

"FROM FOURTH FORMER TO GROCER'S BOY!" Grand St. Jim's
Yarn Inside.

The GEM

2!



FROM FOURTH FORMER

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



TO



GROCERS' BOY!

CHAPTER 1.

Lumley-Lumley Chips In!

"NOW, then, you bounder, clear out!"

Tom Merry looked round quickly as he heard the unpleasant voice. The remark was not addressed to him, but he knew the voice of Levison, the cad of the Fourth, and he wanted to see whom Levison was speaking to.

The School House juniors were at cricket practice on their ground at St. Jim's. Jack Blake of the Fourth was bowling, and he was in great form. Monty Lowther and Manners of the Shell had gone down to his lightning bowling, and Tom Merry was just going to the wicket.

Blake's unusual display had drawn quite a crowd round the field, and some of the New House fellows had come over from their pitch to watch the play. Blake's chums, D'Arcy, Digby, and Herries of the Fourth, were cheering him enthusiastically. It was only practice now, but Blake was shaping well for the coming match with the juniors of Rylcombe Grammar School, and his chums were delighted.

"Bwavo, deah boy!" Arthur Augustus called out at every ball. "Go it, Blake, deah boy! I couldn't do that bettah myself!"

Which was one of the truest statements Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had ever made. Then came Levison's sneering, unpleasant voice, and Tom Merry paused on his way to the wicket. Levison was waving his hand authoritatively to a lad who had come on the cricket field from the direction of the House. It was Grimes, the grocer's boy, from Rylcombe.

Now, certainly Grimes had no business on the school cricket ground. His way lay round the back of the House to the tradesmen's entrance. But Grimes was a cricketer as well as a grocer's boy, and he had seen the play from

afar, and he was just as keen to see Jack Blake's bowling as the St. Jim's juniors were.

So Grimes, instead of keeping on his way to the side gate, had drawn nearer and nearer, in his keenness to view, until he was fairly on the ground, quite forgetting that a grocer's boy with a basket on his arm was out of place in those sacred precincts. Not that any of the St. Jim's juniors resented his presence there, with few exceptions. But Levison was not much like the other fellows. Levison saw a chance of ragging a fellow who was not in a position to reply to him, and it was just like Levison to take advantage of it.

"Clear out!" repeated Levison. "Do you hear, you grocer bounder? What do you mean by bringing your basket here?"

Grimes turned red. "I was jest lookin' at the cricket, sir," he said.

"Well, buzz off, before I help you with my boot."

Grimes was turning to go, but at Levison's last remark he turned back.

"Elp me with your boot!" he repeated. "You'd better not try it on, that's all!"

"Levison!" shouted Tom Merry.

Levison looked round.

"Let Grimes alone. He can stay there if he wants to."

"Yaas, wathah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "If you are intwested in cwicket, Gwimey, deah boy, stay as long as you like."

"Thank you, sir," said Grimes. Levison sneered.

"Rather a new departure to have giddy grocers on the cricket ground," he said. "He's no right here, and he's got to get out!"

"Shut up, you cad!" called out Tom Merry.

"Rats!" retorted Levison. Tom Merry's eyes flashed.

At any other time the cad of the Fourth would not have ventured to

reply "Rats!" to the captain of the Shell. But Tom Merry had just gone in to bat, and he could not leave the pitch to deal with Levison. Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth had just come out of the pavilion with a bat under his arm.

Tom Merry called to him. "Go and punch Levison for me, Lumley, old man."

Lumley-Lumley grinned. "I guess it will be a pleasure," he said.

"Buck up, then; he's going for Grimes!"

"You bet!"

Levison was indeed "going" for Grimes. The grocer's boy was at a disadvantage. He had eggs and other breakable articles in his big basket, and so he was not in a condition for a tussle, as Levison knew very well. The cad of the Fourth advanced upon him with his fists up, with the evident intention of carrying out his threat and ejecting Grimes forcibly from the cricket ground.

Grimes backed away. He was plucky enough, as he had shown in more than one row with St. Jim's juniors and Grammarians in the streets of Rylcombe. But Levison had the advantage now.

"Out you go, your grocer cad!" he exclaimed. "We don't want your sort here. Get out, or I'll bust your basket over your head!"

"I guess you won't!"

Lumley-Lumley came speeding up as if he were fielding a ball. His grasp fell upon Levison from behind, and the cad of the Fourth was swung round. Levison gritted his teeth and glared at Lumley-Lumley. It was not so very long since those two had been friends, and Lumley-Lumley in those days had not been much better than Levison, though always more courageous and more manly.

"Hands off, you cad!" yelled Levison. Lumley-Lumley did not take his hands off. He tightened his grip instead, and

—SPARKLING LONG YARN OF ST. JIM'S—STARRING LUMLEY-LUMLEY.

Levison, white with rage, struck him full in the face.

"Take that! Now—"

Lumley-Lumley reeled under the blow for a moment. Then he struck out, and Levison rolled in the grass.

There was a yell of applause from Arthur Augustus D'Arcy:

"Bwavo, Lumley, deah boy!"

Lumley-Lumley rubbed his cheek where Levison's knuckles had struck, and he grinned as he turned to the grocer's boy.

"It's all serene, Grimey! I guess you can watch the cricket as long as you want to. This worm won't interfere with you again."

Grimes gave him a grateful look.

"Thank you, Master Lumley," he said; "but I've got to get back to the shop. I oughtn't to have stayed, only I saw Master Blake bowling, and—"

"Right-ho!" said Lumley-Lumley. "Just you come along and watch any time you feel inclined, Grimey, when you've got the time to spare. As for this cad, if he bothers you give him a hiding!"

Grimes grinned and nodded, and moved away with his basket, very glad to save his eggs intact.

Levison sat up in the grass and rubbed his nose and glared furiously at Lumley-Lumley.

"You cad!" he muttered. "What does it matter to you about a rotten errand-boy, hang you?"

"Will you have some more?" asked Lumley-Lumley cheerfully. "Don't be backward in saying so."

"Hang you!"

Levison rose slowly and painfully to his feet. He was not a fighting man, and he did not care to face the Outsider of St. Jim's in combat. He preferred to revenge himself, if he could, by safer and more cunning methods.

"Done?" asked Lumley-Lumley, with a grin.

Levison did not reply, but he thrust his hands deep into his pockets and strode away. It was evident that he did not want any more.

Lumley-Lumley strolled back to the cricket pitch. Several voices were calling to him.

"Next man in!"

Tom Merry's wicket had gone down under Blake's bowling. Lumley-Lumley was wanted. He picked up his bat from the grass and went in.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jammed his famous eyeglass into his eye and watched Blake keenly.

"Lumley won't last long," the swell of St. Jim's remarked.

"No fear!" said Monty Lowther.

"I don't know," Tom Merry remarked. "Lumley has been picking up wonderfully on his batting lately, same as Blake has on his bowling, and I think he'll be all right to play against the Grammarians next match. Look there!"

"Bai Jove!"

The ball had come down from Blake like a four-point-seven shell, but Lumley-Lumley was ready for it. The willow gleamed and the ball went on its journey, and there was a shout from the juniors.

"Well hit!"

"That's a boundary!"

"Bravo!"

Jack Blake caught the ball as it was fielded and tossed back to him, and he looked very grim as he prepared to bowl again.

Lumley-Lumley stood up to the bowling with perfect nonchalance, and whatever Blake sent him he sent back.

Neither did the fieldmen get a

chance. There were no catches when Lumley-Lumley was batting.

Tom Merry chuckled joyously as he looked on.

"That's a rod in pickle for the Grammarians," he remarked.

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Bai Jove, I don't believe I could take his wicket myself, you know."

"Go hon!" said Monty Lowther sarcastically.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

And when tea-time put a stop to bowling, Lumley-Lumley was still "not out." He walked back to the School House in the midst of a rejoicing crowd of School House fellows.

CHAPTER 2.

A Row With Rivals!

IN the soft and clear June evening, Lumley-Lumley walked down to the village. It was some time since Lumley-Lumley had seen his father, who had been away in America.

Mr. Lumley-Lumley crossed the Atlantic as other men might cross the Thames, and he was frequently to be found in different continents. The affairs of Lumley's, Ltd., kept the millionaire very busy, and he did not have much time to see his son at St. Jim's.

On the present occasion he was taking a run down to Rylcombe in his magnifi-

There's no snobbery in the make-up of Jerrold Lumley-Lumley, once a waif of the Bowery, New York. And that's why the St. Jim's Fourth Former and his millionaire father fall out—resulting in Lumley-Lumley's being disowned and forced to earn his own living. But does he worry?

cent motor-car, a standing monument to the prosperity of the Lumleys. Jerrold was to meet him in the village, and to take a run to the school in the car with him. Thus the millionaire would be able to have a chat with his son without losing a minute.

Lumley-Lumley was thinking of his father as he walked into the village, and he grinned to himself. The sumptuous motor-car was a change after strap-hanging in the Elevated Railway of New York, which had been known to the elder Lumley in the old days.

St. Jim's was a change to the younger Lumley after the Bowery in New York, the Latin Quarter in Paris, and Limchouse in London.

All those places, and many more, Jerrold Lumley-Lumley had known in the old days, and his experiences were wider and stranger than those of any other fellow at St. Jim's.

Lumley-Lumley reflected sometimes on the change in his fortunes, which had been so great; but he was too much of an adventurer by nature to take it all too seriously. What had come easily might go easily, and Lumley-Lumley was quite prepared, if necessary, to take up the nomadic life again.

The elder Lumley had sent his son to St. Jim's to make his way in the world socially. Lumley-Lumley knew it and grinned over it. He had unlimited pocket-money, and anything he chose to

ask his father for; but he was expected in return to make a good figure at the school, and to make his father proud of him.

The St. Jim's junior was thinking about it as he strolled down the old High Street of Rylcombe, when all of a sudden his cap was pushed forward over his eyes, and he uttered an exclamation.

"St. Jim's waster!"

"Bump him!"

Lumley-Lumley clutched at his cap and put it straight and swung round. Gordon Gay, Frank Monk, and Wootton major, of the Grammar School, were regarding him with grinning faces. There was always war between the juniors of St. Jim's and the Grammar School, and Lumley-Lumley had walked right into the hands of the enemy.

As he expected to see his father's motor-car come in sight at any moment from the London Road, Lumley-Lumley was not looking for a row with the Grammarians, though at any other time he would have been quite willing for a "scrap," without counting odds.

"Here, hold on!" he ejaculated.

"Certainly!" said Gordon Gay genially. "Hold on, you fellows!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Grammarians "held on," but not as Lumley-Lumley had meant. They grasped the St. Jim's junior and held on to him. Jerrold Lumley-Lumley struggled in the playful grasp of the Grammar School youths.

"I didn't mean that, you fatheads!" he exclaimed. "Chuck it!"

"Certainly!" grinned Gordon Gay. "Chuck it, you chaps!"

"It" was Lumley-Lumley. The Grammarians chuckled "it," and Lumley-Lumley sat down in a puddle left by recent rain in the High Street.

Splash!

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Gram-

marians. Lumley-Lumley jumped up in a rage, with water and mud streaming down his trousers, and splashes of mud over his neat Eton jacket. His cap had fallen off, and had dropped into another puddle.

"You silly asses!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lumley-Lumley rushed at his enemies, forgetting for the moment that he was expecting the Lumley's, Ltd., car to come along any minute. The Grammarians roared again, but not with laughter this time.

Gordon Gay received Lumley-Lumley's left in his right eye, and Frank Monk caught his right with his nose. The two Grammarians dropped as if they had been shot, and then the St. Jim's junior closed with Wootton major. They struggled, and the Grammarian was whirled round. A foot caught in his leg, and he sat down on Gordon Gay, and the Cornstalk junior gasped.

"Ow!"

It was Lumley-Lumley's turn to laugh, and he did.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump him!" gasped Gordon Gay. "Roll him over!"

"Yes, rather!"

The three Grammarians jumped up and piled on the St. Jim's junior. Lumley-Lumley resisted gallantly, but he was borne over by the odds against him and bumped on the ground in the puddle he had sat in.

Splash!

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gordon Gay. "Give him another!"

"Rescue!" yelled Lumley-Lumley in

the hope that some St. Jim's fellows might be at hand.

A youth with a large grocer's basket on his arm was swinging by, and he stopped at the sight of the tussle going on in the road.

It was Grimes, the youthful assistant of Mr. Sands, the grocer. He recognised Lumley-Lumley; and in a moment the basket was set on the pavement, and Grimes was rushing to the rescue. One good turn deserves another, Grimes thought, and he rushed into the tussle.

Biff, biff, biff!

Grimes, like Julius Cæsar of old, came and saw and conquered. His sudden attack knocked the Grammarians right and left. Gordon Gay, Wootton major, and Monk rolled over on the ground, and Grimes helped Lumley-Lumley to his feet.

"Thanks!" gasped Lumley-Lumley. "Look out—here come the bounders!"

"Give 'em socks!" grinned Grimes. And in a moment there was a wild and whirling combat going on.

In the midst of it, there sounded the loud hoot of a powerful motor horn, and a big car swung out of the London Road into the old High Street of Rylcombe.

Lumley-Lumley remembered his father's visit, and he caught a glimpse of a gentleman in a silk hat sitting in the car.

"My hat!" he gasped. "My pater! Chuck it, you chaps!"

Gordon Gay whistled. "My hat! It's time for us to go, my children!" he murmured.

And the three Grammarians melted away.

Lumley-Lumley stood gasping for breath, and Grimes wiped a stream of red from his swollen nose. The big car slackened and halted, with a jamming of brakes, and Mr. Lumley-Lumley, millionaire, looked at his dishevelled and battered son and heir with a stern brow.

CHAPTER 3. Disowned!

"JERROLD!" Mr. Lumley-Lumley rapped out his son's name in terrifying accents.

Lumley-Lumley dabbed at his streaming nose with his handkerchief, which was stained with crimson.

He certainly presented a shocking appearance. His jacket was torn up the back, his trousers were muddy and torn, his collar had disappeared, and his face was battered and stained with gore and mud.

Grimes did not look much better. Lumley-Lumley flushed as he met his father's glance. But his usual coolness did not desert him.

"Hallo, dad!" he said cheerfully. "Jerrold!"

"I came down to meet you, popper! Glad I was in time. Shall I get into the car?"

Mr. Lumley snorted. "Get into the car! Certainly not, you disreputable young ruffian!"

Lumley-Lumley grinned. "I'm sorry, pop—"

"Sorry! You look sorry!"

"I guess I couldn't help it. I've been in a scrap."

"I didn't send you to St. Jim's to get into scraps!" roared the millionaire. "You could have got into scraps at a less expensive school."

"I guess I could," agreed Lumley-Lumley. "But, you see—"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

"Who is this?" demanded the millionaire, looking at Grimes with great disfavour.

"Grimes, the grocer's boy," Lumley-Lumley explained. "A friend of mine."

The millionaire turned purple. "A—a—a friend of yours?" he spluttered.

"I guess so, and a good friend, too." "You—you have made friends with a grocer's boy!"

"Why not?" grinned Lumley-Lumley. "I remember I was glad enough to get some crackers from a grocer's boy in the Bowery once—"

"Silence!" exclaimed the millionaire, who did not want his chauffeur to hear any of those little reminiscences. "Silence, you young rascal!"

"Yes, dad, but—"

"Send that boy away."

"I was just goin', sir," said Grimes. "I came to 'elp Master Lumley, sir—"

"He chipped in, like a good pal, to help me," said Lumley-Lumley. "Give us your fist, Grimes, old boy! You're one of the best!"

"Jerrold!" roared the millionaire. "Don't you dare to shake hands with that young hooligan."

"Oh, come off, popper!" said Lumley-Lumley, with certainly less respect than was due to a parent. "Draw it mild, you know. We haven't always been giddy millionaires, and Grimey is one of the very best."

The millionaire seemed upon the verge of an attack of apoplexy.

"You—you young rascal!" he exclaimed at last. "I sent you to St. Jim's to form good associations, and I find you associating with a grocer's boy! You deserve to be taken away from your school, and sent to associate with him for good."

Lumley-Lumley shrugged his shoulders. Whenever he was "ragged" in any way, the old recklessness and obstinacy of his wayward nature were sure to show.

"I guess I shouldn't care," he replied independently. "I could look after myself if you took me away from St. Jim's."

"Silence, sir!" roared the millionaire. "Listen to me—I have told you what I have sent you to St. Jim's for—"

"If you've sent me there to make a snob of me it won't work," said the junior coolly. "I guess I wasn't built that way."

The millionaire raised his hand and pointed to the astounded and amazed Grimes.

"If you speak one word to that boy again, I will disown you, and you shall never return to St. Jim's!" he exclaimed furiously. "I mean it!"

Lumley-Lumley's eyes flashed. "Then I won't return to St. Jim's!" he exclaimed.

"Take care, my boy! I am in earnest."

"So am I!"

"Boy! I—"

"Grimey's one of the best," said Lumley-Lumley; "and you're not going to make me act like an ungrateful cad, popper. Don't go, Grimey, it's all serene!"

"You have disobeyed me!" roared Mr. Lumley-Lumley. "You have spoken to that low person."

"He's not a low person."

"You have chosen low associates instead of those I have selected for you," said Mr. Lumley-Lumley, forcing himself to be calm. "Very well, I will allow you to have your way. I hope it will be a lesson to you. If the school, and if your father's wishes are nothing to you, you can avoid both. You shall not return to St. Jim's. You shall not return to me until you beg for pardon

for your conduct, and promise to amend it."

