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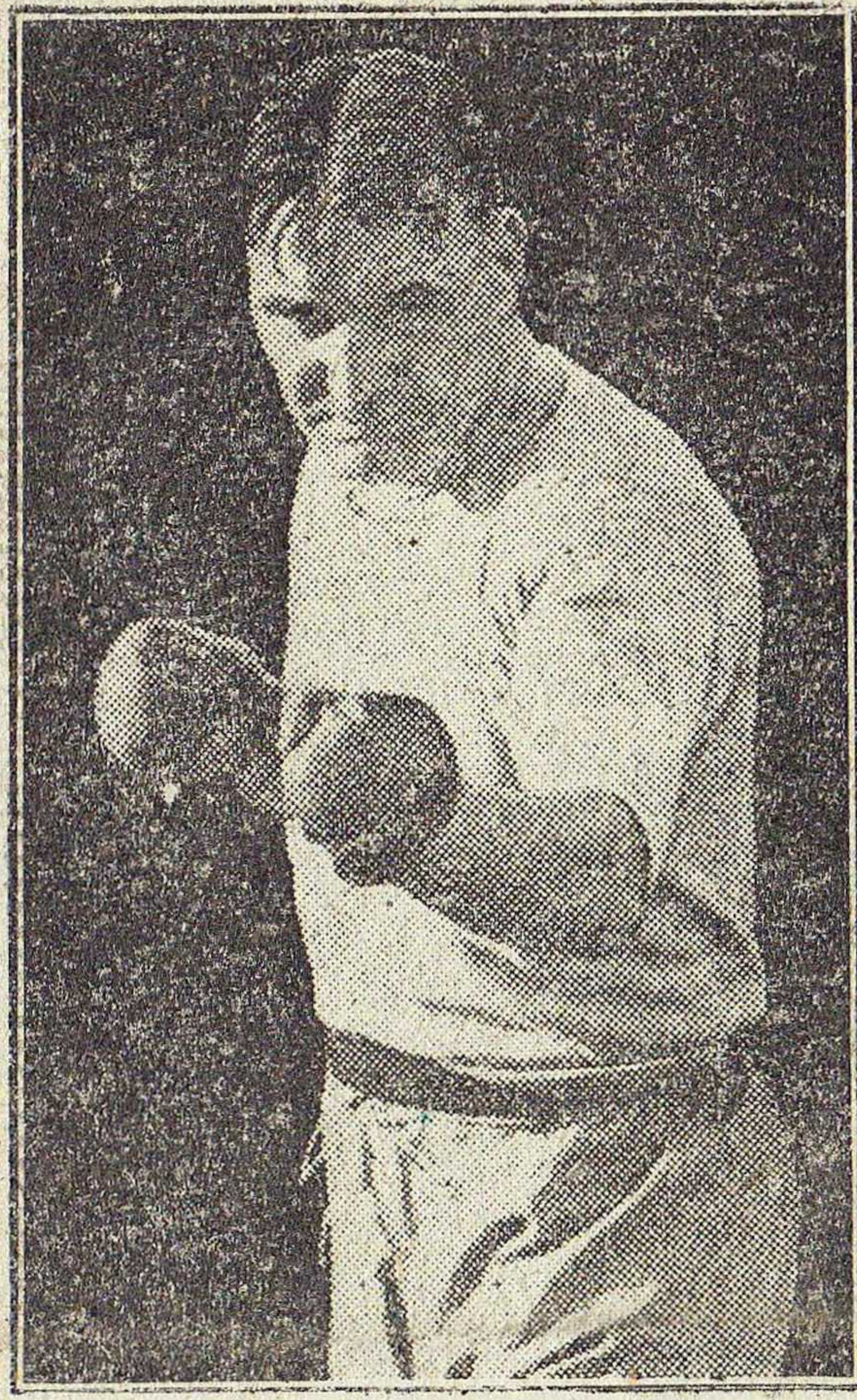
The BOYS' FRIEND 1^{1d}/₂

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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD

[Week Ending July 22nd, 1922.]



DICK SMITH.



The Champion's Substitute!

A KNOCK-OUT FOR THE NEGRO!

Bracing himself, Rollo Dayton measured the negro's heavy jaw, paused for a brief second, and put over a punch which knocked Tagu clean off his feet! "Out!" cried Slogger Ditch, without troubling to count the seconds. (A thrilling incident from this week's story of the Clean-Sport Crusaders!)

AN AMUSING ADVENTURE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. AND GUNNER AT ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.



Gunner's Latest!

By Owen Conquest.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")

The 1st Chapter.

Gunner Means Business!

"Gunny, old chap—"
"Shut up, Dickinson!"
"But I say, old fellow—" pleaded Dickinson minor.

Dickinson minor pleaded almost with tears in his eyes. He would have gone down on his knees to Peter Cuthbert Gunner just then, if that would have done any good.

It was for Gunner's own sake. Gunner of the Fourth was a very trying study-mate; but he was Dickinson minor's study-mate, and not a bad fellow in his own way. It was his misfortune, not his fault, that he was the champion duffer of Rookwood School.

Dickinson felt that it was up to him to save Gunner from himself—if he could. So he pleaded—in fact, beseeched.

"Don't try it on, old fellow!" snorted Gunner.
"Jimmy Silver's right under my thumb," said Gunner calmly. "You ought to know that, Dickinson. I'm going to make Jimmy Silver put me in the eleven for the Bagshot match. I've said so. When I say a thing, Dickinson, I mean it."

"But, I say—" "You needn't say anything, Dickinson. Do you think I've been studying mesmerism for a whole fortnight, not to put it to any use at the finish? You must be an ass!"

"But—but suppose it doesn't work?"

"What rot! I've studied it—mastered it. You know that. I've simply got to put the 'fluence on Jimmy Silver, to make him the slave of my will. His personality will be merged in mine; that's how they put it in the book, 'Mesmerism Simplified.' I've got it all at my finger-tips."

"Oh dear!" groaned Dickinson minor. "But—but if it doesn't work?"

Gunner smiled. "It must work! Didn't it work in your case, when I hypnotised you, and made you believe you were a rabbit?"

Dickinson minor grinned involuntarily.

Peter Cuthbert Gunner fully believed that that wonderful experiment in which he had put his weird powers to the test, was a bona fide one.

He did not give sufficient consideration to the fact that Dickinson minor, at the time, had been hungry, and wanting his tea.

As Dickinson couldn't have his tea until Gunner mesmerised him, his only resource was to be mesmerised. He was willing to let Gunner tell him that he was a rabbit, or a rhinoceros, for that matter, so long as Gunner would leave off playing the goat, and let him have his tea.

