


THE NELSON LEE

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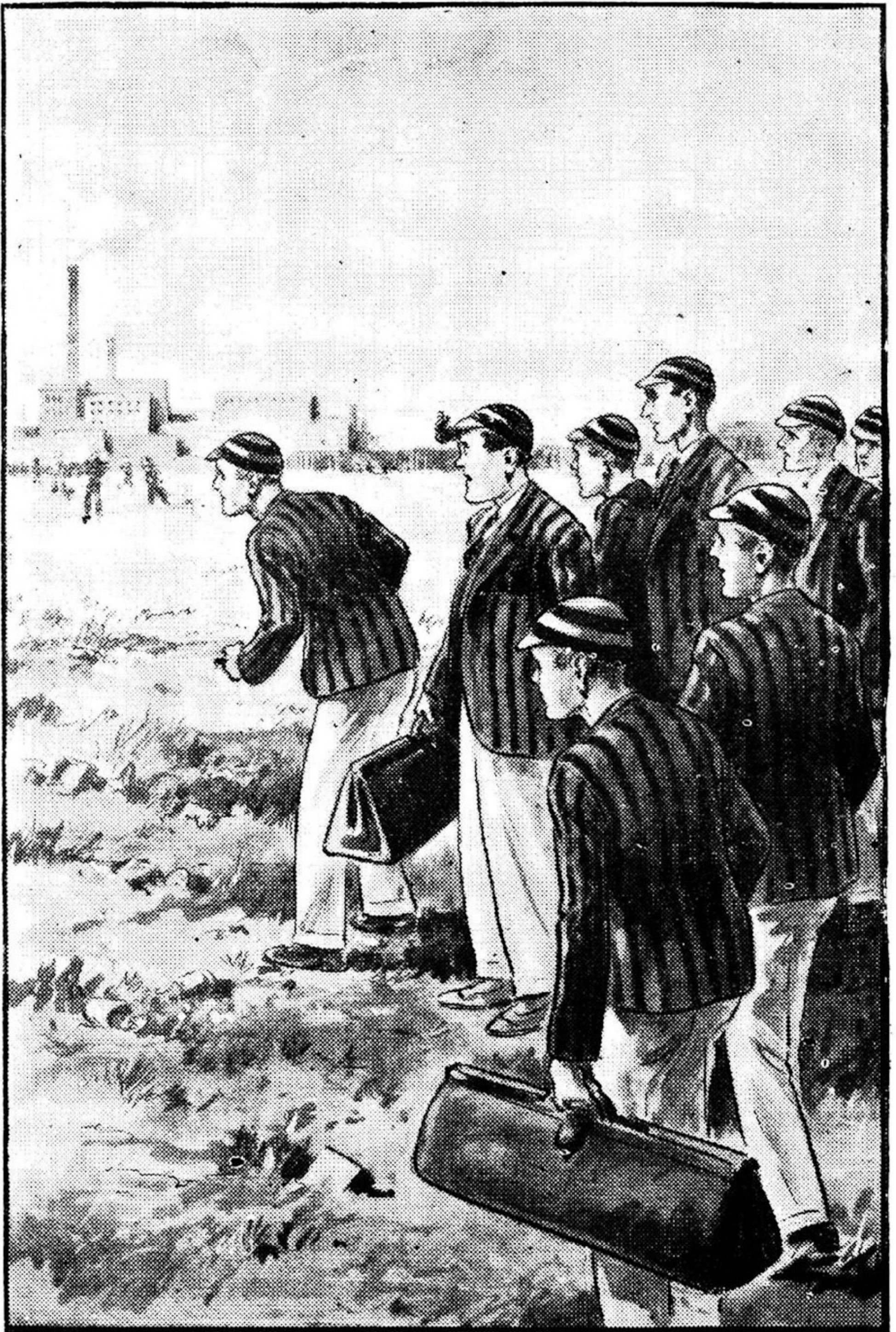
THE ST. FRANK'S TOURING SCHOOL!

An exciting long complete yarn of schoolboy adventure featuring Nipper and his cheery chums of St. Frank's.

New Series No. 162.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY.

June 8th, 1929.



The St. Frank's Junior Eleven gazed at the scene in amazement. They had come here expecting to find a fully equipped cricket ground. Instead they saw a stretch of wasteland, with heaps of rubbish and tin cans dotted about in the coarse grass!

Read About the Adventures of Nipper & Co. in Leeds and Newcastle!

THE ST. FRANK'S TOURING SCHOOL!



By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS

Already the Boys of St. Frank's have had many stirring adventures during their trip on the School Train, but they're still thirsting for more—and they're not disappointed. Leeds and Newcastle see to that! You'll vote this the best yarn in the series so far, chums. Start reading it now.—ED.

CHAPTER 1.

St. Frank's in Leeds!

“**H**OW'S that?”
“Out!”

Edward Oswald Handforth, of the St. Frank's Remove, gazed indignantly towards the boundary. A white-clad figure had just sent the ball shooting up into the heavens, and the umpire had fairly chortled the verdict.

“What rot!” said Handforth. “That was a sixer, wasn't it?”

“Not this time, old man,” grinned the wicket-keeper. “It was a good drive, but you didn't quite get behind it. Dixon brought off a ripping catch, and you St. Frank's chaps are all out!”

Handforth looked at the score-board, aghast.

“All out for 131!” he ejaculated. “My only sainted aunt!”

“Don't forget you're in Yorkshire,” said the wicket-keeper carelessly.

Handforth and the other batsman went off the field with the Yorkshire schoolboys. The St. Frank's juniors were playing the Moorhouse College Junior Eleven—and, by the look of things, they were in for a thrashing.

The St. Frank's innings was just over, and Handforth had had the mortification of seeing batsman after batsman caught out or bowled whilst he strove to make the runs. When the last man was in, it was Handforth himself who had recklessly lashed out, and had given a chance in the long field.

It was a hot, sunny, early June afternoon—Wednesday, and a half-holiday—and the playing-fields at Lawnsdale were looking brilliant. In addition to crowds of Moorhouse spectators, there were considerable numbers of St. Frank's juniors.

The Touring School was in Leeds. And these Leeds schoolboys had been showing them how to play cricket.

"Well, we've done rottenly," said Nipper bluntly.

The Remove skipper was in no way bitter, however, as he looked at the members of his team in the pavilion. One or two were inclined to pull long faces, and Handforth pulled other faces, too.

"It's all rot!" he snorted. "What's the good of 131? Why couldn't some of you chaps help me to stop the rot?"

"I'll tell you why," said Vivian Travers. "The bowlers wouldn't let us!"

"Fathead!"

"The bowlers had a sort of conspiracy, dear old fellow," continued Travers. "They got together, and decided that we should be all dismissed before tea. That's the worst of these bowlers."

"The fact is, we're stale," said Nipper. "It's not our fault, either. Not altogether our fault, anyhow. Since we left St. Frank's on the School Train, we've had no regular practice—and that makes a tremendous difference."

"It does," said Reggie Pitt sadly. "We're rusty, my sons. Didn't you hear Handy's joints creaking as he carried his bat in?"

"You ass!" said Handforth. "That was my pads!"

"Oh!" grinned Reggie. "How was I to know!"

"We've played rottenly—and these Leeds chaps are going to whack us!" went on Handforth accusingly. "That's a nice start, isn't it? This is the first real game we've played on the tour, and all we can get is 131 all out. It's a terrible score."

The other players were not quite so excited about it as Handforth. The score was poor, it was true, but it was not hopeless. If the St. Frank's bowlers put in some good work, the game might end successfully, after all. Not that there was much chance of these Yorkshire boys failing to take advantage of their opportunity.

THE St. Frank's School Train had been "located" at Leeds for some days, and it was due to move on to Newcastle in the small hours of Friday morning. Cricket had been somewhat neglected since the beginning of the tour—not because the fellows had lost their interest in cricket, but because it had been difficult to arrange any early fixtures.

Nipper was now doing his best to settle the forthcoming matches well in advance. He knew, pretty accurately, where the School Train would be on each half holiday during the tour, and so he was getting into touch with the captains of all the big schools within handy reach of the various towns.

Nothing, however, had yet been fixed for Newcastle. For the tour was still young, and Nipper had not been able to obtain the necessary information. This Leeds match had been arranged quite hurriedly, and the York-

shire schoolboys were giving their rivals from the South an excellent game.

It was a fact that Nipper and his men were handicapped. The one disadvantage of the School Train was that it could not carry its own playing-field. At St. Frank's, it was the custom to be out on Little Side early and late—putting in practice continually. Since this tour had commenced, hardly any of the fellows had touched a bat, or fingered a ball.

"We've been doing too much sight-seeing," said Nipper accusingly. "That's the main trouble. In Sheffield, for example, we ought to have found a ground, and even if we couldn't get a match we might have wangled some practice. That's going to be altered now. As soon as we get to Newcastle, we'll practice—even if we have to use a ploughed field!"

THE St. Frank's Eleven went out to field amidst loud cheers from the Moorhouse boys—and a few derisive cheers from the assembled Removites and Fourth-Formers from the School Train. They were disappointed with their team. They had expected the Junior Eleven to do heaps better than this.

But Moorhouse College was a very famous school, and its cricket was of a high order. These playing fields at Lawnsdale were extensive, and they were splendidly equipped.

"I'm not losing heart yet, Reggie," said Nipper cheerfully. "We've got one or two surprises for these Leeds chaps, I believe. Wait until Boomerang starts his bowling. They looked upon him as a joke when he was batting—but I'll bet he'll make them sit up!"

Boomerang—in other words, Charlie Bangs, the new boy from New South Wales—was chatting with Jerry Dodd, who was also a Cornstalk. Both these Australian juniors were keen on cricket. Jerry Dodd was a tried and valued member of the Junior Eleven, but Bangs had had very few opportunities since the season had started.

Nipper opened the bowling with Harry Gresham and Charlie Bangs—Gresham starting off from the pavilion end.

Drummond, the Moorhouse skipper, began the scoring with the fourth ball of the over, driving Gresham to the boundary cleanly and neatly. He followed this up by a two, and then another boundary hit.

"That chap's hot stuff," said Church, who was watching.

"He'll probably score a century," nodded McClure. "We're completely out in the cold in this game. But what else can you expect? Our chaps have had no practice—and we're in Leeds. Everybody knows that Yorkshire is hot on cricket."

"Bangs is going on to bowl now," said Tommy Watson eagerly. "Let's hope he gives these Yorkshire chaps a surprise—just as he gave us one, the first time he bowled against us."

Boomerang Bangs had taken the ball, and was preparing to take his run. Bangs was

an extraordinary-looking junior. He was nearly a head taller than the average fellow for his age, but he made up for this by being excessively thin. He looked as though he had been placed in a stretcher, and pulled out. His legs and arms seemed no thicker than broomsticks; his neck was long and scraggy, and seemed to find some difficulty in supporting his head on his bony shoulders. It was a habit of his always to have a straw sticking out of the corner of his mouth.

The Moorhouse boys were grinning. Bangs looked such a freak that they could hardly credit that he could be dangerous. He was more of a joke than a menace. But Bangs was a dark horse.

True, he had shown no genius as a batsman. Going in towards the end of the innings, he had stonewalled for five balls of an over, and had attempted to cut the sixth. That one effort at scoring had cost him his wicket, and the Yorkshire boys, not naturally, assumed that he was more for ornament than use. Perhaps he was a good man in the field—on account of his height and reach. The Moorhouse crowd had certainly not expected to see him put on to bowl.

Bangs took a curious run. It was something between a hop and a skip to begin with, then it developed into something more rapid, and when the ball left his bony grip it sped down the pitch with startling velocity. The Moorhouse boy at the other end raised his bat in readiness. He did not think he would have any difficulty in dealing with the delivery. In some extraordinary way, however, the batsman lost sight of the leather for a fatal second. Panic-stricken, he lashed out.

Crash!

He was too late. From somewhere in his rear came an ominous sound, and when he spun round he found that his middle stump was missing.

"How's that?" yelled the wicket-keeper.

"Out!"

All the Moorhouse boys were astonished, but the unhappy victim of Bangs' opening delivery was fairly staggered.

"I can't understand it!" he ejaculated, looking at the shattered wicket.

"Ay, but that was a champion ball," sang out Drummond, the skipper.

There was something fearsome about Boomerang Bangs. He looked so harmless—and yet he was so deadly. The secret of his deadliness lay in the fact that he had invented a new kind of googly. His delivery was fast, and he managed to get a turn on the leather which momentarily caused an unwary batsman to lose sight of it.

Once thoroughly accustomed to Bangs' tricks, however, a batsman might score fairly freely off him. Bangs' value was at the opening of an innings, when he could catch the enemy by surprise.

It was so in this case.

The next wicket fell after only two more balls had been delivered. Then a single

was scored, and Drummond got the bowling. He played carefully, but never seemed really troubled, and when the next over commenced, with Gresham bowling again, the homesters were gaining more confidence.

However, Gresham was a dangerous sort of bowler, too. Much to Drummond's surprise he lost his own wicket during this over. A single had been scored, and Drummond, facing the bowler, was playing with confidence. He looked like getting set. An easy one came down from Gresham. At all events, it looked easy. Drummond hit out, and there was a loud slap. Nipper, in the slips, had made no mistake.

"Well, I'm dashed!" said Drummond blankly.

BY the time forty runs were on the board, four wickets were down.

Bangs was being treated with ultra-respect. Not many of the Yorkshire boys felt confident enough to score off this Australian freak. They may have laughed at him as a batsman, but he was a regular terror with the ball. He secured two more wickets before the score had been taken to the hundred.

Six wickets down for 92 runs. This was looking pretty good.

"By Jove, we've got a chance of winning yet!" said Nipper, as the field crossed after an over. "Only four more wickets to fall, and if Bangs does a few more of his fancy tricks we'll pull the game out of the fire."

Unfortunately for Nippers' hopes, however, the two Moorhouse batsmen who were



now in proceeded to make a grim and valiant stand. Even Bangs could do nothing against them. They became set, and they treated Bangs with the utmost indifference, driving him to all parts of the field. In fact, he was so expensive that Nipper was compelled to take him off.

"What's the matter with you, Boomerang?" asked Handforth, during a pause.

"Nothing," replied the Australian junior, with a grin.

"But these chaps have been scoring off you at a tremendous rate."

"Too right, they have," agreed Bangs. "These English pitches are different from those I've been used to in Australia. Be-

sides, we can't always do miracles. Even Tate and Larwood are easy to play at times."

The two batsmen continued to score freely, and the partnership was not broken until the total had been carried to 119—by which time the visitors' chances of victory were dwindling into significance.

Boomerang Bangs was put on again as soon as the new man came in; but the new man took no chances. He was satisfied to keep his end up until the over was finished, and then the other batsman proceeded to knock up the runs.

Nipper and his men had renewed hopes when a wicket fell with the score at 123. The Yorkshire boys needed only nine runs for victory, but there was always the chance that the "tail" would completely collapse.

However, it didn't happen.

The game finished a few minutes later—with the Moorhouse Junior Eleven the victors by two wickets.

CHAPTER 2.

Fixing Up the Next Match!

"**H**ARD lines, old man," said Drummond, smiling.

"Rats!" retorted Nipper. "I'm not making any excuses for St. Frank's indifferent play. The better side has won, that's all."

"We're all out of practice," said Handforth grimly. "That's the trouble! You Yorkshire chaps wouldn't have won so jolly easily if we had been in proper form."

"We're not all Yorkshire," smiled Drummond. "I'm from Northumberland. My people live just outside Newcastle."

"That's funny," said Handforth. "We're going to Newcastle to-morrow night."

"What is there funny about it?" asked Nipper. "Newcastle isn't so very far away. Perhaps Drummond will be able to give us a few tips about the place."

"As many as you like," said Drummond agreeably. "Now that the match is over, we want you to come along to—"

"Whoa! Wait a minute!" interrupted Nipper. "I want to get it in first. We've fixed up a special feed for you in the School Train—and our motor-coach is a particularly big one, so it'll take the lot of us."

The Moorhouse boys were gratified. Drummond insisted that it was up to the home team to entertain the visitors; but Nipper pointed out that there was an exception to every rule. And as the majority of the Yorkshire boys were as keen as mustard on seeing the School Train, they were easily persuaded.

The train, as usual, was located on a siding some distance outside the city, but within easy reach. And as the Lawndale ground was on the other side of Leeds, it was necessary to go right through the city.

It was an entertaining ride for the St. Frank's fellows. They had seen a good deal of Leeds since their arrival, a few days earlier; but Leeds was so full of entertaining spots that many of them would have to

go unexplored. For the School Train was off again on its travels on the following night.

The coach went through crowded Briggate as far as Boar Lane, and so through City Square—with its fine equestrian statue of the Black Prince, by Sir T. Brock, R.A., and regarded as one of the most impressive statues in England. The fellows had learned that this statue had been presented to Leeds by Colonel T. W. Harding. There were other statues in City Square, too—and some artistic bronze figures.

The coach went onwards along Wellington Street, and so into Kirkstall Road. Before long it was bowling out of the congested area, and getting nearer to the more or less rural spot where the School Train was in its siding.

"You've got some wonderful beauty spots round Leeds," remarked Nipper, as he sat chatting with some of the Moorhouse boys. "We went to the Kirkstall Abbey ruins and we thought they were topping."

"They're some of the most perfect ruins in Yorkshire," said one of the local schoolboys. "Have you been out to see Fountains Abbey, by the way?"

"Well, no," said Nipper. "We haven't had a chance of getting out much. Besides, there's such a lot to see in and about Leeds."

"It's a pity you haven't been on the moors," said the other. "There's some glorious scenery within a short run of Leeds. Harrogate isn't very far, and—"

"Yes, I know all about that, but, you see, we're not on a holiday tour," smiled Nipper. "Everything is going on as usual, just as though we were still at St. Frank's."

"We only have a bit of free time in the evenings and on half-holidays—and Sundays. But nobody's grumbling."

"Except for cricket practice, eh?" asked Drummond.

"I'm afraid that's been mainly our own fault," admitted Nipper. "Where there's a will, there's a way. And in future we're going to put in our practice. We'll find playing fields somewhere—even if we have to trespass. We're not going to let this afternoon's defeat be repeated."

"You ass!" said Drummond. "We should have beaten you, anyway."

THERE was general astonishment amongst the Leeds schoolboys when they were escorted over the School Train by the St. Frank's fellows. Every school in the country, of course, had heard about this famous train; but not until they came into contact with it did they realise its wonders.

It was a complete travelling school. There were class-rooms, dormitories, dining-coaches, and even private studies for the juniors as well as for the seniors. Nothing had been forgotten when this train had been built.

As Nipper had said, the tour meant no interruption to school work. Lessons were not interfered with—not even by the train's

motion. For she only moved from place to place at night—whilst the school was sleeping. By day there was nothing to interfere with the normal routine.

"So you're going to Newcastle next?" asked Drummond, as he chatted with Nipper during the big feed. "I can give you some hints about Newcastle, if you want them. I'm a Tynesider, in a way of speaking."

"We shall be only too glad of hints," replied Nipper.

They were at the end of the long junior class-room coach, where the feed was being held. It was naturally an informal affair, and the fellows enjoyed it all the more because of this. The visitors had been divided up into groups, and they were being entertained by Handforth and Reggie Pitt and Travers and Archie Glenthorpe and Boots, and other prominent stalwarts.

"What about cricket?" asked Drummond thoughtfully.

"I want to fix up a match as soon as we get there," replied Nipper promptly. "We shall arrive early on Friday morning, and if we can get a match fixed for Saturday afternoon, so much the better. What about the big schools? Do you know them?"

"I know Newcastle pretty well," said Drummond, nodding. "There's more than one good school, but you couldn't do better than get in touch with Cornwallis."

"Who's he?"

"The honorary secretary of the Newcastle and Gateshead Schoolboys' Cricket Club," replied Drummond. "Incidentally, he's the skipper of the eleven, too. A go-ahead, energetic fellow. If you ask him for a match, he'll go crazy with delight, and he'll fix things in no time."

"That's handy to know," said Handforth, who had joined them. "Good egg! You'd better write to this chap, Nipper!"

"I'm going to," said Nipper. "Thanks, Drummond."

"Don't mention it," said Drummond smilingly. "After whacking you this afternoon, there's no reason why I shouldn't do you a good turn. But I warn you—you'll probably be in for another whacking."

"Is this eleven so hot, then?"

