" he

The horse dealer laughed. "Let his pard see to him when he feels better," he said. "Sapristi! I guess I'm not caring. You're a tenderfoot, I reckon. If you want to look after Yreka Bill, stay here alone and look after him. He will knock you on the head when you've done it! Are you coming or not?"

He made a movement to start. "I'm coming!" answered Frank Richards quietly.

"That shows you've got some hoss sense!" answered Black Pequod, in a jeering tone. "Jump up, and don't waste any more time fooling!"

At a steady trot the double-laden horse moved on northward as the stars came out one by one in the sky. Frank Richards did not speak. He was not inclined for talk with his strange and surly companion, glad as he was of a lift into the settlement. Black Pequod was equally taciturn. He did not utter a word as they rode over the darkened plains. A bunch of glimmering lights appeared in sight at last, and then Frank Richards spoke.

"Is that the camp?"

"I guess so." Silence again, broken only by the trot of the wearied horse, until they were riding into the rugged, unpaved street of Kicking Mule. Then Black Pequod half-turned his head and

"You've told me you're on tramp, looking for a job?"

"Yes," said Frank.

"Got anywhere in camp to sleep

guess you're up against it," said the horse-dealer, not unkindly. "But you've done me a good turn, and I reckon I'm giving you a roof over your head to-night. Know anything about hosses?"

"Something." said Frank. "I've lived on a ranch."

"I guess I might be able to give you a job if you understand hosses, and want to make yourself useful."

Frank did not answer at once. The grim, forbidding-looking horsedealer was not the man he wanted for a boss, and he could not forget the ruthlessness with which Black Pequod had treated the half-breed. But he reflected that beggars could not be choosers, and that he might go farther and fare worse. Any job was better than nothing to the homeless school-

"Well." rapped out the horsedealer, "what do you say?"

"Thank you for the chance! I'll do my best," answered Frank Richards. "I guess I'll try you, then."

And a few minutes later Frank Richards dismounted with Black Pequod at the gate of the horse-ranch. THE END.

("Frank Richards' New Job!" is the title of next Monday's grand, long tale of Frank Richards. Mind you read it! Order your copy of the Boys' FRIEND NOW!)

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 11.

In this competition one competitor sent in a solution identical with the Editor's paragraphs The First Prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to ROBERT H. HORNBY.

4, Shaftesbury Villas, Beverley, Yorks. Three competitors sent in solutions con-

taining one error each, and the Three Prizes of a Tuck-Hamper have been

Alan Gapper, Barnes Cross, Holwell, Sherborne, Dorset: S. Cox, 4, Bescot Street, Walsall: Griffith V. Davies, 75, Lower Redland Road, Bristol.

The Eight Prizes of 5s. each have been added together and divided among the following sixteen competitors, each of whom sent in a solution containing two

Alice Pace, 39, Wellington Street, Leek; Mrs. L. Pace, 39, Wellington Street, Leek; Doris Gatwood, 3, Potter Street, Bishop Stortford; James Bartlett, 27, Lavender Road, Leicester; H. J. Hawkes, Chichester Hall, Rawreth, Essex: Fred Taylor, 3/1, Chapel Street, Attercliffe, Sheffield; Fred Bardsley, 69, Gill Street, Moston, Manchester: Stanley Forster, 2, Stirling Street, West Hartlepool: S. V. Trotman, Gordon Road, Barrowash, near Derby; James Smith, Rose Cottage, Tarland, Aberdeenshire; C. A. Jolliffe, 39. Arctic Road, Cowes, I.O.W.; T. W. Owen, 255, Marshalls Cross Road, St. Helens, Lancs; Ernest Brain, 47. Dove Street, Kingsdown, Bristol; Wilf. Barnes, 5, Grange Street South, Grangetown, Sunderland; R. A. Bennett, Walk Mills, Kingswood, near Wootton-under-Edge: Marion McKenzie,

THE CORRECT SOLUTION IS AS FOLLOWS:

45, Lauder Road, Edinburgh.