Of course, he couldn't explain all that to Gunner. Gunner was too heavy-handed a youth to be given such explanations. He would have dusted the study, with Dickinson minor for a duster.

Having proved to his own satisfaction that he was a hypnotist of strange and terrible power, Gunner was going ahead with his great scheme for getting into the junior eleven.

As Gunner's cricket was of a kind that might have made the angels weep, he had no chance of getting

into the eleven in the ordinary way. Jimmy Silver would have preferred even Tubby Muffin as a member of his team.

But Gunner intended to have what he regarded as his due. Only by means of the "influence" could he hope to obtain it.

Under the mystic hypnotic 'fluence Jimmy Silver would not be able to help himself. He would play Gunner, and Gunner would knock up whole centuries for Rookwood—unless he was dismissed for a duck's egg, as was really more probable.

Gunner had a sense of duty. He felt that it was his duty to play for Rookwood. He was going to do his duty.

Heedless of Dickinson minor and his beseeching, Peter Cuthbert Gunner turned to the study door.

Dickinson was about to confess. But his heart failed him. In his mind's eye he saw himself in Gunner's powerful grasp, used as a duster.

Really, Gunner of the Fourth not only asked to have his leg pulled, but demanded it.

"Well, what about the experiment?" said Gunner. "Wasn't it a ripping success? Didn't I put the 'fluence on you, and make you believe you were a rabbit, and hop round the study on all-fours?"

"But—but—" "Rats! Don't say any more, Dickinson. You jaw too much, old chap. It's one of your most serious faults."

Peter Cuthbert Gunner threw off Dickinson's detaining grasp, and strode up the Fourth Form passage.

Dickinson gasped. He wondered dismally what was going to happen now. Certainly, the hypnotising of

"Then you'd better keep mum, old top. If you say anything, you'd do what you didn't come here to do."

"I want a private interview with you, Silver."

Jimmy stared. "I mean it," said Gunner. "It's very important. The winning of the Bagshot match may depend on it."

"Wha-a-at?" The Fistical Four blinked at Gunner.

"You've got something to tell me about the match?" said Jimmy Silver, utterly mystified.

"And why can't we hear it?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell. "What utter rot!" remarked Raby.

"Look here, Silver, I tell you it's important," said Gunner. "I want only a few minutes, but I must see you alone."

"My only hat!"

Jimmy looked at his chums. Why Gunner should want a private interview was a puzzle, but there was no special reason why he shouldn't have it if he wanted it. Lovell grinned, and rose to his feet.

"Gunner thinks he may be able to persuade you to put him into the team when your kind uncles ain't looking after you," remarked Arthur Edward. "If you do, Jimmy, we'll lynch you!"

"If I do, I shall deserve to be lynched," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "No danger of that."

Tea being finished, the Co. strolled out of the study. They had been going out, anyway. Gunner closed the door carefully after them. Jimmy had risen, too. He was going down to the cricket ground with his chums—when he was done with Gunner.

"Cut it short!" he remarked.

"Sit down!"

"What for?"

"It's necessary."

"Look here, I can't waste a lot of

they were mesmeric passes. He did not even think of anything of the kind.

So far as he could see, Gunner was understudying the celebrated gentleman who was "washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water."

Jimmy's stare grew wider. Once or twice before he had entertained doubts as to whether Peter Cuthbert Gunner was quite right in the head. Now all his doubts were resolved.

A fellow who glared into your eyes and waved his hands about in front of your face for no ostensible reason could not be supposed to be in possession of all his senses.

Jimmy Silver pushed his chair back and doubled his fists ready to tackle Gunner if he grew violent.

"Keep still!" snapped Gunner.

"Are you potty?" yelled Jimmy.

"Sleep!"

"What?" shrieked the captain of the Fourth.

"Sleep!" Jimmy Silver did not obey that command. He shoved his chair back farther and leaped to his feet.

He was really alarmed now.

"Keep off, you potty chump!" he shouted, as Gunner advanced. "I don't want to hurt you, but if you come nearer I'll knock you down!"

"Sit down!" yelled Gunner.

"Let me pass, you maniac!" yelled Jimmy, dodging round Gunner towards the door.

Gunner grasped him. His victim was not to escape him like this before the 'fluence was on.

Jimmy hit out at once from the shoulder. There was a crash as Gunner stretched out on the floor.

He gave a roar as he landed there.

In another second Jimmy Silver had torn open the door and was in the passage.

He was a good deal excited and alarmed. Jimmy Silver feared no foe in the ordinary way, but being shut up alone in the study with a lunatic was no joke.

Gunner sat up dazedly. He groped for his nose, which felt as if it wasn't there, and spluttered.

"Ow! Ow! Wow!"

Jimmy Silver started down the passage at a run. His idea was to cut down to Mr. Dalton's study, and acquaint the master of the Fourth with Gunner's alarming state, so that the unhappy fellow could be looked after and seen by a doctor.

Dickinson minor jumped out of the doorway of Study No. 7, and caught Jimmy by the arm.

"What's happened?" he gasped.

"Don't stop me!" panted Jimmy Silver. "Gunner's gone mad!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"He may do himself a mischief if he's not put under control. Let go my arm, you ass! I'm going to the Form-master!"

Dickinson minor giggled hysterically.

"Hold on! He's not mad—"

"He's as mad as a hatter! He was glaring at me and waving his hands in my face—"

"Ha, ha! Hold on, I tell you! I'll explain. For goodness' sake don't go to Mr. Dalton! It's all right; only a game!" gasped Dickinson. "He's told me not to tell, but I'd better now. Oh dear!"

Jimmy Silver paused.

"What do you mean?" he demanded gruffly.

"I'll explain. Let's get away in case Gunner—"

"Come down with me, then," said Jimmy Silver.

The two juniors went down the passage together to the stairs, Jimmy in a state of doubt and amazement.

It was several minutes later that Gunner came out of the end study with his handkerchief to his nose.

But he was not thinking about Jimmy Silver, or even the Bagshot match. His nose required attention—careful attention—and Gunner headed for the nearest bath-room, where for quite a long time he was busy bathing his nose.

The 3rd Chapter.

Gunner's Latest!

Lovell and Raby and Newcome were waiting downstairs for their study leader. They looked at him inquiringly when he came down with Dickinson minor.

"Well?" asked Arthur Edward Lovell.

