# Tip-Top Stories by Star Authors in This Bumper Issue!

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No. 1,124. Vol. XXIII.—New Series.]

THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

Week Ending December 23rd, 1922.

## THIS WEEK'S SPLENDID PROGRAMME!

"THE SCHEMER!" A Great School Story by World-famous P. G. WODE-

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It was the slickest bit of driving that Dick Lucas had ever done. To either side of him, between the girl and the man, he had about three inches to spare. Yet, as the car leapt forward, his right arm went out and he lifted the girl on to the footboard!

(A Thrilling Incident from John Hunter's Gripping Story in this Bumper Number.)

"THE SCHEMER!" A Great School Story by P. G. WODEHOUSE IN THIS ISSUE.

### THIS ROOKWOOD YARN IS A REAL STUNNER! READ IT RIGHT AWAY!

Published

Every Monday



Telling how Valentine Mornington wins back his old place at the school! ----

The 1st Chapter. A Message for Morny!

"Morny, too?" said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver nodded. "First catch your hare!" grinned Raby. "All Rookwood's been looking for Morny for weeks past without finding

"He's bound to turn up before the school breaks up for the Christmas holidays," remarked Newcome. "Wherever he's hidden, he wouldn't hang on after all the fellows are gone."

The Fistical Four of the Fourth were seated round the tea-table in the end study. They had been discussing the Christmas holidays, now close at hand, and their talk had drifted to Valentine Mornington.

Mornington's, in fact, was the name most often mentioned at Rookwood now. From the august Head himself down to the smallest fag, Mornington was a topic of the keenest interest.

For the expelled junior, who had returned to Rookwood School in defiance of the headmaster, was still at Rookwood, though his whereabouts were unknown.

. Where he was hidden was the deepest of mysteries, but that he was somewhere in the old school was proved beyond the shadow of a doubt.

It was a mystery that thrilled Rookwood, and it was the daily topic. Where was Valentine Mornington? was a question incessantly asked, and never

answered. "We had our little trouble with him before he was sacked," said Jimmy Silver slowly. "But that's all over. I'd jolly well like him to come home with us for

the Christmas holidays." "Same here," agreed Lovell. "But I don't quite see how you're going to ask him. You can't put up the invitation as a notice on the board."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "There's another way," said Jimmy. "The new boot boy. Smacke, is helping Morny in this stunt, so he certainly knows where the chap is hidden, and can speak to him when he likes. I'm going to ask Smacke to pass the invita-

"Oh, good! Never thought of that," admitted Lovell.

"Lots of things you don't think of, old fellow," said Jimmy Silver affably. "Thousands! Millions, in fact. I'll put it to Smacke and tell him to put it to Morny, wherever he is, if you fellows are all agreed that you'd like Morny along

with us for Christmas." "Hear, hear!" said the Co.

tion on to him."

And thus assured of his chums' views on the subject, Jimmy Silver quitted the end study and made his way downstairs. He passed Peele of the Fourth in the passage, and Cyril Peele favoured him with a scowl. Peele was on the worst of terms with Jimmy Silver in these days, since Uncle James of Rookwood had stopped his mean persecution of the new beet-boy Smacke.

Uncle James, however, did not heed Peele or his scowl. He walked on regardiess, quite unmoved by the looks of so insignificant a person as Peele of the Fourth.

Jimmy Silver glanced round him rather cautiously as he descended the lower staircase that led to the boot-room. Rookwood fellows were not supposed to penetrate into those regions, but as Jimmy wanted to see Smacke, there was no choice about the matter.

A dusky passage led to the boot-room. The door was half-open at the end, and Timothy Smacke was humming a tune over his work. Jimmy Silver heard it as he came along, and he could not belp wondering. It was an operatic air that Smacke was humming, odd enough to hear proceeding from a hoot-room.

But Smacke was a rather remarkable boot-boy in many respects, as the captain of the Fourth had already discovered. Jimmy tapped at the door and pushed

it open, and Timothy Smacke suspended the polishing of a large boot belonging to Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth, and glanced at his visitor.

In the light from the boot-room window. Smacke's shock of red hair and sandy complexion showed up to advantage. Jimmy Silver smiled a little. There were red-headed hovs at Rook-

wood, but Timothy Smacke's red head was unusually striking. "Arternoon, Master Silver," said

Smacke. "Good-afternoon, kid," said Jimmy. "Got a few minutes to spare for a powwow?"

can talk while I'm a-polishing of this 'ere boot, sir," said Timothy. "Mr.

Greely's a very particular gent about his boots." "Go it," said Jimmy cheerily. "It's about Mornington."

"Yes, sir?" "You know where the chap's hidden," said Jimmy. "I'm not asking you for information, but there's the fact. Why you're belping him in this stunt I don't know, and I can't say I quite approve of it. But I want to speak to Mornington."

"Better look for him, sir, if you think he's in the school." "I know he's in the school," said Jimmy quietly. "No good beating about the bush, Smacke. I'd like to speak to him, but if you can take a message it

will do almost as well. Will you?" Smacke was silent. "My dear man, I know that you know where he is," said Jimmy. "It's you that supplies him with food, and all

that --- What are you grinning at?" "W-w-was I grinning, sir?" "Yes, you young ass! I don't see anything to grin at. I don't quite under-

stand you, Master Timothy." "No, sir," said Timothy cheerfully. "You're a bit out of the common run of boot-boys," said Jimmy. "I've heard from Tupper about your little ways, besides what I've seen. The way you take care of your hands, and study Latin

in your room---' "No reason why a bloke shouldn't try to improve 'isself, sir."

"None at all," agreed Jimmy. "But it's queer. I fancy you haven't always been a boot-boy, Smacke. I don't believe you're taking money from Morny for helping him, but you've got a motive You're new here. Did you get the job just to help Morny in this stunt?"

Smacke started a little. "I've hit the right nail on the head,

what?" asked Jimmy, with a laugh. "I've suspected that before. You're some friend of Morny's. I shouldn't be surprised if you were a relation."

"A-a-a relation?" stammered Smacke. Jimmy nodded coolly.

"Just that," he said. "More than once, when you've spoken to me, you've had a tone in your voice exactly like Morny's own. It made me jump once or twice, just as if it had been Morny speaking."

"Oh!" gasped Smacke. "And that upper-cut you gave Peele the other day," continued Jimmy. "It was Morny's upper-cut to the life, and I fancy he taught it you. What are you grinning at again, you image?" "Sorry!" gasped Smacke. "Wha-a-t's

the message you want me to give toto the young gentleman, sir?" "I want him to come home with me for Christmas, when we break up," said Jimmy Silver. "Will you tell him so?"

