

When finished with,  
please hand this book to  
a friend, and oblige.

The Editor.

# The Dreadnought

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY.

To ensure getting next  
week's copy readers are  
recommended to order  
in advance.

## The REMOVE-FORM'S RIOT!

A Splendid Long, Complete Tale dealing with the Early Adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS



### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

English and French.

"Mon Dieu!"

"Rats!"

"Ciel!"

"More rats!"

"I tell you viz my own tongue!"

"Well, you couldn't very well tell me with anybody else's!"

"Cochon!"

"Ass!"

"Beast!"

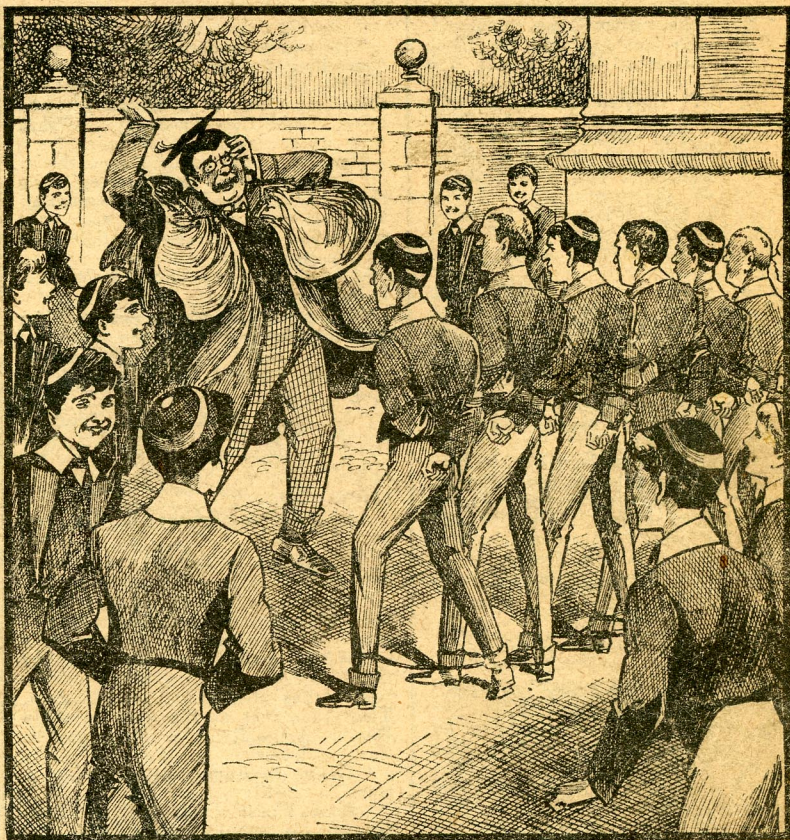
"Lunatic!"

The argument was growing warm in the gymnasium at Greyfriars. Bob Cherry, of the Remove, was talking to Adolphe Meunier, and the conversation was growing decidedly personal. Behind Meunier stood half a dozen youths of his own nationality, all looking very excited, while a number of fellows belonging to the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars—were grouped round Bob Cherry. Close by him, and evidently ready for war, stood a dusky-complexioned youth, generally known at Greyfriars as Inky, but more properly called Hurree Janset Ram Singh, Nabob of Bhanipur.

Matters had long been lively in the Greyfriars Remove.

Greyfriars had been invaded by aliens. A foreign academy kept by Herr Rosenblaum at Beechwood had closed its doors for financial reasons, and Herr Rosenblaum had come to Greyfriars as German master, and many of his boys had come with him. Dr. Locke had hardly foreseen the result, though he had expected that there would be some friction at first. Hurree Singh, the Hindoo, had chummed up with Wharton, Cherry, and Nugent, in No. 1 Study, as a true British subject. But the Germans and the French boys had made no secret of their intention to be "top dogs" from the start. And, as Nugent had put it, when they were not rowing with the native members of the Remove, they were disputing among themselves. Their old feud at Beechwood had been brought with them to Greyfriars, and the rows on the subject were endless.

"Vat you call me?" exclaimed Meunier excitedly, shaking a clenched fist in the face of Bob Cherry.



"Poys!" Herr Rosenblaum could only gasp out that one word. He stood gazing at the strange procession and its conductors in utter amazement.

"I called you a lunatic—a giddy lunatic."

"Ciel! For zem words I chastise you."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Right-ho; chastise away, Froggy."

"Go aheadful!" exclaimed Hurree Singh, in the beautiful English he had learned from his native instructor in Bengal. "We are readyful for the rowfulness, my esteemed friends. We shall return you as good as you deliver."

"Nigger!"

The Indian's eyes flashed.

"My worthy Frenchful friend, I shall bestow upon you the dustfulness of the floor!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Meunier.

"Commencez-vous, and I vill—"

Bob Cherry held the excitable Indian back.

"Leave that to me, Inky," he exclaimed.

Hurree Singh shook his head.

"It is to me to wipe up the floor dustfully with him, Cherry. It is

impossible for the Nabob of Bhanipur to submit to the insultfulness."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cochon!" shrieked Meunier.

"Come on viz you."

"Oui, oui, come on!" shouted Gaston Artois. "Ve vill vipe up ze floor viz you."

"They won't be happy till they get it," said Bob Cherry. "So here goes."

And he rushed at Adolphe Meunier.

The two closed at once, and went staggering about the gym, clutched in a deadly embrace. The next moment Hurree Singh was struggling with Gaston Artois, and then the French and English boys were mixed up in a wild scrimmage.

It was not the first which had occurred since the foreigners came to Greyfriars, by many a one.

Although there was no real ill-feeling at the bottom of the disputes, the rivalry was keen, and seldom slept.

One row ended only to be followed by another, and it was safe to say that

at least one of the three parties at Greyfriars was always on the warpath. The din in the gymnasium was terrific.

The excitable French lads shouted and shrieked as they fought, while the English boys were mostly silent, but all the more determined for that.

The odds, as it happened, were against the French, and they were soon driven into a corner of the gym. and penned up there.

But they were not beaten yet.

They faced the foe manfully, with flashing eyes, and shrieks of defiance.

Bob Cherry called his followers on.

"Rush the rotters!" he exclaimed. "We'll take 'em out into the Close and frog's-march them round the school."

"Bravo!" shouted Trevor. "Come on."

"Good. The rushfulness is the good wheeze!" exclaimed Hurree Singh. The combatants had paused for a moment to take breath.

Now the English lads rushed forward again, and the French were fighting like wildcats with their backs to the wall.

The uproar was terrific, when Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, stepped into the gym. He stared at the scrambling, yelling juniors, and started towards them with a wrathful brow.

"Stop that, you young rascals."

But the young rascals were too excited to heed him.

They did not even hear him, as they fought and struggled in the corner of the gym. Wingate strode on, and came among them, cuffing right and left. Then they heeded his presence at last.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Trevor, as he reeled away from a hearty cuff.

"What's the matter?"

"Stop it, I say."

"Hallo, Wingate; is that you?"

"Yes. Stop it."

"Stop what?"

"This rowing, you young hooligans."

The combat ceased at last.

There had been severe damage on both sides, and scarcely a face there but bore very plain traces of the fray.

Black eyes, and swollen noses, and thick ears were plentiful, and torn collars and ripped jackets were not scarce.

The rivals of the Remove stared and glared at each other in unappeased hostility, but the captain's word was law.

Bob Cherry wiped away a stream of crimson that was issuing from his mouth, and looked at the Greyfriars captain with his usual coolness.

Wingate's brow was very stern.

"What does this mean, Cherry? I suppose I am not far wrong in taking you for the ringleader, as Wharton does not seem to be here."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Right-ho, Wingate. I dare say you're about correct," he said cheerfully.

"What do you mean by rowing in the gym. like a set of hooligans?"

Bob Cherry looked inquiringly at Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"What do I mean by it, Hurree Jampot?" he asked.

The Indian shook his head.

"I have not the knowledgefulness to reply," he said. "The meaningfulness is——"

"You see, Wingate——"

"Yes, I see," said the Greyfriars captain grimly. "I see a cheeky young

rascal, and I see that he needs a lesson."

And his finger and thumb closed on Bob Cherry's ear like the grip of a vice.

The Remove wriggled.

"I say, Wingate, let go! You're hurting my ear."

"How curious," said Wingate, with grim humour. "Strange as it may appear to you, Cherry, that is actually my intention."

"Ow! Ow!"

Wingate let him go. Bob Cherry put his hand ruefully to his crimson ear.

"Now, then, what is all this about?" said Wingate.

"Oh, it's only a row, you know."

"Do you mean to say that you were quarrelling for nothing?"

"Yes, I believe so. One must do something on a half-holiday, you know," said Bob cheerfully. "What were we rowing about, Meunier?"

The French lad grinned expansively.

"Pour passer le temps," he chuckled. "It is really nozing, Vinate; ve row because ve row, vous comprenez. Zat is all— Ciel! Let go my ear!"

Wingate gave the French lad's ear a twist.

"Do you think that is enough?" he asked, releasing it.

"Oui, oui," groined Adolphe Meunier. "Zat is quite enough; in fact, it is ze too mooch."

"No more of this," said Wingate sternly. "If I catch you scrapping again I'll speak to your Form-master about it, and get you a hundred lines apiece. Remember."

And the captain of the school walked away.

The juniors looked at one another and grinned.

"Rows are off for the present," said Bob Cherry, taking Hurree Singh's arm. "Come along, my black tulip."

"With pleasurefulness," said the nabob.

And they strolled out of the gym. They were met at the door by Billy Bunter of the Remove. He looked at them curiously.

"Hallo, have you been having a row, Cherry?"

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Bob, wiping his mouth again with his crimsoned handkerchief.

"Yes, rather. I say, you fellows——"

"Oh, don't bother us now, Billy!"

"But I say——"

"I'm going to get a wash," said Bob Cherry. "You look as if you could do with one as well, Jampot, and a clean collar into the bargain."

"I am going to seek the wash and the cleanful collar," said Hurree Singh.

"Come along, then."

"But I say, you fellows——"

"No time now, Billy. We're not going to stand you anything at the tuck-shop, and we've got no tin to lend till your postal order comes, so cut it."

"But I want to tell you——"

"Oh, don't bother."

"But——"

"The botherfulness of the fat sahib is extremeful," said Hurree Singh.

"Shall I bestow upon him the punchfulness of the nose, my worthy chum?"

"Certainly."

Billy Bunter retreated.

"But I say, Cherry," he called out from a safe distance, "Wharton sent me to tell you——"

"Hallo, what's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, turning round. "Wharton sent you to tell me what, Bunt?"

"The German kids are besieging him in his study——"

"Is that true, you young ass?"

"Of course it is. Wharton sent me to tell you——"

"Why didn't you tell me, then?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Haven't I been trying to——"

"Oh, dry up. Get the fellows together, Jampot, and follow me."

"Certainlyfuly."

Bob Cherry dashed off, and the nabob was not long in gathering the heroes of the fight in the gym. and following him.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Remove to the Rescue.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The din outside Study No. 1 was continuing without cessation. Eight or nine German juniors were gathered in the passage, and Fritz Hoffman, the burly leader of the German faction, was wielding a heavy stool, which he was crashing against the lock of the study door.

Crash! Bang! Crash!

The door gave an ominous groan.

"It is giving in!" exclaimed Carl Lutz, Hoffman's chum gleefully.

Hoffman grinned as he paused to take breath.

"Ja, it is giving in!" he exclaimed.

"A few more plows like tat and ve shall be in to study mit ourselves after."

"Goot! Pang at te lock again."

"Ach! Here goes."

Crash! Bang!

The lock was evidently yielding.

The German lads stood prepared to make a rush as soon as the door should open. The absence of the Form-master gave them an opportunity long desired of bringing their rivalry with Study No. 1 to a head.

"Ve vill treck te study," grinned Karl Lutz. "Ve vill preak eferyting, and rag te pounders till dey not know veder dey are on deir head or deir heel."

"Mein gootness, you vas right, ain't it?"

"Te lock is preaking!"

Bang! Crash!

With a snap the lock parted.

The door flew violently open, and Hoffman, with an exclamation of triumph, dropped the stool.

"Come on!" he shouted.

"Ach! Rush tem!"

The German boys made a forward movement.

But within the study stood Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, each with a bottle of ink raised in his right hand.

"Stop where you are," said Wharton calmly.

Fritz Hoffman hesitated.

The bottle of ink looked rather dangerous, and he had no desire to be drenched from head to foot in its contents.

The fellows behind pushed him on, and he had to enter the study.

He made a virtue of necessity, and, shouting to his comrades to follow, he dashed straight at Harry Wharton.

Harry gave a jerk to his wrist, and a stream of black ink shot into the German's face, and he reeled back with a yell. Nugent discharged his bottle at the same moment, and Karl Lutz received the ink, and staggered away gasping.

The other German lads burst into a

loud laugh as they saw their leaders suddenly transformed into nigger minstrels. But they rushed right on.

Wharton and Nugent stood shoulder to shoulder. There was nothing for it but to fight now, against heavy odds, but they were plucky enough for anything.

Two or three of the Germans rolled over under their blows, and then odds told, and they were borne back right across the study by the rush.

Fritz Hoffman rubbed the ink from his eyes and glared about him.

"Hold dem!" he roared. "Haf you got te rotters?"

"Ach! Ja, ja!"

"Hold dem! Ve vill trench dem mit ink demselves after."

"Ha, ha! Ach, we have dem!"

Wharton and Nugent were struggling vainly in the grasp of the Germans. The numbers against them were too great. They were borne to the floor, and secured by the simple process of being sat upon by their adversaries.

With two or three stout Germans sitting upon each of them, they were powerless, and had to give up the struggle.

"Rescue!" bawled Nugent, at the top of his voice.

Fritz Hoffman grinned.

"Ach, dere is no rescue!" he remarked. "Te oder boys are in te gym., and dey hear you not. Ve vill anoint you mit te ink!"

"Ach! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hold dem tight!"

"Ve have dem, ain't it?"

"I vill soon get te ink!"

Hoffman began rummaging about the study, and the two chums recommenced a desperate struggle to get free. But it was useless. The enemy were too many for them.

"I wonder if that little rotter Bunter gave Cherry my message?" murmured Harry breathlessly. "If not, we're done in."

"Rescue!" yelled Nugent.

There was a sound of pattering feet in the corridor.

"What-ho, Remove!" shouted the well-known voice of Bob Cherry, shouting the familiar war-cry of the Remove at Greyfriars.

"Help!" shouted Nugent.

Bob Cherry came dashing into the study.

"Look out!" yelled Karl Lutz.

The German boys were looking out. Two or three of them flung themselves upon Bob Cherry in an instant and he went reeling back, fighting like a tiger against the odds. But other feet were ringing along the passage now.

"Rescue, Remove!" shouted Bob Cherry.

And a familiar voice answered:

"The rescuefulness is coming!"

And Hurree Singh dashed in, with a crowd of Removites at his heels. The Germans at once jumped up from the prisoners, and faced the new enemy; but the tables were fairly turned now.

The odds were on the British side now. The Removites dashed into the fray, and the Germans were knocked right and left.

Wharton and Nugent sprang to their feet and joined in with hearty goodwill, and the German party would have given a great deal just then to have got safely out of No. 1 Study. But escape was cut off.

Hurree Singh had slammed the door behind the Removites when they were all in, and was standing with his back to it now. There was no escape for the

invaders. The scene in the study was almost indescribable.

The room was not a large one, and there was hardly space for the combatants to move when the rescuers had crowded in.

The furniture was knocked right and left. The table went over with a crash, scattering books and papers and ink on all sides, and the chairs were hurled to and fro.

The Germans were soon mostly on the floor, with victorious juniors sitting upon them, keeping them pinned down. Fritz Hoffman made a desperate dash for the door to escape. But the Nabob of Bhanipur was on guard. He held the German leader at bay until he was seized by Bob Cherry and dragged down, and with Bob sitting on his chest, Hoffman gave up the struggle. Hurree Singh surveyed the scene with a beaming smile.

"The forefignful bounders are prisoners now!" he exclaimed. "They have wrecked the study, but that is of little importantfulness. We have captured them, and I think the ripping wheeze will be to make the example of them."

"Hear, hear!" gasped Hazeldene.

"Let us go! Ach, you peasts!"

"Mein gootness! You vas crush my chest, ain't it?"

"Ach! I cannot preathe mit meinself!"

"I vas choke, ain't it?"

"Never mind!" said Bob Cherry.

"If you choke, we sha'n't miss you much, and we'll see you nicely and comfortably buried, you know."

"Ach! You vas a prute!"

"You vas vun peeg!"

"Engleesh peeg!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Now, Wharton, what are we going to do with them?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I think Hurree Jampot's idea is a good one!" he exclaimed. "We'll make an example of them."

"Good! What's the wheeze?"

"Of course, we don't want to hurt them!"

"Ha, ha, ha! They're looking rather hurt already!"

"Are you hurt, Hoffman?"

"Ach! You peast!"

"They are suffering from considerable hurtfulness," said Hurree Singh, in his purring voice. "The duckfulness under the pump would revive them, my worthy friends."

"Ha, ha! Good idea."

"Mein gootness! You vas not—"

"Dry up, Dutchy! You're licked, you know! And this is where we do the talking," said Bob Cherry, giving Hoffman a gentle poke in the ribs with his boot.

"Ach! I tink—"

"You can tink, or tinkle, as much as you like, but do it quietly," said Bob Cherry. "You're dead in this act. Now, then, Wharton, what's to be done with them?"

"I think the ducking under the pump would be rather rough!"

"Well, they look as if they needed a wash!" said Nugent, looking the Germans over with a critical eye.

"Never mind! We're not going to start washing Germans, I suppose? They can wash themselves."

"I don't think they ever do!"

"Ach! Tat is vun untroot after!"

"And what is it before?" demanded Nugent.

"I've got a rather good wheeze," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully.

"The German kids must be taught that our study is sacred territory."

"Rather!"

"And that it mustn't be invaded by any low-down aliens!"

"Mein gootness! I tink—"

"Tink away, but shut up!" said Nugent. "Go on, Wharton!"

"Well, they will have to be given a lesson. I think it would be a good idea to tie them up two and two, and march them round the Close, as a sort of exhibition of funny animals captured by us—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then all Greyfriars will be able to see that we are the top of the Remove," explained Wharton. "If we make an example like that of the German bounders—"

"Ach! I vill gif you Cherman pounders—"

"Shut up, Dutchy!"

"It will show that they're of no account in the Form," said Wharton. "And after that we'll handle the French in the same way, and show them up. When both lots have had a good licking, we may get a little peace."

"Good!"

"Somebody go and find some rope somewhere," said Harry Wharton, rather vaguely, "and we'll start the procession!"

"Mein Himmel! You vas nefer—"

"Dry up, Dutchy!"

"I vill not try up! I say—"

"No, you don't! Sit on his head, Hazeldene, and make him shut up!"

"Certainly!"

And Hazeldene obeyed, and Fritz Hoffman gasped and perforce was silent.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Procession!

"Here's the giddy rope!"

"Good! Now to business!"

Harry Wharton gave directions, and the Removites carried them out promptly. Fritz Hoffman and Karl Lutz were the first two to be secured. Their ankles were shackled, so that they could walk with short steps, but could not possibly run, and then Hoffman's right arm was tied to Lutz's left. Then their other arms were bound down to their sides. They stood quite helpless, glowering with rage at the grinning Removites.

"They look nice, don't they?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, gazing at them.

"Hoffman looks rather ill-tempered, though. Are you feeling annoyed about anything, Hoffman?"

"Ach! You peasts!"

"Is there anything disturbing your equanimity?"

"Peast! Prute! Pounder!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Do you know what a peast, prute, pounder is, you chaps?"

"Ach! I vill—"

"Oh, ring off, Dutchy!" said Nugent. "You've had your turn. Now for the others!"

"Buck up!" said Wharton. "The masters are off the scene now, but we never know when they may come along. We want to get the procession over without being interrupted by any obnoxious persons in authority."

"Right-ho! Shackle them up!"

The German juniors struggled and protested, but it was of no avail. The numbers against them were irresistible.

Two by two they were shackled, till the four pairs of them were fastened

up, and all was ready for the procession. The prisoners were red with rage and indignation, and they naturally shrank from the intended exhibition in the Close, but there was no help for them.

They had entered the lion's den in invading No. 1 Study, and now the time had come to pay for their temerity. "Form them in line!" said Harry Wharton.

"Come along, you bounders!" "Ve vill not come!" shrieked Hoffman. "Ve vill not come, you peasts! Ve defy you to make us come before!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Push them along!" "Ach! Ve vill not come!" "Peegs! Prutes! Ach!"

The Removites, laughing, crowded round the prisoners, and they were shoved and hustled out of the study into the passage.

There, in spite of their resistance, they were bundled along, helplessly, towards the stairs, surrounded by the Removites.

The house seemed to be deserted—and it was well for the chums of Study No. 1 that it was so.

It was a fine spring afternoon, and the weather had tempted out all who could go, and there was not a master left in the house.

With plenty of noise and struggling, the Germans went surging down the stairs in the midst of their captors.

Down into the hall passed the procession, and then out into the bright sunny Close, under the green old elm trees.

"Shove them along!" "Make the beggars march."

"Ach! I tells you tat I vill not march."

"And I tell you that you will, Hoffy."

"I vill not! I—Ow!" "Shove 'em along!" "Ve vill not—Ow, ow!" "Make the bounders trot."

And the Germans had to trot. The more obstinate ones were pinched when they halted, and hustled and shoved along. In the midst of the laughing Removites they went forward on their forlorn march round the quadrangle.

"My only hat! What is that?" Carberry of the Sixth was coming towards the house, and he stopped in amazement at the sight of the singular procession.

Harry Wharton laughed. "It's only an exhibition," he explained. "We are exhibiting these curious animals which we have captured."

"Ha, ha, ha! What have you got them tied up for?"

"They're dangerous at close quarters. It's safer to keep them tied up in a state of captivity."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Ach! Ve vill preak all your peasty pones—"

"Come along, Dutchy!" Carberry stood laughing heartily as the procession passed on. A good many other fellows stared at it in amazement and mirth. Windows opened in various parts of the school buildings, and curious faces looked out.

"Ciel! Vat is zat, zen?" Adolphe Meunier and his friends came crowding round.

The French juniors were far from pitying the plight of the Germans. They screamed with laughter at the predicament of Hoffman and his comrades, and the furious glares of the prisoners only increased their mirth.

"He, he, he!" cackled Meunier.

"Zat is ver' funny."

"Ach, you peasty pounders!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bring them along!"

"March, you beggars—march!"

The procession wound on round the Close, the accompanying crowd growing larger every minute.

Bob Cherry suddenly uttered an exclamation of dismay.

"Cave!"

"What's the matter?"

"The Herr!"

"My only hat!"

It was too late for retreat. The Removites stood their ground, and the procession came to a disorderly standstill.

Herr Rosenblau, the German master at Greyfriars, was bearing down upon the procession, his fat face blank with astonishment.

Herr Rosenblau, formerly headmaster of Beechwood Foreign Academy, had brought his foreign pupils with him to Greyfriars, and the endless disturbances which had followed had worried him considerably since. He was accustomed to rows at his old school; but national rivalry seemed to have taken a new lease of life among the Beechwood boys since they had come to Greyfriars. There had been disputes and fights without limit, but nothing quite so outrageous as what the German master now beheld.

"Poys!" Herr Rosenblau could only gasp out that one word. He stood gazing at the prisoners and their conductors in utter amazement. "Poys!"

"Yes, sir," said Harry Wharton, with his usual calmness, though his heart was beating.

"Poys!" The juniors were silent enough now.

The German master's eyes rolled, and he gasped like a fish out of water. At last he found his voice.

"Poys, what does dis mean after, ain't it?"

"What does what mean?" asked Harry Wharton demurely.

"Dis—dis outrage!" shouted Herr Rosenblau. "Vat are dese poys doing tied up mit rope mit demselves? Vat does it mean, I say?"

"It's only a procession, sir."

"Himmel! Vat?"

"Merely a procession, sir, that's all."

"You—you—you—"

"It's all right, sir," said Nugent. "Only a little fun, you know, sir."

"So tat is vat you call fun, Nugent?"

"Yes, sir. Isn't it funny, Hoffman?"

Fritz Hoffman grinned in a sickly way.

He had been far from regarding the affair in a comical light, but he was true blue, and he had no idea of not playing the game. He had got the worst of the row with the Remove, but he was not one to complain because of that.

"Tat is all right," he exclaimed. "It is only a choke, sir."

"Only a choke, Hoffman?"

"Ja, ja, mein Herr."

"You vas not complain of tat treatment?"

"Certainly not, Herr Rosenblau."

"Hoffman is trueful blue, my worthy friends," murmured Hurree Singh. "Yes, rather!"

"Hoffman! Lutz! Do you tell me tat you do not complain of dis usage—"

tat you haf noting to say?" demanded Herr Rosenblau.

"Ja, Herr Rosenblau," said Hoffman stolidly. "Tat is only a liddle game vich te Remove poys play mit demselves, after, und ve not mind it at all."

Herr Rosenblau gasped. "Hoffman, you vas not telling me te troot."

"Ach, Mein Herr!"

"You vas try to excuse dese poys."