"I guess there's nothing to amend."

"Silence, sir! Remain with your low friend. I shall go on to St. Jim's and explain to the Head that you will not return!" fumed the millionaire.

"My hat!"

"You will have a chance of reflecting whether it is worth your while to disobey your father and defy him—"

"Oh, come off!" said Jerrold cheerfully. "I don't want your money, popper, and you know it! I don't care a Continental red cent for the giddy millions! And I jolly well shan't ever promise you to be a snob, if that's what you want! And, look here, I'll take you at your word, and I won't come back unless you apologise to Grimes for being rude to him!"

"I—I—I—"

Words failed the millionaire. Jerrold's coolness was too much for him. Mr. Lumley-Lumley sank back in his seat.

"Drive on!" he gasped.

"Good-bye, popper!" said Lumley-Lumley genially.

The millionaire waved a fat hand. "I disown you until you have renounced your low associates and apologised for your conduct!" roared the millionaire.

"All serene! Then I disown you, too, until you apologise to Grimey!"

The millionaire made a gesture to the chauffeur, and the car glided on. It disappeared in the direction of St. Jim's, and Lumley-Lumley and Grimes were left standing in the street staring after it.

"My 'at!" ejaculated Grimes. "The old gent's in a tantrum!"

Lumley-Lumley was a little pale, but he shrugged his shoulders. His obstinacy was fully equal to his father's.

"That's nothing now," he remarked.

"What's the odds?"

"But—did he mean what he said, Master Lumley?" gasped Grimes.

"I guess so."

"But—but what's goin' to become of you, then?" asked Grimes, overcome by the perfect coolness of the son of the millionaire.

"I guess I can look out for myself."

"But—but where are you going to sleep to-night if you ain't goin' back to the school?" asked Grimes, in wonder.

"Oh, that will be all right! I can put up somewhere. The worst of it is that I'm low in funds. I was expecting to get a good tip from the pater to-day. And it doesn't look like it now, does it?" said Lumley-Lumley ruefully.

"Look here," said Grimes, "this is partly my fault—"

"Rot!" said Lumley-Lumley.

"But it is!" said Grimes. "The old gentleman took me for a friend of yours, though even if I was I don't see that it would do you any 'arm—"

"Of course it wouldn't!" said Lumley-Lumley. "Haven't I told you you're one of the best? My dear Grimey, you mustn't mind my popper; that was only one of his tantrums, and I guess he will get over it. The only trouble is—what the deuce am I going to do until he does get over it?"

"That's what I was goin' to speak about," said Grimes. "He took me for your friend, and if you'll let me be your friend while you're down on your luck, I'll be only too pleased. And I won't take no advantage of it afterwards when you're back at St. Jim's, neither. I've got a room that you can share, and welcome, if you ain't too proud."

Lumley-Lumley grasped his hand.

"Not much pride about me!" he

chuckled. "I'll share your room with pleasure, Grimey, old man, and thank you for the offer! Didn't I say you were one of the best?"

**CHAPTER 4.
Startling News!**

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY came into Study No. 6 in the School House at St. Jim's with a decidedly serious expression upon his aristocratic features.

Blake and Herries and Digby were doing their preparation, and had been so engaged for some little time.

D'Arcy glanced at them, and adjusted his eyeglass and glanced again. Then he coughed.

"This is wathah sewious, deah boys!" he remarked. "It's wotten about Lumley-Lumley!"

"What's the matter with Lumley-Lumley?" asked Blake. "Not crocked, is he?"

"No, deah boy. It's worse than that. He's disowned!"

"Whattid?" demanded the three Fourth Formers together.

"Disowned!" said Arthur Augustus impressively.

The juniors looked bewildered.

"But who's disowned him?" demanded Blake. "You haven't done it, I suppose?"

"Pway don't be an ass!"

"Then who's done it? If I catch anybody disowning Lumley-Lumley, after the way he stood up to my bowling, there will be trouble!"

"Pway don't be wiculous, Blake! His patah has disowned him!"

"My hat!"

"I wegard it as wotten! I considah it wathah wuff on Lumley-Lumley!"

"How do you know?" demanded Digby. "Where is Lumley now?"

"He hasn't come back. His governah has just been here. He came in his car and saw the Head. He was in a feahful wage about somethin', and he talked to

the Head in the Hall, with a lot of fellows lookin' on. Dr. Holmes edged him into his study, but a lot of the fellows heard Lumley-Lumley isn't comin' back!"

"Not coming back?" said Blake, in amazement.

"No. It seems that his patah found him fightin' or somethin' in the village, and lookin' vewy disreputable, and was awfully watty about it, and he has disowned Lumley."

"Phew!"

"You see, it's vewy sewious. Lumley-Lumley isn't comin' back to St. Jim's, and I don't know what he's goin' to do. We shall have to back him up somehow, you know. Only I twust he has not been disrespectful to his fathah. I could nevah countenance anythin' of that sort, of course."

"Poor old Lumley!" said Blake. "It doesn't seem possible. Not coming back to St. Jim's?"

"So his patah says."

"There goes our best batsman for the Grammar School match!" said Herries.

"Bai Jove, yaas! But I'm thinkin' of Lumley. It seems that his patah objected to his speakin' on friendly terms with a gwocah's boy. I am afraid that Mr. Lumley is wathah snobbish, deah boys. I do not see any harm in chummin' up with a gwocah's boy if he is decent."

"Certainly not!" agreed Blake. "But this is rather rotten for Lumley-Lumley. I suppose his pater will come round?"

"He certainly didn't look as if he would come wound. I was thinkin' that I might give him a good talkin' to," said D'Arcy thoughtfully. "But he is gone now. He buzzed off in his motacah. He was in a feahful wage."

"But Lumley must come back. What's he going to do?"

"I weally do not know. But if he goes on the wocks, I think we might waise a subsewption or somethin' for him."

The chums of the Fourth left their preparation unfinished and went down. In the interest caused by this startling news, preparation counted as nothing.

They found the whole school in possession of the news, and talking about nothing else.

Levison of the Fourth met them on the landing. He was talking to Mellish, and both the cads of the Fourth were grinning with agreeable satisfaction.

"Lumley's got the order of the boot!" Levison remarked.

"Weally, Levison, you cad——"

"Jolly good thing, too!" said Mellish.

"He's been found chumming up with Grimes, and his father has disowned him, and taken him away from the school!" said Levison, with a chuckle. "It would have been better for him if he'd let me kick that grocer cad out, I think. I think his father has done quite right. Lumley is a rotter!"

"I wufuse to allow you to call a friend of mine a wottah, Levison. Will you hold my eyeglass, Blake, while I thwash Levison?"

"No fear!" said Blake. "I'm going to thrash him myself!"

"Weally, Blake——"

Levison backed away, but the angry junior's grasp was upon him. Blake bumped him down heavily upon the stairs, and Levison roared. Blake bumped him on step after step till they reached the bottom of the staircase, and then left him gasping on the mat, looking very dusty.

Mellish did not interfere. Digby and Herries were ready to bump him down the stairs after Levison, and Mellish did not think it good enough.

Leaving Levison to gasp and mutter threats of vengeance, the chums of the Fourth went into the Junior Common-room.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were there, evidently in possession of the news.



As the car halted Mr. Lumley-Lumley looked at his dishevelled and battered son and heir with a stern brow. "Jerrold!" the millionaire rapped out. "Hallo, dad!" said Lumley-Lumley cheerfully. "I came down to meet you." "You disreputable young ruffian!" snorted Lumley senior.

The Terrible Three hurried over to Blake.

"Have you heard?" asked Tom Merry.

Blake nodded.

"Yes, we've just got it from Gussy. Is it correct?"

"Yes, Lumley's not coming back, and his pater's disowned him. The old chap was in a fearful wax," said Manners.

"Simply ramping!" said Monty Lowther.

"What's the Head going to do?"

"Well, he can't have Lumley-Lumley here against his father's wish," said Tom Merry. "I suppose he's going to let the giddy millionaire have his own way. He can't do anything else. I'm sure he's sorry for Lumley. But isn't it rotten—the chap not coming back?"

"Beastly!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Let's get down to the village and look for him, and see what can be done," Digby suggested.

Tom Merry grinned ruefully.

"I've thought of that, and I've asked Kildare for a pass out of gates, but I can't get one. It's no go."

"But we've got to back old Lumley up, deah boy!"

"The Head won't have us backing him up against his father. We shall be expected to keep out of it, I suppose," said Tom Merry.

"Wats!"

"We jolly well shan't keep out of it!" said Blake emphatically. "We're going to let old Lumley know somehow that we stand by him. It's rotten rough on him!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

And all the School House juniors, or nearly all of them, were agreed upon that point. They were going to stand by the fellow who had been disowned, and back him up—though exactly how the backing up was to be done was not yet quite clear.

CHAPTER 5.

Pals!

"HERE we are!" said Grimes. Lumley-Lumley nodded, with a cheerful grin.

In his present peculiar circumstances Grimes was his only friend, and Lumley-Lumley had accepted his offer of friendship and aid as frankly and heartily as Grimes had made it.

He had waited for Grimes to take back his basket to the grocer's shop in the High Street, after which Grimes' work was finished for the day. Now Grimes had rejoined him, and was ready to take him home.

"Yes, here we are, I guess," said Lumley-Lumley. "If you're going to play the giddy Good Samaritan, Grimes, you'd better lead the way."

"You're sure you'd like to come?" asked Grimes, with a slight hesitation. "I've only got one room, you know—a lodgin' in Mrs. Purfitt's. It will be a big change for you arter the school."

"I guess that won't worry me. But I've only got four bob on me," explained Lumley-Lumley. "That won't go far, if I've got to pay for lodging and meals. If you can take me in, I'll be jolly glad, and I'll stand my whack for supper."

"I'll be glad to have you, if you don't mind," said Grimes. "Come on, then, I'll make you as comfortable as I can, Master Lumley."

"Chuck that!" said the junior. "We're friends now, aren't we?"

"Yes, if you want it like that."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

"Well, my name's Lumley, and yours is Grimes."

"All right, Master Lumley—"

"Chuck it, Mastor Grimes!"

Grimes nodded.

"Do you want me to call you Lumley?" he asked.

"I guess so, if you want me to call you Grimes."

"All serene! This way!"

Lumley-Lumley had put himself a little tidy after the fight with the Gram-marians. He had dusted and smoothed his clothes, and readjusted his torn collar.

The Outsider of St. Jim's—undoubtedly an outsider now, though in a sense different from the old—walked down the old High Street with Grimes, and turned into the lane that led towards the river and the bridge. This was a poorer quarter of Rylcombe, and the oldest part of the village.

A little house with a garden and masses of ivy bore a brass plate, which announced that Mrs. Purfitt was a dress-maker.

Grimes went in the side way, and mounted the back stairs to his room, which he rented from Mrs. Purfitt for the modest sum of three shillings weekly. The house was poor, but almost painfully clean; and Grimes' room, on the third story, had a beautiful view of the river and the church spire, and the wide fields and woods beyond, in the daytime.

Lumley-Lumley looked about the room with interest.

It was clean, like the rest of the house, and plainly furnished. Grimes explained that he paid extra for his breakfast with Mrs. Purfitt, and had his dinner at Mr. Sands, the grocer's. Other meals he prepared for himself in his room, when he had any money, and there was a cupboard beside the fire-grate containing cooking utensils, and another above it which Grimes used as a larder.

"You're jolly well fixed up here," said Lumley-Lumley, in admiration. "This is bigger than our studies at St. Jim's, and we go three to a study. I guess a chap could be very comfy here, Grimes."

"Good!" said Grimes. "The bed's big enough for two, if you don't mind sleeping with me, Master Lumley."

"The question is—whether you mind sleeping with me, Master Grimes?"

Grimes chuckled and began to build up a fire. He looked curiously at Lumley-Lumley several times. He had expected to see the St. Jim's junior depressed and downcast by the trouble that had fallen upon him, but Lumley-Lumley certainly did not look down-hearted. He was quite cool and cheerful, and he began to lend a hand in preparing the evening meal, just as if he were in a junior study at St. Jim's.

"Hungry?" asked Grimes.

"Famished!" said Lumley-Lumley frankly.

"We'd better get in something for tea," said Grimes. "I've got bread and butter, but that ain't enough for— for two. What would you like?"

Lumley-Lumley grinned.

"The question is—what can we get?" he said. "If we're going to dig together for a bit, Grimes, suppose we pool resources? I've got four bob."

"I've only got two-and-sixpence, and it's got to last me till Saturday," said Grimes rather ruefully. "I shan't be able to do you well, Master Lumley."

"I guess I'm not going to sponge on you, if you could, Master Grimes. I ain't the kind of fellow to eat the bread of idleness, if I know it. When a chap's

in want of money there is only one thing for him to do—work."

"You can't work, Master Lumley."

"Can't I, Master Grimes?" grinned Lumley. "You don't know me, I guess. I was working for my living, my son, when I was nine years old; that was before Lumley's, Ltd., were ever heard of. Have you ever heard of the Bowery?"

"Never," said Grimes.

"It's in New York."

"You've been to America?" asked Grimes, his eyes opening wide in wonder.

"I guess so. I was there more than two years," said Lumley coolly. "And I was nine years old at the time, and I turned an honest penny by carrying round drinks in a dive in the Bowery. I worked in an office in Paris with my pater when I was twelve. He had a scheme for making money in tube railways there, but it never came off. I've worked more than you have, Master Grimes, I can tell you, and I am going to get another job now."

"Oh!" said Grimes.

"There must be a job going in Rylcombe for a chap who's willing to work and had experience," grinned Lumley-Lumley. "There's that chap Pilcher, a friend of yours, who works for a butcher. He might help me to get a berth with the Rylcombe butcher, or perhaps you might recommend me to Mr. Sands."

"You—you don't mean that!" gasped Grimes.

"I guess I do. I should make a jolly good grocer's boy. The chief thing is carrying home the goods, and I'm stronger than you."

"My 'at!" said Grimes.

"I don't mean I'm after your job, though I guess I could get it if I tried to boost you out," said Lumley-Lumley. "But I'm going to get a job somewhere in Rylcombe to pay my way while I'm looking round."

"But—but s'pose you had to take a basket of groceries up to the school?" gasped Grimes.

"I guess I could do it."

"But—but wouldn't you mind?"

"Why should I mind if I'm doing honest work?"

"Well, I suppose that's right," agreed Grimes.

"But a lot of the fellows there would turn up their noses at you, Master Lumley."

"They could turn up their noses—and welcome, Master Grimes."

"Look here," said Grimes, "if you mean it, there's a good chance at Mr. Sands'. He wants another boy; he's just sacked one for dropping a basket of higgs. That chap was always dropping higgs, and now he's got the boot. He was lazy."

"Well, I shan't be lazy," said Lumley-Lumley. "That never was a fault of mine, I guess. I'm on that job."

"If you don't change your mind, Master Lumley, you can come round with me in the morning, and I'll put it to Mr. Sands."

"I shan't change my mind, Master Grimes, and I will come round with you in the morning. Now, about tea. Shall I cut out and get something?"

"You sit down while I go—"

"Rats! I tell you I'm not a slacker! I'm going to stand my whack of the exes and my whack of the work. That's understood, I guess, if I camp here."

"All right, Master Lumley—"

"What shall I fetch, Master Grimes?"

"What do you say to sossingers?" suggested Grimes. "We could have

bossingers and bacon. They go all right with tea and bread-and-butter. I'll get the frying-pan ready while you're fetching—
 "Good egg!"

And Jerrold Lumley-Lumley sallied forth on a shopping expedition. Meanwhile, Grimes explained to Mrs. Purfitt that he had taken in a lodger, and bargained that the extra payment to his landlady for her trouble should be a sum not exceeding one shilling weekly. Then Grimes remounted to his room and scraped out the frying-pan and mended the fire and set the kettle on to boil.

Grimes was looking and feeling very cheerful. Grimes was an orphan, and lived alone at Mrs. Purfitt's, and he was glad to have a friend to share his room; and he had a great admiration for Lumley-Lumley.

Pilcher, the butcher's boy, and Craggs, the chemist's boy, were great friends of Grimes', but they lived at home with their parents. If Lumley-Lumley's banishment from St. Jim's lasted, Grimes thought they could get on very comfortably—though he hardly believed that Lumley-Lumley's banishment would last very long. He could not help wondering how Lumley-Lumley would take to the hard and incessant work of a grocer's boy after the easy life at St. Jim's. But Lumley-Lumley was a schoolboy a little out of the common, and he had had experiences of harder times than Grimes had ever known.

Lumley-Lumley came in cheerfully with a bundle under his arm and tossed it upon the table.

"Here you are!" he exclaimed. "Sausages and bacon, Grimey!"

"Good!" said Grimes. And in a few minutes the sausages and the bacon were sizzling in the frying-pan, and the two chums were eagerly watching the cooking.

CHAPTER 6.

French Leave!

"KILDARE, deah boy—"
 Kildare of the Sixth, the captain of St. Jim's, waved his hand as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked into his study.

"Bo off!" he exclaimed. "Weally, Kildare—"

"I know what you want," said Kildare. "You want a pass out of the gates. I'm not going to give you one. It's against orders."

"But I specially wequiah a pass, Kildare, to go to, see my friend Lumley-Lumley—"

"I know; and you can't have one." "In the cires, as old Lumley-Lumley is down on his luck, deah boy—"

"Head's orders." "I wegard it as wathah wotten in the cires—"

"Look here!" said Kildare. "It seems that Lumley-Lumley has disobeyed his father and cheeked him, and has been given the order of the boot. He's not coming back to the school, and he's got to beg his father's pardon before Mr. Lumley will take him back at home. Therefore, you're to let him alone. Understand?"