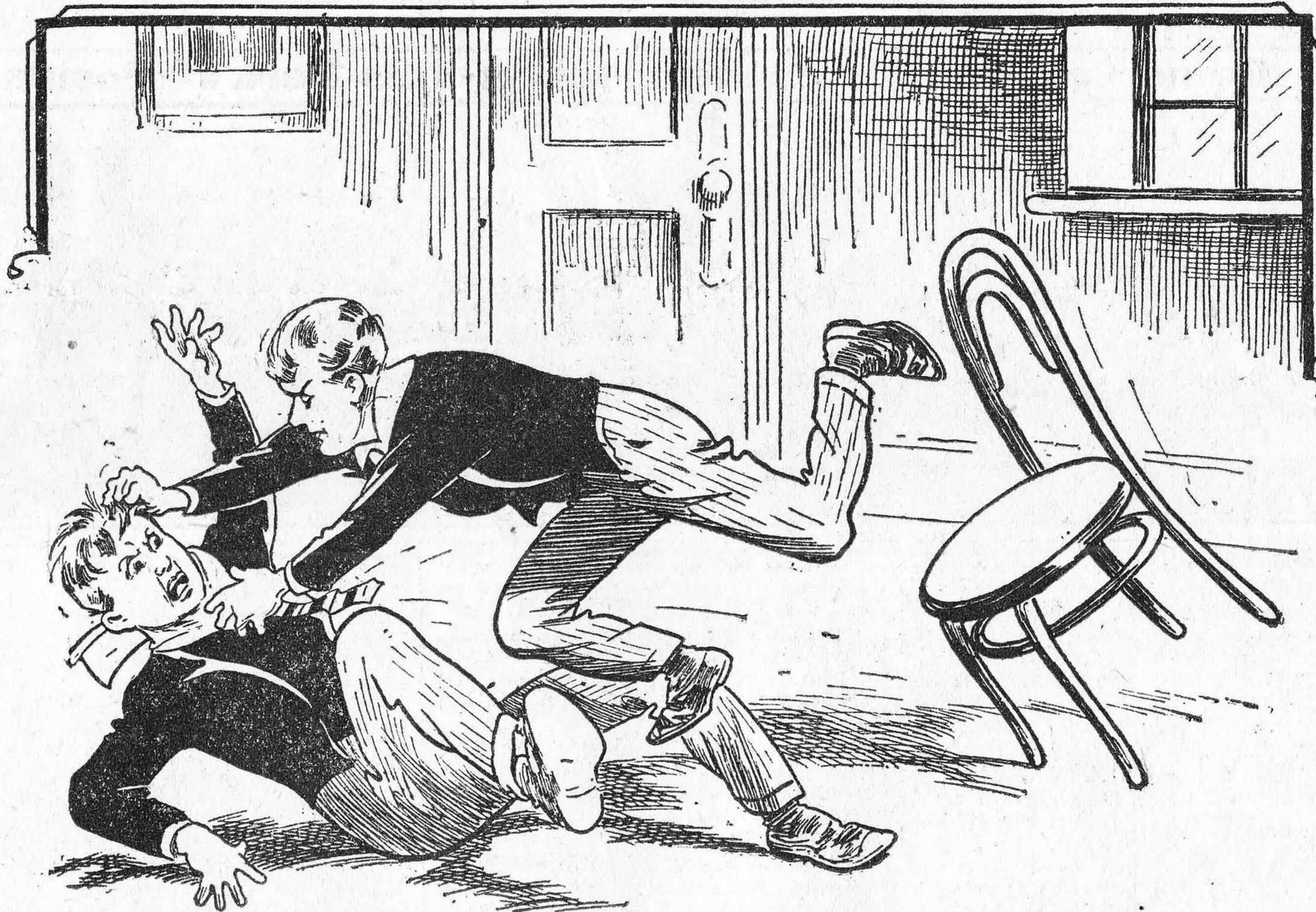
"He's potty!" Jimmy Silver explained. "Started the maddest antics in the study. I had to knock him down and bolt!"

"Great Scott!"

"I've seen this coming on," said Raby, with a shake of the head. "It's getting pretty serious."

"Dalton ought to be told," said Newcome.

"He's going to be told," said Jimmy. "Gunner wants looking



ACTING THE TIGER! Jimmy Silver, apparently in the belief that he was a tiger, sprang upon Gunner, and brought the mesmerist to the floor with a crash. "Yarook! Geroff!" yelled Gunner, as Jimmy growled tigerishly in his startled face!

There was no time to waste, for the Bagshot match took place on the morrow, Wednesday. On this very evening the list of players was to be posted up, and the name of P. C. Gunner was going to appear in it, or P. C. Gunner would know the reason why not.

Dickinson minor gasped as Gunner opened the door. Egregious ass as Gunner was, Dickinson could scarcely believe that he really supposed that he could hypnotise Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth, and bend that rather determined youth to his will.

But Gunner evidently did believe it.

Perhaps the wish being father to the thought helped Gunner to believe it. And the experiment on Dickinson minor had been convincing—to Gunner.

He strode through the doorway, and Dickinson made a jump after him, and caught him by the arm. He felt that he must make a last attempt to turn Gunner from his purpose.

"Gunny, old man—"

"Let go, you young ass!"

"Don't try it on!" beseeched Dickinson. "You—you can't do it! Look here, that—that experiment, you know—"

Jimmy Silver wasn't going to happen. Whatever else was doubtful, that wasn't doubtful at all.

The 2nd Chapter. Not Quite a Success!

Jimmy Silver & Co. were finishing tea in the end study when Gunner looked in. The Fistical Four all smiled to see him. Gunner, and his claims to play in the Bagshot match, appealed to the sense of humour of all the Fourth Form at Rookwood. How a fellow, who fancied himself at cricket, could play quite so badly as Gunner did, was a deep mystery to the Rookwood juniors; and how he could continue to fancy himself at the game, in the circumstances, was a still deeper mystery.

"Trot in, old top!" said Arthur Edward Lovell cheerily. "Tell us something about cricket."

"What's the difference between a wicket and a wicket-keeper, Gunner?" asked Raby.

"Gunner hasn't got that far," said Newcome. "Ask him something easier."

Gunner frowned.

"I didn't come here to talk silly rot!" he said.

"You didn't?" asked Jimmy Silver.

time, Gunner," said the captain of the Fourth. "Come to the point, and be sharp."

However, Jimmy Silver obligingly sat down again.

Gunner stood before him. The hour had come. Gunner recalled to mind the instructions in "Mesmerism Simplified," which he had studied so deeply, and with such profit.

