

THE REBELS OF ST. JIM'S!

The

GEM 1¹/₂^D

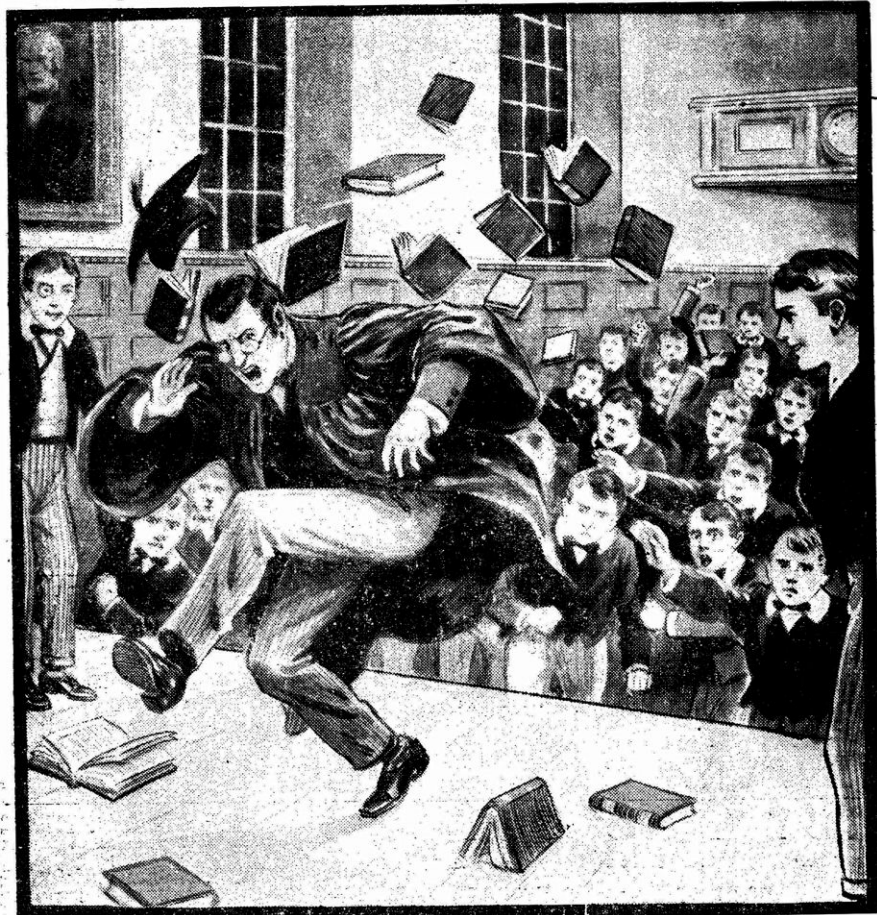
No. 600.
Vol. XIX.

LIBRARY

20 Pages.

Every Wednesday.

April 30th, 1921.



A WARM RECEPTION FOR THE NEW MASTER

Don't Miss Our Splendid Long Complete Story of the Chums of St. Jim's Inside.

ANSWERS TO READERS.

MISS FLOSSIE T. (Andover).—Your list of favourite characters was select and well-chosen. About two-thirds of the fellows at St. Jim's have one or more names. I can only find room to name a few, though. Racke has a half-sister named Gladys Sylvaime. She went out to America a short while before her father died, and her mother afterwards married for a second time to "Aubrey" Racke's father. Then Levison has the well-known Doris as his sister. Glyn has a sister named Edith.

CYRIL N. B. (Mount Park, Ham, Ont.).—I am sorry I can't give you the exact town where Jack Blake lives. Gussy resides during the vic at Eastwood House, Sussex. I think Lefevre is the best footballer in the Fifth. The redoubtable Wally fills the breach as the best fighting man in the Third. I don't think Rugby has been played very much at St. Jim's, if at all. Yes, ice-hockey immediately came into vogue when the Rhyl was flooded and frozen over. That was not recently, however.

"PUG" (Crossgates) writes: "Can you do me the great favour of telling me the remedy for black eyes? My ambition is to be a boxer, and I am told by those who understand the sport that I shall be successful. Now comes the drawback, the thought of going to my workshop with such marks as to make people think me a bouncer. I don't mind taking a good hiding, but marks such as black eyes— Now, what is the remedy for taking out the discolouring, in one night, if possible?"

Raw beefsteak is the best thing to apply; but even that would hardly eradicate all signs in a night. I doubt if anything possibly could get so speedy. But this fact should not surely deter my chum practising the noble art. If he showed marks of a mill his friends would merely understand the better what a good sportsman he was.

"A READER" (Walthamstow).—Richard Hilary is English bred and born. You can ask me any questions about St. Jim's any time you care to write. You seem to be very keen on football. But that's only as a true GEM reader should be.

DORIS KITSON (Erdington, Birmingham).—You will no doubt be glad to hear that Jack Blake was the first portrait published, so you have missed none. Did you approve of the portrait of Widdakey? I am pleased to hear you like Doris Levison. Very few girl readers forget to mention her when writing, and she has thousands of admirers. Doris has blue eyes and light brown hair. If your brother came to St. Jim's at his present age he would have to be advanced in all subjects to be immediately placed in the Shell. I should like to hear from you again.

TOM BATES (Morley, Yorks).—So you are a fifteen-year-old supporter. If you went to St. Jim's and showed brains in the first test exam you might go into the Fourth or the Shell. On the other hand, if you did not you would be put into the Third. Merry first appeared at St. Jim's in No. 11 of the GEM.

Grand Value for Money Story Books

BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY

4 each

SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY

4 each

MUGGET LIBRARY

3 each

- No. 550.—**THE BROTHERS OF BORDEN.** Magnificent yarn of schoolboy life and fun. By Jack North.
 No. 551.—**TRACKED THROUGH RUSSIA.** Thrilling story of Russia before the Revolution. By Alfred Armstrong.
 No. 552.—**THE RIVAL FORWARD.** Superb tale of the football field. By H. Gregory Hill.
 No. 553.—**THE GOLDEN CREEK.** Splendid adventure yarn. By Norman Owen.

- No. 168.—**THE CASE OF THE CINEMA STAR.** A thrilling tale of the Movies, introducing Sexton Blake, Tinker, and John Lawless.
 No. 169.—**THE SECRET OF THE SIX BLACK DOT.** A tale of the Secret Service, introducing Sexton Blake, Tinker, and Mademoiselle Julie.
 No. 170.—**THE AFFAIR OF THE FAMILY DIAMONDS.** A fascinating tale of baffling mystery and clever deduction, featuring Sexton Blake and Tinker. By the author of "The Marble Arch Mystery," etc.
 No. 171.—**AT THE SHRINE OF BUDDHA; OR, THE CHINA-MAN'S VOW.** A mystery tale of the great Chinese Crime Syndicate in London, featuring Sexton Blake and Tinker in one of their most baffling cases.

- No. 47.—**THE BRIDGE BUILDERS.** An absorbing Novel of Detective Work, introducing NELSON LEE and NIPPER, and the American Detective, Trouble Nantucket.
 No. 48.—**THE SIGN OF THE RED CLAW.** A fascinating Detective Romance, introducing NELSON LEE and NIPPER, and the Hindu Barrister, CHULDA GHAN.

Now on Sale Buy Your Copies TO-DAY!

THIS 'PICTURESCOPE' IS CONSISTED OF

A POWERFUL STEREOSCOPE & PICTURE HOLDER

Size 21 ins. long, made of Black Metal. Has Powerful Lens, and is sent complete with 100 PICTURES, which are complete sections of REAL KINEMA FILMS that have actually been shown at various Picture Palaces. Place Picture in Holder, Focus to suit sight, and hold to the light; the result will Astonish and Delight You. All the 100 Pictures are different and the subjects widely assorted. Special Price, complete in Neat Box, 1/6; or with 50 PICTURES, ONLY 1/2. Either Post Free. Satisfaction or Money Back FREE. Illustrated Catalogue, Gratis and Post Free, of Numerous Other Big Bargains in Watches, Clocks, Wood Working Clocks, Wood Double Bell and Nickel Alarm Clocks, Gramophones, Jewellery, Plate, Cutlery, Leather, and Fancy Goods, Novelties, Toys, Useful Goods, Etc., Etc. (Established Over 32 Years).

PAIN'S PRESENTS HOUSE, Dept. 46 P, HASTINGS.

Amuse and Interests Kiddles & Grown-ups Alike. It is the Film Novelty that is Creating a Sensation wherever Shown. One of the Biggest and Latest Novelties of Recent Years.



CUT THIS OUT

"The Gem." PEN COUPON. Value 2d.

Send this coupon, with P.O. for only 5/- direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 19, Fleet St., London, E.C.4., return you will receive (post free) a splendid British Made 14-ct. Gold Nibbed Fleet Fountain Pen, value 10/6. If you save 12 further coupons, each will count as 2d. off the price; so you may send 15 coupons and only 2/- (Post 1/6 extra.) Ask for red, medium, or broad nib. This great offer is made to introduce the famous Fleet Pen to the Gem readers. See enclosed and anxiously await postman.—FLEET FILING, or Safety Models, 2/- extra.



MAKE THIS!
 Set of Parts for making Electric Shocking kit, 1/9 Post Free.

Harborne Small Power Co., 38 A.P., Queen's Rd., ASTON, BIRMINGHAM. Illustrated Catalogue 6d.

"CURLY HAIR!"—"It's wonderful," writes R.M. Testimonials received daily. Copies sent, Ross' "WAVEIT" CURLS straightest hair, 1/5, 2/5 (stamp accepted)—ROSS (Dept. G, 175, New North Rd., London, N.1.)

FREE!—Start collecting STAMPS to-day with Packet ABSOLUTELY FREE. Send postcard and anxiously await postman.—FLORICK STAMP COMPANY, 179, ASYLUM ROAD, BECKHAM, LONDON.

THE REBELS OF ST. JIM'S

A Grand Long Thrilling Story
of the Chums of St. Jim's,
introducing Tom Merry & Co.



By - - -

MARTIN

CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER I. Amazing News!

"THERE'S a row on!"
Monty Lowther of the Shell made that utterance in a serious tone of voice. It was not often that Monty was serious. Usually, he wore a smile that wouldn't come off. Therefore, when Monty Lowther looked serious, it was certain that something far from the usual run of events had occurred to upset his equilibrium.

Tom Merry and Manners, his companions, nodded.

The Terrible Three, as the chums of Study No. 10 were known at St. Jim's, were standing outside the Head's study. Each had a roll of impo-paper in his hand. They had come along to deliver impots to the Head. During cricket practice that morning a ball had been slogged over into the Head's garden. The Terrible Three had gone over in search of it, and Dr. Holmes had caught them. Thus the impots.

From behind the closed door of the Head's study, came angry voices. Tom Merry & Co. could guess who were the owners of those voices. Two gentlemen had arrived at St. Jim's half an hour ago in a luxurious motor-car. These were Lord Parrish, the new president of the Board of Governors of the School, and Lord Hardacre, another new member of the board. The St. Jim's boys knew that there had been a few changes in the governorship of the school. But changes in the Governing Board did not usually affect the school itself.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther had not expected the Head to be engaged. It was now almost five o'clock, and Dr. Holmes had told them to have the impositions ready by five.

Evidently the two visitors were still with Dr. Holmes, and a stormy meeting was in progress.

"I must utterly refuse to carry out these new regulations, Lord Parrish!" came the Head's voice angrily. "In my opinion, they are beyond all reason, and exceed the limits of justice to the pupils. They are quite unnecessary!"

"Nonsense, Holmes!" came the hard, curt voice of Lord Parrish, the new president. "We have decided that these regulations shall come into operation at this school immediately. In our opinion, there is too much laxity in the administration. It is our intention to make various sweeping alterations, and you, as headmaster, must fall in with our wishes. Otherwise—"

There was a significant pause.

The Terrible Three, outside the Head's study, looked uncomfortably at each

other. They could not help hearing these angry words.

"My hat!" muttered Tom Merry, in a low voice. "We—we'd better hop it! We don't want the Head to catch us, and think we're eavesdropping!"

"Oh crumbs!" said Manners suddenly.

The Head's study door had opened, and two red-faced, pompous-looking men emerged. The Terrible Three recognised them as Lords Parrish and Hardacre, who had arrived half an hour before.

Behind them came Dr. Holmes, looking white and distressed.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther stood where they were, uncertain what to do. The two governors stopped short when they saw the three juniors. Dr. Holmes stopped, too.

"What are you doing here, my boys?" he asked wearily. "If you wish to see me—"

"We—we have finished our impositions, and have just brought them along to you, sir," replied Tom Merry.

Lord Parrish, burly and pompous, stepped forward and glared at the captain of the Shell.

"You may burn those impositions!" he rapped. "Dr. Holmes has no further authority in this school. We have requested him to tender his resignation as headmaster of St. Jim's, and he has done so."

"Oh!"

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther could give utterance to no other words. The news had come upon them like a stunning blow, rendering them speechless and bewildered for the time being.

"My lads—" began Dr. Holmes huskily.

"You—you're not leaving, sir?" exclaimed Tom Merry, striding forward and looking full into Dr. Holmes' stricken face. "You—you're not leaving?"

The kind old man whom the boys of St. Jim's had come to love and revere as their headmaster cleared his throat before speaking.

"Yes, Merry, I am afraid it is true," he said, in a voice that trembled with emotion. "A change has taken place on the Board of Governors, and the new president has plans for a new system of school management which I cannot agree

A Splendid Long Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars, and Magnificent Art Portraits of the popular characters, appear each week in the

'BOYS' HERALD.'

to. Consequently, I have had to resign my position, much to my dismay and regret."

"Oh, sir!"

The Terrible Three looked genuinely concerned. Dr. Holmes leaving! They could hardly realise the news. It seemed too unnatural to be true. For some moments they stood looking at Dr. Holmes in blank amazement and dismay. Lord Parrish and Lord Hardacre were sneering.

"I'm sorry, my lads," said Dr. Holmes quietly. "But I shall not consent to enforcing rules upon my pupils which I know will be tyrannical, and be the cause of unnecessary disturbance among the boys." This affair is most distressing to me."

"You boys may depart!" cut in Lord Hardacre coldly. "The rest of the school will soon be acquainted with the news!"

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther walked away mechanically towards the Fourth Form passage. Jack Blake & Co. of Study No. 6 had a "feed" on, and had invited the Shell fellows. Dr. Holmes and the two new governors proceeded on their way to Mr. Railton's room.

Jack Blake, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, Herries, and Digby were preparing tea when the Terrible Three came in.

"Hallo!" said Blake. "You fellows look pretty blue. What's the matter? Licked?"

Tom Merry shook his head. "No," he said shortly. "The Head's resigned!"

"What!"

Herries, who had been making toast, dropped it in the fender. Blake almost cut his finger in the operation of slicing up a loaf. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who was making the tea, poured the water into the fire instead of into the teapot, and Robert Arthur Digby, who was poking the fire, let go of the poker as if the handle had suddenly become red-hot.

The chums of Study No. 6 were amazed at the news.

"The Head's resigned!" exclaimed Blake. "Gammon! You're trying to spoof us!"

"Do we look as though we are spoofing?" demanded Tom Merry, quite crossly. "I tell you, the Head's had a row with the new governors, and has had to resign. He's leaving St. Jim's."

"Bai Jove!"

Jack Blake & Co. blinked at the Terrible Three in bewilderment.

"But—but—" ejaculated Blake. "How do you know, Tommy?"

THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 690.

Tom Merry explained all he had seen and heard in the passage outside the Head's study.

"Greatest Scott!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, polishing his monocle and affixing it very tightly in his eye. "I am in quite a fluff, dear boys! What evah can be the matter!"

"Goodness knows!" said Tom Merry, frowning. "All we can understand is, that the new governors want to make new rules that the Head objects to. They are a couple of old rotters, and they must have got the Head's rag out, and bullied him into resigning. Anyway, poor old Dr. Holmes is going, and—and—"

"What's going to happen?" asked Manners lugubriously.

They all looked consolately at each other.

"Well," said Blake at length. "Here's a giddy kettle of fish, and no mistake! Bless if I can think what will happen when the Head goes. Will Raitton take his place, or shall we have a new Head?"

"Oh crumbs!"

Tom Merry clenched his fists hard.

"The Head's all right, and we don't want another fellow bossing us," he said. "It's a rotten trick, to want to turn things upside down in the school, and bullying the Head. There's going to be trouble for you fellows—mark my words!"