Timothy Smacke looked very curiously at the captain of the Fourth. "I've 'eard 'as 'ow it was for a lowdown trick on you, sir, that Master

Mornington was turned out of the school," he said. "You've heard it right," said Jimmy. "But the fathead was sorry afterwards,

and we met in the next vac, and made friends again. So that's over. And you needn't trouble to drop your h's in speaking to me, Smacke. It doesn't come natural, and you can keep it for people who haven't spotted you." "Oh!" stuttered Timothy.

"Will you give my message to Mornington?" "Yes, sir."

"Good enough, and thanks," said Jimmy Silver. And with a ned to the new boot-boy, I

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the captain of the Fourth departed, satisfied that his message would reach Valentine Mornington, in whatsoever mysterious nock or cranny that invisible youth was hidden.

### The 2nd Chapter. Peele on the Warpath!

"Better let him alone!" muttered

Gower. Cyril Peele set his teeth.

"Not till I've got him the sack!" he

answered. "It's all rot!" said Gower. "Utter rot! Blessed if I'd take such a lot of trouble about a dashed boot-boy! He's beneath our notice. I know he's cheeky, but there's such a thing as one's own dignity, you know. Chap ought to draw

the line at quarrelling with servants." Peele gave his comrade a bitter look. "It's not only cheek," he said. "He's

punched me!"

"Well, you were ragging him," said Gower. "You could get him pushed out for punching a Rookwood chap, only you can't let the Head know you were ragging a servant's room. Chuck it up, and let the kid alone!"

"He knows where Mornington is hidden," said Peele, unheeding. "I know that for a fact, but there's no proof."

"Not much good spinning such a yarn without proof."

"I know that. I'm going to get proof. I'm going to make him pay dear for that upper-cut!"

Gower yawned. He did not like Timothy Smacke, and he resented what he called the cheek of the boot-boy. But he did not share Peele's bitterness, and he was bored with the whole subject. And it was quite plain that Gower did not intend to run any risks in the matter.

"It's plane sailing enough," said "He's helping Morny to keep hidden in the school. That means that he takes him food."

"Looks like it!" assented Gower. "He wouldn't dare to do it in the daytime," said Peele. "He must get the stuff in his room, and take it to Morny at night, when the whole house is asleep, and he's safe."

"Most likely-if he's doing it." "I know he's doing it!" snarled Peele. "Oh, all serene!" Gower yawned again. "I'll take your word for it."

"It's only a question of watching for a few nights, perhaps for only one. night," urged Peele. "We're bound to eatch him in the act. You can guess how the Head would deal with him if he found him out in helping Morny here."

Gower chuckled "It would be Smacke for the long jump like a shot!" he remarked.

"That's what we want." "I dare say; but not enough to make me break dermitory bounds, an' sit up at night watchin' like a giddy sentinel. Not good enough!"

"If you won't help me, I shall do it

alone." "Go it, an' welcome," said Gower. "I

wish you luck. Tell me all about it in the mornin', won't you?"

And Gower strolled away whistling. leaving Cyril Peele with a dark scowl on his face.

Peele was quite determined; but he would have been glad of a companion to share his vigil. But aided or unaided, he was quite resolved; Gower's defection made no difference to his plans.

Gower glanced at his chum with a grin when the Classical Fourth went to their dormitory that night. Peele did not meet his glance; and he was silent. It was very necessary to keep his intentions secret from the Fistical Four. Had Jimmy Silver & Co. suspected that Peele intended to leave the dormitory to spy on Timothy Smacke, certainly Peele's intentions would never have been carried out.

But the Co. did not suspect.

Bulkeley of the Sixth saw lights out for the Classical Fourth, and the juniors turned in, the buzz of talk from bed to bed running chiefly on the approaching Christmas vacation, and the mystery of Valentine Mornington.

Peele did not join in the talk. He was thinking angry, bitter thoughts as he lay wide awake; and he was still

wakeful when the rest dropped off to He had worked out the matter to his own satisfaction. Smacke was Mornington's confederate; therefore they were in communication, and they could com-

municate safely only at night. A watch kept on the boot-boy's garret could scarcely fail to make a discovery, if Peele's theory was correct. Once he had proof in his hands, he would know how to deal with the

obnoxious boot-boy who had cheeked him. Peele never forgot or forgave an injury, real or fancied. As for Mornington. Peele gave him no thought in the matter at all-Morny was only a pawn in this game, so far as Cyril Peele was concerned.

Long after the rest of the Fourth were sound asleep Peele lay wakeful, listening to the chimes that echoed through the winter night. Ten o'clock-half-past ten -eleven!

When eleven had struck, Peele slipped quietly from his bed.

At that hour all the Rookwood fellows were asleep, and the servants had gone to bed.

It was probable that Smacke, to make all safe, would leave his task till midnight, or even later; but Peele did not mean to take chances. At eleven he intended to be on the watch.

He dressed hurriedly, and crept silently to the dormitory door. Softly and silently he opened the door, slipped into the passage, and closed it behind him. There was no sound from the dormi-

tory, save the steady breathing of the juniors and the snore of Tubby Musiin. Jimmy Silver & Co. were safe in the arms of Morpheus, never dreaming of Peele or his spying expedition.

The corridor was quite dark, and Peele groped his way along, his rubber-soled shoes making hardly a sound.

By one passage after another, groping his way, he crept on to the little staircase to the boot-boy's garret.

There he paused to listen. All around him was still and silent as the grave. Peele felt a tremor run through his limbs as a mouse scuttled behind the wall. At that moment he wished himself safe back in the Fourth

Form dormitory. But he quickly regained his nerve. The darkness and silence were oppressive, but there was no danger. What danger could there be within the locked and holted doors of the Rookwood School

With stealthy steps, he crept up the narrow staircase.

At the top was a little landing outside Smacke's bed-room door, and there Peele intended to take up his watch. If the boot-boy quitted his room that night he could not escape discovery. And if Peele's theory was correct, the boot-boy must visit Mornington in his hidingplace almost every night, if not every

Suddenly the junior gave a start, and his heart throbbed. From somewhere below in the darkness there came a

It was a faint sound—Peele hardly knew what it was, unless it was the creak of a window. But to his startled. throbbing eardrums it seemed almost like thunder in the deep silence. He stood still for several infinites and

listened. But the sound was not repeated. "Only a rat!" breathed Peele.

He reached the little landing, and leaned against the wall there. But his heart was beating fast and painfully. It was a comfort to him, in the deadly silence and solitude, to feel that Smacke was on the other side of the door, much as he hated Smacke. He waited.