Gunner had expended half-a-crown on that valuable handbook, and never had a purchaser received such value for half-a-crown—if Gunner's belief in his weird powers was well-founded.

According to his half-a-crown's-worth, a powerful personality and an iron will were requisite for a hypnotist, and Gunner had these, also a commanding eye, which was necessary, too.

With a powerful personality, an iron will, and a commanding eye, to start with, Gunner had found the rest quite easy. Now Jimmy Silver was going to have the benefit of the lot.

Jimmy's eyes opened wide with amazement as Gunner fixed a stony glare upon him. Then Gunner's hands came up, and he proceeded to make passes—mesmeric passes.

Jimmy Silver did not know that

after badly. Grimacing and waving his hand at me, with a peculiar glare in his eyes, and telling me to go to sleep."

"He, he, he!" cackled Dickinson. "It's not a laughing matter, Dickinson!" said Lovell sternly. "He's your chum, too!"

"He's not mad, you know," gurgled Dickinson. "Jolly near it, if you like; but I'll explain to you fellows where Gunner can't hear. Don't tell him I've told you, or he will scalp me baldheaded. Come here."

Dickinson minor drew the Fistical Four into a window recess. There he gave a cautious look round, to make sure that Peter Cuthbert Gunner was not in the offing.

The secret of Gunner's hypnotic power was a deep, deep secret, and Dickinson knew that his life would not be worth living in Study No. 7 if he gave Gunner away, and Gunner discovered the fact.

True, he had not promised. Gunner hadn't asked him to promise. He had simply issued his lofty commands that Dickinson was to keep the mesmerism a deep secret.

That was enough for Gunner. It did not even occur to him that his faithful follower would disregard his express command.

But for Gunner's own sake the secret had to be told. Dickinson couldn't stand aside while Gunner was reported to the Fourth Form master as a maniac needing control.

"For goodness' sake, don't let on to Gunner that I've told you!" began Dickinson minor nervously.

"That's understood," said Jimmy Silver impatiently. "Blessed if I can see what you've got to tell. Get on with it! Gunner's got to be looked after!"

Dickinson chuckled spasmodically. "He's not mad!" he breathed. "I know it looks like it. I thought so at first, but he isn't! He's a mesmerist!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Which?"

The Fistical Four blinked at Dickinson. If Dickinson had told them that Gunner was an anthropophagist, or one of those peculiar gentlemen whom Othello met in his travels, whose heads did grow beneath their shoulder, the chums could not have been more astonished.

"A—a—a mesmerist!" repeated Jimmy Silver faintly.

"That's it! He's got a book on it, and he's studied it, and he thinks he's got it pat!" murmured Dickinson. "Fathead, you know! He can't help being a fathead! He mesmerised me in the study—"

"You!"

"Yes; told me I was a rabbit!"

"Great pip! Did you believe it?"

"Well, not exactly," said Dickinson cautiously. "You see, I wasn't really mesmerised. But Gunner wouldn't let me have tea till he'd done it, so—so—"

"So you pulled his leg!"

"Well, yes! How's a fellow to get on with Gunner without pulling his leg?" said Dickinson defensively.

"By punching his head!" suggested Lovell.

"Well, I can't punch his head; he's too hefty. Besides, I like the old chap; he's a good sort in his way. He stands magnificent spreads in the study!"

Jimmy Silver laughed. "Than which there is no higher praise!" he remarked.

"Well, you see—"

"I see that you think more of the flesh-pots of Egypt than of the frozen truth!" said Jimmy Silver. "You've no right to take Gunner in like that!"

"Well, I wouldn't," said Dickinson. "But he asks to have his leg pulled; he fairly sits up and begs for it. Well, that's how it is. He thinks he can mesmerise, and he's going to mesmerise you, Jimmy, and make you put him in the Bagshot eleven!"

Jimmy Silver gasped.

"So that's it!" he stuttered.

"That's it."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

The Fistical Four shrieked. The discovery that Gunner wasn't insane was a relief; but the discovery that he was a mesmerist, endowed—in his own imagination—with fearful and irresistible powers, took the Fourth-Formers by storm.

They roared till the tears ran down their faces. They were used to Gunner, but this was unusually rich even for Gunner.

"Oh dear!" sobbed Jimmy Silver at last. "Gunner will be the death of me some day!"

"A mesmerist!" gasped Raby.

"He's going to—ha, ha, ha!"

"Going to mesmerise Jimmy, and get into the eleven!" stuttered Newcome. "He would have to mesmerise Bagshot, too, if he wanted to get off without a duck's egg!"

Jimmy Silver wiped away his tears.

"Well, I'm glad he's not actually

potty," he said. "This comes pretty near it—"

"So near as makes precious little difference," chuckled Lovell. "Poor old Gunner! He will wind up in Colney Hatch some day!"

"Don't tell him I told you," implored Dickinson. "Just bump him when he tries it on. That will meet the case."

"Oh, we won't tell him," said Jimmy. "Set your feeble little mind at rest."

Dickinson minor walked away feeling much relieved. Jimmy Silver & Co. started for the cricket field, chuckling as they went. Gunner's latest really put the lid on, as Lovell remarked.

"Will the howling ass try it on again?" said Lovell. "After coming a mucker, as he's just done?"

"Well, he's a sticker!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "I shall have to be on my guard. A fellow with these fearful and wonderful powers—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Co.

Jimmy's eyes danced.

"Let him try it on again!" he said.

"Now I know what the burbling jabberwock is at, I'll pull his silly leg. I'll let him think the 'fluence is on—right up to the time we play Bagshot. That will give him a lesson for his silly cheek!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, what's the merry joke?" asked Conroy, as the Fistical Four came on the cricket field chortling.

"Gunner!" said Jimmy Silver.

"He wants to play against Bagshot to-morrow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Conroy chuckled. The mere mention of Gunner in connection with cricket was enough to make any fellow in the Fourth chuckle.

Meanwhile, Peter Cuthbert Gunner had bathed his nose and done all that could be done for the damaged organ. But it still had a rich blossoming look when he brought it down to Study No. 7. He found Dickinson

intended to give him a chance; but he did not want it to begin too soon. Pulling Gunner's egregious leg was entertaining, but the captain of the Fourth hadn't too much time to waste on the entertainment.

"I want to speak to you," said Gunner. "Come for a stroll in the quad, Silver, will you?"

"After dinner," said Jimmy.

Gunner frowned. But he had to wait till after dinner; there was no help for that.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were smiling when they came in to dinner. They were anticipating what was to follow.