"Yess, wawah! I'm afraid so."

"Yas was prepared, and the chums of the School House sat down to a good spread. But the usual atmosphere of cheerfulness had departed. They all sat downcast and despondent, and the only topics they discussed over the tea-table were the resignation of Dr. Holmes and what would ensue in his absence.

After tea they went along to the Common-room. They found it in a buzz. Baggy Trimble and Mellish had spread their texts that Lord Parrish and Lord Hardacre had departed on bad terms with the Head. There had been a row between the new governors and Dr. Holmes. Speculation was rife as to what had happened.

The Terrible Three and Jack Blake & Co. did not tell what they knew. They hoped fervently that it was all a mistake, that a settlement would be made, and that Dr. Holmes would remain in his place. Honoured and respected as the Head of St. Jim's.

But at call-over that evening St. Jim's received a shock. The whole school was assembled, as usual, for the roll to be called. After each boy had answered "Adsum" to his name, Dr. Holmes, before commencing the evening prayer, stood up and, evidently greatly disturbed, addressed the school in a voice that was peat with emotion.

"My dear lads," said the white-haired old gentleman, with a catch in his voice, "I have some news of a very grave nature to tell you. As you probably already know, certain changes have been effected in the Board of Governors this last week. The new governors propose to introduce another scheme of discipline into this school, a scheme which, in my estimation, is wholly and unacceptably unpracticable, after the amenities which you boys, and the masters, have hitherto enjoyed. I did my best to dissuade the chairman, but I'm afraid my efforts were fruitless. Consequently, my lads, I very much grieve to tell you that, under the pressure exerted upon me, there was no other course for me to take but to resign my position as headmaster of St. Jim's."

A hush fell upon the assembled school as an avestruck, tense hush, during which it would have been possible to hear a

pin drop. Seniors and juniors alike were dumbfounded.

Then suddenly voices broke forth, arguing and expostulating.

"Shame!" roared Grundy of the Shell in his stenorian voice.

"Shame! Shame!"

"We shan't let you go, sir!"

"Shame!"

These were some of the cries that broke from the assembled school when the astounding news had sunk in.

"My dear lads," cried Dr. Holmes, evidently overcome by the dismay his statements had elicited. "I cannot say how sorry I am to have to leave you, but my only trust is that I shall be enabled to return very soon. After having been headmaster of this school for nearly forty years, it tears my heart to have to go away. But it was inevitable. Until the Board of Governors consent to abandon their new rules, I cannot return as headmaster. Even then, Lord Parrish, who is the new chairman, would have to reconsider his motion that I am too—too old to retain my position."

"Oh, sir!"

A tumult of angry cries broke out, but Dr. Holmes silenced the boys, and then proceeded with evening prayers. Having performed that office, he rustled from Big Hall, leaving the boys of St. Jim's to file out of the main door, animatedly discussing the bombast that had burst upon them.

"Well, it's the limit!" said Kangaroo, as he walked away with the Terrible Three, Bernard Glyn, and Clifford.

"What do you think of this, Tommy?"

Tom Merry shook his head dolefully.

"Blessed if I know what to think!" he said. "The poor old Head's going, and we shall have another man in his place. I suppose. Chaps, let's sign a round robin."

"Yass, wawah! That's a wippin' idea!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "We'll send a round robin to the Head, statin' how sorry we are he is goin', and requestin' him to stay, if possible."

"Come on, chaps!" said Blake.

Tom Merry led the way to the Junior Common-room. A huge sheet of drawing-paper was procured, and the round robin started. Every boy was eager to sign his name, and soon the list of signatures grew. Even Aubrey Racker, Gerald Crooke, Scrope, and Mellish, the black sheep of the school, placed their names to the round robin. When all the School House juniors had signed their names, the seniors were visited by a whole horde of juniors, led by Tom Merry & Co.

"Come on, Kildare, put your name down on the round robin!" said Tom Merry to the stalwart captain of St. Jim's. "We're not going to part with the Head without a tussle."

Kildare, North, Barrell, Baker, Monteith, and all the other members of the Sixth, signed their names willingly. So did all the Fifth, and even Wally D'Arcy & Co. of the Third scrawled their names to the round robin. Then the New House was visited, and all the boys over there, juniors and seniors alike, subscribed to the great petition.

"Good!" said Tom Merry in great satisfaction. "Now, chaps, let's go along and see the Head! This is our last resource!"

"Here, hear!"

Quite an army of juniors, with Tom Merry & Co., Jack Blake & Co. of the School House, and Figgins & Co. of the New House in the fore, marched along to the Head's study.

"I say, Tom Mowrey, dear boy, I consider that I ought to present the wound

robin!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "As a fellow of tact and judgment—"

"Ring off, Gussy!" said Tom Merry curtly. "Here we are at the Head's study!"

Tom Merry tapped, and the grave voice of Dr. Holmes told them to enter. Dr. Holmes was there, in his overcoat, with Mr. Raitton, the School House master, and Mr. Horace Ratcliff, the master of the New House, at the head of the crowd of juniors that surged into the room.

"The three masters looked aguish at the sight of juniors that surged into the room."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes. "Boys, what ever is the meaning of this—?"

"We've come to present you with a round robin, sir," replied Tom Merry respectfully. "We don't want you to leave St. Jim's. We don't want a new headmaster, whatever he's like. We consider it a beastly shame that you've been treated like this. Perhaps, if you showed this to the governors—"

"My dear boys, I—I don't know what to say," said Dr. Holmes brokenly. "This evidence of your esteem and duty touches me very deeply. But I am afraid, my lads, that it will be impossible for me to remain at St. Jim's after to-day. My wife and daughter have already departed, and I am just going. Mr. Raitton has been offered my position, but has refused. So, I understand, a new headmaster will arrive on Monday."

"Oh, sir!"

Both Dr. Holmes and Mr. Raitton were looking distressed. Mr. Ratcliff seemed quite unperturbed; indeed, to judge by the look on his thin features, he must have been enjoying the state of affairs. Mr. Ratcliff was a bad-tempered man, who did not pull well with his fellow-masters, and he always been unpopular among the boys.

Tom Merry & Co. and the others looked unhappy. Dr. Holmes folded the round robin, and placed it in his suitcase.

"Well, my boys, I leave now for the station," he said in a quiet voice. "I hope you will be happy under your new headmaster, and—"

"We—we shan't trouble about the new Head!" blurted out Tom Merry. "There'll be trouble, sir, when you are gone."

"Boys, you must restrain your feelings," said Dr. Holmes in deep distress. "Please go now, so that I can have a few words with Mr. Raitton before I depart."

There was no help for it. The boys who had presented the round robin crowded out of the Head's study, and went down to the quadrangle in a crowd.

"Rotten!" said Blake lugubriously. "Beastly!" said Figgins between his teeth. "We'll play old Harry with the new Head, if he tries to gruid us down! Chaps, here comes the Head's trap!"

The coachman drove up to the School House steps, and practically all the school gathered round. Ten minutes elapsed, and then Dr. Holmes appeared in the doorway. A cheer arose for him, and as the old Head looked round upon the boys his eyes were moist with tears.

"Thank you, my boys—thank you," he said, stepping into the trap.

Tom Merry and Blake had been holding a whispered conversation. Suddenly they rushed forward, followed by Manners, Lowther, Digby, Herries, and D'Arcy, and seized the trap. With quick, nimble fingers they unharnessed the horse.

"Boys!" cried Dr. Holmes, standing up. "What ever are you doing? I—I—"

"Come on, chaps!" sang out Tom Merry. "If the Head must go, we'll

give him a good send-off! Drag the trap down to the station! All together!"

"Hurrah!"

Scores of hands grasped the shafts of the trap and dragged it over to the gates. A throng of excited boys followed. In vain did Dr. Holmes protest. At last he sank down into the cushioned seat, and was silent, as the boys of St. Jim's bore the trap out of the gates and down the Rylecumb Lane.

Thus was Dr. Holmes taken down to the village station by his devoted pupils. He was cheered as he stepped out of the trap into the station.

The kind-faced old gentleman was too overcome with emotion to speak.

Tom Merry & Co. and the others assembled on the platform, and waved their caps to Dr. Holmes as the train bore him away from them—and from St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 2.

The New Head.

MR. RAITON took charge of the school affairs during the next day, but it was obvious that he was very ill at ease. Rumour went abroad that the new headmaster would arrive on Saturday. Lessons on Saturday morning passed uneventfully. On Saturday afternoon Tom Merry & Co. went over to Little Side for cricket practice. The first great cricket match between the St. Jim's and the Rookwood second elevens was taking place on Wednesday, and Tom Merry, hearing that Jimmy Silver & Co. were "hot stuff" this season, was determined that his men should practice hard and put up the best game possible.

So his selected eleven played a scratch eleven captained by Dick Julian of the Fourth, and won by the magnificent margin of an innings and thirty-five runs.

"Good game!" chuckled George Figgins, accompanying Tom Merry & Co. off the field. "Fatty's bowling is magnificent, isn't it? Goodness knows where he'd be without the New House!"

"Fatty is certainly at the top of his form," agreed Tom Merry good-humouredly. "We stand a jolly good chance of licking the Rookwooders on Wednesday. I had a letter from Jimmy Silver this morning. He wants us to run over to tea on Tuesday to make final arrangements. It's jolly good of him. Only four of us are going—myself, you, Blake, and Gussy. That's if the new Head will give us a late pass."

"Oh crumbs! Supposing he doesn't?"

The junior cricketers of St. Jim's were now crossing the quadrangle. At the base of the School House steps was a group of schoolboys conversing excitedly together. Baggy Trimble rushed up to Tom Merry & Co. as those youths approached.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped the Peeping Tom of the Fourth. "What do you think? The new Head has arrived, and he's an awful-looking boulder!"

"When?"

"When did he come?"

"Half an hour ago," said Alan Lorne, who was rubbing his ear rather ruefully. "The beast caught me sliding down the balusters indoors, and clipped my ear as though I were a babe in the Third Form! He's a rotter!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Tom Merry & Co. looked deeply concerned.

"What does he look like?" asked Monty Lowther.

"He's tall and dark, and—and looks like an anarchist!" said Baggy Trimble excitedly. "You should see his eyes when he looks at you—like gimlets! Oh

dear! We're in for a rough time of it, you fellows! Blessed if I'm going to put up with any tyrant! I shall make a complaint to my father, and ask him to take me away, if the new Head comes any of his old back!"

"Boy!"

A harsh voice interposed, and, looking up, the St. Jim's juniors were startled to see a tall, immaculately-dressed man in the Hall doorway, glaring down at them, through a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, with eyes that seemed to pierce into their very soul.

They fell back with involuntary shivers.

"Boy!" mumbled the new headmaster, for he wore over his clothing a scholastic cap and gown. "Boy! How dare you discuss me in that manner? What is your name?"

"I—I—I—" gasped Baggy Trimble. "Your name, boy!" thundered the new Head.

"T-Trimble, sir!" gasped the fat youth of the Fourth. "Bub-Bagley Trimble, sir!"

"Kindly step up here, Trimble!" said the new Head icily. "I must proceed to make an example of you before these other boys. You must all realize that new methods of discipline are being introduced into this school's curriculum, and that I, as headmaster, shall see that those methods are carried out. Trimble, are you coming?"

"Oh crumbs! Y-y-yes, sir!"

Baggy Trimble simply crawled up the steps, and stood quailing and trembling before the new Head.

"Go up to my study," said the new Head. "You know where that is, for I am occupying the late headmaster's room. Go up there, Trimble, and fetch me a cane."

"Ye-es, sir!" gasped poor Baggy.

He rolled indoors, and a murmur of conversation arose from the boys standing round the base of the School House steps.

"You lads will kindly remain where

you are," commanded the new headmaster coldly. "Master Trimble is going to be made an example of."

Five minutes of tense silence elapsed, and then Baggy Trimble crawled reluctantly into view. In one fat palm he held a stout ashplant. Baggy had selected the cane which he thought would hurt him least; but, as all the canes in the headmaster's room were very formidable, he did not have much choice.

"Thank you, Trimble," said the new Head, taking the cane and swishing it viciously. "Now, will you kindly touch your toes?"

"Eh?" gasped Baggy. "Touch your toes, Trimble!" thundered the Head.

Tom Merry & Co. and the others in the quadrangle looked askance at each other, and regarded the new Head in amazement. Never before in the whole history of St. Jim's had a boy been asked to touch his toes.

"Look here, sir—" expostulated Baggy rocklessly.

"Trimble!" thundered the Head. "Do as I command you!"

Baggy gave a despairing, haunted look round him, and then, acting on a sudden impulse, he bolted indoors.

"Good heavens!" gasped the new Head. "Trimble—the little rascal! Kildare, fetch that boy back to me at once!"

Eric Kildare, the stalwart captain of St. Jim's, who had come up with Davell and Monty, reluctantly mounted the School House steps and went indoors in search of the runaway Baggy. He had already met Dr. James Grierson, and had taken an instant dislike to the new headmaster.

Kildare found Baggy in his study in the Fourth Form passage, and at last managed to rout him out. Baggy was taken back to the School House steps, where Dr. Grierson, grim and forbidding, was awaiting him.

"Trimble, you shall receive extra punishment for this escapade!" he



Baggy Trimble simply crawled up the steps, and stood, quailing and trembling, before the new Head. "Go up to my study," said the new head. "I am occupying the late headmaster's room. Go up there, Trimble, and fetch me a cane." "Ye-es, sir!" gasped poor Baggy. (See this page.)

graded. "Kildare, will you hold the Young rascal? Trimble, touch your toes!"

Baggy Trimble touched his toes. Dr. Grierson took careful aim, and—

Whack!
There was no mistake. Baggy had received the full force of that blow. He gave a wild leap into the air, clapping that portion of his anatomy where the cane had struck.

"Yarooooooooh!" howled Baggy.
"Silence, Trimble! Come here at once, and touch your toes again!"

"Grooooooh!"
Once more Baggy bowed before the new Head, and once again the cane fell upon his trousers.

"You-ow-ow!" he moaned, when at last the chastigation was completed.

"Ow-ow! I'm hurt! Yoooooop!"
Baggy made a pathetic figure, standing there in full view of most of his schoolfellows, and groaning.

Tom Merry & Co. could not help grinning, but in their hearts they condemned the new Head as a tyrant and a beast.

"Cease those ridiculous noises, Trimble!" said Dr. Grierson sternly.

"The rest of you lads will now see that I will tolerate no half-measures in the administration of this school. I am about to draft out a new set of rules, which shall be exhibited on the notice-board as soon as practicable. If there be no disturbance, or I shall visit the offenders with stringent punishment."

With that the new Head swept indoors, leaving the boys of St. Jim's gasping.

"My only hat!" said Blake, passing a hand dazedly across his forehead.

"What a monster! Chaps, is it a horrible dream? Is he really our new Head?"

Tom Merry clenched his fists hard.

"He's out for trouble, and he'll get it if he's not a little more easy!" he said grimly.

"We chaps can put up with a bit, but there are limits. Poor old Baggy! Does it hurt, old son?"

That question, to judge by Baggy Trimble's moans and the expression upon his countenance, seemed quite superfluous. He surveyed Tom Merry & Co. with dismal eyes.

"Yow-ow! The rotter! I—I feel as though I dare not sit down!" he groaned.

"Look here, you fellows, you're not going to stand by and see us ill-treated, are you? Aren't you going to complain?"

"What's the use?" said Tom Merry, with a shrug. "He's only just started, and maybe things will turn out better than we expect. Anyway, chaps, we'll give him a little rope. What's his name, Kildare?"

"Dr. Grierson," replied the Sixth-Former, with a frown. "He's a pedagogue of the old type. I'm afraid. I feel sorry for you kids, for you'll have less liberties than you used to have. But keep a stiff upper-lip, and don't cause a row unless you can help it."

Kildare walked away, looking quite worried.

The juniors went indoors to have tea, and then do their prep. But their thoughts were all on Dr. Grierson, and the new headmaster, was the sole topic of conversation in the Common-room and in the dormitories that evening.

CHAPTER 3.

Ructions!

"SEEN the notice, you chaps?" asked Kerruish of the Fourth.

Tom Merry & Co. were chatting with Figgins, Kerr, and Winn of the New House in the Shell passage on Monday.

They were discussing the visit to Rookwood on the

morning as a preliminary to the Second Eleven's away match there on Wednesday afternoon.