Half an hour passed—it seemed like long, weary ages to the spy. Still there was no sound or motion from the garret. Surely, if Smacke was coming out of his room that night, he would come soon. And it flashed into Peele's troubled mind that perhaps Smacke had gone already-before his arrival; that perhaps the strange sound he had heard had been made by Smacke himself on his way in the dark to Mornington's mysterious hiding-place.

Peele gritted his teeth at the thought. If he had had his vigil for nothing— His nerves were growing into a twitter now. He determined to satisfy himself at last, and softly turned the (Continued overleaf.)

AGAIN OFFERED Cur Splendid Football Competition. THE TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR CLUB.

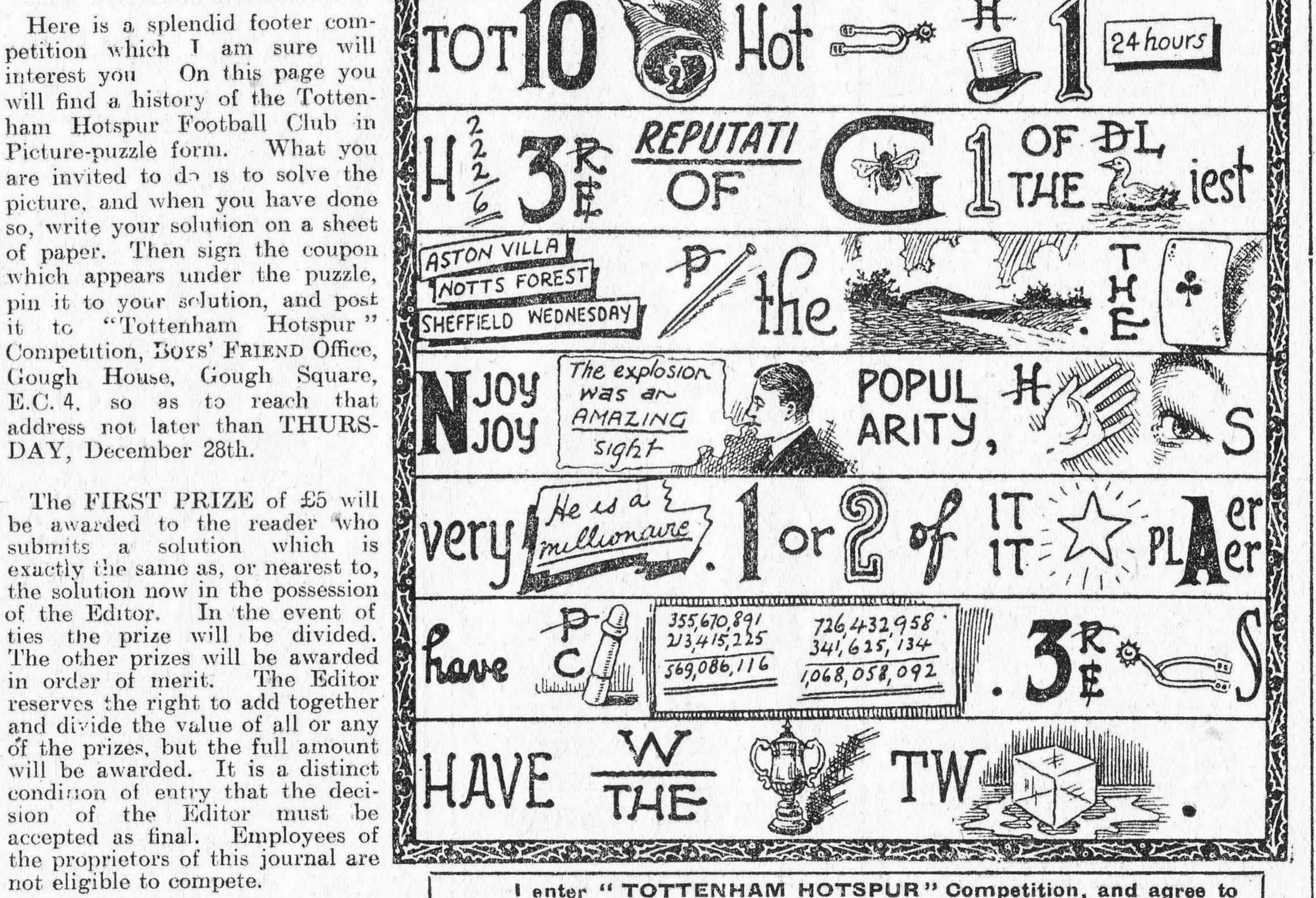
SECOND PRIZE &2 10s., and TEN PRIZES OF 5s.

INSTRUCTIONS.

Here is a splendid footer competition which I am sure will FTOT interest you On this page you will find a history of the Tottenham Hotspur Football Club in Picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve the picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon TASTON VILLA which appears under the puzzle, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Tottenham Hotspur" SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY Competition, Boys' FRIEND Office, BY Gough House, Gough Square, JUJ09 E.C. 4. so as to reach that address not later than THURS-DAY, December 28th.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will 3 be awarded to the reader who was solution which is W exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of M ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all or any of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct 21. condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be accepted as final. Employees of not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Gem," the "Magnet," and the "Popular," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.



I enter "TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR" Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final. Address 

Crash!

over half-stunned.

the floor.

furious cry.

screaming.

at the top of his voice.

upon the fleeing ruffian.

the boot-boy's hand.

"Hold him, my boy!"

"Help!" shouted Smacke.

crashed on his head unresisted.

The dark lantern went with a clatter

to the floor, and there was a heavy thud

the next moment as the cracksman rolled

Ikey turned on the red-haired boot-boy.

He rushed down the passage, shrieking

Ikey, gritting his teeth, paused as he

With a spring, Smacke threw himself

The ruffian turned on him with a

He closed with Smacke, and the Indian

"Help! Help!" Peele was

There were sounds of opening doors and

calling voices on all sides now. And

Smacke, with relentless determination,

clung to the cracksman, shouting breath-

A sudden brilliant illumination blazed

"We're coming!" It was the voice of

out—the electric light had been turned

on. The passage was flooded with light.

Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth.

Lights flashed along the passage.

club dropped to the floor, struck out of

turned to run, leaving his comrade on

"No, you don't!" panted Smacke.

The lantern, on the floor, was still burn-

ing. Peele, with a scream, tore himself

away from the ruffian's relaxing grasp.

handle of the garret door, and opened it. Within all was dark.

Was Smacke there? In the darkness he could see nothing. He listened intently, but he could hear no sound of breathing. But his heart was throbbing so loudly that it was difficult to listen with clearness.

He groped in his pocket for his electric torch. At any risk he must know whether Smacke was still there, or whether it was useless to watch longer. His vigil was getting on his nerves more than he had imagined possible when he had laid his scheme in the daylight.