"Hot isn't the word," said Drummond. "I don't want to deceive you in any way, so I'd better explain that this club secures the best cricketers from all the Newcastle and Gateshead schools. There are lots of elevens, and they play each other, and hold a kind of competition amongst themselves. Naturally, you'll fix up with the first eleven."

"But why?" asked Nipper. "We don't usually play seniors."

"They're not seniors!" said Drummond.

"There's not a fellow in the club older than sixteen. It's different from anything else you've ever come in contact with. It's a wheeze of Cornwallis'. I've already told you that he's a go-ahead chap."

"I shall be pleased to meet him," said Nipper briskly.

"But don't blame me if you're given the hiding of your lives," warned Drummond. "I'm telling you in advance what to expect. I forgot to mention that it's a junior club, so you can fix up with the first eleven quite safely. But don't forget that you'll be playing against the pick from the Tyneside schools."

"The best is only just good enough for St. Frank's," said Nipper blandly. "What's this chap's address, by the way? If I drop him a line to-night he'll get it in the morning, and I'll ask him to wire me."

"That's a good wheeze," said Drummond, nodding. "In fact, I

was going to suggest it myself. If you ask him to write, there might be a delay. Offer the match, and ask him to wire acceptance. If you address your letter to the Newcastle & Gateshead Schoolboys' Cricket Club, The Pavilion, Mayfair Fields, Newcastle, it'll reach him

all right. I've forgotten his private address for the moment."

"Isn't he a boarder at his school, then?"

"No; a day boy," replied Drummond. "His school doesn't matter, anyhow. St. Frank's could easily beat the school eleven, but it'll have a job to tackle this club."

LATER, after the visitors had gone, Nipper had a few words to say with members of the eleven.

"Now, you chaps, I'm not going to preach or give a lecture, but we made a hopeless hash of to-day's game," he said grimly. "I couldn't say much in front of those Moorhouse fellows, but you know as well as I do that ordinarily we could have whacked them."

"On our heads!" said Edward Oswald Handforth, with a snort. "What's the matter with you all? You, Nipper! Only twelve runs. Travers only sixteen; Gresham out for a miserable three; Boots with a duck!"

"You didn't do so much better!" retorted Boots.

"By George! I'd forgotten that!" said Handforth, with a start.

"We all did badly," said Nipper. "When it came to bowling, we were just as poor. And the sole reason is because we've neglected our practice. We'll get some tomorrow, somehow, and some more on Friday, after we get to Newcastle. We've got to whack those Tyneside chaps!"

CORRESPONDENCE WANTED!

Do you want to correspond with fellow "Nelson Lees" either at home or abroad, chums? You'd like to, eh? Turn to page 44—there's readers galore who are waiting to hear from you!

He aroused a great deal of enthusiasm, and all the members of the eleven promised that they would give up sight-seeing and devote most of their time to hard practice at the nets. If it came to a pinch, they could even fix the nets up beside the railway and put in some practice on the spot.

“**W**HO’S it from, Handy?” asked Church.

Handforth started. It was getting near to calling-over, and the leader of Study D was sitting on one of the footboards of the train, taking things easily. It was still warm and sunny, and the June evening was altogether delightful. The air was filled with the humming of insects as they were either winging their way homewards for the night or coming out from their haunts in preparation for nocturnal adventures.

“Clear off!” said Handforth gruffly. “This letter is private.”

He stuffed it into his pocket rather hastily. It had evidently arrived by the evening post, for mails were delivered at the School Train, just as at St. Frank’s.

“Of course, we don’t want to pry into your private affairs, Handy,” said McClure, as he and Church stood looking at their leader. “But why become mysterious? You seem quite scared about something.”

“Scared be blowed!” said Handforth, rising to his feet. “I should probably have told you all about it if you hadn’t been so inquisitive. As it is, I’ll keep it to myself, and let it come as a surprise.”

“Let what come as a surprise?”

“Why, Marjorie’s visit to— Eh?” he added, with a start. “You can’t get it out of me like that, you fatheads!”

“Well, well!” remarked Travers, strolling up. “What’s the trouble here? Is this yours by any chance, dear old fellow?”

He picked up an envelope, and was about to pass it to Handforth when he smiled. He glanced at the handwriting, and then sniffed the envelope.

“Eau de Cologne,” he murmured. “Or is it Lily of the Valley?”

“Give it to me!” roared Handforth. “It’s mine!”

“So I notice,” said Travers. “There’s no mistaking a girl’s handwriting, is there? And it’s not Irene’s, either. Handy, you flirt, what have you been up to? Is this a Leeds girl you’ve been—”

“No, it isn’t!” yelled Handforth, turning red.

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Tell that to the Marines!” grinned Church. “My only hat! He was making eyes at a girl in a restaurant yesterday—one of the waitresses in York Road.”

“You—you silly clown!” howled Handforth. “This letter is from my sister, Ena!”

“Ena!” said Travers sceptically. “Come, come! In fact, now, now! Do you expect us to believe that, Handy? Your sister,

indeed! For the love of Samson! That’s a thin one!”

“All right!” panted Handforth desperately. “Look at it!”

“Do you really want me to?”

“Look at it!” insisted Edward Oswald.

Travers took the letter reluctantly, but did no more than glance at the beginning of the letter, and at the signature.

“Dear old fellows, we must apologise,” he said, looking at Church and McClure. “A young lady who begins her letter with the words ‘Dear Old Rhinoceros’ is very obviously a sister. And this being the case, why is it that you blushed just now, Handy?”

“I didn’t blush!” snorted Handforth. “I’m wild because you say such dotty things. Ena will hear about this as soon as she arrives, you mark my words, and then you’ll have to answer to her.”

“As soon as she arrives?” repeated Church, staring. “Arrives where?”

“In Newcastle, of course.”

“Newcastle!”

“You know jolly well that she’s going to be in Newcastle for the week-end, with Irene and Doris and Marjorie and Mary and Winnie,” said Handforth impatiently.

“You’re dotty!” said McClure. “We knew nothing about it. By jingo! Is this the secret you were going to keep to yourself?”

Handforth started.

“Secret?” he said blankly. “By George! I’d forgotten—”

“Too late!” chuckled Travers. “It’s out now, so you might as well tell us the whole story. Gather round, fellow-countrymen. There is good news. Newcastle is evidently going to show us some beauty spots that we were not anticipating.”

Nipper and Gresham and Bob Christine and quite a few others came round, keenly interested. Any attempt on Handforth’s part to keep the secret was now out of the question.

“Good gad! I mean to say!” ejaculated Archie Glenthorne. “Good old Marjorie coming North, what? Are you quite sure you’re not pulling our legs, Handy, old cheese? I mean, it’s a bit of a far cry from St. Frank’s, isn’t it? Sundry hundreds of miles, if you know what I mean.”

“It’s a special occasion,” replied Handforth, with an important air. “You all know that Marjorie is the champion swimmer of the Moor View School. Well, this year she’s entering for something special.”

“Good gad! Not—not the dashed Channel?” asked Archie, aghast.

“Nothing so commonplace as the Channel!” replied Handforth, with scorn. “Ena says that Marjorie is going in for some competitions. I don’t know the details exactly. Anyhow, she’s booked to meet a champion swimmer at the Newcastle Baths on Saturday evening—some charity stunt, of



Travers sniffed at the envelope of Handforth's letter, and then he glanced at the handwriting. "Eau-de-Cologne," he murmured. "And it's a girl's handwriting. Handy, you flirt, what have you been doing? Is it a Leeds girl this time?" A ripple of laughter went up from the onlooking juniors, while Handforth turned a fiery red.

course. And the other girls are coming North with her as an escort."

"I'm surprised that their headmistress allowed them to make such a plan," said Nipper. "Or perhaps Miss Bond is going with them?"

"No. It seems that Doris' people have got some friends who live somewhere near Newcastle—Jesmond Dene, I think," said Handforth. "They're going to their place for the week-end, and they're taking the girls with them, just so that Marjorie can compete in the swimming. Anyhow, Ena says that they'll all come and see us on Saturday."

So the forthcoming move of the School Train to Newcastle-upon-Tyne promised to be doubly interesting, especially as on the morrow a telegram came for Nipper from Cornwallis, enthusiastically agreeing to a match with the St. Frank's Junior Eleven for Saturday afternoon.

There was much to look forward to this week-end!

CHAPTER 3.

Among the Tynesiders!

"WELL, there's plenty of smoke!" said Handforth critically. "And grime and dirt and fumes, too! My hat! What a place!"

"Don't be too hasty, you fathead!" said

Church. "What about Sheffield? In the city, Sheffield is about the grubbiest, smokiest spot you can think of—but it's glorious just outside. We've hardly seen Newcastle yet."

It was Friday afternoon, getting towards tea-time. Lessons were over, and considerable numbers of St. Frank's fellows were having a look at Newcastle for the first time—for although the train had arrived in the early hours of that morning, it had, as usual, "parked" well outside the busy area.

Handforth & Co. and a few other Removites were now having a look at Newcastle from the High Level Bridge—the old bridge which was built by Robert Stephenson in 1846.

It cannot truthfully be said that the view was inspiring, although it was certainly busy. Looking down upon the teeming quayside, there was a tremendous lot of activity to be seen—with the belching chimneys in the distance, and with ships loading and unloading.

Just on the other side of the Tyne, Gateshead was much in evidence. Any stranger might reasonably have supposed that Newcastle and Gateshead were the same town. There was really nothing to indicate that they were distinct and separate places.

"Well, come along," said Nipper briskly. "We'll go back now—we don't want to go into Gateshead. Our job is to find the

Mayfair Fields. I've asked one or two people, but they don't seem to know it. Rather rummy, eh?"

"Jolly rummy!" said Handforth, frowning. "If it's the playing grounds of this big schoolboys' club, it ought to be known to everybody. But you know what people are!" he added, with a sniff. "They're generally bound up in their own affairs, and know a jolly lot less about their home town than visitors."

A train went roaring overhead, stopping conversation for the moment. This old bridge not only carries the railway across the river, but there is a road and footway beneath it.

"Give me the old cities!" said Handforth. "These new places are too noisy and modern!"

"That's right—air your ignorance again," said Church tartly. "Fancy calling Newcastle a modern city! You hopeless ass!" If you come with me to the Moot Hall I'll show you the remains of an old Norman fortress. And what about Castle Garth—built by Henry the Second in 1172?"

Handforth looked suspicious.

"Have you swallowed a guide book?" he asked tartly.

"No!" retorted Church. "But I've made a point of reading up history—and the particular history of each town we visit. It helps a lot. It was Nipper's idea, and I thought it was a jolly good one. I'm going to start reading up about Glasgow and Edinburgh next, so that I shall be in the know by the time we get there next week."

Handforth was somewhat abashed.

"So that's why the study has been littered up with history books all the week," he said. "Why the dickens didn't you tell me before? Then I might have swotted up some local colour."

"We've been telling you all the week," said McClure patiently. "Why, Newcastle was occupied by the Romans. It was here before the Conquest!"

Nipper grinned.

"Let's see who knows the most," he chuckled. "What was Newcastle called before the Conquest, Handy?"

"Well, it ought to have been called Old-castle if it's that age!"

"It was called Monkchester," replied Nipper. "Incidentally, it was destroyed by the Danes in the ninth century. I think there was a battle on Gateshead Fell—"

"And it was destroyed again by William the Conqueror," put in Church triumphantly. "And then Robert of Normandy built a castle in 1080—after he got back from sloshing Malcolm, the King of Scotland. See? It was a new castle. That's where the town got its name from."

"Rats!" said Handforth sceptically.

"But it's a fact!" roared Church. "Robert of Normandy built a new castle in 1080, and from that time the city has been called Newcastle. Do you think I'm trying to pull your silly leg?"

"Well, I'm blowed!" said Handforth. "Funny how these towns get your names, when you come to think of it."

"Newcastle's had tons of ups and downs," said Nipper. "As far as I remember, it was fortified by somebody against William Rufus—Robert de Mowbray, I think. Then it was seized by the King of Scotland, and restored to the English again in 1157. Then Henry the Second rebuilt the castle. Why, during the fourteenth century the city was attacked by the Scots on three different occasions."

"All right—all right!" said Handforth hastily. "I give you best! But, by George, I'm jiggered if you'll catch me when we get to Edinburgh!"

The St. Frank's fellows were not likely to find many traces of antiquity in Newcastle, however, for most of these have been destroyed in its modern growth. Yet Newcastle-upon-Tyne really owes its origin to a Roman station at a bridge over the river. There are some slight remains of the old walls, which for strength and magnificence far surpass all the walls of the cities of England, and most of the towns in Europe.

The re-erected castle, built by Henry the Second, was at one time the strongest fortress in the North of England; and even to-day its keep is one of the finest specimens of the Norman stronghold remaining in the country. The walls of this keep are fourteen feet thick, and in a state of excellent preservation.

The schoolboy tourists soon found, however, that many of the modern streets of Newcastle are spacious and handsome. They were greatly struck by Grey Street—with its wonderful scheme of Grecian architecture—and by Grainger Street. The boys found, too, that there were some very fine shops and theatres and cinemas—to say nothing of splendid public parks and recreation grounds, particularly the beautifully wooded grounds of Jesmond Dene. Jesmond, of course, is the chief residential suburb, and it was here that the juniors expected to find the headquarters of the Newcastle and Gateshead Schoolboys' Cricket Club.

But they were quite wrong.

In fact, it was some considerable time before they found Mayfair Fields at all—and then only after very diligent inquiry.

SOMEBODY had remembered that there was a thoroughfare called Mayfair Road, and this, at all events, was apparently a step in the right direction. Once they got to Mayfair Road, they would probably find Mayfair Fields.

The juniors in this search-party consisted of the members of the Junior Eleven. Nipper's idea was to introduce the team to Cornwallis, and, if possible, to get a bit of practice on one of the Club's spare pitches. For this reason the juniors had come laden with well-filled cricket bags.

They journeyed to Mayfair Road by tram-car, and the farther they went, the more they wondered.

"What does it mean?" asked Harry Gresham. "We seem to be getting into the worst quarter of the city! Look at it! Nothing but smoke and grime, odd bits of wasteland, and factories and smelting works and foundries. There must be another Mayfair Road somewhere."

"Well, we'll have a look at this one while we're on the job," said Nipper, frowning. "Perhaps we shall get into a better neighbourhood soon."

But they didn't. Within a minute or two the conductor came up and told them that Mayfair Road was quite close. They got off the tram, and when they arrived at Mayfair Road they were thunderstruck.

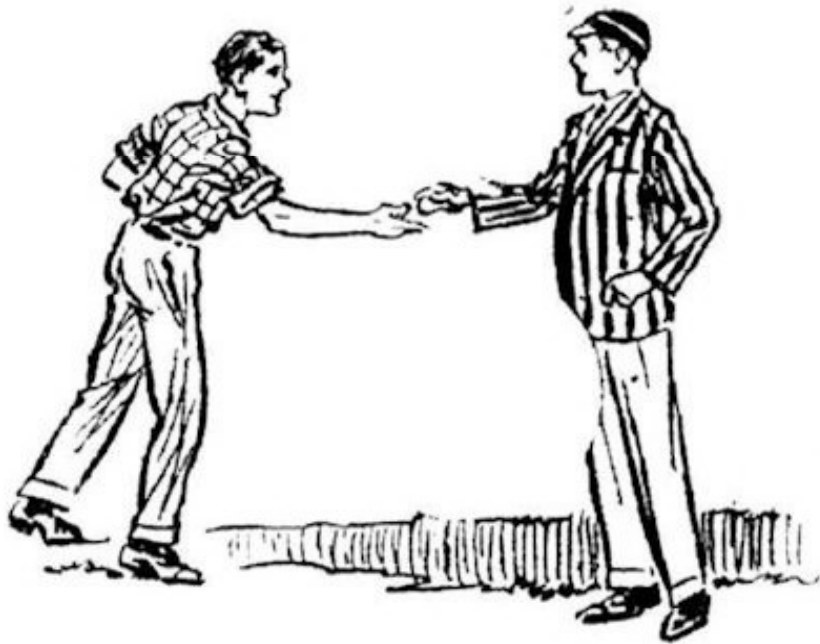
For it proved to be a squalid thoroughfare, with rows of dingy houses, and with yelling youngsters playing about. These youngsters lost no time in swarming round the St. Frank's party.

"Just a minute, my sons," said Nipper, seizing a couple of the small local inhabitants. "Do you know where we can find the headquarters of the Schoolboys' Cricket Club? It's supposed to be in Mayfair Fields——"

"'E means Corny's place!" yelled one of the urchins.

"Corny!" repeated Nipper. "Is that short for Cornwallis?"

"That's 'im!" replied the other. "Jim Cornwallis! But nobody ever calls him nothin' but Corny round 'ere. I believe 'e's playin' cricket now with a crowd o' the chaps."



"Run to earth!" said Nipper. "Here's sixpence for you, my son. You can act as our guide."

The boys took the money eagerly, and not only he acted as guide, but about twenty others as well. The St. Frank's juniors, in fact, were swept along by a veritable escort.

"Something funny about this, dear old fellows," murmured Travers.

"Jiggered if I can understand it," said Handforth blankly. "What's the idea of having a ground in this part of the city? Pity they couldn't find a better spot for their giddy playing-fields!"

None of the fellows knew what to expect now. They had naturally anticipated a

stately pavilion—a well-equipped clubhouse—with acres of smooth, delightful turf. They had expected to find white-clothed figures at the nets, with perhaps a sprinkling of on-lookers lounging in deck-chairs—and all amidst an atmosphere of refinement and good taste. If this club was composed of fellows from all the best schools in Newcastle and Gateshead, it was only reasonable to suppose that the playing-fields would be first-class.

"'Ere we are," said the guide-in-chief, pointing.

THEY had reached the end of Mayfair Road, and, rather to the St. Frank's juniors' surprise, the guide dived through a gap in a ramshackle fence. The newcomers followed him, and then they stood stock-still, gazing in bewilderment and dumbfounded surprise.

"Is—is this Mayfair Fields?" asked Nipper faintly.

"Yes, of course," said the guide.

"And is that place the pavilion?" breathed Nipper, closing his eyes and opening them again. "And are those chaps Cornwallis and his fellow players?"

"'Course they are!"

"Hold me, somebody!" murmured Nipper. "Ye gods and little fishes! My sons, we've had a few surprises in our time, but this whacks everything! My only sainted aunt!"

CHAPTER 4.

Skipper's Orders!

THE St. Frank's Junior Eleven was not merely surprised, but amazed. Yet they might have anticipated something like this, for they had had plenty of hints during the past five or ten minutes.

All the same, the schoolboys were staggered.

They beheld a stretch of wasteland—absolute wasteland. In the foreground the grass was coarse and mingled with rank weeds. Here and there old tin cans were showing, and occasionally a heap of rubbish jutted its ugly head out of the grass and weeds.

Some distance away the ground rose slightly, and it was difficult to see what lay beyond—although, in the distance, there were some grimy, ugly-looking factories. In the immediate vista, however, a number of boys were at cricket practice. None of them was dressed in flannels, and they appeared to be using a very worn-out bat and an equally worn-out cricket ball.

For the moment play had stopped, and the cricketers were gazing at the new arrivals. Then, with one accord, they came running over the rough ground.

"Great Scott!" said Handforth. "Look at the pavilion! Oh, my only Sunday topper!"

The "pavilion" was an old hut, with a rusty corrugated iron roof, and with a board fixed along the top of it. Even at

this distance the juniors could read the words that were daubed on that board—"N. & G. SCHOOLBOYS' C.C." It seemed that this was unquestionably the right place!

"By Jove!" grinned Jimmy Potts. "This is a bit of a staggerer, if you like!"

"Shush!" warned Nipper suddenly.

"Eh?"

"Don't let 'em know that we're taken by surprise," went on Nipper, with a quick look at Handforth. "Compose yourselves, fat-heads! We'll get this thing straight before we go any farther."

At that moment the cricketers came running up. Foremost amongst them was a plump, biggish boy of about fifteen. He was dressed in a pair of baggy trousers and a check shirt, open at the neck.

"Which of you is the skipper?" he asked eagerly. "You're the St. Frank's lot, ain't you—from Leeds?"

"That's right," said Nipper. "I'm the skipper—Hamilton, of the Remove. Are you Cornwallis?"

"That's me!" grinned the other, holding out his hand. "Jolly pleased to meet you, Hamilton! But you're called Nipper, ain't you?"