"Yaas, I undahstand, but—"
 "Then clear out!"

"Weally, Kildare—"

The captain of St. Jim's jumped up, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy hastily retreated from the study and closed the door. But he did not go far. He stepped along the Sixth Form passage as far as Darrell's door, and knocked.

"Come in!" called out Darrell. Arthur Augustus entered, with his sweetest smile.

"Dawwell, deah boy, would you mind giving—"

Darrell grinned. "Yes, I would mind," he said. "You can't have a pass out. I suppose that is what you want."

"Weally, Dawwell—"
 "Buzz off!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy left the study rather disconsolately. He hesitated for a few moments, and then looked into Langton's study. The prefect was at work, and he looked up with a grim expression.

"Get out!" he said. "No passes to-night!"

"Weally, Langton—"
 "Travel!"

D'Arcy travelled. The prefects evidently were useless, and the swell of St. Jim's drifted thoughtfully along the Sixth Form passage, thinking it out. He was determined to see Lumley-Lumley, to assure him that he was backing him up, and he did not want to be driven into breaking bounds. But it looked as if he would have no other resource. He stopped at the House-master's door, and tapped, and Mr. Railton bade him enter. It was a forlorn hope, and Mr. Railton's expression showed D'Arcy as soon as he entered that there was no chance.

"Would you mind givin' me a pass out of gates—"

"Impossible, D'Arcy!"

And D'Arcy retired, defeated again. His eye was gleaming behind his monocle now. He was getting, as he would have expressed it, "Fed-up." He was trying his hardest to avoid breaking bounds, but it really seemed as if masters and prefects at St. Jim's were in league to force him to do it.

"Where on earth have you been?" demanded Blake, when Arthur Augustus came back into Study No. 6. "When are you going to do your prep?"

"I'm afwaid I haven't time for prep this evenin', deah boys!" said D'Arcy loftily.

Blake stared. "You'll get into trouble with Lathom in the morning, then," he said.

"I shall have to wisk that. At the pwesent moment I am thinkin' about Lumley-Lumley. I want to see him."

"It's impossible, my son."

"The word impos does not exist for a true D'Arcy."

"Rats!"

"Weally, Blake—"
 "Get down on a chair and get your prep done, my boy, and don't jaw," said Herries.

"I wufuse to do anythin' of the sort. I was thinkin' that you fellows might be able to help me."

"Help you what and which?"

"Get out of the coll."

"Can't have you breaking bounds," said Blake, with a shake of the head. "I don't approve of such goings on in early youth."

"Pway don't be an ass."

And Arthur Augustus walked out of the study. He looked into Tom Merry's room, and found the Terrible Three at work.

"I want one of you chaps to give me a hand," he remarked.

Monty Lowther held out his hand and grasped that of the swell of St. Jim's, and shook hands with him in an affectionate manner, a proceeding which Arthur Augustus viewed in considerable astonishment.

"Weally, Lowthah, what are you up to, you ass?"

"Giving you a hand," said Lowther. "You fathead!"

"Well, you asked for it," said Lowther, withdrawing his hand. "Did you mean the other hand?"

"I meant give me a hand over the wall."

"But there isn't any wall here, except the walls of the study, and they're joined to the ceiling," said Lowther. "I couldn't possibly give you a hand over them. Would it do if I gave you my hand over the table?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry. "I wufuse to listen to your wotten attempts at humour, Monty Lowthah. I want somebody to help me ovah the school wall."

"Oh, I see! You're going to break bounds!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Can't be done!" said Tom Merry, with a shake of the head. "Pause and reflect, my child, when about to enter upon the path of temptation—oh, pause—"

"You uttah ass!" shouted D'Arcy, exasperated. "I'm goin' to break bounds to go and see how Lumley-Lumley is gettin' on."

"Couldn't you break something else?" demanded Lowther. "Try the study crockery. You could break that without getting licked afterwards."

"I wufuse to entah into a widiculous discuss with you, Lowthah."

And Arthur Augustus retired from the study and slammed the door. He met Reilly of the Fourth in the passage, and buttonholed him at once.

"Will you do me a favah, deah boy?"

"Sure and I will!" said Reilly, diving his hand into his trousers pocket.

"How much?"

"It's not money," said D'Arcy.

"Oh, good!" said Reilly, rather relieved. "What is it, then?"

"I want a bunk up ovah a wall." Reilly looked round.

"Which wall?"

"The school wall, deah boy. I'm goin' to see Lumley-Lumley, and I cannot get a pass out. Therefore I am goin' to take French leave."

"Faith, and I'll bunk ye up!" said Reilly. "But you'd better not go."

"Wats!"

And D'Arcy having replied thus politely to Reilly's advice, they proceeded into the dark quadrangle, and the Belfast boy helped D'Arcy climb the wall.

"Pway be careful, deah boy!" murmured D'Arcy. "I don't want to wuin my twousahs. If you could keep quite still while I wesk my feet on your head I could get ovah the wall without wisking spoilin' my twousahs."

"What about my head?" howled Reilly.

"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that!"

"You ass—"

"Weally, Weally—"
 "Back up!" growled Reilly. "You're jolly heavy. I shall stumble in a minute—there. I told you I should!"

"Ow!"

Arthur Augustus found himself reclining gracefully in the quadrangle. Reilly looked down at him, and dusted his jacket.

"You ass, you've wiped your silly boots on me!" he said. "You can ask somebody else to help you over the wall, you silly gossoon!"

And Reilly walked away in wrath.

Arthur Augustus picked himself up, and very nearly ran after Reilly to take summary vengeance upon him. But he remembered that he was in a hurry, and turned back to the school wall. He

climbed it this time without assistance, though at the cost of several scratches upon his beautiful trousers.

He dropped into the road outside the school wall, and carefully dusted his trousers.

Then he started towards Rylcombe village.

It was not till he was in the High Street of Rylcombe that Arthur Augustus reflected upon the fact that he had not the slightest idea of where to look for Jerrold Lumley-Lumley.

"Bai Jove!" he murmured. "I wondah where the boundah is?"

He stood for some time in thought, wondering where to look for the Outsider of St. Jim's. While he was turning the difficult problem over in his mind, Lumley-Lumley himself came out of Mother Murphy's shop across the street, and hurried away with a bundle under his arm. Arthur Augustus caught sight of him across the street and started running to overtake him. The Outsider was walking quickly, and he disappeared into a garden in River Lane before D'Arcy could come up with him.

"Bai Jove! I pwesume he's got a lodgin' here," said Arthur Augustus to himself.

And the swell of St. Jim's walked up to the door, where gleamed the brass plate announcing to all Rylcombe that Mrs. Purfitt was a dressmaker. He rang the bell, and the door was opened by a little maidservant, who was almost overcome by the resplendent vision of the swell of St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy raised his silk hat very gracefully and politely. Arthur Augustus was as polite to a housemaid as to a duchess.

"Pway excuse me," said D'Arcy elegantly. "I think a friend of mine is wesidin' here, and I should like to see him—chap named Lumley-Lumley!"

And he stepped gracefully in.

CHAPTER 7.

Arthur Augustus is Astonished!

"PRIME—eh?" said Grimes.

"I guess so," said Lumley-Lumley, sniffing appreciatively the scent of the frying sausages. "I'm jolly hungry. Where are the plates?"

"I've only got one. But I'll have a saucer, Master Lumley."

"You won't. I'll have the saucer, Master Grimes."

And Lumley-Lumley set the table. The sausages were sizzling beautifully, and so was the bacon. Grimes was evidently an artist at this sort of thing. Lumley-Lumley lent him what assistance he could, but Grimes was the master hand. In the intensely interesting occupation of cooking the sausages, the two boys did not hear a light tap at the door. It was repeated, and then the door opened.

"Pway excuse me, deah boys!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked in. Grimes went on cooking, and Lumley-Lumley swung round.

D'Arcy gazed into the room.

Exactly how he had expected to find Lumley-Lumley he could not have said. But certainly the bare attic was a shock to him, to say nothing of the sight of the St. Jim's fellow cooking his own evening meal over an open grate.

D'Arcy simply stared.

"Bai Jove!" he murmured.

Lumley-Lumley nodded cheerfully. "Hallo, Gussy! How did you get here?"

"Bai Jove!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

"Come right in!"

"Yes, come right in," said Grimes, looking round with a ruddy face from the frying-pan. "You're very welcome, Master D'Arcy."

"Master Rats!" said Lumley-Lumley. "This is Gussy. Come in, Gussy! Have you got a pain anywhere?"

"No!" gasped D'Arcy.

"You look as if you had."

"Weally—weally—ahem—"

"Walk in, kid!" said Lumley-Lumley hospitably. "You're just in time for supper, and there's enough for three, ain't there, Grimey?"

"Quite enough," said Grimes; "and D'Arcy's very welcome."

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus came into the attic rather gingerly.

He deposited his silk hat upon a chair, and regarded Grimes in a doubtful sort of way.

"You know Grimey?" asked Lumley-Lumley.

"I—I have met him!" gasped D'Arcy.

Grimes grinned. The last time he had seen D'Arcy was when he was on the cricket field at St. Jim's. But the time before that was on an occasion when Grimes, Pilcher, and Craggs had met the swell of the School House in Rylcombe Lane, and knocked off his silk hat, and in other ways treated him with utter want of respect due to a D'Arcy.

"All serene, old man," said Grimes.

"Mind you, I don't bear malice for a little row, and I 'ope that you don't, neither."

"Oh, certainly not!" stammered D'Arcy.

"Of course not," said Lumley-Lumley.

"Here, sit down, Gussy. Make yourself at home. Take this chair."

"Thank you, deah boy!"

"Not that one," called out Grimes

"That one's got a gammy leg. Oh!"

Crash!

The chair collapsed, and Arthur Augustus sat upon the floor, with the chair round his neck.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

"Sorry!" grinned Lumley-Lumley, helping him up. "I didn't know the chair was a giddy invalid. Take this one."

"Thank you," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity. "I pwefer to stand."

"The sossingers are done," said Grimes, turning over the savoury mass into a dish. "I 'ope you like sosses, D'Arcy."

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy. "I should be vevy pleased to join you, deah boys."

"There's one good chair," said Grimes, "and 'ere's a couple of boxes. Take your choice."

Arthur Augustus chose a box, and sat down. It seemed safer. Grimes finished dishing up the sausages and bacon, and made the tea. Lumley-Lumley cut the bread. Arthur Augustus tried not to look astonished. But he was really astounded to see the St. Jim's fellow so perfectly at home in the attic, and evidently so comfortable there.

"I came to see you, Lumley; deah boy," said D'Arcy, after a pause. "I was thinkin' that you would be feelin' awfully down on your luck, you know."

Lumley-Lumley chuckled.

"I don't look it, do I?" he asked.

"Bai Jove, no!"

"I'm all O.K.," said Lumley-Lumley cheerfully. "I've got a good chum, you see—old Grimey. We're great pals now, ain't we, Grimey?"

"Wotot!" said Grimes.

"Grimes is going to get me a job at Mr. Sands'," said Lumley-Lumley confidentially. "It's jolly good of him, isn't it?"

D'Arcy almost dropped his fork.

"A—a—a job?" he stuttered.

"I guess so."

"At the grocer's?"

"Exactly!"

"Imposs!"

"Fact!" said Lumley-Lumley. "My pater's given me the order of the boot, you know. I ain't aristocratic enough for him. I'm not going to sponge on Grimey, even if he lets me. I'm going to get a job."

"Gweat Scott!"

"Nothing like hard work and independence," said Lumley-Lumley. "Don't be surprised to see me delivering the groceries at the school, Gussy."

"Bai Jove!"

"Of course, you won't be bound to speak to me, if you don't want to," said the Outsider gravely. "I don't want you to talk to your social inferiors, unless you feel inclined. I shan't take advantage of our former acquaintance."

"Weally, Lumley—"

"Jolly lucky to have a pal like Grimey. Don't you think so?" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Yaas, but—"

"Have some more sausages?"

"Thank you vevy much. But I suppose your patah will let you return to St. Jim's?"

"Not unless I apologise."

"You will apologise, then?"

"I guess not."

Arthur Augustus looked severely at the Outsider.

"Weally, Lumley-Lumley. I cannot approve of diswespect to a pawent."

"Then I shall have to worry along without your approval, I guess. I'll try to bear up," said Lumley-Lumley solemnly.

"But—but suppose your fathah doesn't come wound, Lumley?"

"Then I shall most likely start in the grocery business later on. I shall expect you chaps at St. Jim's to give me your custom."

"Bai Jove!"

"As a matter of fact, I expect the pater will come round when he's blown off steam a bit," said Lumley-Lumley. "But if he doesn't, I guess I'm quite able to stand on my own feet without being held up. I've done it before. This ain't the first time I've had a row with my pater. It happened in Paris once, and I was on my own for a month, picking up jobs in the market for a living. This will be an easy job in comparison, and if I don't make it up with popper I shall stick to the grocery line and grow up to be a big grocer, with branches in every town in the United Kingdom."

Arthur Augustus could only gasp.

"Nother cup of tea?" said Grimes hospitably.

"Thank you vevy much, deah boy. Lumley, are you sewious?"

"I guess so."

"I was goin' to offah to see your patah and talk to him," said D'Arcy. "In the pwesent circs a fellow of tact and judgment might be able to do some good."

"No good at all," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'm going to stick to the grocery, and wait for the pater to come round. That will be all right."

"But what about your studies, deah boy?"

"I guess I shall go to the night school in Wayland."

"Oh! But what about the cricket?"

"I'm joining the Rylcombe Junior Cricket Club. Grimes is captain, and he will give me a chance."

"Wotot!" said Grimes.

"Then you won't be able to play against the Gwammawians?"

"Yes, I will. We'll challenge them."

said Lumley-Lumley coolly. "We'll challenge you St. Jim's chaps, too, won't we, Grimey?"

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Grimes. "Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus finished his supper in a state of great astonishment. When he took his leave of Lumley-Lumley and Grimes, he walked back to St. Jim's still amazed. Lumley-Lumley as a grocer's boy and attending the night school at Wayland, and playing cricket with the village boys on the village green, simply took D'Arcy's breath away. D'Arcy was thinking about it so deeply that he ran right into the arms of a prefect when he entered the school, and was given five hundred lines on the spot for breaking bounds.

CHAPTER 8.

The New Grocer's Boy!

THE morning sun of June was shining down into the old High Street of Rylcombe.

Grimes took down the shutters of Mr. Sands' shop and handed them to Lumley-Lumley as he removed them. Lumley-Lumley carried them in and stacked them away. The Outsider was in high good humour. This seemed to him better than grinding Latin in the Fourth Form Room in the School House. It was a change, at all events.

The shutters all down, Grimes went into the shop and Lumley-Lumley followed him. Mr. Sands had just come into his little parlour. Mr. Sands was a fat and rubicund gentleman of middle age. He nodded very pleasantly to Jerrold Lumley-Lumley. The millionaire's son had been a good customer at the little shop, having frequently sent orders for supplies that ran into pounds at a time.

Lumley-Lumley was worth being polite to—or had been, for things were changed now. But Mr. Sands did not know that yet.

"Good-morning, Master Lumley-Lumley!" said Mr. Sands. "What are you doing out of school so early?"

"I've been helping Grimes take the shutters down, sir."

"Dear me!"

"I hear you want a boy, sir."

"Yes," said Mr. Sands in surprise. "I am looking for a boy."

"Good egg! I know a boy who is looking for a job."

"Indeed!" said the grocer. "You want to recommend some lad for the place, Master Lumley-Lumley! I'm sure I should be very pleased—ahem!—to give him a trial. Who is the boy?"

"Myself!"

"Eh?"

"I'm looking for a job!" Lumley-Lumley exclaimed.

The grocer laughed.

"You will have your little joke, Master Lumley-Lumley," he said.

"But it isn't a joke," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'm looking for a job—honest Injun, you know. And Grimes said you were wanting a boy, so I've given you first chance!"

Mr. Sands stared at him blankly.

"You're not in earnest?" he gasped.

"I guess I am!"

"You've left school?"

"My pater's taken me away."

"But—but then you are going home—"

"Order of the boot!" Lumley-Lumley explained. "I've got low tastes, and my father learned a lot of aristocratic prejudices in the Bowery in New York. He's kicked me out to shift for myself." "You—you don't say so!" Mr. Sands ejaculated.

"But I do say so!" said the junior.

"I've got to earn my living, or else sponge on Grimes. I want a job!"

"But—but your father's a millionaire."

"Yes; but I'm a shilling heir at present—I mean, I've only got a bob, and I want to earn some more. Do you think I should suit?"

"My goodness!"

"I can weigh up things and carry baskets and keep accounts and make myself generally useful. You can give me the same wages as the last chap, and I will undertake not to drop any eggs. Any eggs broken to be deducted from my salary."

Mr. Sands burst into a laugh.

"If you really mean it—," he said.

"Honour bright, sir!"

"But what will your schoolmaster say?"

"It isn't his bisney now. My pater's taken me away from St. Jim's—ordered me not to go back, you know. He won't take me home, either. I tell you I've got to earn my own living. Grimes will give you a recommendation for me. I'll serve you well, and, if I don't suit, you can sack me. Is that all right?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes, that is all right."

"You'll take me on?"

Mr. Sands rubbed his fat hands. "I'll take you on," he said; "but it will mean work, you know—hard work."

"I don't mind hard work."