A sudden gleam of light came from the little torch; and it fell on Timothy

Smacke's bed. It fell on a startled face and two staring eyes. The boot-boy was there, and | was hurling himself at Smacke, and

he had awakened. "What--" came a gasping voice.

Peele shut off the light instantly. Smacke was there, evidently awakened

out of sleep by that nocturnal visit. Yet it was close on twelve! What became of Peele's carefully-worked-out theory?" He heard the sound of the startled

boot-boy scrambling out of bed. "Who's that?" panted Smacke. Peele did not answer. He backed out

of the bed-room hurriedly, and drew the . door shut.

In the room he could hear Smacke moving-a sound as of a fellow hurriedly grabbing his clothes and bundling them

The door reopened as Peele crept away across the little landing to the stair-

"It that you, Peele, you cad?" So the boot-boy had guessed-probably suspecting that it was another "rag" of the cad of the Fourth.

Peele almost stumbled down the stair-Whether his theory was sound or un-

sound, evidently there was nothing more to be done that right. The boot-boy was on his guard now. Peele stumbled hurriedly down the stairs, and stumbled away, his heart throbbing. If the bootboy raised an alarm-if he was caught out of his dormitory—

He blundered on in the darkness, hardly knowing whither he was going in his hurry. And a scream of terror rose to his lips as he was suddenly grasped in the gloom-a scream that died unuttered as a rough hand was pressed over his mouth.

### The 3rd Chapter. An Astounding Discovery.

Peele tottered in the grasp that had fastened on him, his senses swimming with fear.

Who had seized him?

It was not Smacke-he was still above. Was it Mornington, who had emerged from his hiding-place, or Jimmy Silver, who had followed the spy from the dormitory?

Peele knew that it was not. He knew that it was a man's grasp that had fastened on him, and he remembered the sound he had heard half an hour before—the sound as of a win-

dow creaking. So terrible was his fear that he almost fainted as he realised that he was in the hands of burglars.

The rough hand pressed hard on his mouth, choking his cry if he had tried to utter it again. But Peele did not think of crying out again—he was too terrified for that. He could only sink helplessly in the muscular grasp, quaking with terror.

"What is it, Ikey?" came a hoarse,

whispering voice. "A kid, I think."

"Wot's he doin' 'ere, then?" "Dunno, but I've got him safe!" A light glimmered out—the light of a dark lantern, that glimmered on Peele's white, fear-stricken face.

Dimly he made out two faces that were masked with strips of black cloth, the eyes showing above, the hard mouths below. Dazed with terror as he was, Cyril Peele lost no detail of what he saw; he even observed the bag slung over the shoulder of the man who had seized him—a bag that gave a slight metallic clink as the man moved.

He knew now what had happened—that he had blundered, in the dark, fairly into . the path of the two cracksmen, who were stealing away after committing a robbery back to the box-room window by which they had entered.

"Don't make a sound, young 'un!" breathed Ikey. "If you want your 'ead caved in you make a sound." Peele was not likely to make a sound.

"We can't hang on, Ikey," muttered the other man, hurriedly, "and we can't let him yell as soon as we're gone!" "I know that."

"Well, then-"

"You've got the jemmy 'andy?"

Peele shuddered with horror. But he could make no effort, in the savage muscular grasp .that imprisoned him. There was a catch of the breath from Ikey's companion. "You-you don't mean--"

"'Course I don't!" said Ikey savagely. "I mean give him a tap on the napper what will keep him quiet for 'arf an

"'Old him, then!" "Ain't I 'oldin' him? Sharp's the word!"

Peele almost fainted with horror as he lay helpless in the muscular grasp. There was a sound in the darkness of the passage behind him.

"Shut off the light!" hissed Ikey, as his quick ears caught it.

But before the light could be shut off a half-dressed figure came racing up. There was a glimmer of red hair in the light, and Peele knew that it was Timothy Smacke, the boot-boy-the boy he had sought to injure-who had come to his rescue.

Mr. Dalton hurried to the insensible boot-boy.

There was an Indian club in Smacke's hand, and it struck the man who held "In Heaven's name, what has happened, the lantern in one hand and the jemmy Mr. Dalton?" Dr. Chisholm, in sweeping in the other. dressing-gown, arrived on the scene, his The attack was so sudden that the face pale and agitated. "What-whatruffian had no time to elude it. The club what is it?"

> "A burglary, sir," said Mr. Dalton. He made a gesture towards the cracksman's bag, which had burst open in falling to the floor Half a dozen pieces of the school silver had rolled out.

"Bless my soul! But this boy---" "He seized upon the burglar, sir, and prevented his escape," panted Mr. Dalton.

### SPECIAL

Owing to the Christmas holidays, next week's issue of the "BOYS" FRIEND" will be published

"It is Smacke, the boot-boy. He has shown amazing courage. But for him, the ruffians certainly would have escaped with their plunder. This villain struck him down!"

THURSDAY, the 21st.

"The brave lad. Give me room!" Dr. Chisholm dropped on his knees beside the insensible boot-boy, and the Rookwood fellows crowded back.

The Head's face was deeply moved. Smacke's eyes were closed, his face like marble. The thin stream of crimson still oozed from under the red hair.

Dr. Chisholm looked for the injury, and a strange, startled exclamation broke from his lips.

His hand rose from the boot-boy's head

insensible junior, held the red wig in his hand, motionless, like one dazed.

The juniors crowded forward, craning over one another's shoulders to look at the still face—the face that was unmistakably Valentine Mornington's, in spite of the "make-up" that disguised it.

"Morny!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Old Morny! And we never guessed. never guessed."

"Morny!" muttered Cyril Peele, and there was a pang of remorse at his heart. "Morny! And I-I--"

"Stand back!" It was Mr. Dalton's voice. "Give him room. He is coming to his senses."

The eyes of the boot-boy opened.

He stared round him wildly. "What-what-" he muttered faintly. "My poor boy!" whispered the Head.

Mornington's eyes rested on him, and on the red wig which the doctor still held in his hand. A spasm of pain crossed his face. But he smiled—the old ironical smile of Valentine Mornington of the Fourth.

"You've spotted me." His voice was a faint whisper, dying away in sheer weakness. "The game's up!"

"Mornington!" breathed the Head.

All anger was gone now, all resentment of the wayward junior's wild escapade. Only compassion and anxiety remained. Erroll pushed his way through the juniors. His handsome face was white as

"Morny!" he said, his voice trembling. Morny's eyes turned on him.