"By my friends—yes," said Nipper, as he shook hands. "So you can go ahead."

"I reckon it was jolly sporting of you to offer us a match," said Cornwallis enthusiastically. "I can tell you; our chaps have been talking about it all over Newcastle and Gateshead. We always thought that you chaps from the big schools were too stuck up to play a team like ours."

"Ahem!" coughed Nipper. "Look here, Cornwallis, I think we'd better get things straightened out. I mean, I thought this club was made up of fellows from the big schools round here."

Jim Cornwallis' face changed.

"You thought we were—like you?" he repeated, startled. "Didn't you know we were from the Council schools?"

"Well, not exactly——"

"We'd better call the game off," interrupted one of the St. Frank's fellows. "Why, it's positively dangerous to play on a pitch like this!"

Cornwallis looked at the pitch.

"We play on it," he replied.

"Yes, but you're used to it. The whole thing's a mistake——"

"There you are, Corny!" broke in one of the Newcastle boys, in an excited voice. "What did we tell you? We said these chaps would be too stuck up to play us. We knew there was a catch in it somewhere."

JIM CORNWALLIS lost his genial smile.

"There's no mistake," he said grimly. "I got a letter from you, and you asked me to wire——"

"I know," interrupted Nipper. "You're quite right—there's been no mistake, Cornwallis. I asked you for this match, and you accepted. Good enough! We'll be pleased

to play you to-morrow afternoon, as arranged."

The other St. Frank's fellows looked startled.

"But——" began somebody.

"But nothing!" interrupted Nipper. "We asked for this game, and we'll play. I hope we're sportsmen."

"Thanks," said Cornwallis quietly. "But you needn't play us unless you want to. I can't understand how it was you came to think we were—— And, anyway, how did you get to hear about us?"

"Do you know a chap named Drummond?" asked Travers.

"Never heard of him."

"Well, well! It's clear enough that he's heard of you," said Travers dryly. "A Newcastle fellow—although he's at school in Leeds. This is Drummond's doing, dear old fellows," he added, looking at the others. "For the love of Samson! What a wheeze! And the First of April was over months ago!"

"What do you mean—First of April?" asked one of the Tynesiders aggressively.

"Steady!" grinned Nipper. "No offence, old man! You see, this chap Drummond pulled our legs. He gave us your address, and suggested that we should write for a fixture. I dare say he thought it was a good joke."

Cornwallis nodded.

"I see," he said, with a trace of bitterness in his voice. "And now you've found out what kind of club ours really is, you don't want to play us?"

"My dear chap——"

"You can't fool me," said the Newcastle skipper. "I ain't blind—nor deaf, neither. And seein' as there's been a sort of mess-up, we'll let you off. Thanks for coming, all the same. We'll get on with our practice, chaps."

He turned away, but Nipper grabbed his arm.

"You've got it all wrong, Corny," he said genially. "As I've already mentioned, we asked for this game, and we want to play it. We'll be ready to meet you to-morrow afternoon, on this ground, at half-past two."

"Good man, Nipper!" said Handforth enthusiastically, while some of the other St. Frank's fellows grinned their approval.

"Sure you ain't too good for us?" asked Cornwallis, with doubt in his voice. "Look here! We don't want to play you unless you want to play us. See? We don't want any favours. And if you think we ain't good enough——"

"For goodness' sake," sighed Nipper, "chuck it, you ass! We're not snobs at St. Frank's, I hope. I'll admit we've been spoofed by Drummond, but we'll forget that. We'll play you—and be glad to."

Corny's face cleared.

"Good man!" he said heartily. "Did you hear, you chaps? These St. Frank's fellows are going to play us!"

There was a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the Tyneside Eleven, and before

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long the two groups of schoolboys were chatting together, and everything was amicable.

"Of course, we ain't got much to show you in the way of a ground," said Cornwallis apologetically. "Can't afford it. Used to be allotments here, you know. It's as much as we can do to pay the rent, although it only comes to a few bob every month. The pitch ain't so good, either."

"Good?" repeated Archie Glenthorne, as he gazed round. "I mean, is this the pitch? Good gad! You don't mean to say you play cricket on this dashed mountain range?"

He gazed at the pitch in surprise. It wasn't exactly a mountain range, but it was undoubtedly rough and uneven. The turf was not so bad, but it badly needed cutting, and any kind of accurate bowling would be impossible. In fact, if a fast bowler got to work on that pitch he would be a menace to everybody within a radius of a hundred yards. There would be no telling how the ball would pitch off the ground.

"It needs rolling," said one of the local boys.

"I'm afraid it does," agreed Nipper gravely. "Haven't you a roller?"

"Can't afford one," replied Cornwallis.

"And what about bats and stumps?" asked Handforth. "Are we going to play—"

"We did have a complete set of cricket gear, but somebody pinched it," put in Cornwallis. "In fact, we had two sets, and they were both pinched. So we've had to make do with a lot of old stuff. But what's it matter? It's the cricket that counts—and we ain't such bad players."

"All right—we'll be here at two o'clock prompt," said Nipper. "The game to start at half-past, Cornwallis. You'll have your eleven all ready?"

"We'll be waiting for you."

"And what about spectators?" continued Nipper. "Do you think there'll be many people to watch?"

"You wait!" grinned Cornwallis. "There'll be hundreds! The word's got round that we're goin' to play St. Frank's."

More than half the chaps don't believe it. Why, some of 'em will even forget their whippets to come and have a look at this game! I'm glad you've agreed to play it—because we should look awful fools if it fell through."

He and Nipper wandered off, chatting. On the rising ground behind the pavilion they could look right down into a murky, swiftly-flowing stream which was hidden from view ordinarily. Nipper was surprised to see it there.

"Don't you ever lose any balls in this river?" he asked.

"Not often," grinned Cornwallis. "There ain't many chaps who can hit the ball as far as this. Doesn't look very pleasant, does it? It ain't a river, really, although it's pretty deep and the current's strong. A sort of overflow from some of these factories. Runs into the Tyne further down."

The more Nipper saw of the ground, the less he liked it. And the more he saw of Cornwallis, the more he liked him. The Newcastle lad was one of the very best.

"WELL, of all the frosts!" said Bob Christine, taking a deep breath. The St. Frank's boys had bade good-bye to Cornwallis & Co., and were on their way back to the tram route.

"You're mad, Nipper!" went on Bob. "You ought to have got out of it. It won't be a game at all! We shall make ourselves the laughing-stock of every Public school in the country."

"Just a minute!" grunted Nipper, coming to a halt. "Did you mean that, Bob, or are you just trying to be funny?"

"I mean it!"

"Sure?"

"Of course I'm sure!" roared Christine. "What the dickens——"

"I don't like to do this, but it's necessary," said Nipper resignedly, as he rolled up his sleeves. "I'm going to punch you in the eye, Bob, for being such a snob."

"By George, I was going to do the same thing!" snorted Handforth.

"But I'm not a snob!" protested Bob.

"I'd rather be the laughing-stock of every Public school in the country than have the whole of Newcastle and Gateshead scorning us for refusing to play those Council school boys," said Nipper. "Hang it, they didn't ask for the game! It was our invitation. I think they deserve a tremendous lot of praise for playing cricket at all—on such a ground. They're heroes. They deserve to be encouraged."

"By Jove! I hadn't looked at it like that," said Bob Christine apologetically. "I'm awfully sorry, Nipper! Naturally, I didn't mean what I said. Please forget it. I'll be only too glad to play to-morrow."

Nipper's face cleared.

"Good enough!" he said genially. "Any more objectors?"

There were none.

CHAPTER 5.

Archie to the Rescue!

JIM CORNWALLIS scratched his head, and looked worried.

"Wish we could have things a bit better for them St. Frank's chaps," he said. "It's sportin' of 'em to play us to-morrow, and I'd like to show 'em that we appreciate it. But how can we have things nice and posh? We haven't got the money."

"They're willing to play us as we are," said Bill Whittaker.

"That's what makes me all the more anxious to have things posh," said the captain. "But we can't afford it. I mean, we ought to be in white flannels—real white ones, my sons. And what about pads? We could do with new stumps, and some new bats, too. Yes, and a real leather ball."

They were standing in the doorway of the clubhouse, and the St. Frank's fellows had long since disappeared. The Council school boys firmly believed that all their visitors were now a mile or two away. They did not know that one of them was within a couple of yards.

As a matter of fact, Archie Glenthorpe was just inside the clubhouse. Wandering in there earlier, he had been gratified to find a deck-chair behind the ramshackle door. It was a faded deck-chair, and it had been patched in two or three places. But it was unquestionably an excellent spot in which to rest the good old bones. Archie, sinking into it, had dozed off. Dozing off in out of the way spots was one of Archie's pet hobbies.

He was awake now—or, at least, half awake. The voices of the Tynesiders had aroused him, although for some little time he had taken no notice. He was not even heeding the words that were being spoken.

"It's no good talking about white flannels and pads and leather balls," said Bill Whittaker, shaking his head. "We can't afford to buy 'em. And if these St. Frank's boys don't want to play us as we are, they can jolly well stop away."

"There's no need to talk like that, Bill," protested Cornwallis. "The game's fixed, and St. Frank's is going to play us as we are. But I was thinking that it would be only fair to them if we smartened up a bit in their honour. Perhaps we could borrow some stuff just for to-morrow."

"Might borrow some pads and some stumps and things," said Bill. "But what about clothes? We can't borrow any white flannels."

"Absolutely not!" came a voice from inside. "Good gad, no!"

"Hallo, who's this?" yelled Cornwallis. "Well, I'm blessed if one of those chaps hasn't stayed behind!"

Archie came out, looking somewhat bewildered. He jamméd his monocle into his eye and surveyed the little scene. He looked farther afield, and started.

"Odds disappearances and vanishing acts!" he ejaculated. "I mean to say, what

about the lads? Nipper and Handforth and the other chappies."

"They've gone," said Cornwallis. "They went ten minutes ago."

"Good gad!" said Archie.

"Have you been asleep in here?"

"I believe, old thing, that I did indulge in forty of the best," replied Archie. "I feel distinctly braced. Absolutely! As for your suggestion that you should borrow white flannels and so forth, I'm absolutely against it. Awfully sorry to listen in, and all that, but I was so dashed near that I couldn't help it."

"It doesn't matter—we said nothing private," replied Cornwallis. "You'd better dash after the others. Perhaps you'll catch them up—"

"Bother the others!" interrupted Archie. "It seems to me, laddies, that a little assistance is indicated. Please don't imagine that I'm attempting to be insulting, or anything frightful like that. I mean, don't be offended, old dears. But if you'll let me come to the rescue, I shall be most frightfully bucked."

"How do you mean?" asked Cornwallis, in wonder.

"Well, about these dashed flannels," said Archie vaguely. "Pads and stumps and so forth. I mean, if you'd allow me, I'd like to make a sort of presentation to the good old club. Only too jolly delighted. Flannels all round, and all that sort of rot. What about it?"

The others were silent, and Archie sighed.

"You don't think much of the scheme?" he went on. "Well, perhaps you're right. At the same time, one word, you know, will be enough. Just one dashed word."

"Is this a joke?" asked Cornwallis bluntly.

"Good gad, no!

In other words, absolutely not!"

"But if you mean what you say, it'll cost you over twenty quid—and that's putting it mildly," protested Cornwallis. "You couldn't afford to whack out money like that. Besides, I'm not sure that we should like to accept."

"My dear old horse, there's no suggestion of charity about it," urged Archie, in distress. "A mere sort of brotherly overture, what? Lots of cricket clubs accept presentations without any loss of dignity. I mean, it's absolutely the thing. And if you will give me the pleasure—"

"If anybody wants to buy us flannels or other things, we'll accept 'em," said Cornwallis promptly. "Crikey! There ain't no false pride about us! But you're just tryin' to be funny, ain't you?"

"Observe!" said Archie, beaming.

He pulled out his note-book, and produced a sheaf of currency notes. The Tynesiders looked and blinked.

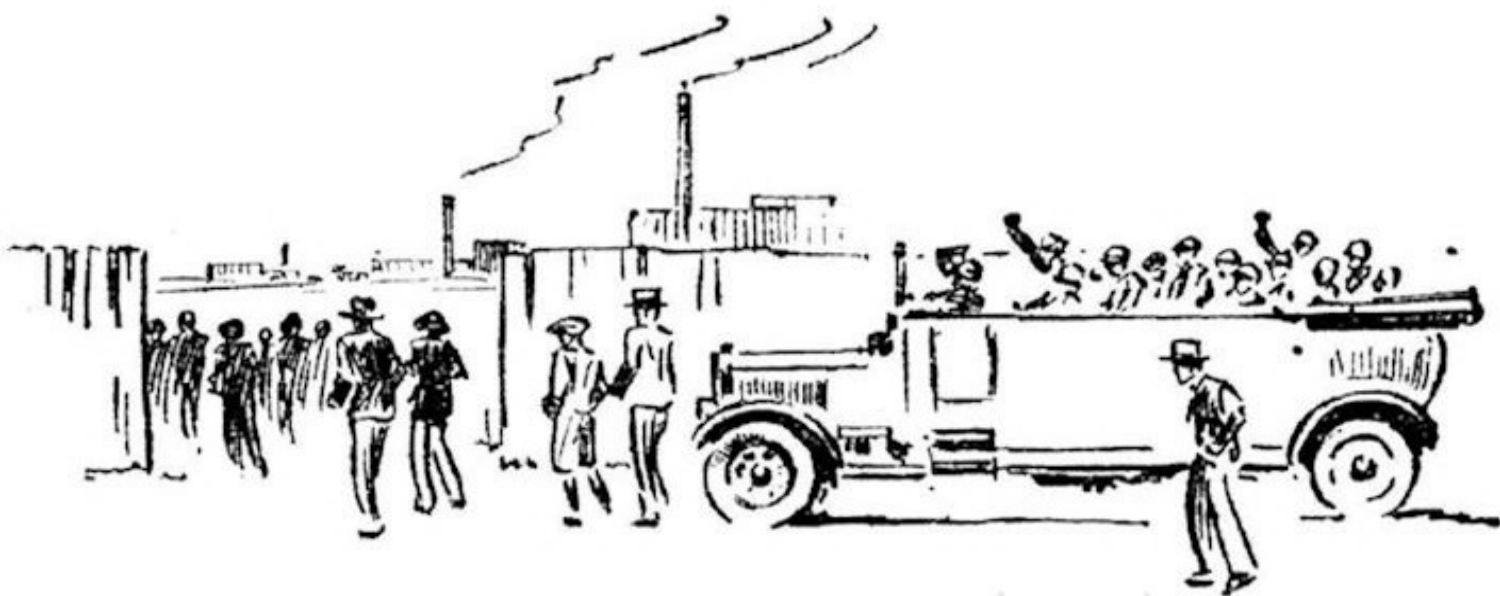
"So if you'll lead the way to a dashed outfitting establishment, we'll dash to the dashed place and get busy, what?" invited Archie genially.

ARCHIE meant what he said. And he was overjoyed to find that the Tynesiders were agreeable to his suggestion. It is to Archie's credit that he thought only to help this struggling club. His motive was not prompted by the thought that it would be better for the St. Frank's Eleven to play against a properly equipped team.

Within a few moments Archie was chatting amiably with Cornwallis & Co. Once the ice was broken, he gloried in his present rôle. Nothing suited him better. He was extremely glad that he had dozed off in that shed, and he was all the more pleased because the other St. Frank's fellows knew nothing about it. They would thus get a surprise on the morrow, when they turned up for the match.

Archie, with his crowd of curiously assorted companions, made one or two detours on the way to the shopping centre. There were two or three members of the eleven to collect—for some of them had left school and were now in "business," as Cornwallis humorously explained. One of them had to be fetched from his work behind a green-grocer's counter; another was just coming off duty at the telegraph office.

However, the full eleven was soon made up, and then they all got on a tram, and did not alight until they arrived at the junction of Westgate Road and Clayton Street.



In this busy district, they soon found a high-class outfitters.

"I dunno!" said Cornwallis doubtfully. "Seems to me that we oughtn't to go in. Eleven of us! Supposin' this St. Frank's chap can't pay up? What's going to happen then?"

"We hadn't thought of that," said Bill Whittaker, pulling a long face. "There'll be a pile of trouble for us, and—"

"Oh, I say, chuck it, you know," put in Archie. "Don't think I haven't heard what you've been saying, old articles. Kindly

walk in, and allow me to do the honours. All for the good old club, don't you know?"

"You swear there ain't no spoof about it?" said Cornwallis.

"Haven't I already said there isn't? Kindly let me tell you that I am not one of those chappies who spoof," said Archie. "Absolutely not! So cut out this dashed tommy rot, and follow me."

INSIDE the establishment, the assistant took one look at the motley throng, and then he unostentatiously sent for the manager. When this gentleman arrived he politely but firmly requested to see the colour of Archie's money.

"You will realise, sir, that this is a big order, and I would like to point out that this is a ready-cash establishment," he said smoothly. "While casting no doubt upon your sincerity——"

"You want to be absolutely sure that I've got the good old doings?" asked Archie, nodding. "Absolutely! Say no more, old chunk of cheese! Have a look at this!"

The manager, having recovered from the shock of being called a chunk of cheese, was further required to recover from the shock of finding Archie's pocket-book bulging with notes. The manager had been quite convinced that this was some schoolboy practical joke. He even satisfied himself that the money was genuine—for he had had his doubts on this point.

"Take the dashed lot," said Archie, waving a hand. "If there's any to come back, I can collect it as we go out. But these lads of the village are to be equipped with the full regalia for cricket. Flannels, pads, gloves, and all the rest of it. Absolutely everything, down to the good old foot protectors. So kindly shove things along with some speed."

"Please bring your friends this way, sir," said the manager.

"Absolutely," said Archie, with a sigh. "Good gad! How I miss Phipps! If he were here, laddies, there'd be no dashed confusion of this sort."

"Phipps?" said Cornwallis inquiringly.

"My valet, don't you know," said Archie. "A priceless sort of cove, too. He'd just give you the good old once-over, trickle hither and thither, and before you could say 'Peter Robinson,' he'd have you all supplied. A bit of a marvel, is Phipps. But we shall have to struggle along without him."

They succeeded in struggling along quite well. The bill mounted up, for Archie insisted upon doing the thing properly. In fact, he insisted so much that when the order was complete his cash had more than run out.

"Not enough?" he repeated, when the manager deferentially presented him with the bill. "Oh, rot! I mean to say, rubbish!

Why, my good old pocket-book was bursting its dashed seams. I had a fresh supply of the priceless chunks of paper only yesterday. Come, come, laddie! Add it up again!"

"I can assure you, sir, that your money falls twelve pounds, sixteen shillings, and fourpence short of the required amount," replied the manager. "However, if you will give me your name and address, and sign——"

"Twelve quid short!" gurgled Cornwallis. "Crikey! How much does the whole bill come to, then?"

"If you'll pardon the bluntness, old thin-gummy, it's none of your dashed business," said Archie. "As for this twelve quid—— What ho! Light in the good old darkness! Just one moment, laddies!"

He ran down the shop, and buttonholed a tall, lanky individual who was at one of the counters, inspecting some neckties.

"Ah, Brother Archibald, what troubles you?" inquired the lanky one.

"Nothing absolutely troubles me, Browne, old lamp-post, but if you can whack out a matter of thirteen or fourteen quid, I shall be frightfully pleased," said Archie. "Just a temporary loan——"

"Say no more," interrupted William Napoleon Browne, of the Fifth. "As I have nothing smaller than fivers on me, brother, I shall have to make it fifteen quid. We Brownes have no use for the small stuff."

The manager, who had followed, opened his eyes very wide as Browne produced his pocket-book. He was rapidly gaining the impression that these St. Frank's fellows were simply weltering in money. He wasn't to know, of course, that Archie Glenthorne and William Napoleon Browne were distinct exceptions.

Browne was only too glad to help. He knew that his money was safe; but at the same time he exhibited a pardonable curiosity in Archie's crowd of parcel-laden companions. It was not customary for the genial ass of the Remove to consort with such company.

"Be good enough to introduce me, Brother Archie," said Browne. "Do not deny these friends of yours the pleasure of my companionship. One glance at them is sufficient to convince me that they are quivering with eagerness to make my acquaintance."

Browne was introduced. Further, he was given a few details of the situation.

"Tell me all!" he urged, when Archie felt that he had explained enough. "Do not leave me in the dark, Brother Archibald. For here I can detect an opening for my own great abilities. Let us combine together in preparing a surprise for the lads of the Remove."