The Terrible Three and Figgins & Co. looked interested.

"What notice?" asked Manners.
"It's on the board—notice from the Head."

The chums of the School House, followed by the New House fellows, made their way to the notice-board, around which a large crowd of fellows were congregated. They pushed their way to the front and looked at the paper pinned to the board, and then saw the cause of all the consternation and dismal faces.

The notice was written in small, crabbed handwriting, vicious even in its appearance. This is how it ran:

"SCHOOL RULES AMENDMENTS.
The following Amendments in the School Rules will come into operation from the commencement of the present week and until further notice:

A system of Marks shall be instituted, viz.: One Hundred Marks shall be allocated to each lesson, each boy receiving a percentage of marks according to his industry during the lesson. In lieu of Impositions, Fine Marks shall be deducted at the termination of each day from each boy's total of Marks earned.

Prefects are empowered to impose Fine Marks.

Boys whose total of Marks for a day fails to exceed half of the maximum shall be punished as follows: Seniors, detention in Form-room after lessons; Juniors, corporal punishment of at least four strokes of the cane.

No junior boy shall be allowed outside the school premises after the hour of six o'clock p.m. Boys found in the quadrangle or elsewhere than indoors will be punished severely.

The School Playing Fields shall be available for games only for half an hour before one o'clock, and half an hour before five o'clock p.m., the usual half-holidays excepted.

Boys shall not be allowed to partake of Tea in their own studies. All members of the School shall assemble in the Dining-room at five o'clock precisely for Tea.

The Masters and Prefects shall see that these amendments are carried out explicitly.

(Signed) JAMES GRIERSON,
Headmaster.

"My hat!" said Tom Merry.
"Great pip!" gasped Monty Lowler.
"My only Aunt Jane!" ejaculated Manners.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" was Figgins' astounded comment.

The boys of St. Jim's blinked at this notice in deep consternation.

Seniors were in the crowd round the notice-board, as well as juniors, and they were equally dismayed at the new rules. Letters of the Fifth and Sixth major, were looking wrathly. Cuts, Gilmore, and St. Leger seemed very much put out. Kildare, it was said, had seen the notice and had walked away in disgust.

A crowd of Third-Form lads were there, and they read the notice aloud very slowly and deliberately.

"My only sainted Aunt Jane!" exclaimed Wally D'Arcy the younger brother of Arthur Augustus and the leading light of the Third-Formers.

"What a shindy rigmarole! What does it all mean, Tom Merry?"

"It means this, kid," said the captain of the Shell quietly. "The new Head has imposed a lot of rotten fresh rules, and there's going to be a shindy before

long. We're going to have a hundred marks for each lesson, and have so many deducted, according to how we shape during the lesson. For instance, in Latin, which I'm not great shakes at, I might get seventy marks out of the hundred, and so on. And then, if you do anything wrong, instead of getting an input—fifty or a hundred lines—we're going to have five marks; that means, so many marks taken off the total marks for the lessons. There are four lessons a day, which makes the total four hundred, and if we don't get two hundred per day we shall be licked!"

"Oh, Tenney!" groaned Wally D'Arcy, and his groan was repeated by all the fags present.

"And, I say," cried Carly Gibson, Wally's chum, "we've all got to have tea in Hall! No more feeds in the Form-room before prep, you chaps!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"And we mustn't be out of doors after six in the evening!" cried Reggie Manners. "And only an hour a day for cricket!"

"It's too jolly rotten!"

"We can't stand that!"

"Grierson's rules mean slavery!"

Those were some of the comments made upon the Head's notice.

There was a buzz of excitement and subdued rage all over the School House and New House at St. Jim's. Never before had such rules and restrictions been imposed upon them. It was easy to see that the innovations would arouse a great deal of discontent and rebellion.

Baggy Trimble stated his intention of writing home to his pater, asking for a removal to Ryeombe Grammar School. George Alfred Grundy vowed that he'd go for Dr. Grierson if ever he asked for him—Grundy—to touch his toes.

But Tom Merry had the best suggestion. That day he had been thinking hard, and when tea was over, he called a meeting in the Rag. Practically all the Lower School flocked into the room.

"Chaps!" cried Tom, mounting upon a chair, the back of which he rapped with a ruler. "Chaps, we are gathered together this evening to discuss the tyrannies of Dr. Grierson—"

Groan!

"Grierson's a rotter—"

"Yaas, wathy!" chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "He fined me twenty marks this afternoon for singin' tenah solos in my study, and when I told him that I vegahded him as unweasonable and unjust, he increased the fine to fifty. Weally, it's too wotten! I've only got two hundred and ten marks to my credit now, and theah's a noark to half an hour before call-ovah, when the marks are called in. If I lose another ten, I'm in for a lickin'!"

"Gentlemen!" roared Tom Merry, rapping the chair back with the ruler. "Let me speak! We're all suffering under this rotten new wheeze of marks. The other masters don't approve, but they have to knuckle down to the new Head. What can they do?"

"Shame!"

"They ought to tell him to go and eat cokes!"

"He's an interfeerer!"

"Gentlemen!" cried Tom Merry. "I have a suggestion to make—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Get it off your chest, Tommy!"

"Shurrup!" roared Tom, plying the ruler with vigour. "Gentlemen, I have a wheeze to propound. Let the form a Union, and call ourselves the St. Jim's Junior Union. Then, if anything happens, we can all stick together and act together!"

"Bai Jove!"

"That's a ripping wheeze, Tommy!"

"Who'll join the Union?"

Tom Merry took out a large book and a fountain-pen, and told the others to roll up and sign on. There was no lack of enthusiasm on the part of the juniors to become members of the St. Jim's Junior Union. Soon every junior had registered himself as a member of the Union. That having been done, the juniors were clapping when Kildare arrived.

"Hallo! What are you kids up to?" he asked.

"We've just formed a Union for the protection of our rights, Kildare," replied Tom Merry. "Don't you think it's a good idea?"

Kildare grinned.

"You'd all get it in the neck if the Head got to know of it," he said. "But clear out of here now, all of you. Dr. Grierson will be visiting your studies soon to see whether you are getting on with your prep."

"Of course, the old Paul Pry!"

Tom Merry's meeting broke up.

The Terrible Three did their preparation, and then went along to Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage, to have a chat with Jack Blake & Co.

They found Blake, Herries, Digby, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looking greatly disgruntled.

"Hallo, old scabs!" said Tom Merry cheerily. "What's wrong? Grierson been ragging you?"

"Yaas, watah!" said Arthur Augustus. "I vegard him as a fywmalish wotah, but Jove!"

"What's the old bird done, anyway?" inquired Monty Lowther.

"Tea in Hall was jolly rotten to-day," said Blake, "so we bought some sosses and potatoes, and rashers of bacon, and some cream buns at the tuckshop, and started a feed. We were going to ask you chaps in, but that interfering cad, Grierson, looked in, commanded the lot, and licked us into the bargain. Oh, wouldn't I like him on my own at the top of a mountain for just ten minutes!"

And Blake spared energetically in the air at an imaginary figure of Dr. James Grierson.

Tom Merry & Co. looked sympathetic.

"Jolly hard on 'im," said Tom. "He is the limit, you know—absolutely the last word in barbarianism!"

"Things are getting too thick!" groaned Herries. "He caught me over by the kennels after dinner while I was feeding my bulldog. He has forbidden me to go near him again, and given the gardener orders to feed him. That's jolly rotten for Towser, because he can't stand that rotten gardener, and I'm afraid he'll starve in time."

"Yaas, and Grierson was vewy personal with vegard to my clobber this mornin'," said the noble swell of St. Jim's. "He refuse to allow me to wear a bow, because at the school where he came from ordinary plain neckties were the rule. And he says that white spats look widge. I vegard him as an interfering loundah, but Jove!"

The chums of the Lower School looked decidedly gloomy.

"What about keeping our appointment with Jimmy Silver at Rookwood to-morrow, Tommy?" asked Blake morosely. "Can it be done, I wonder?"

"Oh, crumbs!" said Tom Merry. "Of course we've allowed out after six. That won't give us much time to get to Rookwood and back. I'll run along and plead with Grierson."

Tom Merry left Study No. 6 and made his way to the room that used to be Dr. Holmes' study. Now the private sanctum was occupied by the Usurper, as he was now called.

His dark eyes glittered behind the lenses of his gold-rimmed spectacles as Tom Merry entered.

"Well, Merry!" said the new Head, in a cold voice.

He had already taken a keen dislike to Tom Merry and his chums. Perhaps that was because they were happy, spirited boys, full of the joy of youth.

"If you please, sir," said Tom respectfully, "I and a few of my friends—Blake, Figgins, and D'Arcy—have been invited to tea at Rookwood School to-morrow to make final arrangements for the cricket match which takes place on Wednesday afternoon between their Second Eleven and ours. It's a very important fixture, sir, and—and we should like your permission to miss tea in Hall to-morrow and allow us a late pass, so that we shall be able to keep our appointment."

Dr. Grierson pursed his thin lips, and considered for some minutes. Then, after a pause, he said:

"Very well, Merry. You and the three other boys you mention may miss tea in Hall in order to go to Rookwood to-morrow. But I cannot allow you a late pass. Remember, you must be back within the school premises by six o'clock; otherwise, I shall punish you all most severely!"

"Oh, thanks very much, sir!" said Tom Merry.

When he returned to Study No. 6 and told the news to his chums, they seemed satisfied.

"It means rushing off directly lessons are over, having a hasty tea at Rookwood, and then hurrying back here," said Tom Merry. "Perhaps Grierson's idea in letting us off is to see if we get back by six. He thinks we shan't do it. But we shall, Jimmy Silver won't mind us scotching, if we explain things to him."

"Heah, heah!"

And the chums of the School House fell to discussing the forthcoming cricket match until the bell rang for call-over.

CHAPTER 4.

A Chapter of Accidents.

IT was a happy party of four St. Jim's fellows that set out for Rookwood next afternoon. The fortunate four were Tom Merry, Blake, Figgins, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

They ran down to Ryelombe as soon as afternoon school was over and caught the train to Rookwood just in time. They arrived at Coombe Station after twenty minutes to five, and saw Jimmy Silver, Newcome, Raby, and Lovell waiting for them in the station vestibule.

"Hallo, you fellows!" said the chief of the Rookwood Fistical Four, coming up and shaking hands warmly with Tom Merry. "Jolly glad to see you again! We've got a nice spread in our den. And I suppose you are hungry?"

"Yes, we're rather," said Tom Merry.

The Rookwooders and the St. Jim's juniors all shook hands and walked into Coombe High Street. Tom Merry explained matters to the Fistical Four, Jimmy Silver, Newcome, Raby, and Lovell whistled with astonishment when they heard of the tyrannies of Dr. Grierson at St. Jim's.

"I had cheese, you chaps," said Jimmy Silver. "I was just I'd been over the traces, if things got too bad. That would make the blessed school governors sit up and take notice that you fellows resented any interferences with your liberties. My giddy aunt, old Grierson would get our backs up properly!"

"Oh, we've formed a union for the protection of our rights," said Tom Merry, with a grin. "If Grierson grinds

us down too much we shall take 'direct action.' It's the only way!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, it's jolly rotten," said Jimmy Silver sympathetically. "Let's hurry, then. We can jaw over the tea-table. Come on!"

They hurried on to Rookwood School, and the Fistical Four conducted their guests into the Classical side of the school. There, in Jimmy Silver's study, Kit Erroll and Val Mornington had prepared a good feed.

"Oh, good!" said Tom Merry briskly, viewing the good things with a look of supreme appreciation. "It will gladden our hearts to have a real good study feed! Tea in study is barred at our school now, you know."

"Poor chaps! Anyway, there's plenty here, so tuck in!"

They were all seated round the festive board, and neither the Rookwooders nor the St. Jim's juniors needed a second bidding. They "piled in," and during a hearty meal they discussed to-morrow's match. Jimmy Silver & Co. vowed that they'd give Tom Merry & Co. a kicking, to which the St. Jim's juniors emphatically returned, that they'd administer a thorough "walling" to Rookwood on the greensward. It had to be a very hasty meal, and Tom Merry & Co. had to hurry away within a quarter of an hour. Jimmy Silver & Co. lent them bicycles in order that they might reach the station in time for the train. They accompanied the St. Jim's juniors to the station, and rode back the borrowed machines.

"The train arrived at Ryelombe at seven minutes to six."

"Plenty of time if we sprint back!" said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, watah!" said D'Arcy. "Grierson won't catch us on the hop this time, dear boys!"

"Come on!"

The four juniors ran down Ryelombe High Street, and took the leafy lane which led to St. Jim's.

At the cross-roads Figgins gave a sudden gasp.

"Oh crumbs! Grammarians!"

The figures of Gordon Gay, Wootton major and minor, Frank Monk, Carboy, and Mont Blong, of Ryelombe Grammar School, were visible at the cross-roads. The Grammarians chuckled when they saw the St. Jim's fellows.

"Hallo!" said Gordon Gay. "These little boys are in a hurry. More haste less speed, you know! Grab the boundaries!"

Tom Merry & Co. had to stop. They gasped in dismay as their rivals bore down upon them.

"Here, hold on, Gay——" began Tom Merry.

"Right-ho, old son! I'm holding on!" said Gay sweetly, as he jerked Tom round by the collar and bore him, struggling, to the grass.

"Pax, you rotters!" roared Blake, as the two Woottons assailed him. "Look here, we've got to—— Yarwoocoh!"

"Oh, you fearful watahcs! Leggo! Yarwoocoh!" shrieked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, going down, with Carboy and Mont Blong on top of him.

Frank Monk was wrestling with Figgins. Figgins was about to protest when Carboy, sitting on D'Arcy's chest, roared out and grasped Figgins' ankle, bringing the New House leader bounding to the ground with a yell.

"Oh crumbs! You-ow! Gerroff my chest, you rotter!" moaned Tom Merry, who had been taken at a disadvantage.

"We've got to get back by six——"

"There goes six!" shrieked Blake, as the village clock began to chime. "Oh

crumbs! That's done it! We're all in for a licking!"

Gordon Gay & Co. looked at their fallen rivals in astonishment.

"What are you chaps gassing about?" asked Gay curiously. "Do you mean to say that you've got to be indoors by six?"

"Yes. That's why we were running!" shrieked Tom Merry. "Oh, you blithering idiots! We've got a new Head, and he's made rules that all we juniors have to be in by six o'clock. We shall be locked now, sure as a gun! Oh, you— you—"

"My hat! I'm awfully sorry, Merry!" exclaimed Gordon Gay, rising and assisting his rival to his feet. "We saw you running, of course, but had no idea that you—"

"Oh, you chuckle-headed jackasses!" growled Blake, getting up. "We're in for no end of a row when we get back!"

"Bai Jove! I am all in a flitch, dear boys!" said D'Arcy, groping for his monocle, polishing it, and adjusting it in his eye. "My jacket and trousers are wumpled, and—"

"Never mind about your clobber, Gussy!" said Tom Merry impatiently. "Let's hurry back to St. Jim's as quickly as we can. It's all right, Gay; we can't blame you. You didn't know the circumstances. We should have done the same to you if we had been in your position."

"But suppose we came along and explained things to your new Head—honour bright?" asked Gay seriously.

Tom Merry shook his head.

"You don't know Dr. Grierson," he said ruefully. "He'd think it was a put-up job, and refuse to believe us. No, old son; thanks very much, but we've got to shove on up to another time."

"Come on!" said Figgins.

"Wun like anything, dear boys!" Tom Merry, Blake, Figgins, and D'Arcy ran as fast as they could back to St. Jim's. Taggles was in the gateway when the juniors arrived, panting and hot.

"Five past six!" he said. "Which you know I oughter report yer—"

"Taggy, old son, where is Grierson?" asked Tom Merry, grasping the porter's arm.

"Which, I believe, 'e's at a meetin' with the other masters," replied Taggles. "Better 'urry hinddoors and get hout of it hif you can. Wot I says is this 'ere, although I thinks as 'ow all boys ought to be drowned, you young gent's is ben't treated very 'air-like me. 'Eef I'll ad my way with Grierson—"

"Yes, Taggy, we know you don't like him," said Tom Merry hastily. "Thanks for winking over this. If Grierson's at the meeting we may be able to get in unobserved."

"They ran across the quadrangle; but Blake suddenly remembered that Dr. Grierson stationed a prefect on the Hall door after six o'clock to see that no boy went out, and to report any boy who came in late. The prefect for that evening was Gerald Knox, the bully of the Sixth."