"You never guessed, Erroll, old man?" "Never! Oh, Morny-"

"Don't worry." Mornington's voice was stronger for the moment. "Don't worry, old pal. I'm all right! My head's

Why, Smacke helped in the search for him! Morny searching for himself, by

"What do you think now. Peele?" hooted Lovell. "Are you still down on

Smacke, you rotter?" Peele's reply was unexpected.

"I didn't know it was Morny," he said in a subdued voice. "But-but 1 shouldn't be down on him now if he was really a boot-boy. He rushed in when those villains were going to knock me on the head-" Peele shuddered at the recollection.

"And why were you out of the dorm at all?" demanded Raby.

"Never mind that; the Head doesn't know I was out, as he found me in a crowd when he came up. Never mind why-only I'm sorry; and I'm going to tell Morny so when he's well enough to

Peele said no more; but his thoughts were busy as he lay wakeful. For once, at least, the hard heart of the cad of the Fourth was touched, and his repentance was sincere enough.

It was a very late hour when the Classical Fourth slept at last, and before they slept they heard the arrival of the doctor's car; and they heard the arrival of the police from Rookham who came to take away the two burglars. But they slept at last, and there were a good many heavy eyes in the Classical Fourth when the juniors turned out at the clang of the rising-bell in the winter morning.

Jimmy Silver & Co. and Erroll were the first down. They were keenly anxious for news of Mornington.

His amazing imposture had been exposed; Timothy Smacke was to be known no more in Rookwood School. But what was to become of Mornington? The Co. found Mr. Dalton in the quad, and Jimmy ventured to question him. The Fourth Form master's face was very grave.

"Mornington is at present in the sanatorium," he said. "He is ill-very ill. But the doctor is assured that he will recover, and will be himself again in the course of a week or two." "Thank goodness for that!" said

Jimmy. "None of you boys had any knowledge of his imposture?" asked Mr. Dalton,

eyeing the chums of the Fourth. "Not the least idea, sir!"

"It is amazing," said Mr. Dalton. "Mornington's face was made up with great skill; and he has admitted to the Head that he borrowed the name of a lad named Timothy Smacke, who was to come here recommended by an agency, as the new boot-boy. He induced Smacke to let him borrow his name and take his place-doubtless for a monetary consideration. His surprising appearances in the school are now explained-when he appeared as Mornington, he had removed his disguise; and he replaced it again behind a locked door in his garret, to reappear as Timothy Smacke. It was a most amazing imposture."

"But now, sir-" said Jimmy Silver. "Is he—is he to be sent home now, sir?" asked Erroll in a low voice.

Mr. Dalton shook his head. "Mornington has received a severe

injury in saving the school from a robbery," he said. "But for his intervention, there is no doubt whatever that those two rascals would have escaped with the school silver, and with five hundred pounds in bonds from the Head's safe. Mornington lies ill and suffering as the result of his courage and devotion. I am sure that, in these circumstances, the Head will take a merciful view."

"Oh, good, sir!" murmured Jimmy. "Mornington's defiance of all authority is inexcusable," said Mr. Dalton. "That remains unaltered; but his devoted courage has atoned for it. I have every hope that Mornington will be allowed to resume his old place in the Fourth Form of Rookwood."

"Hurrah!" Mr. Dalton smiled as he walked away; and the cheer that Jimmy Silver & Co. gave woke every echo of the old quadrangle of Rookwood.

Richard Dalton proved to be a prophet. It was soon known throughout the school that Valentine Mornington had been pardoned, both for his old offence and for the wild escapade by which he had become an inmate of Rookwood. In the circumstances, the Head could scarcely have acted otherwise; but never had a decision of the Head's been more popular in every Form.

And as soon as the injured junior was able to receive visitors, Jimmy Silver and Erroll were the first he saw. A pale face smiled at them as they stood beside Morny's bed.

"No end of a stunt-what?" grinned Mornington "It was a shame to pull your leg as I did, but I had no choice. And I was bound to come back to Rookwood-and here I am-to stay! Toppin',

"Yes, rather, old fellow!" said Erroll

"Tip-top!" said Jimmy Silver. "And you can give yourself the message now, old chap-about Christmas, I mean! You're coming?"

And Mornington grinned again, and nodded his head. And when Rookwood broke up for Christmas, Mornington was one of the merry crowd that departed under the wing of Uncle James.

THE END. (Jimmy Silver & Co. appear again next week in a grand Christmas yarn entitled: "The Phantom of the Priory!" See that you make sure of your copy of the

"Help, help, help!" As Peele, shrieking at the top of his voice SMACKE TO THE RESCUE! dashed down the passage, Ikey gritted his teeth and turned to run. But, with a spring, Smacke, brandishing an Indian club, was upon the fleeing ruffian, who was now only thinking of escaping with his plunder, leaving his hapless confederate to his fate.

Crash!

hand from his pocket, came down on Timothy Smacke's head. There was a faint groan from the boot-boy, and he dropped senseless to the floor.

The cracksman fled on, but the delay had sealed his fate. Mr. Dalton was coming along the passage with the fleetness of a deer. He sprang on the ruffian from behind, and bore him to the floor with the force of his rush. Cracksman and Form master went to the floor together, the cracksman underneath.

"You scoundrel!" panted the young master.

The ruffian struggled furiously; but he was no match for the athletic master. A heavy knee was planted on his chest. Three or four half-dressed Sixth-

Formers were on the scene now. Bulkeley of the Sixth came to Mr. Dalton's aid, and Ikey, struggling furiously, was secured. And Neville and Lonsdale laid hands on his half-stunned confederate, and secured him easily enough.

There was a buzz of voices in the broad corridor. Fellows of all Forms were crowding on the scene, half-dressed or in pyjamas. Jimmy Silver & Co. were among the first of the juniors, but they came too late for service; the cracksmen had already been overpowered.

Peele, finding himself in the midst of a crowd, and safe, ceased to shriek, and leaned on the wall panting for breath. But no one heeded him.

All eyes were turned in horror upon the still form of the boot-boy stretched on the floor, with a trickle of red oozing from under the shock of red hair. He was quite insensible.

"Good heavens!" panted Jimmy Silver.

"It's Smacke! He-he's stunned!" "He collared the burglar!" breathed "Hold those two rascals safely," said Mr. Dalton, and he rose, panting, to his feet. The cracksmen were safe enough;

seven or eight of the Sixth had hold of

them now, and they could stir hardly a

"A-a-a wig!" panted Jimmy Silver.