And when Cornwallis and his companions heard what Browne proposed, they really and truly began to believe it was all a dream!



To stand by idle and watch Marjorie go to the rescue of the unfortunate Newcastle lad was more than Archie Glenthorne could stand. He spun round, leapt down the bank, and plunged into the water, even forgetting to remove his topper in his excitement.

CHAPTER 6.

A Walk-Over!

"IT'S all right, you chaps," said Nipper briskly. "The girls are coming over to see the match—and they'll arrive soon after the start."

"But aren't they coming here first?" asked Handforth.

"They can't manage it," replied Nipper. "So they're going direct to the ground."

It was the following afternoon, and the junior cricketers were gathering beside the School Train—which stood, as usual, on a quite secluded siding some little distance from the city.

By now all the junior eleven had forgotten their prejudices and were keenly looking forward to the forthcoming game.

It was a glorious June afternoon, just ideal for cricket.

"What's that you were saying just now?" asked Reggie Pitt wonderingly, as he joined the others. "The girls going straight to the ground?"

"Yes," replied Nipper. "They rang up, and Mr. Lee allowed me to speak to 'em for a few minutes. They wanted to come to the train, but they couldn't manage it in the time. They're right out in Jesmond."

"Did you tell them about the ground, and all that?" asked Pitt.

"Yes," replied Nipper, "and the girls are as keen as mustard on seeing the game. They're being driven straight there in a car. If they aren't there at the start, they'll arrive soon afterwards."

This was a cheering piece of information, and everybody was looking forward to seeing their fair chums of the Moor View School again. It was indeed an unusual thing for the girls to come so far North. Some of the juniors suspected that Irene & Co. had deliberately fixed up that swimming contest, knowing well enough that the School Train would be in Newcastle that week-end.

The St. Frank's crowd journeyed to the Mayfair Fields in a big motor-car. Although it was the biggest vehicle that Newcastle could provide, it was packed full. Practically everybody in the Remove and Fourth wanted to go. Those who were crowded out were obliged to travel by tram.

"Of course, it'll be an absolute walk-over," said Handforth, as they bowled along. "I don't suppose the match will last more than half an hour."

"Give it an hour," said Nipper, smiling.

"Half an hour," insisted Handforth. "If these Tynesiders bat first, Charlie Bangs can get the whole side out in about ten minutes. They'll never be able to stand up to his bowling."

"I don't think I shall put Boomerang on to bowl," replied Nipper, shaking his head. "That would be a bit too thick. Dash it, we want to give these chaps a chance—they deserve it."

"H'm! I hadn't thought of that," said Handforth. "Perhaps it would be a bit thick to spring Boomerang on them."

"Why not let Handy open the bowling?" suggested Travers.

"But he's not a bowler," said Church, staring.

"Does that matter?" asked Travers. "We want to give these sportsmen some encouragement. Against Handy's bowling they might be able to knock up a few runs."

"You—you funny-faced idiot!" roared Handforth indignantly. "Are you suggesting that I'm no good as a bowler? Why, if Nipper puts me on, I'll have the whole side out in one over!"

"He'll get 'em out two at a time!" murmured Pitt.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean two overs!" snorted Handforth, turning red.

"And that means three, because somebody else will have to bowl from the other end after you've dismissed six," said Nipper, grinning. "But why have all this discussion over nothing? Perhaps these Tynesiders will give us a better game than we expect."

And Nipper, although he didn't realise it at the moment, had never spoken truer words!

"WELL, I'm hanged!" ejaculated Nipper, in dumbfounded surprise. They had arrived at their destination. The big coach had pulled up at the end of Mayfair Road. But here, instead of the ramshackle fence of yesterday, there was now a big opening, with throngs of people passing in and standing by.

And when the St. Frank's cricketers dismounted from the coach they were given a hearty cheer, a rousing cheer which swelled up and which was echoed repeatedly.

But Nipper's surprise was occasioned by the playing-field.

The other junior cricketers were equally staggered. They had a clear view of it, and they could hardly believe the evidence of their eyes. Gone was the rough, unkempt wasteland. Ropes had been set up all round, and crowds of people were kept off the actual field by this barrier.

And the field itself, instead of being marred by rank grass and rusty cans and heaps of rubbish, was smoothly cut and looked quite respectable. The pitch itself and the grass for some distance round was smooth and level. Indeed, the pitch looked almost perfect. It was as though a miracle had been wrought during the night.

To make things even more startling, a number of youthful figures, clad in dazzling white, were at practice. If one confined one's attention to the pitch itself, and disregarded the drab surroundings, it was quite possible to imagine one's self on the playing-field of a well-equipped cricket club.

"They're—they're Cornwallis and his team!" ejaculated Nipper. "Look at 'em! All in flannels! And look at the ground! What's happened? Who's been performing magic?"

"Don't ask me!" said Handforth blankly.

"But it's—it's unbelievable!" ejaculated Church. "It couldn't have been done in the time!"

"You fathead! It's done!" said Edward Oswald.

There was no question about it. That caricature of a cricket field had been transformed. And those players, who had seemed so unlike real cricketers in their work-a-day garb, now looked businesslike and efficient. White flannels made all the difference, particularly as the youngsters themselves revealed an unsuspected form.

"It must be a jape!" said Nipper, taking a deep breath. "We've been spoofed, you chaps! These fellows aren't Council school boys at all. They must have been spoofing us yesterday."

"I don't see how that's possible," argued Pitt. "This ground was a dust-heap yesterday, wasn't it? We'd better go along and inquire."

Jim Cornwallis was grinning when they approached him.

"Welcome to the N. & G. S. C. C.," he said genially. "Looks a bit better than what it did yesterday, eh?"

"Better!" echoed Nipper. "It's another ground altogether. How did you manage it, Cornwallis?"

"I didn't manage anything," said Cornwallis, shaking his head. "We've got to thank you St. Frank's chaps for all this. Crikey! We ain't likely to forget your School Train comin' to Newcastle. Real sports, that's what you are!"

"But we've done nothing!" protested Nipper.

"Why, didn't that chap Glenthorne tell you?" put in Bill Whittaker. "It was him who rigged us out in these flannels."

"Archie!" said Nipper. "My only hat! That's why he was broke this morning! Do you mean to say that he treated you to your flannels?"

"Yes, and these stumps and pads and bats and balls and everything," replied Cornwallis enthusiastically. "It cost him all the money he had, and over twelve quid he had to borrow from another fellow, too. We don't like it much," he added, becoming serious. "It doesn't seem right. Sort of taking advantage of his good nature."

"If you want to offend old Archie, just tell him that you're uncomfortable about it," said Nipper. "If he's done this to help your club, good luck to you. Don't worry about the money. Archie can afford it, and he loves an affair of this kind. But how on earth did you work the miracle of the ground?"

"There, brother, is where I figure," beamed William Napoleon Browne, who had strolled up. "I rather think that my generalship has been successful. Not, of course, that my generalship could be anything else. It is hardly necessary to remind you that we Brownes never fail in our undertakings."

"Well, I'm blessed!" said Handforth. "And we didn't know anything about it!"

"I stole away in the small hours of the morning," said Browne contentedly. "Doubtless there will be a slight spot of bother with Mr. Pagett later, but let us not dwell upon unpleasant subjects. Grass-mowers, watering-cans, rollers, and sundry hefty helpers have wrought this change. Needless to say, a certain amount of palm oil was necessary, to say nothing of my energetic leadership. By mid-day the task was completed, and since then I have been busily congratulating myself. I now await the shower of congratulations from others."

And William Napoleon Browne got the shower—in abundance.

CHAPTER 7.

A Surprise for St. Frank's!

THAT Browne deserved praise was increasingly evident when the pitch was closely examined.

Within the space of a few hours he had wrought a remarkable change. It turned out that he had commandeered the services of a big watering-cart, a motor-roller and a powerful mower. These three contrivances, combined, had worked wonders. All the inequalities of the pitch had been rolled out during the early morning. Throughout the forenoon the sun had been at work, and now the pitch was dry and well-nigh perfect.

That is to say, it was as perfect as such a pitch could be. It would be idle to pretend that the turf itself was first-class. It wasn't. But Browne had made something of it which nobody had ever thought possible.

"You fellows don't realise what this means to us," said Cornwallis dreamily. "Cricket's going to be a big thing for us this summer—now. We can get fixtures with some of the big schools, perhaps—and with junior clubs that wouldn't have looked at us ordinarily."

Nipper laughed.

"Well, you've really got to thank that chap Drummond, of Moorhouse College," he said. "If Drummond hadn't advised us to fix up a match with you, we should never have come near here."

"Anyhow, we're starting well," said Cornwallis happily. "A match against a famous school like St. Frank's is something better than we ever dreamed of."

"It now remains for you, brothers, to provide us with a worthy spectacle," said Browne, unfolding a long white coat, and donning it. "Well, are we ready?"

"Hallo!" said Nipper. "You umpiring?"

"Much as I fear the arduous nature of the task, I am prepared to sacrifice myself in

the cause of sport," replied Browne smoothly. "Come, brothers, let us put some pep into it."

Nobody had requested Browne to be an umpire; it was entirely his own idea. But both Nipper and Cornwallis heartily approved—and they were, indeed, grateful to Browne for shouldering this task.

By this time hundreds of spectators had arrived. Never before had this ground been so crowded. Nearly all the members of the Remove and Fourth were there, and quite a number of fags, too. The seniors were not in evidence, owing to the fact that the First Eleven had a match of their own this afternoon.

Cornwallis' friends had rolled up in their scores. Council school boys from all parts of Newcastle and Gateshead had turned up, excited and thrilled by the news that had gone round. Many of them refused to believe the story—until they were convinced by the evidence of their own eyes.

The toss was taken in the approved fashion, and Cornwallis won. He unhesitatingly decided to bat first.

So, at twenty-five minutes past two, the St. Frank's cricketers went out on to the field, to be greeted by loud cheering. They came from the "pavilion" just as though this ground were as stately and as pretentious as Little Side at St. Frank's.

Indeed, with the crowds blotting out the wasteland, and with only the field in view, with its well-rolled pitch, the juniors had the impression that this was going to be a normal match.

It was only when they remembered the actual facts that they smiled. Appearances could be so deceptive! They knew well enough—or at least, they thought—that Cornwallis & Co. were mere novices.

"How long do you think they'll last?" asked Travers smilingly.

"Not more than half an hour," replied Nipper.

"Rot!" put in Handforth. "They'll never last half an hour! As soon as I start the bowling——"

"But you're not going to bowl, old man," said Nipper gently.

"Eh? But you told me——"

"My dear ass, I was only spoofing," said Nipper. "Do you think I want any of these Tynesiders brained? If you attempt to bowl, you'll probably knock somebody silly!"

"I'll knock you silly to start with!" roared Handforth indignantly. "Not that you need much knocking, by George! There's no sense in being gentle with these chaps. We want to get them out as quickly as possible, and if you'll let me bowl——"



"They'll stay in all the afternoon," said Nipper, nodding.

"Why, you—you——"

"Hallo, hallo!" put in Vivian Travers. "Well, well! Do I detect a bevy of fair damsels waving to us, or is it merely my imagination?"

Handforth looked round, forgetting his anger.

"Irene & Co.!" he ejaculated gladly. "By George! They've arrived, you chaps—and before the start, too! Good egg!"

There were six of the Moor View girls, and they came on to the field, smiling and laughing, escorted by William Napoleon Browne—who, incidentally, had been inquiring of Irene Manners why it was that Cousin Dora had not come along.

Irene was accompanied by Doris Berkeley, Marjorie Temple, Ena Handforth, Winnie Pitt, and Mary Summers. They were all dressed in delightful summery frocks of gay colours, and they added a charming note to the scene. As Nipper remarked, they gave it a tone.

"Why, it's not half so bad as we expected it to be," said Mary. "We were told that it was just a piece of wasteland——"

"Ah, but Browne has been busy since then—without us knowing anything about it," said Nipper. "Old Browne has done wonders."

They briefly explained—successfully silencing Browne, who would not have been brief at all—and the girls were vastly interested.

Large numbers of deck-chairs had been hired for the occasion, and Irene & Co. were invited to take their seats, so that they could watch the match in comfort.

"Not that you'll be here long," said Handforth cheerfully. "We'll have this match over in less than an hour, and then we can buzz off somewhere and enjoy ourselves. What about going over to Jesmond Dene? I've heard that there are some wonderful places there, and——"

"The match hasn't started yet, Ted," interrupted Irene. "Don't you think it's rather unwise to be so confident? Perhaps these boys will play better than you expect."

"Yes, there is that about it," agreed Nipper. "In fact, I hope they do. However, I think we shall win easily," he added confidently.

"Well, I hope it isn't too one-sided, because that would make it so uninteresting," said Marjorie. "By the way, are you coming to see me in the swimming contest this evening?"

"You bet we are!" said Nipper promptly.

"Absolutely!" said Archie Glenthorpe. "Good gad! What a question! We wouldn't miss it for worlds, old girl!"

"Thanks," said Marjorie. "It might help me if I get cheered on, you know. And if I win this contest I shall be able to appear in the next round of the competition—in London. You see, it's an open competition for all girls under seventeen from all parts of the country."

MUCH as the fellows were interested in Marjorie's forthcoming swimming race, however, cricket was the order of the moment. And by the time the girls had got comfortably settled in their chairs the game was due to begin. Jim Cornwallis and Bill Whittaker had come out to open the batting.

"Go it, Newcastle!"

"Show us what you can do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The St. Frank's juniors cheered lustily, but there was a hint of irony in their shouts. All the juniors believed that Cornwallis & Co. would be skittled out like so many ninepins. How was it possible for them to stand up against the masterly bowling of the Junior Eleven? It was true that the Junior Eleven was out of practice, but that would surely make little or no difference in a match of this kind.

It had to be admitted that Cornwallis and Whittaker looked very businesslike as they walked to the wicket. Perhaps it was the white flannels which gave them this false appearance of confidence. In their ordinary clothing they had looked a very "uncricket-like" pair, but now it was difficult to realise that they were novices.

It was still more difficult to realise this when Cornwallis, receiving the first ball from Christine, sent it soaring away to the boundary for a four.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Handforth, staring.

"Fluke!" said Church.

Bob Christine bowled again, and there was something alert, keen, and alive about Cornwallis' attitude. He braced himself, his bat swung round, and he knocked Christine for a beautiful on-drive which added two more runs to the score.

"The fellow seems to be pretty good," murmured Nipper, pursing his lips. "By Jove! I wonder if we've been fooled again? These chaps seem to know as much about cricket as we do! It's always a fatal thing to take too much for granted."

The Tynesiders were cheering lustily, and when Cornwallis sent Christine's third delivery soaring towards the boundary there was a tremendous yell. But Harry Gresham was perilously near at hand, and with a swift run he reached the vital spot, leapt up, and held the ball confidently.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

It was an excellent catch, and there was a roar of approval from the St. Frank's spectators. The Tynesiders were not quite so enthusiastic now. Cornwallis had opened well, but his early promise had not been fulfilled. He was evidently too much of a slogger, without any real scientific knowledge of the game.

Kidd came in, and, profiting by his captain's mistake, he contented himself by stonewalling until the end of the over.

Then Bill Whittaker received the bowling from Gresham, at the other end. The over was rather tame, although Whittaker succeeded in getting a two, and then a single. Kidd broke his duck with the last ball of the over. But the batsmen were playing cautiously now—they were beginning to understand that the bowling was of a different stamp to that which they had previously come up against. In fact, they had never played such cricket as this before.

As for the St. Frank's juniors, they were surprised—and pleased—to find that the Tynesiders knew quite a lot about the game. The latter were not such novices as they had looked! They may not have had the ground, or the opportunities, but when it came to the actual game, they were "all there." Any crudities in their play, any lack of finesse, could be accounted for by the fact that they had never had a decent ground to play upon.

KIDD was out soon afterwards, with 7 runs to his credit. Bill Whittaker, however, became more confident as the game progressed, and he was soon set. After that he began to score fairly freely, and he proved himself to be an excellent batsman. He had been joined by Tommy Wilkes, and this pair proceeded to make a stand.

Nipper was reluctant to put Boomerang Bangs on to bowl. Bangs was a terror, and he would probably skittle out these Tynesiders in no time. And none of the St. Frank's fellows wanted the game to end in a fiasco.

However, when Whittaker and Wilkes proceeded to treat Gresham and Travers with absolute disdain, scoring boundaries freely, and twos and singles without much effort, it was apparent that something would have to be done.

These batsmen were set, and they were thoroughly enjoying themselves. The spectators were shouting excitedly every moment, and there were hundreds gathered round now—all intensely interested.

"You'd better have a shot at it, Boomerang," said Nipper at last.

It was the end of an over, and he tossed the ball to Boomerang Bangs, the lean, long junior from New South Wales.

"I'm not so sure," said Bangs. "This isn't the sort of pitch that suits me—and I don't think I'm in form, anyway."

He wasn't. With the first two or three balls, surely enough, he "rattled" Bill Whittaker considerably. More than once Bill came within an ace of being bowled. But after that he got the measure of Boomerang's trickery, and then he proceeded to score.

Bangs was certainly off colour—due, no doubt, to the fact that he had been for some weeks without practice. Furthermore, he was totally unfamiliar with English wickets. He had been deadly in Australia, but in England he was more or less commonplace. Later, perhaps, he would regain his uncanny prowess.

To-day, rather to Nipper's dismay, Bangs was useless. And he had been regarded as a cert. Once Bangs started to bowl, any batsman could be got out! Unfortunately, this optimism in Bangs was entirely unjustified to-day.

The situation, from the St. Frank's boys' point of view, was by no means comfortable!

CHAPTER 8.

Not in the Game!

"**W**HAT are you going to do about it, Nipper?"

Handforth spoke rather aggressively. The field was just crossing over, and the score-board told all and sundry that the Tynesiders had made 107 runs. Only four wickets were down. This was so opposed to all the predictions, that the St. Frank's juniors were beginning to look worried.

"Do about it?" repeated Nipper. "Do about what?"

"Why don't you get these fatheads out?"

"My dear chap, I'm not a magician," protested Nipper. "I can't bewitch the ball. They're better cricketers than we gave them credit for being—and we deserve this shock for our silly over-confidence."

"If you'd let me bowl, they'd soon be out," said Handforth tartly.

"Ahem!"

"Something in your throat?" asked Handforth, glaring.

"Well, no," admitted Nipper. "But if it's all the same to you, old man, I don't think I'll put you on to bowl—"



"It's not all the same to me," interrupted Handforth. "If I bowl I'll get these wickets like clockwork. Think of the prestige of St. Frank's! It'll be an awful thing if we lose this match."

"It won't be awful, but it'll be pretty rotten," admitted Nipper. "But it's because I'm thinking of the prestige of St. Frank's that I'm not going to let you bowl," he added sweetly. "Cheese it, you ass! The field's waiting."

Handforth grunted, and moved to his place. He was somewhat mollified a few minutes later by bringing off quite a good



With Archie Glenthorne at their head, the Newcastle lads streamed into the shop. "These lads of the village are to be equipped with the full regalia for cricket!" said Archie to the astonished manager, and to prove that he was not joking, pulled out his wallet, which was crammed full with notes.

catch, and dismissing the redoubtable Whittaker. Bill came in for a tremendous ovation as he carried his bat off the field.

After that the Tynesiders continued to fight gamely, but the St. Frank's bowling was improving all the time. Practice was having its effect. Harry Gresham was becoming more deadly, and he took two wickets in one over a little later on.

Most bowlers, of course, lose their sting after a while. But in this match it was different. The bowlers had started easily, believing that they would get plenty of victims. As soon as they found that the Tynesiders were worthy of high-class play, however, they put more ginger into it.

Cornwallis' team possessed a tail. The last four men were out in the course of a couple of overs, and the innings ended with a score of 165—which was extraordinarily good, considering everything.

"Well done, you chaps!" said Nipper heartily. "You're giving us a lot better game than we hoped for."

"Well, we ain't such duffers as you believed, eh?" grinned Cornwallis.

"By Jove, you're not!" agreed Nipper frankly. "You've got a fine batsman in Whittaker—and Wilkes will improve enormously if he practises. Do you happen to have any deadly bowlers?"

"Wait and see!" chuckled Cornwallis.