Mr. Sands chuckled. He did not think that the St. Jim's junior would take very readily to hard work. But Mr. Sands was wise in his generation. He was quite assured in his mind that Lumley-Lumley's troubles would soon blow over, and that the junior would be sent back to St. Jim's. When that happened, Mr. Sands could certainly count upon him as a generous customer, if he stood by him now in the hour of adversity. The grocer thought of that, and was not insensible, either, to the extensive advertisement he would get when it became known that he was employing a millionaire's son as an errand boy.

People would come to the shop to be served by the son of the famous millionaire, Mr. Lascelles Lumley-Lumley. When it got about the village, it would make Mr. Sands' grocery famous for a mile and a half more.

"Sure you don't mind work?" he asked.

"You bet!"

"You will be under Grimes, of course."

"I guess I don't mind that. Grimes is going to be my cricket captain, and I don't see why he shouldn't be my chief officer in the grocery line."

"Very well," said Mr. Sands graciously. "You can consider yourself engaged."

"Thank you, sir!" said Lumley-Lumley.

Lumley-Lumley was businesslike, or, as he would have expressed it in the wonderful language he had learned in New York, he was all business from the word go.

Having been engaged by Mr. Sands as errand boy, he dropped entirely his St. Jim's manner, and seemed oblivious of the fact that he had been accustomed to address Mr. Sands as "old Sands," or even "Sandy Sugar." He was smart and respectful, and did not forget to call his employer "sir."

Mr. Sands watched him curiously in the shop. Lumley-Lumley was a handy fellow. He did not break anything, or knock anything over. By the ready way he dropped into the work, he might have been born a grocer's lad. He

(Continued on the next page.)



MAKE THE JESTER SMILE AND WIN HALF-A-CROWN!

Send your Jo'te to The GEM Jester, 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

BAD NEWS IS GOOD NEWS.

The boy was just coming round after an operation.

"My boy," said the doctor, "I have some bad rews for you. You will never be able to work very hard again."

"That's all right, doctor," replied the boy, unperturbed. "Now tell me the bad news!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to R. Monk, 65, Dalmorton Road, Wallasey, Cheshire.

IN THE MOUNTAIN CLASS.

Teacher (during geography lesson): "Where is Ben Nevis?"

Boy: "Not in this class, sir!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to W. Miller, 3, Mabley Street, Homerton, London, E. 9.

LOST FOR WORDS.

The new lance-corporal, standing with an instructor, had the squad of soldiers he was drilling marching away from him. The squad had gone some distance, and it appeared that the corporal did not know the next command to give.

At last, when the men were about one hundred yards away, the exasperated instructor yelled:

"For the love of Mike say something, you fool, even if it's only 'Good-bye!'"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to G. Bonner, 107, Stamford Street, Grantham, Lincs.

TELLING LIES.

Boss: "I'm surprised at you, Jones. Do you know what they do with boys who tell lies?"

Office-boy: "Yes, sir. When they get old enough the firm sends them out as salesmen!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to D. McCowan, 96, Cambridge Close, Hounslow West, Middlesex.

FOOLING THE FOREMAN.

Mike: "Pat, it's a hard worker ye are. How many hods of mortar have ye carried up to-day?"

Pat: "Faith, and I'm no hard worker. I'm just carrying the same load of mortar up and down the ladder all the time to fool the foreman into thinking I'm working!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. Buckwell 15, Rodney Road, West Bridgeford, Nottingham.

WELCOME.

Mr. Shirks: "It must be awful to be a debt collector. You must be unwelcome wherever you go!"

Mr. Birks: "Not at all. Practically everybody asks me to call again."

Half-a-crown has been awarded to N. Banbury, 64, Church Street, South Melbourne, S.C. 5, Victoria, Australia.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

took a broom from Grimes and swept out the shop. And, to Mr. Sands' amazement and delight, he swept out the corners as well as the places that showed. Mr. Sands had never employed a boy before who did that. Then the junior helped to stack up the goods for sale, and that day being window-dressing day, he made himself remarkably useful in dressing the window.

Mr. Sands was as delighted as he was surprised.

"You'll be very useful," he told Lumley-Lumley later in the morning. "Thank you, sir! I hope to be," said the junior respectfully.

Grimes, who was grinning from ear to ear all the time he was in the shop, went out on the morning round, the afternoon round being reserved for the new boy. Mr. Sands retired to the bosom of his family, and Lumley-Lumley was left to mind the shop. In his white apron, half-folded diagonally in the real grocer style, Lumley-Lumley looked very smart and businesslike.

Customers came in, and Lumley-Lumley, who seemed to have learned the business already, served them with promptness and dispatch.

Towards midday three youths in school caps came into the shop, and Lumley-Lumley started a little as he recognised Frank Monk, Gordon Gay, and Wootton major of Rylcombe Grammar School. It happened to be a Wednesday, which was a half-holiday at the Grammar School and St. Jim's, though not for Jerrold Lumley-Lumley. The Grammarians had come in to purchase supplies for a picnic, quite ignorant of the fact that Mr. Sands had a new boy, or of whom the new boy was.

"Tin of condensed milk, please, and open it," said Gordon Gay. "And—and my only summer bonnet!"

"Yes, sir," said Lumley-Lumley calmly. "Snoozer's Splendid Brand, sir? Or will you try our own, sir? Much better, and a lower price."

"Lumley-Lumley!"

"I can recommend our condensed milk, sir."

"You—you ass!" gasped Gordon Gay, while the other Grammarians stared at Lumley-Lumley in blank amazement. "What's the little game?"

"Is this a new jape?" demanded Monk.

"What the dickens are you doing here?" exclaimed Wootton major.

"I'm Mr. Sands' new boy, please, sir."

"You!"

"I guess so—I mean—yes! Can I get anything else for you, sir? Our one-and-six blend of Indian and Ceylon tea is splendid, sir."

"You—you fathead!" ejaculated Frank Monk. "You don't mean to say that you're really working here as a grocer's boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"If you call me 'sir,' I'll punch your silly head!"

"Beg pardon, sir! But I'm bound to call my master's customers 'sir,' sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you try our ham, sir?"

"Look here!" said Frank Monk. "What does it mean? Did you get into trouble with your pater after that little row yesterday?"

"Yes, sir. My father gave me the order of the boot, sir, and I'm not going to St. Jim's any more, sir."

"I—I say, was it our fault?" asked Wootton major, in dismay.

"Well, yes, sir, it was. But never mind, sir. I've had lots of rows with the pater, but he always comes round."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

"We're awfully sorry," said Gordon Gay.

"Not at all, sir. I don't mind in the least. I like this for a change after the class-room. The hours are longer, but I have a good master."

"Can we do anything?"

"Certainly, sir! If you give me a good order, it will help me with my master, as he will like me to be a good salesman."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How long are you going to keep this up?" demanded Monk.

"I don't know, sir. I'm in a good berth, and I hope to keep it. Will you try our own marmalade, sir? We warrant every jar."

"Well, we'll give you a good order, anyway. That's what we've come for," said Monk. "I've got a list here."

"Very good, sir."

Lumley-Lumley took the list, and made up the articles in neat packages. The Grammarians watched him in amazement. Lumley-Lumley had quick and deft fingers. He served the juniors very quickly, and Monk laid a pound on the counter.

"Fifteen shillings and ninepence-halfpenny, sir," said Lumley-Lumley. "Bacon has gone up a halfpenny, sir."

"Right-ho!" grinned Monk. "It can go up a penny if you like."

"Can I show you anything else, sir? You have no tea in your list. We have a very special line in an Indian and Ceylon blend."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Perhaps you would like to take a trial half-pound packet? If you once used our tea, sir, we guarantee that you will never patronise any other establishment. Our motto is good quality, combined with reasonable prices."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gordon Gay. "Yes, shove in the trial packet. It's worth the money to hear you reel it off."

"Can I interest you in our nine-shilling eggs, sir?" asked Lumley-Lumley. "We have them direct from the Quarry Farm, sir, the same place that supplies St. Jim's—a well-known Public school in this vicinity, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

By the time Lumley-Lumley had finished, the whole pound remained in Mr. Sands' till, and the Grammarians departed, loaded with purchases and grinning hugely.

Lumley-Lumley sedately dusted the counter. Mr. Sands came out of the parlour.

"Any business?" he asked, with a smile.

Lumley-Lumley consulted his pocket account-book.

"Takings, thirty-three shillings and fourpence three-farthings, sir," he said.

"My word!" ejaculated Mr. Sands.

"May I go to my dinner, sir?"

"Yes, yes! Certainly! You'll find it all ready!" gasped Mr. Sands.

"Very glad that you are satisfied with me, sir!" said Lumley-Lumley.

And he went to his dinner.

CHAPTER 9.

A Licking for Levison & Co.!

TOM MERRY & CO. came out of the School House after dinner that day, looking a little less sunny than usual. They could not help thinking of Lumley-Lumley. Arthur Augustus had reported to his chums that the vanished junior was apparently in good spirits, and intending to get a job in Rylcombe, and quite satisfied with his lot.

But the juniors did not feel quite convinced. The change from the Fourth Form at St. Jim's to the village grocer's shop was very great, and they were worried for Lumley-Lumley.

"It's rotten!" said Tom Merry, for at least the twentieth time.

And the chums agreed that it was.

"I suppose the giddy millionaire will come round in time," Monty Lowther remarked. "But it will be rough on Lumley-Lumley while it lasts!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What bosh!" said Levison. "Lumley-Lumley's found his mark now! It's just about what he's suited for! Some of us ought to go down to the grocer's shop and see him, and order eggs and things. It would be fun!"

"Oh, wats!"

And the chums of the School House turned their backs upon Levison. The cad of the Fourth shrugged his shoulders. In the fall of Jerrold Lumley-Lumley from his high estate, Levison saw an opportunity of paying off many old scores, and he did not mean to neglect the opportunity. And his estimable chums, Mellish of the Fourth and Coke of the Shell, fully agreed with him. They had never forgiven Lumley-Lumley for deserting their select society and turning over a new leaf, and leaving all bad habits—and themselves—behind him.

Figgins & Co., and Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence of the New House, came over for news of Lumley-Lumley. They whistled when they heard about him.

"Fancy him as a giddy grocer's boy!" said Redfern. "Why, he may come up to the school with the groceries, as Mr. Sands serves St. Jim's!"

"Bai Jove!"

"He'll have to come up to the tradesmen's entrance!" broke in Levison.

"Shut up, Levison! Let's get down to the cricket!" said Tom Merry.

The School House was playing the New House that afternoon. Tom Merry had intended playing Lumley-Lumley in the School House team, but that was evidently out of the question now. But the juniors were thinking of him as they went down to the cricket ground.

Tom Merry won the toss, and the School House batted first. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy tapped Tom Merry on the shoulder.

"I want you to do me a little favah, deah boy," he said.

"Go ahead, kid, but buck up!"

"I want you to open the innings with me, Tom Mewwy."

Tom Merry shook his head.

"Can't be done!" he said. "You see, it would discourage the side if there were a duck's-egg to start with!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jammed his monocle into his eye, and simply glared at his cricket captain.

"You uttah ass—" he began.

"Chaps are not allowed to call their skippers names!" said Tom Merry severely. "I shall have to caution you, D'Arcy!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Well, don't let it occur again, and it's all right!"

Arthur Augustus breathed hard through his nose.

"I specially want to bat first, deah boy, because I want to look wound, you know. I fancy that cad Levison intends to play some of his caddish pranks on Lumley-Lumley, and I am goin' to keep an eye on him!"

"Oh, all right!" said Tom Merry graciously. "I'll begin with you, then, and you'll be free after the first over!"

"You feahful ass—"



"Sit down, Gussy," said Lumley-Lumley. "Make yourself at home." "Thank you, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "Not that chair!" exclaimed Grimes. "It's got a gammy leg." But his warning came too late. Crash! The chair collapsed, and D'Arcy, with a yell, was deposited on the floor.

"Man in!" said Monty Lowther.

Figgins & Co. went out to field, and Tom Merry opened the innings with Arthur Augustus D'Arcy at the other end. Tom Merry's prediction was not fulfilled. D'Arcy was not out in the first over, but that was because Fatty Wynn was bowling to Tom Merry. In the second over Arthur Augustus met his fate at the hands of Redfern.

"Bai Jove!" he ejaculated, as the wicket went down.

And he walked back to the pavilion in a state of great astonishment.

But the swell of St. Jim's was comforted by the early fall of his wicket that he was free to keep a watchful eye on the movements of Levison & Co. And certainly he was quite right in supposing that Levison meant mischief.

The afternoon round at Mr. Sands' included St. Jim's, and goods were due to be delivered that afternoon; and at half-past three a youth came to the tradesmen's entrance with a basket on his arm.

Levison was on the alert, and as the grocer's boy came up the gravel path to the kitchen door of the School House, Levison gave a shout:

"Lumley! By George!"

Lumley-Lumley did not look round.

He walked on quietly, his basket on his arm, and rang at the kitchen entrance.

Mellish and Crooke and Gore and several other fellows gathered round, to stare at the schoolboy errand-boy.

"Eggs, please! Twelve a shilling!"

"What price sandy sugar?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lumley-Lumley did not appear to

hear them. The cook came to the kitchen door to take the goods he had brought for delivery, and she almost fell down at the sight of the grocer's boy.

"Master Lumley-Lumley!"

"Please I've brought the grocery, ma'am!"

"But—but—"

"I'm Mr. Sands' new boy, please!"

"Lawks!" said the cook.

And she took the groceries in, looking dazed.

Lumley-Lumley waited for the empty basket. Fellows were gathering round from all sides to look at him. Lumley-Lumley looked very different from of old. He was no longer in Etons, having borrowed a suit of clothes from Grimes that were more suitable for the work he had to do. But he looked just as cool and nonchalant as ever, and quite as well able to take care of himself.

"Thank you, ma'am!" he said politely, as the cook handed him the basket.

And he turned to make his way back to the gate.

Levison and Mellish and Crooke barred his path.

"Not so fast!" said Levison insolently.

"We haven't seen you for quite a long time, Lumley! Don't be in a hurry!"

"We want to have a squint at the new grocer's boy!" grinned Crooke.

"Please stand aside, young gentlemen!" said Lumley-Lumley, very respectfully. "I have to get back to my work!"

"What price eggs?"

"We're going to take you for a walk round the quad, basket and all, and show you to the school," said Levison. "Collar him!"

The three juniors advanced upon the Outsider. He took a grip upon the handle of his basket and swept the heavy wickerwork right at the advancing juniors. It swept them off their feet as it struck, and they rolled on the gravel with loud yells.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, arriving upon the spot a minute too late to interfere. "Ha, ha, ha! I vegard that as funny!"

"Good-afternoon, Master D'Arcy!" said Lumley-Lumley, raising his cap.

"Weally, Lumley, deah boy—"

The three cads of the School House jumped up. They rushed together at Lumley-Lumley. He crashed the basket upon them again, and Crooke rolled in the gravel; but Levison and Mellish fastened upon the grocer's boy. Then Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sailed in. With all his elegant ways, the swell of St. Jim's was a hard hitter. He gave Levison his right and Mellish his left, and the two cads of the Fourth dropped as if they had been shot.

Lumley-Lumley chuckled.

"Thank you, sir!" he said.

And he put his basket upon his arm and walked out of the gate touching his cap.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy nodded in response, and then turned to the three sprawling juniors. He jammed his monocle into his eye and regarded them with immeasurable scorn.

"You uttah wottahs!" he exclaimed. "If any of you will walk into the gym with me, I will give you a fearful thwashin'! Follow me if you have any pluck, you boundahs!"

CHAPTER 10.

Gore Buys Eggs!

GRIMES greeted Lumley-Lumley with a grin as he came back after his round.

'Delivered the goods all right?' he asked.

'I guess so.'

'Any trouble at the school?'

Lumley-Lumley chuckled.

'Not much,' he replied. 'A few dents in my basket, that's all.'

'Mr. Sands has gone out,' said Grimes. 'I've got to take some jelly up to the 'All. You'll have to mind the shop while I'm gone, Master Lumley.'

'I'll mind it all right, Master Grimes.'

And Grimes departed. Lumley-Lumley, with his white apron on, sat down behind the counter contentedly to mind the shop. Several customers came in, and he served them politely and cheerfully. Then there was a lull, and he had leisure to read his number of the "Magnet."

It was about five o'clock when a crowd of fellows came in, and Lumley-Lumley found himself confronted by old acquaintances. All St. Jim's had heard of his new engagement as grocer's boy, and quite a crowd of fellows had come down to do some shopping at Mr. Sands' to see the Outsider of St. Jim's at work.

Lumley-Lumley rose to his feet and put away his paper. He saw Levison and Mellish in the party, and was ready for trouble. But most of the juniors were simply careless fellows out for a little fun. There was a roar from them as they came in and spotted Lumley-Lumley in his white apron behind the counter.

'What can I do for you, gentlemen?' asked the grocer's boy respectfully.

'Ain't he got the manner to the life?' said Mellish. 'Anybody could see that he was born for it.'

'Yes, rather!' grinned Gore of the Sheil. 'I want a ha'porth of plums, Lumley-Lumley, and please put it down to the account.'

'Pen'orth of sandy sugar, please!'

'Eggs for me, and not shop 'uns. I know you'

'Please give your orders one at a time, gentlemen. What can I do for you, Master Gore?'

Gore winked at his comrades. He intended to play a little joke on the new errand-boy—a joke that would appeal to him and his friends, although its humour was quite likely to be lost on Jerrold Lumley-Lumley.