Under the red wig a head of soft dark hair had been hidden, cropped close. The change in the boot-boy's look was start-

the bushy eyebrows, now that the shock of red hair was gone, Timothy Smacke looked quite another person. And that other person— From every fellow who could see him

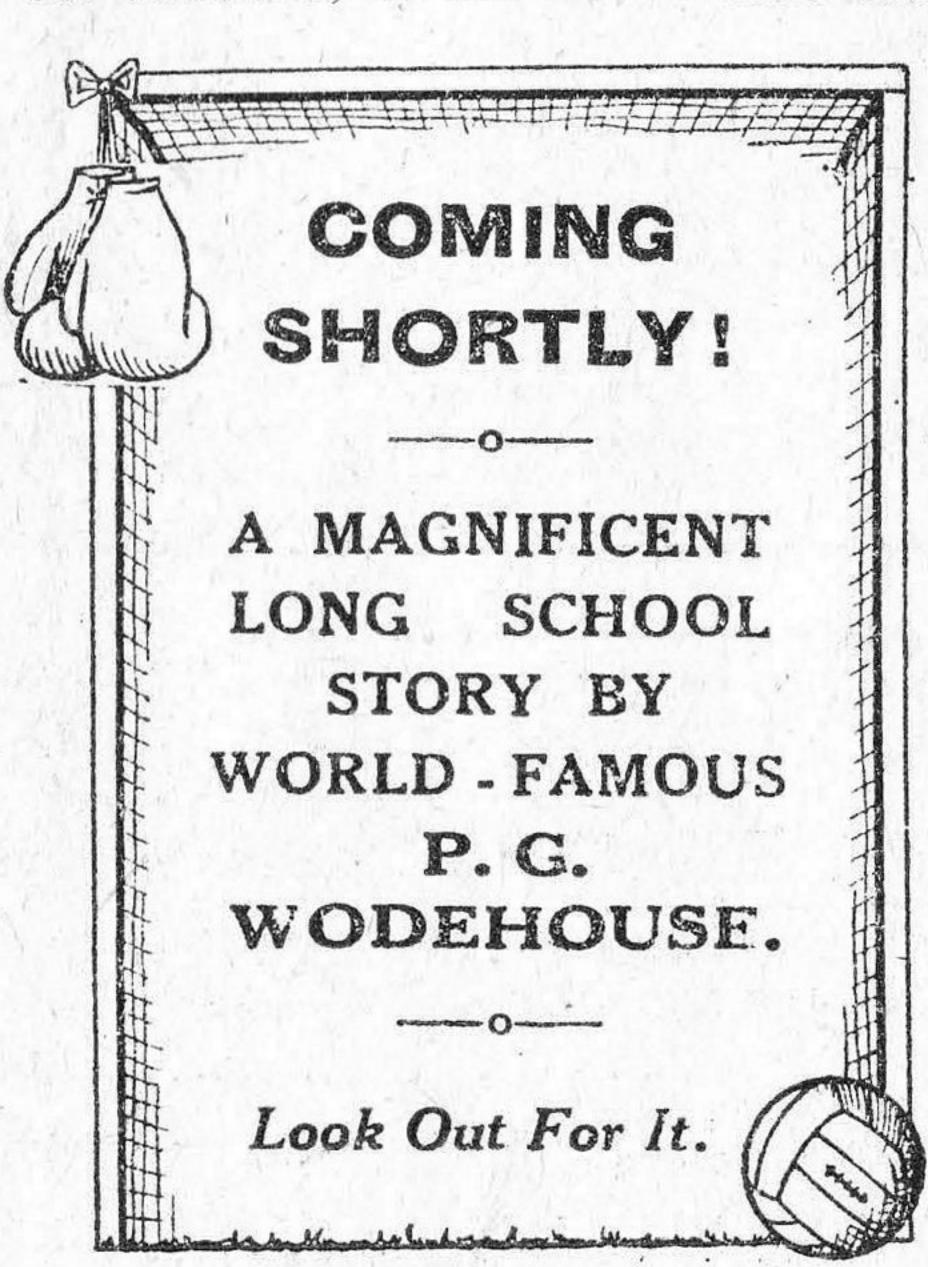
In spite of the sandy-red complexion,

there came a shout, a shout of utter amazement. "Mornington!"

> The 4th Chapter. Luck at Last!

"Mornington!" "Valentine Mornington!" "Morny!"

Dr. Chisholm, on his knees beside the



-with the red hair in it! There was a aching like thunder, but I'm all right. Something heavy, grabbed by Ikey's gasp of stupefaction from the crowd. Have they got that villain?"

"Yes. yes!" "And the giddy loot!"

"You saved the school from a great robbery, Mornington," said the Head softly. "Your courage and devotion will not go unrewarded. But do not speak any more, my boy."

Mornington made a motion with his hand, to put it to his aching head. But his strength failed him, and the hand fell helplessly back. In spite of himself, a groan escaped the hapless junior.

His eyes closed again.

"Mr. Dalton-Bulkeley-help me with this poor boy," said Dr. Chisholm, rising to his feet. "He must be put to bed at once. Neville, please telephone for the doctor-urge him to come without a moment's delay—and then telephone for the police." "Yes, sir."

The cracksmen had been secured with cords by this time, for Bulkeley had been busy. With their hands bound, the two ruffians were led away to a room to be locked in, to await the arrival of the

Valentine Mornington, unconscious again, now, was carried away by Mr. Dalton and Bulkeley.

Then the juniors were shepherded back to their dormitories by the prefects. But there was little more sleep for Rookwood School that night.

In every dormitory there was a buzz of excited talk, and especially in the dormitory of the Classical Fourth, the Form to which Mornington had belonged when he was a Rookwood fellow. "Morny-making out he was a giddy