It was evident that the Tynesider skipper was expecting to give the visitors some further surprises; and when the St. Frank's innings commenced it was seen that there was every reason for Cornwallis' confidence. An insignificant youngster named Bradley proved to be a clever bowler. True, he needed a little polish, and some of his deliveries were inclined to be wide, but on the whole he showed great promise, and the batsmen found it quite difficult to deal with him.

Harry Gresham and Jerry Dodd opened the batting for St. Frank's. Perhaps they treated the bowling a little too carelessly; for it was difficult for them to get it out of their heads that they were not playing a "rag-time" team—as they had first supposed. Anyhow, Jerry Dodd lifted a ball from Bradley, and gave a distinct chance to mid-on. Everybody expected mid-on to make a mess of that catch, but he held the ball beautifully.

"My only hat! Jerry's out!" said Handforth blankly.

He was sitting on one of the deck-chairs, near the Moor View girls. The air was filled with the shouts of exultation from the Tynesiders. They knew Bradley to be

good, but they had hardly expected him to capture a wicket so early.

"It was my own silly fault," said Jerry, as he came in. "I oughtn't to have touched that ball at all—it was a yard wide, anyhow. The young beggar deliberately tried to trap me, and he did it."

Travers went in next—much to Handforth's wrath. For Edward Oswald considered that he had been insulted enough as it was. Everybody knew that he ought to have been put in first!

"You've got nothing to grumble at," said Church impatiently. "Even Nipper isn't going in until after you. You'll be able to get nicely set, and then, when Nipper joins you, you can make a stand."

"But supposing Gresham and Travers knock up a century each?" grumbled Handforth. "I shan't get a chance of batting at all!"



With Archie Glenthorne at their head, the Newcastle lads be equipped with the full regalia for cricket!" said Archie, pulling out his wallet, wh

He was considerably surprised, five minutes later, when Gresham's wicket was shattered by an excellent ball from Kidd. So far, St. Frank's had only scored 18 runs, and two wickets were down. It wasn't at all healthy.

Not that Handforth was worried about the outcome. He was going in now, and he had decided to score a century. If the

other members of the Eleven would only back him up, everything would be all right.

"See you later, girls!" he said cheerily, as he went out.

"Bet you don't hit a boundary with your first ball, Ted!" laughed Irene.

"Here, I say!" protested Church. "Don't say that. He'll only play recklessly."

But as Handforth played recklessly at all times, there was not much danger in Irene's pleasantry. As a matter of fact, he did score a boundary with the first ball, and

MARJORIE TEMPLE clapped her hands enthusiastically.

"Oh, well hit!" she cried. "Did you see that, Archie? I believe that's the sixth boundary that Handforth has hit!"

"Oh, rather!" said Archie. "Handy's a frightful chap for hitting, you know. Not merely hitting the good old leather sphere, but everything else, dash it! A most energetic blighter."

They were standing well away from the crowds of spectators. In fact, they were on the top of the rising ground well beyond the boundaries of the field. Immediately below them, at the foot of a steeply-sloping bank, was that murky-looking, swiftly-running stream—which Nipper & Co. had viewed the previous day.

"Ted's doing splendidly," said Marjorie.

"Absolutely!" agreed Archie. "But dash Ted! Bother Ted! In fact, blow Ted! I thought it a ripping scheme to entice you away from the populace so that we could have a heart-to-heart talk, so to speak, if you know what I mean."

"I don't think I do," smiled the girl.

"Oh, come!" protested Archie. "I mean, about this good old swimming business. This cricket is all very frightfully topping, but I'm much more interested in this swimming stunt of yours. I mean, I'm not sure that I altogether approve. Hence the heart-to-heart talk."

"But why should you disapprove, Archie?"

"Well, I mean, isn't it too frightfully strenuous?" asked Archie concernedly. "I'm all in favour of girls being athletic, and so forth, but too much of a good thing is—well, too much, what? I've heard that you go deaf if you swim too much. And you get muscular rheumatism, and all sorts of other frightful ailments. You mustn't go and overdo it, old girl."

Marjorie laughed merrily at Archie's unnecessary concern.

"You silly!" she chuckled. "I'm a regular water-baby. I'm just as comfortable in the water as I am ashore. As for these contests, they're so easy that I never get enough of them."

"You're not thinking of training to swim the dashed Channel?" asked Archie anxiously.

"Good gracious, no!" said the girl. "What nonsense! Channel swimming is too much of a craze, and what is there in it, anyhow? It's been done so many times that a new victory doesn't even mean anything. Besides, my people wouldn't think of allowing me to go in for it."



he shop. "These lads of the village are to manager, and to prove that he was not jocular with notes.

another boundary with the second. He was evidently determined to hit out with all his strength at everything that came along.

"He thinks he'll last—but he'll be out after a couple of overs," said Nipper. "The ass! Why can't he be more cautious?"

"Handy be cautious? That's an impossibility!" grinned Gresham.

"I believe you're right!" grunted Nipper.

unfortunate boy not only clung, but he fought madly!

CHAPTER 9.

Marjorie's Pluck!

ARCHIE GLENTHORNE was handicapped.

His well-fitting Etons were excellent for ordinary wear, but they were apt to be an awful bother in swimming. Archie was quite a good swimmer, but he soon found that the current of this stream was surprisingly tricky and difficult. And hampered as he was, he found it impossible to overtake the girl.

Marjorie was not so handicapped. In the first place, her clothing was much lighter than Archie's, and scarcely hampered her at all; in the second place, she was a much better swimmer, and at the tip-top of her form.

And now, finding that it was impossible to reason with the drowning boy, she took a firm grip on the back of his collar, flung herself on her back, and made strong efforts to get to the bank.

All this had happened so quickly that even now the cricketers and the spectators knew nothing of what was happening. Archie Glenthorne's shouts had been heard but not understood. At the very worst, it was assumed that he was indicating that the ball had got lost.

Marjorie reached the bank quickly, and she was thankful. Bradley was more violent than ever. Now as she turned and helped him to scramble out he was fairly sobbing with exhaustion.

Then an unexpected accident happened.

In making a wild effort, Bradley unconsciously swung his right foot round, and his heel caught the girl with tremendous violence on the forehead. Without a sound she slipped back into the water, knocked senseless by that sudden, unlooked-for blow—a blow which was purely accidental, and of which Bradley himself knew nothing.

Until this moment Marjorie had been in no danger at all. Now, in a dramatic second, the whole situation was altered. The current caught her in its grip and she was carried away, just as Archie managed to reach her side. And Archie was staggered when he reached out a fraction of a second too late.

"Whoa! I say, old girl!" he gasped. "I mean— Good gad! She's absolutely sinking!"

It was fortunate for Marjorie that Archie had jumped in, too. As her head went under the cold water did something to revive her, but she was still dizzy and helpless from the effect of the blow, and if Archie had not been so near she would almost certainly have been dragged under by the current, and kept under.

As things were, Archie struck out with tremendous energy, dived, and managed to seize a portion of the girl's flimsy dress. He rose to the surface, hanging on for all he was worth. Then, as he swam with one hand, he found one of Marjorie's arms, and pulled her head clear of the water. A moment later he had his hand round her shoulders, and was able to support her.

"All serene now, old cherub!" he spluttered cheerfully. "Absolutely O.K.! The lads of the village are dashing up in considerable quantities. In other words, now we shan't be long."

It was a fact. Handforth and Nipper and large numbers of spectators had topped the rise, and had seen the figures struggling in the water.

"Great Scott! There's been an accident!"

"Archie's fallen in the river!"

"Who's that with him?"

A dozen fellows slithered down the bank to the water's edge—just in time to receive Marjorie from Archie as he reached the bank.

"All serene, laddies!" panted Archie. "Nothing to get excited about. I mean, the good old aquatic display is over."

"What's happened?" asked Nipper. "Come on, Handy! Lend a hand here! We'll have you out in a jiffy, Marjorie!"

Marjorie was rapidly recovering now, although her head ached and there was an ugly red mark on her forehead. Nobody had yet noticed the still, sprawling figure of the diminutive Bradley on the opposite bank. But Marjorie had not forgotten him.

"Thanks!" she said, as she was helped out. "But don't bother about me. There's that boy on the other side. I believe he's in a bad way. Do go to his help."

"Which boy?" asked Cornwallis anxiously. "Crikey! It's young Shaver Bradley! Quick, you chaps! We'd better bring him over to this side."

"What about our new flannels?" protested Whittaker. "Lummy! We don't want to go an' ruin 'em the first day we wear 'em!"

"Absolutely not," agreed Archie. "Kindly stay where you are, laddies. The good old summer suiting is already ruined, so I might as well do another Channel swim. Tally-ho for Dover!"

He plunged back into the water, and swiftly swam across. In the meantime, Marjorie had been surrounded by Irene and Mary and the other girls—all of them very excited.

"Do tell us what happened," urged Irene.

"It was really nothing," replied Marjorie. "I mean, I didn't do anything. But I'm sure that Archie saved my life. Whatever shall I do with these wet togs of mine? I can't walk about like this!"

The problem was soon solved. Cornwallis' sister was among the spectators, and it appeared that she had a girl friend who lived in one of the nearest cottages. So Marjorie was whisked off there.

"ABSOLUTELY!" declared Archie with conviction. Shaver Bradley was being attended to by Handforth and Cornwallis and some others, on the grass near by. The match, of course, was momentarily forgotten. And Archie had been singing Marjorie's praises in no uncertain terms.

"She saved the blighter's life," he declared. "No dashed question about it, laddies. The dear old soul was slipping down for the third and final time, and then Marjorie shoved the half-nelson on him and did the necessary. But, good gad, it was a frightful sort of business. The chappie absolutely fought like a dashed dervish. Rummily enough, he didn't show any anxiety to be saved at all."

"The poor kid was pretty well unconscious, and didn't know what he was doing, I expect," said Cornwallis. "Crumbs! What a game! Jolly good thing that girl was near by! She's a sport! Wouldn't be the first time somebody's been drowned in this ditch! It doesn't look much, but it's awfully dangerous owing to the strong currents!"

When Bradley came to himself he was dazed and pale and exhausted. There was no further cricket for him that day, and a group of willing friends offered to see him home, and tuck him away in bed.

Nobody was unkind enough to tell him how he had struggled, or how he had endangered his fair rescuer's life. Indeed, he

did not even know that he had been pulled out by a girl. The knowledge might not have been welcome to him in his present condition.

He wasn't to be blamed for his recent actions, for he had been quite unconscious of them. His energetic display had been the frantic efforts of a drowning boy—instinctive and spasmodic.

"Well, now we can get on with the game, I suppose?" said Handforth, after Archie had been carried off into the "pavilion," there to don some borrowed clothes. "No reason why the match should be abandoned."

"No reason at all," agreed Nipper. "Let's get on with it. Pretty rough on Marjorie, though. I'm afraid she's handicapped for tonight's contest."

"Think this affair will spoil her chances?" asked Pitt.

"Well, it won't do 'em any good," said Nipper. "We'll see her after the match, and it may be necessary to persuade her to postpone the swim."

So, until Marjorie reappeared, the match went on. There was not so much interest in it now—particularly as Handforth was clean bowled by Kidd five minutes after the re-start.

However, Nipper and Buster Boots made a good stand, and between them they easily knocked up the necessary runs for victory. The Tynesiders had given the Junior Eleven a good match—a much better match than they

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had expected—and for Nipper & Co. to win by five wickets was by no means good. Had they been in form, they would have done much better.

Cornwallis and his men were decent cricketers, but they had had little or no opportunities of indulging in any really good play. If only they could get some real fixtures—in consequence of Archie's and Browne's generosity—they would soon become a really tip-top eleven.

As Nipper said, this fixture had been well worth the making, and he was glad that Drummond's sense of humour had led him to make the suggestion. No doubt Drummond and the other Moorhouse school boys were chuckling hugely, fondly thinking that their jape had worked according to plan. If so, they were chuckling to no purpose.

"It's a pity you're not nearer to St. Frank's, Cornwallis, old man," said Nipper. "If you were, we'd fix you up with some matches during the season."

"You're a sport," said the Tynesider heartily. "Us chaps have always thought that you public school fellows were too stuck up to play with the likes of us. Now we know different."

"You bet we do," said Bill Whittaker, grinning.

As they walked off the field the girls appeared, and Marjorie was looking quite herself again—except for the fact that she was wearing a frock which was slightly too large for her, and which was certainly not in her own style.

"Oh, it's impossible," she declared, when the juniors urged her to come back to the School Train for a late tea before going on to the swimming gala. "I've got to go home with Doris, so that I can change."

"But you look absolutely priceless," said Archie stoutly. "I'm a frightful sight in this dashed suit, but it doesn't matter about me."

Archie certainly did look incongruous in his borrowed clothes. As he was to be taken straight back to the School Train, however, he didn't mind so much.

All their persuasive efforts were useless with regard to Marjorie, and before long she and the other girls went back to Jesmond in the same car that had brought them. Incidentally, William Napoleon Browne had promised to go straight along to the baths, in order to book seats for the large party of juniors who desired to attend.

"Leave it to me, brothers," said Browne gracefully. "A matter of this kind requires a man of tact—a man of genius. For such an occasion the seats are likely to be nearly all sold. It may be necessary to perform a little juggling, in order to secure the accommodation."

"We know you'll do your best, Browne," said Nipper. "Thanks awfully. We'll settle up with you later—or give you the money now, whichever you think better."

Browne was indifferent. Some of the fellows paid, and some left it until afterwards. It was imperative, however, that they should

attend this gala, so that they could cheer Marjorie on to victory. It was all the more important now, since her adventure of the afternoon was not calculated to improve her chances.

As for the swim being postponed, she would not hear of it; in fact, she had made the fellows promise that they would say no more about that incident.

And as the girls had refused the invitation to tea on the School Train, the Removites and Fourth-Formers decided that they wouldn't go back to the train, either. Far better to have a bit of a spree in one of the big restaurants in the centre of the city. Then they would be near at hand to go on to the gala, afterwards. Archie was the only fellow who went back to the train—and his return was essential, since he had to get into some presentable attire.

"I'll tell you what," said Nipper, as they were in the coach bowling towards the centre of the city. "We've got Marjorie's telephone number, haven't we? Let's ring the girls up, and ask them to join us at the restaurant as soon as they're ready. Then we can all go to the gala in style."

"Good egg!" said Handforth eagerly. "Funny thing I didn't think of that myself. Browne's coming to the restaurant, too—after he's got the tickets—and Archie's promised to show up there when he's changed. We shall be one big party."

Most of the Removites and Fourth-Formers were on hand, so Marjorie would have plenty of friends to cheer her to victory.

CHAPTER 10.

Browne the Schemer!

"A H, Brother Horace! Well met!" William Napoleon Browne came to a halt on one of the pavements of Percy Street, not far from the Haymarket.

"Where on earth have you been all the afternoon?" asked Horace Stevens, of the Fifth. "You don't mean to say you've been watching those kids in their silly cricket match."

"Not merely watching, but umpiring—and, I venture to state, umpiring brilliantly," replied Browne. "It gives me pleasure to inform you that St. Frank's won the match by five wickets."

"Well, it doesn't give me any pleasure to hear it," said Stevens, grinning. "If it comes to that, why did they lose any wickets at all? I understood that the game was against a very mediocre team."

"Then you understood wrong, brother Horace," replied Browne. "Without fear of contradiction, I can say that brother Cornwallis and his men are stalwarts of the right order. However, this is not the time for discussing that subject. There is more important work to be done, and you shall have the privilege of sharing it."

"I'm not looking for any privileges, thanks," said Stevens. "What's the wheeze now, Browne? What's the latest hare-brained scheme? Somehow, I don't trust your undertakings. They're a bit too daring for me."

Browne smiled kindly.

"This is merely a question of securing sundry orchestra-stall seats at the Baths," he replied. "Large numbers of lads desire to attend, and I have promised to book the seats. So come with me, brother."

"But they don't have orchestra stalls at the Baths," protested Stevens.

"Then we will book the equivalent," replied Browne.

Stevens didn't like the idea much, but when Browne insisted it was almost impossible to resist him. It certainly saved a lot of time to fall in with his suggestions.

They located the Baths without any trouble, and there were placards plastered on the outside announcing the great swimming gala for that evening. Browne paused to inspect the bills.

"I could have done much better than this, Brother Horace," he said, shaking his head. "A poor show. You will observe that Sister Marjorie's name is in no way prominent. An absurd oversight. And yet she is on the bill as the star attraction of the evening."

"Star attraction?" said Stevens. "How do you make that out?"

"You will notice that Sister Marjorie is described as the most daring high diver of her age in the South of England," said Browne. "We both know, of course, that Sister Marjorie is an adept at diving. Have we not seen her indulging in this form of exercise at her own school sports? And yet her name is only in small type on this bill."

"Awful!" said Stevens patiently.

"I note that the gala is in the cause of charity," went on Browne. "A noble object, Brother Horace. It makes me all the more enthusiastic to book the highest priced seats. Come! Let us interview the syren of the box-office."

They entered, and the syren of the box-office proved to be an elderly man who had apparently just awakened from his afternoon nap. He received the request for the large number of seats with only a mild show of surprise.

"You can have as many as you want," he said indifferently. "Plenty of 'em, young gents. What price?"

"One moment," said Browne, in a shocked voice. "Am I to understand, brother, that the seats for this gala have not been eagerly snapped up by the Newcastle populace?"

"Snapped up!" replied the man. "Why, there's only about twenty booked. Somehow, it don't seem to 'ave been advertised properly. Or else folks have got somethin' else to do. I don't suppose we shall be more than a quarter full. After all, there aren't many people who want to see schoolgirls in a swimmin' contest. The weather's too fine.

Everybody's out playin' tennis, or cricket, or golf."

"This is an unexpected blow," said Browne gravely. "Sister Marjorie is to appear in this competition to-night, and scarcely anybody will be on hand to see her. It is all wrong, Brother Horace. I am convinced that large numbers of the Newcastle population, did they but know of this gala, would be eager and anxious to see more of Sister Marjorie. Here we have an enormous building—a magnificent public edifice—capable of holding some thousands of people——"

"Not thousands," said the box-office-keeper.

"At a pinch, thousands," insisted Browne firmly. "The proceeds of this gala are to go to charity, and yet nobody appears to be interested. I must confess, Brother Horace, that I am shocked. I do not blame the good people of Newcastle, because it is fairly evident that they do not know of this attraction. You will have noted that no less than two dozen young ladies are to compete. Even this bevy of feminine prowess fails to attract the multitude. We must do something to alter this!"

BROWNE paid for the block of seats in the best part of the building, and then he took his departure, leaving the box-office-keeper slightly befuddled. Browne frequently had this effect upon strangers.

"You will note, Brother Horace, how wise I was in bringing you along," said Browne, when they were outside. "For here, surely, there is an opening for you to make yourself useful."

"Look here——" began Stevens.

"Something must be done about this lack of interest in Sister Marjorie's appearance in Newcastle," continued Browne. "Not only is it a slight to the damsel herself, but the good cause of charity is neglected. There is ample time for us to bring about a change. A little advertisement, Brother Horace, and the thing will be done."

"But you're crazy," said Stevens. "There's no time to advertise now. The gala comes off in about a couple of hours——"

"An hour too much for our requirements," interrupted Browne calmly. "For your information, Brother Horace, let me tell you that Sister Marjorie and her fair companions are due to arrive at a certain restaurant, in a certain street, at a certain hour. To be exact, in about half an hour from now."

"But I don't see——"

"You will see all if you have patience," said Browne. "I might mention that Sister Marjorie plunged into a murky stream this afternoon and rescued a local inhabitant from drowning. It was her desire that this incident should be hushed up. Much as I regretted her views on this point, I consented to remain silent."

"Impossible," said Stevens. "Nothing on earth could keep you silent. Even if you were gagged and knocked on the head with



Handforth, slogging as energetically as usual, fairly surpassed himself. He got hold of a loose ball and sent it soaring far, far beyond the boundary—indeed, it went whizzing over the heads of Archie and Marjorie to alight on the other side of the murky stream. “Oh, what a hit!” murmured the girl in admiration.

a sledge-hammer, and screwed down in a box with two-inch boards, you'd still manage to make yourself heard.”

“Had I more time, brother, I would express my appreciation of this compliment,” said Browne gracefully. “I am gratified to know that you have such faith in my abilities. However, let us proceed. It is essential that the Newcastle public should be informed of Sister Marjorie's heroism; but it is even more imperative that the good people should be given another example of the young lady's mettle. This is the moment for dramatic advertisement. Handled adroitly—as I shall handle it—there can be no possibility of failure. The accommodation at the Baths will prove totally inadequate for the vast crowds of people who will fight to get in.”