"It is de troot, sir," said Hoffman obstinately. "It is a game vich ve play, und if ve have te vorst of it, it is all right."

"Do you all say te same?"

"Ja, ja!"

The German boys all said the same. Herr Rosenblau looked them over, and he understood, and his face cleared somewhat.

"I tink I know vat you mean, poys. You vill not vat you call sneak—"

"There is no sneakfulness about Hoffman," purred Hurree Singh. "I shall stand him the treatfulness at the tuckshop after this."

"But such a scene as dis cannot be made in te Close," said Herr Rosenblau sternly. "Wharton, I know fery vell tat dis is anoder row—"

"All in good part, sir."

"Perhaps; put it is a row und a disturbance of the beace; und I tink tat Hoffman is as mooch to plame as you are—"

"If you please, sir—"

"Silence, all of you! You will take fifty lines each for dis conduct—all of you—"

"Oh, sir—"

"All of you, mind. Now you vill immediately set dese poys loose."

"With pleasurefulness, sahib."

"Let me see it done at vunce."

The juniors soon had the prisoners untied.

"Now," said Herr Rosenblau, with a warning wave of the hand, "if dere is any more rows to-day, I cane you all mit yourselves after, ain't it!"

And he marched away, with a stern brow; but when he was within the house a smile came over his fat face in the place of the frown.

Harry Wharton gave Hoffman a thump on the back.

"Ach, you peasty pounder!"

"It's all right," said Wharton hastily, as the German squared up to him. "Rows are off. I was only backing you up."

"Mein Gott! You almost preak mein pack!"

"You're a good sort, and true blue, and it was decent of you to speak as you did."

"Ciel, zat is quite true," said Adolphe Meunier. "Even ze Sherman may have ze good quality sometime—"

"Vat tat you say, you French pounder?"

"I say zat ze Sherman was peegs," said Meunier defiantly.

"Ach! Rotter!"

"Rottair yourself!"

"I vill pounce your head!"

"Mon Dieu! I vill vipe up ze ground viz you!"

"Peast!"

"Rottair!"

The German and the French junior were rushing at one another by this time. But the English lads rushed between.

"Here, keep off the grass!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "You heard

what Herr Rosenblau said—no more rows to-day."

"I do not care for zat Sherman——"

"I vill trash tat French peeg——"

"Ciel! I vill——"

"Ach, let me reach tat——"

"Keep off the grass, confound you!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, pushing the excited French junior back. "I tell you you sha'n't row now."

"Duck 'em under the pump if they won't be reasonable," said Nugent. "It will do them good—both of them."

"Right-ho! That's a good idea."

But the prospect of a ducking under the pump was apparently not enticing to either the Frenchman or the German.

They gave in, and walked away in different directions, glowering at one another over their shoulders as they went.

"Nice lot of tiger-cats," said Bob Cherry. "Come along, kids; we're well out of that. And I'm jolly glad it was Herr Rosenblau that dropped on us, and not Mr. Quelch or the Head."

"Yes, rather. It was a good jape; and as for the fifty lines, who cares?"

"Nobody!"

"Hallo, what's that fearful row?" exclaimed Nugent, looking back.

There were sounds of deadly strife from under the elm-trees.

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh. "French and German!" he exclaimed.

It was true.

The foreigners had only waited for the departure of the interfering Removites, and they had met again in strife under the elm-trees. French and Germans were engaged in a deadly combat.

"No business of ours," yawned Nugent. "We've done our best to keep the peace. But I say, you chaps, things will be lively at Greyfriars if those foreign chaps stay here. I don't believe there's been a day quiet since they came."

"I don't think they will remain," said Harry Wharton quietly. "The Head certainly never expected anything like this. I shouldn't be surprised any time to hear that they were going to leave Greyfriars. They're a bit out of place here."

"Well, that's so."

"There is truthfulness in what you remark," Hurree Janset Ram Singh observed, in a thoughtful way. "I should be sorry to leave Greyfriars myself, yet I admit that it would be somewhat sweetful to see my old chums Redfern and Lawrence once more. But if the time is short, let us have as many rows as possible, so that it will be merryful."

And the chums of the Remove laughingly assented.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Called Before the Head.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, Wingate?"

The captain of Greyfriars was looking into No. 1 Study, where the chums of the Remove were preparing tea. Billy Bunter was laying the table, and Nugent was poking the fire under the copper kettle. Bob Cherry was untying a parcel, which had evidently just been brought up from the school shop.

"You are wanted in the Head's study," said the Greyfriars captain briefly.



This picture strikingly demonstrates the unenviable position of Russian outposts who are guarding the telegraph wires on the outskirts of Poland. Brought up as it were amid Russian snows, these warriors are well fitted to endure the hardships attendant upon their lonely vigil.

Bob Cherry gave a whistle.

"Hallo, has the Herr reported us, after all, then, about the procession?"

"He wouldn't do that, Bob, after giving us an imposition himself."

"No, I suppose not. Then what——"

"I fancy it's about what's happened in this study," said Harry Wharton. "You know Quelchy wanted to know who busted in the door."

"We couldn't very well give Hoff-man away."

"I thought Quelchy hadn't finished with the matter," said Nugent, shaking his head. "He's handed it over to the doctor."

"The time of payfulness for the little jape has arrived," said Hurree Singh. "But we cannot tell the doctor any more than we told to the respected Form-master sahib."

"Hardly!"

"It is sneakful to give away the German rotters," said Hurree Singh. "Besides, whoever is saucy to a goose must also be saucy to a gander, as your English proverb says."

"Ha, ha, ha! Where did you learn that English proverb, Inky?" asked Bob Cherry.

"It was written in the copy-book of my respected instructor in Bengal."

"Well, are you going, Wharton?" interrupted Wingate.

"Certainly."

"Aren't the rest of us wanted?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Only Wharton was mentioned to me, but if any of you others were in the row, you can suit yourselves about going along with him," said Wingate.

And the Greyfriars captain walked away.

"Well, we'll all come," said Nugent decidedly.

"No need for that," said Wharton quietly. "If it's a licking, one is enough, and I can stand it. You stay where you are."

"Rats! We're all coming!"

"Certainly. The lickfulness must be endured by all who had concern in the rowful disturbance," said Hurree Singh.

"Well, only Nugent and I were here when they busted the door in——"

"We were all in the row," said Bob Cherry. "Besides, if it's a licking, and there are four of us to take it, the Head will lay it on more lightly."

"There's something in that."

"Of course there is. Come on, all together!"

And the chums of the Remove quitted the study.

They were looking rather serious as they approached the Head's study. It was no light matter for a junior to be called into that dreaded apartment.

Harry Wharton knocked at the door, and led the way into the study. Dr. Locke raised his eyes and fixed them upon the quartette.

"I think I sent for you only, Wharton."

"I am here, sir."

"We have all come, sir," said Bob Cherry diffidently, "as we all had as much to do with the row as Wharton had."

"Indeed! What I wish to know is, how the door of your study came to have the lock broken," said the Head sternly.

"It was broken in, sir," said Wharton.

"I know that. Who broke it?"

The juniors were silent.

"Was it broken in from outside by a party of juniors attacking the study?"

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"Who were the juniors?"

Silence again.

"Why do you not answer me?" said the Head quietly.

"It would be sneaking, sir," said Harry Wharton.

"Unless the names of the culprits are given to me, I shall have no alternative but to consider you yourselves responsible for what has happened, and to punish you severely for the damage done."

The faces of the juniors brightened visibly.

Between respect for the Head and a determination not to betray Hoffman and his friends they had been in a difficult position.

To escape from the dilemma at the cost of a licking was a relief to them.

"We have no objection to that, sir," said Wharton immediately.

The doctor compressed his lips a little.

"Then you may hold out your hand, Wharton."

He took up his cane. Wharton obeyed, and received two cuts on either hand, well laid on, too. Then each of the heroes of the Remove received the same. The cane stung their palms keenly in the experienced hand of the doctor, but they bore the infliction without a murmur.

Dr. Locke laid down the cane.

"You may go," he said quietly.

"Your pocket-money will be stopped to pay for the damage done, and I am afraid it will leave you penniless for some time. You have only yourselves to blame for that. You may go."

"Thank you, sir."

And the juniors left the study.

In the passage outside they looked at one another with dubious expressions, while they twisted their smarting hands under their arms.

"By George! The Head has come down heavy this time!" murmured Bob Cherry. "I say, what are we going to do for tin the next few weeks?"

"Blessed if I know!" said Nugent.

"I'm nearly broke now!"

"And I'm quite," said Harry Wharton. "I blued the last shilling in the tuckshop half an hour ago for tea."

"Fortunately, I am still in a somewhat cashful condition," murmured Hurree Singh. "It will be pleasurable to me to stand the treatfulness to my esteemed chums."

"Good old Inky!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, slapping him on the shoulder.

"But your pocket-money will be stopped, you know, so you will want to be economical, too."

"What I have is at the servicefulness of my respectable chums," answered Hurree Singh, "and if I fall short of the filthy lucre, I have that which I can raise money upon pawnfully."

"Eh! What's that?"

Hurree Singh slipped his hand into his pocket and drew out a little case, which he opened, and a dazzling glitter shot from the dark velvet lining.

"My hat! Is it a diamond?"

"Yes, and a very valuable one."

The juniors looked at the big stone in amazement. It was a very large diamond, beautifully cut, and its value must have been very great.

"Where did you get that from?" asked Bob Cherry.

The nabob smiled.

"I have many like it in the treasury of Bhanipur," he replied. "This one I had set as a tie-pin, as you see, but it was explained to me by the respectable Herr Rosenblum that it was not cautionful to wear it in public, as it might tempt the fingers of the thieftful persons. It is worth a hundred pounds."

"Well, you'd better keep it out of sight," said Harry Wharton. "It's not safe for a kid to have a stone like that about him. As for pawning it, I fancy no pawnbroker would lend you anything on it, Hurree Singh. He would want to be satisfied first that you had a right to it."

"I am Nabob of Bhanipur——"

"Never mind; pawnshops are barred," said Bob Cherry. "We'll rub along somehow without that. Let's get in to tea."

The chums of the Remove returned to their study. Billy Bunter had the kettle on the boil, and he made the tea as soon as he heard them coming.

In spite of their smarting hands, the juniors enjoyed their tea in the cosy study. And their late punishment had not the slightest effect so far as restoring peace in the Remove was concerned. For while they ate they discussed further plans of campaign, having for their object the defeat and complete setting-down of the alien members of the Form.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Broke.

The chums of the Remove soon forgot about the caning in the Head's study, but they felt the rest of their punishment for a longer time. The stoppage of their pocket-money was a serious matter. The charge for repairing the door of No. 1 study and replacing the broken lock was a considerable one, and it was probable that the pocket-money of the four chums would be stopped for weeks before the bill was quite paid.

A natural delicacy prevented the chums from acquainting Hoffman with the state of the case. They had taken the punishment upon their own shoulders rather than give the Germans away, and they felt that they were in honour bound to stick it out, as Bob Cherry expressed it.

"We can't say anything to the Deutschers," said Bob Cherry decidedly while the chums of the Remove were discussing the matter on Saturday. "That would spoil the whole thing. We've taken it on, and we must stick it out."

Harry Wharton nodded a full assent.

"You are quite right there, Cherry. Not a word to the Germans on the subject."

"Only what are we to do for tin?" said Nugent. "We have now come to the end of Hurree Singh's cash, and we are all stony!"

"I am sorrowful that I have no more cashfulness to place at the disposal of my respectable chums," said the nabob.

"My dear chap, you've come to the rescue like a nabob, and that's all right," said Bob Cherry. "Of course, we shall square up later. But the question is, what's to be done now?"

"The pawnful method——"

"Won't do, kid."

"But the diamond would fetch——"

"My dear chap, the first question the pawnbroker would ask would be, where

you got the diamond from," said Harry Wharton.

"I should acquaint him with the fact that I am the Nabob of Bhanipur, and that I have many such stones in my treasure-chamber in my Indian palace."

"But he might believe that you were romancing."

"If he had the doubtfulness of the veracity of a Nabob of Bhanipur, I should smite him upon the nasal feature with the powerfulness of the right arm."

"That wouldn't improve matters."

"It wouldn't improve his nasal feature, either. Besides, he might call a policeman, and have you run in."

"Anyway, it might come out that a Greyfriars fellow had been to a pawnshop, and that would mean a row with the Head," said Harry Wharton. "It won't do, Inky. We must think of something else."

"I have the bowful submission to the wilfulness of the working majority," said Hurree Singh gracefully.

But the "something else" was not easily thought of, and the juniors had to give up the discussion without having thought of any method of raising the wind.

It was Saturday, and a half-holiday, and on such an occasion the chums of the Remove particularly felt the need of a little cash in hand.

But they were all in a stony state, and every expedient devised for relieving their necessity was found to be impracticable.

There was nothing for it, as Harry Wharton finally said, but to grin and bear it.

But Hurree Singh's thoughts were busy on the subject.

He was pained by the thought that he could do nothing to help his chums in the hour of need, and his mind was still running upon the idea of pawning the diamond in the village, and so raising money.

The difficulties raised by his chums did not change his mind upon that point. As for the risk of the fact coming out that a Greyfriars fellow had been to a pawnshop, that would not happen if he were careful. It would be a good idea to take a friend along with him to prove that he was Nabob of Bhanipur, and had a right to dispose of the diamond if he wished. But as he intended to keep the pawning secret, at least for the present, he could not ask one of his chums, who had objected to the scheme. He turned the matter over in his mind, as he strolled out alone under the old Greyfriars elms, and he was still thinking it out when Hazeldene of the Remove joined him.

The nabob looked at him inquiringly.

"I say, I want to speak to you, Inky," said Hazeldene, in the ingratiating way which had earned him the nickname of Vaseline in the Remove. "Can you spare a minute?"

"Certainly!"

"I'm rather broke to-day; my allowance hasn't come down——"

"I am sorry——"

"Could you lend me half-a-crown till next Saturday?"

The Indian looked really concerned.

"I am regretfully sorrowful, Vaseline, but I cannot. I really wish that I could perform the lendfulness, but I have no cash in the pocket."

Hazeldene looked incredulous.

"You're always rolling in money," he said. "You get your allowance to-

day, too. Why don't you say at once that you won't?"

"If you imply doubtfulness upon my assertiveness, Vaseline, I shall wipe up the ground dustfully with you."

"Oh, keep your wool on! But——"

"The fact is, that I am in the brokeful condition, because my allowance has been stopped by the respectable and esteemed Head."

"What for?" was Hazeldene's natural question.

Hurree Singh explained.

"Then why don't you ask Hoffman to stand something?" asked Hazeldene.

Hurree Singh's lip curled.

"I do not wish to do anything of that sort. It is a secret from the esteemed German rotters."

"Ha, ha! Well, haven't you anything you can raise money on?" asked Hazeldene practically. "There's a popshop in the village."

"A what?"

"A pawnshop," said Hazeldene, colouring a little.

The nabob started eagerly.

"That is what I was thinking of," he said. "Will you come with me to raise money at the popping establishment, and I will lend you the sovereign or the two sovereigns, and will not ask you for the return payfulness?"

Hazeldene's eyes glimmered with covertousness at the idea.

"Will I come? Rather!"

"My gratefulness will be very great."

"But what have you to pawn?" asked Hazeldene.

The Indian drew the little case containing the diamond from his pocket. Hazeldene uttered an exclamation of amazement at the sight of the splendid stone.

"Why, that must be worth a heap of money!" he exclaimed.

"It is worth two thousand rupees, my esteemed friend."

"And is it yours?"

"I have many such in my treasure-chamber in the city of Bhanipur."

"My word! I wish I knew the way into that treasure-chamber!" grinned Hazeldene. "But, I say, the pawnbroker will want to know all about this."

"You can bear the witnessfulness that I am really the respectable Nabob of Bhanipur, and honestly the ludicrous possessor of the precious stone."

"Ha, ha! I suppose I can."

"Then let us proceed swiftly to the shop of the popper."

"May as well try, anyway."

"I will go and put on my coat, as the weather looks somewhat rainful, and I will join you in a few minutes," said Hurree Singh.

"Good! I'll wait for you at the gate."

The two Removites walked away. And barely had they disappeared when two grinning faces peered round the big trunk of a tree close at hand.

The faces belonged to Meunier and Gaston Artois. The French chums had heard the whole of the talk between Hurree Singh and Hazeldene.

"Mon bleu!" murmured Meunier, grinning expansively. "Vat zink you of zat, my shum?"

"Zey go to ze pawnshop," said Artois. "It would be ze good shoke to take all ze fellows and meet zem coming out, and cheer zem."

"He, he, he! Zat would be funny."

"Let us get ze garçons togezer, zen."

Adolphe Meunier shook his head.

"Zat would be funny, Gaston; but I have ze better idea in my head."

"Ciel! And vat is zat, mon ami?"

"Zey go to ze pop-establishment to pawn ze diamond——"

"C'est vrai! And zen?"

"Suppose, ven zey reach ze pop-establishment zey no longer have ze diamond?"

Artois stared at his chum.

"But how? In vat vay?"

"Come viz me."

Meunier, chuckling to himself over his idea, led the way towards the School House. He explained to Artois as he went.

"Ze Indian vill go oopstairs to put on ze greatcoat. Ve shall find him alone."

"Zat is true."

"Ve sall collair him and take ze case from his pocket——"

"But zen he vill know zat ze diamond is gone!"

"Ve must do it vizout his know-ing."

"Good!—if it can be done."

"You vill see. You sit on ze head and rub ze features in ze carpet, and he vill not be sinking of anything at ze time."

"Ha, ha, ha! Zat is right."

"Ve put a marble in ze case instead of ze diamond!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Zen ze pawnbroker have zat offered to him! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" cackled Artois.

"I zink ze veeze vill vork."

"I zink so. Ha, ha, ha!"

And the French lads hurried into the house and up the stairs, on the track of the unsuspecting Hurree Singh.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### The Popping Sahib Loses His Temper.

Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh was changing his coat without a suspicion that the French juniors knew anything about his project, or had any knowledge of the existence of the diamond. When two mischievous faces looked in at the door he did not observe them, and he did not know that foes were at hand till he heard a sudden rush of feet—and then it was too late!

"Seize him!"

He was grasped and dragged to the floor before he could think of resistance. He went down with a bump, and Gaston Artois sprawled over him, and Adolphe Meunier grasped him round the neck and flattened his princely features upon the floor.

"Oh! Ow! Leave off!"

"You vas the prisoner, zen!"

"I will dustfully wipe up the floor with you!"

"Sit on ze nigger harder, Gaston!"

"Oui, oui!" grinned Gaston.

"Vill you surrender now?"

"No, I will not surrender to you Frenchful bounders!" gasped Hurree Singh, struggling manfully under the weight of the two juniors.

His resistance did not trouble the French chums much. In the struggle it was easy for Meunier to slip his hand into the pocket where he had seen Hurree Singh replace the case containing the diamond.

Hurree Singh, with his face in rough contact with the carpet, could not see either that the French lad had taken the case, or what he was doing with it.

In a few moments it was slipped back into his pocket, and he was totally unconscious of the whole proceeding.

"Now will you surrender?"

"Never!"

"Zen ve vill tie you up to ze shair and leave you here," grinned Adolphe Meunier.

Hurree Singh changed his mind. He thought of Hazeldene waiting for him at the gate of Greyfriars, and of the necessity of raising money for the needs of Study No. 1 by taking the diamond down to the pawnshop in the village.

"I—I surrender, you rotters!" he gasped. "You are twofully to one superior in number, and there is no disgracefulness in surrendering to the great oddfulness."

"You confess zat you are beaten?"

"Certainly!"

"Zen ve vill allow you to go," said Meunier, rising. "Let ze niggair get up, my shum."

And Hurree Singh was allowed to rise.

He got upon his feet, looking very dusty and wrathful. He rubbed the dust from his clothes, and eyed the French chums indignantly.

"I would inflict upon you the severe thrashfulness if I had time!" he exclaimed. "Another time I vill visit you with the condignful punishment."

The French juniors grinned as they walked away. Out of sight of the nabob, they hugged each other with glee.

"He know nozzing of vat I have do," said Meunier.

"Nozzing vatefer," grinned Artois. "He vill go down to ze pop-establishment——"

"Viz ze marble in ze case. Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is too funny! Ha, ha, ha!"

Hurree Singh came out, and gave the French juniors a wrathful look as he passed them. Hazeldene was waiting for him at the gate, and the two walked down the lane together.

"You've been a long time," said Hazeldene.

Hurree Singh explained the cause of his delay.

"Well, it doesn't matter," said Hazeldene. "The shop keeps open all the afternoon. We had better take care not to be seen going into it. There would be a row if it were known at the school that a Greyfriars fellow had been to the pawnbroker's, I can tell you."

"That is quite rightfully the case, my respectable friend. It is only an emergency of extreme greatness which justifies the breaking of the rule."

"Oh, blow that!" said the less conscientious Hazeldene.

The juniors soon reached the village, and entered the pawning establishment quietly and quickly by the side door. A young man with black eyes and a very prominent nose asked them what he could do for them.

Hurree Singh, though he was making the sacrifice for the sake of his friends, felt a keen sense of uneasiness at really finding himself inside a pawnbroker's shop.

He coloured a little as he met the eyes of the young man with the prominent nose, and felt hastily in his pocket for the case.

"I believe that you perform the lendfulness to the needy person?" he remarked. "I am in want of cash."

"Do you mean that you want to pawn something?"

"That's it," said Hazeldene. "Cut the cackle, Inky, and let's get out."

"Certainly!"

"Well, what is it you wish to pledge?"

Hurree Singh handed the case over the counter.

"I wish to raise a loan upon that diamond, if you please. It is worth two thousand rupees, but I wish you to lend me only the common or garden ten-pound note, in order to increase the easyness of the future redemption."

The young man behind the counter opened the case. He looked at what it contained, and then looked at the beaming face of Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. Then he looked at the stone again. The expression of his face was very grim.

He could only possibly conclude that the two Greyfriars juniors had come into the shop with the deliberate object of working off a joke upon him upon his busiest day in the week, and his wrath naturally rose at the thought.

"So you want to raise money on this, do you?" he asked.

"Certainly."

"It's worth a hundred pounds," said Hazeldene; "but we only want a tenner on it."

"You only want ten pounds? Why not make it twenty?"

"The ten will do, thank you, my respectable popping friend," said the nabob. "I wish, as I had the honour of mentioning, to make more easyful the redemption of the popped article."

"I see," said the young man, with ominous quietness. "Wait just a minute, will you?"

"Certainly."

The young man disappeared for a moment, and the next moment he came out from behind the counter, and seized the two juniors by the collar, one in each hand.

He was a powerfully-built young man, and the juniors were too taken by surprise to resist, and they were helpless in his hands.

"So you wish to pawn this valuable stone for ten pounds, do you?" said the young man wrathfully. "I'll teach you!"

"What's the matter?" gasped Hazeldene.

"The popping person is insaneful!"

"If you don't want to lend the money—"

"Return my valuable diamond—"

"Out you go!"

With two strong jerks, the young man dragged them to the door, kicked it open, and then slung them out across the pavement.

The amazed juniors went reeling away, and fell sprawling.

They sat up on the pavement and stared at each other, and at the young man standing glaring wrathfully at them from the doorway of the pawnshop.

"He is dangerously insane!" gasped the nabob.

"Go away, you young scoundrels, or I'll come out to you!"

"He's off his rocker, for a cert."

"Get away from here!"

"Return me my valuable diamond, and I will execute the swift departfulness!" exclaimed the nabob, rising to his feet. "You are a rude and brutal individual, and I despise you. Return me the diamond!"

"There you are!"

The young man returned the case containing the stone with a whiz. It struck Hurree Singh on the nose, and elicited a sharp cry. Then it fell to the pavement.

The door of the shop closed with a slam.

Hurree Singh rubbed his nose in rueful amazement. He could not comprehend the conduct of the young man in the least, except upon the supposition that he was insane. And the young man had looked excited and angry, but hardly insane.

"What does it mean, Vaseline?"

"Blessed if I know, unless he's right off his giddy rocker!" growled Hazeldene, rubbing his limbs ruefully.

Hurree Singh glanced at the box on the pavement. It had jerked open in the fall, and the stone had rolled out of it; and the nabob gave a cry of astonishment at the sight of it.

"Look!"

"What's the matter?"

"My diamond is gone!"

"What?"

"This worthless stone is put in the place of it," said Hurree Singh, picking up the case and the stone and regarding both in utter bewilderment.

Hazeldene gave a snort.

"Oh, I see; that explains. No wonder he got wild when you offered him a marble and asked him to lend you ten pounds on it, you utter ass!"

"But the diamond was in the case."

"Rats! You've made an idiotic mistake."

"But it was in the case when I showed it you under the trees at Greyfriars."

"I know it was."

"And I have the complete certainfulness that I have not opened the case since," said Hurree Singh.

Hazeldene sniffed.

"You must have, and forgotten about it—or else someone has played a trick on you. My word, I see it now!"

"What do you see, my respectable friend?"

"One of the biggest asses at Greyfriars," growled Hazeldene. "Of course, that is what Meunier and Artois were up to when they collared you before you came out; they managed to change the diamond for the marble somehow."

"Surely it is impossible!"

"Rats!" growled Hazeldene.