When the Rookwooders marched out of the dining-room, Gunner joined Jimmy Silver at once. Lovell and Raby and Newcome strolled away, just as if they wanted to give Gunner a chance.

Peter Cuthbert was glad to see them go. It was necessary to have Jimmy alone to put the mystic 'fluence on.

"Well, what is it?" said Jimmy amiably.

"Come into the Common-room," said Gunner.

"Certainly."

Jimmy followed Gunner into the junior Common-room, which was deserted at that time of the day.

"Sit down, old chap," said Gunner.

Jimmy sat down.

Gunner stood before him, just as he had done in the study the previous day. But this time Jimmy Silver showed no sign of restiveness. He seemed like clay in the hands of the potter.

Gunner fixed his eyes on Jimmy's, with a steady fixed glare.

"The fact is, Silver," said Gunner,

"I'm doing some new gymnastics—wrist exercises, in fact, and I'd like you to see them. Just sit still and watch for a few minutes, will you?"

This was deep, very deep, of Gunner. What he wanted was to gain time for the quelling eye and the mystic passes to work their magic

"By George!" murmured Gunner aloud, "this beats it! Why, after this, I'll mesmerise Bulkeley of the Sixth, and make him put me in the First Eleven, and win matches for Rookwood. I'll mesmerise the Head, and make him put me in the Fifth Form—dash it all, no, in the Sixth! It's a curious thing that they grin under the 'fluence. Dickinson minor did just the same, and now Silver's doing it. Affects the muscles of the face, somehow, I dare say. Lucky for some people that I'm a chap of high principles, and only mean to use this terrible power for good things!"

Jimmy was still standing on one leg, the slave of the hypnotist's will!

"Now, Silver," said Gunner, "your name's not Silver at all. Your name's Higgins. Now what is your name?"

"Higgins" said Jimmy.

"Good! Now you're a cat!"

"Miaou-ou-iaou!" mewled Jimmy Silver.

Gunner fairly chortled with satisfaction. He was putting his victim to severe tests, and all of them were successful.

"Now you're a tiger," said Gunner gloatingly. "What are you?"

"A tiger!" said Jimmy Silver.

And Jimmy, apparently in the belief that he was a tiger, made a sudden spring at Gunner. The mesmerist went with a crash to the floor, taken quite by surprise, and Jimmy clawed at him ruthlessly, as undoubtedly a real tiger would have done.

"Yaroo!" roared Gunner. "Oh, my hat! Gerroff! Oh! Ooop!"

"Gr-r-r-r!" growled Jimmy Silver tigerishly.

And he clawed at Gunner, and gnashed his teeth in the hypnotist's startled face.

"Great pip! Gerroff! Here, I say, you're—you're a canary!" gasped Gunner breathlessly. "Just a harmless little canary bird! Gerroff!"

Jimmy Silver ceased to claw. He

the School House. Jimmy Silver smiled serenely.

"Is the 'fluence on?" asked Lovell.

Jimmy nodded.

"Right on! Gunner took me into the Common-room and mesmerised me. He made me believe that I was a tiger and a canary. At least, he thinks he did."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"As a tiger I clawed him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Co.

"As a canary, I was just thinking of pecking him, when he came to business," said Jimmy Silver. "Now I'm going to play him against Bagshot—I don't think! Dear old Gunner!"

Meanwhile Gunner was changing into flannels in high spirits. As he came down in spotless array he met Dickinson minor, and Dickinson minor staggered as he saw him.

"You—you—you're not playing!"

stuttered Dickinson.

"What do you think?" grinned Gunner.

"I'm down for the Bagshot match. Didn't I tell you so?"

"But—but Jimmy Silver—"

babbled Dickinson.

"He's under the influence!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"The slave of my will!" said Gunner.

"Oh, my hat!"

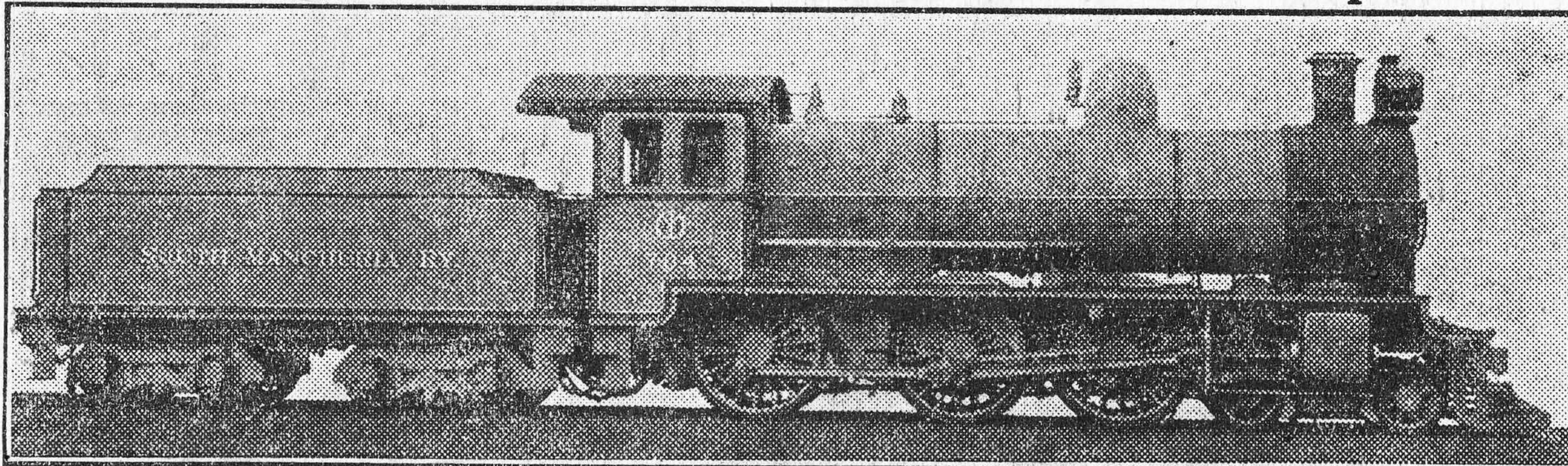
"Come along and see me play, old fellow!" said Gunner, linking his arm in Dickinson minor's, and leading his dazed chum away. "I've got a chance at last. The fellows are going to see what I can do. I expect to get a century in each innings—the other bats will hardly be wanted! I shall make Silver open the innings with me, of course. First in and not out, you know! That's the style! This will be a red-letter day for Rookwood! The Bagshot Bounders will see some cricket they've never dreamed of!"