"Well, what's to be done now?" said Tom Merry, pausing in dismay. "Unless one of us got in through the pantry window. There's room for a slim fellow to get through. Gussy, old man, would you like to risk it for us? You are slimmer than any of us. All you would have to do is to climb in at the pantry, come round to the back door, and open it for us. Nobody will spot you if you are careful."

"Very well, dear boy," said Arthur Augustus graciously. "My clobber is already wumpled, so I don't mind. If

you will bunk me up, I'll climb through into the pantry."

"Right-ho! Come on, chaps!" They went round to the back of the School House and halted underneath the pantry window. It was rather high up; but, "bunked" up by Jack Blake, Tom Merry, and Figgins, D'Arcy had no difficulty in reaching it. He gently opened the window and clambered within.

"Gussy's in!" breathed Blake. "Now, I wonder— Mum-my hat! Wh-what was that?"

A terrific crash sounded from the dark interior of the pantry—a crash that struck with awful suddenness upon the ears of the waiting juniors in the quadrangle outside. The crash was followed by sundry other sounds of banging crockery and tin; and then a human voice became audible, reading the still night air with a feebish howl.

"Good heavens!" breathed Tom Merry, in a tense voice. "What ever has happened?"

"Yaroooh!" Yow-ow-ow-ow!" came in plaintive tones from the interior of the pantry.

Tom Merry, Jack Blake, and Figgins surveyed each other with haggard faces. Grim visions of wrath to come floated before their inward vision.

"Gussy's bungled it!" growled Blake. "Oh, why did we let Gussy go in? We might have known he'd have bungled. We're in for it now!"

"Hark!"

Wild commotion seemed to be taking place within the pantry. At length the yells ceased, and silence reigned. Tom Merry, Blake, and Figgins waited outside with bated breath, wondering what next would happen. Minutes that seemed like ages passed, and then Gerald Knox strode into view.

"Come indoors, you little rascals!" he said, in a burly voice that plainly evinced the satisfaction he felt at the juniors' predicament. "You've let yourselves in for something this time! Go straight up to Dr. Grierson's study!"

Tom Merry & Co. went, feeling far from happy. Knox saw them into the Head's apartment, and retired, muttering. Gerald Knox had always been up against the heroes of the Lower School, and had already constituted himself a special crosby to the new Head.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was in the Head's study, looking ghastly, and, had the circumstances been different, Tom Merry & Co. would have regarded his appearance as extremely funny. He was smothered in flour and marmalade from head to foot. The sticky substance clung to him lovingly, pickles and flour stuck to the marmalade, the effect being very ludicrous. Another junior was there before the Head, too. He was short and plump, and, through the marmalade on his face, was recognisable as Baggy Trimble of the Fourth. Baggy was liberally covered with marmalade and flour and pickles, and little pieces of broken china adhered to his person, making it quite evident that Baggy had sat down in a basin and broken it.

Tom Merry, Blake, and Figgins gaped. Roughly, they could guess what had happened. But this was not the time for speculation. The hard, cold gaze of Dr. Grierson was fastened upon them.

"Well?"

The expression on the new Head's face indicated for Tom Merry & Co. that they had better say what they had to say. "What have you to say?" he demanded in icy tones.

Tom Merry looked him boldly in the eyes, and told him exactly what had happened, excepting to mention the names of the Grammarians who attacked them. Dr. Grierson sneered openly

when he heard how the four juniors had been prevented from reaching St. Jim's by six o'clock.

"Really, Merry, I admire your ingenuity in devising such an excuse, but you can hardly expect me to credit your statements," he said. "You lads had ample warning of what would happen if you returned after six o'clock. Not content with disobeying my orders, you seek to enter the school surreptitiously, in the hope of evading punishment. That attempt has made matters worse. The incident in the pantry is disgraceful, and you shall all be punished. As for the other miserable youth—what were you doing in the pantry, Trimble?"

"I—I—I—"

"Explain your presence in the pantry, boy!"

"I—I was hungry, sir!" stammered Baggy. "There wasn't much for tea in Hall, and—and I have a very weak constitution to put it up. So I went down to the pantry to get something to eat. Really, sir, all I wanted was a piece of bread, or—or—"

"Do not prevaricate, Trimble! You have been stealing the jam and preserves! Touch your toes!"

Baggy very unwillingly did so. This was the fourth time, since the advent of Mr. Grierson, that he had been made to touch his toes, so that his anatomy ought to have become hardened to the process of caning. But, to judge by Baggy's yells of agony as the cane descended, his anatomy was still extremely tender.

Tom Merry was the next to suffer the degrading ordeal of being caned whilst touching his toes. He hesitated at first, but on account of the lights deemed it best to obey the new Head.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy "wefused" to touch his toes. He "wegahded" it as "infwa dig." Dr. Grierson, greatly enraged, strode forward to grasp D'Arcy and force him to his will, but drew back when he saw the marmalade and pickles. So he compromised by caning Arthur Augustus viciously on the palms of his hands, grinding his teeth with rage. D'Arcy bore the cruel caning with a stiff upper-lip, although the blood of all the D'Arcys was boiling in his veins. Figgins and Blake submitted to the tyrant, and touched their toes.

"I understand," said Dr. Grierson, when the castigation was over—"I understand that the object of your visit to Rookwood was to discuss a cricket-match that was to take place to-morrow, Merry?"

"Yes, sir," replied Tom Merry.

"Then the match shall not take place. I forbid all eleven juniors who intended going to Rookwood to leave this school to-morrow afternoon, and shall instruct Taggles not to allow any of you out of gates."

Tom Merry & Co. looked thunder-struck.

"But, sir," gasped the captain of the Shell, "we—we can't scratch that match! It's most important, and—"

"That is no concern of mine, Merry. Personally, I am not in favour of boys at school devoting so much time to these rough and ridiculous games. I have said that the match at Rookwood shall not take place to-morrow."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed George Figgins, in horror, "surely we can be punished some other way!"

"Do not argue with me, boy!" thundered Dr. Grierson. "I shall issue a detention for the whole Shell and Fourth Forms if you persist in trying to dissuade me. Go immediately, and do your preparation!"

The juniors went. At the end of the

corridor Monty Lowther, Manners, Digby, Herries, and a crowd of other juniors were anxiously awaiting them. When the news was told there was general consternation.

"But, Gussy, what happened?" exclaimed Herries.

"I got in through the window, and fell into a huge bowl of pweeswie," replied the swell of St. Jim's dolefully. "Of course, Mrs. Kebble is makin' matrimonial—I had forgotten that. Then I wan into Baggay Awimble, who was havin' a feed on his own. Baggay thought I was a ghost or something, and in the struggle which ensued we upset all the tins and cwokewy and the flourbin, and got ourselves in a howwid mess. Gwooooh! My cobblah is wuined, and I feel frightfully uncomfy. I'm goin' up to have a bath and a change, bai Jove!"

And Arthur Augustus squeaked away up to the bath-room, followed by Baggy Trimble, who walked with a decided limp.

"No match with Rookwood to-morrow, chaps?"

"It's unbearable!"

Feeling was very bitter against Dr. Grierson in all ranks of the school that evening. The list for the match comprised Tom Merry, Lowther, Blake, D'Arcy, Talbot, Levon, Kangaroo of the School House, and Figgins, Kerr, Wynn, and Redfern of the New House. Dr. Grierson took down all these names, and gave Taggles instructions not to allow them out of gates during the half-holiday.

"We sha'n't put up with it, Kildare!" said Tom Merry to the captain of St. Jim's that evening as the Shell fellows and Fourth-Formers trooped up to bed. "We're going to have that to-morrow, Kildare if it means expulsion!"

Kildare looked uneasy.

"Look here, kids, don't act the goat," he said. "I know how you feel, but you can't kick against the traces!"

But Tom Merry's face wore a determined look. When lights were out in the dormitory, Jack Blake & Co., with several other members of the Fourth, came along to the Shell dormitory, and a meeting of the members of the St. Jim's Junior Union took place, by candlelight. The meeting was carried up in subdued voices, but excitement ran high.

"Well, you chaps," said Tom Merry, addressing the School House members of the Junior Eleven. "are you all game to break bounds to-morrow afternoon? I've heard from Figgins, Wynn, and Redfern. They are quite willing."

"There was a breathless hush in the dormitory, and then a clamour of soft voices.

"Yes, Tommy, we'll do it!"

"Bwitons nevalh shall be slaves, bai Jove!"

"Hear, hear!"

"And, if there are ructions afterwards, we shall complain to the governors," said Tom Merry grimly. "It's a mad trick. I know, for eleven of us to defy the Head; but, under the circumstances, I think we are justified!"

And the Fourth-Formers crept away to their own dormitory, with their minds made up to follow Tom Merry's lead and take "direct action" to-morrow afternoon.

CHAPTER 5.

Bolted!

"STOP! Merry, Blake, Figgins, D'Arcy—all of you! I command you to come back this instant!"

Dr. Grierson's voice rose to a wild shout. He was rushing across the old quadrangle of St. Jim's, and before him ran a party of eleven juniors.

Dr. Grierson had left the St. Jim's Junior Eleven in the Sixth Form-room, under the eagle eye of Gerald Knox of the Sixth. Knox enjoyed the task of supervising the confined juniors that afternoon. But he had not bargained for the plot that had previously been laid.

Upon a signal from Tom Merry, the whole eleven of them rose and dashed upon Knox. The bully of the Sixth was taken quite unawares. A hand was clapped over his mouth to prevent him yelling out, and next minute a heavy gag was thrust between his jaws, and deftly made fast. Strong, quick fingers bound his legs and arms, and within the space of five minutes the Sixth Form prefect was lying on the floor of the Sixth Form-room bound, gagged, and utterly helpless. His eyes rolled grotesquely as Tom Merry & Co. took some rope from beneath a form, opened the window, made one end of the rope fast to a form, threw the other end out of the window, and then proceeded to climb out of the window, down the rope, to the quadrangle.

Manners, Herries, Digby, Kerr, Julian, Kerruish, Reilly, Lawrence, and Owen were awaiting the runaways outside the school gates, with bicycles. The other St. Jim's fellows who intended seeing the match had already gone down to Rylcombe, confident that Tom Merry & Co. would succeed in "pulling it off."

Things had gone without a hitch until Dr. Grierson had come into the Sixth Form-room and seen Blake, the last to climb down the rope, disappear out of the window. He did not succeed in stopping Blake. Waiting only for an instant to cut Knox's bonds, the new headmaster dashed downstairs, and into the quadrangle, in pursuit of the runaways.

Knox appeared shortly afterwards. The master and the prefect ran furiously after the escaped eleven.

"Stop!" shrieked Dr. Grierson.

"Come back, you young rotters!" roared Knox.

Tom Merry & Co. looked back, grinning. They had no fear of being caught.

"Rats!" retorted Blake. "We're off to Rookwood, and hang the consequences! Go and eat coke!"

"Stop!" howled Knox.

"Stop!" screamed Dr. Grierson.

Tom Merry & Co. vanished through the school gates. The others had already locked Taggles in his lodge. They were waiting outside, in Rylcombe Lane, with their own bikes and the machines belonging to the members of the fugitive eleven.

"Oh, good men!" gasped Tom Merry, grasping his machine from the hands of Kerruish. "Mount and get away as quickly as you can, chaps! We haven't too much time to reach the station for the train!"

"Right-ho, Tommy!"

They mounted their machines, and rode away in a large party, just as Dr. Grierson and Knox appeared in the gate-way.

The new Head and his cronies stood spellbound in the middle of the road as they saw the throng of cyclists speeding down the lane, chortling with glee.

"Good heavens!" muttered Dr. Grierson, white to the lips with ungovernable rage. "The insolent scamps have defied me! It is a plot! They have accomplished!"

"No doubt about that, sir," said Knox. "I fancy all the Shell and Fourth are in this. They're all going over to Rookwood."

"Bless my soul! They must be stopped! We must go after them, Knox! Come with me! We will take the local train from Rylcombe."

"Can't, sir!" said Knox sullenly. "It's in the station by now, and those young rotters will only just about catch it."

Dr. Grierson set his teeth hard.



Upon a signal from Tom Merry the Juniors dashed upon Knox. The bully of the Sixth was taken quite unawares. The next minute a gag was thrust between his jaws to prevent him yelling out. Within the space of five minutes the Sixth Form prefect was bound, gagged, and utterly helpless. (See this page.)

"Very well," he said. "I will telephone to the headmaster of Rookwood School, and request him to have those boys sent back as soon as they arrive."

With that Dr. Grierson stalked away and hurried indoors.

Five minutes later he was seated at the telephone, viciously demanding the number of Rookwood School. The young lady at the exchange seemed to resent his impolite tones, and kept him waiting. Consequently, when he did obtain a connection, Dr. Grierson was on the verge of violence.

"Is Dr. Chisholm there?" he snapped. "Who?" came a man's voice at the other end.

"I want Dr. Chisholm!" grated the new Head. "Call him at once! I am the headmaster of St. James' School, and wish to speak to him concerning some boys who have run away against my order."

A faint gasp sounded over the wires. "Dr. Chisholm isn't known here, sir," said the other voice. "This is Conrube Vale Asylum. Do you wish the runaway boys to be taken in here? We——"

Clatter!

Dr. Grierson rang off. Breathing hard through his nose, he waited for a few moments, and then took up the receiver again.

"I want Coombe, one-three-nine-eight!" he breathed sulphurously into the mouthpiece.

"Coombe, one-three-five-eight!" said the young lady's voice sweetly. "I gave you that a minute ago, sir!"

"One-three-NINE-eight!" shouted Dr. Grierson, had-temperedly.

At length, after an exasperating wait, he was connected with Rookwood.

"Hello! Is that Dr. Chisholm?" he said roughly.

"Dr. Chisholm is speaking," came a calm, cultured voice over the wires. "Who are you?"

"I am Dr. Grierson, of St. James' School."

Dr. Chisholm was heard to give an exclamation of surprise.

"Bless my soul! What do you require with me, sir?"

"I have to inform you, sir, that a party of junior boys belonging to your school have, in defiance of my authority, broken detention in order to play a cricket match with the boys of your school," breathed Dr. Grierson tensely. "They will probably soon be arriving at Rookwood, and I shall be much obliged to you, sir, if you will kindly prohibit the match and have the young renegades sent back to me."

"Goodness gracious!"

"There was a pause."

"Well, sir?" hissed Dr. Grierson.

"Under the circumstances, Dr. Grierson, I must decline to interfere in this matter in any way," came the voice of Dr. Chisholm tartly over the wires. "I have heard the circumstances of the case from Dr. Holmes, who is at present my guest at Rookwood, and as trouble appears to have ensued since that gentleman's resignation as headmaster of St. James', I regard it as entirely your own affair to control your pupils. I shall certainly not refuse any of Dr. Holmes' late pupils admittance to Rookwood."

"But—but—" gasped Dr. Grierson. Slam!

Dr. Chisholm had rung off. The Usurper ground his teeth, and viciously hung up the receiver. There seemed no hope now of the returning Tom Merry & Co. This realisation was like gall and wormwood to Dr. Grierson. He sat in his chair, his eyes glinting like points of fire, his fingers working convulsively. His whole aspect boded ill for the fugitive eleven when they returned.

THE GEN LIBRARY—No. 690.

CHAPTER 6.

Bravo St. Jim's!

"COOMBE!"

The train stopped, and Tom Merry & Co. poured out on the platform. The fast train had brought them from Rycombe to Coombe, the little village near Rookwood School.

The old-fashioned High Street was soon crowded with schoolboys. Some of the Rookwood fellows met the visitors at the station, and the St. Jim's Eleven found a brake waiting for them outside. Jimmy Silver & Co. were there; also Tommy Dodd, Tommy Doyle, and Tommy Cook of the Modern Side. They greeted the St. Jim's fellows cheerily.

"Here we are again, old sons! Pile into the brake!"

"Thanks!" said Tom Merry. "We've had an awful job to get here!"

"Yaas, wathah! It was a nawwow squeak, bai Jove!"

On the way to Rookwood, Tom Merry & Co. recounted their adventures with Dr. Grierson since last night. Jimmy Silver & Co. and the three Tommies gaped.

"My only Sunday topper!" ejaculated the chief of the Fistical Four. "What nerve! You chaps have some pluck, I must say. But won't there be the dickens of a row when you return to St. Jim's!"