"Perhaps it is so; but I do not understand—"

"Well, it's all up now, and we've had our journey for nothing," said Hazeldene. "I'm off, Inky."

"Do not be too hasty, Vaseline. I can take in my watch to the popping gentleman, and obtain the loanful consideration on that."

Hazeldene grinned.

"I don't suppose you'll find him in a very reasonable mood just now, Inky. I'd advise you not to go into that shop again."

"But surely he would not be so rashful as to refuse the good stroke of business?" urged the nabob.

"Well, try him, that's all!"

"Come in with me."

"No, thanks; I'll wait for you here."

"Very well. I am sure he will listen to reason when I give him the complete explanation of the extremely great error I have fallen into with regard to the diamond."

And Hurree Singh re-entered the shop.

The young man behind the counter stared at him, apparently hardly able to believe his eyes at the sight of the dusky nabob.

"So you've come back again!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sahib; I wish to make the polite and esteemed explanation—"

"Get out!"

"But I wish to explain—"

"Are you going?"

"I beg of you to have the esteemed patience, my worthy popping-sahib, until I have made the respectful explanation."

The popping-sahib seemed to have got quite to the end of his esteemed patience. He rushed round from behind the counter and dashed at the nabob.

Hurree Singh saw that it was dangerous to linger, and that there was no time for esteemed explanations just then. He made a spring for the door.

He had thrown it open again, and was just darting out, when the young man reached him, and took a running kick. His boot gave the nabob a powerful lift behind, and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh went out flying, and landed on his hands and knees on the pavement.

Hazeldene burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha! I thought it would end like that!"

The young man of the shop bestowed a glare upon the two juniors, and slammed the door, and Hurree Singh rose rather painfully to his feet.

"I consider that popping-sahib is a rudeful and brutal scoundrel," he remarked. "I wish my worthy chums were here, and we would raid the shop and give him what you English call an elevated old time!"

"Ha, ha! Come along!"

"I suppose there are no other popping-establishments in the village?" asked Hurree Singh, loth to give up his idea of raising the wind.

"Not likely."

"Then we had better return to Greyfriars."

And the juniors walked rather disconsolately back to the school. Harry Wharton met them in the Close, with a rather puzzled expression upon his face.

"I've been looking for you, Hurree Singh," he exclaimed.

"I have been to the esteemed village. What is it?"

"Meunier gave me this to give you," said Harry, extending a small packet to the nabob. "He made no explanation, but just shoved it into my hand, and said it was for you—something that belonged to you."

Hurree Singh took the packet and opened it. He suspected what it was, and he was not mistaken. The opening of the little packet disclosed the glittering diamond of Bhanipur, and Harry Wharton gazed at it in amazement.

"What does that mean, Hurree Singh?"

And the nabob, with a beautiful blush in his dusky face, explained; and Wharton shouted with laughter. And so did the rest of the Remove when Hazeldene told them the story.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### A Riot in the Remove.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir?"

"I leave you in charge of the class for a few minutes."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch cast a rather doubtful glance for a moment at the Remove as he crossed to the door. A fog had just brought him in a note. It was Monday morning, and the Remove



were hard at work in their class-room—English, French and German all grinding away at Latin. The note evidently necessitated the departure of the Remove-master for a time, and he was dubious as to how his unruly class would conduct itself in his absence.

"You will be quiet, boys, and continue your work, while I am gone," said Mr. Quelch. "I will send in a prefect in a few minutes, to take charge of the class."

"Yes, sir," said a dozen voices.

And the Remove-master left the room.

The moment he had done so, and the door was closed, a buzz of voices rose in the room; English, French and German were mixed in a babel.

"Shut up, you fellows!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "You heard what Mr. Quelch said."

"Who vas you?" demanded Fritz Hoffman, with an air of impartial inquiry, as if he really wanted to know.

"I have been left in charge of the class by Mr. Quelch."

"Pish!" exclaimed Adolphe Meunier. "Rats! Rot! Bosh!"

Wharton's eyes glared.

"Did you say 'bosh' to me?" he exclaimed.

"Oui; I said 'bosh,' and I said 'rats,' and 'pish!'" said Meunier defiantly.

"Keep quiet!"

"Bah! Keep quiet viz yourself!"

"Oh, shut up!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We shall all get into a row if there's a kick-up in the class-room."

"That is extremely correct," said Hurree Singh. "I request these foreig'n rotters to shut up their talkfulness."

"You vas vun nigger, Inky."

"Who cares for ye English pigs?"

"Zat is right, you Sherman rottair!"

"Who vas you call vun rotter, Adolphe Meunier?"

"You yourself, Hoffman; you vas ze chief rottair, and ze ozers—"

"I vill poonch te nose of you—"

"Shut up!" roared Harry Wharton.

"If you two sets of asses begin to row now, I will wade in and knock your heads together!"

"Ciel! If you vas touch my head, I vipe ze floor viz you!"

"Ach! Let him try to knock te head, tat is all!" And Fritz Hoffman, by way of showing his independence, began to whistle "The Watch on the Rhine" in his shrillest tones.

Meunier, not to be outdone, started whistling the "Marseillaise."

"Will you shut up?"

"Non!"

"Nein!"

And the French boys, getting into the spirit of the thing, set up their national song at the top of their voices.

The Germans roared back "Der Wacht am Rhein" in stentorian tones. The result was a din that could be heard over half Greyfriars.

"Es braust ein Ruf wie Donnerhall!" roared the German juniors.

"Allons, enfants de la patrie!" yelled back the French boys.

"Wie Schwertgeklirr und Wogenprall!"

"Le jour de gloire est arrive!"

"Zum Rhein, zum Rhein, zum Deutschen Rhein!"

"Contre nous de la tyrannie—"

"Wer will des Stromes Huter Sein?"

"My only hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"They'll have the roof off soon!"

"The only thing to do is to start an opposition," exclaimed Hazeldene.

"What price 'Rule, Britannia!'"

There was a yell of approval. The juniors struck up in a roar, and their voices drowned the fewer foreigners in a deafening din of sound.

"Rule, Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!"

"Britons never, never, never—"

"Aux armes, citoyens—"

"Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein—"

"Rule, Britannia—"

It is safe to say that no such terrific pandemonium had ever disturbed a classroom at Greyfriars before. Harry Wharton had given up the idea of attempting to keep order.

The whole Remove was on the war-path now, each junior seeking to make the greatest possible amount of noise, as if for a wager.

There were more English lads than French and German put together, so

"Rule, Britannia!" soon drowned both the "Marseillaise" and "Der Wacht am Rhein," and the foreign lads thereupon set to work stamping and beating the desks with rulers to drown the vocal efforts of the English juniors.

The juniors were not slow to reply in kind. The uproar was terrific.

"My word!" murmured Nugent.

"There will be a row!"

"There's one already, I imagine," grinned Bob Cherry.

"My solitary hat!" exclaimed Hurree Singh. "The noise will attract the prefects, and we shall be imposed upon without mercifulness."

"Ha, ha! Don't you know a Hindoo song, Hurree Singh, just to make the thing complete?" said Hazeldene.

"The idea is rippingful," said the nabob.

And his voice at once added to the din, chanting some absolutely tuneless and incomprehensible lay of Bhanipur.

There was an angry voice at the door, as Carberry of the Sixth looked in. He was evidently the prefect sent by Mr. Quelch to take charge of the unruly Remove during the temporary absence of the Form-master.

"Shut up, you young blackguards!"

But the Removites were too wildly excited by this time to heed him. It is quite probable that had Mr. Quelch himself come in then, he would have found it extremely difficult to restore order in the classroom; and so it was not likely that the Remove would pay much attention to Carberry, the most unpopular prefect at Greyfriars.

"Be quiet! Do you hear?" roared Carberry.

It was not easy to hear in the din, and certainly none of the Removites heeded. The uproar continued without abatement, and wildly mingled snatches of French and German and English echoed out into the corridors, and reached other classrooms and amazed all who heard.

"Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein."

"Fest steht und treu die Wacht, die Wacht am Rhein—"

"Aux armes, citoyens!"

"Formez vos bataillons—"

"This was the charter, the charter of the land,

And guardian angels sang the strain,

"Rule, Britannia—"

"Will you shut up, you young demons?" shrieked Carberry, and he dashed at the Remove, smiting right and left with the cane he had snatched from the Form-master's desk.

Then some of the singers ceased their song, and howled with pain instead.

Hoffman received a cut across the

cheek, and he snatched at the cane, and tore it from the prefect's hand.

Carberry seized him by the collar, and dragged him out before the class, and began to box his ears savagely.

This was too much for Karl Lutz, who rushed gallantly to the aid of his leader, and seized the prefect round the neck from behind, and dragged him to the floor. In his excitement he plumped down upon him, and began to jam his features on the hard linoleum, and Carberry gasped for help.

Harry Wharton dragged the excited Lutz off his victim, and the next moment was seized by Hoffman, and they wrestled and fought, heedless of everyone else.

The chums of the Remove dashed to the rescue, and in a twinkling English and Germans were mixed up in a wild affray. In a case like this, Meunier and his friends sided with the weaker party, and they scrambled to the aid of the Germans, so that the three parties were mingled in a general combat before the amazed Carberry could get upon his feet.

The prefect gazed about him in bewilderment.

French, German and English were fighting like tigers, utterly forgetful of the fact that they were in a classroom in school hours, and that the Form-master might return at any moment.

A rush of excited juniors sent the prefect flying, and he bumped on the floor with half a dozen youngsters sprawling over him. But by this time the din had attracted general attention, and Mr. Quelch was returning to the Form-room with swift strides. The Remove-master arrived in the doorway, and he stood gazing in upon the scene in blank amazement.

"Boys!"

He roared out the words.

At any other time the mere sight of Mr. Quelch's angry face would have silenced the Remove and reduced them to obedience. But the juniors had fairly broken loose now. No one paid the least heed to the Remove-master's angry voice; most of the excited youngsters did not even know he was there.

"Boys! Cease this unseemly riot instantly!"

But the unseemly riot showed no signs of abating.

"Carberry! How dare you allow this?"

"How could I help it?" hooted Carberry, staggering to his feet. "The young demons have knocked me about and—"

"Silence! You should not answer me like that!"

"Well, it wasn't my fault! They want flogging all round—"

"You can go, Carberry."

"Jolly glad to!" muttered the prefect, as he retreated into the passage.

"Go to the Sixth Form-room and tell the Head that I should be glad if he could come here at once."

"Certainly, sir."

The prefect hurried away, and Mr. Quelch gazed in upon the riot in grim silence. His voice had been unheeded by the rioters; it remained to be seen whether the Head's would be unheeded, too.

There was a rustle of a gown in the passage, and the Head of Greyfriars came along to the Remove-room with swift strides.

"My dear Mr. Quelch—"

"Look!" exclaimed the Form-

master, raising his finger and pointing dramatically into the room.

The doctor looked, and his face became like a thundercloud.

"Bless my soul! I can scarcely believe my eyes, Mr. Quelch! How did this happen?"

"I was compelled to leave the room for a few minutes, sir, and before the prefect I sent could arrive this riot broke out."

"It is incredible—unparalleled! Boys!"

The doctor's voice rang through the classroom.

"Boys! Cease this instantly!"

There was a sudden hush.

"The Head!" gasped Harry Wharton.

And the dreaded word passed round the Remove.

"The Head!"

The fighting ceased as if by magic.

The Removites, dusty and dishevelled and bruised and battered, stood with crimson faces, meeting the angry glare of the Head of Greyfriars, and a terrible silence fell upon the room.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Farewell.

A pin might have been heard to fall in the Remove classroom. The Head looked at the rioters, and the rioters looked at the Head.

As Hurree Singh said afterwards, in describing the scene to some old friends, the terribleness of the occasion was unparallelogrammed.

"Boys!"

His tone was quiet now, but to the ears of the hushed Remove it seemed like thunder echoing through the silent room.

"I can scarcely believe my ears," the Head continued, looking straight at the red and dusty rebels. "I can scarcely believe my eyes. I have never beheld such a scene of unparalleled hooliganism."

"If you please, sir—"

"Silence, Hoffman!"

"S'il vous plait, Monsieur le Docteur—"

"Silence, Meunier!"

The doctor's glance seemed to cut the rioters like a knife.

"The whole Form has been concerned in this outrageous tumult," he

said, "Every boy in the Remove will receive a caning after school, and will come to my study for that purpose."

"Certainly, dear sir."

"Every boy will write out five hundred lines from Virgil, and will perform this task the next half-holiday, and will remain in during all leisure hours until the task is completed."

The Remove gasped. They had expected something severe, but this was the sledge-hammer coming down with a vengeance!"

"That is all," said the Head sternly. "And if that does not teach the Form discipline, we will see what severer measures will effect."

The Remove were silent.

"Has any one of you," went on the Head, "any explanation to give—any excuse to make for this outrageous conduct?"

There was a muttering of voices, but Harry Wharton was the only one who spoke out.

"If you please, sir, we didn't mean any real harm—"

Dr. Locke smiled grimly.

"You don't consider it harmful to riot in the classroom, Wharton?"

(Continued on page 13.)

**VENTRILQUIST'S Double Throat; fits roof of mouth; astonishes and mystifies; sing like a canary, whine like a puppy, and imitate birds and beasts. Ventriloquism Treatise free. Sixpence each, four for 1s.—BENSON (Dept. 6), 259, Pentonville Road, London, N.**

**89 CONJURING TRICKS.** 57 Joke Tricks, 60 Puzzles, 60 Games, 2 Love Letters, 420 Jokes, 15 Shadowgraphs, 42 Money-making Secrets (worth £20), and 1,000 more stupendous attractions, 7d. P.O. cheques.—HUGHES, PUBLISHER, Harborne, B'HAM. Grand Comical Novelty War Packets, 7d.

**SPORT.** The Sure Shot Catapult, with quantity of Shot, 1/-. Net Traps, catch any birds alive, 1/- and 1/3. Best Bird Lime, 4d. tin. All post free.—WICKS BROS., NORWICH.

**84 CONJURING TRICKS** 2,000 Riddles and 40 Card Tricks, only 5d.; Wrestling, Boxing, and Jujitsu Instructor, 7d.; "How to Dance," 7d.; 100 Famous Comic Recitations, 7d.; Minstrel Songs and Dialogues, 7d. 10s. 6d. all post paid. Lists free.—G. WILKES & CO., Publishers, Stockton, Regy.

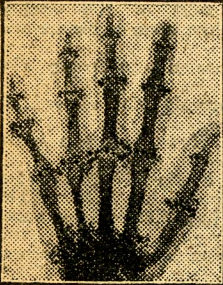
**BLUSHING.** Famous Doctor's Recipe for this most distressing complaint, 1s. 1d. Never fails. Hundreds Testimonials. Mr. GEORGE, 63, STRODE ROAD, CLEVEDON.

**FUN FOR 6d.** Ventriloquist's Double Throat; fits roof of mouth; astonishes and mystifies; sing like a canary, whine like a puppy, and imitate birds and beasts. Sixpence each, four for 1s. Novelty catalogue and art of Ventriloquism included Free. Satisfaction guaranteed.—BRITISH SUPPLY CO., ILKESTON.

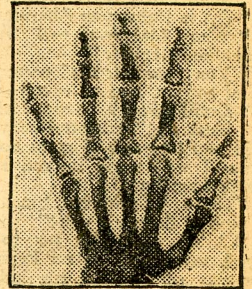
Applications with regard to Advertisement space in this paper should be addressed: Advertisement Manager, "Pluck" Series, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

# RHEUMATISM

**GREAT FREE DISTRIBUTION of 4/6 BOXES of the REMARKABLE U.A.E. TREATMENT.**



Hand of a lady, showing the position of the grains of Uric Acid, which cause the excruciating agonies of Rheumatism. Note the distorted fingers.



The same hand, showing the joints free from Uric Acid and the fingers in their natural shape.

I want everyone suffering from Rheumatism, Lumbago, Neuralgia, Sciatica or Gout to send me their name and address, so that I can send them **FREE a 4s. 6d. box** of the world-famous U.A.E. (Uric Acid Expeller). I want to convince every sufferer at my expense that U.A.E. does what thousands of so-called remedies have failed to accomplish—**ACTUALLY CURES RHEUMATISM, LUMBAGO, NEURALGIA, GOUT,** and all Uric Acid complaints. I know it does. I am sure of it, and I want you to know it and be sure of it.

You cannot coax Rheumatism out through the feet or skin with plasters or belts, you cannot tease it out with Liniments or Embrocations. **YOU MUST DRIVE THE URIC ACID—WHICH CAUSES THESE COMPLAINTS—OUT OF THE BLOOD.** This is just what this great Rheumatic Remedy U.A.E. does. It **EXPELS the CAUSE** and that is why it cures Rheumatism, Gout, Lumbago, Neuralgia, Sciatica, etc. It cures the sharp, shooting pains, aching muscles, swollen limbs, cramped and stiffened joints, and it cures quickly. **I CAN PROVE IT TO YOU.** It does not matter what form of Rheumatism you have or how long you have had it. It does not matter what remedies you have tried. U.A.E. and Uric Acid cannot exist

together in the same blood. **READ OFFER BELOW AND WRITE AT ONCE.** If you do not suffer yourself draw the attention of someone who does to this announcement. **Do Not Suffer! There is a Cure! I will Prove to You the Value of The U.A.E. Treatment.**

Simply fill in the Coupon at the foot (or write, mentioning this paper), and post me to-day, and I will send you a **4/6 box** of U.A.E. to try, together with Analyst's certificate of purity, doctors' opinions, and a book entitled, "The Origin, Nature, and Treatment of Uric Acid Disorders," also a few extracts from the many thousands of testimonials received. Write at once; do not delay until your constitution is wrecked or your heart injured by Rheumatic poison.

**FREE 4/6 TREATMENT COUPON.**

The Secretary, The U.A.E. Laboratories, 190, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Dear Sir.—Please send me a Free Treatment of U.A.E., also a book entitled "The Origin, Nature, and Treatment of Uric Acid Disorders." I enclose 2d. (stamps) for postage

NAME.....

(W) ADDRESS.....



A complete wreck—too crippled to work.



Result—the full vigour and healthy brightness of youth enjoyed once again.

"Well, sir, we didn't stop to think."

"The circumstances of the case were too hasty and hurried, sahib, and we were carried away by excitement of our pedal extremities," explained the nabob.

"Ahem! I have one word more to say to you—news that will probably be welcome to the members of this Form who came here from Beechwood."

There was a general movement of interest.

A rumour had been spreading about Greyfriars for the past few days that there was to be a revival of the old school at Beechwood, and that Herr Rosenblum would return there with the boys he had brought to Greyfriars.

"I have to inform you," resumed the Doctor impressively, "that Herr Rosenblum will be leaving Greyfriars in a few days, and that he returns to his former school, as headmaster, Beechwood Academy being now revived."

"Vive Herr Rosenblum!"

"Hoch, hoch!"

It was an enthusiastic shout from the foreign members of the Greyfriars Remove.

The Head's stern brow relaxed a little.

"Does this news please you, my boys?"

"Oui, oui!" shouted Meunier.

"Ja, ja, mein Herr!" exclaimed Hoffman. "Ve sall all pe glad as efer vas to return mit ourselves to our old school."

"I shall be sorrowful to leave Greyfriars, but it will be pleasurable to me to see Beechwood and my old chum Redfern again," purred Hurree Singh.

"This change will take place in a few days," said the Head. "In the meantime, I hope you will try to live in peace with one another."

"Certainly, sir!"

"We'll do our best."

"We shall exert the extreme bestfulness of our ability, worthy sahib."

"Ach, tat is goot!"

"Ve vill live in peace viz ze Shermans," said Meunier magnanimously.

"I will trust you, my boys."

And the Doctor turned and strode away with a rustle.

"Resume your places," said Mr. Quelch, and the Removites sat down, and the lesson was resumed; but it is safe to say that neither master nor pupils bestowed much attention upon it.

After the school was dismissed, the four chums met in their study to discuss the new development.

"I'm sorry you're going, Inky," said Bob Cherry. "We ought to give a farewell feed, but it can't be did while we're in this state of stony brokenness."

"We ought to manage it somehow," said Harry Wharton. "I could take my watch down to Solomonson's in the village—"

"Or I my diamond studs," said Nugent.

There was a knock at the door.

"Come in!" called out Wharton.

It was Fritz Hoffman who entered.

The Remove chums looked rather on the alert, but the German junior soon showed that his visit was made in a friendly spirit.

"Dere vill pe no more rows!" he exclaimed, with a wave of his fat hand.

"Ve vill live like te lambs in te fold till ve leave Greyfriars now."

"We're willing, if you are."

"Ve sall haf plenty of rows ven ve return to Beechwood," said Hoffman,

with a grin. "No more at Greyfriars. But tat is not all. We haf heard apout you losing all your bocket-money pe cause of te door tat vas proken."

"What about that, Hoffman?"

The German took a little bag from his pocket, and poured out a heap of silver on the table. The chums of the Remove looked at it in amazement.

"What the dickens is all that for?" demanded Harry Wharton.

The German junior gave them a beaming smile.

"Ve make te suscription," he said.

"Ve bass round te hat."

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"No," said Hoffman innocently.

"My hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Vy for you laff? Ve pass te hat round, und make a suscription, vat you Engleesh call fork out all round. You take te cash."

Four shakes of four heads answered the German.

"Can't be did," said Harry Wharton decidedly. "Couldn't think of it."

The German looked rather hurt.

"I tink you should take it—ve proke te door, und—"

"It's impossible."

"But you vas proke—"

"Yes, I know we are." A sudden thought flashed into Harry Wharton's mind, and he went on: "I'll tell you what. We'll take it as a loan to tide us over this stony time, and return you a postal-order for it afterwards at Beechwood."

"Goot! Tat is all right!"

"Then it's settled. We'll give a big feed as a sort of farewell feast, you know, and you'll all come?"

"Mit pleasures."

And Fritz Hoffman grinned genially, and left the study.

"Jolly good sort!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hallo, here's Froggy!"

Adolphe Meunier put his head into the study.

"Vat you zink of vat ze Head say?" he demanded. "Sall ve all live in peace wiz ourselves till ve pack to Beechwood?"

"Yes, rather."

"Zen ve are villing," said Meunier.

"Ve give a big feast before ve go, and ve ask you all to come—you and ze Shermans."

"We're giving one ourselves—"

"Zen ve had better make a pool of it, and make it one bigger feed," said Meunier.

"Good wheeze!"

And the idea was adopted. The preparations for the farewell feast occu-

ried the minds of the juniors during the next few days, and left them no time for disputing—to say nothing of the time taken up by the heavy impositions earned by the row in the class-room.

The last few days which the aliens spent at Greyfriars passed quietly enough. There had never been any ill-feeling at the bottom of the disputes, and the juniors were on their very best behaviour now. And when the day came for Herr Rosenblum and his pupils to go, the whole Remove marched down to the station to see them off.

The parting was genial on both sides; but especially affectionate was the separation of Hurree Jamset Singh from the chums of the Remove.

"I have enormous afflictedness of the heart to see you no morefully," the nabob said, his English growing more mixed in his emotion. "I am departfully sorry to leave the esteemed Greyfriars and my worthy and respectable chums. I shall always regard you rememberfully, and I shall correspondingly write to you from Beechwood."

And the chums of the Remove shook hands with him, and the nabob hugged them one and all before he got into the train. And then he leaned out of the carriage window, and shook hands with Harry Wharton again, and left a small object wrapped in paper in his palm.

"Hallo, what's this?" exclaimed Harry, in amazement.

The nabob smiled.

"A parting gift from a nabob," he replied. "Do not look at it till I am gone. Mind, I give it to you, and give it with all my heartfelt esteem, and these worthy and respectable chums are honourful witnesses of the circumstance."

"We are!" grinned the worthy and respectable Removites.

"But I say—"

The train began to move, and Hurree Singh waved his hand.

"You will keep it for my sake, Wharton, you who have been my best-friend."

And the nabob's dusky face was so earnest that Harry, though he had not the faintest idea of what was in the parcel, and suspected that it contained something of value which he would not like to accept, could not but promise that he would keep it.

The train rolled on.

The windows were crammed with French and German faces and waving caps, and from one window beamed the full moon countenance of Herr Rosenblum, and his fat hand waved farewell.

The Greyfriars lads waved their caps and shouted.

"Good-bye! Good-bye!"

"Adieu!" came ringing back from the departing train. "Leb'wohl!"

And the Beechwood boys were gone.

The chums of the Remove turned to leave the station. Wharton had for the moment forgotten the little package in his hand, but Bob Cherry called his attention to it.

"What the dickens is it, Harry?" he asked.

Wharton unfastened the little package.

"My hat!" exclaimed he. "I can't keep this. But—I said I would—I shall have to keep it now! But what on earth am I to do with it?"

For it was the nabob's diamond that glimmered in the palm of his hand!

THE END.

Another Magnificent Long,  
Complete School Tale of  
Harry Wharton & Co.

NEXT  
THURSDAY.

Entitled:

"THE PHANTOM  
FUGITIVE!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Order your copy of "The  
Dreadnought" in advance.

NEXT WEEK'S GRAND HARRY WHARTON STORY IS ENTITLED: "THE PHANTOM FUGITIVE!"

THE FIRST BUMPER INSTALMENT OF OUR GREAT NEW SERIAL!