Stevens looked rather helpless.

“Go on!” he said resignedly. “This is all double Dutch to me, but carry on with it. How in the name of all that's marvellous you can entice the people into the public baths is beyond me. If they don't want to go to the gala, they won't go, and there's an end of it.”

Browne smiled.

“You may remember my efforts in a somewhat similar case in Adelaide, Australia,” he murmured. “That was a cricket match—but I venture to hint that the public rolled up handsomely. I claim to be an expert on such matters, brother. Give me your watch.”

“Eh?”

“I have been thinking, and I have decided upon the course I shall pursue,” continued

Browne. “When you hear of this scheme, Brother Horace, you will stand open-mouthed with admiration. Indeed, you will be so eager to thank me for permitting you to take a star part—”

“What's all this got to do with my watch?” interrupted Stevens impatiently.

“A great deal. I should hate your watch to get waterlogged.”

“Waterlogged!” gasped Stevens.

“While you are about it, you might as well hand me your note-case, too,” said Browne. “Notes are not improved by immersion in water—particularly in such water as the Tyne appears to favour. In short, Brother Horace, it will be advisable for you to hand me the entire contents of your pockets. You may safely entrust them to my keeping.”

Stevens began to feel hot. He knew Browne of old. There was something irresistible about him. And if Browne had determined that Stevens should plunge into the Tyne, the chances were that Stevens would plunge into the Tyne. Stevens naturally became alarmed.

“Look here, Browne,” he said fiercely. “You can keep this mad scheme to yourself! I'll have nothing to do with it! I don't even want to know the details! I wash my hands of the whole thing.”

“You will have ample opportunities of washing your hands later,” said Browne complacently. “Not, of course, that the Tyne—”

“Blow the Tyne!” roared Stevens, coming to a halt on the pavement and seizing Browne by the arm. “I tell you I won't

have anything to do with it. You're mad!"

Browne's serene calmness put Stevens into a panic.

"You may have observed the high-level bridge—the old one; made, I believe, of cast iron," said Browne. "Or is it wrought iron? This is a point we must verify later. You may also have observed the swing bridge, in close proximity. The swing bridge has a conveniently low parapet, and the water is at no great distance from the roadway level. Thus, when you accidentally fall over into the Tyne, the descent will be but brief——"

"But I'm not accidentally going to fall over into the Tyne!" howled Stevens. "I've never heard such drivel in my life!"

"I regret," said Browne sadly, "that my brain-wave should be so disparagingly characterised. Alas, Brother Horace, I fear that you are unappreciative of genius. It saddens me."

Stevens breathed hard.

"If you're so jolly keen upon somebody falling into the Tyne, why don't you fall in yourself?" he demanded.

"I will confess that the idea occurred to me, but I dismissed it," said Browne promptly. "Great as my ability is, I acknowledge—freely and handsomely—that when it comes to falling into the Tyne, you can easily beat me. It is well known, Brother Horace, that you are a good actor."

"Acting has got nothing to do with this mad business," said Stevens. "And I'm telling you, straight from the shoulder, Browne, that I'm not going to jump into the Tyne——"

"Not jump in—fall in."

"I'm not going to fall into the Tyne for you, Marjorie, or anybody else!" roared Stevens, exasperated. "That's my final word."

Browne patted his friend on the shoulder.

"I love to see this sturdy determination," he said benevolently. "But it has always been one of your good points, brother, that you are open to reason. Now, touching upon this little scheme. Let me remind you that it is in the cause of charity."

"I can't help that——"

"Wrong!" said Browne. "You can help splendidly. What is more, you *will* help. Let us have no more of this petulant opposition. Hand over your watch and chain, Brother Horace, and——"

"But why?" broke in Stevens desperately, feeling that the ground was slipping away from beneath his feet. "Tell me what you have in mind. Can't you wangle the thing in some other way? Why go to the trouble of having somebody fall into the river? It's—it's clumsy!"

"In order that this incident shall receive the full publicity that it deserves, a sensational effect is necessary," declared Browne firmly. "There is quite another aspect of the matter which I have not yet touched upon. It may interest you to learn, how-

ever, that I shall be quite near by when you indulge in your evening bath. I would take on your task myself, only I feel that my efforts will be better employed elsewhere. Now, Brother Horace, let me give you some careful instructions."

"I'm not going to agree to this——"

"Listen to them closely, for everything will depend upon correct timing."

"I tell you——"

"As a preliminary, we will have your watch and chain and other valuables," said Browne relentlessly.

"But I won't do it," said Stevens feebly. "I have already told you——"

COMING NEXT WEEK!



"Come, brother!" murmured William Napoleon.

And Horace Stevens, worn down at last, surrendered and prepared himself to be led like a lamb to the slaughter!

CHAPTER 11.

Quite a Success!

WHEN William Napoleon Browne determined upon any certain course of action, he invariably went through with it. Opposition only added to his determination—it only gave him greater zest to carry on. And where Stevens was concerned, Browne had never been known to fail. He knew Stevens like a book, and the things that he couldn't get Stevens to do did not exist.

For the next ten minutes Browne gave his study-mate some very precise instructions, and Stevens, with a dull sort of resignation, agreed to everything.

"Then it is all settled, brother?" said Browne. "Proceed to the swing bridge and await my coming. All else you know. There is much for me to attend to, and little time in which to do it."

He swung off with long strides, and his first task was to dash into the offices of Newcastle's most prominent evening newspaper. He learned with satisfaction that an edition was due to go to press within an hour. It was a special late edition, and

"THE SCHOOL TRAIN IN SCOTLAND!"

Edward Oswald Handforth is very disappointed when he arrives in Scotland. He had expected to see everybody going about wearing kilts and blowing bagpipes. Of course, he finds nothing of the sort, hence his disappointment.

And Handy decides to alter this lamentable state of affairs!

He gets himself the full Scottish regalia, complete with bagpipes. He sallies forth. Everybody is agreed that he makes a "bonny wee bairn," but his efforts on the bagpipes are not appreciated quite so much!

Edwy Searles Brooks has written a really magnificent yarn for you next week, chums. Don't miss reading it, whatever you do!

"RIVALS OF THE RAMPANT!"

Stanton Hope's grand serial gets more exciting each week. Look out for another fine instalment next Wednesday.

ORDER IN ADVANCE!

Browne hoped that his manufactured sensation would be known in time for inclusion in the "Stop Press." But, of course, he made no mention of this to a soul.

He did give an account, however, of the afternoon's affair at Mayfair Fields, and he was promised that the item would be prominently displayed under the heading, "Plucky Schoolgirl Visitor." This paragraph would include a mention that Marjorie was to appear that very evening at the Swimming Gala—in aid of charity.

Having settled these points, Browne hastened to the restaurant where Nipper and the other juniors were awaiting the arrival of Irene & Co., after the completion of their meal.

Browne did not go in. He very soon learned that the girls had not yet turned up, and he hovered about in the immediate

neighbourhood of the restaurant, his eyes wide open. And, sure enough, he had only been there three minutes before the girls turned up.

"A NARROW margin," murmured Browne. "However, a miss, it is said, is as good as a mile. I must confess that these particular misses look far better than any mile in the country."

He briskly approached the girls just as they were about to enter the imposing doorway.

"One moment, sisters," he said, raising his hat. "Ah, you are the particular maiden I am searching for," he added, beaming upon Marjorie. "I trust you will spare a few moments on a matter of some importance."

"There isn't very much time," said Marjorie. "I want to get to the Baths well before they open, so that I can get some practice. I'm going to do some diving—"

"I do not doubt it," said Browne, nodding. "In point of fact, I am convinced that your high diving will be a sensation, Sister Marjorie. However, there is a point that must be settled without delay. I have already been to the Baths, and I have discovered, to my regret, that the public reveals little or no interest in the proceedings. Scarcely any seats have been booked."

"But you'll be there—and all the other boys," said Marjorie. "We didn't really expect much of a crowd."

"That is scarcely the correct view-point," said Browne, shaking his head. "A crowd must be there, Sister Marjorie. I have decided that every available seat shall be occupied—and paid for. And it is within your power to help in this enterprise."

"I'll do anything I can," replied Marjorie promptly. "Of course, it'll be heaps better if the gala is well supported. But how can I help?"

"If you will come with me, I will soon show you," replied Browne. "Let me urge these other damsels to join forces with the gang inside. We shall not be very long."

"But you haven't explained—" began Irene.

Browne raised his hat, took Marjorie gently by the arm, and led her away. His forceful tactics were just as effective with girls as with boys.

"Whatever is the idea?" asked Marjorie, laughing.

"You will see presently," replied Browne, as he hurried her along. "In the first place, there is no time to lose. Providing we get this thing over within five minutes, all will be well."

"Get which thing over?"

"I hate to be so obscure, but a little secrecy is necessary," said Browne. "There are several officials connected with the Baths— But no. I must not reveal too much."

"Do you want me to see these officials?" asked the girl.

"It might be advantageous," replied Browne vaguely.

He said nothing definite, and gave her all sorts of involved hints that led nowhere. In the meantime, he walked her swiftly along. They were now in Grey Street, with its Grecian architecture. Browne deftly turned into Mosley Street, and he was soon discoursing upon the beauties of St. Nicholas Cathedral.

He piloted his fair charge past the Castle, getting nearer and nearer to the High Level Bridge—which, although mainly a railway bridge, is provided—underneath—with a road and footway.

"But we're going towards the bridge, aren't we?" asked Marjorie, after a while.

"Let me point out the Fish Market, and——"

"Why are you taking me over to Gateshead?" interrupted Marjorie impatiently. "And if we must go there, why can't we get on a tram? There isn't any too much time to spare."

Browne succeeded in giving her the impression that her presence on the other side of the river was essential—in connection with some official hitch at the baths. It was only an impression, because Marjorie was quite muddled. Browne did not give her an opportunity of thinking very clearly.

His one and only object was to get her on the bridge. Afterwards, she would know the full truth, and it wouldn't matter. But to give her the slightest hint of his purpose now would be to ruin the whole scheme. For Marjorie, he was convinced, would never willingly participate in this daring stunt.

Although Browne showed no indication outwardly, he was immensely relieved when they were walking over the bridge. Having arrived on the third span, he paused and gazed down the river.

"In spite of our haste, sister, let us glance for a brief period down the mighty Tyne," he said. "You will observe that the quay-side is more or less inactive, owing to the fact that this is Saturday evening. But look at the great ships, and the——"

"Why, somebody's waving to us," interrupted Marjorie.

"Indeed! I confess I cannot see——"

"Just down here—right in front of us—on this other bridge," said Marjorie. "Isn't he one of your friends, Browne?"

Browne beamed. He found himself looking at Horace Stevens, who, true to his trust, was leaning over the parapet of the swing bridge, just below. The river, as Browne had anticipated, was quiet.

"Ah, Brother Horace," said the Fifth Form captain. "You are quite right, Sister Marjorie. We have been observed by the eagle eye of Brother Horace. I trust he does not imagine that I am carrying you off to the pictures, or that we are engaged in some such frivolous pursuit."

He waved genially, and leaned over.

"I'll see you later, Brother Horace," he sang out. "If you will proceed to the swimming gala——"

Browne suddenly paused with a startled exclamation. For Horace Stevens, waving to the pair on the High Level Bridge, appeared to lean over too far. Anyhow, he suddenly gave a wild yelp, and toppled over the parapet. He plunged into the waters of the Tyne.

"Foolish fellow!" said Browne. "Evidently he misunderstood me. I suggested that he should proceed to the swimming gala—not that he should take a swim on the spot."

Marjorie was watching, open-eyed.

"But what shall we do?" she cried. "Look! I don't think he can swim!"

"Good heavens!" gasped Browne. "I had forgotten—— Something must be done—— Ah! An inspiration!"

His one fear was that somebody on the swing bridge would dive to Stevens' rescue. Prompt action, therefore, was essential. He proceeded to peel off his jacket. And Marjorie, exactly as his astute wits had anticipated, grasped him by the arm.

"Oh, but can you dive?" she asked breathlessly.

"I must confess that I am no expert," admitted Browne. "However, Brother Horace appears to be in danger——"

"You mustn't dive from this height!" protested the girl quickly. "Please! I'll go! It's nothing for me."

Before Browne could stop her she was over. Her frantic determination to dive was occasioned by the fact that Stevens was giving all the signs that he was drowning. Browne had counted upon the normal inactivity of the average spectators during such an incident. Plenty of people were shouting, but nobody had yet jumped in—although, no doubt, plenty would have done so within the next minute.

But Marjorie forestalled them.

DOWN she went in a glorious, superb dive—in spite of the fact that her take-off had been hampered. She struck the water with scarcely a splash, dived under, and came up within a few feet of Stevens.

"Splendid!" murmured Browne complacently. "Nothing could have happened better. All Newcastle will be ringing with this story within the hour. 'Schoolgirl Dives to Rescue from High Level Bridge! Excellent! 'Amazing Rescue Scene by Girl of Fifteen!'"

He had had no scruples about leading Marjorie into this situation, notwithstanding the fact that it would involve the ruination of a second charming frock within the course of one day. It was, indeed, Marjorie's first rescue effort which had put this scheme into Browne's head. The one had naturally led on to the other. As for danger, there was none. Browne knew perfectly well that Marjorie was easily capable of such a dive

without harming herself in the slightest degree.

Marjorie, having swum up to Stevens, made efforts to support him. But he shook his head.

"It's all right, Miss Marjorie, thanks," he panted. "I'm better now. Anyhow, I believe I can manage. Awfully decent of you, all the same."

"I thought you couldn't swim," said the girl.

"But I can."

"Browne said——"

"You mustn't take any notice of Browne—he's an ass," broke in Stevens, as they swam.

Stevens was wrathful at the idea of everybody believing that he was incapable of swimming, and that it should be necessary for a girl to rescue him. In fact, he nearly gave the whole thing away.

But in the nick of time he remembered that Browne was depending on him, and he suddenly doubled up, went under, and came up with an agonised look on his face.

"Cramp!" said Marjorie, in alarm.

Stevens said nothing. He wasn't cramped, and he had no desire to tell any deliberate falsehoods. He had proved that he could swim, and that gave him comfort. Now he passively allowed Marjorie to tow him to the river bank. And when they arrived, he offered no objections when he was hauled out by dozens of willing hands.

Marjorie was assisted out, too—and at Stevens' suggestion the pair of them were bundled into a taxicab and driven straight to the Baths.

IN the meantime, Browne was very busy in the nearest telephone-box.

Graphically he gave an account of the rescue to the big evening newspaper. A reporter was sent down at once to verify the story, and this young gentleman had no difficulty in getting information, for hundreds of people had collected on the swing bridge, and all along the quayside. Long after Stevens and Marjorie had gone, the crowds hovered about.

"And that," said Browne genially, "is that. Within a short time the streets will be thronged with newsboys, yelling out their sensational cries. I venture to predict that the Baths will lack no customers when the hour of the gala arrives."

CHAPTER 12.

Marjorie's Victory!

"**W**ELL I'm jiggered!" said Handforth blankly.

He and a throng of other Removites had just come out of the restaurant. Irene & Co. were there, too. As a matter of fact, they had become impatient. Nobody knew what had become of Marjorie—except for the fact that she had

gone off somewhere with William Napoleon Browne. And as Marjorie's girl chums knew that she was anxious to be at the Baths a full hour before the gala started, they were getting worried.

Irene believed that there had been a misunderstanding. Marjorie had evidently gone straight on to the Baths. So everybody decided to go there—everybody except a couple of fellows who were told off to remain outside the restaurant in case Marjorie came along.

However, all this arranging was knocked on the head by something else. No sooner had the boys and girls got out of the restaurant than they were aware of noisy shouts from running newsboys.

With miraculous speed the newspaper had got the edition on the streets, and in the centre of the city, at least, the paper boys were busy.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" ejaculated Handforth. "Did you hear that, you chaps?"

"Hear what?" asked Nipper.

"Why, one of those newsboys was just shouting that a schoolgirl has rescued somebody from drowning."

"Well, I'm blessed! It must be about Marjorie," said Doris. "Can't somebody buy a paper?"

Nipper bought one, and Handforth bought one; Reggie Pitt bought one. In fact, there were a dozen papers purchased within so many seconds. And when the fellows saw the "Stop Press" item, they were startled.

"Look at this!" said Nipper in wonder. "'Sensational Dive from High Level Bridge.' And listen to this! 'A schoolgirl visitor from the South of England effected a wonderful rescue this evening from the old High Level Bridge. Noticing that a young man had fallen into the river from the swing bridge below, she unhesitatingly dived to his rescue, and brought him safely to the quayside. It is learned that this young lady's name is Miss Marjorie Temple. This must surely be a record, since it is the second rescue Miss Temple has performed in one day. Her earlier exploit is described in another column. Miss Temple is one of the young ladies who are to appear at the Baths this evening in the great swimming gala. We understand that this charitable effort will be well worth watching, and that large numbers of seats are still available. Unquestionably, Miss Temple has proved her ability, at least, to compete successfully for the high-diving trophy.'"

"My only hat!" said Handforth.

"Great Scott!"

"Marjorie—again!"

"And we didn't know anything about it." Everybody was talking at once. The excitement ran high, and the other news item, "in another column," was read with interest. At great length, and with much detail, Marjorie's earlier exploit was fully described.

Precisely as Browne had anticipated, the whole of Newcastle was discussing the rescue—particularly the second one. And it was only natural that there should be a widespread desire to attend the gala—so that this girl could be seen in person. The very fact that she was still determined to compete in the gala was a proof of her pluck.

While the St. Frank's fellows and Moor View girls were still discussing the situation, Browne himself appeared. He was immediately surrounded.

"All is well," he declared smoothly. "If you will proceed to the Baths, you will find Sister Marjorie already there. I trust, brothers, that you will be unstinting in your congratulations."

"You bet we'll congratulate her!" declared Handforth enthusiastically.

"A slight misunderstanding," murmured Browne. "Much as Sister Marjorie deserves congratulations, I would like to suggest that I deserve them more."

"You!" said Nipper. "What have you done?"

"Let it not be publicly whispered, but it was I who successfully wangled the whole thing," replied Browne calmly. "When I mention that the bookings for the gala were meagre, you will realise that it was necessary for me to set my wits to work."

"Great Scott! You don't mean——"

"When I further mention that the rescued individual was no less a person than Brother Horace, you will shrewdly perceive that the rescue was not quite so dramatic as the newspaper would have you believe," continued Browne. "Not that the newspaper is at fault in any way. The report is perfectly true—as far as the rescue is concerned. But none but ourselves know that Brother Horace fell into the river at my instigation, and that Sister Marjorie dived in owing to my——"

"Why, you—you wretch!" cried Doris indignantly.

"Alas! That so charming a damsel can use such a tone——"

"Do you mean to say that you tricked Marjorie into doing a thing like this?" demanded Irene hotly. "But why? What for? She might have hurt herself."

"It was an awful thing to do," said Mary Summers.

"Let's go and see her," urged Handforth's sister.

THE girls were very indignant about it. The Removites and Fourth-Formers, however, after the first shock, were inclined to grin. They appreciated the joke. William Napoleon Browne had been at it again.

"There's no telling what that bounder will do," said Nipper. "He's got nerve enough for a dozen. And the rummy thing is, he gets people to help him in the most outrageous stunts."

"Let's go along to the baths, and see if we can find Stevens," suggested somebody.

"Perhaps he'll tell us all the details."

Meanwhile, Irene & Co. had arrived, and they were considerably relieved to find Marjorie, in her swimming-costume, indulging in some preliminary practice in the great crystal bath. Some of the other schoolgirl competitors—most of them local inhabitants—were in, too.

"You all right, Marjorie?" asked Doris, from the edge of the bath.

"Of course I am," sang out Marjorie.

She swam over and clung to the rail, looking at the girls who were standing on the edge. Being Marjorie's friends, they were allowed in. The accommodation for the public was barricaded off. There were hundreds of seats, extending all the way round and reaching far back. The building was a considerable one, and every inch of space had been utilised.

"We want you—in your dressing-room," said Mary grimly.

"But why?" asked Marjorie. "I'm practising——"

"We want to tell you something—important."

So Marjorie went, slipping on a bath-robe as soon as she left the water.