"They—they will—if—if you play!"

stuttered Dickinson.

"They will—rather!" assented

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minor there. That youth gave him a rather guilty look.

"D-d-did you try it on?" he murmured.

Gunner nodded morosely.

"W-w-w-was it a success?" asked Dickinson hypocritically.

"Fairly," said Gunner.

"Eh?"

"But not quite. The 'fluence was going on, I could see that, but Silver is a tougher customer than you, Dicky. More character, you know—not so soft. More resisting power. It was going on quite well, when he made a sudden effort and—and broke the 'fluence, as it were."

"Oh!" gasped Dickinson.

"But I'm satisfied that I can handle him," said Gunner confidently. "I'm going to try again, and next time there will be no mistake. I shall have him right under the influence in plenty of time for the Bagshot match. Already he's partly under it, in spite of his resistance. I shall finish the job. You'll see."

"Oh!" said Dickinson again. That was really all he could say.

The 4th Chapter. Under the 'Fluence!

"Silver!"

"Hallo, Gunner."

Jimmy Silver's tone was quite merry and bright.

It was the following day, and morning lessons had finished at Rookwood. Most of the juniors were thinking about the Bagshot match. Pankley & Co., of Bagshot, were expected at Rookwood quite early in the afternoon.

Gunner was thinking about it as much as anybody. Time was getting very close now, and the 'fluence was not yet on.

During the previous evening Gunner had looked for chances without finding them. Jimmy's chums had hardly left him, and the amateur hypnotist hadn't been able to get to work.

Quite unknown to Gunner, Jimmy

effect on the mesmerised victim. If Jimmy could only be induced to sit still for a few minutes while Gunner put in the mesmeric passes, all was well, according to Gunner's belief.

Jimmy restrained his feelings. To Gunner's great satisfaction he nodded an amiable assent.

"Go ahead, old chap!" he said.

"This is quite interesting!"

"More interesting than you think, perhaps!" said Gunner. "Just you watch me!"

With his eyes fixed on Jimmy's, he started the mesmeric passes. His large hands waved and wove patterns before Jimmy's eyes.

To his delight, Jimmy's eyelids began to droop.

Gunner had been washing his hands in invisible soap in imperceptible water for only a couple of minutes, when the captain of the Fourth displayed unmistakable signs of drowsiness.

In three minutes his eyes had closed.

"Sleep!" said Gunner in a thrilling voice.

Jimmy snored.

Gunner almost gasped. Of course, he had known that he could do it, he had not had any doubts about that. Still, it was a thrilling moment when the amateur hypnotist saw his victim helpless before him—his will merged in Gunner's, as it were, the slave of the master-mind.

"Open your eyes!" commanded Gunner.

Jimmy Silver's eyes opened.

"Now," said Gunner in a deep, impressive voice, "you're under the influence, Jimmy Silver—the slave of my will. Understand?"

"Yes," said Jimmy drowsily.

"You have to obey my orders!"

"Yes."

"Stand up!"

Jimmy Silver stood up.

"Now stand on one leg!"

Jimmy Silver stood on one leg.

Peter Cuthbert Gunner almost

crowded with delight. Evidently the captain of the Fourth was the slave

of his powerful personality.

went and perched himself on the corner of the table.

Gunner staggered to his feet. His collar had been torn off the studs and his necktie wrecked by the clawing of the tiger.

"Oh dear!" he gasped. "I shall have to be jolly careful how I exert my power! Better not make a chap believe he's a lion or a tiger again."

Gunner set himself to rights hastily. He was feeling rather bumped and breathless, but very triumphant.

"Now you're Jimmy Silver again!" he said. "Captain of the Rookwood Fourth, you know! You're playing me in the Bagshot match this afternoon. Understand?"

"Yes," said Jimmy drowsily.

"Good! Come with me. Mind, you are the slave of my will, and have to do exactly as I tell you!"

"To hear is to obey!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Come on!"

Gunner took the captain of the Fourth by the arm and led him out of the Common-room.

The 5th Chapter. Gunner Wakes Up!

"Come on, Jimmy!" called out Arthur Edward Lovell. The Co. were waiting for Jimmy Silver in the passage.

"I'm ready!" said Jimmy.

Gunner gave his victim a rather anxious side-glance. Jimmy Silver looked quite normal—there was no trace of 'fluence in his looks.

"The fellows are ready," said Raby. "Bagshot may be here in a few minutes."

Jimmy turned to Gunner.

"Get into your flannels!" he said.

"What's Gunner to get into flannels for?" asked Lovell, suppressing a chuckle.

"He's told me to play him!"

"My hat!"

"I won't keep you two jiffies!"

said Gunner in great delight. And he bounded for the staircase.

Jimmy Silver & Co. walked out of

Gunner. "Come on. Mind, not a word about the mesmerism—I'm quite justified, of course, in using these methods to get the best man at Rookwood into the team—but the fellows might not see it. Not a word on that subject. The end justifies the means, you know—a century or two for Rookwood will make them all jolly glad I played—what?"

Gunner almost raced his dizzy chum down to Little Side. Dickinson minor went like a fellow in a dream.

Was Gunner really a mesmerist after all? If not, what was he doing in flannels, with a bat under his arm, hurrying down to Little Side for the match? Dickinson minor pinched himself to make sure that he was not dreaming.

There was a crowd of Rookwooders on Little Side—Jimmy Silver and his merry men were ready. Bagshot were expected any moment now. Jimmy stood among the cricketers, and Gunner was rather surprised to see eleven fellows ready. Apparently the skipper had not yet decided which one to leave out to make room for Gunner.

The Fistical Four exchanged merry glances as Gunner came up.

"Ready!" announced Gunner.

Many eyes turned on Gunner.

"And what are you ready for?" asked Tommy Dodd.

"What's the ass doing with that bat?" asked Conroy. "Has he dreamed that he's a cricketer?"

"I'm playing!" said Gunner coolly.

"Is there a match on to-day at marbles, then?" asked Conroy.

"I'm playing Bagshot!" roared Gunner. "Silver, I want to open the innings, and take the first over."

"Oh! You want that?" asked Jimmy.

"Yes. A good innings at the start will buck up the team. You can take the other end."

"Thanks."

"Don't try any showing off, or fancy cricket," said Gunner. "What

POLRUAN'S QUEST!

By MAURICE EVERARD.

(Continued from page 5.)

helpful news—then came the following:

"On recommendation of your bankers, sending out s.s. Semiramis."