# The Merchant's Secret!

*The Opening Instalment of Our Powerful New Serial Story, Introducing* **SEXTON BLAKE** *The World-Famous Detective;* **EZRA Q. MAITLAND,** *and* **BROADWAY KATE.**



**AUTHOR'S NOTE.**—For the benefit of those readers of 'The Dreadnought' who have not followed the previous stories dealing with **SEXTON BLAKE'S** colossal struggles with **THE GREAT AMERICAN CRIMINAL, EZRA Q. MAITLAND,** it may be as well to state that the famous detective, together with his friend **FENLOCK FAWN,** of the **NEW YORK POLICE,** first encountered **MAITLAND,** his wife **BROADWAY KATE,** and their criminal accomplice the Chinaman **WANG,** when Maitland plotted with a **GERMAN SECRET SERVICE AGENT** named **FRANZ VON STOLTZ** to betray a liner, carrying a million of British money, to Germany.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

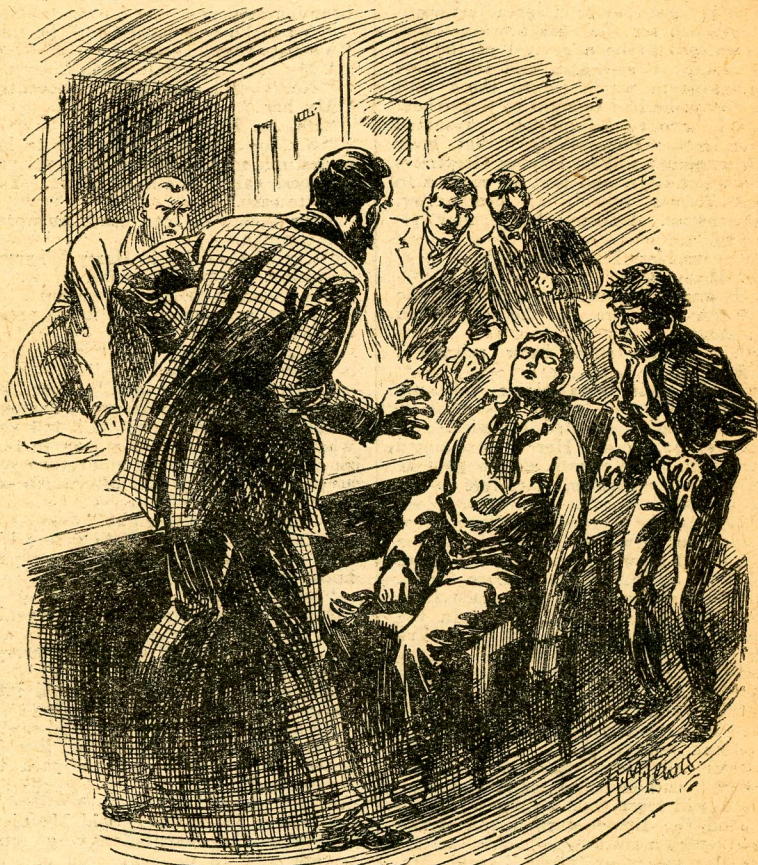
### The Cable from Fenlock Fawn.

Sexton Blake's face looked just a trifle more drawn and pale than was his wont as he bent over the glass bowl upon the marble slab running down one side of his small but adequately fitted laboratory.

The famous detective, with the aid of his young assistant, Tinker, was engaged in making an important experiment—important because its result would decide whether a fellow-being was to live or die. If the dark stains upon the fragment of cloth which Sexton Blake had pressed to the bottom of the bowl proved to have been caused by human blood, the arm of the law would stretch forth, a man would lie in prison accused of a foul and callous murder, and eventually he would die by the rope.

The burly, red-faced individual who had been seated in a desk-chair near at hand rose to his feet, and peered with a strange eagerness over Sexton Blake's shoulder, for he had observed that the experiment had almost reached its end.

This man was Detective-inspector Martin, of Scotland Yard, an official whom the Baker Street detective was at all times pleased to have as an ally and colleague. True, Martin was a trifle self-opinionated, and rather too apt to be hot-headed and impetuous, but at all times he was ready to show the bull



"Donnerwetter!" Von Stoltz gasped. "I know him now! He is the assistant of Sexton Blake."

dog pluck that was in him, and Sexton Blake admitted and realised the fact.

Sexton Blake took a bottle from his assistant's hand, and carefully let ten drops of the chemical it contained trickle into the liquid in the bowl, which was at the moment a murky brown in colour.

"If the stains were not made by the blood of some animal, the poacher Jefson is our man, Mr. Blake," Inspector Martin said. "However, there's not much doubt about it in my mind, and I'm sorry I have delayed his arrest so long."

Sexton Blake's lids had been drooping until he appeared listless, almost sleepy, but now they were momentarily raised, to show that his eyes were very hard and bright.

"Yet you have no definite proof," the detective murmured, as he took a slip of sensitised paper from a box upon the slab.

Martin shrugged his broad shoulders.

"Well, no," he admitted slowly. "But it is known that the fellow Jef-

son threatened to kill Squire Higgins after—"

"You should never rely upon circumstantial evidence to any great extent, my friend," Sexton Blake interrupted quietly. "It is often most misleading. Ah, it is ready! Now let us see what we shall see!"

The contents of the glass bowl had now grown perfectly colourless, and, his features still quite immobile and betraying no outward sign of interest, Sexton Blake dipped the slip of paper into the liquid in the bowl.

"If it turns pink, the stains were caused by human blood," Martin muttered, with the air of one repeating a lesson. "It's pretty certain, I'm thinking, that—"

The worthy official broke off, and frowned down at the bowl and its contents.

Slowly the hue of the paper was changing—but it was not to pink.

"It's turning blue, sir!" Tinker exclaimed excitedly. "It's turning blue, which means—"

"That Jefson is not the murderer, my lad," his master finished quietly.

"The stains were probably made by the blood of a rabbit or pheasant, as I suggested in the first instance."

Inspector Martin glared at the inoffensive slip of paper as though it had done him a personal injury, whilst he violently tugged at his short beard.

"Trying to pull it out by the roots, sir?" Tinker suggested innocently, as he surreptitiously winked at his master. "If you care to borrow a pair of scissors and the gov'nor's razor, you can—"

"Oh, shut up!" Martin snapped. "Jefson is innocent, Blake," he added, as though he had been of that opinion all along. "I'm glad I didn't order his arrest."

"Precisely," the detective murmured, suppressing a yawn as he commenced to put the articles he had been using back in their respective places. "After all, I imagine you had better give an eye to the squire's son. See what Mrs. Bardell wants, Tinker!"

The lad obediently crossed to the door, upon which had sounded a succession of taps. He found their landlady without.

"A cablegram for Mr. Blake!" she announced, handing Tinker the message.

As the landlady withdrew, Sexton Blake took the envelope and ripped it open; then the listless expression suddenly left his face, and he gave a distinct start.

"Von Stoltz!" he muttered, his eyes narrowing. "What can be his object in risking a journey to England just now?"

"Anything important?" Martin jerked.

Sexton Blake handed him the message with a shrug.

"It is serious news," he said. "Read for yourself."

The official's eyebrows elevated sharply as he perused the pencilled words.

"Von Stoltz left by Macedonia, arriving London sixth.—FENLOCK FAWN," he read aloud. "Hang him! What can be his game?"

"That is what we must take immediate steps to find out, my friend," Sexton Blake answered, his jaw setting a trifle grimly. "You may depend upon it that for such a man as Von Stoltz to risk a personal visit to London just now there is some deep plot against Great Britain afoot!"

Inspector Martin nodded, and Tinker, who had been expectantly watching the faces of the two detectives, saw that a worried look had crept into the official's eyes, self-reliant and confident man though he knew him to be.

"The message, of course, refers to Von Stoltz?" Martin suggested, after a pause.

Sexton Blake nodded.

"To Count Franz von Stoltz, of the German Secret Service," he agreed harshly. "The man who coerced the master-criminal of America, Ezra Q. Maitland, into attempting to betray the British liner Muratana, with her millions of specie, to the German commerce raiders. Martin, even you do not realise the fiendish cunning, the utter callousness of this man! He it is who possesses the master-brain that guides the actions of the Kaiser's lesser spies. Von Stoltz is the man who has been chiefly responsible for the remarkable system of espionage the Germans hold in Britain to-day. Oh, of a certainty we may rely that there is

more than a good reason for his coming to London!"

A flush had leapt into Sexton Blake's pale cheeks, and his eyes were glinting and brilliant. It was only upon very few occasions in the past that the burly official from Scotland Yard had seen his friend show such signs of animation and excitement.

"We must arrest him the moment he sets foot on British soil!" Martin stated, with determination. "By Jove, he'll receive a warm reception! I will 'phone the Yard, and instruct my men to act at once!"

Sexton Blake swung round upon him.

"Indeed, you will do nothing of the kind!" he said sharply.

Inspector Martin's face went a deep shade of crimson, and he positively gasped.

"Can't stop me!" he snapped, with an aggressive squaring of his shoulders. "Do you realise that I represent the law?"

Sexton Blake shrugged almost wearily, as he half turned away.

"I fully realise the fact," he said quietly. "I also realise that if you go against me in this that it will be impossible for me to help Scotland Yard in the future."

Martin snorted, picked up his hat, and started towards the door; then he hesitated as he reached the threshold, and turned back a trifle sheepishly. He had realised that it was Sexton Blake who had helped him to obtain the high position he held; also he knew that the Chief Commissioner, Sir Henry Fairfax, would not thank him to induce the famous logician to fall out with the C.I.D.

"Why don't you want him arrested?" he asked shortly.

"Because such an action would be madness," Sexton Blake retorted calmly. "He is doubtless coming here to confer with the lesser spies of Germany, and with tact it may be possible to arrest a great number of them. Besides, by holding our hand for the moment we shall probably be able to get some inkling of the evil Von Stoltz intends to engineer upon these shores."

"I suppose you're right," Martin admitted grudgingly. "What do you propose to do?"

"Send Tinker to the docks. He has met Von Stoltz in the past, and should be able to pick him out, however skilfully he is disguised. It is a great pity that I cannot go myself, but it is now nearly five o'clock, and I have an appointment with Earl Kitchener at the War Office at six, which I must not put off. My friend Fenlock Fawn, of the New York police, promised he would communicate with me at the moment the spy Von Stoltz made any movement; but as to-day is the sixth, and that upon which the ss. Macedonia is due at the Royal Albert Docks, I can only conclude that Fawn has but just learnt of the German's departure from New York. Tinker, the boat bringing this man to London is due at six-fifteen, so you will have to hurry on a disguise and get along to the docks at once!"

"You want me to keep an eye on him, gov'nor?" the lad suggested eagerly.

"Exactly," his master agreed. "But remember the kind of man he is, and do not run into unnecessary danger. He will, of course, be made up, otherwise he would not dare to show his face in the metropolis; but I am relying on you to pick him out. Do not forget that he walks with just the

slightest trace of a limp. Attend carefully to your make-up, for Von Stoltz is more than usually alert, and unless you are well disguised he will recognise you."

"Why not let me send a couple of men to shadow Tinker?" Martin suggested anxiously; for, despite the lad's habit of chaffing him, the official inwardly possessed a genuine affection for his colleague's young assistant. "They could see that the lad didn't get into a mess. From what I have heard of this German, he wouldn't hesitate to take any desperate step to gain his ends. If he realised that Tinker was following him he might do him a mischief. In some dark street a quick knife-thrust or—"

He broke off suggestively, and Sexton Blake shuddered. He hesitated a moment, and puffed meditatively at a cigar he had lighted before he replied.

"I fear such a precaution might spoil everything," he said slowly at length, "although it would certainly be wise. However, to put Von Stoltz and Tinker under anything approaching official observation would tie my hands, and I may find it necessary to resort to measures outside those approved of by the law. No, we must rely upon Tinker. Cut along, my lad, and remember the warning I have given you."

"You may depend upon me, sir," the lad answered brightly. "I'll report to you at the earliest opportunity."

The next moment the door closed behind him, and Sexton Blake sank into a chair. For almost a minute he sat in silence, the tips of his long, sensitive fingers pressed together, his brows contracting in a thoughtful frown.

"I almost wish I could avoid sending him, Martin," he said gravely at last. "Yet there is no other course open to me."

"Oh, he'll look after himself," the official returned consolingly, although inwardly he, too, shared his friend's misgivings. "He's a smart lad, and knows his business."

"You are right," Sexton Blake murmured; "but"—he doubtfully shook his head—"somehow I would rather his quarry were the most desperate of British gaolbirds. You do not know Von Stoltz as I know him."

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Tinker at Work—The House at Poplar—Trapped!

The great liner from New York, the ss. Macedonia, had just berthed as Tinker arrived at the docks.

The lad had quickly slipped into a disguise. The change was, perhaps, one of the hastiest he had ever made, but for all that it was excellent.

He was attired in a dilapidated coat and a ragged pair of trousers that the average street urchin would have discarded in disgust as being too far gone for further wear, whilst his boots were so cracked and broken that one of his big toes peeped out nakedly. Tinker's usually fresh-complexioned face had assumed a sallow, unhealthy hue, his cheeks looked hollow and sunken, and the kind-hearted elderly lady who had pressed twopence upon him at the Bakerloo Station was to be excused for believing that he was upon the verge of sinking with starvation and want.

A few deft touches with an eyebrow-pencil had completely altered the curve of the lad's brows, and a tousled wig of an auburn hue had completed the metamorphosis.

"I reckon the guv'nor himself wouldn't know me if he met me in the street," the lad muttered, "so I'm pretty safe where the German johnny is concerned. Ah! The passengers are landing! Come up, Tinker, my lad, and mind your p's and q's!"

The great gangways had been run from the liner's decks to the quay, and men, women, and children were streaming over them, the officials monotonously urging them to hurry, as was their wont.

Despite the fact that night had fallen, handkerchiefs were being waved from the decks of the liner by those still aboard, as their owners recognised—or thought they recognised—some friend or relative upon the quay. Hurried farewells were being taken by the passengers who had made each other's acquaintance in crossing, and upon all sides were signs of bustle and busy life.

Tinker pushed his way through the crowd and lounged against a pile of luggage, whence he could observe the three gangways which had been lowered. His appearance suggested that he was merely an idler, and quite uninterested in the animated scene, but in reality every nerve in his body was tingling with suppressed excitement, and all his senses were alert.

A few months ago, when Tinker and his master had been in New York, this man who was arriving in London by the ss. Macedonia had plotted with a resourceful American criminal to travel upon a British boat carrying a million

of specie intended for the use of Great Britain, in order that the ship and her precious cargo might be betrayed to two German cruisers upon the look-out for her.

The criminal in question, to wit, Ezra Q. Maitland, was quite as unscrupulous as the notorious London crook, George Marsden Plummer; and, indeed, where cunning and brain-work were concerned, it was doubtful whether either could have given the other a single point. As Plummer was the acknowledged prince of evildoers in London, so was Ezra Q. Maitland the master-criminal of New York, and time after time he had succeeded in escaping from the clutches of the astute Yankee detective, Fenlock Fawn, as George Marsden Plummer had done from the hands of Sexton Blake.

Working with the assistance of his beautiful but criminal wife, who was known to the New York police as Broadway Kate, and his servant and confederate, a Chinaman named Wang, Maitland had all but succeeded in bringing off the coup the German Secret Service agent had planned; but at the eleventh hour Sexton Blake had stepped in to snatch the spoil from the criminal's greedy hands, and, metaphorically speaking, Maitland had only succeeded in escaping by the very skin of his teeth.

And now Count Franz von Stoltz—the man who had woven this network of intrigue and plot about the British liner Muratana—was coming to London! But why? Tinker asked himself. That was the question. Like his master, he felt certain that the German had some colossal scheme, or schemes, on hand, and—

"Ah!"

Tinker caught his breath sharply, and his body stiffened; then he detached himself from the pile of trunks and edged a little closer to the gangway upon his right, down which a heavily-built, broad-shouldered man was passing.

The appearance of the person in question was as unlike the dangerous spy for whom Tinker was looking as could well be imagined. He was certainly not British, but his appearance was Dutch rather than Teutonic.

He was attired in a suit of tweeds, over which was a greatcoat, left open in spite of the bitter east wind that was sweeping over the docks and river. A heavy moustache and a flowing beard adorned his features, and a slouch hat was upon his head. No, he certainly had nothing of the Teuton about him; yet, ever so slightly, he limped, and the trifling defect had not escaped the keen eyes of Sexton Blake's assistant.

Nearer to the gangway Tinker sidled. The lad's master had called his attention to the fact that Count Franz von Stoltz was afflicted with a limp, and the young detective believed this Dutch-looking man to be he.

As the passenger stepped upon the quay, Tinker stumbled, seemed to lose his balance, and clutched wildly at the man's clothing to save himself from falling. The big man uttered a guttural oath, and pushed the supposed street-urchin roughly from his path; but it was not before Tinker had seen all that he wished to observe.

When he had lurched forward his eyes had come to within a few inches of the passenger's face, and the lad had seen that the man's beard was attached to his face by means of spirit-gum—in other words, it was false.



SONGS FOR THE KAISER:—“When Father Papers The Parlour!”



Von Stoltz struck savagely with his right and caught Martin a heavy blow upon the point of the jaw, sending him down in a huddled heap.

Just for a moment Tinker's eyes glinted with excitement; then he assumed an indignant expression, and desired to know where the dickens the big man was coming to—a sally to which the latter paid no heed.

"It's the man!" Tinker muttered beneath his breath, for he was sure now that the apparent Dutchman was Count von Stoltz. "I reckon I'll stick to him like a leech, and if he shakes me off he's smarter than other blessed German sausages I've met!"

The German Secret Service agent walked swiftly from the docks. Evidently he had made arrangements for the forwarding of his luggage to wherever he intended staying before leaving the liner, for he was carrying nothing, nor had he delayed a moment after setting foot upon the quay.

As soon as he reached the street Von Stoltz glanced from left to right; then, espying a taxi waiting to pick up a fare, he raised his hand sharply, and the vehicle started forward and drew up to the kerb beside him.

Whistling unconcernedly, and decidedly out of tune, Tinker mingled with the men and women who were pouring from the docks into the street, and edged towards the taxi; but, although he apparently paid no heed to the ragged urchin he had pushed out of his way when landing, Von

Stoltz spoke in such low tones that it was impossible for the young detective to overhear the instructions he gave the driver.

As Von Stoltz disappeared into the cab and it started off up the street, Tinker looked round for some means of giving chase. He espied a second taxi standing near at hand, and, approaching it, the lad swung open the door.

"Follow that cab in front!" Tinker ordered sharply, springing within the vehicle. "Don't lose it on any account!"

"Here, what's the caper?" The chauffeur jumped from his seat, and, clenching his fists pugnaciously, he aimed a blow at the head of the disreputable ragamuffin who had dared to enter his cab. "Come out of it!" he snarled. "Come out of it! D'ye 'ear?"

"Haw haw haw!" roared a big navy, stopping dead and removing his pipe to guffaw. "Home, James!" he ordered in a high-pitched, affected voice. "And, James—haw!—hurry!"

"Shut your mouth!" the chauffeur advised aggressively. "Now, come out of it, yer dirty-faced scamp! I'll

Ow! Here, leggo of my arms! Bust! You're breaking 'em!"

The taxi-driver was a man of no mean strength, but he received a bad surprise. Tinker strongly objected to being yanked into the muddy road by

his collar, and he had shown his disapproval by placing a ju-jitsu hold upon the chauffeur's arms that caused him to howl with pain and the watching navy to shout with laughter.

"Don't be a fool!" the youngster whispered quickly. "Here, take this sovereign, and do as I've asked, mighty quick! I'm a detective, and there's a man in that cab whom I wouldn't lose for a king's ransom."

"Well, may I be blowed!" the chauffeur gasped, his eyebrows going up in blank amazement. "All right." He bit the coin hard, to make sure that it was genuine. "We'll have him, if I lose my licence over the job!"

"Buck up, or you'll lose sight of the cab!" Tinker exclaimed. "Right away—and stick to it like a fly to a jam-pot!"

The lad slammed the door, and the driver sprang into his place. Then, to the astonishment of the passers-by who had been watching the episode, the cab started off with its ragged fare, just as the conveyance carrying the German spy, Von Stoltz, disappeared round a bend in the road.

Tinker's chauffeur entered into the spirit of the thing, and put on a burst of speed, with a result that the German's cab was quickly in sight once more. Then away went the two

vehicles through the badly-lighted East End streets.

It was in the East India Dock Road that the foremost taxi stopped, and, snatching down the speaking-tube, Tinker gave his driver an order that caused him to swing round into a side-street and pull up sharply.

Here the lad lost no time in slipping from the cab, and, having told the delighted chauffeur to keep the change out of the sovereign he had given him, Tinker hurried once again into the main road.

Ahead of him in the gloom he could see the stalwart form of his quarry, and, with the stealth of a Red Indian, Tinker shadowed the German until he suddenly swung round a corner.

The lad quickened his pace, and a moment later turned down the side-street in the wake of the spy. Tinker now had to exercise far more caution, as the narrow thoroughfare in which he found himself was deserted save for a slatternly woman or so at the doors of the ramshackle, tumble-down houses, and a few ragged, white-faced children who played in the gutters and splashed each other in the puddles left by the recent shower.

Count Franz von Stoltz had drawn his slouch hat well forward over his eyes, and turned the collar of his coat up about the lower portion of his features, and it was but very little notice that the inhabitants of the slums through which he was passing took of him, while on account of Tinker's disreputable appearance his presence caused no comment whatever.

On, on went the German, traversing street after street, until it seemed he was bent upon reaching the very heart of the slums, and always in the rear slouched Tinker, like a shadow of the night.

At last Von Stoltz reached a street narrower than any through which he had as yet passed; indeed, so narrow was it that two persons with a generous supply of arm-reach could have clasped hands across the road. Tinker, glancing up quickly as he turned the corner, saw that the place rejoiced in the high-sounding name of Paradise Gardens, although why it had been so christened was a baffling mystery. Faintly to the lad's ears came the hoot of a siren, telling him that he and his quarry were approaching the river, and when Von Stoltz reached the centre of the street he turned into a narrow alleyway leading down to the waterside.

Noiselessly, and with every nerve in his body strung up to concert-pitch with excitement, Tinker crept to the mouth of the alley, and cautiously peered round. It was only sharply to draw his head back, however, for Von Stoltz had paused before the side-door in the house upon the opposite side of the passage, and, had he turned, he must have seen the face of the lad who had so successfully dogged his footsteps.

Just for a moment Tinker hesitated, not knowing quite how to act, then he dropped at full length in the mud, and wriggled forward until he could observe what was to take place.

The German plied the rusty knocker upon the door, and plainly to the ears of the young detective came three raps, then there was a pause, and once again the master-spy knocked three distinct times—a fact that Tinker took a careful note of.

"It might be useful to the gov'nor to know how to get in a little later on,"

Tinker thought; and at the moment he little dreamed how valuable the information was to prove to his famous master. "I wonder what it can mean? It almost seems as though the house were the meeting-place of alien spies, and—"

Tinker's train of thought was suddenly snapped as the door of the house was opened slowly, silhouetting the figure of a man against the dim light of the passage beyond. A man! Was it a man? Tinker started, and inwardly asked himself the question. Yes, it was a human being right enough, but he was scarcely more than four feet in height, whilst his head and legs were out of all proportion to the size of his body, inasmuch as the former was so large that it appeared to be top-heavy, and the latter were abnormally long.

The strange creature, recognising the caller, gave an obsequious bow, and as he did so Tinker only just saved himself from uttering a cry of repulsion, for the light had fallen upon the dwarf's face, and never could the lad remember looking upon such a hideous sight. To describe it in plain language, it resembled that of an ape more than anything else. It was short in the forehead, narrow in the eyes, and baggy in the pouches of the cheeks; and at once it was terrible and bestial.

"Welcome, Excellency!" the dwarf croaked, in a harsh, cracked voice. "Welcome back to us!"

Von Stoltz made some reply in German, and the next moment he had disappeared within the house, and the door had closed behind him.

"Well, I'm hanged!" Tinker exclaimed aloud. "My aunt! What a face! I don't believe I shall fancy my food for a month. Ugh! Humph! Three knocks, a pause, and then three more—that's what I've got to remember. Now, what had I better do?"

Tinker rose to his feet, and stood for a moment in thoughtful hesitation. Had he adhered strictly to the orders Sexton Blake had given him, he would have returned post-haste to Baker Street, and have reported what he had learnt, but in the lad's nature a strong spirit of adventure predominated, and it was for that reason that he was prompted to slip into the alleyway and inspect the house which the German spy, Von Stoltz, had entered.

A brief examination disclosed to Tinker that the place was almost as large again as any of its fellows, and that at the rear its walls were lapped by the dark waters of the Thames. From the exterior it appeared to be uninhabited, for not a chink of light shone from its closely shuttered windows.

It was to these latter—or rather the lower ones—that Tinker paid most attention. The love of his work was making him forget all else, every fibre of his being was itching to investigate, his detective instinct was aroused, and Tinker did not think of the man who had grown to love him better than a son, who would be anxiously waiting at Baker Street for his return.