'I'm standing treat,' said Gore. 'I want quite a lot of things. Some of you fellows help me give the orders.'

Lumley-Lumley looked at him suspiciously.

'Excuse me, sir,' he said politely, 'but our terms are strict cash. We do not give credit.'

'Who's asking you for credit?' demanded Gore.

'Ahem! I prefer to see the colour of your money, sir.'

Gore, with a flourish, drew a pound from his waistcoat pocket. It was a recent tip from his uncle, and Gore had flourished that pound about St. Jim's considerably already, though he had not the slightest intention of expending it in standing treat to the juniors who were with him.

'What do you think of that?' he demanded.

'Very good, sir. What can I get you, sir?'

'Better have ham,' said Mellish.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

'A pound of ham!' said Gore.

'Very good, sir.'

'And bacon,' said Levison.

'A pound of bacon,' said Gore.

'Certainly, sir!'

'A pound of biscuits,' said Gore,

'and a pound of cheese; a pound of raisins and a pound of saltanas and a pound of tea.'

'Immediately, sir.'

'A pound of dog biscuits and a pound of cold beef.'

Gore apparently found it easier to give his orders in pounds.

Lumley-Lumley cut off or selected, and wrapped up the goods as they were ordered, quite quietly and respectfully. Lumley-Lumley's lips had tightened a little. Perhaps he guessed what was in Gore's mind and was on his guard.

The pile of packages on the counter grew and grew. Lumley-Lumley cast up the account on a sheet of paper.

'Nineteen shillings and sixpence-halfpenny, sir,' he said.

'Make it the pound, Gore,' said Hancock of the Fourth.

'Yes, rather,' said Gore. 'Put in a tin of condensed milk, please.'

'Yes, sir. Exactly one pound, sir.'

Gore winked at his grinning comrades.

'Sure that comes to a pound?' he asked.

'Quite sure, sir.'

'Go over the account again, item by item.'

'Certainly, sir!'

Lumley-Lumley read out the accounts and the items. Gore listened with a great air of attention, while his companions grinned.

'I think that is correct, sir,' said Lumley-Lumley.

'Yes, that's correct!' grinned Gore.

'I want those things sent up to the school.'

'Very good, sir. Shall we send them by our morning delivery, sir? We send the cart in the morning and a boy in the afternoon.'

'Oh, in the morning!' said Gore.

'Very good, sir. One moment, please.'

'Good-afternoon!' said Gore, apparently not hearing.

'One moment, sir. The account is one pound.'

'Oh, the account! I'll pay on delivery.'

'Excuse me, sir, but my instructions from my employer are to let no goods go out of this shop without the cash.'

'Can't send them without the cash?' asked Gore, with another wink to his delighted friends.

'Impossible, sir!'

'Then you can shove 'em back where you found 'em!' drawled Gore. 'Upon second thoughts, I've changed my mind and won't have 'em.'

'Ha, ha, ha!' yelled the juniors.

'Excuse me, sir,' said Lumley-Lumley, with perfect calmness. 'You have purchased these goods, sir, and you must take them. They are your property, and you can take them, or have them delivered, just as you choose; but, in either case, you must pay for them.'

'Must I?' grinned Gore. 'Who's going to make me?'

'I guess I am, if necessary.'

'You! Why, you ass, I could double you up with one hand!' said Gore angrily. 'You start making me pay, and I'll start making you wriggle, you fathead!'

And Gore swung round towards the door. Lumley-Lumley placed one hand upon the counter, and vaulted lightly over, and darted between Gore and the shop doorway.

The other juniors surged round.

'You'll pay for your goods before leaving the shop, please!' said Lumley-Lumley.

'Stand aside!' roared Gore.

'I guess not.'

'Then I'll jolly soon shift you!'

And Gore hurled himself upon Lumley-Lumley. He was met by a fist that seemed to him like a chunk of solid iron jarring upon the point of his jaw. Gore went down on his back with a crash, seeing more stars than the most enthusiastic astronomer ever counted in the course of a long career.

'Yaroooh!' roared Gore. 'Ow!'

'Will you kindly pay for your goods, sir?' asked Lumley-Lumley politely.

The juniors yelled with laughter. They were quite ready to laugh at Gore as to laugh with him, and certainly the laugh had turned now against Gore.

Gore lay on the floor, staring up stupidly at Lumley-Lumley for a moment. Then he jumped up and rushed furiously at the grocer's boy.

Crash!

Squelch!

Lumley-Lumley hit out so quickly that Gore hardly knew where the blow came from. But he knew where he went to. He sat down with a squelching crash in a box of eggs exposed for sale, and there was a terrific smashing round him.

Crash!

'Groooooooh! Moooooeh!' gasped Gore.

'Ha, ha, ha!'

Gore reclined in the box of eggs. He had broken dozens, and they were simply swamping over his clothes. He sat in a sea of yolk, gasping.

Levison, Mellish, and Crooke made a movement towards Lumley-Lumley, and he picked up a ham knife in a careless sort of way, and Levison, Mellish, and Crooke strolled out of the doorway with great promptness.

The juniors who remained were shrieking with laughter. Gore struggled out of the box of smashed eggs, dripping with yolk, and inarticulate with fury.

'I shall have to charge you for those eggs, sir,' said Lumley-Lumley calmly.

'Eight dozen at a shilling a dozen—that will be eight shillings, please! These eggs are cheap, sir, as they are shop eggs. You might have sat in a box of new-laid, and that would have cost twice as much. Eight shillings and one pound, that will be a total of twenty-eight shillings, if you please, sir; and the broken eggs are yours, if you care to have them, sir.'

'Ha, ha, ha!'

'Ow! Groogh!' spluttered Gore.

'Yow-ow-ow-ow-oh!'

'Ha, ha, ha!'

'I'm smothered! I'm mucked all over! These eggs smell horrid! Yow! Ow-ow-ow!'

'The smell is certainly unpleasant, sir, but permit me to point out that you were not compelled to sit in your own eggs!'

'My eggs!' yelled Gore.

'Yes, yours, certainly! Twenty-eight shillings, please!'

'I won't pay you a penny!' shrieked the infuriated Gore.

'You will pay me twenty-eight shillings!'

'I won't!'

Gore made a stride towards the door. Lumley-Lumley stepped in his path, his eyes gleaming, though he was still cool as a cucumber.

'If you decline to pay, sir, my duty to my employer will compel me to use force. I shall roll you in those eggs, begging your pardon, sir.'

'You—you dare not!' gasped Gore.

He had already learned to his cost

that Lumley-Lumley was muscular enough to do it, if he chose.

"You will see, I guess, if you refuse to pay your debt."

"Look here! I—"

"Twenty-eight shillings, please!" said Lumley-Lumley, inexorable as Fate.

"I—I've got a pound!" gasped Gore, in dismay.

"Very well, I will take away eight shillings' worth of goods from the packets I have made up for you, in consideration of your poverty," said the grocer's boy.

"You—you thieving beast! You—you—I—you—"

Lumley-Lumley, keeping one eye on Gore, abstracted eight shillings' worth of goods from the big pile on the counter, and amended the bill, which he handed to Gore.

"One pound, please, sir."

"I—I won't pay! I—I mean—keep off, you grocer cad! Here's the quid, hang you!"

And Gore flung the pound upon the counter.

"Thank you, sir!" said Lumley-Lumley demurely. He went back behind the counter, took up the pound, and slipped it into the till. "You are at liberty to take away the box of broken eggs at your discretion, sir, or we will deliver them at the school either by afternoon or morning delivery, according to your wish."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hang you! Groogh-oo-oo!"

"Kindly take your goods if you are going, sir!"

Gore breathed rage and vengeance, but he reflected that, as he had paid a pound for twelve shillings' worth of goods, he might as well take them away.

The other fellows helped him to gather up his packages. They were likely to have a feed, after all, as George Gore had been kept to his bargain.

"Good-afternoon, sir!" said Lumley-Lumley courteously. "Always pleased to do business with you, sir! If you care to try our two-shilling blend of Indian and Ceylon tea—"

But Gore was gone. The other fellows followed him from the grocer's shop, grinning and chuckling—and keeping to windward of Gore, who did not smell pleasantly of eggs. Lumley-Lumley was able to make a good report of business done.

"Sold a whole box of twelve a shilling heggs!" exclaimed Mr. Sands, in astonishment. "Well, my word! Who was the customer?"

Lumley-Lumley consulted his accounts.

"George Gore, of St. Jim's, sir!"

"Paid for, I hope?" asked Mr. Sands, who had had dealings with George Gore and knew him.

"Yes, sir; paid in cash."

"Good!" said Mr. Sands, still greatly astonished. "Bless me! What could the boy have wanted with all them heggs? You are a good salesman, my lad."

"Thank you, sir!" said Lumley-Lumley.

And he went in to his tea, leaving Mr. Sands in the shop wondering what George Gore of St. Jim's could have wanted with eight dozen eggs at twelve a shilling.

Lumley-Lumley had the shop open precisely to time, and boxes of eggs were carried out and arranged on the pavement, and the masses of bacon in the window, and the shop swept out and dusted, with unremitting promptness and care.

"My word!" said Grimes, resting on his broom, and watching Lumley-Lumley's tireless broom at work. "Anybody would think you were born for this 'ere business, Master Lumley!"

"Perhaps I was, Master Grimes!"

"He, he, he!"

Lumley-Lumley minded the shop while Grimes went on his morning round with the pony and cart that were the pride of Mr. Sands' heart. Many customers came in, chiefly from curiosity to ascertain whether the rumour was true that a millionaire's son was employed as shop-boy and errand-boy at the grocer's.

They found Lumley-Lumley quick, obliging, and civil.

If the junior thought with any regret of St. Jim's, he did not show it. He served all the customers with the same polite attention, and never made a mistake in the change, and was as courteous to the shabby urchin who wanted twopennyworth of treacle as to the princely customer with four or five shillings to spend.

Lumley-Lumley was not surprised when, later in the morning, he heard the toot-toot of a motor-horn in the High Street, and heard a car stop outside the grocer's shop.

He looked very serious and sedate in his white apron, with the corner tucked up in the professional manner, as Mr. Lascelles Lumley-Lumley, financier and millionaire, strode into the little shop.

Mr. Lumley-Lumley gazed at his son behind the counter.

He seemed unable to speak for some moments. He appeared to be struggling to decide in his mind whether his eyes were deceiving him or not.

"Jerrold!" he gasped at last.

"Good-morning, sir!"

"Jerrold!"

"What can I do for you, sir?" asked Lumley-Lumley gravely. "If you are

short of petrol for the car, sir, you can get it at the garage on the corner!"

"You—you—"

"Ahem! Can I provide you with sandwiches for your journey, sir?"

"You—you villain!"

"I can make up some nice sandwiches in beef and 'am, sir," said Lumley-Lumley, purposely dropping the "h", and watching the effect upon his father.

Mr. Lumley turned purple.

"Jerrold! You young rascal!"

"Or if you would care to try our special blend of Indian and Ceylon tea—"

"What are you doing here?" roared the millionaire.

"Minding the shop, sir!"

"You—you young scoundrel!"

"Ahem! If I can supply you with eggs, sir, we have a very cheap line at twelve a shilling. I sold quite a large number yesterday to a young gentleman from St. Jim's. We have a better quality at eight a shilling, but the new laid—"

Mr. Lumley-Lumley gasped.

"Take that apron off at once!" he shouted.

"I use it to protect my trousers, sir. I cannot afford to buy new trousers every week on my salary!"

"Get out from behind that counter!"

"Mr. Sands' orders, sir, to mind the shop!"

"I—I—I'll skin you, you young villain! How dare you masquerade as a grocer's boy!" roared the millionaire.

"I am a grocer's boy, sir!"

"You—you—"

"I'm earning my living, sir!"

Mr. Lumley-Lumley choked.

"I've heard about your goings on, you young rascal!" he said at last, with an effort. "You have done this to annoy me!"

"Not at all, sir; I'm trying to earn an honest living! You have disowned me, and taken me away from St. Jim's. What is a chap to do? I cannot sponge and to beg I am ashamed!" said the junior cheerfully. "I think I shall get on by strict attention to business, and

The Invention of the Age ... the Story of the Year!

It can travel over the ground and under the ground! It can bore through solid rock and burrow into the depths of the earth! The Black Mole, invented by Robert Kenyon, is the world's most marvellous tank!

But the secret of it is known—the plans have been stolen by a gang of desperate crooks. Zworg, the leader, is already using the Black Mole for his own nefarious purposes—and Kenyon stands accused of helping him. He must prove his innocence . . . Every boy should read this amazing story of an amazing machine! The opening chapters of

"THE BLACK MOLE!"

appear to-day in the seven star-story issue of that popular boys' paper—



The RANGER

On sale at all News-agents. Every Saturday 2d.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

CHAPTER 11.

No Surrender!

LUMLEY-LUMLEY took the shutters down the next morning at Mr. Sands' shop.

Grimes stood and watched him in admiration, as he handled the shutters like one to the manner born.

by supplying a good article on reasonable terms!"

His father gasped. "Are you coming in the car?" he demanded.

"Do you want me to?"

"No. I don't; but if you like to apologise, you can come."

"Thank you, I decline! Besides, I could not possibly leave Mr. Sands until he engaged another boy to take my place. A chap must play the game."

"You are trying to disgrace our name," shouted Mr. Lumley-Lumley.

"There is no disgrace in honest work, sir. I am afraid you are a little bit snobbish, pater," said Lumley-Lumley, with a shake of the head.

The millionaire jumped. "This to me, sir!" he roared.

"Certainly, sir! Pray excuse me," added Lumley-Lumley, as a customer came in. "Business before pleasure, you know, sir. I have my duty to do."

The customer was a youth with fourpence to spend. He required several articles, in moderate quantities, for that fourpence, and Lumley-Lumley served him with quiet politeness and attention. His father watched him in open-mouth amazement.

"How long are you going to keep this foolery up?" the millionaire demanded, when the diminutive customer had gone.

"This isn't foolery, sir; it's business." "Don't you want to go back to St. Jim's?"

"I guess so, if you ask me nicely."

"What?"

"But you will have to undertake to play the game, and not bother me, popper."

"I—I—"

"Hallo! Here's Grimes! Grimey, old man, is it time to get up that new case of sugar?"

"Yes, Master Lumley," said Grimes, with rather an uneasy glance at the irate millionaire. "But there ain't no hurry."

"Better get it done, Master Grimes." "Master Grimes!" gasped the millionaire. "Oh!"

"Please excuse me, sir," said Lumley-Lumley, turning politely to his father. "I have some work to do now, and must not neglect my employer's business."

"Jerrold! You young villain! You've only got to admit that you're in the wrong, and I'll take you in the car, and run you up to the school."

"But I'm not in the wrong, popper."

"You are, you young rascal! Apologise, and I'll take you back."

"No fear!"

"What's become of the respect due to your father?" demanded Mr. Lumley-Lumley.

"What about the respect due to your son?" demanded Jerrold, in his turn. "You have played the giddy ox, popper, and it's time for you to climb down."

Mr. Lumley-Lumley seemed to be on the point of suffocating.

"Are you coming?" he demanded chokingly.

"No, sir. I've got my work to do."

"For the last time!"

"Very good, sir."

The millionaire swung furiously round to the door.

"Sure you do not want to try our two shilling blend, sir?" asked Lumley-Lumley anxiously.

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Or our special line in eggs at twelve a shilling!"

"Br-r-r-r-r!"

And Mr. Lascelles Lumley-Lumley was gone. The two boys in the shop

heard the hum of the motor, and the car rolled away.

Lumley-Lumley chuckled softly.

"My 'at!" said Grimes. "My only 'at! If I 'ad a millionaire for a father, Master Lumley, I wouldn't be working in a grocer's shop."

"That's because you've got no ambition, Master Grimes," said Lumley-Lumley coolly. "There are plenty of openings in the grocery business for a chap to climb to the top of the tree."

"But your father will come round, won't he?"

"I guess so," he replied. "He always has. This isn't the first time we've had our little troubles, but they always blow over. The popper and I are very good chums, you know. We've always been good pals, only I don't stand ragging, even from popper."

"But suppose 'e don't come round?" asked Grimes.

The junior shrugged his shoulders.

"Then I stay here, Grimey."

"And stick to the grocery?"

"I guess so. And in two or three years I guess I'll have half the grocery business in Sussex in my hands, too," said Lumley-Lumley coolly.

"My eye!" said Grimes. "I believe you would, too, Master Lumley."

"Let's get that sugar up," said Lumley-Lumley briskly. "It's nearly dinner-time, and after dinner I've got to go on my round."

And Mr. Sands' two faithful employes set to work.

CHAPTER 12.

Backing Up Lumley!

TOM MERRY & CO. came out of the School House into the sunny quadrangle of St. Jim's, just about the same time that Mr. Sands' new boy was going to his dinner in the shop. The bright June sunshine was blazing down on the cricket field.

Tom Merry paused on the School House steps to look round.

George Gore came out, and Tom Merry nodded to him with a grin. The story of Gore's purchase of eggs was all over the school, and Gore had been laughed at over it till the mere mention of the matter was enough to drive him to fury.

"Hallo! Going shopping, Gore?" asked Tom Merry cheerfully.

The Shell fellow scowled.

"Oh rats!" he replied.

"Looking for a bargain in eggs?"

"Go and eat coke!"

And Gore swung away.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaas, it's wathah funny!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, as he came out of the House, polishing his eye-glass.

"Gore seems to have gone to wag, and to have returned wagged. Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry was looking towards the gates. Gore had joined Levison, Mellish, and Crooke, and two or three other

fellows of the same sort, and they had gone out into the road together.