She wasn't feeling any too comfortable, for she had more than a suspicion that these girls only wanted her in the dressing-room so that they could shower congratulations upon her. And Marjorie, being a modest girl, required no congratulations. She was only too glad that she had been brought straight along to the baths without any fuss.

"Now!" said Irene, when the dressing-room door had been closed. "We've read all about it in the newspapers."

"I knew it!" sighed Marjorie. "Do you mean to say that they've got it out in the papers already? I was hoping that the incident wouldn't be reported."

"Well, look at this," said Doris.

Marjorie took the paper, read the report, and coloured.

"Oh, they're making too much of it!" she protested. "There was really nothing in what I did. Browne's friend was in danger, and I was near at hand, so I dived in and——"

"Yes, we know that," interrupted Doris. "But do you know, Marjorie, that it was a hoax?"

"A hoax?" cried Marjorie.

"Stevens didn't accidentally fall into the river," said Irene. "It was deliberate. Browne put him up to it."

"Wha-a-a-at!"

"Fact!" nodded Irene. "It was just one of Browne's wheezes. I expect that affair of this afternoon put it into his head."

"But—but I don't understand," gasped Marjorie breathlessly. "Why should he do it? I—I thought—— Oh, it's too bad!" she went on hotly. "The newspapers reporting that I'd done something heroic, and it was

all a hoax! I'll never speak to Browne again!"

"You needn't be so hard on him," said Doris gently. "It was all in the cause of charity. When he found that the gala was likely to be so poorly attended he got up this stunt as an advert. Stevens helped him. It was all done on purpose so that the newspapers would print the story, and arouse a lot of public interest. There'll be crowds of people here soon on purpose to cheer you."

"Oh!" said Marjorie, startled. "And—and I don't deserve——"

"Rats!" put in Irene. "You didn't know it was a hoax, so your part of it was genuine. I say, you know, it was pretty wonderful the way you dived down from that High Level bridge——"

"Is Browne here?" interrupted Marjorie coldly.

"I think he's with Stevens somewhere," replied Doris.

"I want to see him. Please bring him here."

"But, my dear old girl——"

"Please bring him here!" insisted Marjorie.

SHE gave Browne a cold, angry glance when he appeared, escorted by Irene & Co.

"Ah, Sister Marjorie," said Browne, beaming. "Let me reassure you by telling you that a fresh supply of clothing is on the way. Sister Doris has telephoned to her friends, and——"

"Thank you very much!" broke in Marjorie icily. "It is very good of you to be so thoughtful about my clothes. But I want to speak to you about something else. How dare you drag me into your awful hoax!"

"We Brownes dare anything," replied William Napoleon promptly. "I would point out that in the cause of charity any wheeze is more or less permissible, providing, of course, that it is honest."

"But this isn't honest," said the girl wrathfully. "You know it isn't. You've fooled hundreds of people into coming here to attend this gala. They're not coming to watch the contest, but only to watch me, and probably to cheer me for something which was only a hoax."

"You apparently overlook the fact that your own part of the scheme was gilt-edged and twenty-two carat," said Browne. "What you did, Sister Marjorie, was spontaneous. Needless to say, I have already handed in the full and complete story to our journalistic friends of the newspaper."

"More fibs, I suppose?"

"I have related the absolute truth," replied Browne, with dignity. "I saw no reason why I should not receive the credit and the acclamation of the populace that is due to me. In a word, the newspapers will on Monday morning come out with the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Your own part, I need scarcely add, is accurately described. Sister Marjorie, there is no need for you to frown upon me. Charity has been well served, and even now the throngs are waiting to give voice upon your appearance."

Marjorie was somewhat mollified; Browne at least was quite honest about it. And the fact that the full truth was to be published put Marjorie into a better frame of mind.

THE gala, it is needless to add, was a rip-roaring success.

Every available seat was bought, and hundreds of people paid for standing room. Marjorie came in for a great deal of cheering, which she thoroughly deserved. For it was an undoubted fact that her own efforts in the hoax had been genuine.

Whether the cheering of the multitude encouraged her it is difficult to say; but it is a fact that she came through the gala with flying colours. All the St. Frank's fellows were delighted at the success of their girl chum.

Marjorie won every event she entered for, and her success in the high-diving contest was appreciated more than anything else. For Marjorie had already proved her ability as a high-diver.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne was highly amused on the Monday morning by the reports in the newspapers, and particularly by an interview with William Napoleon Browne. Not only did Browne's photograph appear—incidentally, upon his own suggestion—but his interview was both entertaining and humorous.

In fact, it was many a long day before the Tynesiders would forget the visit of the St. Frank's School Train.

THE END.

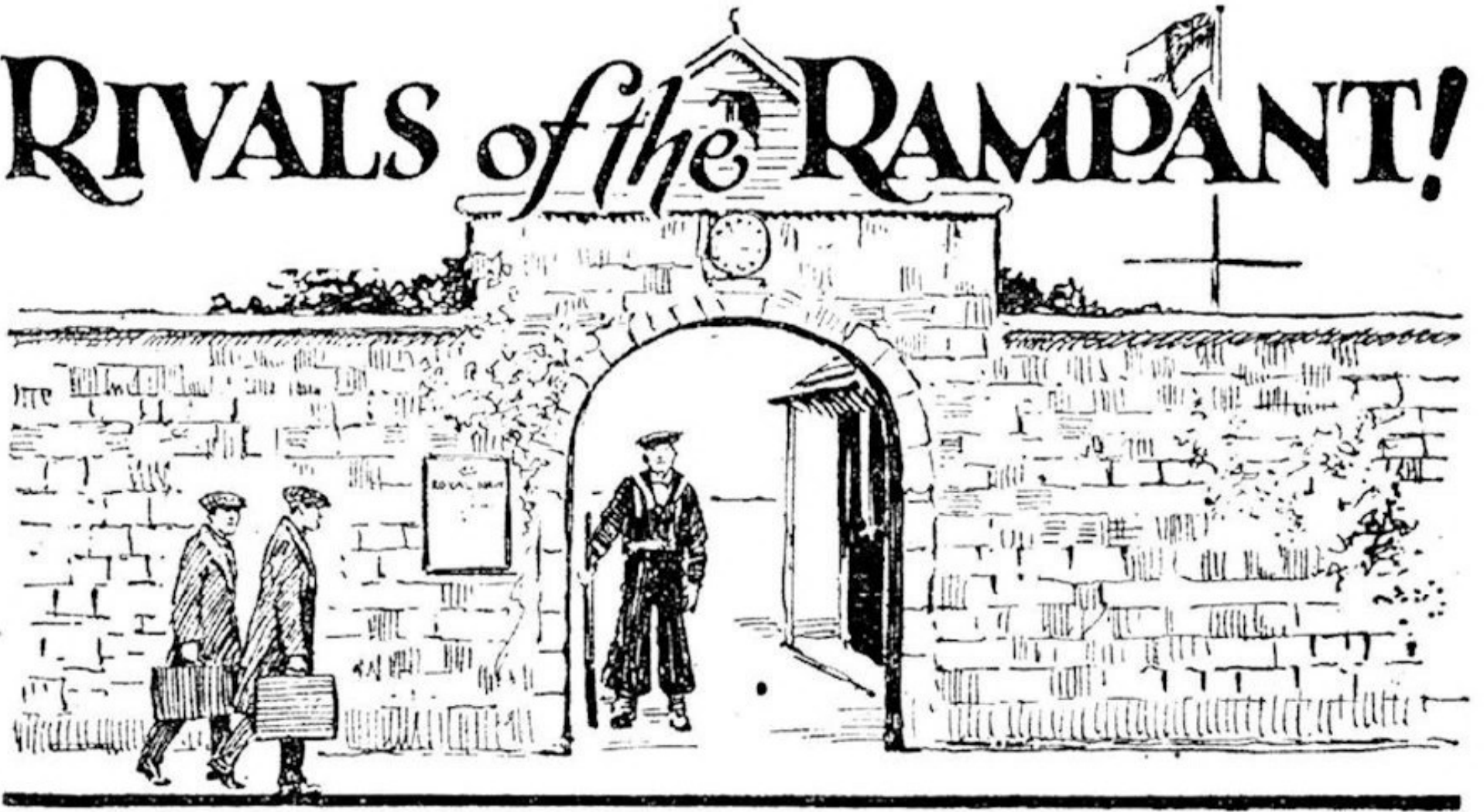
NEXT WEEK YOU WILL FIND

"THE SCHOOL TRAIN IN SCOTLAND!"

DON'T MISS THIS CORKING YARN, CHUMS!

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO START THIS GRAND SERIAL NOW!

RIVALS of the RAMPANT!



By STANTON HOPE

To the Rampant!

THERE was a general demand by the passengers to be taken to the North Side as soon as possible, lest the news of the collision got about, and relatives became anxious about them. Accordingly, the commander of the destroyer ordered his boats to proceed with this task.

The skipper, who was still unconscious, was taken off to the destroyer herself, as were several other passengers who had been injured by striking the rails or were suffering severely from shock.

"What is your name, my lad?" the lieutenant demanded of Smith.

"Er—er—" stammered the boy. "there's no need for me to give that, is there?"

"Most decidedly."

"Well, it's Clement Smith, but—"

"And your address?"

"I—er—I'm on my way to join the naval training schools, sir."

"By Jove! Admiral Britton will be interested to hear that!"

Clem Smith gave a start, and turned away, to see Jack, pale of face, keenly regarding him. But what intention he had of disclaiming all hand in the grounding of the ferry-boat now left him. The jealousy he had always felt over the position the other boy occupied in his uncle's affection returned with overwhelming force.

Inwardly he squirmed to think of Jack

in the rôle of hero, lauded by everyone at the schools, receiving full mental marks of approval from Barny Morland, who had promised to leave his money to the boy who acquitted himself best in the new life they had jointly embarked upon. After all, he, like other passengers, had not seen Jack at the wheel, though he was fully aware that he it was who had performed the gallant feat, and if people cared to think he himself had done the job—well, that was no concern of his.

Thus again Clem Smith lost the opportunity to speak the truth.

Blankly he refused the pressing offer of the lieutenant to take him aboard the destroyer, and, avoiding Jack's eye, he escaped toward one of the boats.

But the path of the cad is ever strewn with thorns. Some of the bluejackets and Marines, in their enthusiasm, had been

having a whip-round, and the boisterous corporal elbowed his way to Smith with a cap full of money.

"Here you are, matey," he said. "Take this with the best of luck from us all, and here's hopin' the ferry company come down handsome as well!"

"Sufferin' Mike!" gulped Smith, reddening. "I—I don't deserve that!"

Never did he speak a truer word, although only one lad aboard, other than himself, knew it.

When is a hero not a hero? Why, when the said hero has taken the credit for a plucky action he hasn't done. And that's the sort of hero Clem Smith is!

Not for a moment was it in Smith's heart to take that money, and he hurriedly turned to get away. But the corporal would not be put off so easily, and while a bluejacket dragged open the side-pocket of Smith's brown overcoat, he hastily shovelled the silver and copper coins into it.

"I don't want it, I tell you!" yelled Clem Smith. "Lemme alone!"

"A lad of the real kidney that!" remarked a leading seaman approvingly, and pushed Clem Smith, still protesting, down into the boat. "Now say no more about it, matey, 'cause 'ooman lives are worth more than a few quids any day o' the week!"

This last incident roused Jack almost to the point of denouncing Barny's craven nephew. One thing only prevented him—that he himself would have to adopt the rôle of hero, a thing from which he shrank as though from the very plague itself. And, after all, the truth must assuredly come out, for there was one man who had clearly seen who it was that had taken the wheel of the boat. That was the luckless skipper who had still been unconscious when taken off to the destroyer.

The boat containing Clem Smith was the first to reach the North Side, and Jack followed in a later one. The cargo steamer, Felsgap, had dropped her hook farther out in the harbour behind the screen of mist, and a boat from her had come back expecting to pick up a few survivors. Meantime, she had sent wireless messages on different wavelengths through the ether, and one of these had been picked up by Admiralty House which had telephoned the news of the disaster to the ferry offices, police and hospitals.

Thus already a crowd had gathered when the ferry-boat passengers landed on the North Side jetty, and Jack picked his way among the excited throng in search of Clem Smith.

That worthy was nowhere to be seen, and finally Jack took the tram for the short journey to the naval training schools.

He alighted outside the great gates, where a petty officer and a smart young sentry in bluejacket's uniform were on duty by a sort of little lodge. A big parade-ground stretched

before him, with a tall flagstaff, from which the White Ensign floated, in the centre, and bordered by the colourful figureheads of ancient ships.

Approaching the petty officer, Jack touched his cap.

"I've come to report, sir," he said. "Jack Gilbert."

"All serene, my lad," said the petty officer. "We've been expecting you. Your pal, Smith, arrived about a quarter of an hour back."

Apparently nothing was known here of the accident to the ferry-boat, and Jack held his tongue while the P.O. summoned a messenger.

"Here, Jenkins," said the petty officer to the smart boy who appeared, "take this lad to Petty Officer Teak in the Collingwood Block. He's got that fellow, Smith, and some other young chaps in the New Entries' dormitory."

Jack followed his guide across the parade ground. He had passed the threshold of H.M.S. Rampant. His heart beat fast with a strange exultation, yet it seemed as though a dark shadow lay across his path. In his mind, like a portrait on a sensitized plate, was the memory of that face he had seen peering down upon him from the Felsgap's poop-deck.

The mouth of Clement Smith had been effectually closed by Barny as to his past. But if Lew Bonner, the cracksman, were still living, there would be no safety for him even in his new life in the Royal Navy!

Teak's Awkward Squad!

JACK GILBERT had little chance of noticing much about his new home as he followed the smart young bluejacket, Jenkins, across the parade ground. His guide went "at the double," and to avoid being left behind, Jack had to step lively, too.

The wide area of gravel, considerably bigger than a football field, was bordered on three sides by red brick buildings. On the fourth side was the great entrance gate through which Jack had passed, the guard-

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

JACK GILBERT, a cheery youngster of some fifteen years, has his whole career changed in the course of one night. It happens when his rascally uncle, and his only living relative,

LEW BONNER, asks the boy to burgle a certain place. Jack refuses. A fight ensues, in which Bonner falls through a trapdoor, and is swept away by an underground stream—apparently to his doom. Jack thereupon decides to forget the sordid past and to start afresh. He tells his story to his only friend,

BARNY MORLAND, who takes him under his wing. Barny gets Jack to join the Navy along with his—Barny's—nephew,

CLEM SMITH, a worthless individual, who hates Jack. Barny tells the boys that he intends to leave a sum of £2,000 to the one of them who acquits himself best in the Service. They both pass their tests, and are sent to H.M.S. Rampant, a training school at Porthaven. Crossing by ferry on the way to the school, the boat collides with a steamer. Jack is horrified to see his uncle on this latter boat. Meanwhile the ferry is sinking, and only Jack's prompt action saves it from disaster. He then swoons—and when he wakes up again he finds that Clem Smith is being lauded as the hero who saved the ferry boat!

(Now read on.)

room, the paymasters' offices, and a high wall. A tall mast with a yard, with the White Ensign drooping through the mist, was set in the middle of the ground. Just within the entrance gates and at each corner were highly coloured ornaments in the shape of various figureheads of the old "wooden walls" of England.

Some boys in bluejacket's uniform, with gaiters and armed with rifles and bayonets, were drilling under a petty officer. Their efficiency was proclaimed by the metallic snap of their arms to each clear-cut order.

Two officers—one a commander with three gold rings of lace round his sleeves—emerged from a building, and the messenger jerked his head to one side and saluted. Jack quickly lifted his cap.

Smartness was in the air of the Rampant—and it was contagious.

The guide briskly entered a block of buildings which bore the name "Collingwood"—similar blocks were named after other famous admirals: Nelson, Drake, Benbow and Keppel. The lad glanced into a small dormitory, and then ushered Jack out of the building again.

"Petty Officer Teak isn't here," Jenkins said. "Hang on a minute, and I'll find out where he is."

Left to himself, Jack gazed about him, and suddenly saw Clement Smith, who had arrived shortly before him, emerge from a store with two or three bars of yellow soap in his arms. On Smith's face was a curious expression, and his eyes glanced to the right hand and to the left, as though seeing if the coast were clear. Then, without noticing Jack himself, he furtively sidled round the brick wall of the store, which was set apart from the main buildings.

Jack's eyes narrowed.

"What the thump's he up to now?" was his wondering thought.

Impelled by a fresh suspicion of the lad whom he knew to be a rotter, Jack walked across to the store and looked round the corner. And there was Clem Smith, kneeling on a bed of mould containing a few shrubs, the soap by his side, and vigorously scraping out a small hole in the ground near to the side wall with his fingers. The suspicions which had entered Jack's mind grew stronger, and they were confirmed entirely when Smith took a bundle, made up of his grubby handkerchief, from his pocket, dropped it with a clink into the hole, and hastily scraped the mould over it.

It was just as he was doing this that he became aware of Jack's presence.

"Ow!" he gasped, so startled as to fling himself almost upright. "Wh-what the dickens do you mean by sneaking up like that?"

Jack looked him straight in his pallid face.

"I walked over to see what you were doing with my money," he said.

The colour flooded back in Smith's cheeks.

"What are you blatherin' about, you

prize ass?" he demanded. "I've got no dibs of yours."

"You only had ten shillings pocket-money from old Barny," he said, "so I s'pose I'm right in saying those dibs in the handkerchief were subscribed by the terry passengers."

"Mind your own bizny!"

"It's very much my business, as you'll jolly soon learn," Jack exclaimed, growing more indignant. "Those dibs are what were subscribed after the wreck of the ferry and handed over to you by that corporal of Marines."

"Well, what if they are?" growled Smith. "They were subscribed for me and I couldn't very well give 'em back, could I?"

Jack stepped close to him and spoke in a quieter, colder tone.

"That money," he pointed out, "was subscribed for the fellow who shoved the ferry-boat into the sand on Pilots' Bank. And as I happened to be at the wheel when the skipper was knocked out, and you were beating your giddy head in sheer funk on the deck below the bridge, the money, strictly speaking, belongs to me. I don't mind your taking the praise for shoving the ferry on the sandbank—if it pleases you to act the beastly hypocrite—but I'm hanged if you're going to bag the booty!"

"You frabjous chump!" spluttered Smith, trembling with anger. "The dibs were shoved into my hands, and what the dickens else could I do with them except push 'em underground in a safe place?"

"Why?"

"'Cause we're just to be kitted up, fat-head! The people here don't know I've got this 'brass'; if they did they'd nobble the money, I expect, and dole it out in driblets. So I'm stowing it away, and later on I—I mean, we—can rake it out and have a jolly good bust-up."

The withering look in Jack's eyes showed his contempt for the cad.

"Jolly thoughtful of you," he commented. "How much is there?"

"Seven pounds, fifteen shillings and four pence," answered Smith. "I counted it afore coming in. Some rotter had put in a dud florin, but I chucked that away."

Precisely at that moment a boyish voice from somewhere by the Collingwood block called Jack's name—and, alarmed again, Smith hastily scraped the mould over the money with his boot, and grabbed the bars of yellow soap.

"I'll have more to say to you later," snapped Jack, as he quickly turned away.

"Here, my lad," said Jenkins, the young bluejacket, as soon as Jack doubled back to the Collingwood block, "what the dickens d'you mean by pushing off? Where've you been?"

"I saw a mate of mine," Jack said, indicating Smith hurrying away from the store; "the fellow I came down here with."

"Take my tip," Jenkins snorted, "and when one of your betters tells you to stay

anywhere or do anythin', carry out your giddy orders. Otherwise, chum, you won't enjoy yourself at this place—see? Come this way!"

Together they trotted round to the back of the block and entered what proved to be the ante-room to a compartment that contained four separate baths. Here were several other awkward-looking lads of about Jack's own age, in civilian clothes, and a broad-shouldered petty officer, who was addressing himself to Clem Smith, who had just returned with the yellow soap.

"Ten minutes to draw soap from the 'pusser'!" the petty officer was hooting.

undone; the tie Barney Morland had bought for him was all askew; his cap was pulled too much down on his forehead. And as he became startlingly aware of these imperfections in dress Jack shuffled his feet uneasily.

He expected a sharp reprimand, but when the petty officer spoke his voice held the benevolent tone of a father welcoming a son.

"You were a long time getting here, Gilbert," he remarked. "Did you miss your mate, Smith, after you landed from the ferry?"