At a window of one of the back rooms Tinker paused. A gust of wind had caused the shutters to rattle noisily, showing that their fastenings were none too secure, and, with a swift making up of his mind, the lad decided that he would try to gain an entry into the strange house. Once inside, there was a chance that he could gain definite information as to what was going on, and—

Click! The blade of a clasp-knife had

forced the shutters, and they opened to his touch. Then, replacing the knife in his pocket, Tinker quickly examined the fastening of the window. To his satisfaction he found this to be but an ordinary, flimsy catch, and a moment later Tinker held between his finger and thumb a slim piece of steel—an implement that had served him in good stead upon many such occasions in the past.

With deft fingers the lad inserted the tool between the framework of the windows, then softly, very softly, he forced back the catch, afterwards sinking to his knees, and crouching for a moment in a listening attitude. No sound came to him to show that any noise he might have made had been heard, however, and, once again straightening his body, Tinker gently raised the window.

A couple of seconds later he stood in the inky darkness of the room beyond, his breath coming a little sharply, his whole body trembling with suppressed excitement.

All was still. The silence was eerie and nerve-racking, and, brave lad though he was, Tinker's heart positively thumped against his ribs. Then he pulled himself together, and crept across the room, instinctively avoiding the few rough pieces of furniture it contained.

Tinker's fingers came into contact with the door, and fumbled their way to the handle. He turned it noiselessly, and smiled grimly with satisfaction as he found the door unlocked.

Cautiously the lad opened the door, to peer into a dimly-lighted and apparently deserted passage beyond, then faintly to his ears came the hum of conversation.

From beneath a door at the extreme end of the passage-way issued a brilliant chink of light, and towards this room Tinker stole, until finally he was before the door, his ear pressed to one of the panels.

To his delight, the daring lad found that he could hear quite distinctly the voices of the persons within, one of which he almost instantly recognised as that of the man he had followed from the Royal Albert Docks. The conversation was in German, but Tinker had a sufficient smattering of that language to obtain a fair grip of what was being said, although here and there he had to guess at words of which he could not call to mind the meaning.

"Then the question of our actions in the event of a possible invasion has been settled, my friends," Tinker heard Von Stoltz say. "The rooms have been taken for me in the hotel at Newcastle, and the arrangements regarding further means of signalling from the coasts of this accursed country have been made. There now only remains the matter of the lorries to be discussed."

"So, Excellency," another guttural voice agreed, "you will hear my report upon the firm in Scotland?"

"Yes," Tinker heard Von Stoltz return. "My information was correct as to their financial condition?"

"So," the other said again. "They are upon the verge of bankruptcy—unless some gigantic piece of business comes along, they will be compelled to close down. Despite their reputation, they cannot obtain further credit. Work they must have, and that quickly!"

Tinker heard Von Stoltz chuckle



softly in a manner that was both cunning and exultant.

"They shall have work in plenty, my friend," the master-spy answered. "After I have seen Speyers, our agent at Newcastle, I shall commence my negotiations with the Scottish firm. To them shall give the order for at least a quarter of the lorries we purchase in Britain. Five hundred of these heavy motor vehicles will be required within the next six months to replace the wastage caused by the war, and I intend to purchase one hundred to one hundred and twenty from Great Britain. To act thus will be to strike a blow at our enemy, for it will lessen her supply of iron and steel."

Tinker held his breath and pressed forward against the door. What did the conversation regarding the purchasing of the lorries mean? he wondered. Surely no British firm would knowingly commit treason by trading with the enemy country? Ah! He believed he could understand, after a moment's thought. In all probability, Von Stoltz proposed to order the lorries from some neutral country, whence they would be transhipped or sent overland to Germany for the use of her army! Yes, no doubt that was what the spy proposed, but, by heavens, he should find it a difficult matter to carry out his plan, Tinker decided, with a tightening of his lips.

Who was the Scottish firm? he asked himself—the Scottish firm upon the point of closing down? He must endeavour to learn the identity of this company, and—

Von Stoltz commenced to speak again, although it was merely to discuss the great need of the enemy country for such commodities as iron and steel. Tinker, however, listened tensely, and so eager was he not to miss one word that was uttered that he did not hear the half-suppressed exclamation of surprise from the other end of the passage as the repulsive-looking dwarf emerged from a room and caught sight of him before the door.

The ape-like creature recovered himself in a second, and his lips snarled back from his yellow, uneven teeth; then he stole back into the room he had recently quitted to return silently with a heavy life-preserver gripped in his gnarled hand.

With cat-like tread, the dwarf glided forward, his animal eyes blazing like living coals with ferocious passion, and foot by foot, inch by inch, he drew nearer to the back of the unsuspecting lad.

Then, when only a couple of feet separated the dwarf from his intended victim, a board creaked beneath his tread, and Tinker swung round upon his heel, with a gasp of alarm.

Like lightning, the lad took in the situation, and his hand dropped to the pocket of his ragged jacket, wherein lay a serviceable automatic, but before he could draw the weapon the dwarf had launched himself forward, and, with a yell of fury, had aimed a savage blow at Tinker's head.

Thud! The life-preserver descended with terrific force upon the young detective's shoulder, narrowly missing his head, which he had jerked aside in the nick of time; then Tinker's fist shot out, and landed heavily between the dwarf's eyes.

The man went down with a crash, and Tinker turned to escape, meaning to regain the room through which he had passed in entering the house; but

his adversary was too quick for him. One of the dwarf's powerful arms shot out, and he gripped Tinker's ankle, to bring him in a huddled heap to the ground, just as Count Franz von Stoltz rushed into the passage, and pulled up in blank amazement, to stare at the scene before him.

"Ach, himmel!" he rasped. "What is wrong?"

"A spy, Excellency!" the dwarf cried, in his cracked, hoarse voice. "A spy, and listening to—"

He broke off with a snarl of pain, for Tinker's fist had shot into his mouth, choking his utterance and knocking a couple of teeth down his throat. The dwarf cursed gutturally, and the next moment he and Tinker were rolling over and over, fighting desperately for the mastery.

The combat was to be of short duration, however, for in less time than it takes to relate, the count had realised how matters stood, and had whipped out a revolver. Just for a moment Tinker's life hung in the balance, for the German levelled the weapon point-blank at his temple; then Von Stoltz seemed to realise that to fire would raise an alarm, and probably bring the police to the house, and, clubbing the weapon, he struck down savagely at the lad.

The butt of the revolver caught Tinker a stunning blow upon the back of his unprotected head, and, moaning faintly, he pitched forward across the body of his opponent, and rolled over inert and unconscious.

"Who can he be?" Count von Stoltz demanded, unsteadily in German. "Carl, bring him into our room. By blitzen, we may be in the gravest danger. This meddling fool may be some agent of the police!"

Carl, the dwarf, who had regained his feet, stooped, and picking Tinker up in his long, muscular arms, he followed Von Stoltz back to the room whence he had emerged, upon the threshold of which stood six men.

Their florid faces and burly forms proclaimed their nationality at once. They were Germans, and all paid spics of the War Lord, who had steeped Europe in blood and crime in his efforts towards the gaining of the world-power he coveted.

"Who is he, Excellency?" one of them asked excitedly, peering into the pale face of the senseless lad. "Donner und blitzen, how did he get in here?"

Von Stoltz shrugged his broad shoulders.

"As yet, I do not know," he said grimly, as he stepped into the room in the wake of the dwarf. "But I will tell you this, Herrmann; he will find it a difficult matter to get out again—alive!"

The apartment in which they were now gathered, was comfortably furnished. A long mahogany table stood in the centre, about which were grouped six chairs, whilst heavy plush curtains concealed the window, and several views were upon the walls.

The dwarf placed Tinker in one of the chairs, and Von Stoltz leant over him; then the spy gave a start, and peered more closely into the lad's face.

"He is made up!" he cried, with conviction. "Quick, Carl, a wet sponge! Somehow he seems familiar with me!"

The article he had requested was handed to him from a wash-hand cabinet which stood in the room, and Von Stoltz rubbed vigorously at

Tinker's face, then he tore off the lad's wig, and stepped back aghast, his features working with agitation.

"Donnerwetter!" he gasped hoarsely, with a sobbing indrawing of his breath. "I know him now! He is the assistant of Sexton Blake, the detective of Baker Street—the one man in London who would be capable of foiling our well-laid plans! He must have been watching for me at the docks, and has followed me here!"

Exclamations of alarm burst from his companions, and they pressed closer to look into Tinker's face.

"What will you do, Excellency?" the man Herrmann asked, and in his heart was a great terror as he thought of the penalty for treason.

"Do!" Von Stoltz laughed in a manner that was not pleasant to hear. "Do!" he raved, as in a sudden outburst of fury he struck the stunned lad savagely in the face. "We shall see that he departs by the river! Alive he is a menace to our safety—our very lives—and he must die!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Tinker a Prisoner—His Clever Ruse.

When Tinker once again came to his senses, he found himself propped against the wall of a room that was in inky darkness save for a beam of moonlight, which had succeeded in penetrating the grimy glass of a window some feet above his head.

At first, the lad's mind was a blank; but when he tried to move his arms and found that they were securely bound behind his back, memory returned to him, and slowly he recalled what had happened, although his head was racked with pain, and it was not an easy matter to think clearly.

The young detective realised in a dim kind of way that he had been attacked from behind, when he had been struggling with the dwarf, and for several moments he lay bitterly reproaching himself for not obeying orders, then he fell to speculating where he was, and if it would be possible for him to escape.

It was impossible for him to cry for help, for a rough gag had been wedged between his teeth, and when he tried to move his legs, it was only to find that they were secured in some mysterious manner at a few inches from the floor.

Tinker mouthed at the gag, and tugged at his bonds until the cords bit into his wrists, and lacerated the flesh, causing him the most excruciating pain; but at the end of five minutes he had made no impression upon his bonds, nor had he loosened the gag.

For a few seconds Tinker lay back against the wall, panting sharply from his exertions, then a kind of frenzy seized him, for he knew that he could expect no mercy from his captors, and life is sweet even to one who is constantly carrying it in his hands.

Again and again he wrenched at the cords binding his wrists; then suddenly he felt a searing pain in one of his hands, and, fumbling about with his fingers, he discovered that his flesh had come into contact with a large, rusted nail protruding from the wall.

New hope leapt into Tinker's heart. His ready brain in a flash devised a plan for freeing himself, and he lost no time in putting it into execution. He began to rub the cords binding his wrists against the nail in the hope of

eventually sawing them through. Backwards and forwards went Tinker's hands, and his teeth bit hard into the gag, as from time to time his flesh was grazed and gashed by the nail. But he stuck to his task and worked with dogged determination, with a result that at last the cords grew slack, and, with a vigorous wrench, he had freed his hands.

The lad snatched the gag from his mouth and sighed with relief; then, leaning forward, he felt to ascertain in what manner his legs were secured. To his dismay Tinker discovered that they were held tightly in a wooden frame, similar to the stocks of the olden days, which was clamped to the floor. Evidently this room was intended to serve as a prison should the need arise, Tinker realised, and he wondered of what grim secrets the frequenters of the strange, gloomy house could tell if they were so minded.

The lad had no time to examine the fastenings of the contrivance which held him a captive, for from without came the sound of shuffling footsteps, and a second later the door was unlocked and thrown open, to reveal the grotesque figure of Carl, the dwarf, standing on the threshold of the room, a lamp held at arm's length above his head.

The man's eyebrows went up in sheer astonishment as he took in the fact that Tinker was no longer gagged, but as the lad had thrust his hands behind him the moment he had heard his captor's approach, the latter had no idea that Tinker had released his wrists.

Carl gave vent to an angry oath, and, setting the lamp down in the centre of the room, he advanced and viciously kicked Tinker in the side.

"So," he sneered, in guttural English, "you haf been clever enough to let your gag slip! Ve vill soon alter that, mein vriend, although you are right at the top of the house, and could shout yourself hoarse without being heard. You British pig and sneak spy, you did not dink to get caught when you forced your way in! Himmel, but id may please you to know what is to happen to you!" He stooped and picked up the handkerchief that had formed the gag. "So? Then I will tell you! To-night—later, when all is dark and the river deserted is—you will be drugged, and you will leave t'is world for ever. Do you comprehend?"

Tinker made no reply, but, brave lad though he was, he shuddered. He fully realised the merciless death that had been planned for him. Drugged and senseless, he would be flung into the dark waters of the Thames, to sink like a stone and drown. His death would merely form another of the unexplained mysteries of the great world of London, and—

The dwarf laughed harshly, and leered down into the lad's pale face; then he sank to his knees and attempted to thrust the gag between his prisoner's lips.

It was then that he received the surprise of his life. Like lightning, Tinker's hands shot upwards and gripped the dwarf's scraggy neck in a vice-like hold, choking back the yell of alarm he attempted to utter.

Tinker's jaw was thrust forward grimly, his face was set and hard, and his eyes were blazing with excitement. By heavens, he wouldn't go under without a struggle! he resolved. If he could but overpower the dwarf he might—

The man struggled like a madman, gnashing his teeth and striking savagely at the young detective's head; but Tinker held on like grim death itself, and it was only a faint gurgling sound that the German found it possible to make.

Lower and lower Tinker forced his adversary; then, with a sharp jerk, he rolled him over, and if it were possible the lad tightened his hold upon the German's windpipe.

The dwarf's efforts to break free were growing weaker, and he was gripped by the agonies of asphyxiation. He beat up feebly at his enemy with his fists, but it was all in vain. Never for a second did that choking hold upon his throat relax, and soon his eyes were starting from his head, his tongue lolling from his mouth.

At last the dwarf's head rolled foolishly to one side, and Tinker felt his body grow limp and lifeless. With a sigh of relief the lad allowed it to sink to the floor.

"He's safe for an hour or more," Tinker muttered. "Now to search his pockets. If he's only got the keys of this beastly arrangement holding my legs, there's a sporting chance for me yet!"

Quivering with eagerness, Tinker commenced feverishly to rifle the unconscious man's pockets, but his heart sank when he had completed his task, for he discovered nothing in the shape of a key with which to release the lock of the stock-like contrivance keeping him a prisoner. The only articles brought to light were a stump of pencil, a fully-loaded five-chambered revolver, and a letter written in German.

The latter the lad quickly ascertained would be of no value to his master were he to regain his freedom, for it merely consisted of a half-sheet of notepaper, upon one side of which were scrawled a few lines from an acquaintance in Berlin, signed only with a Christian name.

Just for a moment Tinker gave way to despair; then a sudden idea struck him. One side of the half-sheet of paper was blank, and he possessed a pencil!

Tinker snatched the last-mentioned article up; then he stopped dead in perplexity, for he did not know the number of the house in which he was held captive. He had devised a novel plan for communicating with his master, but his lack of knowledge of his exact whereabouts was a stumbling-block. Wait! There was Pedro, his master's faithful four-footed friend! Yes, Pedro was the solution of the difficulty.

Feverishly Tinker commenced to write upon the blank side of the dwarf's letter, and this is how his message read:

"The finder of this message will be rewarded if he takes it to Sexton Blake, of Baker Street, London, without delay. I am held prisoner in house in Paradise Gardens, Poplar, and am in dire peril! Tell Sexton Blake that Pedro will track. Knock three times, pause, and knock thrice more to gain admittance.—TINKER."

"It will mean sacrificing the revolver, but that can't be helped," the lad murmured. "The wheeze ought to work, unless the brutes do me in before the message gets to Baker Street. Set your back teeth, my lad, and grin with your front ones! You're not dead yet awhile, anyway!"

Tinker clicked the cartridges from

the revolver and wrapped the message about the barrel, securing it in place with a portion of the cord that had bound his hands; then he ripped a square foot of the lining from his ragged coat. The strip of calico, in its turn, was bound tightly round the weapon and secured with a further scrap of cord; then, taking careful aim, the lad sent the heavy missile crashing through the window.

Tinker lay back against the wall, hoping against hope that the message would quickly be found and understood, and that the sound of the breaking glass would not penetrate to the ears of any of his captors who might be in the lower rooms of the house.

Would his master reach him in time? he asked himself. Would Sexton Blake rescue him before he was overtaken by the terrible death Count Franz von Stoltz had planned for him?

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Private Pat O'Leary Understands.

Private Pat O'Leary, of the Dublin Fusiliers, wounded in the battle of Mons and invalided home, had come to the conclusion that he had lost his bearings.

The soldier was quite a young man, not more than twenty-three or four, with a round, merry face and a pronounced Irish brogue that was very pleasant to hear.

He had been entrusted with a message—a last message from a dying hero to the one being in the world who would care. When Private McGrath had been breathing his last, amid the roar of the guns and the din of battle, he had asked his chum to tell his aged mother how he had sacrificed all for the dear old country, and O'Leary had consented, whilst he gulped at the strange lump that would persist in rising in his throat.

The Irishman had found his dead chum's mother at the address given him off the East India Dock Road, and with rough tenderness he had discharged his obligation and sought to comfort the stricken woman. Then, after he had left her alone with her great sorrow, he had somehow taken a wrong turning and completely lost his way.

"Paradise Gardens!" the soldier muttered, as he swung round a corner and with difficulty made out the name of the thoroughfare in the darkness. "By the blessed Blarney stone, Oi don't see no orchids or roses, or such things, at all, at all; an' if Oi spakes the truth, the place don't look so very inviting!"

He glanced down at his right arm, which was resting in a sling.

"Ut's a pretty slum, anyway," he continued, "an' Oi shouldn't be a great deal of use in a scrap. If some nasty, rude spalpeens set on me, they'd have it all their own way entirely. Still, Oi've only got twopence-half-penny an' a packet of smokes, so they wouldn't make much out of the job."

Private O'Leary's natural cheerfulness returned to him, and he grinned; then he set off down the narrow slum, whistling a patriotic song in which the distance to Tipperary is mentioned.

His musical efforts were to come to a sudden and disastrous end, however.

He had scarcely reached the centre of the harsh-looking poverty-stricken thoroughfare when he let out a wild

howl, flung up his uninjured arm, and, staggering a step or so backwards, he lost his balance and sat down violently in a puddle.

Something—something that was terribly hard and heavy—had caught him a frightful crack upon the side of the head. For a moment Private O'Leary saw a myriad of stars, and all he could do was to sit and use a string of forcible language beneath his breath.

"Bedad! Zeppelins!" he gurgled at length. "Bejabers—bombs! Invaded from the skoites at last!" He slowly pulled himself together and rubbed ruefully at his head. "No, it can't be that!" he soliloquised. "By my aunt's old pig who used to slape in the parlour, phwat was ut?"

With difficulty, owing to his injured arm, Private O'Leary rose to his feet, his head still singing painfully; then something bright caught his eye, and, stooping, he picked up some curious object from the road.

It proved to be a revolver, the barrel of which was almost covered with a strip of calico, and the wounded hero stared at it in surprise, although it was not for long that it was inactive.

His curiosity prompted him to remove the covering from the weapon—a task that he accomplished with his good hand and his white, even teeth.

"Begorra!" he ejaculated a moment later, speaking aloud in his excitement. "Here's some message. Phwat the thunder does ut all mane?"

He hurriedly carried his find to Paradise Gardens' solitary lamp-post, removing the sheet of paper wrapped about the barrel of the revolver as he did so.

"Written in some beastly foreign lingo," he commented, as he scrutinised the writing upon the paper.

"Looks loike German. Hall o!"—he had turned the paper over—"Phwat have we here? Ut's plain English this toime, which is a mercy. 'The finder of this message will be rewarded if he takes ut to Sexton Blake, of Baker Street—'"

Private O'Leary's jaw dropped foolishly, and if he had been surprised before, he was doubly so now.

"The finder of this message will be rewarded," he read, "if he takes it to Sexton Blake, of Baker Street, without delay. I am held prisoner in house in Paradise Gardens, Poplar, and am in dire peril. Tell Sexton Blake Pedro will track. Knock three times, pause, and knock thrice more to gain admittance—TINKER."

"Arrah! Ut's a mystery Oi've stumbled on, to be shure!" the soldier

cried, recovering himself. "Sexton Blake, of Baker Street! That will be the great detective who's always being talked about in the papers! Who the dickens is Tinker? Somehow the name seems familiar, but Oi can't call it to moind at all, at all. An' phwero did the message come from—that's the quistion. The strate's so narrow, ut's a puzzle to know even which soide of the road it came from. Bedad, the fellow who wrote this seems to be in the soup entoiely, an' ut's me for the East India Dock Road, as soon as Oi can foind me way! Oi'm going to chance a taxi, if Oi can foind one; but, begorra, phwat a hole Oi shall be in if the whole thing turns out a blissed have—and me with only twopence-half-penny in the woide, woide world!"



Private O'Leary let out a wild howl, flung up his uninjured arm, and, staggering a step or so backwards, he lost his balance and sat down violently in a puddle.

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Sexton Blake Anxious—Private O'Leary Calls—At Scotland Yard—Ready to Raid.

Sexton Blake looked up sharply as the clock upon the mantel struck ten.

With Pedro lying stretched at his feet, the detective had been sitting hunched up in his easy-chair, a cold pipe between his lips. Two hours previously he had returned from the War Office, and had been surprised to find that Tinker had not returned, nor had any message been received from him by Mrs. Bardell.

Again and again Sexton Blake had asked himself what could be the meaning of the lad's silence. Tinker's orders had been simply to follow Count Franz von Stoltz to his destination after leaving the docks, and to keep an eye upon him, reporting to Baker Street at the earliest opportunity. Yet well

over four hours had passed since the assistant had departed upon his errand, and no word had come from him; and Sexton Blake was growing more anxious with every minute that passed.

Whenever Tinker was long away upon such an enterprise as this, his master was apt to conjure up vague feelings of alarm upon his behalf. To Sexton Blake Tinker was more than a son—he was the one being in the world who really mattered; and time after time the detective had been tempted to keep Tinker out of the active part of his often-perilous profession; indeed, it was only the thought of the bitter disappointment he knew his assistant would experience that kept Sexton Blake from putting such a resolution into effect.

The clock ticked away the minutes until the hands stood at a quarter-past ten, and the detective drummed impatiently with his long, sensitive fingers upon the arm of his chair.

Why did not Tinker wire or telephone? he asked himself. Was it possible that some great danger beset him—a danger that prevented him from communicating to Baker Street. Sexton Blake wished now that he had fallen in with Inspector Martin's suggestion to send a couple of plain-clothes men to shadow Tinker and his quarry. True, it would seem that the young detective could have come to no harm, had he obeyed orders. But there came the rub—had he obeyed orders?

Sexton Blake rose to his feet and crossed to the window as the sound of a taxi drawing up before the house fell upon his ears. He drew aside the curtains and peered out, and he was just in time to see in the light of a street-lamp a khaki-clad figure emerge from the cab and enter the front garden.

The street-door bell was tugged vigorously, and Sexton Blake had not long to wait for his visitor to be announced. There came a rap upon the door, and Mrs. Bardell put her head into the room.

"A gentleman to see you, sir," she stated. "He's a military gent, sir, and he looks as though he's been wounded, pore dear. He says to me, he say—Lawks a mussy, sir, I didn't know as you'd followed me hup!"

The good lady stepped aside to allow the caller to step into the room, and the door closed behind her.

"You are Mr. Sexton Blake, sor?" Private O'Leary—the visitor was he—came quickly forward.

"That is my name," the detective answered. "What can I do for you?"

"Oi've found a message from someone called Tinker, sor," O'Leary began. "He—"

"From Tinker?" Sexton Blake had

started; his lids were raised sharply from his eyes and all his listlessness had left him. "You have a message from my assistant?" he suggested eagerly.

"Yis, sor," O'Leary replied. "It was thrown from a window of a slum down East. The chap who wrote it asks for ut to be brought to you at once, an' so Oi've brought ut along, although, shure, how Oi'm going to pay the taxi fare if there's nothing in it, Oi don't know at all, at all!"

Sexton Blake almost snatched at the soiled sheet of paper the private held out to him, and as he perused the pencilled words his face went tense—almost haggard.

"Where did you find this?" he asked sharply, clutching at the soldier's sleeve with unwonted impulsiveness. "Quick, man, tell me everything! It is a matter of life and death!"

Private O'Leary stared at the detective curiously for a second, then he pulled himself together and clearly and concisely he told Sexton Blake of the strange manner in which the message had fallen into his hands, producing the revolver and the scrap of calico as he was speaking.

"You say that you had no means of telling whence the message came?" Blake asked quickly, as the soldier finished his story.

"Bedad, no, sor! The strate was so narrow that—"

"Precisely! I follow what you mean. It might have come from a house upon either side."

"You've got ut, sor. Besides, you see, at hit me a jewel of a conk on the napper, and—"

"My friend," Sexton Blake cut in earnestly, "you cannot realise the service you have rendered me by so quickly bringing this message here. With promptitude and luck I shall be able to save my assistant from a foul death at the hands of one of the most dangerous German spies in Britain. Now, the missive speaks of remuneration. If you wish to avail yourself of that fact, I can assure you that you may name your own reward. I would not begrudge a hundred pounds—ay, more, to repay you for what you have done to-night."

Private Patrick O'Leary took a backward step, then his head went up proudly.

"Shure, O'im not out on the make, Mr. Blake," he answered almost coldly.

"If Oi've been of assistance to you against the spalpeen of a German you mintoned, Oi'm more than satisfied!"

Sexton Blake inclined his head and held out his hand.