Tom Merry shrugged his shoulders. "We'll put up with that," he said. "The St. Jim's Junior Union has been formed to deal with all grievances, and 'direct action' will be taken again, if necessary. Anyway, we're not going to bother about what's going to happen when we get back. We've come to give you chaps a kicking!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof!" said Monty Lowther. "Here we are at Rookwood!"

The sports ground at Rookwood was thronged with a mixture of merry Rookwooders and St. Jim's fellows. As the rival teams walked out into the field there was a sensation round the pavilion, and then a huge burst of wild, joyful cheering from the St. Jim's visitors.

They had recognised Dr. Holmes, their own old headmaster, with Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, outside the pavilion!

"Hurrah!" roared Monty Lowther lustily. "Here's our real Head! Cheers for Dr. Holmes, boys! Hurrah!"

The cricket-ground rang with cheering. Dr. Holmes, his hat off, his white hair blowing in the light breeze, looked round with tears in his eyes. This great ovation from the boys who had last week been his pupils greatly affected him. He stood up to speak, and a great silence fell on the crowd, who eagerly listened to every word.

"My dear boys, I thank you for this mark of esteem!" he said. "I am here as the guest of Dr. Chisholm, and have great pleasure in coming to watch this cricket match this afternoon. I need hardly say that I expect my old pupils to play up, and play the game, and I hope to see them win!"

"Hoorah!"

"We will!"

There was another burst of cheering, and then the stumps were pitched. Jimmy Silver and Tom Merry tossed for ends, and the Rookwood skipper won.

The St. Jim's cricketers stationed themselves on the field, and the game commenced.

It was apparent, from the first, that Jimmy Silver & Co. were in great form. The great Jimmy himself, and Tommy Dodd were the first partners at the stumps. Fatty Wynn, the champion bowler of St. Jim's, went on to bowl.

He bowled his level best, feeling that, under the eye of Dr. Holmes, he must exceed himself this afternoon. And Fatty did exceed his usual brilliancy.

Jimmy Silver had to adopt stonewalling tactics, for Fatty's "yorkers" took some getting used to. The two junior House leaders of Rookwood played steadily before Fatty's hurricane battery. Scoring was slow. Tom Merry looked joyfully at Fatty as, for the sixth time, the ball crossed over, and the score was only 15!

"Get him out this time, Fatty!" said the St. Jim's skipper encouragingly.

Fatty nodded, and gripped the leather. Tommy Dodd, facing him, gritted his teeth, for he saw the look in the Welsh junior's eye. Fatty took a little run, and sent down a scorching. Tommy played out, was deceived by the cunning break in the ball, and groaned when he heard the ominous rattle of falling stumps, and saw the wicket spread-eagled.

"How's that, umpire?" chorled the delighted St. Jim's fellows.

"Out!"

Val Mornington succeeded Tommy Dodd. He played a careful game, but had the misfortune to be caught out by Tom Merry in the slips. Teddy Grace was next, and stayed at the wicket for just two balls. The first he hit out for a couple, and the second knocked his balls flying.

The Rookwooders looked dismayed. But when Tommy Cook, in collaboration with Jimmy Silver, commenced to "make things hum," their hopes ran higher.

Fatty Wynn had retired for a breather, and Jack Blake took most of the bowling. The telegraph-board registered 56 when Jimmy Silver went back to the pavilion, having been run out by a brilliant throw in the "twigs."

Then Fatty Wynn took the leather again, and scoring slowed down. He did not perform the hat-trick, but he despatched Van Ryn, Lovell, and Conroy in very quick succession.

Tommy Doyle took the wicket, and brought cheerful looks to the faces of his schoolfellows by scoring three boundaries and a string of doubles, before his partner, Kiri Errol faced the bowling. Errol put up a magnificent game, and added 30 to the score. The tail-end of the Rookwood innings fared very badly, and by the time the innings was finished, the grand total for Rookwood was 163.

"Good old Fatty!" said Tom Merry, slapping the fat Fourth-Former on the back, as they made tracks for the refreshment-room. "You've played splendidly! If we can't make more than 153 for our innings, I'll eat my hat!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy enthusiastically. "It weally seems that we shall win, deah boys! That will be erstawa gwaifying, consid'erin' that Dr. Holmes is watching us."

"Hear, hear!"

Tom Merry & Co. were in high feather when the time came for their innings. Tom took the first wicket, with Talbot as partner. Jimmy Silver bowled, and proved that he was a brilliant exponent of that art.

The St. Jim's juniors found that the victory they coveted would not be so easy to attain as they anticipated.

Scoring was slow, but it mounted surely. Talbot went, then Blake, and Fatty Wynn. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made the magnificent score of ten, but his stumping was hard luck, for he was in good form.

The match proceeded until five o'clock. Redfern was "still going strong" when Monty Lowther came in as tenth man. Teddy Grace dismissed Monty with a "duck's egg." There was breathless suspense all over the field, for the St. Jim's

score, so far, was 151. Ernest Levison had been selected to stand last for his side, and it rested with him and Redfern whether St. Jim's pulled off the victory. "A dozen to draw—13 to win!" bawled Grundy excitedly. "If you let us down, Levison, I'll give you a whopping!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Play, Levison!"

Levison grinned at Grundy's dark threat, and "centred." Then he faced Teddy Grace, who, by various mysterious signs, had indicated to Jimmy Silver & Co. his grim determination to deal summarily with the St. Jim's last hope.

But Levison proved a jibe that was not forlorn. Mindful of the task before him, he had studied Teddy Grace's bowling from the pavilion, and now he proceeded to stand up to him confidently.

Levison raised loud howls of delight from Tom Merry & Co. by slogging the first delivery away for 4.

"Good old Levison!" chortled Blake. "A couple more like that, old son!"

Grace sent down a "scorcher," which Levison was wary of. Then came another, which Levison hit. But it was only for one.

Then Redfern once more faced the bowling, setting his teeth grimly.

Snaek! went his bat upon the leather, and 3 runs were registered.

Excitement ran high. Teddy Grace put all his knee into the bowling, but did not catch either Redfern or Levison napping. Three doubles in quick succession were collected, and then Tom Merry & Co. surged forward.

St. Jim's had won!

"Hurray!"

"Played, Levison!"

"Good old Redfern!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked rueful, but they took their defeat like the sportsmen they were.

Dr. Holmes shook hands with Tom Merry and Jimmy Silver, and then the Rookwood skipper made a bold request.

"We are all having tea together before Tom Merry and the others leave for St. Jim's," he said. "Would you—ahem!—honour us by having tea with us, sir?"

"I shall be delighted, my boy!" said Dr. Holmes, smiling.

"Oh, how ripping!"
The tea took place in the junior Common-room, on the Classical Side. The room was crowded. Dr. Holmes took the seat at the head of the table, and he made a speech before he went.

Tom Merry & Co. had to leave Rookwood at last. Jimmy Silver & Co. and Tommy Dowl & Co. accompanied them to Coombe Station, and saw them aboard the train.

It was a merry, cheering throng that returned to Rykcombe that afternoon.

CHAPTER 7.

"Booking" the Tyrant!

"NOW for a wop, deah boys!"
"Arthur Augustus D'Arcy spoke those words quite cheerfully as the St. Jim's juniors went in at the gates of St. Jim's, and crossed the quadrangle.

It was five minutes to six, and, as Monty Lowther philosophically remarked, there was some consolation in not being late, anyway.

Kildare and Darrell were chatting by the Hall door of the School House when Tom Merry & Co. came in. The prefect gave the youthful cricketers serious glances.

"You reckless little asses!" said Kildare sternly. "So you've come back!"
"Yes, here we are, Kildare, large as life, and twice as natural!" said Tom Merry cheerfully. "Where's the beak?"

"Dr. Grierson is in his study; he's been raging all the afternoon," replied

Kildare. "There's a notice on the board that will interest you."

Wonderingly, the returned juniors went over to the notice-board, round which a crowd of boys had gathered. These boys made way for Tom Merry & Co. There seemed something strange in their silence and their looks at Tom Merry & Co.

Not until they had read the notice did Tom Merry & Co. realise the cause of the general dismay. This is how it ran:

"NOTICE.

"All boys will remain in Big Hall after prayers this evening, when the public flogging will take place of the following boys, found guilty of insubordination:

"Thomas Merry, John Blake, George Figgins, A. A. D'Arcy.

"All other boys concerned with these in breaking detention this afternoon will be also summarily dealt with.

"(Signed) JAMES GRIERSON,
"Headmaster."

Tom Merry & Co. gasped.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, polishing his monocle, and reading through the notice once again. "We are going to be publicly flogged! Great Scott! What are we going to do about it, deah boys!"

Tom Merry set his teeth grimly.

"Chaps," he cried, addressing the gathered throng of juniors, "most of you here are members of the Union we formed yesterday. We all pulled together this afternoon, took 'direct action,' went over to Rookwood, and there licked Jimmy Silver & Co. That was our first success, and it shows that, by all pulling together we can do things.

Now, we saw Dr. Holmes, our old Head, over at Rookwood, and there was not one fellow among us who did not feel jolly sorry that he had left us."

"Hear, hear!"

"Down with Grierson!"

"We don't want the Usurper!"

"Let's have Dr. Holmes back again!"

When the cries had subsided, Tom Merry addressed them again.

"Members of the St. Jim's Junior Union!" he cried, in a ringing voice. "Why did Dr. Holmes leave us? What forced him to give up his job to the Usurper? Simply because he stuck up for us! The old Head wouldn't agree to grinding us down, and so had to leave!"

"Shame!"

"Dr. Holmes was all right!"

"Our old Head stuck up for us!" said Tom Merry. "Now it is up to us to stick up for him. Chaps, we'll move heaven and earth to get Dr. Holmes back again!"

"Great pip!"

A great hush fell upon the juniors assembled round the notice-board. Kildare and several of his fellow prefects were standing by the Hall door, but they did not "chip in." Their sympathies were all with the juniors. Had it not been for their prestige as prefects, they would probably have joined Tom Merry & Co.

"I mean what I say," cried the captain of the Shell. "Now's the time for us to stick up for Dr. Holmes, and have him back. Let's take 'direct action' again! Out with Grierson, and down with all his rotten rules and regulations! And, boys, we'll start our 'direct action' in Big Hall this evening!"

"Good old Tommy! We will!"

"Are you all ready to follow my lead?" asked Tom.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"We'll back you up, Tommy!"

"Hands up for 'direct action' and the return of Dr. Holmes!" cried Tom.

Every hand went up.

"Good!" said Tom. "Here comes Grierson. We'll discuss matters at greater length in the Common-room later."

Dr. Grierson swept into the Hall. His dark eyes scintillated evilly when he saw the returned juniors.

"Go away to your studies, and do your preparation!" he rapped. "Boys making further disturbance here will be caned!"

He did not say a word concerning the



"Now, you little renegades!" said Dr. Grierson, through the opening of the door. "If you do not—Yarrah! Ooooh! Swoosh! A flood of icy water, propelled from the water-jug by Tom Merry, caught Dr. Grierson full and truly in the face. He fell back, gasping and gurgling incoherently. (See page 13.)

afternoon's escapade. Evidently he was saying that until later on.

When prep was over Tom Merry & Co. attempted to hold a meeting in the Common room, but Knox was staying in the vicinity, and they had to abandon the project. But Tom Merry & Co. had laid their plans. In Study No. 10 the Terrible Three and Jack Blake & Co. wrote out instructions on a score of sheets of impot paper, and these instructions were issued secretly to the trusted members of the Union.

At half-past seven all the school assembled in Big Hall for a call-over. It was apparent that tense excitement was in the air. Everybody seemed to be on tenterhooks of anticipation. When the roll had been called, and everybody had answered "Adsum" to his name, Dr. Grierson took prayers. Then, having concluded that office, he rapped for silence.

"All boys will kindly remain in their places," he said, in a voice that though low, was grim with intonation. "I have a task to perform which I trust will serve as an object-lesson to the rest of the school, that my authority here cannot be defied with impunity. Eleven members of the Shell and Fourth Form were detained by me this afternoon, but in spite of my orders, they assaulted a prefect, and broke detention. Before I proceed to flog the ringleaders, have any of those boys a statement to make?"

Tom Merry stood forward until he was close to the headmaster on the platform. "I have something to say, sir, which I want all the school, masters as well, to understand. I and the three others who are to be flogged with me were prevented from reaching the school by six o'clock last night. We were late through no fault of our own, but we admit we did wrong by trying to enter the school by the pantry. But we were caught and punished; each of us had a jolly severe caning. That, every decent person would agree, was sufficient punishment. But, on top of that, you, sir, detained not only we four, but the whole eleven as well—chaps who had done nothing wrong. We considered that absolutely unjust and unreasonable, consequently we took the law in our own hands this afternoon, and went over to Rookwood. I appeal to the other masters. Mr. Railton, as our Housemaster, would not have treated us like that."

All eyes were turned upon Mr. Railton, the popular master of the School House. "Well, Mr. Railton," said Dr. Grierson, "this boy has appealed to you. What is your opinion on this subject?"

Mr. Railton returned the Head's glance fearlessly.

"Personally, Dr. Grierson, I consider that you exceeded your duty by the punishment meted out to these eleven juniors," he said quietly.

"Hear, hear!" roared Kangaroo of the Shell, and soon everybody had taken up the "Corstall's cry."

Dr. Grierson darted a baleful look at Mr. Railton.

"Indeed, sir?" he said tartly. "Well, as I am not in the habit of being guided by subordinate masters, I shall certainly please myself. Merry, Blske, Figgins, and D'Arcy, I command you to step upon this platform!"

There was a hush as Blake, Figgins, and D'Arcy detached themselves from the fronts of the Fourth and walked to the front. Tom Merry accompanied them upon the platform. Dr. Grierson rang the bell. Taggerts, who entered, carrying a large birch. He did not seem to relish the task before him of "hoisting" the boys to be flogged.

"Merry shall be the first to be THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 690.

punished," said Dr. Grierson, swishing the birch maliciously. "Merry, I warn you that if you attempt to escape—"

"Now, boys!" cried Tom Merry, turning to the school. "Book him!"

"Whizz! Thud! Wallop!"

A perfect hurricane of books came from the ranks of the Shell and Fourth. The juniors had, according to Tom Merry's instructions, brought books into Hall. This was quite a common practice for the boys of St. Jim's. But it was by no means a common practice to hurl those books at the headmaster on the platform!

"Good heavens!" "Boys, I—Yaroooh! Yah! Ow!" roared Dr. Grierson, falling back before the heavy missiles. "Desist! You young rascals! Yooooooooh!"

"Whizz! Bang! Thud! Whack!"

Books surged upon the luckless tyrant, smiting him, with loud concussion, all over his person. He roared. The school roared, too.

"Whack! Thud!"

"Wallop!" cried Mr. Railton, in consternation. "Cease this madness at once—"

"Rats!" roared Grundy, hurling a huge Lexicon, that smote Dr. Grierson in the back of the neck. "Down with the tyrant! 'Direct action,' boys! Another one for his nob!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The process of being "booked" by the warlike juniors was more than Dr. Grierson could stand. He rushed indignantly out of Big Hall by the side door, followed by a thorough bombardment of books.

Big Hall was in an uproar.

"Victory once more!" yelled Tom Merry. "Chaps, now we've started the ball rolling, may it continue to roll, until Grierson is rolled out and Dr. Holmes returns!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Grierson must go!" yelled Tom Merry. "That's our watchword henceforth! G.M.G., Grierson Must Go!"

"Hurrah!"

"G.M.G.!"

"We'll make him go!"

In vain did the other masters and the prefects try to maintain order. The whole Shell and Fourth Forms, School House, and New House juniors alike, were in a wild with Tom Merry & Co. They were all determined to stick together, were all agreed upon one thing. And that was—G.M.G.

CHAPTER 8.

"Direct Action."

"COME on, boys!" sang out Tom Merry. "This is where we start our barring-out! No more work until Dr. Holmes comes back!"

"Hurrah!"

Led by the captain of the Shell, all the juniors trooped out of Big Hall, and upstairs. The prefects stood spell-bound. Wally D'Arcy & Co. of the Third were speechless with awe and wonderment.