"Y-yes, sir!" stammered Jack, wondering exactly what he ought to do with his hands. "I must have caught the tram after him."



Bitterly Jack watched Smith being chaired by the cheering bluejackets. It was he who should be getting the cheers, not Smith. And then he reddened as he saw the keen eyes of Petty Officer Teak regarding him curiously. "Here, what's the matter with you, my lad—jealous?" demanded the P.O.

"Two minutes I gave you, my lad! You may have crawled around at home, but you're in the Navy now—and, tar me, you've got to jump to it—jump to it, my lad!"

With that, Petty Officer Teak, in charge of the new entries, turned and swept Jack with one comprehensive look of his keen grey eyes.

Immediately Jack had a horrid feeling that there was a great deal wrong with himself. As though by some magic conveyed in that glance, Jack became aware of several things which had not troubled him before. His boots were wretchedly dirty, although the weather and not himself was to blame for this; a top button of his waistcoat was

The petty officer dismissed Jenkins, and laying a fatherly hand on Jack's shoulder, ushered him across to the rest of the awkward squad. The trifling informality made him feel happier.

"Now, my lads," said Petty Officer Teak, addressing all the new arrivals, "you're a'comin' with me to draw your kit, after which you're each going to have a nice barf."

Until Jack's arrival he had been showing the lads the new entries' quarters. Now he marshalled the boys—some fairly smartly-dressed and others rather ragged and dirty—into the semblance of order and led the way to the outfitting stores. During the next hour or so the lads were drawing uniform

in the way of serge jumpers, trousers, caps, blue-ribbed vests and underclothes, some of which they took to the ante-room of the baths. The rest of their new kit, including about a hundred other articles such as jack-knife, hair brush, comb, blankets, sports wear, ditty-box, and many other things, they took to the small new entries' dormitory. Two books also were given each boy—the Prayer Book and Seamanship Manual volume 1.

Never in his life had Jack owned so many clothes or boots or so many articles of toilet. Nor had most of the other boys with him. After this each boy had to take a bath, and to one or two of them perhaps this was the most novel feature of their initiation into the Royal Navy.

The civilian clothes of the boys were collected and taken away, and each lad had to don uniform minus, however, the white lanyard and black silken scarf of full-dress wear.

And there they stood—the awkward squad again—in loose blue jumpers and legs encased in the rough serge, bell-bottomed trousers, gazing sheepishly from one to another and scarce able to control their mirth.

"Tar me, you look more like real sailors now, my lads!" chuckled P.O. Teak. "Let's hope you're going to start in with real enthusiasm to earn the ninepence a day the Admiralty are kind enough to pay you while you're learnin' to become sailors." A bugle sounded from somewhere without. "Tea!" announced the petty officer.

Jack, Clem Smith and the other New Entries, with faces "shining like the morn," and feeling more awkward than ever in their new naval rig, shuffled after the P.O. to their separate mess. And what a meal they got! Lashings of steaming hot tea with milk and sugar, bread and real butter, and slices of fine rich fruit cake.

One boy, hitherto used to "door-steps" and margarine for tea at home, kept mumbling his gratification. All proved that in the mess they could more than hold their own with the most senior boys in the establishment!

Blushing Honours!

WHEN the last crumbs of fruit cake had vanished there sounded the brazen notes of the bugle again.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Petty Officer Teak in surprise. "That's the call for divisions!"

A smart young Marine arrived at the Collingwood block.

"The admiral's arrived with his staff," he announced breathlessly, "and the captain says you're to parade the new entries with the rest."

"Aye, aye!" answered Teak.

Out on the big parade ground, the various terms of boys were dressing into line in their various classes. Petty Officer Teak fell

in his awkward squad on the extreme left. Then from the direction of the officers' mess there appeared Admiral Sir John Rodney Britton, accompanied by Captain Hedworth Orr, officer commanding the training establishment, two members of the admiral's personal staff, and various other officers.

The admiral and the captain, followed by their imposing retinue, inspected the boys, who stood motionless to attention. As the great man paused beside him Jack wished that the ground would open and let him through out of sight. Though the last kindly words spoken to him by the admiral were still clear in his mind, he could not eliminate the remembrance of that dive into the Port-haven train when he had clumped his august superior under the ear.

The inspection over, the admiral took up his position before the assembled boys, the other officers grouped about him.

He cleared his throat.

"A smart turn-out, boys," he commented. "I am much gratified to find the same standard of smartness during a surprise visit to the Rampant as on my last formal inspection. While here, I have a pleasant duty to perform—to extend my appreciation to a new shipmate of yours, Boy Clement Smith."

He turned and addressed some remark to a chief petty officer behind the illustrious group.

"Boy Clement Smith!" bawled the C.P.O. "Six paces forward—march!"

To Clement Smith it was as though a bomb-shell had exploded on the parade ground. His feet, now shod in "pusser's crabs"—regulation boots—seemed glued to the ground; his jaw sagged and his eyes goggled.

By a brilliant manoeuvre Petty Officer Teak got behind him and drove a set of mahogany knuckles into the small of his back.

"Six paces forward—shiver your eyes!" muttered Teak in a hoarse whisper.

And Clement Smith, to his utter consternation, found himself out there away from the awkward squad, the cynosure of all eyes.

In a few crisp words the admiral explained what had happened earlier that day in Port-haven Harbour—how the ferry, crowded with passengers, had been cut down, and how by the cool courage and brilliant presence of mind of one boy the stricken boat had been grounded safely on the Pilots' Bank.

"That heroic boy stands before you all," the admiral said in conclusion. "I understand his name is to go forward for the gold medal for life-saving. He has well earned it, and well may you all be proud of your new shipmate."

He beckoned Clem Smith toward him, and the boy shuffled forward as though in a dream.

If, since arrival in the Rampant, Smith had considered making a clean breast of everything and passing the honours of the gallant feat to Jack, who had won them, there was now no such idea in his mind.

Not that Smith wanted the honours—far from it. His dull mind was a welter of confusion. Not before the admiral, captain, and all these fellows could he make the dramatic announcement that he was a humbug, and the boy he hated the hero.

Still in a dream, he felt the admiral's hand close over his and heard the remark: "I shall watch with close interest your career in the Service, my boy," clear-cut through the thunder of cheers which suddenly burst out. Utterly dazed, he staggered back to the awkward squad of new entries; the exuberant shouting was silenced, the captain called for cheers for the admiral which were heartily given; the great man and his staff left by the main gates, and the parade broke up.

Immediately there was a general rush for Smith. He found himself flung shoulder high on a yelling crowd of smart young blue-jackets of the senior terms.

"Ow! Yoo-ooh!" he gasped. "C-cut it out! Lemme down! I didn't do nothin', s'help me I didn't!"

"Busky! Busky! Good old Busky!"

The unwilling "hero" looked round in bewilderment—they seemed to be cheering someone else.

But no; he speedily discovered that Busky had been promptly selected for him as a nick-name. A fellow called Smith on joining the Navy invariably becomes saddled with either Busky, Gunboat, Darky, Shoe, or Smudger, just as Nobby is tacked to the surname Clark, Hookey to Walker, Dusty to Rhodes, Pichner to Martin, and so on.

Among the cheering crowd, Jack stood silent, and he reddened as he saw the keen grey eyes of Petty Officer Teak regarding him curiously.

"Here, what's the matter with you, my lad—jealous?" he demanded. "Give your pal a cheer—be a sport!"

Jack opened his mouth, but the cheer stuck in his throat, and fortunately the notes of the bugle brought an end to the riotous demonstration. Much dishevelled, Smith was lowered from the lusty young shoulders of the boys of the Rampant, and Petty Officer Teak marshalled his awkward squad again and took them to the dormitory.

Here he showed them how to sling their hammocks, which were issued in the Rampant, unlike two of the other training establishments elsewhere, and also taught them how to lay out their blankets for their beds.

By the time they had done this, the bugle went for supper, and even Clem Smith, or Busky, as he was dubbed, brightened considerably at the sight of the steaming cocoa, bread, breast of mutton, and roast potatoes.

So strange a nature had he that when he had again well lined his interior with the good things, he was feeling quite cheerful about that unexpected ceremony conducted by the admiral.

After all, why shouldn't he take advantage of the situation, as Jack Gilbert so obviously

(Continued on next page.)



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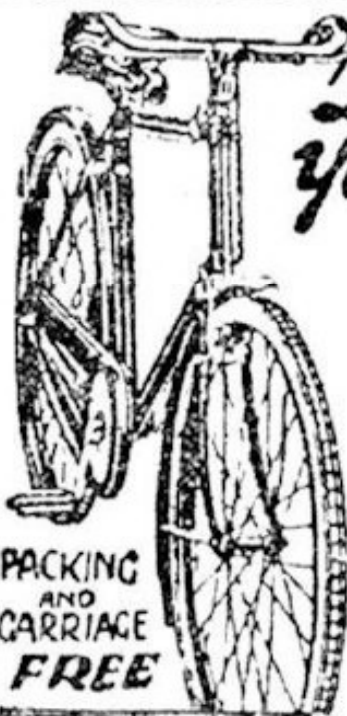
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did not desire to vaunt himself? It wasn't his fault they kept cheering him, and it was pleasant to feel that the affair, which assuredly would get into the later editions of the evening papers in London, would much please Barney Morland. And after all, by fair means or foul, he must make sure of that £2,000 saved by his uncle.

That night, after Jack and the other new entries had gone to sleep in their strange beds, Busky remained awake. His popularity would make his life easier here in the Rampant, he believed, and he finally closed his eyes in the blissful belief that an ideal time was in store for him—little knowing what the morrow would bring forth!

Busky's True Colours!

"SHOW a leg! Show a leg! Tumble out, my hearties!"

Uncertain of the effects of the bugle on his sleeping squad, Petty Officer Teak, with fatherly consideration, came early on the following morning to see them out of their hammocks.

Blinking their eyes, the boys rolled from the strange swinging beds and donned their serge uniforms to begin in earnest the new life in the Navy.

The cooks brought in cocoa and biscuits which the new entries had in their own small mess-room.

"That breakfast was a bit of all right, eh, mates?" remarked one boy from a poor part of Porthaven. "That's a jolly sight more than I ever got at 'ome."

Feeling warmed up, they went out to the chill of the early morning for an hour's drill and exercises from Petty Officer Teak. At the end of that time, the bugle sounded and Teak dismissed them back to their mess-room.

"Breakfast now, my lads!" he announced.

"Lummy!" gurgled the Porthaven boy.

Again they got their legs under the table, and great steaming pots of coffee were set on the board with stacks of bread and margarine and two poached eggs on toast for every boy.

The lads were delighted, Jack no less than the others. As for Clem Smith, otherwise Busky—he was even more glad than on the previous night that he had joined the Navy.

In an hour's time, after his own breakfast, P.O. Teak took charge of them once more.

"You lads are in luck," he stated. "In my young days in the service, we used to get weevily biscuits and salt horse. Still, that grub will do you good—make men of you. Now fall in outside, and we'll go along to the baths for your swimming test."

These baths, about thirty yards long and fifteen across, were in a building by itself, with a high glass roof, and the new boys were to learn later that there was also an open air pool for use in the summer.

The boys donned slips, had a shower and a wash first, and each in turn had to prove his ability in the water while an officer and a

physical instructor made notes. Jack acquitted himself creditably, but after a length, Busky showed signs of "bellows to mend."

The swimming test over Petty Officer Teak took the squad back to the dormitory and gave them a fatherly talk on the general routine of the training school.

"And now, my lads!" he said in conclusion, "I'm going to take you to meet the headmaster."

"Crumbs!" mumbled Busky and one or two of the other boys.

"And after that, the chaplain."

"Lummy!"

"Then the doctors."

"Ooooh!"

"Finally, the dentists!"

"Oh, help!"

The headmaster, Gregory Anslow, proved an elderly gentleman of the type one would expect to find in the best Public schools. He spoke kindly to the boys, sympathised with Jack and Busky when they explained they were orphans, and made it clear to all the lads that he had their welfare at heart. Next they visited the chaplain, in his little office adjoining the schools' church. He, too, was pleasant, and earnestly hoped that any boy in a difficulty would come to him for advice.

The visit to the surgeon-commander and his lieutenants was not so satisfactory from the lads' point of view. In turn they were examined and punched about the surgery.

"That's all, petty officer," said the surgeon-commander cheerfully. "To-morrow we'll vaccinate the lot of 'em."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered P.O. Teak, as cheerfully. "Now for the dentists!"

The Rampant had excellent dental surgeries, with white-clad surgeons and orderlies in attendance.

One after the other the new entries had to go through the mill. Their teeth were examined, and some of the boys had to suffer extractions.

After a ginger-haired boy had been attended to, Busky was beckoned to the chair, while Jack stood by still awaiting his turn.

"Ah, you're the boy who saved the ferry!" remarked the chief dental officer. "Just open your mouth, sonny."

Gripping the chair with both hands, Busky obliged.

"Very bad teeth, I'm afraid," muttered the officer.

He applied a silvery instrument sharply to one of Busky's molars.

Tap!

"Yarooogh!"

Surprised, the dental officer again uplifted his instrument—and Busky almost hurled himself backwards out of the chair.

"Yoops! Lemme alone! It hurts! Oh, my g-giddy aunt!"

The officers and orderlies present gazed at Busky in blank surprise. They had not expected this boy—this hero—to behave in such a cowardly way—

(Another exciting instalment of this fine serial next week, chums.)



E. S. BROOKS

BETWEEN OURSELVES!

OUR AUTHOR CHATS WITH OUR READERS

NOTE.—If any reader writes to me I shall be pleased to comment upon such remarks as are likely to interest the majority. All letters should be addressed, EDWY SEARLES BROOKS, c/o The Editor, THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.



M. KOJI MOHAMED

GOOD luck to the Owl Club—Francis Burrow and Albert G. Patrick (Fulham)—and I hope you will keep your promise and send me a copy of the Club's monthly magazine when the next issue is sprung upon an eager world. Since your magazine has the approval of your English master, it obviously must be first-rate. I am glad that your History and Geography master said such kind things about my recent School Ship stories. When a schoolmaster says that yarns in such a paper as the *Nelson Lee Library* are of educational value, the author naturally feels gratified.

* * *

Awfully sorry—Reg. T. Staples (Walworth)—if I have upset you by changing your name to Rex. I herewith change it back. Henceforth you shall be known as "Reg" to all our readers. But really, you know, you *did* lead me to believe that you preferred the new name better. If it will mollify you at all, I'd like to add that I personally prefer Reg to Rex. It's more pally. I can't even attempt to reply to your letters in the Old Paper (unless the Editor consents, for one week, to drop out the story altogether), but I continue to get quite a lot of pleasure out of perusing your "missiles," as you call them in your jocular way. So, if your typewriter isn't yet worn out, carry on! One day you'll be a prolific story writer, or journalist, mark my words.

* * *

Thanks for your excellent "Nelson Lee Crossword Puzzle"—Bernard Egan (Dublin). I should like to publish it on this page, with the Editor's permission, but just now there isn't the space. But I shan't forget it.

* * *

Here is the information you require—Walter E. Gough (Leicester): Study No. 4 shelters Sessue Yakama only—in the Modern House. Study No. 14, in the East House, is shared by Julian Clifton and Robert Simmons. Studies 18, 19 and 20, in the East House, are still empty. These are the full names you want: HORACE Crowe, GEORGE Webb, ALBERT Crook, LOUIS

Griffith, JULIAN Clifton, and CHARLES Owen (Owen major). I don't know Jack Stapleton and Simons. Perhaps they have joined the old school since I was down there last. Anyhow, they're strangers to me.

* * *

You mustn't be angry with me—M. Koji Mohamed (Singapore)—for keeping your photo until this week. I should have liked to print it a week or two after the receipt of your letter, as you requested, but lots of other readers' photos were awaiting their turn before yours. It pleases me to know that I have such enthusiastic readers as you in those parts of the world which are not so generally known. Of course, everybody knows the Straits Settlements, but the average individual scarcely believes that the Old Paper makes its way there. Yet I know for a fact that we have lots of readers in Singapore. In fact, the Old Paper goes to places as far apart as China and Equatorial Africa and British Guiana.

* * *

I hope you're still alive—Harry Slater (Nelson)—so that you can read about the St. Frank's fellows in Blackpool in a week or two's time. I'm quite sure that you won't be bent double with age, waiting for this event, as you suggest.

* * *

The title of the last story in the Old Series—E. P. Salmon (Hackney)—was "Handy's Round-up." It was No. 568. Enoch Snipe is in Study No. 15 in the East House, with Merrell and Marriott. The Hon. Douglas Singleton is in Study N in the West House with Hussi Ranjit Lal Khan.

CORRESPONDENTS WANTED

Neville Kirkman, 256, Boom Street, Pietermaritzburg, Natal, **South Africa**, wants correspondents in India, Siam, Borneo, Jamaica, Cuba, Holland, France, Tasmania, and the South Sea Islands. Interested in reading, walking, postcard collecting, tennis, etc.

Norman Atwell, 49, Berkeley Road, Westbury Park, **Bristol**, wants N.L.L., new series.

Geoffrey Cookson, Tyndale House, Tyndale Park, **Herne Bay**, would exchange mandoline, in case and in good condition, with home tutor, for N.L.L., old series, 500-564 inclusive.

Jas. H. Sullivan, Cemetery House, Lime Road, **Stretford**, wants correspondents in British Isles, France and Holland.

T. Rhodes, 18, Jackson Street, **Ashton-under-Lyne**, Lancs., wants N.L.L. back numbers, old series, before 112, and ninety-seven issues between 183 and 446.

D. S. Bruce, 12, Primrose Terrace, Marningham, **Bradford**, Yorks., wants to hear from readers.

L. Brown, 8, Ellerslie Road, Clapham, **London, S.W.4.**, requires members for a cycling club, age about 15-18. Live in, or near, Clapham essential. Either sex accepted. For full particulars apply Tuesday, Thursday or Friday after seven o'clock; Monday or Wednesday after nine o'clock.

Cecil Riecken, 6, Amadale Street, **Belfast** (Antrim Road), wishes to hear from readers in his district who would help him to form a club; wants to exchange back numbers and stamps.

E. Marshall, 14, Durnford Street, New Basford, **Nottingham**, offers 200 back numbers; also wants a football correspondent in Southend.

F. Giles, 76, Tewkesbury Road, **Cheltenham**, Glos., wants to hear from readers.

C. R. S. Clegg, Aberfeldy, Sixth Avenue, Joslin, **South Australia**, wants correspondents in England and America.

Sydney Nock, 4, Adrian Street, Moston, **Manchester**, wants to hear from readers keen on gym. work, etc.

Bertram Pitt, 20, Plaistow Park Road, Plaistow, **London, E.13**, wants correspondents in England, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand.

Miss E. Lee, 49, Iris Street, Paddington, Sydney, **N.S.W., Australia**, wishes to correspond with girl readers; ages 14-16.

Charles H. Nicholson, Onewa Road, Northcote, Auckland, **New Zealand**, wishes to correspond with readers in the British Isles, Australia, South Africa, Canada, New Zealand, and U.S.A.

Jack Burgoyne, 108, Heald Grove, Rusholme, **Manchester**, wants back numbers.

T. H. Ellerker, 6, Wise Terrace, **Leamington Spa**, wishes to correspond with a reader in South America; age 16-17.

Ronald Coles, 5, Salisbury Terrace, **Frome**, Somerset, wishes to correspond with readers.

A. Nichols, Cyprus, Mentmore Road, **Linslade**, Bucks, wishes to hear from readers in China, India, U.S.A. and England.

G. Seetha Rama Rao, Taboot Road, Calicut, South Malabar, **India**, wishes to hear from stamp collectors.

R. W. Benstead, 4, Westerfield Road, South Tottenham, **London, N.15**, offers 1,400 foreign stamps—including many rare specimens—with album.

J. P. Retchford, 178, Ninth Avenue, Perth, **Western Australia**, wants N.L.L. new series, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 19, 25, 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, 41.

Leslie C. Edens, 27, Church Street, St. Ebbe's, **Oxford**, wants to join a correspondence club and to hear from readers—especially overseas.

Fred Blakeborough, Jun., 38, St. Mary's Field, High Church, **Morpeth**, Northumberland, would like to hear from readers; also from Jack H. Watts of Detroit.

Will W. F. H. Macilraith send his address to Percy Weiner, 28, John Campbell Road, Dalston, **London, N.16**?

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