Tom Merry wrinkled his brows a little.

"Looks like another visit to the grocer's," he remarked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It wouldn't be a bad idea to get along ourselves," Tom Merry said thoughtfully. "We haven't seen Lumley-Lumley in his new line of business, you know, and if Levison & Co. mean trouble—"

"Yaas, wathah. Come on, deah boys."

And Tom Merry and D'Arcy strolled down to the gates. Figgins and Red-



"Collar him!" cried Levison. The three juniors advanced the handle of the basket, and swept it round at the advanced ground.

fern of the New House, and Jack Blake and Monty Lowther joined them. All the juniors were very keenly interested in Lumley-Lumley's new departure, and quite in a friendly way they wanted to see him at work. And they were also keen to checkmate any attempt on the part of the cads of the School House to rag the new grocer's boy.

Levison & Co. arrived in the High Street of Rylcombe, and stopped outside the shop of Mr. Sands.

Lumley-Lumley was just starting on his afternoon round. He had the big grocer-basket on his arm, and Grimes was standing in the shop door, giving him some final instructions. Lumley-Lumley caught sight of Levison & Co., but took no notice of them.

"The eggs are for the Oaks, and the and to open fire on the sniffing snobs of St. Jim's."

"Right-ho!" said Lumley-Lumley. And he started down the street, with his basket on his arm.

He had expected some ragging from Levison & Co., but perhaps Gore's experience in the shop the previous afternoon had warned them to keep their distance. Lumley-Lumley intended, in case of necessity, to sacrifice some of the eggs intended for the Oaks, as missiles

But he remembered that he was Mr. Sands' boy now, and must take this kind of unpleasantness along with other kinds that fell to the lot of fellows in employment. He averted his glance and walked on.

Sniff, sniff, sniff! The audible sniffs of the juniors reached Lumley-Lumley's ears, and again he was very strongly tempted to turn, eggs in hand.

But he restrained himself. Sniff, sniff, sniff! Lumley-Lumley stamped on.

Five juniors of St. Jim's arrived upon the scene, and looked at Lumley-Lumley with his basket, and at the sniffing fellows led by Levison.

Tom Merry & Co. understood.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "They are tweekin' Lumley-Lumley with howwid wudeness, you know."

"The rotters!" said Redfern.

Tom Merry grinned.

"Look here!" he said, indicating a large egg-box outside Mr. Sands' shop. "These eggs are twelve a shilling!"

"Yes. Gore knows that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's worth a bob," said Tom Merry. "Hallo, Grimes! I'm going to take a dozen of those eggs. Here's your bob!"

"Yes, Master Merry," said Grimes. "Shall I wrap them up?"

"Ha, ha, ha! No. We want them for immediate consumption."

"You ain't goin' to eat them raw?" demanded Grimes, in amazement.

"Ha, ha, ha! No. We going to chuck 'em!"

And each of the juniors seized two or three eggs.

The sniffing brigade had passed Lumley-Lumley, and had ceased to sniff, and were grinning at one another gleefully. They knew that they had annoyed the schoolboy errand-boy, and they were satisfied. But their satisfaction was of short duration.

Whiz, whiz, whiz! Smash! Smelch!

Smash! Smelch! Eggs flew through the air with deadly aim. Tom Merry & Co. were all good bowlers. They captured wickets every time at this short range.

"Yah! Oh!"

"Owp-yowp-groo-oo-oo!"

"Yaroo!"

Levison staggered across the pavement, and sat down in the road as an egg smashed on his nose. Mellish caught one in the eye; and another, sent with unerring aim by Redfern, smelched on Crooke's mouth. It was a specially ripe egg, too, and the cad of the Shell turned quite white.

"Gooo-rrro-oo!"

Crooke sat down and dabbed frantically at the overripe egg with his handkerchief.

"Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Whiz, whiz, whiz! Crash! Smash! As Tom Merry had said, it was worth a "bob." The cads of St. Jim's howled and staggered under the merry fusillade. The dozen eggs were expended in a very short space of time.

Village boys gathered from all sides to look on, yelling with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow!"

"Yow!"

"Oh! Groo!"

Tom Merry tossed another shilling to Grimes. Twelve more missiles were at the disposal of the bowlers. They made wonderful play with them. Levison & Co., yelling and gasping and sending forth weird odours of overripe eggs, fled.

They dashed down the road towards the school at top speed, and the last of the eggs whizzed after them and smashed on the backs of their heads.

Then they vanished, streaming with yolk.

Tom Merry & Co. roared with laughter. Lumley-Lumley had set down his basket to yell, more at his case. Levison & Co. had vanished, and they left nothing behind but patches of broken eggs on the pavement and a lingering odour of stale eggs.

"Bai Jove! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess that was O.K.," gasped Lumley-Lumley. "I reckon it's decent of you fellows to stand by me like this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I told you we were going to back you up, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I wathah think we are doin' it! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors roared again.

Levison & Co. did not stop running until they had reached the crossroads, half-way to St. Jim's. There, out of breath, and half suffocated by the smell of the broken eggs that clung to them, they paused, and gasped and snorted.

They had sniffed at Lumley-Lumley; but they sniffed more emphatically at one another now, though for a different reason.

"Goodness gracious, young gentlemen! What a state you are in!"

It was Mr. Sands, the village grocer, who had just turned out of the lane from Wayland. He stopped and regarded the eggy juniors in utter amazement.

"Dear me! Has there been an accident?" he inquired.

"Better ask your rotten errand-boy!" yelled Levison.

Mr. Sands smiled.

"Dear me!" he said again, and walked on.

Sniff, sniff, sniff! Levison & Co. rubbed at the eggs and rubbed off most of the clinging stickiness, but they could not rub off the smell. That clung to them lovingly.

"Ow!" groaned Mellish. "It was Tom Merry and the rest—the beasts! They're backing up that grocer cad—Yow! We'd better leave him alone in future—Groogh!"

Levison gritted his teeth.

"I jolly well shan't let him alone!" he exclaimed savagely. "Nor old Sands, either! I'll teach the fat old bounder to grin at us! Groogh! I'll—"

"You'll leave me out of your next scheme, anyway!" grunted Gore. "I've had enough of it! I'm fed-up! Groogh!"

"So am I!" growled Crooke. "Yow-ow-ow!"

Levison snarled, but he did not reply.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.



upon the Outsider. Lumley-Lumley took a firm grip upon the juniors. They were knocked off their feet, and rolled on the ground with loud yells.

against Levison & Co., but they were not needed.

The cads of St. Jim's were adopting new tactics.

They did not approach the schoolboy errand-boy.

Instead of that they elevated their noses high in the air, and walked past him with an air of the utmost scorn and disdain.

Lumley-Lumley paused in astonishment.

Levison and Mellish, and Gore and Crooke, and the rest, walked past him with noses in the air, sniffing.

Lumley-Lumley's cheeks grew red for a moment.

He was strongly tempted to dive his hand into the grocer-basket for eggs,

The unhappy snobs of St. Jim's, grunting and sniffing all the way, returned to the school on the worst of terms with each other and with themselves.

CHAPTER 13.

A Crickét Challenge!

AFTERNOON lessons were over at St. Jim's, and Tom Merry had come in from the cricket field. He was sitting in the window-seat in the passage, with his hands in his pockets, when the voice of Jack Blake was heard calling in the Lower Hall:

"Tom Merry!"
"Here I am!" said Tom Merry, coming downstairs.

"Letter for you."
"Oh, leave it in the rack!"
"But it's in Lumley-Lumley's fist," said Blake, "That's why I took it out of the rack to bring it to you."

"Might be something important," remarked Digby. "We've agreed to back the poor beggar up all we can, you know."

"Yaas, wathah! Pway wead the lethah at once, Tom Mewwy!"

Tom Merry slit open the envelope, which was addressed to himself and bore the local postmark of Rylcombe. The letter within was written by Jerrold Lumley-Lumley, and Tom Merry gave a soft whistle as he read it.

"My hat!" he exclaimed.
"Bai Jove! Is there any news, deah boy?"

"Yes, rather! It's cheek—pure, unadulterated cheek!" said Tom Merry.

"Read it out," said Blake.
"Here goes!"

Tom Merry read out the letter:
"Dear Merry,—The Rylcombe Junior Cricket Club have the honour of challenging the St. Jim's juniors to a cricket match for Saturday afternoon next. An early reply will oblige.

"J. LUMLEY-LUMLEY,
Secretary."

"Gweat Scott!"
"The cheek of it!" ejaculated Blake indignantly. "Why, what chance will those young asses have against us?"

"A better chance with Lumley-Lumley batting for them than they would have had before," said Kangaroo, with a grin.

"Bai Jove! You're wight, Kangy!"
Tom Merry grinned.

"Lumley-Lumley seems to have dropped St. Jim's for good and quite thrown in his lot with Grimes, Pilcher, and Craggs & Co. I suppose he knows that our match with the Grammarians for Saturday has been postponed, and he is improving the shining hour by sending up this challenge. Are we going to play them?"

"The noble Levison would turn up his nose at playing a team of grocer and butcher boys," Kangaroo grinned; "but as we're not so aristocratic as Levison I don't see why we shouldn't."

"Wathah not!"
"Oh, let's play 'em!" said Blake. "It's like their nerve to challenge us; but, of course, that's Lumley-Lumley's doing. Let's play them and give them a lesson."

"Yaas, wathah!"
"Not a bad idea," said Digby. "Of course, they wouldn't have a look in."
"Of course not!"

"So they've made Lumley-Lumley their giddy secretary," said Digby. "He was always a pushing chap. I don't think they'll lick St. Jim's."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

"Ha, ha, ha! No!"

Quite a crowd gathered round to hear Lumley-Lumley's letter read. There was a general grin. The challenge from the village junior club was regarded by the St. Jim's fellows as being, as Tom Merry had described it, pure and unadulterated cheek. But there was a general willingness to play, especially as a fixture for the Saturday had fallen through and the afternoon was not engaged.

"We'll play them, then," said Tom Merry, looking round. "We'll go down to the village and tell Lumley-Lumley so."

"Yaas, wathah!"
And the juniors sauntered down the green, shady lane to the village, and the game was thereupon fixed up for the coming Saturday, much to Lumley-Lumley's delight.

It was a Saturday afternoon. It was a glorious June day, and the St. Jim's fellows had turned out after lessons in high spirits, most of them bound for the cricket field.

The match between Tom Merry & Co. and the Junior Cricket Club of Rylcombe was due that afternoon, and the heroes of St. Jim's were ready for it. They did not anticipate much trouble with the Rylcombe team, with the exception of Jerrold Lumley-Lumley. He was likely to give their bowlers some trouble.

There was a match going on on the Sixth Form ground and another on the Fifth, and the merry click of bat and ball could be heard on all sides when the junior team arrived from Rylcombe. Tom Merry & Co. met them with great politeness.

Lumley-Lumley & Co. were a little late; but Lumley-Lumley explained that that was due to the fact that, although his friends were all supposed to have the Saturday afternoon off, their employers sometimes kept them a little late.

Then they got to cricket. St. Jim's won the toss and went in first, and the school batsmen slogged at the village bowling in fine style.

Lumley-Lumley did some bowling, and did it well, but the Rylcombe team had only one other good bowler, and that was Grimes.

He was captain of the eleven, and he did not put himself on to bowl at first. He made the fur fly when he did go on, however.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy saw with surprise his wicket fly to pieces under a whizzing ball from the grocer's boy, and Jack Blake, still more to his astonishment, shared the same fate.

The next man in was Kerr of the New House, and Kerr followed in his predecessor's footsteps, achieving a duck's egg.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, as Kerr came out. "What wotten luck! That gwocah chap is vey hot stuff, deah boy!"

"The hat-trick!" grunted Kerr. "Never mind; there's Figgy going in!"

Figgins and Tom Merry between them made the runs pile up. Then Redfern got a chance, and added to the total. But Reddy was caught out by Lumley-Lumley, and Tom Merry was clean bowled by Grimes.

When all the wickets were down, the St. Jim's juniors' score was exactly 100, which was not like nearly what they had expected to—do against a mere village team.

There was an adjournment for tea, and Levison & Co. came sniffing round very disdainfully at the sight of the grocers' boys and butchers' boys sitting

down to tea with the juniors of St. Jim's.

Unfortunately for Levison, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy caught one of his disdainful sniffs, and he wheeled round to the ead of the Fourth from the tea-table spread under the elms, and grasped Levison by the collar.

"Did you sniff, Levison, or did you not?"

"Yes, hang you!" growled Levison.

"Why did you sniff, deah boy?"

"Because I choso!"

"That is not a weason!" said D'Arcy with a shake of his head. "If you wish to sniff, deah boy, it is bettah to have an adequate weason. I will pwovide you with one."

And with his disengaged hand Arthur Augustus picked up the pepper-castor from the table, and kindly and gently shook it over Levison's face.

Levison burst into a terrific sneeze. "Ow! Atchoo—atchoo—oooh! Ooop—oop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway sneeze at your leisure, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "You may sniff as much as you like. Pway continue!"

"Atchoo—choo—choo! Sni-i-i-iff!"

"Go it! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sne-e-e-eze! Sni-i-i-iff!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Levison tramped away, sneezing and sniffing furiously. The cricketers were not troubled by him any more that afternoon.

CHAPTER 14.

St. Jim's Defeated!

"**T**IME!" said Tom Merry, as the big clock on the tower of St. Jim's indicated five.

And Grimes & Co. went to the wickets to bat.

Tom Merry placed his men to field, and Grimes opened the innings with Pilcher, the butcher's boy, and Craggs, who honoured the local chemist with his assistance.

Fatty Wynn was put on to bowl.

The fat Fourth Former had been carefully kept off the pastry at tea-table by Figgins and Kerr, and he was at the top of his form.

He took Craggs' and Pilcher's wickets almost in the twinkling of an eye, and the St. Jim's crowd cheered.

"Go in next, and stop that fat bounder!" said Grimes to Lumley-Lumley. "Stiek it out, if you can, Master Lumley!"

"I guess I will, Master Grimes."

And Lumley-Lumley went in to bat, with Jimmy Smith, the post office boy, at the other end.

It was just after Lumley-Lumley's innings had commenced that the sound of a motor-horn was heard.

"But no one took any notice of it. Everybody was too busy playing cricket, or watching it. Even when a big handsome car swung in at the gates, and was tooted up the drive by an imposing chauffeur, nobody looked round."

Mr. Lascelles Lumley-Lumley stepped from his car at the door of the Head's house.

The millionaire was shown in.

Dr. Holmes was standing at his study window, looking out towards the cricket field, and quite interested in the junior match, when Mr. Lascelles Lumley-Lumley was announced.

The Head of St. Jim's turned to greet his visitor.

There was some perceptible coldness in his manner. The Head did not like

(Continued on page 28.)



**Let the Editor be your pal. Write to him to-day, addressing your letters :
The Editor, The GEM, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House,
Farrington Street, London, E.C.4.**

HALLO, chums! I have just finished reading the next St. Jim's story, and my candid opinion is that it's the best story Martin Clifford has ever written for us. That's no idle statement, but a plain, unvarnished fact! From the very beginning the yarn grips the interest and holds one enthralled throughout. Powerful in plot, quick-moving in action, and full of human interest, this story, which is called

"PLAYING THE GAME!"

will, I am sure, be hailed by all of you as one of our author's finest efforts—a story that will live long in the memory.

The theme centres around Arthur Fitzgerald, a newcomer to St. Jim's. He is an amateur county cricketer, and he takes up a post at the school as a cricket coach. From the first meeting Tom Merry & Co. take a liking to the cheery athletic coach, and consider themselves fortunate to have so great a player to teach them more about the popular summer game. But no sooner does Arthur Fitzgerald enter St. Jim's than Mr. Selby, the Third Form master, who meets him face to face, drops a bombshell. He accuses the cricket coach of being Dandy Jim, a notorious cracksmen!

That's the dramatic way this great yarn opens, and you will thoroughly enjoy it all through to its satisfying conclusion. Look out for it next Wednesday, chums, and don't forget to tell all your pals about it.

THE LOST LOCO.!

An amazing theft occurred not long ago at Jersey City, U.S.A.—a theft that leaves one wondering how the thief or thieves—for it was too big a job for one—got away with it. In the night they entered the workshops of a big engineering company and took away a locomotive weighing no less than eleven tons! And so complete was their getaway, with not a clue left behind, that

the police were baffled. What anyone could want with an eleven-ton loco is a mystery. It's not an easy thing to dispose of or move about without danger of detection to the thieves. But what seems more likely, perhaps it was only a hoax, after all!

Still, the amazing theft calls to mind a similar sort of incident which occurred in France. But in this case the engine was not stolen—it was borrowed for a ride! An out-of-work Frenchman, fed-up with looking for a job in his home town, decided to go to Paris to seek employment. But how to get there was a problem. The man, however, solved it in a unique way. Awaiting his chance by a railway, he boarded an unattended engine, ready with steam up, and calmly drove it off. The driver and fireman nearly had a fit when they came running up to see their engine disappearing down the line. But it was too much for the out-of-work to hope that he could get through to Paris on the loco, and his journey came to an end when he was shunted on to a side line by an alert signalman.

MOTORING ON THE CHEAP!