The lifeboatman is perhaps one of the bravest men around this country's coasts. He performs splendid deeds of heroism under most awful conditions at a moment's notice. He is generally an old fisherman, and can tell yarns by th



The half-breed came on furiously, and before Black Pequod could fire again he was upon them. Frank Richards' hand went to the gun in his pocket!

a loud and fearful yell.

dashing riderless across the plain, and I Injun, but you won't get out of that. | had had enough of this. He ran at | the ruffian plunged headlong in the

Thud, thud! The half-breed came on furiously as his companion fell, and before Black Pequod could fire again he was upon them. Frank Richards pulled the gun from his pocket, and blazed away twice; but the leaping horse caught the bullets, and went plunging upon its side. Le Couteau leaped clear, and sprang at the horse-dealer, who fired at close range, and missed by an inch. The next moment the half-breed was upon him, and the two men went rolling in the grass, locked in a desperate struggle.

The 4th Chapter! The Fight!

Frank Richards was on his feet now. and Le Couteau were rolling over and Black Pequod grimly. "I'm not position of Frank Richards. Proover in the grass, panting and gasp- | goin' to tote you along to Kicking | bably the horse-dealer realised that, ing, almost at his feet. To shoot was | Mule, I reckon. You ain't worth the | for his brow cleared. The last sunas dangerous to the horse-dealer as to I trouble. I'm going to hide you till rays were sinking into gloom, darkhis assailant.

fallen, Yreka Bill staggered up. His | Gaston Pequod. You savvy?" bearded face was white, and his right | The half-breed only panted. arm hung helpless at his side. The Black Pequod removed his crushing many dangers, and this new peril, bullet was in his shoulder. But he knee, and Le Couteau began to thrilling enough to the schoolboy, came tramping on unsteadily, his struggle again feebly. But he was seemed to produce no effect on the knife grasped in his left hand. But exhausted, and helpless in the power-

burly ruffian reeled in his saddle, with, "I guess this is my deal!" said, Frank Richards sprang to his feet, Black Pequod grimly. "You can his eyes flashing. Thief and cut-The next moment his horse was | wriggle all you want, you son of an | throat as the half-breed was, Frank Where is the other galoot, Richards?" "Down in the grass," answered

> Frank. "Did you wing him?" "Yes." Frank shivered a little. "In the arm. I think. He seems to be badly hurt."

> "Good! Go through this galoot while I hold him down, and take his weapons away."

Frank Richards jerked a revolver from the half-breed's belt. His knife was in the grass with his rifle. He had no other weapon. Le Couteau was still struggling, but his strength was almost spent, his breath came in thick and heavy gasps. But his eyes still

blazed up like those of a wild animal. "Now take off his belt," said Black Pequod.

Frank obeyed.

Out of the grass, where he had be a lesson to you to keep clear of Black Pequod mounted his horse.

for the presence of Frank Richards ful grasp of the horse-dealer.

the horse-dealer, seized his arm, and tore away the belt from his grasp. Pequod, with an oath, swung round | awarded to: on him, letting the half-breed fall into the grass. Frank flung the belt far across the plain.

"You meddling cub-" began | the horse-dealer furiously. Frank Richards faced him coolly

enough. Black Pequod was evidently a "hard case," but the schoolboy was not afraid of him. For moment the horsedealer looked as if he would spring at the schoolboy; but he restrained his anger, and turned away. He called to his horse, which came trotting up to him. The half-breed lay moaning in the grass, exhausted and powerless to move; at a short distance. Yreka Bill's groans came at intervals. The conflict had been disastrous enough to the prairie "You size up what you're goin' to | thieves; but it would have ended you can't crawl, and I guess that will | ness was overspreading the prairie as

> "I guess we've come out the big end of the horn, sonny!" he said. "I ain't forgotten what I owe you; but you'd better remember that Gaston Pequod ain't the man to be checked, or to interfere with. But I you've done me a good turn. I hour.