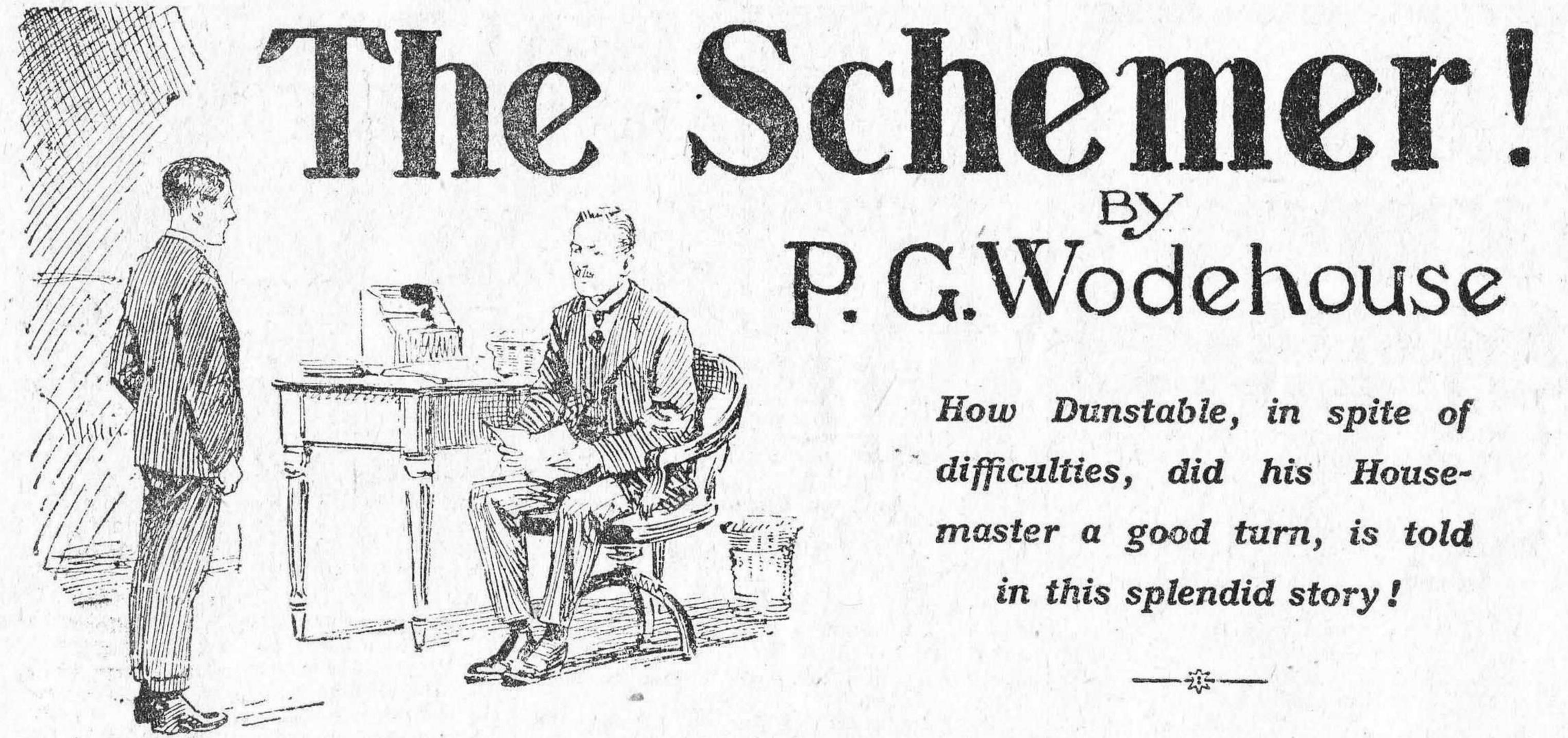
for the tenth time. "It beats me! And we never guessed!" "I even guessed that he might be a relation of Morny's," said Jimmy Silver. "But Morny himself-my hat!"

boot-boy!" said Arthur Edward Lovell

"It's a giddy wonder!" said Conroy.

Boys' Friend by ordering it from your newsagent to-day!) "No wonder they couldn't find him! You mustn't miss "The Wizard of the Wing!" next week's grand footer story, featuring Rollo Dayton and that master-criminal the Duke!

THIS STORY IS A PERFECT SCREAM!



P. G. Wodehouse

How Dunstable, in spite of difficulties, did his Housemaster a good turn, is told in this splendid story!

The 1st Chapter. The Wily Watson.

Dunstable had his reasons for wishing to obtain Mr. Montagu Watson's autograph, but admiration for that gentleman's novels was not one of

It was nothing to him that critics considered Mr. Watson one of the most remarkable figures in English literature since Scott. If you had told him this, he would merely have wondered in his coarse, material way how much Mr. Watson gave the critics for saying so. To the reviewer of the "Weekly Booklover' the great man's latest effort. "The Soul of Anthony Carrington" (Popgood and Grooly: 6s.), seemed "a work that speaks eloquently in every line of a genius that time cannot wither nor custom stale." To Dunstable, who got it out of the school library, where it had been placed at the request of a literary prefect, and read the first eleven pages, it seemed rot, and he said as much to the librarian on returning it.

Yet he was very anxious to get the novelist's autograph. The fact was that Mr. Day, his Housemaster, a man whose private life was in other ways unstained by vicious habits, collected autographs. Also Mr. Day had behaved in a square manner towards Dunstable on several occasions in the past; and Dunstable, always ready to punish bad behaviour in a master, was equally anxious to rehe might exhibit.

On the occasion of the announcement that Mr. Watson had taken the big white house near Chesterton. a couple of miles from the school, Mr. Day had expressed in Dunstable's hearing a wish that he could add that celebrity's signature to his collection. Dunstable had instantly determined to play the part of a benevolent |

Providence. He would get the autograph and present it to the Housemaster, as who should say, "see what comes of being good." It would be pleasant to observe the innocent joy of the recipient, his child-like triumph, and his amazesecuring the treasure. A touching | "Little beast!" said Mr. Watson to | no good," said Linton. scene-well worth the trouble involved in the quest.

ardour of scores of brave men and- | ful, y'know." more or less-fair women. A genuine | Next day the following was included Montagu Watson was a prize in the in Dunstable's correspondence: autograph market.

Watson, Esq., The White House, he is deeply grateful." Chesterton. Looking at it casually, few of his friends would have recogit had seemed good to that man of Linton. guile to adopt for the occasion the role of a backward youth of twelve years old. He thought tender years might touch Mr. Watson's heart.

This was the letter: "Dear Sir,-I am only a littel boy, but I think your books ripping. often wonder how you thing of it all. Will you please send me your ortograf? I like your books very much. ward and foster any good trait which I have named my white rabit Montagu after you. I punched Jones II. in the eye to-day becos he didn't like your books. I have spent the only money I have on the stampe for this letter which I might have spent on tuck. I want to be like Maltby in 'The Soul of Anthony Carrington' when I grow up.

> "Your sincere reader, "P. A. DUNSTABLE."

It was a little unfortunate, perhaps, that he selected Maltby as his ideal character. That gentleman was considered by critics a masterly portrait of a cynical rogue. But it was the

only name he remembered. "Hot stuff!" said Dunstable to ment at the donor's ingenuity in himself, as he closed the envelope.

himself, as he opened it. It arrived by the morning post, and he never And there would be trouble. For really felt himself till after breakfast.

Mr. Montagu Watson was notori- "Here, Morrison," he said to his ously a fee to the autograph-hunter. | secretary, later in the morning; "just His curt, type-written replies-signed answer this, will you? The usual by a secretary-had damped the thing-thanks and most deeply grate-

Dunstable was renowned as a "Mr. Montagu Watson presents his schemer. When Mark, the boot-boy compliments to Mr. P. A. Dunstable, at Day's, carried his burden of letters | and begs to thank him for all the to the post that evening there nestled | kind things he says about his work in among them one addressed to M. his letter of the 18th inst., for which

"Foiled!" said Dunstable, and went nised Dunstable's handwriting. For off to Seymour's to see his friend

> "Got any notepaper?" he asked. "Heaps," said Linton. "Why? Want some?"