"I am sorry," he said quietly; "but the wording of the message made it imperative that I should make the offer of remuneration. You said, I believe, that there was some difficulty about paying the taxi?"

"Yis, sor. By the Powers, me total wealth is twopence-halfpenny, an' the fare comes to foive silver bobs!"

Despite the great fear that was gnawing at his heart, Sexton Blake's lips curled in a smile.

"I will see to that," said he. "Now, can you spare me an hour of your time, my friend?"

"As many as you loike, sor!" O'Leary agreed. "Shure, ut's some fun Oi'm scenting!"

"There will be a great deal of fun—of a sort," Sexton Blake agreed grimly. "I want you to do me a further favour. Could you show me

the exact spot in Paradise Gardens where you fell after the revolver had struck you?"

O'Leary nodded after a moment's thought.

"O'im belaying that I could, within a few inches," he stated, with conviction.

"Good!" Sexton Blake ejaculated, stepping to the telephone. "By the aid of my hound, Pedro, we shall easily discover the house into which my assistant has been lured. Excuse me one moment." He took down the receiver. "Hallo! Put me on to Scotland Yard quickly, please!"

O'Leary watched the detective interestedly. After a pause, the latter asked to be put through to Detective-Inspector Martin, of the C.I.D., and O'Leary's interest increased.

"Hallo!" Blake said, a second or two later. "Is that you, Martin? Yes, it is Sexton Blake speaking. I'm glad you had not left. Tinker has got into trouble. Eh? Yes, it's serious—more than serious, I fear. He has fallen foul of the man he was shadowing to-day. You know whom I mean. It is not wise to mention his name over the telephone. From a message I have just received, it would seem that Tinker has been trapped in some house down East—probably a veritable nest of spies. I want you to be ready to raid at once. We've got to get him out without delay, old friend. That is what it amounts to. Have a strong force of plain-clothes men ready to start so soon as I reach the Yard. Minutes may count if we are to save his life. Yes, I am coming on to the Yard at once!"

Sexton Blake rang off and turned to O'Leary.

"Come," he said, reaching for his coat and hat; "we have not a moment to lose!"

Detective-Inspector Martin paced restlessly up and down his private office at the Yard, a deep frown upon his brow. Between his teeth was a cigar, which he had completely ruined by lighting all down one side, and he was puffing at the weed jerkily and agitatedly.

Many were the cases in which the burly official and Tinker had played important parts together, and the news that the young detective was in such grave peril had affected Martin almost as keenly as it had Sexton Blake.

Martin burnt his fingers as he removed his cigar from his lips. With something very like an oath he flung it violently into the fire and rang the bell upon his desk. Almost instantly the door opened and a subordinate appeared.

"You rang, sir," he said deferentially, as he saluted.

"Of course I did!" Martin snapped shortly. "Think I whistled?"

The man made no reply, but he fidgeted uncomfortably. Since the outbreak of war between Great Britain and Germany Inspector Martin's position had been no sinecure, and to-day, especially, had been more than usually trying.

"The dozen men are ready to go East?" Martin suggested sharply.

"Yes, sir, and the cabs are waiting."

"Right. See that Mr. Sexton Blake is shown in to me the moment he arrives? Understand?"

"Yes, sir. He has hardly had time to reach here yet sir, but—"

"Mind your own business!" Martin advised amiably. "It doesn't matter to you how long he takes. Simply remember there's to be no delay in his getting through to me as soon as possible. That's all that concerns you. I'll ring if I want you."

The man saluted again and hurriedly left the office; if the truth be told, he was more than glad to quit the presence of his irascible chief. As the door closed upon him Martin sank into the chair before his desk, although almost instantly he sprang up again as if he had been prodded with a pin. He recommenced his pacing, and he only desisted when Sexton Blake was announced.

"What has really happened, Blake?" Martin inquired, indicating a chair which the detective declined with a wave of his hand. "You didn't tell me a great deal over the 'phone."

"It was inadvisable to do so, my friend," Sexton Blake replied. "Even you do not realise how complete is the German system of espionage in Great Britain to-day; although it was unlikely that any spy could have overheard our conversation, it would not have done to take risks. As no doubt you gathered from what I told you, Tinker has in some way been captured by Von Stoltz."

"We must take action at once!" Martin said, with a squaring of his shoulders. "Do you know where Tinker is?"

"Not exactly; but he is a prisoner in some house in Paradise Gardens—a slum in Poplar," Sexton Blake explained, and forthwith he told Martin of the coming of Private O'Leary with the message that had virtually dropped from the skies.

"I am going on to Poplar at once with Pedro," the detective concluded. "He will quickly be able to show me where the lad is confined after I have allowed him to sniff at the scrap of lining torn from Tinker's coat."

Martin nodded. "Then we shall raid at once," he exclaimed. "Spring a surprise upon them and arrest every person we find in the house!"

"Exactly," Sexton Blake agreed.

"Your men are ready?"

"Yes," Martin answered. "Pray Heaven we may be in time!"

Sexton Blake with difficulty suppressed a shudder. Into his mind had flashed a scene in the bathroom of a hotel in Paris he had witnessed a little over two years ago. An agent of the French Government, who stood in the path of Von Stoltz, had been found dead in his bath, a knife thrust deeply between his shoulders. Sexton Blake had been positive at the time that the master-spy was the guilty man, but there had not been a scrap of evidence against him, and—

"Martin," Sexton Blake said, in low, impressive tones, a fierceness that was foreign to him apparent in his pale face, "if we are too late—if that lad is dead—Heaven help his murderers! I believe I shall shoot—shoot to kill!"

"Calm yourself, Blake," the official urged, in alarm, for never in the past had he seen his colleague so affected. "The law will punish Tinker's murderers if his life has been taken—which Heaven forbid. Come along! The cabs and men are awaiting us."

Out to the street the two men made their way and entered a taxi in which Private Pat O'Leary was waiting with

Pedro. The vehicle started away with a jerk, for Sexton Blake had already given the chauffeur his instructions, and it was followed by three more cabs almost immediately afterwards.

It was a desperate race against time, and Inspector Martin had realised the fact. Acting upon his orders the cabs took not the slightest notice of speed limits and went at the greatest pace they could command. Once the foremost conveyance, carrying Sexton Blake and his companions, was pulled up by a constable, but a word from the high official of the C.I.D. quickly removed any obstacle in the way of their progress.

In a surprisingly short space of time the East India Dock Road was reached, and the Baker Street detective gave the order to pull up. He alighted with Martin, O'Leary, and the hound, and the official detective gave his last few orders to the plain-clothes men in the other cabs, which had also stopped.

Sexton Blake took Pedro's leash and swung off down a forbidding-looking side-street, Martin and O'Leary at his heels, and the other detectives following in twos and threes at intervals. The few night-birds the party passed made themselves decidedly scarce, for there was something that positively spelt "Scotland Yard" about Martin's subordinates, and the inhabitants of the slums through which they passed had no use for the police at the best of times.

Sexton Blake knew his London like a book, and it was not long before he arrived at the corner of Paradise Gardens, where he called a halt. A few whispered words to the plain-clothes men caused them to shrink back into the shadows of the gloomy street, whilst Sexton Blake, Martin, and O'Leary continued upon their way with Pedro.

"It was about here, sor, that the revolver hit me," O'Leary said at length, tenderly feeling the bump upon his head as he remembered it. "Oi think this was the puddle in phwhich Oi sat!"

"You are sure of the spot?" Sexton Blake asked quickly.

"Almost certain, sor."

The detective nodded and took the scrap of calico from his pocket; he pressed it to Pedro's muzzle and afterwards laid his hand flat upon the ground.

"Find, boy," he urged encouragingly. "Good Pedro—find!"

The hound, knowing at once what was required of him, lowered his nose to the ground and sniffed round in a circle, but it was only to look up wistfully into his master's face.

"Evidently Tinker has not passed over this spot," Sexton Blake murmured, half to himself, as he shifted his position to about a yard further up the street, and stepped from the road to the pavement. "Good lad"—he again allowed the dog to sniff at the calico and indicated the ground—"good Pedro—find!"

Once more Pedro dropped his muzzle and eagerly sought to pick up the scent. Both Inspector Martin and the Irishman held their breath, for the situation was becoming strained, whilst Sexton Blake's face was harsh and drawn with the emotion he was experiencing at the delay.

"Seek, Pedro," he whispered coaxingly. "Seek your young master. Find Tinker, boy," he added huskily.

Pedro sniffed deeply, then his head

went up, and he bayed deep down in his massive chest.

"He's got it!" Martin exclaimed, with a sigh of relief. "Thank goodness he hasn't been long!"

Sexton Blake was almost tugged from his feet as the hound started at a sharp pace down the street in a manner that proved the scent was a strong one. He entered the alleyway at the side of the gloomy-looking house into which Tinker had broken a few hours previously, and without once faltering he led the three men round to the window through which the young detective had entered.

It was only by pulling sharply upon the leash that Sexton Blake prevented the noble animal from hurling himself at the shutters, which had again been made secure.

"Call up your men, Martin," Sexton Blake ordered, in a low, tense whisper. "There can be no questioning the fact of Tinker having entered here."

"Right!" Martin answered, in the same quiet tones. "I'll have them back here in two minutes."

Upon tip-toe the official stole away into the darkness, and Sexton Blake turned to O'Leary.

"You had better keep out of the shindy, my friend," said he. "The men within will be seised, and the country cannot afford to lose such men as you just now."

The Irishman regarded his wounded arm ruefully.

"Oi suppose you're right, sor," he admitted regretfully; "though, sure, Oi'd have loved to have been in the barney. Still, Oi'll kape on the other soide of the strate and watch the fun, if Oi may."

The detective nodded, and the soldier turned and took up his stand upon the opposite side of the alleyway, while Blake stood rigidly waiting by the dark, silent house. Every nerve in his body was strung up to concert pitch, and although outwardly he was calm and collected, his fingers were itching to grip at the throat of the man who had lured Tinker into his power—who might ere this have the lad's blood upon his hands.

Ah! A dark figure loomed out of the gloom, then another and another. The foremost man was Inspector Martin, who was affectionately caressing the handcuffs reposing in his pocket.

"You, Smith, and you, Merson, get down to the river and try to get hold of a boat to watch the back of the house," Martin ordered officially. "If you are not back in ten minutes, I shall take it you have succeeded in obtaining one. Keep a sharp eye for any person trying to escape that way. Understand?"

The two men saluted and noiselessly crept away down the alley, and Martin turned to Blake. By this time a further six of the Scotland Yard men had drawn near.

"Four of my chaps are waiting in the front, Blake," the official said, as he took out his watch. "We'll give the two who have gone to the river their ten-minutes, then we'll make things hum."

Sexton Blake nodded, and in silence the little party waited for the stipulated time to pass.

To the private detective it seemed an eternity before Martin returned his watch to his pocket, aggressively

squared his shoulders, and advanced to the door in the side of the house.

"Say when," he said softly.

Sexton Blake felt to make quite certain that his revolver was safe in the pocket of his overcoat.

"Ready!" he whispered grimly, his lips compressing into a thin, straight line. "Now!"

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Tinker Doomed—Drugged and Helpless—In the Nick of Time—Sexton Blake's Clue.

When Tinker flung the revolver bearing his desperate message through the window and leant back against the wall he fully expected that either Von Stoltz or one of his companions would hear the crash of the breaking glass and immediately ascend to the room in which he lay to ascertain what had happened, but the seconds flew by and nothing to show that the men below had heard transpired.

At the end of a quarter of an hour the vague hope in the young detective's heart grew stronger, and he set to work to render the unconscious dwarf hors de combat against the time when he should recover his senses.

Tinker thrust the handkerchief that until recently had gagged him between the German's broken, uneven teeth, then he secured the dwarf's hands behind his back with some of the cord. With the spy's braces, the young detective lashed together his prisoner's legs, and his spirits grew higher.

Tinker smiled grimly as he finished his task and fell to reasoning how long it would be before his master could reach him, providing the message was found quickly and delivered to him. The time slowly dragged on and two hours, almost three, passed away, showing that either the dwarf had been instructed to keep watch over him or had not been missed by the master-spy and his confederates.

Had the message been found and taken to his master? Tinker wondered. Was Sexton Blake now upon the way to rescue him? Tinker heard a distant clock chiming the half hour after ten, and his heart began to sink again, for, although he was anything but a coward, the suspense was nerve-racking, and the death that awaited him, unless his beloved gov'nor came in time, was too awful to contemplate.

Tinker started, and his jaw tightened grimly as he heard the sound of a heavy footfall upon the stairs without. He leant forward sharply, his ears strained, every nerve alert, waiting—waiting for the approaching man to enter.

The footsteps grew more distinct, then the door was opened and Count Franz von Stoltz stepped into the room.

"All is well, Carl?" he asked, peering with knitted brows into the badly-lighted room. "The prisoner—Donner und blitzen!"

The German took a step backwards, his face blank with amazement, for he had caught sight of the helpless figure of the dwarf stretched upon the floor.

"Himmel, you vhelp, you shall pay for this!" he snarled, recovering himself. "Herrmann!"—he dashed from the room and leant over the banisters—

"Fritz! All of you! Come quickly!"

There came a rush of feet upon the rickety stairs and the six confederates of the master-spy dashed up to the landing, demanding to know what was wrong.

"Himmel, he has not escaped?" the man Herrmann rasped. "He—"

"No, no!" Von Stoltz returned. "Not so bad as that. But he has overpowered Carl! Look for yourselves!"

The excited Germans dashed after him to the room where the dwarf and Tinker lay. The lad was still sitting tensely forward. His face was pale and hard-set, but there was no sign of fear in his eyes, although he knew that he was very near to death.

"Ach, we are in time, you meddling, spying dog!" Von Stoltz hissed, shaking his huge fist in Tinker's face. "You thought you would escape—eh? But it was not to be! Curse you, you are about to start upon your journey to the other side of the veil. Do you understand me? My one regret is that it is not in my power to send your clever master with you!"

"Oh, cut the chinwag!" Tinker advised, returning the German's glance unflinchingly. "By James, I'd like a chance to show you what a Britisher is made of, you blustering bully! If I were free I'd made some of your heads sing, and—"

"Silence!" Von Stoltz cried, with a burst of anger, as he took a menacing step forward. "Another word, and I'll—"

"The window, Excellency! See, the window!"

Von Stoltz swung round upon the speaker. It was the spy, Herrmann. His face working with agitation, his eyes startled, he was gesticulating wildly in the direction of the broken window.

"By perdition!" the count gasped. "What does it mean?"

Tinker laughed exultantly and the German turned and glared at him.

"I will tell you what it means, your Excellency," the young detective sneered, as, as best he could, he made a mocking bow. "I will tell you why the glass is smashed. I did it when I flung my prisoner's revolver through the window!"

"What do you mean?" Von Stoltz demanded angrily. "Speak, or by Himmel, I'll shoot you without hesitation!"

Quivering with passion, he whipped a heavy automatic pistol from his pocket and levelled it point-blank at Tinker's temple.

"Speak!" he thundered again.

"With pleasure," the lad retorted coolly. "I attached a message to your master to the weapon. Now do you understand? You will have murder on your hands if you dare to take my life! At any moment the police may arrive, and—"

Herrmann approached Tinker and the lad clenched his fists. As the spy attempted to grip at his hands, the young detective lashed out with his left and caught his enemy a stinging blow between the eyes.

Herrmann let out a guttural oath and again leapt upon his victim. Upon this occasion, too, another of the spies came to his assistance and managed to secure a grip upon Tinker's arms.

The next moment a drug-soaked handkerchief was pressed tightly over the detective's mouth and nostrils. Tinker struggled frantically to free his hands, but the man who was holding them was powerfully made and the nauseating drug quickly took a grip upon the lad's faculties.

"To the river with him!" the master-spy ordered callously. "Then we must make ourselves scarce. Quick, Herr-

mann—and you, Fritz. There is no time to— Hark! What was that?"

Von Stoltz started and stood rigid, listening. From below had come the sound of three knocks upon the door, followed after a pause by three more.

"Who can it be?" Herrmann quavered fearfully. "We are all here, yet someone is using our signal to—"

"It is the police!" another cried hoarsely. "The police!"

"You are right!" Von Stoltz rasped, clenching his fists in baffled rage and apprehension. "The English pig must have given away the signal when he sent his message!"

Just for a moment the seven men stood irresolute, then they were galvanised into action by the sound of a thunderous knocking upon the door, accompanied by an authoritative voice demanding that they should "Open the door in the name of the law!"

Tired of waiting to be admitted, the police had decided to hasten matters and force their way in.

"By my Fatherland," Von Stoltz raved, every evil passion in him roused, "I will not be cheated of my vengeance! It is this dog of a Britisher who has brought us to this, and he shall pay the penalty!"

"All is lost!" Herrmann moaned, shaking in every limb as one stricken with the ague. "Hark! They are breaking down the door!"

He was right. A heavy body was being dashed again and again against the panels of the street door, and Von Stoltz snatched up Tinker's inert form.

He made a rush for the landing, his unconscious burden clasped in his brawny arms, but even as he started to descend the stairs the door below crashed inwards with a splintering of wood and a burly figure sprang into the dimly-lighted passage. It was that of Detective-Inspector Martin, of Scotland Yard, whose shoulder had been responsible for the breaking down of the door. He was followed by Sexton Blake, revolver in hand, and at his back were the six plain-clothes men who had taken active part in the raid.

Crack, crack, crack!

The report of a revolver rang out three times in quick succession as a spy amongst those grouped upon the stairs fired into the passage, and one of the Scotland Yard men clutched at his wrist with a half-suppressed oath.

Von Stoltz stood for a moment inactive in his baffled fury, then, dropping Tinker, he snatched out his automatic. Before he could use it, he was in the grip of Inspector Martin. The official wound his arms round the German's body, but the latter was desperate and he was not scrupulous as to how he fought. He lifted his foot and hacked savagely at Martin's shins, and with a gasp of pain and surprise the official let go his hold.

Von Stoltz struck savagely with his right and caught Martin a crushing blow upon the point of the jaw, sending him down in a huddled heap, then the German avoided Sexton Blake, who had sprang at him and made a wild dash for the stairs.

Two plain-clothes men were fighting desperately with a couple of the spies—the others had fled to the upper rooms, whither they had been pursued by the remaining detectives—but Von Stoltz managed to push his way past them, although in doing so he lost time, and Sexton Blake had caught up with him ere he reached the landing.

Sexton Blake flung himself at Von Stoltz and gripped him by the throat, then with a neat back-heel the detective sent the German heavily upon his back and the two men rolled over and over fighting desperately and fiercely.

Something gleamed in the famous detective's hands and—click!—one of the spy's wrists was encircled by a band of steel. The touch of the handcuff seemed to awaken in Von Stoltz almost superhuman strength and he struck upwards at his adversary like a mad-man.

It was well for Sexton Blake that Von Stoltz had dropped his revolver in the struggle, for never for a moment would the German have hesitated to use it. He was desperate; in his mind's eye he saw himself standing his trial by court-martial; he heard the death sentence passed upon him, and—

"Curse you, Sexton Blake!" the spy hissed, and his lips snarled back from his teeth like those of an infuriated wild beast. "Oh, why have I not killed you in the past when the opportunity has been placed in my way?"

The detective made no reply; he merely strove relentlessly to snap the other fetter upon his adversary's free wrist.

All was confusion and chaos. Down in the passage Inspector Martin had just reeled to his feet and was leaning dazedly against the wall, for powerful man though he was, the terrific blow he had received had come near to knocking him out of time. Pedro was crouching over the unconscious Tinker, whining plaintively and licking at his young master's face, whilst upon the stairs the two detectives were still struggling doggedly with their intended prisoners, and from the upper rooms came the sounds of a fierce combat, pointed from time to time by the spitting of a firearm.

Thud! Sexton Blake's head was knocked backwards with a jerk as Von Stoltz succeeded in wrenching his right arm free and struck up savagely at the detective. The German was swift to press home his advantage, and with a quick twist he had flung Sexton Blake from him and leapt to his feet. Like an arrow from a bow, he dashed along the landing towards a large window looking out upon the river, and as he reached it Sexton Blake staggered unsteadily to his feet, recovered himself, and sprang after him.

It was only for a moment that the master-spy hesitated. He flung a hurried glance over his shoulder to see his enemy approaching, and, drawing back, he deliberately flung his whole weight at the window.

As Sexton Blake made an ineffective grab at his clothing there was a splintering of woodwork and the crash of breaking glass and the German's heavy body came into contact with the window, then the whole framework was wrenched asunder and the spy went sprawling out with the debris.

But even as he fell, he uttered a yell of dismay, for beneath him was an open boat in which were seated two men. They were the detectives whom Martin had sent to watch the rear of the premises, and Count Von Stoltz's herculean body was hurtling straight for the frail craft.

*(Another long, exciting instalment of this magnificent serial next Thursday. Order now!)*



VIVVY STEVENS.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

JIM CULVER and VIVVY STEVENS are fellow clerks in the employ of Crarper & Sons, paper merchants. The junior partner in the concern is a despicable cur, with no notions of chivalry, and Jim Culver has occasion to thrash him for insulting Vivvy. The sequel to this scene is that both Jim and Vivvy are sacked, and find that they have to face the world together. Vivvy has an aunt in Cambridgeshire, whither the couple proceed for advice; but an unfortunate action on Jim's part causes them to draw blank. Proceeding along a country lane at dusk, the adventurers fall in with Mr. and Mrs. Beagle, a theatrical pair, and confess to a great longing for the stage. To test their abilities, Beagle arranges that Jim and Vivvy shall display their respective prowess in singing and dancing at once. The impromptu performance is rudely interrupted by a theatrical agent named Lavington Crooks, who endeavours to entice Vivvy to accompany him to London, as he sees that Vivvy is a wonderful dancer. At this suggestion Jim waxes wroth, and a quarrel ensues.

Jim Culver throws himself into an attitude of self-defence.

"Do you mean—this?" he asks.

"Yes!" Crooks replies, through his clenched teeth.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

## The Stumbling-block.

It all happened so quickly that Jim might well have been taken unawares. But he was a natural boxer, and instinct controlled his feet, so that he kept clear of Crooks's first rush.

He was aware of one thing from the very start—that Crooks was a boxer. When he had hit Jeremy Crarper, it had been like punching a sack of feathers, but Jeremy Crarper's friend, the theatrical agent, was a different proposition. His knowledge of the fistic art showed itself in every movement of the hands and feet and body.

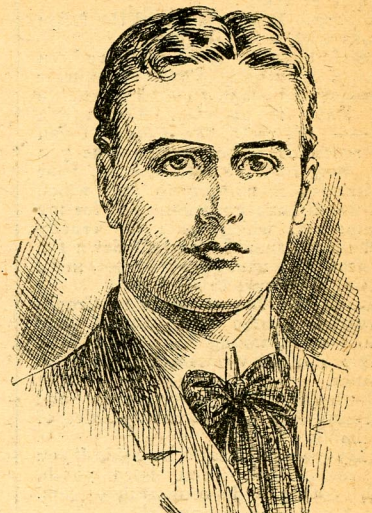
But one thing, however, went against him and stood in Jim's favour. Lavington Crooks had lost his temper. Jim's interference seemed to have worked him up into a state of anger that bordered on madness. Evidently he thought a very great deal of Vivvy's

# TWO OF THE BEST!

The First Chapters of a grand  
New Serial Story dealing with  
the Thrilling Adventures of  
**JIM CULVER**

and  
**VIVVY STEVENS.**

By **JACK LANCASTER.**



JIM CULVER.

dancing and the money it might have put into his pocket.

There were a few moments of quick sparring, during which Jim felt two numbing blows on the left cheek, then Crooks rushed at him like a bull, seeming unable to control himself any longer. There was a wild mix-up and a taud of blows going home.

Vivvy drew a long, hard breath, but said nothing. Montague Beagle stood muttering some part out of a play beneath his breath. Mrs. Beagle stood still and silent as a statue, only her eyes following the combatants.

Crooks's superior weight forced Jim backwards, but it was not Crooks who got home the greater number of blows. Jim ducked to avoid a smashing blow at his face which he had no time to guard, and took it, instead, on the crown of his lowered head. It hurt him, but it split Crooks's knuckles, and the shock and pain took Crooks off his guard for the fraction of a second. In that space of time Jim darted in quick as a snake, and next moment his adversary was bleeding at both nostrils.

Montague Beagle applauded loudly with his hands.

"Bravo," cried he—"bravo! On, Stanley—on! A mighty blow, my dear!"

"Decidedly so!" said Mrs. Beagle. Crooks swore to himself, so wasting valuable breath. Again he rushed at Jim, swung his right at Jim's head, missed, and nearly spun round. The boy, cool as a cucumber, and taking advantage of the opportunity, uppercut him beneath the chin. Crooks reeled, and his hands went up to his face. Next moment Jim had got home with his right just above the belt; and then it was over.

Crooks grunted like a pig, and collapsed, falling on his side. He lay writhing on the ground, gasping for breath, and Jim stood over him waiting to see if he were going to rise. But Crooks had had quite enough.

Jim felt a hand on his arm. He turned and saw Vivvy standing at his elbow.

"Jim!" she whispered.

There was a whole world of admiration in her eyes and in her voice. But there was something else besides—pity and anxiety as she looked down at

Crooks. Much as she disliked the man she could not bear to see him in pain.