Tom Merry & Co. first went to their own studies, and shifted those articles of furniture and personal belongings that they needed. These were removed up to the Shell dormitory. Dr. Grierson, with Knox at his heels, rushed along the corridor, in an effort to stop the moving operations, but were "rushed" by a troop of determined juniors, led by George Figgins. The New House fellows, usually on terms of rivalry with the School House fellows, now barred the hatchet and joined forces in the bold endeavour to get rid of Dr. Grierson, the worst headmaster it was possible for a schoolboy to imagine. As Figgins remarked, Mr. Ratcliff, their own House-

master, was bad enough, but Grierson

"knocked Ratty into a cocked hat." The Shell dormitory was full of overflowing by the time the necessary furniture was installed there. And, when the Shell fellows and their allies of the Fourth crowded into the room, there was hardly room to move. But the St. Jim's strikers did not mind.

"Well, chaps, we're all at headquarters," said Tom Merry, looking round him cheerfully. "Now we have to decide on a plan of campaign. It will be impossible for us to remain in here for any length of time. Grierson is an obstinate rotter, and he'd probably hang out. And he could easily see that we didn't get any grub. No, chaps, we're going to have a barring-out of a new sort. Dr. Holmes has had to resign because of the new rules and regulations. Well, we are going to follow the old Head's example, and resign from St. Jim's until Grierson clears out. Remember—G.M.G."

"Great pip!"

"We're going to resign from St. Jim's!"

"What are you driving at, Tommy?"

Tom Merry regarded the surprised juniors with a broad grin.

"I've got it all out and dried!" he said.

"We're going to make Grierson and the rotten governors sit up. We'll resign from St. Jim's and live somewhere else. Now, this is where the cream of my wheeze comes in. You know that large house just before you get to Rylecombe Wood, standing a little way back from the lane? That house has been unoccupied for months and months. In fact, it's an empty house just waiting for tenants. Now that empty house belongs to Lord Parrish, one of the governors who is responsible for this row at the school. Chaps we'll clear out of St. Jim's to-night, with the necessary furniture, and take possession of that empty house. We'll live there, until Grierson clears out of St. Jim's and Dr. Holmes comes back!"

"By gum!"

"What a wheeze!"

The St. Jim's strikers gasped. Tom Merry's novel scheme had quite taken their breath away.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Well, Tom Mewey, it's a wippin' ideal! Lord Pawfish is sure to get his back up when he hears that his house is being occupied by all we fellows, and Grierson's posh at St. Jim's will be intolerable, with practically half the school driven away into lodgins!"

"By ha, ha, ha!"

"Chaps, it's a dandy scheme, and we'll do it!" cried Blake enthusiastically.

"We'll take up lodgings in the empty house to-night! We'll be a little community on our own, until Grierson goes!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll do it!"

"Cave!" cried Robert Arthur Digby, who was stationed at the door. "Here comes Grierson!"

"No! a word about the wheeze, chaps!"

Dr. Grierson, his face white, his eyes seemingly on fire, strode along the corridor. When he looked in at the door of the Shell dormitory, and saw the preparations Tom Merry & Co. had made for a barring-out, he stood rooted to the floor.

"Good heavens!" he ejaculated. "What is the meaning of this?"

"G.M.G.," said Tom Merry, amidst an intense silence. "G.M.G., sir—Grierson Must Go!"

"Wha-a-!"

"G.M.G.—Grierson Must Go!"

"That's our motto, sir!" said the Shell captain staunchly. "We're fed up with your rules and regulations, and your rotten tyrannies on top of them, and we want our old head back. There was never all this trouble and row in the school while Dr. Holmes was headmaster. We refuse to be ground down and sat upon. We are going to stick up for our rights. We are all determined not to do any more school work until you have resigned your position as headmaster!"

"Good heavens!"

Dr. Grierson's face went pink and white by turns. This ultimatum had quite taken him aback.

"What—what!" he managed to gasp at last. "You boys refuse to work until I am gone? Is insurrection! You—you cannot mean—"

"No, we do mean it, sir," said Tom Merry. "We're going all out to get Dr. Holmes back. We don't want you and your rotten rules!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Clear out, and let us have some peace at St. Jim's!"

"We were happy enough with Dr. Holmes!"

"We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dr. Grierson trembled with rage.

"You little rascals! I have never heard of anything more infamous in all my life!" he exclaimed, in a voice that seemed to be a snarl. "Take all these things out of this dormitory at once, and return to your studies for preparation! If you don't, I shall take measures to have you removed!"

"Rats!" yelled Jack Blake triumphantly. "No more work until we get Dr. Holmes back. We refuse to obey your orders! You're not our headmaster!"

"What!"

"No, sir; we don't recognise you as our head!" said Tom Merry, taking the cue from Blake. "We'll obey Dr. Holmes, but nobody else—not even Mr. Raitton, if he asks us to obey your orders! Everybody is fed up with you!"

"So you refuse to leave this room and obey my orders?" fumed Dr. Grierson.

"Yes, rather!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"G.M.G., dead boys!"

Dr. Grierson stood irresolute for some moments. Then, with a baleful look round the room, he swept out.

Tom Merry & Co. looked meaningly at one another.

"He's gone to fetch help, to storm us out!" said Tom Merry. "But Grierson won't succeed in getting us out of here! We're leaving to-night, anyway, to take up our quarters in the empty house!"

"Rather!"

The door was shut and locked, and a barricade of bedsteads and wash-stands placed against it. Soon there came the sound of footsteps outside, and a fierce rapping at the dormitory door.

"Open this door immediately!"

"It's Grierson," said Tom Merry, "and—"

"Open this door, you young sweeps!"

"Knock!"

"Let 'em all come!"

Bang! Thud! Bang!

"Will you obey me and open this door?"

"Rats!" replied Tom Merry. "We'll come out when Grierson agrees to leave St. Jim's for good!"

"Hear, hear!"

"This is disgraceful! I—I have never had to deal with such unruly boys in all my life!"

"Go hon!"

"I—I—I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently Dr. Grierson was at a loss for words. The voice of Taggles, the school porter, could be heard. Taggles had been summoned for assistance.

"Hark!" said Tom Merry. "They're unscrewing the lock!"

"Bai Jove! So they are, dead boys!"

Tom Merry signalled to Blake and Manners. These youths grasped each a water-jug, and waited until the lock was off. Taggles managed at last to remove it, and the dormitory door was shoved open a little way—the barricade prevented it opening farther.

"Now, you little renegades!" said Dr. Grierson through the small opening. "If you do not—Yarsoogh! Oooohh! Swoooooosh!"

A flood of icy water, propelled from the water-jug by Tom Merry, caught Dr. Grierson well and truly in the face. He fell back, gasping and gurgling incoherently.

"Plenty more water!" sang out Blake cheerfully. "The first one to show his face will receive a swamping! Now, then, roll up!"

But nobody "rolled up." Dr. Grierson's face had evidently discouraged those who might have been disposed to face the St. Jim's rebels.

Dr. Grierson raved and stormed in the passage, but this only evoked fresh laughter from the boys in the Shell dormitory. Tom Merry & Co. rebuilt the barricade, and soon had the door impregnable against all comers.

At length, Dr. Grierson gave it up as a bad job. With a few parting threats, in a sulphurous voice, through the key-hole, he departed with his suitcase, and the rebels of St. Jim's were left alone.

"Well, chaps," said Tom Merry, "we'd better have some grub. We've brought in plenty. Got that little cooking-stove, Herries?"

"Rather!"

Fatty Wynn superintended the cooking of supper. A substantial meal of hot cocoa, fried bacon and sausages, bread-and-jam and biscuits was served out. In the middle of this there came a cautious tap at the door.

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry. "Who's that?"

"D'Arcy minor!" came the well-known voice of Wally D'Arcy of the Third. "I say, you chaps, you've got some pluck. Would you like us to join you?"

"No, thanks, Wally!" laughed Tom Merry. "Nah, as good as feast, you know. How's the Usurper?"

"Tearing his hair," replied the hero of the Third. "But, I say, you fellows, I've got some important news for you. Pigzott nosed it out. Grierson's got a wheeze for getting you out of that room to-night. In the middle of the night, when everything is still, he's going to ring the fire-alarm. His idea is that you'll all think there's a blaze on, rush out, and then he and Knox and Cutts of the Fifth and a few others are going to catch you on the hop, and stop you from getting back into the dorm."

"What a deep wheeze!"

The rebels of St. Jim's were astounded. "So if you chaps hear the fire-alarm in the middle of the night, don't budge!" chuckled Wally. "It will be spoof!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Thanks for the tip, Wally!" said Tom Merry through the keyhole. "If you hadn't told us we might have—"

"I reckon I'll cut off now!" said Wally hastily. "Here comes Knox!"

As Wally's footsteps retreated down the corridor, the St. Jim's strikers looked at each other.

"Well," said Tom Merry, with a twinkle of mischief in his eye, "I think

we might go one better on Grierson. Glyn, old chap, could you get something from the chemistry lab that will give off plenty of smoke when burnt?"

"Yes, rather!" said Bernard Glyn. "I could easily get out of the window and into the chemistry lab without being caught. But what in thunder—"

"We'll get up a spoof fire!" chuckled Tom Merry. "It will cover our retreat, you know. Grierson's going to ring the fire-alarm—well, we'll clear out rather earlier than we intended, burn this smoke stuff, and ring the fire-alarm first. That will put the wind up Grierson & Co. He'll see smoke coming out of here, and will break into the room, after a lot of trouble. Then the old bird will have a shock. He'll find diamonds in our beds and the real birds flown!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll do it," said Glyn enthusiastically. "A mixture of sulphur and carbon will give off clouds of smoke when burned. Rely on me!"

CHAPTER 9.
Deluded in the Dark.

THAT night there was a certain liveliness in the Shell dormitory at St. Jim's. According to further regulations of Dr. Grierson's, the whole school had to be in bed by ten o'clock. At half-past ten, the rebels in the Shell dormitory commenced operations.

The window, already greased, was opened, and the various articles of furniture lowered by means of a rope. Bedding and bedclothes were lowered, too. Quantities of papers, rags, and old clothes had been raided from the box-rooms, the fellows leaving the dormitory for this purpose having been successful in fulfilling their mission without detection. Glyn had climbed out of the window and obtained the necessary "smoke-powder" from the chemistry lab. The vacant beds were stuffed with papers and rags, and the coverlets placed on top, so that it appeared as though the beds were occupied.

That done, bundles of necessary clothing and food were made, and the rebels of St. Jim's descended, one by one, down the rope to the quadrangle. All was dark and silent as the grave. St. Jim's, to all intents and purposes, was wrapt in sleep.

Glyn was the last down the rope. He lingered to set fire to the smoke-powder which, though quite harmless in itself, would give off dense volumes of smoke.

"All serene!" asked Tom Merry, as Glyn clambered down the rope.

"What ho!" chuckled Glyn. "The powder's burning like lilly-o! Monty's going to ring the fire-alarm!"

"Oh, good!"

The juniors whiled away the time in converting their bundles and articles of furniture over the side gate. Percy Mellish had been bribed to steal a key to the side gate from the Prefect's Room. The side gate was opened, and the things deposited in the lane.

Tom Merry & Co. waited, and then, through the still silence of the night, there came the loud sound of a gong.

"The fire-alarm!" chuckled Tom Merry. "Now the fun is going to fly!"

"Look, dead boys!" cried Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "The smoke is comin' through the dormy window in clouds. It weally looks as though the woom is on fire, bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dense clouds of dark smoke were to be seen issuing from the Shell dormitory window. The moon shone down brightly, and bathed the school in

(Continued on page 18)

THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 690.



Joy's Gossip

Dear Mr. GEM Editor,—Doris and I have seen a good many of the St. Jim's boys, but this letter must be chiefly concerned with little Tom Holt. He was a new boy, and he did not take very kindly to St. Jim's. He had been hopelessly spoiled by his Aunt Mary, as appeared afterwards, and, of course, he thought that what he did was right, even to wearing jewellery, though Cardew had laughed at him for doing so.

Things must have come to a pass when he decided one evening to run away from St. Jim's. But that brings me back to the beginning. Doris and I were having supper when I heard a man's voice in the lane. The cottage where we were staying was close to the road. I started to the door, nearly fell over my bike I had left in the passage, and reached the strip of garden. I saw in the dusk a couple of gipsy vans and some horses passing our place, while close up to the gate a wee man was struggling with a big, beavny fellow, who was grabbing at the boy's watch and chain.

I saw the poor little fellow being slung into one of the tilt-vans. A cloth drowned his cries. As I ran forward the horses were whipped up, and the caravan went rolling on into the night. I dashed up, but a halting sound gave me a push which sent me reeling into a ditch. By the time I had scrambled up I felt so wild I could have done anything.

"I'll go after those rogues on the bike," I said to Doris.

She had broken hers; but she was jolly brave, and raced off to let the police know.

Then, a minute later, I was pedalling down the lane without a light. I did not know what I could do all alone, but I felt so sorry for the boy. He was such a little chap, and I felt reckless when I thought of what he was suffering. So I just rode straight on and got alongside the van in which I knew the boy was a prisoner.

Well, I grasped hold of the tailboard, and whispered to the captive.

"Is that you, Tom Holt?" I asked. There was a rattle inside the van. It was Tom Holt, sure enough. He managed to put his head out between the canvas flaps.

"Who are you?" he asked. "Oh, I know! It's no use; they've tied my hands and ankles!"

"I'm coming in to set you at liberty," I said.

Holt protested. He actually said he wasn't a bit afraid, but his voice shook.

I jumped off my bike, gave it a shove towards the hedge, and clambered into the van. We heard grunting and talking

farther on, but the gipsies did not seem to be suspicious.

There I was groping in the dark of the van, trying to find my knife; but I hadn't got it, so I had to manage the rope knots with my fingers, and broke my nails. But we had Tom Holt free at last.

"Now, you drop off," I said, "and I'll follow."

Holt hesitated; but at last he agreed to leave the van if I did so at the same time, and then—well, it was the worst part. We were both seized, and a horrid-looking, tramp-like person grasped my wrists.

"You think you're precious clever, doncher?" he snarled in my face. "Now we've got a pair of beauties, and we'll make your folks pay up proper before we let you go!"

They tied my arms behind my back, and bundled us into the van again. But I managed to tear off the lace bow I was wearing on my blouse with my teeth, and it fell into the lane without anybody seeing. I knew there would be a search, but I did feel pretty desperate. The vans turned into fresh lanes, and then there was that nasty coffee-shop we stopped at in the slum of a tumble-down town.

Tom and I were hustled upstairs, and a frightful, fat, red-faced man in charge loomed at us.

Of course, I knew my uncle would pay any sum to get me free; but I set my teeth and hoped he wouldn't, all the same.

But one thing I did discover was that young Holt was a hero. He only thought of my troubles. He had started whimpering about his Aunt Mary when in the van, and about how sarcastic Cardew had been, and Ernest Levison, but that soon finished. He said after that he did not care what happened so long as I did not come to real harm. He told me he knew he had been a nuff and a milkop.

But what beat me was how we were to get out of the hateful, frowsy little coffee-shop. Waiting to be ransomed is poor work. I felt sorry for the kings who had to sit and twiddle their thumbs in the old days while their adoring subjects collected the money to buy them off.

The skylight was solid glass. I knew it soon, for I bumped my head on it in trying to get it open.

I believe the vans had gone on; but some of the men were at the place, when suddenly I heard a noise below. A cry—"Go it! St. Jim's for ever!"—floated up to us. In dashed our captors. They wanted to get us into safety in the cellar, I suppose; but Tom Holt put himself in front of me, and up went his fists. Of course, he was brushed aside. I clung to the table. The roughs were shouting terrible, and then there was a rush.

Cardew, Tom Merry, Talbot, and Ernest Levison charged up the stairs. The scene that followed "baffles description" (I believe that is the right term). There was too much of it. Anyhow, Red Face was sent down like a fat numpin. I rather fancy it was Talbot's fist he met. Well, then the police came, and Cardew told me how he and a crowd had started off when Doris gave the alarm. The best thing, perhaps, was the way Cardew clapped his hand on Tom Holt's shoulder and said they would be chums. I shall have to postpone till next week a lot that I wanted to say about St. Jim's.

Your chippy chum,

JOY.



Captured by the kidnappers!



JOHN SHARPE.

The INVISIBLE HAND



IRON HAND.

This wonderful story has also been filmed by the popular VITAGRAPH Film Company, and readers of the "GEM" should make a point of seeing the picture week by week at their favourite cinemas.

New Readers Start Here.