Six hundred and seventy miles on ten gallons of petrol! That performance of a six-cylinder car wants some beating. In fact, only a small horse-power motor-bike could get near it. But the excellent performance of the car is in no way due to the engine. It is the result of the ingenuity of a Douglas, Cape Town, farmer. From old scraps of iron found on his farm he made a gadget that generated gas from burning charcoal which the car, once started on petrol, operated as it went along—the gas being purified before it entered the engine. So the petrol could be shut off and the charcoal gas made to serve its turn. During a trial run, the farmer's car, running on the charcoal gas,

PEN PALS COUPON

1-6-35

attained a speed of thirty-five miles an hour—and that against a strong head wind!

This news has set Bernard Glyn, the inventor of St. Jim's, busy on the plans of a home-made car that will entirely produce its own gas for propulsion, and therefore cost next to nothing to run. But his chums shudder to think what will happen if that car ever reached the road! I doubt it will.

"BACKING UP BILL!"

As you have read, or will read in the grand Packsaddle yarn in this number, Bill Sampson, the headmaster of the Texas cow town school, is getting a raw deal from the school committee in firing him. But Bill refuses to be fired, which places the committee in an awkward position—for the cowboy master is ready to back up his refusal with his six-gun, as he shows in the next gripping yarn of Western school adventure. And the quickest man on the draw in Texas is not to be trifled with. Bill is determined to keep his position, and in this he is backed up by all his pupils of Packsaddle School. You cannot fail to be thrilled by Frank Richards' latest smashing yarn of this series.

Thrills, too, come thick and fast to the St. Frank's boys in the next chapters of "The Secret World!" The Gothlanders are on the attack again. It is their second invasion of Northestria, and Nipper and his companions are determined not to be left out of the hostilities this time. Read next week how they join in the fray.

THE MONSTER OF THE BAY!

Monsters, since the appearance of the Loch Ness mystery creature set all England talking, have been popping up all over the world, but, curiously enough, they are only seen! One sea monster, however, has at last been landed. It was shot in Galway Bay, off the West Coast of Ireland, by a lighthouse-keeper, after it had got caught in the meshes of a fishing net. It tore the nets to shreds and escaped, but it had been seen, and the alarm was given in Galway. Many fishermen and others set out with guns to settle the sea beast. But when they arrived on the scene they were only in time to see the monster in its death throes. The lighthouse-keeper had already fired several shots into its head. The unknown sea beast, which has a very large head and a long scaly body with sharp tails, is forty-eight feet in length and twenty-six feet in the girth, and weighs nearly four tons!

TAILPIECE.

Teacher: "Brown, can you spell chicken?"

Small Boy: "I'm not old enough, sir. Try me with hen!"

THE EDITOR.

East Indies, Iraq, South America, Europe—excluding England—
Iceland, Asia, Philippines.

R. S. Keelson, 17, Trewnice Road, Wimbledon, London, S.W.20, wants a correspondent in the States; age 13-16.

Richard Norris, 444a, Randles Road, Sydenham, Durban, Natal, South Africa, wants correspondents; age 15-17; swimming, cycling, shooting.

Robert Hugh McDougall, 51, Milton Road, Observatory, Cape Town, South Africa, wants a pen pal; age 10-11; Australia, Canada, Japan; aeronautics, stamps.

Ivan Purchase, 55 Milton Road, Observatory, Cape Town, South Africa, wants pen pals in the British Empire, China, Japan; stamps; age 9-12.

(Continued on page 22.)

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424



A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest to each other. If you want a pen pal, post your notice, together with the coupon on this page, to the address given above.

Miss Dorothy Davies, 18, Branshill Gardens, Dartmouth Park Hill, Highgate, London, N.W.5, wants girl correspondents in Mexico, Egypt, British Empire; age 18-30; sports, films.

Douglas Bingham, 16, Buckingham Street, Ladysmith, Natal, South Africa, wants pen pals; age 13-15; stamps;



The SIX-GUN SCHOOLMASTER!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Steve Spills a Mouthful!

"YOU old gink!"
 "Say—"
 "You doggoned old pie-
 can!"
 "What—"

"You call yourself a schoolmaster, you all-fired, uneducated old jay? Get back to punching cows!"

Bill Sampson, headmaster of Packsaddle School, stood rooted to the playground. He was so astonished that he forgot to be enraged. He just stared at Steve Carson in blank amazement.

The Packsaddle bunch stared, too. Like Bill, they could hardly believe their ears. Dick Carr, staring at Steve, wondered whether he had taken leave of his senses. The whole bunch gasped. Small Brown, the teacher, standing in the schoolhouse porch, blinked like a startled owl through his horn-rimmed spectacles.

Steve was talking to his headmaster. Tin Tung had rung the school bell for class. Big Steve, mounted on his bronco, did not dismount and turn the brone into the corral. Bill Sampson shouted to him, and cracked his quirt as a hint of what would be coming to Steve if he did not follow the bunch in. And that was how Steve answered him.

It got the goat of the whole bunch. Steve Carson had a deep frown against his headmaster for many a quirting, every one richly deserved. Every guy in the bunch knew what he thought of Bill. But no guy expected to hear him telling Bill. Now he was telling him, and it was amazing.

"Get back to punching cows on Kicking Mule, if they'll give you a job in the outfit!" resumed Steve, sitting his bronco, and looking at Bill's blankly astonished face with cool impudence. "That's your long suit, Bill Sampson! You a schoolmaster! Forget it! Schoolmaster nothing! I don't give a Continental red cent for a schoolmaster of

your heft! Punch cows, you doggoned old pie-faced geck!"

"Say, you gone loco, Steve!" gasped Slick Poindexter.

"Pack it up, you bonehead!" stuttered Mick Kavanagh. "You've sure spilled a bibful, Steve! Pack it up!"

Bill, too astounded to stir, stood like a man in a trance. It really seemed that he doubted his sense of hearing. Never since the citizens of Packsaddle had founded the school on the bank of the Rio Frio, and selected Bill to ride herd over the bunch, had Bill been talked to like this. One thing was certain to all the bunch—Steve, who had had many a quirting, was booked for another, compared with which any previous quirting would not be a small circumstance.

And he did not seem to care!

That was the amazing part of it. Surely he knew what was coming to him! But he sat his bronco coolly and carelessly, reins in hand, grinning at Bill's dazed face.

"Got that, you old piecan?" asked Steve. "Chew on it! I'm telling you to quit, and go back to punching cows, you ornery old gink!"

Bill woke up, as it were. He gasped; he drew a deep, deep breath. His grip closed hard on his quirt. Red wrath sufficed his bearded face.

"Carry me home to die!" ejaculated Bill. "You—you—you're shooting off your mouth that-a-way at your schoolmaster, young Carson! By the great horned toad, I guess I'll make you yaup like you was a dorg with a burnt tail, and then some! I guess—"

Bill jumped at Steve to hook him off the bronco.

Steve gave the brone a jab of the spur, and the steed leaped away. He rode round the playground, with Bill Sampson chasing in pursuit, brandishing his cow-whip.

The bunch gazed on, spellbound. Unless Big Steve had gone loco, they could not begin to understand this. Careless of Bill's raging wrath, Steve

looked back at him as he galloped, and waved his stetson in mockery. After him charged the enraged headmaster of Packsaddle, but he had no chance of running down the bronco. Right round the playground galloped Steve, waving his hat in mocking defiance.

"Loco!" said Slick. "I guess that guy's plumb loco! Say, Bill will take the skin off him for chewing the rag that-a-way!"

"You said it!" grinned Mick.

"And serve him right, too!" exclaimed Dick Carr indignantly.

"You're talking!" agreed Pie Sanders. "I guess nobody in this bunch stands for giving Bill back-chat in that style! I'll tell a man!"

"Pull in!" Bill was roaring. "I'm telling you to pull in that cayuse, you, Carson! Jumping painters! I'll say you won't be able to crawl when I'm through with you!"

"Forget it, you ornery old geck!" shouted back Carson.

He circled the enraged headmaster on his bronco.

Suddenly spurring the horse, he dashed past Bill within length of a quirt—so suddenly that Bill was too late in lashing out. But as he swept past, Carson lashed out with his own quirt and lifted the stetson from Bill's head. He rode on, laughing, out of reach, while Bill's ten-gallon hat flew across the playground.

That was the limit! Bill gave a roar of wrath. The Packsaddle bunch simply gasped. Steve was not only asking for it—he was howling for it!

"You, Poindexter!" roared Bill. "You bring my cayuse!"

But Slick had no time. Carson wheeled his horse and dashed away towards the gateway on the school trail.

Evidently he intended to ride out of school, heedless of the fact that lessons were scheduled to begin. That, indeed, was only wise after the way he had talked to Bill. Yet, so far as the bunch

—THAT'S BILL SAMPSON. HEAD OF PACKSADDLE SCHOOL.

could see, there was nothing in it. Steve was a boarder at the cow town school, and he had to come back sooner or later. And when he came back—

Bill made a wild rush after him. With a jingle of bridle and stirrups, a clatter of lashing hoofs, Steve rode out at the gate.

On the trail outside, he looked back, to wave his hat once more at Bill and yell a parting word:

"Go and chop chips, you ornery old geck!" yelled Steve. "Go back to punching cows, you big stiff!"

And Steve dashed away at a gallop down the trail to Packsaddle.

Bill stared after him. Then he glared round at the staring bunch.

"Say, you young gecks, deaf?" he roared. "Ain't you heard the bell? And ain't Mister Brown waiting for you? Beat it!"

There was a rush for the schoolhouse. Bill was never to be trifled with, and less so now than ever. But the bunch did not give Small Brown much attention in that lesson. They were lost in wonder. Steve was gone—but he had to come back! Bill's look, as he sat at his desk, showed what Steve had to expect when he came back. Did Steve hope, in some mysterious way, to be able to get away with this? Had he some card up his sleeve of which the other fellows knew nothing? The Packsaddle bunch simply did not know what to think—Steve had got them guessing!

The Boot for Bill!

EZRA LICK, town marshal of Packsaddle, coughed. Job Wash, storekeeper, echoed his cough.

Both of them looked uncomfortable as they stepped through the schoolhouse porch and looked into the school-room. Bill, glancing round from his desk, did not look encouraging. Bill might be more of a cowpuncher than a schoolmaster, he might know more about packing guns than packing knowledge, but Bill did not stand for interrupting class. Old-timers who had known him when he punched cows on the Kicking Mule ranges, and who dropped in to chew the rag, found Bill giving them the marble eye and the frozen mitt if they horned in during class. Bill could run a school if he could not teach in it. So, though Mr. Lick and Mr. Wash were the two most important citizens of Packsaddle, and the chief members of the school committee of that lively burg, Bill Sampson eyed them as if they were cheap pieces left on the counter.

"Say, Bill—" began Marshal Lick, having coughed.

"Say nix!" interrupted Bill. He waved a hand towards Small Brown and his class. "Guys ain't allowed to horn into this hyer caboodle while lessons is on! Vamoose the ranch!"

"I guess—" said Mr. Wash.

"Quit guessing, and beat it!" said Bill. "You want to chew the rag with me, you mosey into my office and squat. I guess I'll be along when the school's broke herd."

The town marshal and the storekeeper exchanged glances. The bunch watched them curiously. They could see—and perhaps Bill could—that these two prominent citizens of Packsaddle had arrived upon an errand not wholly agreeable. What it was was a mystery.

Bill was liked all through Packsaddle. The bunch liked him, and respected him, hard as he rode herd over them. In all the rough and tough Packsaddle

bunch, Steve was the only guy who had a real grouch against the headmaster. His father, Two-Gun Carson, was the only man on the school committee who did not pull with Bill. Yet here were the two chief members of that committee, obviously on a disagreeable errand. And none the better pleased, it was plain, by Bill's reception of them.

Having exchanged glances they looked at Bill. Bill gave them his shoulder to look at, his eyes on the class. Marshal Lick drew a deep breath, and spoke again.

"I guess we've come up special in the buckboard, Bill, to talk to you a few."

Bill glanced over the shoulder he had turned to them.

"You guys gone deaf down to the burg?" he asked.

"Meaning?" asked the marshal. "I guess the school bell can be heard in Packsaddle, allowing you ain't gone deaf. So you're wise to it that school's on."

"Look here, Mr. Sampson!" said Job Wash. "As members of the school committee of the town of Packsaddle, we—"

"You, Poindexter!" roared Bill.

"Yep!"

Slick jumped.

"Shut that door!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Dick Carr; and the bunch grinned.

Slick, grinning, went to the door and shut it, almost on the noses of Marshal Lick and Mr. Wash.

Class went on. Voices—angry voices—could be heard murmuring in the porch. Bill Sampson gave them no

**When Bill Sampson is fired from
Packsaddle School, it is the
cowboy headmaster who does
the firing instead!**

heed. Bill had been appointed headmaster of Packsaddle School, and, so long as he was headmaster, he was riding herd; and guys who horned in during class had to take what came to them. The door remained shut.

Small Brown blinked curiously at Bill through his horn-rimmed spectacles. Small Brown wondered now Bill had the nerve to hand over this stuff to the important citizens who had appointed him to his post, and could push him out of it again, if they liked. Bill seemed to have dismissed those prominent citizens from his mind. If they chose to wait in his office till he had time to chew the rag, well and good; if they didn't, well and good again. That was how Bill looked at it.

But there was some subdued excitement in the bunch, though none apparent in Bill. Something was up—that was certain. Dick Carr wondered whether Steve Carson's amazing defiance of his headmaster had any connection with this. It was a coincidence at least.

School was dismissed at last. The Packsaddle bunch streamed out of the schoolhouse. Slick Poindexter pointed to a buckboard stetched at the gate.

"That's Wash's caboodle," he remarked. "They're waiting to see Bill."

The two prominent citizens were indeed waiting to see Bill—not in the best of tempers. Bill crossed the porch from the school-room into his "office,"

where he found the town marshal sprawled in a rocker, and Job Wash standing by the window with set lips. Bill gave them both an affable nod. Now that school was over, Bill was no longer a schoolmaster, but just Bill, ready to be hospitable and friendly.

"Spill it, old-timers!" said Bill. Marshal Lick glanced at Mr. Wash, who coughed. Bill looked from one to the other.

"Meaning no offence, Bill," said Mr. Lick.

"I guess," said Bill, "that I ain't the galoot to go off on my ear. You got suthin' to spill. Shoot!"

"The regular meeting of the school committee has taken place, Mr. Sampson," said Job Wash. "The committee have come to a unanimous decision."

"Meaning?" asked Bill, who had never learned the word unanimous on the ranges of Kicking Mule.

"All the herd on the same trail," Bill, said Marshal Lick.

"I get you!" assented Bill.

"While expressing satisfaction—unanimous satisfaction—with the way you have hitherto managed this school," resumed Mr. Wash—Bill wrinkled his rugged brows in the effort to follow Mr. Wash's meaning—"the committee, nevertheless, feel that the time is ripe for a—a change."

"How come?" asked Bill.

"With all respect to you personally," said Mr. Wash, "the committee feel that some headmaster of higher educational attainments—"

Bill began to get it.

"A headmaster who will not merely exercise authority, which the committee heartily acknowledge that you have done to their satisfaction, but who will possess certain scholastic qualifications—"

"A high-browed guy with book larnin', Bill," translated Marshal Lick.

Mr. Wash frowned at the interruption. He had mixed in politics in his time, and was rather proud of his flow of language.

"To be brief—" resumed Mr. Wash.

"Now you're talking," said Bill.

"To be brief, the committee, while unanimously acknowledging your past services, and expressing their thanks for the same, consider that the time has come—"

"You've spilled a jugful!" said Bill. "Put your cards on the table, Mr. Wash."

"The committee," said Mr. Wash, "will be glad to accept your resignation of the present post as headmaster of this school."

"That's the parcel," said Marshal Lick.

Bill looked at them.

"That's what you've moseyed along to spill?" he asked.

"You said it."

"Your resignation—" said Mr. Wash.

"Forget it!" said Bill.

The storekeeper eyed him.

"You do not think of resigning?"

"Not so's you'd notice it," said Bill.

"Hem! In that case—"

"Fired?" asked Bill.

"I should not express it in that manner, but—"

"I guess not," agreed Bill. "You wouldn't talk plain if you could crawl around blowing off your mouth."

Mr. Wash flushed.

"Meaning no offence, Bill," said Marshal Lick apologetically. "But the guys do think that a galoot with book larnin' and such—"

"You figure that book-learnin' will handle this hyer bunch?" asked Bill. "Why, you pesky piecan—" He paused. "Say, you been spilling this all over Packsaddle afore you put me wise?" Bill breathed hard. "I guess it was Two-Gun started this, and I'll say, he's mentioned it to young Steve. Yep; I get it now. I sure wondered where that young guy had picked up all that nerve all of a sudden. Say, you want my answer?"

"Your resignation—" said Mr. Wash.

"Forget it!" said Bill.

"Then I regret to say your dismissal is—"

"Pack it up!" said Bill. "I guess it's my turn to chew the rag. I'll say you're a piecan, Mr. Wash. I'll mention that you're a bonehead, Mr. Lick. I'll tell a man your pesky committee is a caboodle of the world's prize boobs, run by that all-fired, poker-sharp Two-Gun Carson. I'm fired; and you've moseyed in to put me wise. Now I'll put you wise what I think about you."

Bill made a stride forward. His right hand gripped Marshal Lick's neckscarf, and hooked him out of the rocker. His left hand fastened like a vice on the collar of Mr. Wash. There was a gasp from the marshal; a squeak of terror from the storekeeper. Unheeding both, Bill ran them out of the schoolhouse into the playground, with a grip of steel on the backs of their necks, and a roar from the Packsaddle bunch greeted the startling and unexpected sight.

Bill's Answer!