"Then get out a piece. I want to dictate a letter.

Linton stared. "What's up? Hurt your hand?" Dunstable explained.

"Day collects autographs, you wants Montagu know, and he Watson's badly. Pining away, and all that sort of thing. Won't smile until he gets it. I had a shot at it yesterday, and got this."

Linton inspected the document. "So I can't send up another myself. you see."

"Why worry?"

"Oh, I'd like to put Day one up! He's not been bad this term. Come

"All right. Let her rip!" Dunstable let her rip.

writing to tell you what an inestim- | the kind things, etc.-3a, Green | done such a foolish thing. It seems able comfort your novels have been | Street was Dunstable's home address. | so objectless. You know how greatly to me during years of sore tribulation and distress--"

"Look here," interrupted Linton, personal. with decision at this point, "if you think I'm going to shove my name at the end of this rot, you're making the mistake of a lifetime."

"Of course not. You're an elderly widow. We'll think of a good name afterwards. Ready?"

"Ever since that dreadful war, I have turned for consolation to the pages of 'The Soul of Anthony Carrington,' and-" "What, another?" asked Dun-

"There's one called 'Pancakes."

"Sure? Sounds rummy." "That's all right. You have to get a queer title nowadays if you want to

sell a book."

"Go on, then. Jam it down!" "And 'Pancakes.' I hate to bother you, but if you could send me your autograph I should be more grate-

ful than words can say. Yours admiringly." "What's a good name? How would Dorothy Maynard do?"

"You want something more aristocratic. What price Hilda Foulke-Ponsonby?"

Linton signed the letter with a epigram, and at the end of the five flourish.

Mrs. Foulkeinstalled They Ponsonby at Spiking's in the High address for a lady whose blood was I worthy envious for a week.

presumably of the bluest, but they could think of none except that obliging stationer who would take in letters for them.

There was a letter for Mrs. Foulke-Ponsonby next day. Whatever his other defects as a correspondent, Mr. Watson was at least prompt with his responses.

Mr. Montagu Watson presented his compliments, and was deeply grateful for all the kind things Mrs. Foulke-Ponsonby had said about his work in her letter of the 19th inst. He was, however, afraid that he scarcely deserved them. Her opportunities of deriving consolation from "The Soul of Anthony Carrington" had been limited by the fact that that book had only been published ten days before; while, as for "Pancakes," to which she had referred in such flattering terms, he feared that another author must have the credit of any refreshment her bereaved spirit might have extracted from that volume, for he had written no work of such a name. His own "Pan Wakes" would, he hoped, administer an equal quantity of

Mr. Secretary Morrison had slept badly on the night before he wrote this letter, and had expended some venom upon its composition.

"Sold again!" said Dunstable. "You'd better chuck it now. It's He held a letter in his hand, and

For the next few days the keeper's existence was enlivened by visits from what appeared to be a most enthusiastic bird's-nester.

On the fifth day he caught him, and conducted him into the presence

of Mr. Montagu Watson. Mr. Watson was brief and to the point. He recognised his visitor as the boy for whose benefit he had made himself stiff for two days.

The keeper added further damaging facts.

"Bin here every day, he 'as, sir, for the last week. Well, I says to myself, supposition is he'll come once to often. And then, I says, I'll cotch him. And I cotched him."

Mr. Watson bit his pen.

"What you boys come for I can't understand," he said irritably.

"You're from the school, of course?" "Yes," said the captive.

"Well, I shall report you to your Housemaster. What is your name?"

"Dunstable." "Your House?"

"Day's."

"Very good. That is all."

Dunstable retired.

His next appearance in public life was in Mr. Day's study. Mr. Day had sent for him after preparation. he looked annoyed.



For five minutes the great Mr. Watson devoted his powerful mind to the task of chasing the elusive Dunstable!

"I'll have another shot. Then I'll try and think of something else." | just received a letter complaining of Two days later Mr. Morrison you. It seems that you have been replied to Mr. Edgar Habbesham- trespassing." Morley, of 3a, Green Street, Park Lane, to the effect that Mr. Montagu Dunstable correspondence ceases, and the relations become more

### The 2nd Chapter. Dunstable's Triumph!

On the afternoon of the twentythird of the month, Mr. Watson, taking a meditative stroll through the wood which formed part of his property, was infuriated by the sight of a boy.

He shouted.

double.

The apparition paused. "Here! Hi, you boy!"

"Sir?" said the stripling, with a winning smile, lifting his cap.

"What business have you in my wood?" "Not business," corrected the visitor, "pleasure."

"Come here!" shrilled the novelist. The stranger receded coyly. Mr. Watson advanced at the

His quarry dodged behind a tree. For five minutes the great man devoted his powerful mind solely to the task of catching his visitor.

The latter, however, proved as Dunstable made no objection, and elusive as the point of a half-formed minutes he was no longer within

Mr. Watson went off and addressed

"Come in, Dunstable. I have "Yes, sir."

"I am surprised, Dunstable, that "Dear Sir,- I cannot refrain from Watson was deeply grateful for all a sensible boy like you should have At this juncture the Watson- | the Headmaster dislikes any sort of friction between the school and the neighbours, and yet you deliberately trespass in Mr. Watson's wood." "I'm very sorry, sir."

"I have had a most indignant letter from him-you may see what he says. You do not deny it?"

Dunstable ran his eye over the straggling, untidy sentences. "No, sir. It's quite true."

"In that case I shall have to punish you severely. You will write me out the Greek numerals ten times, and show them up to me on Tuesday." "Yes, sir."

"That will do."

At the door Dunstable paused. "Well, Dunstable?" said Mr., Day.

"Er-I'm glad you've got his autograph after all, sir," he said.

Then he closed the door. As he was going to bed that night. Dunstable met the Housemaster on

the stairs. "Dunstable," said Mr. Day.

"Yes, sir."

"On second thoughts, it would be better if, instead of the Greek numerals ten times, you wrote me the first ode of the first book of Horace. The numerals would be a little long, perhaps."

THE END.

(Look out for a magnificent long school story by world-famous P. G. Street. It was not a very likely his keeper in terms which made that I Wodehouse, that will shortly appear in these pages!)

CAUGHT!



THE INQUISITION! "Yes," said Dunstable. "Well, I shall report you to your Housemaster!" snapped Wir. Watson irritably.