How eagerly, day after day, they all watched the horizon for a glimpse of the vessel, and at last, twenty-three days from the date of their first inquiry, they caught sight of her, a low hull, with rakish spars and a single funnel aslant; a brig-rigged vessel, equipped with auxiliary steam.

Joe watched her draw in, towards evening. "Bit of a mix-up," he said laconically, "but she's fast and trim, and I reckon she'll do! Anyway, in the morning we'll take a good look over her, and if she answers all the questions I put to her, then we'll mark her down for the Gulf of Tonkin, and, inside a week from now, raise the treasure."

Bastwick Moves!

On the deck of a trim little steamer lying in the roadstead of Singapore, two men were seated under a deck awning.

Said the bigger of the two, a loosely-built, grim-jowled fellow, who might have been anything from a tick-tack man on a racecourse to a professional crook:

"Tell you what it is, Bastwick. I'm dead sick of the whole blessed business! Week after week, humping round, the confounded ocean, always waiting for a trump card to turn up, expenses running as fast as the water under a keel, and we're no nearer getting hold of the treasure aboard the Enchantress than we were on the day you wired me to leave New York to finance your rotten expedition!"

Bastwick's thin lips drew back in a slow smile, and he took an extra long pull at the weed in his mouth.

"What's the good of grousing, Ditchingham?" he replied easily. "I thought I was putting you on to a good thing, or I should never have asked you to come in. The last time we met in the States, you suggested that if ever I had a likely proposition to put up—a proposition promising a big return for a comparatively small outlay—you would find the capital. Well, what is the position? I got possession of this ship—took her over, shall we say—from the late Captain Jagers, and she's been so effectually altered that she passes muster as the Audacious, my own personal property. The Benign was lost, with all hands, at sea—at least, so the world at large believes—and those of her crew who still serve with me—us, I mean—are more than willing to forget that they were ever Jagers' men. I wired to you in New York, and you kindly joined me in a South American port, with enough cash to put to sea on the track of the Enchantress—didn't you think the job worth while when I told you she carried gold and specie which I value at close on two million?"

"Sure!" agreed Ditchingham, directing a stream of tobacco juice venomously to the deck. "And I don't doubt your bonafides, Bastwick. We've worked together before, and, hitherto, our stunts have panned out well. But this one—I can't help saying it—strikes me as something worse than a mare's nest. Since getting that cable from Cape Town, advising us to turn westward, I don't believe we've ever been within two thousand miles of the Enchantress

at any time—and two thousand miles, my friend, is a long way from a fortune."

Bastwick's eyes took on an odd gleam.

"There I don't agree with you! I say we've been more than once a good deal nearer to the yacht than you allow. What have we discovered since we decided that the Cape Town cable was a decoy, dispatched, not by one of my men, but by Joe Tremorne himself? We know for a fact the Enchantress lay the best part of a week in Table Bay; we know she steamed east and fetched Colombo; then we heard news of her in the neighbourhood of the Nicobars. And that isn't the last. Cape Romania sighted and spoke to her; a P & O boat saw her heading north by north-west through the South China Sea. Three days later the typhoon which swept the Paracels Reef caught her and drove her again north-west. Where? She must have made Ha-Tinh or Tan-Hoa."

"Or lie at the bottom of the Gulf of Tonkin."

Bastwick shook his head.

"Never, my friend, never! If there's one man in this world who could bring a vessel through the worst typhoon that ever raged between Cape Cambodia and Hong-Kong, that man is Tremorne. He's safely skippered every kind of craft, from a sampan to a towed liner, in all the seven seas, and I'm as firmly convinced to-day, as I've been all along, that though the Enchantress went into the Gulf of Tonkin, she never came out of it!"

Royle Ditchingham screwed his ugly mouth into a leer.

"Which only goes to prove my contention. She must have gone down with all the gold and everyone on board, and we're wasting time and money by hanging round here. You've let me down badly, my friend, and the net result of your efforts to date is that you have red murder on your hands, to say nothing of a ship, which you may find difficult to dispose of when the time comes."

Bastwick, like all moral cowards, didn't care to reflect too much or too long on his accomplice's last remark.

"I don't see how you can say I've let you down. I've done all in my power to get a line on to Tremorne and his lot. We left Bojer and the other chap in Cape Town to keep a look-out; I dropped Holer in Colombo, and he radioed us that the Enchantress was making for the Nicobars; and less than a month ago we put Richardson ashore at Hong-Kong, with instructions to wireless us if news came his way."

"Hong-Kong!" growled the big man. "What's the use of Hong-Kong? They won't have put in there!"

The scorn in his voice roused Bastwick.

"You take me for a fool, don't you? Well, you are mistaken! Supposing my reckoning is correct, and the yacht did touch port in the Gulf of Tonkin as I've said, either at Tan-Hoa or Ha-Tinh, that her propeller was burst or her engines gone west—what would Tremorne, a capable and experienced skipper with heaps of money behind him, do? Why, cable to Hong-Kong, of course; and at any time now we may get a line from Richardson saying my reading of the case is correct."

Ditchingham half rose in his chair.

"Look here, I'm prepared to meet you this once—but it's the last time. We can't mess about here any longer waiting for reports which never come. We'll put the Audacious to sea, take the whole coastline of the Gulf from Kwang-Binh to Hai-Nanh, as you're so convinced the Enchantress went into the Gulf and never came out—

and if there's nothing doing at the end of the trip, then the best thing will be to take this vessel, sell her to a black-bird in the Carolines, share the proceeds, pay off the crew, and make our way across to the pearl banks of New Guinea. There's cash in plenty to be picked up there."

"Right. We'll do it," said Bastwick, relieved to get out of the unpleasant situation so easily. "No time shall be lost, and if I find I've made a mistake, I'll be the first to admit it."

Ditchingham yawned ill-naturally behind his seamed hand.

"The admission of your errors, my son, won't do me much good. I've dropped a good many thousands and I want to see something back."

"So you will!" retorted the other harshly. "Haven't I told you, not once but a score of times, the Enchantress is loaded to the gunwales with plate. I know—'cos I've seen it, chalices and patens, candlesticks and goblets, solid plaques and sacks of coin heavy enough to drop us to the Plimsoll mark."

"But of course they'll fight for it," protested Ditchingham.

"Fight for it!" re-echoed Bastwick scornfully. "The yacht carries nothing heavier than a couple of four-pounders and the usual store of small arms and ammunition—while we've got more than one little pea-shooter powerful enough to blow a dozen Enchantresses out of the water."

Ditchingham took a long pull at his cigar.