John Sharpe, the great analytical detective, is engaged by Chief Burnett, of the Secret Service, to track down the band of organised and dangerous criminals operating under the guidance of Iron Hand, a fearless, clever man of dominating personality. Marna Black, one of the band of crooks, is captured, and Burnett induces Anne Crawford, a woman agent of the Secret Service, to assume Marna's identity and get into the confidences of Iron Hand.

She is instructed to keep her real identity a secret even to Sharpe; but she often assists him and sends him information concerning the movements of the gang, and he is puzzled to know just where it comes from.

Iron Hand has a number of hiding-places in different parts of the country, which are referred to as "Nests," the most important of which is Eagle's Nest, situated on a deserted cliff. The leader's chief assistants are Potsdam and Black Flag. John Sharpe has had many big troubles with the gang, and has foiled many of their deepest schemes. Iron Hand has robbed Colonel Blodson, the cattle king, of a casket of valuable jewels, and he takes them to his assistant in Chinatown, Wong Li, to take care of. They are placed in the care of a Chinese idol, and Sharpe, in trying to get them, sets the gong in the Temple ringing.

(Now read on.)

The Furnace of Death.

LEE CHOW led Anne Crawford into a room decorated in a typically Chinese manner. In the centre there was a table upon which rested food and drink. Lee Chow indicated the couch, and invited the girl to sit down. Then he prepared to get the food ready for her, but Anne was still puzzled over the identity of this man, and, calling him to her, she asked: "Where have I seen you before?"

They were alone here, and Anne thought it quite safe to interrogate him. The yellow man's face lit up with gratitude at the question put by Anne.

"You help Lee Chow once in Chicago," he replied politely. "No remember?"

Anne searched her memory. Then presently she recalled the incident to which he referred. The Chinaman was obviously very delighted to be able to render any service to her in return.

"You eat, sleep," he remarked, bowing all the time. "Lee Chow will watch over you. You saved me from prison once!" Lee Chow again went to the table to get ready the food, and Anne, still posing as Marna Black, the woman cook, wondered how she could use the apparent friendship that the Chinese man had for her to her advantage.

In his private office, Wong Li, the great merchant, was busily at work. Suddenly his attention was aroused by the sound of a bell. He rose with a startled expression on his face, for he knew only too well the meaning of this. He rushed hurriedly from the room.

The high priest and his two assistants had also heard the alarm, and were considerably concerned over the affair.

The ringing of the gong, in fact, created consternation in a number of places. The employees in Wong Li's warehouse immediately ceased their duties when they heard it, and hastily hurried away, for everyone had to obey the summons of the idol.

As it continued to ring with what seemed to John Sharpe an increasing loudness every second, he was puzzled to know quite what to do. First of all he rushed with the case towards the door, but turned back, realising that he would probably run into the Chinese if he did so. He looked frantically round the Temple for a satisfactory place to hide.

The attention of Anne Crawford had also been aroused by the persistent sound of the bell.

"What is that?" she asked Lee Chow. "The Temple of Buddha," replied the man, with considerable trembling in his voice.

"Come! No woman may go in, but Lee Chow will show you a place to look."

And Anne followed him. The high priest, joined by Wong Li and the other Chinamen, all very excited, ran in the direction of the Temple.

Sharpe heard the steps approaching, and he darted behind the screen where he had hidden before. The next minute the high priest and a crowd of between fifteen to twenty yellow men dashed into the Temple.

The lights were immediately turned on, and the dead Chinaman was discovered. The high priest turned the man over, so that he and Wong Li could recognise him.

Then, with great solemnity, the priest said: "Buddha has taken vengeance." Wong Li nodded, and then peered into the receptacle on the altar. In an alarmed voice he told the priest to look.

"Where is the treasure?" he asked. "It must be here," replied the priest, "since here is the dead thief. Search!"

He and Wong Li carefully examined the altar, and the other men began to search also, but the casket could not be found.

When Sharpe realised that he was trapped, and he decided to take a desperate chance. He was still disguised as a Chinaman. He walked casually from behind his screen, bending close to the floor, and pretending to take part in the search, he succeeded in mingling unnoticed among the other Chinese.

By this time Anne and Lee Chow had entered a room directly above the Temple. It was one used as a store-house, and there were boxes and packing cases strewn round the floor. There were several ropes also hanging from the wooden beams of the ceiling, and others coiled on the floor. To some of the ropes there were bales suspended. Evidently a precaution to prevent destruction of the goods by rats.

Lee Chow led the way to a sliding trapdoor in the floor, and he motioned Anne to follow him, and keep quite silent. He then opened the trapdoor and peered through. Anne bent and also looked through. She was truly amazed by what she saw beneath.

The priest, Wong Li, and others, including John Sharpe, were still searching for the jewel-case. But the two above did not know what was going on, and when Anne turned a questioning look at Lee Chow, the Chinaman indicated in his own peculiar way that he did not know either what all the excitement was about.

Anne again looked below, and she saw that now the high priest was demanding the attention of all as he stood before the altar, with his arms raised up.

Sharpe still remained unnoticed among the group of men that were now giving the priest their attention. The priest pointed to the idol, and announced "Let Buddha call the faithful to prayer."

He motioned one of his assistants to go over to the gong, and he struck it twice.

Instantly everyone, except the high priest and John Sharpe, prostrated themselves on the floor. This was an unfortunate error of the detective's. He forgot for a moment that he was supposed to be a Chinaman, and would be expected to understand their religious customs. As it was, he was standing while everyone else around him was kneeling on the floor.

The high priest was quick to notice this, and he realised at once that there was present a man who did not belong to the faithful. As soon as he realised his error John Sharpe hastened to follow them. But he was too late. The high priest called the attention of the others, and ordered them to seize the detective.

He was brought helpless before the high priest at the altar. One of his assistants knocked Sharpe's cap from his head, and it was seen immediately that he was not a Chinaman. His hands were quickly bound.

From her position above, Anne saw all that was going on. And she was very excited when she recognised the face of John Sharpe below. This was the first occasion since Iron Hand had ordered him to be thrown over the precipice, and she was highly elated that he was still

alive; but her pleasure quickly vanished, for she felt that once more he was in deadly peril. Could she do anything to help him?

There was tremendous excitement below when the men realized that there was a stranger amongst them.

"There is the thief!" announced the priest, as he pointed an accusing finger at Sharpe. "A foreign devil. Where are the jewels?"

In spite of his unfortunate predicament, the detective showed no fear, despite the fact that he was entirely at the mercy of the Chinamen. They could not quite understand his easy presence in the face of his danger.

With a slight laugh Sharpe pointed to the jewels, and the high priest quickly went over to the spot indicated and recovered the jewel-case.

Opening it, he showed the contents to Wong Li. They breathed easier, and then turned their attention again to their prisoner. Their hearts were filled with rage at this white devil who had dared to come into their temple.

"The sacrifice must be purged by fire," announced the priest, in his strange, monotonous voice. "Let all be made ready."

One of his assistants hurried out of the room in obedience to a signal from the high priest, and the others forced Sharpe into the raised space before the altar. At a nod from the high priest one of the men cut his bonds. The high priest again looked around at the assembled crowd.

"Buddha claims only willing sacrifices," he announced, and poor John Sharpe prepared for the worst fearfully.

Anno Crawford was watching the events with terror in her eyes. She turned to her companion, Lee Chow. "What are they about to do?" she asked leadingly.

"Chow turned towards her. "Look! See!" he replied. "They give foreign devil to sacred fire."

Anne was horror-stricken. Again she looked through the trapdoor. She had no eyes for anyone but John Sharpe, and she saw him standing defiantly before the altar, waiting for death.

The assistant priest, who had been sent out, had returned again, and, approaching his master, he bowed and reported to him.

"All is ready, master," he said.

The high priest nodded and gave a signal to the others, and at once a weird chant filled the temple.

The men swayed backwards and forwards with religious fervour, and the high priest slowly walked over to the wall, where a lever was disclosed, while the others commenced to kneel before the idol.

Sharpe realised that all was up with him, and he could not but feel a little uneasy. He looked around at the group, and then down at his feet, for he suspected that he was standing on a trapdoor.

"What's all this about, anyway?" he asked.

All the priest's attention was upon the lever, and he showed little interest in the detective's question. He was mad with religious fanaticism.

"Let there be darkness before the great light comes!" he murmured, and the chanting of the Chinamen grew louder and louder.

One man was manipulating the light in the temple, and it gradually grew dimmer and dimmer, so that it was almost impossible to make out the figures of the kneeling Chinamen, but a brilliant light was directed upon the priest and the idol, so that they stood weirdly in the surrounding gloom.

THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 690.

The high priest's hand had now gripped the lever.

Anne was more worried than ever, and her blood nearly froze when Lee Chow whispered in her ear, "The sacred fire comes."

Francic with fear for Sharpe's safety, she decided that she must do something, and at once. If only she could spare his life for a moment, and prevent this horrible death, it would be something.

She looked around, and her eyes dwelt upon one of the ropes extending from a beam in the ceiling, and which was coiled on the floor near the trap. The girl seized it, and, holding it for a moment above the trap, she yelled out loudly:

"Sharpe, the rope!"

Then she hurled it down through the opening.

Sharpe, who was ever on the alert, gazed up directly he heard the voice. At that moment the rope tumbled down in front of him, and at the same time the high priest's hand grasped the lever and pulled it.

There was a sudden burst of flame surrounding the detective's feet, as the trapdoor upon which he stood opened suddenly. Sharpe dropped through it, and a great burst of flame ascended high in the trap.

The high priest, still standing up, and the others kneeling, chanted their weird hymn louder than ever.

But the detective's good angel had once more rendered him a good turn, and although he had fallen through the trapdoor, he had managed to clutch the end of the rope, and he hung on to it like grim death. The next second he commenced to climb up hand over hand as fast as he could.

The Chinamen above were raving more and more, and their strange religious ceremony was now at its height. This was fortunate for the detective, and the fact that the room was in almost total darkness, made Sharpe's escape easier, and they did not notice what was going on.

The high priest and his followers were rejoicing in the fact that the white devil was being devoured by the consuming furnace below, but suddenly he caught sight of a figure at the top of the rope now disappearing through the trapdoor into the room above.

Lee Chow and Anne retired to make room for him, and Anne Crawford whispered excitedly to her Chinese companion:

"He must not recognise me! Come!"

And the two hurried through the only door.

Great bursts of flame now came up through the trapdoor at intervals, which showed only too well the force of the fire, which raged beneath. Had Sharpe not escaped when he did, nothing could have saved him.

Roused to action, the high priest shouted angrily:

"He escapes! Quick! Your knives!"

John Sharpe was drawing himself up through the trapdoor, and before he had time to close it the Chinese hurled their knives up at him through the opening.

He had just time to get away as a number of knives burst through from the room below.

It was a lucky escape, and the detective did not want to take any more risks, so he closed the door without hesitation. One of the knives had passed through his clothing, just grazing him, and he pulled it out.

The next thing for him was to find a way of escape. The high priest had closed the trapdoor in the temple and

shut out the flames. Then, as the lights went up again, he exclaimed joyfully:

"We have him trapped! There is but one way out of the upper chamber!"

At his command, all but two of the men rushed out through the door, the two Chinamen remaining bowed before the idol.

Sharpe, hearing the words, rushed to the door and peered out. It led to a plain passage-way, and the high priest, Wong Li, and the others had already peached it. They were wild with rage at being robbed of their sacrifice.

The detective realised that his enemies were about to enter the room. He closed the door, and discovered a heavy beam which would serve as a barricade.

This temporarily protected, the resourceful detective rushed back to the trapdoor through which he had recently entered, and, carefully opening it, he looked through.

The sight of the two kneeling Chinamen met his gaze. Already the others were pounding at the door, and he had to act now, or it would be too late!

He dropped down through the trapdoor. So far the attention of the praying Chinamen had not been drawn to him. The detective hung for an instant, and then dropped full on the back of one of the men. He knocked him senseless, and turned in time to grapple with the other one.

The men above were now battering hard at the door, and some of them were attacking it with axes.

It did not take Sharpe long to dispose of his other adversary. Breaking away from his grip, he delivered a knock-out blow which sent him reeling to the floor.

Having dealt with the Chinamen, John Sharpe turned his attention once more to the jewels. He was going to rush forward and grab them, when he suddenly remembered the dangerous mechanism of the idol, and he drew back instantly.

Then he carefully removed the cloth from the altar, and, lifting up a heavy chair, he placed that upon it. Producing his knife, the detective started to cut some long, stout strips from the bamboo screen.

Meanwhile, the men above were continuing their assault upon the door, and had almost succeeded in breaking through. There was very little time left for Sharpe to act, if he were to get away in safety. By skillfully inserting the pieces of bamboo sticks into the receptacle containing the jewel-case, the detective was able to lift it out.

But even as he did so, the mechanism of the idol commenced to work, and the arms of the god descended with crushing force on the chair, smashing it to pieces.

The next minute the gong commenced to ring its warning again. The high priest, Wong Li, and the others who were attacking, paused in their efforts for the moment at the sound of the bell. Once again the ominous ringing told them that someone was interfering with their precious idol.

The high priest speedily gave orders for half of the men to go back and guard the temple exit, while the remainder redoubled their efforts, and soon succeeded in smashing through the door. Led by the high priest, the party entered the room above the idol, and Wong Li started to open the trapdoor.

That gentleman was rather surprised and dismayed to see the two Chinese guards lying down full-length upon the floor unconscious.

Only a moment before, Sharpe had fortunately discovered a secret door leading to the interior of the idol, and,

(Continued on page 18).

thrusting the jewel case inside, he scrambled in after it.

Wong Li and others of the party dropped through the trap-door, and the next moment entered through the doorway.

Everybody looked frantically around for Sharpe, and then, remembering how they had been fooled before, some of them carefully scrutinized the two Chinamen to make quite sure that the detective was not impersonating one of them.

John Sharpe was not feeling too comfortable in the limited space inside the idol, but he had to make the best of it. Not long after he had made his entry, a small ray of light revealed the presence of a peephole in the interior of the idol, and Sharpe hastened to make use of it.

Peering through the hole, the detective could easily see the searchers looking for him, but in vain.

He was considerably amused to watch their fruitless efforts—then suddenly his expression was changed to one of horror, for he saw the Chinese priest pointing towards the idol, and overheard him say that the interior of the god was the only place which had not been searched so far.

Once again Sharpe felt that he would be within their clutches, and he shivered to think of the ghastly fate he had so recently missed by what seemed almost miraculously.

In his last effort to find a way of escape, Sharpe glanced down at his feet; and then, taking out his knife, he commenced to dig away at the woodwork in the floor. It occurred to him that there might possibly be some secret passage-way communicating with the interior of the idol.

This proved to be correct, and when an opening below the floor was disclosed, Sharpe at once descended through it, although he had not the slightest idea what it was, or where it led to. For all he knew, he might presently meet with a worse fate than that which one he was endeavouring to escape from. But it was worth risking!

The detective found that it was a narrow vertical passage, with a ladder leading from the base of the idol.

When he reached the bottom, Sharpe made his way along the horizontal passage-way, which was dimly lighted by electric bulbs. He carried with him the precious but troublesome casket of jewels.

The search-party followed the lead of the high priest, and hurried toward the rear of the idol. There were loud shouts of indignation at this profaning of their shrine. The Chinese high priest opened the secret door, and started to enter.

Face to Face.

ALTHOUGH John Sharpe was unaware of the fact, the secret passage he had taken during his flight was connected with Nest 1, the underground headquarters of the Crime Trust.

Iron Hand and Potsdam, who had recently set out for it, arrived to find, to their great satisfaction, that it was still unknown to the police.

In the luxurious panelled room of the underground haunt the leader of the gang and his second-in-command were conferring.

"Everything is all right here," Iron Hand was saying. "Evidently the secret died with Sharpe. We must return to the

Chinese joss-house for the jewels, and also Maria Black; we may have need of her soon. We'll use the secret passage this time—it's shorter."

The leader rose up from his chair and opened a panel in the wall, and the two men passed through to the secret passage.

John Sharpe hurried through the tunnel, turning his head every now and again with an apprehensive look upon his face. He was wondering how long it would be before Wong Li and his party were upon his track again.

Presently the sound of footsteps ahead of him attracted his attention and made him pause. So he was not alone in the tunnel.

Who were the other occupants? he wondered.

It was not very long before the detective recognised the approaching figures. He put his hat as much over his eyes as possible, and, hiding the jewel case, hurried forward again.