Jim looked at her and understood what was in her mind.

"Oh, he's all right," he said—"only winded. He could get up now if he wanted to—only he doesn't want. Have you had enough, Mr. Crooks, or would you like to continue?"

Crooks scowled and licked his knuckles.

"Settle with you . . . 'nother time!" he gasped. "There's to-morrow, and the next day . . . and the day after."

Jim shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, all right! I shall be willing to oblige you whenever you want a row. Shall I help you up?"

Crooks, still scowling, shook his head. Montague Beagle walked round and regarded him with folded arms.

"Far be it from me," he said in his deep, sonorous voice, "to rejoice over a fallen foe. But there is something in your misfortune that is not displeasing to me. I have long sought the opportunity of telling you what I think of you, and—and now—"

"Oh, you go to Jericho!" Crooks growled.

"I shall do nothing of the sort, sir. I would not go to Jericho even with a No. 1 touring company. As I have said, I have long sought the opportunity of telling you what I think of you. It is with the utmost pleasure that I call you a—a— What shall I call him, Miranda?"

Mrs. Beagle made no suggestion, and her husband remained, hand to brow, in an attitude of deep thought.

"Ha!" said he. "I have it. You are, sir, a pudding-faced, club-footed baboon. It is with great pleasure that I call you a pud—"

Jim took him by the arm.

"Come along, Mr. Beagle," he said. "He's had enough."

Montague Beagle struck a dramatic attitude.

"Enough!" he cried. "My dear young sir—my very dear young sir—you do not know this man. Enough! Miranda, is he not a pudding-faced, club-footed baboon?"

"Decidedly so!" Mrs. Beagle exclaimed with emphasis.

"All right," said Jim, unwilling to

see a fallen foe tormented. "Let's leave it at that."

Montague Beagle favoured the fallen Crooks with a stately bow.

"Sir," he said, "since you have been knocked down by a lighter and younger opponent and shamed before us all, we will leave it at that. You are a pud—All right, Mr. Culver, I will not repeat it again. Enough, as you say. But, hark ye, Mr. Crooks, your punishment is nothing to that which you would have undergone but for my rheumatism, which takes me cruelly in the right shoulder and all down the left arm. The next time we meet, mark ye, sir! The next time!"

Mr. Beagle bowed again as Crooks scrambled to his feet, turned, and walked away, taking Jim's arm. Mrs. Beagle and Vivvy walked slightly in advance.

Montague Beagle turned and addressed Jim with a wide gesture of the hands.

"My young friend," he said, "you are magnificent. You have youth, skill, courage. I congratulate you. You are a fine young fellow. Even myself as a young man—"

"Oh, I'm sure you were a much better all-round chap than I am," Jim observed modestly.

"Perhaps!" Mr. Beagle answered musingly. "Perhaps! But that is a long while ago. Do not let us speak of it. In those days—Look out!"

The warning, shouted at the top of Montague Beagle's voice, only came in the nick of time. All four jumped on to the bank at the side of the road as Lavington Crooks's car flashed past. It was a near shave, for Crooks did not much care if there were an accident or not. Mrs. Beagle, for all her weight, skipped like a young panther. Her husband, red and gasping, shook his fist after the tail-lights of the retreating car.

It would be well now to leave Jim and Vivvy and their new-found friends for a brief while, and follow Crooks and his car on their journey.

He drove recklessly, and reached London in a little over two hours, leaving the car at a garage in Kensington. He then went to his flat, which was just around the corner, changed into evening clothes, and took a taxi-cab up to Regent Street, where he got out, and entered one of the new night clubs, the "Guy Fawkes."

As usual, dancing was in progress, and as he crossed the great room, fugging the wall, the first to address him by name was Jeremy Crarper.

Crooks nodded towards a little room at the back, and went inside. Presently Jeremy joined him at the small table near the fireplace where he was seated.

He advanced towards him, holding out his damp, limp hand.

"Hallo, old sport," he sang out, "how the deuce are you feelin' to-night? Full of beans—what? That's good! I've been wantin' to see you. I say, I told the waiter to bring whiskey-and-sodas. Was that right?"

"That'll do," Crooks growled.

Jeremy sat down and leaned across the table towards his friend.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed. "You look a bit battered, old man. What have you been doin' to yourself?"

Crooks drew his head back and snarled.

"All right!" he growled. "You needn't poke your nose into my face!"

"How did you do it?" Jeremy insisted.

"Never mind. What the deuce has it got to do with you? By the way," he added, "I met two of your beastly employees to-night. One of your beastly clerks, and a girl who used to be your secretary."

Jeremy stared.

"Not Vivvy Stevens?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, that was the girl's name. And the little beast of a boy's name was Culver, I think—James Culver."

Jeremy leaned farther across the table.

"Where did you meet them?" he asked.

"In Cambridgeshire—on the road. I was coming up in the car from my week-end place. They were with a couple of old barn-stormers, and the girl was dancing—having a sort of rehearsal, I s'pose. I tried to get her to come up to town with me in the car. She can dance, by Jove!"

Jeremy grinned.

"Crooks, my dear old pal," he said, "one of your eyes will be black to-morrow, and your nose is just a teeny bit swollen. You needn't explain how it happened. I know!"

Crooks frowned impatiently. He was not feeling proud of himself just then.

"Oh, mind your own business!" he grunted. "And—yes, you look a bit battered yourself."

"I know—I do," Jeremy admitted. "It looks as if that little rat Culver has had a busy day. He did this to me in the morning, and I'd wager anything that he did that to you in the evening. I never set up to be a boxer like you. I should have thought a chap like you, Crooks, could have smashed up a kid like him!"

"So I did," Crooks retorted. "And he wouldn't have touched me if he hadn't taken me unawares."

Jeremy winked his left eye very slowly.

"All right," he said. "I know when you're telling the truth, Crooks, and it isn't very often. You're not telling it now. So you've had a taste of Jim Culver, have you? The little skunk hit me this morning, and we sacked him and Miss Stevens for it. I haven't done with him yet, though."

"Nor have I," Crooks muttered, in a sunk voice; "you may lay your boots on that. He prevented me from launching that girl on the stage. She's a gold-mine, that girl!"

"She is!"

Crooks raised his eyebrows.

"How do you know?" he demanded.

"Have you seen her dance?"

"No. I'm not talking about her dancing. Didn't even know she could. But I'll tell you presently. Go on."

"I say she's a gold-mine for her dancing. In two months time I'd have had her ready for the London stage, and if I couldn't get her two hundred a week my name's not Lavington Crooks."

"And my name's not Jeremy Crarper if you wouldn't have had a hundred and eighty a week out of that money."

Crooks shrugged his shoulders.

"Just so!" he said. "You didn't think I wanted to take her out of kindness, did you? I'd have made her sign an agreement for ten years. She would take fifteen pounds a week, and I would take the rest of her salary. She'd have jumped at it. Fifteen pounds a week would have seemed princely to her. I'd have got hold of her, too, if it hadn't been for young

Culver. He told her I was a friend of yours, and that was enough. Then the old fools they were with chipped in, too."

"Who were they?" Jeremy inquired.

"Two old fossils, man and his wife, named Beagle. Broken-down actor and actress. I had them on my books for a long time, and they don't love me. They were stupid enough to offend me, Jeremy."

"Oh, I see."

Jeremy Crarper pressed his hands to his head. He seemed lost in thought for several moments.

"Look here," he asked presently, "is that girl likely to come to the front if she tours the country with those Beagle people?"

Crooks shrugged his shoulders.

"Nothing can stop her from coming to the front. She's a real artist. She's great—wonderful! But with the Beagles it'll take her a long time. And serve her right! She'll get no tuition, for one thing."

"That's a good job," Jeremy muttered. "I wish we could get her away from young Culver. Yes, there's money in that girl, not only in her dancing. There's a lot more money to come to her one of these fine days than she'd earn on the stage in a hundred years."

"You mean," said Crooks under his breath, "that she's an heiress?"

Jeremy nodded several times.

"Just that," he said.

"And she doesn't know?"

"She hasn't the least idea. That's why we sacked her to-day, the gov'nor and I. If she were brought to the verge of starvation, she might sign away all rights of whatever legacies were to come to her for the sake of a few pounds. You see, she doesn't know that she's going to be left tuppence. The trouble is—will she ever starve while she's with young Culver and those Beagle people?"

Crooks looked askew.

"She might!" he said meaningly.

Jeremy leaned still farther across the table.

"Look here," he whispered, "you'd better come into this with us. The gov'nor's agreed. And three heads are better than two. Equal shares. But you'll have to do some work."

Crooks smiled broadly.

"All right," he answered; "I'm game. But I shall want more particulars. I take it that if she has thrown in her lot with young Culver and the Beagles, the whole lot must be brought down to absolute beggary."

"That's right."

"It won't be so hard with the Beagles. I can smash their show up for them, I think, even with Vivvy Stevens in it. But the difficulty will be young Culver. I believe we shall have a job to make him leave her."

Jeremy nodded again, very vehemently.

"Yes," he said, "unless we're very careful, he'll be the stumbling-block!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Averting a Tragedy.

"If we're going to Cambridge we'd better turn to the left here," said Montague Beagle, suddenly standing still and thrusting out an arm like a sign-post.

Jim looked at Vivvy.

"What about your aunt?" he queried.



"We shall have to write to her," Vivvy said. "After all, we did mean to go and explain to her. We can put that in the letter."

"Right-ho, then," said Jim.

"May this turning mark a great turning-point in your lives," Montague Beagle said, pointing down the road that lay ahead of them. "May it lead to success. Eh, Miranda?"

"Oh, decidedly so!" said Mrs. Beagle.

"Then let us step out. Perchance wealth awaits us in Cambridge, it being term-time. The young undergraduates sometimes patronise the lesser drama, if only to laugh at the performers. But their money is good. At you, Miss Stevens, they will not laugh."

Vivvy smiled over her shoulder.

"I hope not," she said. "I'm sure I don't want Jim to have any more fights."

"Sometimes," Montague Beagle went on musingly, "they throw things. Was it not, Miranda, a dead cat that felled me to the stage at Oxford when I had reached the thirty-third verse of Eugene Aram."

"Oh, yes, decidedly a dead cat," Mrs. Beagle corroborated, sniffing reminiscently. "Decidedly dead."

"That is what one might have expected at Oxford," Mr. Beagle went on. "No Cambridge man would fling a dead animal at a Thespian. There it will be different. My wife, my partner, my dear Miranda, will go on to the stage and announce that I took my degree—a first in Moderations, I would have you know, sir—at Caius College in 1879. There will be applause. I shall come on and bow thus. Watch me—thus! After that we shall play to a packed hall. The news will get round. The Montague Beagle Family, Tragedians and Society Entertainers."

"Sounds all right," said Jim, but he had his doubts.

"It will be a draw," said Montague Beagle, throwing out his hands like a cross-Channel swimmer. "We shall roll in money. With care we may prolong our stay in Cambridge for a fortnight. Oh, why did I not think of Cambridge before? I should have preferred to make my fortune earlier in life. Then we may have enough to start a fit-up company, when my little play, 'The Blood on the Staircase; or, The Mystery of the Cross-eyed Pawnbroker' will come before the public for the first time. Its success is already assured. In three years' time at the most we shall be in the West End. Then my dear Miranda will have sables, and I, sir, shall indulge myself in a new fur overcoat."

"I say, Mr. Beagle," said Jim, anxious to stop him from counting any more chickens, "how did you come to know that rotter Crooks?"

Mr. Beagle tossed back some of his long hair.

"That," said he, "is a painful subject. Forgive me if I do not go into it too closely. He is an agent, as he said. He got my poor wife and I to put ourselves in his hands for six months. We signed an agreement to go to no other agent, and do no work save what he obtained for us. During that time I had occasion to reprimand him for a piece of sharp practice towards some other person that came before my notice. He took his revenge by offering us no engagements. We should have starved were it not for my dear old friend, Cæsar de Snooke."

"Who on earth is he?" Jim gasped.

"He is the man who, although not well blessed with this world's goods, sent us enough every week to keep body and soul together until we got out of that scoundrel's clutches. He is a travelling showman, a line of business somewhat beneath ours, and Cæsar de Snooke is not his real name. His real patronymic I do not know. But Cæsar de Snooke looks very well on the bills. It hints that the show will be funny but refined, and the average father does not hesitate to bring his wife and all the little ones to see it."

"Do you know where he is now?"

Jim asked, curious as to the gentleman who bore such an unusual name.

"On one of the broad highways of England. We might meet him to-morrow, perhaps in ten years' time, perhaps never again. Ah, I hear sounds of woe!"

By this time the road had led them to the outskirts of a wood through which it wound its way. The hedges on either side had already given place to open, wooded spaces. And under a tree at the side of the road a little boy sat crying with a piece of rope in his hand.

Vivvy and Mrs. Beagle both stopped, and Jim and Mr. Beagle drew up beside them, the latter linking arms with his wife.

"Poor little fellow!" Mrs. Beagle crooned, as if she were talking to a stray dog. "Poor little fellow!"

The little boy took no notice, but continued to weep, rocking himself to and fro as if his heart were broken. He beat time to his sobs with the piece of rope in his hand.

Vivvy bent forward and touched the youngster's head lightly with her hand.

"What's the matter?" she asked softly. "Have you lost your mother?"

The small boy raised his eyes and shook his head mournfully.

"N-no! I—I've—sniff—lost my—sniff—grizzly bear."

Jim started.

"Your what?" he cried.

"My grizzly bear. And—and I sha'n't half catch it from the b-boss."

Jim and Vivvy stared at each other. Suddenly they discovered that they were alone with the little boy—that the Beagles had vanished, as it were, into thin air. Presently, however, Montague Beagle's head appeared slowly and cautiously around the trunk of a tree.

"Did he say a grizzly bear?" the old actor asked in a hushed whisper.

"Yes."

The head disappeared again, and for the life of them Jim and Vivvy could not help laughing.

"It's all right," Jim sang out. "There's no bear here. Come along, Mr. Beagle."

Montague Beagle returned to the road somewhat shamefacedly.

"I was not afraid," he averred.

"Just for one moment, perhaps, I was taken aback. Now it is all over. What do I care for a grizzly bear? Miranda!"

"Yes?" said Mrs. Beagle, coming up behind them.

"When the time comes, stand behind me."

"Decidedly so!" said Mrs. Beagle.

"We must help him find it," Jim remarked. "It can't have gone far?"

Mr. Beagle threw up his hands.

"Were it not for my rheumatism—" he began.

"We knew a showman once," said Mrs. Beagle, very white in the face,

"who lost a lion. And it broke into a house and ate up one of the housemaids and nearly half the cook. It cost the owner of the lion an awful lot of money, and he had to give all the housemaid's relations free passes to the show to keep them quiet. And they say a grizzly bear's worse than a lion!"

"All the more reason why we ought to try to catch it," Jim said. "I suggest that Vivvy and Mrs. Beagle go back, while Mr. Beagle and I have a hunt round."

"A good suggestion," Mr. Beagle exclaimed sonorously. "It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done. Miranda, my love, should anything happen to me, I have written my own epitaph. You will find it on the back of a County Court summons, among the pawntickets."

Jim turned and addressed the little boy, whom he noticed was very thin and freckled, and phenomenally ugly.

"When did you lose the bear?" he asked.

"About t-ten minutes ago. It broke off the rope and ran away."

"Scandalous to allow a bear out with a grizzly boy!" Montague Beagle exclaimed. "My old friend, Cæsar de Snooke, would never have allowed it!"

"Ten minutes ago!" said Jim.

"The bear will probably have made for the nearest cottage. Its first instinct would be to look for food. We ought to find the nearest cottage and warn the people."

Mr. Beagle shook his head.

"Heaven knows that I am no coward," said he; "but, to be frank, I do not want to find that bear when it is searching for food. When it has had time to make a good meal I do not mind so much."

"Rubbish!" laughed Jim. "Come on! I'm fatter than you, so ten to one it'd have a go at me first. But I don't believe it'll want to eat anybody. Which way did it go, kid?"

The boy pointed in the direction in which the Beagles, Vivvy, and Jim had been walking.

"I don't suppose it's fierce," Jim added; "otherwise it would have attacked the kid directly it broke loose."

"It wouldn't touch me—it knows me!" gasped the boy.

"All right," said Jim; "you come along with us, then. Ready, Mr. Beagle?"

"We'll come, too," Mrs. Beagle put in. Heaven knows where that bear has got to by this time, and if we're to meet it I'd sooner have two men with me than be alone with Miss Stevens. Oh, decidedly so!"

Vivvy came up to Jim and took his arm as they walked along.

"Well," she said, "don't you feel as if the whole world's upside down? Less than twelve hours ago we were in that silly old office. Look what's happened since then. And now we're hunting for a bear, of all things!"

"And we've messed your aunt's house up, and I've had two fights, the first since I left school. And we've both had the sack. And we're going on the stage, and you've turned out to be a star dancer. What a day!"

Vivvy laughed.

"I've never felt so jolly," she said. "I feel that I don't care what happens. What a splendid old partner you are, Jim."

He looked round at her and grinned. "Am I really?" he said. "Well, if

I am I can't help it. You see, I've got such a splendid old partner, too."

Vivvy laughed.

"We mustn't begin to pay each other compliments," she said. "Friends never do that. I say, Jim, I believe something more exciting is going to happen before the night is over."

"Anyway," said Jim, "it won't have been a dull day."

But Vivvy was quite right. Something more did happen, and that very soon.

They went on side by side, chatting in low voices, and keeping a wary look-out to left and right. Suddenly Jim heard a loud cry from Montague Beagle, who was tramping behind with his wife and the boy who had lost the bear.

"Why did you not say so before?" the ancient actor shouted. "My old friend! The man who fed me when I starved. Oh, thrice happy day. Ta-ra-umpti-i! Miranda, forgive me if I play a few happy staves on my dear old violin."

"Music attracts bears!" Jim called out.

Beagle's jaw dropped, and he lowered the fiddle.

"What's the matter?" Jim added.

"What are you so bucked about?"

Beagle hurried forward, and caught Jim by the arm.

"My dear young friends," he cried, "this is indeed a joyous day. Good fortune hides for us behind every tree and jumps on our backs."

"Do you mean the bear, Mr. Beagle?" Vivvy asked.

Beagle's face fell again.

"No. I keep forgetting the bear. I mean, my dear, that before very long I shall be able to present to you my dear old friend, Cæsar de Snooke."

"What, the chap you were telling me about?" Jim cried.

"There is only one Cæsar de Snooke. He is with his show in a village quite close to us. The bear belongs to him. Yonder little ragamuffin has just filled me with surprise and joy by telling me his master's name. In a short while we shall be falling with tears upon each other's necks."

"Very nice, too!" said Jim. "Don't forget to rag him well for not keeping his bear under proper control."

"I shall talk to him," said Mr. Beagle, "like a brother. He will listen like a dutiful son. Then—then he will engage all of us. Our fortunes are made!"

"What about Cambridge?" Jim inquired. "I thought our fortunes were going to be made there."

"Cambridge is off," said Mr. Beagle, "now that we are about to meet Cæsar de Snooke. I cannot tell you how—Sst! Hark! What was that?"

They looked at each other and listened. Through the still night air a cry had been borne to their ears. As they lingered, tense and still, drawing slow breaths, they heard it repeated.

"The bear!" cried Jim. "It—it's after somebody!"

"It—it sounded like a cry for help," Vivvy faltered.

"Where did it come from?" Beagle asked breathlessly.

"Over there, I think," Jim said, pointing to the left. "Come along!"

Without waiting any longer he bounded up the low, shelving bank and disappeared amidst the trees. Vivvy followed close behind him, only his superior pace keeping her in the rear. The others straggled after them.

Jim recognised the light footfalls close behind him.

"Go back!" he gasped, without looking round; but Vivvy took no notice, and Jim bounded on.

He found himself running down an incline where the land was marshy. Presently he could feel the chill of water in his boots. There was enough light for him to see great deep footprints in the mud, and they were not the footprints of a human being or of any domestic animal.

Presently a little shallow stream crossed his path. There were stepping-stones, but he had no time to pick his way over them. He went splashing across, ankle deep in water. Then, as he reached the other side, a dreadful sight met his gaze.

The bear, a huge monster, stood upon all fours, nuzzling the prostrate body of a man. The man lay as one dead, neither moving nor making a sound. The bear, evidently enraged, was making queer little guttural noises and striving to bite its victim. Fortunately it was muzzled, and the muzzle was effective.

Jim took in the situation at a glance. The bear had knocked the man down, and was now trying to use his teeth upon him. When he found that he could not bite he would use those great ugly paws again, and—The rest was unthinkable.

Jim hesitated for a moment. He had no weapon, save the light walking cane which he had carried with him to and from the Crappers' office. It would hardly have been effective against a dog, much less a bear. He looked wildly around him.

Vivvy stood only three yards behind, with her back towards him. She was stooping, struggling with something. Then he realised that she was lifting one of the stepping-stones out of its bed in the stream.

"Oh, well played, Vivvy—well played!" he cried, and leaped to her side, taking the stone from her hands.

All that Jim had ever heard about bears flashed to his mind in that instant. Somebody had told him that they were easy animals to hurt—beasts with many vital spots. A hard blow across the back, for instance, made them sick.

He took the stone from Vivvy, and approached the bear. He knew that he must not miss, and he did not mean to miss. If he did, one or both of them would be done for. The bear would leave his first victim to tackle his new assailants. As he approached, he kept on gasping out to Vivvy to run back.

The bear pricked up its ears, looked up, and growled. Jim nerved himself for a moment, poised the stone, and hurled it. It fell with a loud thud clean

on the middle of the bear's back. There was a louder growl which merged into a muffled squeal.

"Hooray!" Jim gasped.

The bear turned abruptly and slunk away, whining like an injured dog. There was a loud rustle of leaves and a crackling of twigs, and next moment it had vanished into the thicket.

Jim and Vivvy both ran forward and bent over the man. His head was bleeding, where the bear had dealt him a heavy blow. Fortunately, the brute's claws had been clipped, or the result of that blow must have been fatal. As it was, the man was still alive.

"Get some water in my hat while I undo his collar," Jim whispered quickly, and Vivvy hurried away to do his bidding.

Jim, on his knees beside the injured man, had now leisure to see what manner of person he was. He was tall, well-dressed, middle-aged, and bronzed, although under the brown his face was ghastly pale. Blood was trickling gently down from a severe wound in the scalp.

Vivvy brought the water, and, taking out one of her own little handkerchiefs, washed the wound.

The injured man groaned once or twice, but without opening his eyes. Then, out of Jim's larger handkerchief they devised a rough bandage and tied it round his head.

"Better try and bring him round now," Jim whispered. "Bathe his face and forehead."

Vivvy did so, very gently, and presently the man opened his eyes and looked up vacantly into Vivvy's face.

"Where am I?" he muttered.

"What's the matter? Something's happened. My head! Oh, my head!"

"Do you feel very bad?" Vivvy asked softly.

"My head feels— Oh, what has happened. Tell me what has happened!"

"You have been attacked by a bear," Jim said in a low voice, "but the beast has gone now. You've had a rather nasty blow over the head, sir, but you will be better very soon."

The man wrinkled his brows.

"I don't remember anything about a bear," he muttered. "I—I can't remember anything at all. My memory's gone—gone! It's all a blank, all— But—but I know I've seen you before."

He was staring straight at Vivvy and speaking to her.

"I don't think you have," she said gently. "It must be your imagination."

The man groaned, but still stared at her as if something puzzled him.

"Yes," he said, "I know you. Those eyes, that nose and mouth—I could not be mistaken. Oh, no, what am I thinking? My memory's all—all gone. It was a man—a man with those eyes of yours. Stevens, was it—Stevens? Oh, my head!"

Vivvy started back.

"Stevens, did you say?" she cried. "My father! All my life I have longed to meet somebody who could tell me about my father."

The injured man closed his eyes.

"I can't remember—anything—more!" he groaned.

(Another tremendously exciting instalment of this grand new serial in next Thursday's DREADNOUGHT. Order your copy NOW!)


  
**DO YOUR EDITOR**
  
**A GOOD TURN**
  
 By Getting a New
   
 Reader For
   
**The Dreadnought**
  
 This Week.
   


# LION OR EAGLE?

A Stirring New Serial  
Story of the Attempted  
Invasion of the British  
Isles.

By JOHN TREGELLIS.

READ THIS FIRST.

Lord Kitchener's appeal for a million men has reached the village of Dacresford, where the recruiting sergeant has an exceptionally busy time. VICTOR and FRANK DACRE, the two sons of the Squire of Dacresford, set a noble example when they themselves step forward to enlist.

The Germans succeed in landing a huge force on the East Coast of England, and, the country being practically unprepared, fortune favours the invaders.

In a terrific cavalry engagement the British seem to let forth all their reserved energies, and the German lines are broken. Then comes the order—"Charge!"

"Sit tight!" Victor exclaims in his brother's ear, as their horses spring forward. "It's death or glory now!"

(Read on from here.)

Victor's Short Cut.

It was the moment of a lifetime. The wind screamed in their ears as they flew along, and the thunder of the squadrons' hoofs drowned all else save the first sharp cheer that burst from the men's throats. On every side the grim, fierce faces bent their gaze ahead, and the sabres were hitched well to hand.