"All right, I've heard enough." His tone was surly. "Cut the cackle and get on with the graft—and I warn you if we don't click this time, my name's 'Walker' for a new home."

Perhaps it wasn't so strange after all how near in his reckoning Edgar Bastwick was. Although working more or less in the dark, he had sized up a difficult situation with astonishing accuracy. The truth was that the man realised the dangerous position in which he would find himself if this last throw for a fortune failed.

England was a closed door. Never again could he hope to set foot in the land where a warrant was still out for his arrest. Both the arm and the memory of the law are long, and it wasn't so very many months ago that, after swindling young Rawson out of his inheritance, he had attempted his life in an endeavour to wrest from the boy the secret of the treasure hidden away through long centuries in the keeping of the Sargasso Sea.

Even as he sat at Ditchingham's side looking out over the sparkling waters of the roadstead of Singapore, dotted with crafts of all sizes and all nationalities, his thoughts automatically flew back to the sequence of events that had transpired since the Enchantress first left Plymouth with the treasure hunting party on board: the cleverness with which he and Gil Mawfy and a handful of scoundrels as unscrupulous as himself, had concealed themselves on the yacht, to wait patiently in hiding until the gold had been recovered from the galleon and brought on board the steamer. Then had followed the attempt to seize the yacht—an attempt in which Tremorne had worsted him and made him and his associates prisoners, the transference to Captain Jagers' steamer, the Benign, the taking over of the ship, the renaming to the Audacious, and then the joining forces with Royle Ditchingham.

"Perhaps you're right," he said, breaking the long pause. "We'll have one more go, and if that fails, I'm willing to do as you suggest."

He rose from his chair and went forward, and six hours later the Audacious' anchor was raised and under a full head of steam, nosing her way steadily into the South China Sea. Ditchingham had indicated that he was none too pleased with the adventure, and more than once he showed his disapproval openly. They made a quick journey to Ha-Tinh, but there was no sign of a British steamer in the tiny harbour, which was mostly crowded with Chinese junks and up-river sampans. The same experience waited them at Tan-Hoa, a hundred and fifty miles to the North.

"There are only two possible alternatives," Bastwick was forced to admit. "Either the Enchantress perished in the typhoon, or Tremorne ran her ashore somewhere between here and Pakhow. Between now and Pakhow I intend hugging the coast."

"And 'hug' the coast Bastwick did, to such good purpose that four days after leaving Tan-Hoa the lookout man broke the silence of the drowsy afternoon.

"Wreck on the starboard quarter, under the land!" he sang out.

Instantly there was a rush to the bridge, and after a long sweep of the low shore through his glasses, Bastwick turned to Ditchingham a smile of triumph, lifting the corners of his thin mouth.

"Now, what about it? Is that a wreck or isn't it?" he asked provokingly. "The craft went in quite recently. You can see her hull is freshly painted, and though her deck and upper works are gone, my opinion is—we've found the Enchantress."

"That may be," agreed the other, moving aside. "But if you stand here you'll see daylight through her. There's a gaping hole on the port side and one nearly as big on the other. If that doesn't spell an empty hull I don't know what does."

For an hour they watched the great mass of wreckage looming larger and larger, until under her high stern they made out the large brass letters, "Enchantress of Plymouth."

Bastwick was in a state of highly-strung nervous tension.

"Hole or no hole, we've found her," he said excitedly as the steamer dropped anchor in deep water, and a number of deck hands drew to the vessel's side to lower away a boat. "A month ago she carried a fortune worth a king's ransom, and if you look round," waving his hand towards the gently sloping shore and the flat mangrove swamp, "you can see they can't have taken it with them. There are no roads—nothing but thick, impenetrable vegetation, and somewhere near by we shall find the Tremorne crowd all dead, with the treasure chests keeping guard over their bodies."

Ditchingham looked doubtful.

"Take my advice, friend, and don't go ashore unarmed. For all we know there may be at this moment a dozen rifles trained on us from the shelter of the trees. Wilson, Bjornsen, Hemmingway, broach a case of rifles and serve out fifty cartridges to each man. If the thing's worth doing at all it's worth doing well."

Ten minutes later, half the steamer's crew, strongly armed, were tumbling into the cutter and the long-boat, and pulling to the shore from which at low water the wreck could easily be reached by climbing over the rocks.

(The concluding instalment of this splendid story will appear next week. Look out for our new adventure story, coming shortly. Next week's free boxing photo will be of Eugene Criqui!)

GUNNER'S LATEST!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Continued from page 8.)

I want is some good, steady stone-walling. Leave the run-getting to me. Just back me up, that's all. That's what I want."

"What you want, and what you are going to get, seem to be a bit different," remarked Jimmy Silver, cheerfully. "Hallo! there's the Bagshot brake. Run away and play, Gunner."

"What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell. "Put some more 'fluence on, Gunner."

Gunner jumped. "What? Silver—I'm playing! I've told you—ordered you—why, I'll jolly well smash you—here, leggo!" roared Gunner.

"It's time for you to wake up!" explained Jimmy Silver. "Carry him away and drop him somewhere."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Co. collared the astonished Gunner, and he was lifted off his feet. His bat dropped in the grass, and Gunner struggled wildly—but in vain. Jimmy Silver smiled at him sweetly.

"The 'fluence wasn't quite strong enough," he explained. "Try again—another day. Too busy now."

"Why, I—I—I—" stuttered Gunner. He choked with wrath. Amid a roar of laughter, he was whirled away, and dumped down at a distance from the pitch, and there left to recover himself.

By the time Peter Cuthbert Gunner had his second wind, Bagshot were batting, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were in the field. Gunner sat up in the grass and blinked at them. Slowly, but surely, the truth forced itself into his powerful brain, that Jimmy Silver hadn't been under the 'fluence at all—that he had been pulling the mesmerist's egregious leg. It took Gunner a long time to realise that, and to digest it.

He sat for quite a long time and blinked at the cricketers. Jimmy Silver & Co. had quite forgotten his existence, by the time he limped away—a sadder, if not wiser, Gunner. Peter Cuthbert Gunner did not play in the Bagshot match. But he found another occupation that afternoon. He lighted a fire in Shed No. 7, and put "Mesmerism Simplified" upon it. With a gloomy brow Gunner watched his half-crown's worth of marvellous knowledge reduced to ashes.

From which Dickinson minor—with considerable satisfaction—deduced that Gunner had given up mesmerism, and that nothing more would be heard of Gunner's Latest!

THE END.

LOVELL'S BARGAIN!

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Jimmy Silver & Co.

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