To make a bluff of it was his only chance of success. If he hesitated it would be his undoing, and there was just a possibility that Iron Hand and Potsdam would think he was one of the gang, and pass him by. It was unlikely that anyone not in the know could gain access to the secret passage. So, with considerable fear in his heart, John Sharpe braced himself up, and prepared for the ordeal.

Fortunately his ruse was successful. Although the two gangsters glanced at him as they passed by, they did not apparently recognise the detective, and, with a sigh of relief, he hurried on again, in case they should change their minds and challenge him, or ask for the password.

The two leaders, of course, still believed Sharpe dead, but they were soon to be disillusioned. Arriving at the end of the tunnel, Sharpe opened the panel and entered the office belonging to Iron Hand.

The detective was, of course, already familiar with the secrets of the underground headquarters of the gang.

There was very soon a hue and cry after him, and Wong Li and the others were rushing along the passage when they came face to face with Iron Hand and Potsdam.

"Did you see him?" hastily questioned Wong Li, in a state of great anxiety, gasping for breath.

"Who?" inquired the leader, with a look of perplexity.

"The foreign devil who violated the shrine and took the jewels has fled that way!" returned Wong Li, pointing in the direction along which the two had recently come.

Potsdam suddenly recalled the man who had passed them in the tunnel.

"We'll get him in the Nest!" he growled.

With wild shouts, the party hurried along the tunnel.

Meanwhile, John Sharpe made his way to the well which had served him a good turn on a previous occasion. Climbing down the ladder, he descended until he came near the surface of the water, then he dropped the jewel case down, and it sank immediately.

The detective ascended the ladder, and made his way to the leader's room again, when the sound of many hurrying footsteps reached his ears. It was too late now for him to move or carry out his original idea.

Assuming an attitude of complete coolness and indifference, John Sharpe took out his cigarette-case and extracted a cigarette. Taking a match from a box

on the desk, he lit up and puffed away contentedly.

The next moment Iron Hand, Potsdam, Wong Li, the Chinese high priest, and the rest of the curious party burst into the room.

They stood amazed as they looked upon the cool, unfurried man in front of them, and there was a dead silence.

"Sharpe!"

It was a great effort for Iron Hand to utter the word, so puzzled and surprised was he.

The detective smiled at the sound of his name, and, removing his hat, he bowed low, at the same time remarking: "At your service!"

The leader's face was distorted with rage and hatred, and it was difficult for him to speak.

"You have escaped us again!" he hissed. "This time—"

There was an ugly look in his wicked face.

Everybody crowded round the detective, with the idea of overpowering him, but Sharpe stepped back and raised his hand for attention. What would be the next move of this amazing man?

A hush came over the crowd, for they were all curious to know what he would say, and there was something in his amazing personality which made them obey.

"You and your friends are after the jewels, I take it?" he said, addressing Iron Hand.

Loud and angry exclamations came from the crowd, as they surged nearer to him.

"Well, you will never get them, except through me!" he continued. "I know where I hid them, and you don't!"

The gang were staggered for a moment to hear this, and they realised that Sharpe had the upper hand. Calling the leader nearer to him, and measuring him with his eyes, Sharpe said:

"All I want is a sporting chance! Clear your friends out, and get a knife like this. We'll fight it out, man to man, and the winner takes all!"

(Get next week's GEM for the continuation of this amazing story.)



REMEMBER

that Constable Cuddlecock, the Pride of the Force, and Bobbie, the Terrier Toy, are out to capture new readers. The Comical Couple are on duty every week in

"Jester"

Buy It NOW! 1^d.

The Rebels of St. Jim's

(Continued from page 13.)

mythic radiance. Lights leaped up in the windows. It was evident that the fierce clanging of the fire-alarm had had its effect.

"Here's Monty!"
Monty Lowther dashed up, breathless but cheerful.

"I've worked the giddy oracle!" he chuckled. "You ought to see the rumpus over in the School House! All the chaps are out in their pyjamas. I saw Railton and Linton in dressing-gowns. Selby is rushing about in an awful funk. Grierson and Knox have rushed up to the dormy. They can't understand it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Well, chaps, this is where we shift camp!" said Tom Merry. "We'd better get into our new lodgings as soon as possible!"

Meanwhile, pandemonium reigned supreme in the School House. The fire-alarm had brought everybody from bed. The scene of the "fit" was soon located.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Dr. Grierson, standing in the corridor outside the Shell dormitory, and watching, in horrified fascination, the smoke as it poured from under the door. "The—these little rascals have set the room on fire! They must be in there! We must get in at once!"

Taggles, assisted by the prefects, had got the school fire appliance into operation. A huge water-hose was connected with the main in the bath-room, and Taggles turned the water on. Crowds of white-faced, scared schoolboys were at the end of the passage, coughing and sneezing as the dense blue smoke assailed their nostrils.

"Come, Knox, let us get the door open!" gasped the headmaster. "This affair may be serious. Taggles, mind how you operate that hose—
Bang! Crash Thud!

The door gave way at last, and a thick

cloud of pungent blue smoke belched forth. The masters and the boys fell back in horror, coughing and spluttering. "The water, Taggles—at once!" screamed Dr. Grierson. "If those boys are still—atichoo!—in the dormitory they must be suffocated! Yerrugh!"

Taggles sent a deluge of water in at the door of the dormitory. There was no hissing of steam. There were no flames to be seen, only masses of thick smoke.

The smoke began to clear somewhat, and Taggles, gaining in courage, advanced into the room and swept the beds with the water.

"Gerrugh! The smoke is clearing, Taggles!" gurgled Dr. Grierson, striding into the room, a handkerchief clasped to his nose. "Good heavens! The beds are occupied! The boys have been suffocated while they slept!"

Dr. Grierson, with fast-beating heart, strode over to the nearest bed and tremblingly raised the coverlet. He expected to see an inert, pallid figure of a schoolboy. He almost fell down when he beheld a jumbled mass of rags, old coats, and used exercise-books.

"Bless my soul!"

Taggles dragged off another quilt, and his eyes almost goggled from his head in amazement when he saw the "dummy" sleeper.

The boys of St. Jim's crowded forward, and Wally D'Arcy hauled up the coverlet of Tom Merry's bed. He picked up, from the top of a bundle of books, a sheet of impot paper, and he read aloud the message it bore:

"To Dr. James Grierson, the Usurper,—We, the members of the St. Jim's Junior Union, hereby announce that you have been dished, diddled, and done brown! So sorry your fire stunt didn't come off, but we had a spoof fire to work as well. G.M.G. stands for Grierson Must Go! We have followed the example of our own headmaster, Dr. Holmes, and resigned our positions at St. Jim's until he comes back. If you want peace and quietness at St. Jim's, clear out! We're not coming back until you are gone! Britons never shall be slaves! G.M.G."

There was silence for a moment, after the reading of this amazing message. Kildare discovered the still smouldering smoke-powder, and a wild howl of laughter broke out from the juniors and seniors alike.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!"
"Grierson's been spoofed!"

Dr. Grierson's face was truly remarkable to behold. His varying expressions were wild and wonderful in their effect. He seemed to gulp, and his fingers worked spasmodically. At last, he managed to make himself heard above the tumult of laughter.

"Silence!" he shrieked. "This is no laughing matter! Such an affair is unprecedented! Go back to bed! Taggles, clear up this water! I—I shall have to consult with the governors to-morrow!"

Great excitement reigned. The whole school laughed loud and long over the affair. Dr. Grierson fumed. He had no sleep that night. The departure of two whole Forms was sufficient to worry any headmaster—especially when he realized, in his heart of hearts, that he was responsible!

Meanwhile, Tom Merry & Co. were taking possession of the empty house in the Kylecombe Woods. They had no difficulty in gaining an entrance. Soon they were installed in the lower rooms, rough beds were made on the floor, and they sank down to sleep. Tom Merry, Blake, Figgins, Talbot, and Kangaroo took it in turns to "keep cave" during the night.

They felt quite cheerful. This was a bold escapade, but they were confident that their project would succeed. They meant to live in these temporary quarters until the Usurper had left St. Jim's. One o'clock boomed from the village church clock, and in the raided house, after a day and night of exciting adventure, sleep at last overcame the Rebels of St. Jim's!

(There will be another grand long story of the chums of St. Jim's next week, entitled: "EXILED FROM SCHOOL!"—By Martin Clifford.)

CHAT ABOUT ST. JIM'S AND GREYFRIARS.

William George Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, seems to be gaining more admirers every day. Sure, the porpoise himself must even know that love is blind.

I have just been on Mr. Martin Clifford's track to make inquiries as to whether the juniors of St. Jim's are likely to pay a visit to the seaside this summer. He informs me that we can all rest assured of its being a "shore" thing.

Aubrey Racke, having started his rascally escapades so early, shows every appearance of proving a poor father when he grows up. Well, to all intents and purposes, he at present looks very much like making a father poor.

We hear from good authority that David Llewellyn Wynn's suits cost 25s. more than that of any other junior at St. Jim's. Really, one cannot state with certainty whether it is a case of waste or waste!

Many are the letters of complaint that reached me referring to the absence of Joy's letter in one of our recent issues. Well, Joy herself wishes me to state it was quite unavoidable, as everything was quite upside down at her place owing to spring cleaning. It won't occur again she informs me.

Many of my readers who enjoy the grand stories about William George Bunter, of the "Boys' Herald," agree with the saying, "laugh and grow fat." It is nice to hear that some are able to live on the "fat" of the land. Take my tip, grow and be laughed at.

With reference to our recent story, entitled "Through a Terrible Ordeal," an anxious reader, wishing to cheer the unfortunate Figgins up, writes saying that without a doubt there's a silver lining in every cloud. I fully agree with our chum, but it isn't everybody that has an aeroplane to reach it!

Since starting our magnificent art portraits of the chums of St. Jim's, numerous readers have sent me letters containing their attempts at sketching some of these world-famous characters. It seems to be one of a "sketching" complaint.

Now that King Cricket "knocks" at the door, all fond lovers of real good and exciting cricket stories would do well to start reading the fine series just starting in this week's issue of the "Boys' Herald," entitled: "Stringer—the Demon Bowler." I feel fully convinced that these fine stories will "strike" the wicket first time.

According to information prior to going to Press, we hear that poor old Buggy Trimble has again got himself in the war. Sure enough, whilst he was prowling around the pantry in search of some marmalade, he got severely "jammed" in the door.

EDITORIAL.

My Dear Chums.—
During the past few weeks many of my correspondents have asked for a new "Barring Out!" story, and they will therefore, I am sure, be doubly delighted with this week's magnificent yarn, entitled: "The Rebels of St. Jim's." This rallicking and exciting story is just the kind you enjoy so much, and the climax will come as a big surprise. The sequel to "The Rebels of St. Jim's" will appear in next week's "Gem" under the title of "Exiled From School," and this story also will be crammed with interest

and packed with dramatic surprises. You must not miss this thrilling adventure story. Some of my readers state that they have a difficulty in getting the "Gem" because it is sold out so quickly. Well, the remedy for this is to go to your newsgast as early as possible each Wednesday, and secure your copy before they have all gone. Another good plan to prevent disappointment, is to give a regular order to your newsgast, and he will then save you a "Gem" each week. The Editor of the "Boys' Herald" tells me that the new cricket story, entitled:

"Stringer—The Demon Bowler," it creating a sensation in that paper. Stringer, who was the popular hero of the football story, "Out for the Cup," is making new friends every day in his new part. You should get the "Boys' Herald" now if you want a real good treat. It is only 1d., and is on sale everywhere. Owing to the extra length of our school story this week, "My Readers' Own Corner" has been left out, but this popular feature will appear as usual in next week's "Gem."
YOUR EDITOR.

The Money-Saving Sweet



AT the cost of only 1d. you can enjoy an hour or more of Sweet enjoyment.

EVERY 3d. Packet of WRIGLEY'S 3 FLAVOURS contains 6 LONG-LASTING Bars of Concentrated Sweetness.

THERE are 3 Flavours, and you can enjoy them in turn or keep to which one of these you like the best:

JUICY FRUIT

is a revelation of the delicious flavour of crushed ripe fruits. Every "bite" is like a sip of the juices of the fruits.

SPEARMINT

has the Mild Mint flavour that moistens the mouth and refreshes the feelings.

DOUBLEMINT

gives you the full flavour of the nectar-like Creme-de-Menthe Liqueur.

TRY WRIGLEY'S 3 FLAVOURS ONCE and you will understand why they have the Largest Net Sale of any Sweet in the World.

WRIGLEY'S is the greatest little pick-me-up in the world, and it is also unrivalled for whitening the teeth, cleaning the tongue, and sweetening the breath. Enjoy a bar whenever you feel "dry" and whenever you feel tired, whether at work or during play.

SOLD EVERYWHERE

WRIGLEY'S

COSTS LITTLE
LASTS LONG

Wrigley's, Ltd., 235, Westminster Bdg. Rd., London, S.E.1.

Don't Wear a Truss!



Business deal at a reasonable price. Write at once for our Illustrated Booklet.

BROOKS APPLIANCE CO., LTD.
1590C, 80, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.



FACTORY TO RIDER

Packed Free. Carriage Paid. Fifteen Days' Free Trial. LOWEST CASH PRICES. EASY PAYMENT TERMS. Prompt Delivery. Save Dealers' Profits. Big Bargains in Shop Sold and Second-hand Bicycles. Satisfaction guaranteed or Money Returned. Write for Monster Size Free Lists and Special Offer of Sample Bicycle.

MEAD CYCLE COMPANY, Limited
Dept. B 607, BIRMINGHAM.

DO YOU LACK SELF-CONFIDENCE? Do you suffer from nervous and neuritic ailments that draw the broken parts together and binds them as you would a broken limb. It absolutely holds firmly and comfortably and never slips. Always light and cool, and conforms to every movement of the body without chafing or hurting. We make it to you on a strict guarantee of satisfaction or money refunded, and we have put our price so low that anybody, rich or poor, can buy it. Remember, we make it to your order—and if you send it back to us, and we will refund your money. That is the way we do business—always absolutely on the square—and we have sold to thousands of people this way for the past ten years. Remember we have no sales, no harness, no lies, no fakes. We just give you a straight business deal at a reasonable price. Write at once for our Illustrated Booklet.

BECOME BIG NOW. The plume of business and social life goes to the man who has height and physique to match it. You can easily increase your height from 2 to 5 inches, and improve your health, figure, and carriage, by the Girvan Scientific Treatment. Used by Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, Colonel de Franca, D.S.O., M.C., M.M.'s, and D.C.M.'s. Merely send 5 penny stamps for particulars.—GODFREY ELLIOTT-SMITH, Ltd., 527, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C.4.

CRICKET BATS.—All Cane Handle, 10/6; Full size, 12/6; size, 13/6. STUMPS 5/6. Full size, 7/6. Great Toys, 7/6. 2/6. Steel Shoes, 1/- extra. COMPO BALLS, 1/-, 1/3, 1/6, 2/-. Full List post free. Money returned if not satisfied. Postage, 9d.
TOM CARPENTER, 65, MORCAMBE STREET, WALWORTH RD. S.E.17.

ELECTRIC LIGHT!

BATTERY, WIRE, SWITCH, REFLECTOR, LAMP, INSTRUCTIONS, &c. 5/- & 9/- POST PAID.
HARBORNE SMALL POWER Co., 38 A.F., Queen's Road, ASTON, BIRMINGHAM. Illustrated Cat. 6d.

"CURLY HAIR!" "Mine curled at once," writes Major. Thousands of testimonials, proof of "Summers' Curly" curly straight hair. 1/5, 2/6 (quantity accepted).—SUMMERS (Dept. G.M.), Upper Russell St., Brighton.

TOBACCO HABIT POSITIVELY CURED IN THREE DAYS.—Famous Specialist's prescription, 1/6.—H. HUGHES (Box B.P.), HULME, MANCHESTER.

STAMPS.

Free packet unposted to applicants for approval, enclosing 2d. 100 stamps (used), 8d.
LORD, COWLEY, OXFORD.

All Applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Department, UNION JACK SERIES, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

(SPECIAL ART
PICTURES OF THE
BOYS OF GREY-
FRIARS IN THE
BOYS' HERALD.)

The GEM LIBRARY

1½d



DR. RICHARD HOLMES, D.D. M.A. The respected Hox-
master of St. Jim's.
Special Art Portraits of the Greyfriars Juniors are given FREE with the "Boys' Herald."
You should add these to your collection. (Another Splendid Portrait Study next week.)