It seemed but a few seconds, while the turf rolled away under foot, before they found themselves upon the enemy. There were enough armed men in that hurrying host to have covered the cavalry four times over, but they had already felt the teeth of the British lion, and were flying from his wrath. A desperate attempt to form fours and meet the cavalry was made, but the huge German force was now a disorderly mob, every man for himself, and before there was time to think the troopers were upon them.

The White Hussars dashed into the fray like a whirlwind, and the sabres flashed and swept and bit home with awful swiftness. Victor and Frank scarcely knew what happened, or how they came to be in that raging cataract of men and horses. They saw the mass of troops turn to face the attack and next moment were upon them.

Frank felt his horse rear and squeal as a bayonet laid open his shoulder, and put up his carbine with both hands to try to guard a swinging down-cut that a German subaltern made at him with his sword. The blade bit deep into the lock and bolt, and the striker went down and was trampled under-foot as the horse's shoulder struck him. Clubbing his light carbine, Frank struck out blindly as his mount bore



So well trained are our cavalry horses that their value in a charge is inestimable. It is of frequent occurrence for a number of horses, although bereft of their riders, to continue their wild career. Such a scene is portrayed above.

him on, and as he made a wild attempt to club down a Prussian on the near side who was about to spike his horse, another on the right swung up his bayonet to drive it home in the boy's body.

Victor's revolver banged in the man's face, and he fell forward limply, the horses passing over him. How many of these incidents there were in the ride Frank could not tell. They all passed in the wink of an eyelid; and as the cavalry came fairly into the midst of the Germans the thundering hoofs and flashing sabres scattered them like wolves flying before the charge of a tiger.

Through and back again went the White Hussars, dashing among the bristling bayonets and snapping rifles, a hundred of their saddles empty; but four times the number of Germans were down. The mass of them were driven far and wide and ridden over, while half a battalion, finding themselves hemmed in a field, flung down their arms and surrendered as the troopers charged. They were given quarter at once. Their arms were piled, and a troop of Yeomanry that came up took charge of them.

All along the line the rout was the same. So complete a defeat had not been seen since Jena was fought. So swiftly had the British regiments pushed round the flanks that they

caught the flying Germans and drove the remnants of the scattered battalions to fight or surrender.

As the Hussars came dashing out from their final charge, Frank, wild with excitement, hurled his carbine at a man who was taking a deliberate shot at him, as if he were in a shooting-gallery, and a rough outburst of laughter broke out as the butt took the man in the belt and sent him sprawling, the rifle flying into the air. At the same moment Frank's horse, that had been wounded in the fight, came down heavily and rolled over, the boy just managing to throw himself out of its way.

Victor dashed after a riderless horse of the Hussars as it cantered by, neighing for its dead master, and, catching it by the bridle, he brought it up to his brother.

"Hurt, Frank?" he cried. "Jump up, then, and keep mounted, whatever you do. We've broken their last stand!"

"Hurrah!" yelled Frank, as he flung himself into the saddle and galloped away, the stirrups, which were much too long for him, banging and swinging like flails. Gripping with his knees, he got hold of the leathers each in turn, and managed to shorten them up three holes. Then, jamming his feet home, he flew over the trampled field to where he saw a great

NEXT WEEK'S GRAND HARRY WHARTON STORY IS ENTITLED: "THE PHANTOM FUGITIVE!"

mass of men, in khaki and in green, striving furiously together, four hundred yards away, their bayonets flashing and thrusting.

Several warning voices yelled to him to turn, but he paid no heed, and went on alone. What the trouble was ahead, or what he meant to do, he scarcely knew. He was mad with excitement, and all he saw was the colours of the crack Hanover regiment surging and waving in the midst of the fight, where the Germans had rallied to a stand against the Lincolns.

Straight into the fray dashed Frank, through friend and foe. He had no weapon, but the great troop-horse flew on like a thunderbolt, and in a few seconds he was up to the centre, where the reddened swords were flashing round the Hanover colours.

Frank seized the staff, and with the sheer weight of his rush tore it from its holder. A crimson blade whizzed past his back and bit into the cantle of the saddle; another shaved through the thick staff as he held it up to guard himself, and wounded him slightly in the chest, and the great horse, with no hand on the bridle, blundered away to the left before its young rider could be struck down, and a mighty cheer rose as the colours were seen to fall.

Frank trailed the broken staff behind him, nearly losing it after it was cut in two, and from that moment the Germans, who were superior in numbers to their attackers, began to give way. The Lincolns pressed on with redoubled fury, and in two minutes the First Hanovers broke and fled, leaving two-thirds of their number dead or prisoners.

Frank hardly waited to see the end of it; he flew back as fast as his horse could cover the ground to join the troopers again. But the White Hussars had already made a circuit round to catch the retreating Hanovers, and Victor was out of sight, too. Then Frank caught sight of his old friends, the Suffolks, resting on their arms, a third of them missing, and nearly every man showing the stains of the great fight they had been through. Lingard, the adjutant, was with them, and Frank galloped up, shouting wildly, and waving the Hanover colours above his head.

A mighty cheer arose, and every man who had any headgear left hoisted it on his bayonet.

"What colours are those?" shouted Lingard.

"The First Hanovers!" cried Frank. "Then, by Jove, youngster, you've captured the best prize of the day!"

"Well done, Frankie!" called Victor, who came cantering up at the same moment. "You've got 'em, then? I saw you goin' for 'em, an' I made sure it'd be your finish. What price. Weary Wilhelm now? Are you hurt?"

"Only a bit of a cut over the ribs," said Frank, tumbling off his horse and throwing himself down, for the strain had been tremendous; "hardly a flesh-wound even. We've got off cheap. There's a lot of poor fellows will never answer the roll-call again."

"Yes, hundreds," said Lingard, "and hundreds more. Can't score victories for nothing. You may get shot in the first skirmish or go through twenty battles without a scratch; it's all luck. We've clipped the eagle's wings this time."

"Will it settle the invasion?" asked Frank eagerly.

"It may even do that, if our other forces have checked the four German army corps to the north, between Ipswich an' Norwich. We've saved London from the worst danger that threatened it. Now, if the rest goes as well, the Germans'll be sheddin' tears for their happy Fatherland. General Forbes has done his work well."

As they rested, leaving the flying squadrons to scatter and pursue the last of the routed foe, news came in from all sides. They had over four thousand prisoners. The Germans had lost nearly half their men on the field itself. Only the Uhlán and cavalry regiments had got away with anything like their former strength, and a whole regiment of Hussars had been wiped out.

As for the guns, only a single battery was saved, and that was sure to be taken before long. Surrenders were still going on wholesale, for the Germans had nowhere to retreat to. On each side were deep salt rivers, and behind lay the marshes and the sea. It was true they had ten miles of country behind them, but it was a mere pocket, hemmed in by water on three sides and the British on the fourth.

"We're goin' to get the whole lot of 'em!" cried a Yeomanry corporal, cantering up to beg a drink of water. "We've pretty nearly done it already. There aren't a lot left, but they've scattered themselves so much that it's like roundin' up a drove of pigs. The ones who are retreatin' are cut clean in two halves goin' north an' south. Their army's done for, an' Von Schlacht is makin' a dash for it with his staff, for he's cut right off, an' afraid he'll be captured. He's makin' for the north, to try an' cross Hamford Water, 'cause he's barred on this side by our cavalry."

"By gum, is he?" cried Victor, jumping up. "Which way did he go?"

"They saw him in the distance ridin' out from Laxford for Alresford Creek, where it's likely the Germans have got some boats. It's the only place he could go for, an' as he started early, he's half-way by now. He'll be across to Clacton before dark."

"Will he?" cried Victor, springing to his horse. "Why, he's got the marshes to cross, an' we could get to Laxford in front of him with fast horses from here, by a good ten minutes."

"What, capture Von Schlacht!" exclaimed the corporal, in surprise.

"Why not?" returned Victor, springing into his saddle. "He's left his broken force an' running north with his staff. What mischief mayn't he do yet? He's one o' the first of the Kaiser's generals. By gum, here's uncle and his troop!" cried Victor, clapping his heels to his horse.

The squad of Yeomanry had returned, after helping to head off and capture a battalion of Prussians, and now were returning, with the loss of eight or ten men. Victor reined up sharply in front of Captain Berners and saluted.

"It's reported General Von Schlacht is makin' for Alresford Creek to escape, sir. Won't you come an' cut him off? All our light cavalry are ahead after the enemy."

"Cut him off, Victor!" exclaimed his uncle, while every trooper pricked his ears eagerly. "Why, how can we get there in time?"

"I can show you a way to get there

five minutes before him, if we start at once and ride hard," said Victor.

"Then let us start!" cried the captain. "I rely on you, Vic! Three about, there—gallop!"

### The Capture of Von Schlacht.

Frank swerved in on the other side of his uncle, and away went the troop, straight across the stricken field and out to the northward. There was no time to make reports or seek orders; if it were to be done it must be done at once.

"Capture a brigade-marshal and his staff!" muttered Captain Berners as he rode. "Such a thing hasn't been done, barring wholesale surrenders, since Napoleon's first war!"

"That's no reason why it shouldn't be, is it Uncle Jack?" said Victor, shortening his rein. "Why, it's a sure gain of two miles the way I'm goin', while Von Schlacht's blunderin' over the dykes. An' those fellows behind were goin' to sit still an' let him go!"

"It isn't everybody knows the Essex marshes like you do, Victor," said his uncle. "More's the pity, for we need it now. An artillery major told me yesterday he'd never heard of the River Colne before. Think of it! But you're right, if we can get hold of Von Schlacht—which I doubt—it will be a tremendous score. He's a man worth capturing."

"You needn't doubt, uncle," said Victor, "for I can put you where you can get at him, and you'll do the rest. If there's time I can ambush you, so he won't get wind of us and hook off somewhere else. He's a heavy man, but I doubt he rides hard."

"What do you know of him?" "I saw him at the fight in Thurno Woods—a big, fierce old Johnny, with a red face and white moustaches. I don't know how many he'll have with him."

"His staff and guard—say, eight or ten," said Captain Berners, running his eye over his men. "We're a round dozen. We lost eight in that last scrimmage."

"Push along, or we shall be too late," said Victor. "That's Alresford village on the hill. We've got to go round the foot. Frank, ride up the hill and see if you can spot anything of Von Schlacht or any other Germans. Pull out here to the left, uncle, an' round behind the farm. If we're seen now the game's up. We've got to make for those two small coppices on the way to the creek."

"Why?" "Because Von Schlacht's bound to pass either between 'em or close to 'em."

"Then I'll have half my men in each!" exclaimed Berners. And, quickly dividing the troop, he sent six to the nearer coppice, with orders to lie low and watch, while he took Victor and the rest of the men to the farther one. In a couple of minutes it was done, and the two divisions of horse-men were waiting silently under cover of the two little groves.

"Quick work!" said Victor. "You've got your men in smart order, uncle."

"Pleased to have the approval of an old war-dog like yourself," said the captain grimly. "Victor, it's many a year since I spanked you across my knee, but if you've led me and my

troop here on a fool's errand I'll do it again!"

"I think it'll be all right," grinned Victor; "but, of course, one can't tell, and if Von Schlacht got wind of your clumsy troopers gallopin' along here he'd go another——"

"Here comes one!" said Berners, as a horseman came swiftly galloping down the hill and right round the back by the hedges.

"It's Frank!" said Victor. "The young rip takes cover well, even on horseback. He'll join us from the rear, so as not to be seen, and by the way he's ridin' he should have some news."

In a couple of minutes Frank came through the coppice from behind, and reining up quietly beside the leaders, he nodded to Victor.

"There's a party of about ten horsemen ridin' like Old Harry up from the marshes," he said, "an' a pretty mess they're in. I should think they've left a few behind in the dykes. They're makin' this way."

"Well done!" muttered Berners. "You were right, Victor."

"There they are!" said Victor, pointing quickly through the trees as a distant squad of mounted men appeared. "It's Von Schlacht, right enough," he added, borrowing a pair of looted field-glasses that Frank handed him—"the big chap on the right. He looks mighty savage."

"So would you if your giddy invasion went up in smoke," said Frank. "He's thinkin' of gettin' more men and havin' his revenge. That's where we come in."

"Shut up!" whispered Victor.

Not another word was said as the horsemen rapidly approached. Their horses were in a lather, mud-stained, and panting, showing how mercilessly they had been pushed in the ride from Tillingham, which was really riding back towards the British forces. But Forbes' light cavalry were already between them and Bradwell Quay, and Alresford was the only place where the fugitives could be sure of getting a boat.

Von Schlacht's fierce, brick-red face could be seen with the naked eye as the staff rode up. Right between the two coppices they came, as fast as they could spur.

A shrill whistle arose, and there was a shout of warning from the Germans as the two halves of Berners' troop suddenly dashed out from the coppices. A way went the two boys on either side of their uncle, the troopers thundering behind, and they heard Captain Berners' ringing shout as he called on the Germans to surrender. The answer was a couple of hastily-fired revolver-

shots, and before there was time to think, the two parties were into each other.

So sudden was the charge, delivered sideways on both flanks, that the Germans, on their lighter horses, went down like ninepins by the mere shock of the collision. Taken by surprise by the burly Yeomen, who struck out lustily, the German staff, whose weapons were not even drawn, were simply bowled over with very little bloodshed, save for four who drew revolvers and were cut down, while one of the Yeomen was killed and another wounded.

Victor rode close at Frank's bridle-hand, and it seemed to the boys like an old-fashioned Rugby charge. They were both nearly unseated when their horses crashed into those of the Germans, and a revolver-shot singed Victor's hair and stung his face with powder-grains; but when the first shock was over the lightly-horsed staff were mostly sprawling on the ground.

"Where's Von Schlacht?" cried Victor, wiping his smarting cheek, and half blinded by the burnt powder.

"Great Scott, look at uncle!" shouted Frank, pulling his horse round.

Captain Berners had gone to the attack with his eyes fixed on but one person. Von Schlacht was riding on the near side, and when he saw the troop cutting off all chance of escape for his escort he rammed his spurs home and made a wild dash to cut across and escape by the rear.

But for Captain Berners, he would have succeeded, for the captain alone barred his way to freedom. But Berners rode straight at the German general to intercept him.

Captain Berners had not as much as drawn his sword, and he paid no heed to Von Schlacht's revolver as the two men dashed at each other. It cracked once as the giant Britisher spurred his great grey horse forward, the two met a gallop, and Berners, throwing his huge arms round Von Schlacht, fairly plucked him from the saddle, revolver and all, while the German general's horse went galloping wildly on without its rider.

**The V.C.**

A ringing shout went up as the troopers saw the encounter, and even the floored Germans stared with amazement as Berners cantered up with their general across his saddle-bow. The Yeomen had flung themselves from their mounts, and beat the weapons from the hands of the Germans before they could rise; and Berners, disarming his prisoner of the pistol, at once set him down.

"Bid your men surrender!" general!" he cried. "No use shedding blood needlessly."

The staff were for fighting still, but Von Schlacht gave his command hoarsely, and they ceased, to the relief of the Yeomen, who did not want to use their blades against outnumbered men who had no chance.

"Your parole, general?" said Berners, turning to his prisoner.

"You had best shoot me!" muttered Von Schlacht hoarsely, biting his white moustache. "My day is ended. I will give no parole!"

"It is not the custom of the British to shoot unarmed prisoners," said Berners.

"After defeat and flight, caught riding for my life like a cursed scout," said Von Schlacht hoarsely, his eyes red and savage. "What does it matter what happens to me?"

"I understand your feelings," said Berners, who felt pity for the old warrior standing there disarmed and helpless; "but we know well enough the flight was bitter to you, and that you did it not for your own sake, but that you might yet be of service to your country. It will be less painful for us both if you give your word. I have no wish to herd a brave man into camp at the end of a pistol," he added.

"I have fallen into the hands of a gentleman, at least!" said the German general, with a gulp. "I give my parole. Let us get it over."

"Trooper Scott, catch General Von Schlacht's horse," said Berners, taking off his jacket. "Victor, come here and tear out the lining of my coat."

"Are you hurt, uncle? Did he hit you?" exclaimed Victor anxiously, hurrying forward.

"Got me through the shoulder," said Berners, who had taken no more notice of Von Schlacht's revolver than if it had been a pea-shooter. "Must tie it up, or I shall lose too much blood on the ride back. Bind it crossways, Victor, and make the knot as tight as you know how. That's you."

He did not even wince under his nephew's rough surgery, and, the flow of blood being stopped, he put on his coat again and stood to his horse.

"I regret having wounded you," said Von Schlacht, with a courtly bow.

"I have the lesser hurt," replied Berners, swinging into the saddle, "and you the greater. Are you ready, gentlemen?" he said to the staff. "I presume you will also give your paroles?"

They gave them gloomily enough, and the cortege started back towards Wivenhoe. General Forbes had pitched his headquarters' tent on the summit of the hill, where the heliograph was winking and the field-telegraph clicking to tell the great news to those awaiting it so anxiously.

The captain rode straight up before the headquarters' tent, and, dismounting, asked to see the general.

"I am extremely busy, and can only attend to matters of the first importance!" said General Forbes' voice sharply inside the tent when the message was taken to him. "Captain Berners, did you say?" He strode to the door of the tent himself. "What is it, captain?"

"I have to present a prisoner, sir," said Berners, saluting—"General Von Schlacht."

"What?" exclaimed Forbes, his face flushing, and he lowered his voice. "Enter, captain, and bring your prisoner."

*(This magnificent story of the Great War will be concluded in next Thursday's number of "The Dreadnought." Order your copy early.)*

**FREE** For Selling 12 Packets of Kew Seeds at 1d. per packet.

To further advertise our Famous Kew Seeds we give every reader of this paper a magnificent present absolutely FREE simply for selling 12 packets at 1d. each. Our up-to-date Prize List contains hundred of different kinds of free gifts including Ladies' and Gents' Cycles, Gold and Silver Watches, Fur Sets, Family Scales, Chains, Rings, Accordions, Phonographs, Gramophones, Air Guns, Engines, Toys, Cinemas, etc.



All you need do is to send us your Name and Address (a postcard will do), and we will send you a selection of Flower and Vegetable Seeds to sell or use at 1d. per large packet. When sold send the money obtained and we will immediately forward gift chosen according to the grand list send you. Colonial applications invited. Send a postcard now to—

**KEW SEED CO., Ltd. (Dept. 8), Kew Gardens, London.**

**NEXT WEEK'S GRAND HARRY WHARTON STORY IS ENTITLED**

**"THE PRISONER OF WAR"**

# THE SECRET PLOTTER.

(CONCLUSION.)

## Blake's Mission Is Accomplished.

"Yes," said Blake, moving across to the divan and placing his hand on the lever. But for some reason or other he did not shut it off then and there. A strangely preoccupied look had crept into his face, which was quite different from the paralysed expression which it had worn only a few minutes ago. And suddenly he beckoned to the sergeant, and at the same time placed his finger to his lips in token of silence.

The sergeant tiptoed across the thick carpet noiselessly.

"The secret exit we've been looking for is somewhere in this room," Blake whispered.

"Yes, sir."

"We must search for it in absolute silence."

"Yes, sir."

"For all we know, Sando can hear every word we utter and every movement we make."

The sergeant nodded his apprehension.

"Tell your men—tell them they must not make the least sound; tell them to pay no attention to the orders I give them; those orders will only be intended to mislead Sando, if he is listening."

The sergeant nodded again, and Blake's instructions were quickly communicated to the constable, who passed them on from one to the other. A thrill of suppressed excitement ran through all present. The atmosphere of the room seemed suddenly charged with electricity.

"Well, that will do, men," said Blake, in loud, clear tones. "You needn't wait. There is nothing more to be done here for the present. Indeed, I'm afraid the scoundrel has outwitted us, and there is nothing more to be done at all. I'm too much upset to realise this calamity properly as yet, and I shall be glad to be alone to collect my thoughts."

"Yes, sir. We understand. Come along, men!" replied the sergeant.

This was the signal for the commencement of the search.

Silently and cautiously they spread themselves about the room, the walls of which, it will be remembered, were hung with sable curtains, flanked by mirrors. The curtains were noiselessly drawn aside, the mirror-frames were closely scrutinised, the walls were touched, felt, and handled. They dared not tap nor sound them, for fear of the slightest noise betraying their presence.

Slowly, methodically, silently, they worked round the room in this manner, Blake being the keenest and most active of the searchers.

They proceeded strenuously, but without their investigations producing any result. Yet the fact did not dismay them or cause any relaxation of their efforts. It was to be expected that the secret exit would be difficult to find, hampered as they were by the strict necessity of searching for it in absolute silence.

A quarter of an hour elapsed—twenty minutes—half an hour.

Every particle of the wall, every crack, crevice and crevice in the mirror-frames, had been minutely scrutinised,

and their failure to discover anything was beginning to discourage them.

"We've been all round the room, sir," whispered the sergeant to Blake.

"Then we must go all round it again," was Blake's reply.

"If we only dared sound the walls by tapping them, sir, we should probably—"

"No. Proceed as before. There must not be the least noise," Blake interrupted him.

"Very well, sir." And the momentarily intermitted search began afresh.

It was at this very moment, without the least warning, that one of the mirror-frames swung back with a crash, like a door turning on its hinges, and Cornelius Sando leapt into the room.

His appearance was so bewilderingly sudden that the constable nearest him was utterly nonplussed by it.

"Seize him!" shouted Blake.

Blake himself was not near enough to get at him, and before the constable in question had recovered his presence of mind Sando's fist was dashed in his face, and Sando himself had shot through the curtains and was racing for his life along the corridor.

"Help—help!" came in a weak voice from the opened aperture.

It was Tinker's voice, and Sexton Blake plunged through the opening. The force of example is infectious, and, instead of following the fugitive, the police followed Blake like one man.

But a moment later they were straggling back again, with Blake carrying Tinker in his arms.

"Are you all right, young 'un?"

"Right as rain, sir, if you'll only cut these cords! What about Sando?"

And the words were hardly out of Tinker's mouth when the whole party were startled by three thunderous thuds from the direction of the staircase. There was no possibility of mistaking their significance.

Blake turned pale, and, laying Tinker down on a divan, shut off the lever controlling the mechanical contrivances—which, in his previous excitement, he had forgotten to do.

"What about Sando?" repeated the youngster eagerly.

Blake paused before replying, to steady his voice. And then he answered solemnly:

"Dead, Tinker! He has fallen a victim to his own hideous ingenuity. Whether it is better as it is or not I do not pretend to say, but his end, at least, must have been mercifully sudden."

He signed to some of the men to proceed to the spot, and they found what they expected to find. Cornelius Sando had perished under the blows of his own monstrous hammer!

"Now, young 'un, tell us about yourself," said Blake, when they had recovered from the shock of the catastrophe.

"Oh, my story is soon told!" replied Tinker brightly. "I left you prosecuting the search down below, and came here to sit down, and as I was very tired I dropped off to sleep. I awoke to find Cornelius Sando in the room, pinning up a slip of paper on the curtain. I shouted for help, but he was on me in a moment with his revolver, at the same time making his mesmeric

passes over me, and I had the sense to pretend to succumb to them."

"To pretend, Tinker?" queried Blake incredulously. "Didn't the mesmeric influence overcome you?"

"No, sir; and I think I know why. Sando was in too much of a hurry to get away to be able to concentrate his will-power properly on me. You see, my shout for help had disturbed him, and he was afraid every moment somebody would come. At least, that is how I explain it. He failed because he was flurried by trying to do several things at once."

"Yes, that is probably the explanation," said Blake thoughtfully. "Well, what then?"

"Oh, then he picked me up and carried me into the secret exit, and when he had got me there he tied a handkerchief over my mouth, and roped me up with the cords you've just cut. Then he dumped me down on the floor, and crept back to the end of the aperture—I suppose to listen to what was going on in here."

"And all the while you were pretending to be insensible?" queried Blake.

"Yes, sir. And that's how I had him; for while he was intent on listening I was busy wriggling towards a rack of revolvers arranged along the walls—there are dozens of them, sir; scores!—and as soon as I had got hold of one of them I was—well, you see, I'd got him, sir!"

Blake nodded and smiled.

"It is too interesting to lose any of it, Tinker. Let's have the whole yarn," he said.

"Oh, well, sir, there is really nothing else to tell. I imagine I must have made a bit of a noise, for he turned round suddenly, and saw me with a revolver. It seemed to flummox him. I thought he was going to fire, but he didn't; and before I could get him fairly covered he whipped round and bolted through the mirror-door, and—that's all."

With the unmasking of the arch-criminal, Cornelius Sando, and his tragic death, Sexton Blake's work in the United States was done.

The vast organisation of which Sando was the brain and head, and which had penetrated almost every department of the public service, crumbled away and perished.

John Lucas Slaney and many others, including Selim, were brought to justice, and in due course expiated their crimes.

Ivy Cottage was pulled down and demolished, and a handsome police-station has since been built upon the site of it.

Rewards and honours of every description were showered upon Blake and Tinker, but as soon as they could escape from them all—from the banquettes, and the speeches, and the junketings, and the festivities—they took boat and returned to England.

"After all, there is nothing like the Old Country, sir," said Tinker.

"Nothing in the world, Tinker!" replied Blake.

THE END.