"LOOK!" yelled Dick Carr. "Howly Mike!" gasped Mick Kavanagh.

"This here is the bee's knee!" exclaimed Slick. "Say, Bill has sure got his mad up with them guys!"

Down the path from the porch to the gateway, heedless of the staring and excited shouting of the bunch, went Bill Sampson—with a wriggling, squirming, spluttering guy in either hand!

The bunch roared with laughter.

Mr. Wash was no athlete—but the marshal of Packsaddle was a powerful man, and he put up a frantic struggle. But powerful as he was, the gigantic Bill handled him. Bill, it was well known, could pitch over a steer by the horns, and had done so in his old days as a puncher on Kicking Mule.

Mr. Wash's podgy weight and Mr. Lick's muscle gave him no trouble. With a guy swinging like a sack in either hand, Bill strode down to the school gate—half-dragging and half-carrying them.

Wild gurgles came from the half-throttled storekeeper. Frantic yells came from the town marshal.

"Say, this is some circus!" gasped Pie Sanders.

"I guess it's the wasp's side-whiskers!" chuckled Mick. "Them galoots sure have riled Bill a few."

"Let up, you galoot!" roared Marshal Lick. "Say, you let up, you ornery piecan, Bill Sampson! You want me to pull a gun on you?"

Unheeding, Bill strode on, whisking them along. The marshal, in sheer desperation, grabbed the gun from his belt.

There was a gasp from the Packsaddle bunch.

"Watch out, Bill!" yelled Poindexter. "Crack! It was not the crack of the revolver, though it sounded like it. It was the crack of two heads coming together in collision. Marshal Lick's

head cracked against Mr. Wash's, and the crack rang across the playground. And the gun dropped from Lick's hand as his head crashed.

"Ooooooh! Wake snakes!" howled Marshal Lick.

"Whurrrrrgh!" gasped Mr. Wash.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The bunch crowded down to the gate after Bill!

They roared with laughter, but they were as puzzled as entertained. Why Bill had got his "mad" up to this extent was a mystery to the bunch. He had always been on friendly terms with Marshal Lick, and had backed him up many a time in keeping law and order in the rough cow town. And he owed some respect at least to Mr. Wash, as chairman of the Packsaddle School Committee. Now he was handling them like a pair of roughnecks.

Bill reached the gate. The marshal was still struggling, but Mr. Wash was dragging helplessly along the ground, his hat off, his buttons bursting, his face crimson, his eyes bulging. There was no doubt that Mr. Wash, by that time, wished that he had stayed behind his counter at his store on Main Street, Packsaddle, and left this business to the marshal. And it was probable that the marshal wished that he had left it to some other guy!

Bill halted by the hitched buckboard. "Now, you pesky piecans!" roared Bill.

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled the suffocated Mr. Wash.

"Let up!" panted Lick. "I'm saying let up, you ornery bulldozer!"

"You allow I ain't the man to handle this school, and ride herd over this bunch!" roared Bill. "I ain't shouting that I got a hunch for book learnin'! You knowed that when you roped me off the Kicking Mule ranges to run this here school. Mr. Brown's the guy to put across the book learnin', and I'll say he's a daisy at the game! I'm here to ride herd! I guess this bunch wants a galoot of my left to ride herd! Yep!"

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled the storekeeper. "Doggone you, Bill, you're fired!" hooted the marshal. "You let up, or I'll sure come back for you with a gun."

"I'm fired!" said Bill. "You said it, marshal! I guess I got to put you wise what I think of you!"

He dropped Mr. Wash in a gasping heap, and gave both hands to the marshal. Swinging Lick into the air, he tossed him bodily into the buckboard.

Lick landed there with a crash, and the vehicle rocked. A yell and a wild splutter came back from the marshal. With more bruises and bumps distributed over him than he could have counted, the marshal of Packsaddle sprawled in the buckboard.

Then Bill grasped the gasping storekeeper again. Mr. Wash howled wildly:

"Let go! Release me! Boys—help! That man is no longer your headmaster—he is dismissed—that ruffian—help!"

"You pesky piecan!" yelled Slick indignantly. "Bill's boss here, and don't you forget it!"

"Say, Bill, shall I fetch your quirt for him?" shouted Pie.

"Boot him, Bill!" roared the bunch.

They knew now what the trouble was. And the whole bunch simmered with angry indignation. Bill—fired! Bill was part and parcel of Packsaddle School—Bill had run it from the beginning—Bill was the goods! Every fellow there had had the quirt from Bill, but they liked him none the less for that, and they respected him the more. They were a rough and tough bunch, hard to handle; but they respected a man

who could handle them—and Bill could! There was a surge forward of the excited schoolboys. Every fellow there was honing to get a hand on the fat Mr. Wash.

But Bill's hands were on Mr. Wash! Up went the podgy storekeeper, swinging, and he was tossed into the buckboard after Marshal Lick.

Mr. Lick was trying to scramble up when the storekeeper landed on him. A suffocated howl came from the marshal as Mr. Wash's weight squashed him down again.

Those two prominent citizens of Packsaddle were wildly mixed in the vehicle. Bill, with a glare and a snort, cast loose the horse, and gave it a smack on the flank.

Down the trail went the horse, with the buckboard rocking and rattling behind over the rugged ground.

The gateway was packed by the bunch, roaring and jeering. Up from the interior of the buckboard rose two crimson faces, hatless, with wild, tousled hair. Gasping, panting, spluttering, the marshal and Mr. Wash glared back at Bill and the bunch.

"Beat it, you piecans!" roared Bill, in a voice that reached almost as far as Packsaddle. "Beat it, you pesky polecats! You hit this hyer school agin, and allow that a guy's fired, and I'll sure fix you up for a front seat in a funeral! Beat it, you piefaced gophers!"

A gurgle from Mr. Wash, and a yell from the marshal floated back, and then the rocking, rattling buckboard disappeared down the trail.

Bill Sampson turned back into the gateway.

"Say, you young geeks!" he roared. "That guy Wash allowed that I ain't headmaster of this shebang—that I ain't riding herd over this here bunch! I guess he won't hump along and say it agin! I'll mention that if the doggoned committee aim to fire this baby, they want to pack their guns and come a-shooting! You get me?"

"Sure, we get you, Bill!" grinned Slick. "And I'll tell a man that if you let them fire you, we'll sure lynch the guy they stick in your place."

Bill snorted.

"I guess a guy that humps in to cinch my place hyer won't live long enough to be lynched!" he snapped. "I'll tell a man I'm headmaster of Packsaddle School, and I stay headmaster so long as I pack a gun!"

And Bill tramped back to the schoolhouse, red with wrath. And the bunch gave him a cheer as he went. Whatever might be the outcome of the trouble, one thing at least was certain—the Packsaddle bunch were standing for Bill!

Gun Talk!

STEVE CARSON rode in at the gate of the cow town school as the sun dipped behind Squaw Mountain.

There was a grin on Big Steve's face, and he cracked his quirt and waved his hat as he rode in. The bunch were all in the playground. They were gathered in excited groups, discussing the startling happening of the afternoon and what might come of it. Every eye turned on Steve as he came. Most of the bunch gave him dark looks—even his own pals, Poker Parker and Slim Dixon, eyed him rather grimly.

All the bunch knew now how and why Steve had blown off his mouth at Bill that morning—he had had early news that Bill was to be fired, and he had reckoned that it was safe play. And the fact that he had returned, and that he



With Marshal Lick and Mr. Wash swinging like sacks in his hands, Bill Sampson strode down to the school gate. In desperation the marshal grabbed the gun from his belt. Crack! But it was not the crack of a revolver. It was the sound of Marshal's Lick's head coming in contact with Mr. Wash's!

came in grinning and gleeful, showed that he did not know that the two prominent citizens who had come there to "fire" Bill, had been "fired" themselves by the indignant headmaster of Packsaddle. Obviously, Steve figured that Bill was gone.

"Say, you'uns!" chuckled Steve, bringing his bronco to a halt, and jumping down. "I guess you're all wise to it now! That peccan Bill—"

"Can it, you skunk!" roared Slick. "You spill a word agin Bill, and we'll sure ride you on a rail out the school." Steve sneered.

"Aw, pack it up!" he said. "I guess Bill's a back number. The school committee down to Packsaddle ain't no use for Bill! I'm telling you! I guess my popper put me wise to it."

"You wouldn't have dared to cheek Bill if you hadn't known," said Dick Carr contemptuously.

"I guess I told that geek what I had been honing to tell him for dog's ages," grinned Steve. "And I'll tell you guys we got no use for an oneducated cowpuncher school-mastering here. I'll tell a man, the noo headmaster ain't a guy of Bill's heft! Nope!"

"You've seen him?" exclaimed Mick. "Sure!"

The bunch gathered eagerly round Steve. It had come as a startling surprise to them that the school committee had decided to fire Bill. It was still more surprising to hear that they had his successor all ready to take his place.

"Is he in Packsaddle already?" asked Dick Carr.

"Yep! I seen him at Hanson's Hotel."

"What's his name?" asked Mick.

"Scadder," answered Steve. "Long-legged guy with a face like a prairie rabbit—store clothes and a Derby hat like Small Brown. But my popper says he's a whole team and a cross dog under the wagon when it comes to teaching. My popper knowed him East."

"I guess your popper has worked this rifle!" said Slick savagely. "He don't like Bill a whole lot, along of Bill allowing that a poker sharp like Two-Gun ought to be rode on a rail out of town." Steve sneered.

"Bill's too fresh at shooting off his mouth," he said. "Mebbe my popper's pulled it the way he wants it with the committee. Anyhow, Scadder's a better man than Bill for the job—"

"Aw, can it!"

"I guess he won't ride this herd."

"We want Bill!"

"Scadder nothing!"

All the bunch shouted, and Steve shrugged his shoulders.

"You're getting Scadder," he said, "and you'll sure see him afore long—he's coming up the trail in Hanson's buggy."

"Coming to take Bill's place?" asked Dick Carr.

"You said it! Bill ain't got no kick coming!" sneered Steve. "He's a goldarned cowpuncher, and he can go back to punching cows, like I told him!

They're standing him three months' salary, because he's getting no notice to quit. I reckon Mr. Wash had the dollars in his rags when he came up to see Bill and put him wise. Say, was Bill mad when they told him?"

"Just a few!" grinned Slick.

"I figured he would be mad!" chuckled Steve. "I'd have liked to see his face, doggone him. But I reckoned I wouldn't horn in agin until after he'd beat it—after the way I talked to him this morning."

"You reckon that Bill's beat it?" asked Mick.

Carson stared at him.

"Search me!" he answered. He gave a start. "Mean to say that Bill ain't vamoosed the ranch?"

"Not so's you'd notice it!" grinned Slick.

The grin faded from Steve's face. Evidently he had taken it for granted that Bill was gone.

"But—but they came—Mr. Wash and the marshal—they came up to put him wise!" he exclaimed. "They was going to pay him three months salary, for him to get out pronto and leave the stamping ground clear for Scadder—"

"I guess Bill horned in on them afore they got as far that!" chuckled Slick. "Why, you ornery peccan, Bill ain't fired! He fired the marshal and old Wash—and sent them cavorting away in a buckboard hell for leather down the trail!"

"Great gophers!" gasped Steve.

"And here's Bill!" grinned Dick Carr, as the headmaster of Packsaddle came striding out of the schoolhouse.

Steve stared at the six-gun schoolmaster with dropping jaw. Then he made a bound for his bronco. But Bill's grasp was on him before he could get into the saddle.

"Let up!" yelled Steve. "You ain't schoolmaster here now, Bill Sampson—you're fired, doggono you! I'm telling you to let up!"

Bill did not answer.

He gripped Big Steve by the collar with his left hand; in his right he swung the quirt.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Steve roared and hopped and howled. The Packsaddle bunch looked on with grinning faces.

Generally, when a guy in the bunch got the quirt, he had more or less sympathy from the rest of the bunch. But there was no sympathy now for the bully of Packsaddle. Steve had howled for it, and now he got it.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Steve's frantic yells rang across the playground. Bill laid on the quirt with a heavy hand. Steve had enjoyed his talk to Bill that morning. After the feast came the reckoning.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

As Bill laid on the quirt and Steve yelled and struggled and the bunch looked on, grinning, no one noticed a buggy stop at the gate.

A thin, long-legged man with a square jaw in a black coat and black hat stepped down. There were several suitcases in the buggy; the newcomer had evidently come to stay. The driver of the buggy stared in at the gateway and grinned at the scene in the playground. The man in the black coat stared in also, but he did not grin.

He walked in.

"I guess that will see you through, Steve!" Bill was saying. "I'll mention that you won't shoot off your mouth at your schoolmaster that-a-way!"

Steve staggered away, yelling.

Then Bill became aware of the new arrival. He stared round at the man in the black coat.

There was a deep-drawn breath in the Packsaddle bunch. All of them guessed at once who the newcomer was. Mr. Scadder, evidently, had not heard how the marshal and Mr. Wash had left the school a few hours ago. No doubt he expected to find a vacant place ready to step into.

Bill hitched his gun-belt a little to bring the butt of his six-gun a little nearer his hand as he strode towards

the newcomer. Under his ten-gallon hat his brows were knitted and his eyes gleaming.

"Say, you!" he barked. Like the bunch, Bill guessed who the stranger was—the suitcases piled in the buggy told their own tale. Mr. Wash and the marshal had not been given time to tell Bill all that they had come to tell him. But he could guess the rest now.

The man in the black coat stared at Bill.

"Who are you?" he snapped.

"I'll mention that I'm Bill Sampson, headmaster of this outfit!" roared Bill.

"You—a headmaster!"

Bill crimsoned with wrath. In leather crackers, gun-belt, and stetson, he undoubtedly looked more like a cow-puncher than a schoolmaster.

"Ain't I a-shouting it?" demanded Bill. "And I'm jest asking you who you might happen to be, moseying into this school?"

"Scadder—Elias Scadder—is my name," said the man in the black coat.

"I am the newly appointed headmaster of Packsaddle School, and if you are indeed Mr. Sampson, I am surprised to find you still here."

"Mebbe!" said Bill. "I guess I may surprise you a few more before you're through."

"I certainly understood," snapped Mr. Scadder, "that the former headmaster would be gone. I was distinctly told so. I understood that Mr. Wash, the chairman of the school committee, acquainted Mr. Sampson with the arrangements now made."

"I guess Job Wash spilled a bibful," said Bill. "Mebbe he hadn't got through when I cinched his neck. That guy sure does chew the rag a whole lot. You ain't seen Wash since he was here?"

"No."

"Nor the marshal?"

"No."

"They sure should have put you wise," said Bill. "Seeing that they ain't, I guess I'll spill it. Me, Bill Sampson, I'm headmaster of this caboodle—got that? I ain't vamoosing the ranch for no other guy to horn in—got that? I ain't got no use for Scadders—got that? Your best guess is to skip back into that buggy and absquatulate! Got that?"

Mr. Scadder eyed him.

"I shall do nothing of the kind!" he answered. "I have informed you that I am now headmaster of this school, and I am here to take up my post. You will oblige me by leaving at once."

"Search me!" gasped Bill.

"If you are dissatisfied, Mr. Sampson, you will doubtless lay any complaint before the school committee," said Mr. Scadder. "With that I have nothing to do. But I must insist on your leaving at once."

"Carry me home to die!" said Bill.

Mr. Scadder turned to the driver of the buggy.

"Take in my baggage," he said.

Bill breathed hard.

"You beating it, you Scadder?" he asked.

"Certainly not."

Bang!

Bill was the quickest man on the draw in Santanta County. His six-gun roared before Scadder knew that it was in his hand.

The Derby hat on the new schoolmaster's head spun round as the bullet bored a hole through it.

There was a startled yell from Scadder. He leaped clear of the ground as he yelled. The perforated hat flew from his head.

Bang, bang!

"Beat it!" roared Bill, as the bullets crashed on the ground within inches of Mr. Scadder's feet. "I'm telling you to beat it! Absquatulate! Vamoose! Git!"

Bang!

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Packsaddle bunch.

Mr. Scadder hopped and yelled. Whatever he had expected at Packsaddle School, he did not seem to have expected this. He spun round and dashed out of the gateway, his long legs going like lightning.

Bang! roared Bill's six-gun after him.

The bullet grazed a long leg, taking a patch out of Mr. Scadder's trousers. A fearful howl floated back from Mr. Scadder, and he fairly bounded down the trail. He passed the buggy and its grinning driver and raced.

Bill rushed out of the gateway, the smoking revolver in his hand. Scadder, hatless, ran like a deer.

Bang! roared the six-gun again. A wild howl answered from Scadder as the bullet knocked up the dust at his feet.

He tore on and vanished.

Bill strode back into the playground. Steve Carson, still yelping from the quirt, eyed him evilly. But the rest of the bunch waved their hats and roared a cheer for the six-gun schoolmaster.

THE END.

(Next week: "BACKING UP BILL!" Move big thrills with the pals of Packsaddle and their cowboy headmaster.)

PEN PALS

(Continued from page 17.)

W. M. Summers, 78, Graham Road, Hackney, London, E.8, wants correspondents overseas; age 18 upwards; sports, books, films.

Jack Fenwick, 28, Beacon Road, Herne Bay, Kent, wants members for the Rocket Correspondence Club.

Roy Field, Hawthorne Lodge, Upper Gungate, Tamworth, Staffs, wants a pen pal in France; age 12-14.

Miss Elsie Hammond, 34a, Matilda Street, Bethnal Green Road, London, E.2, wants girl correspondents.

Miss Violet May, 73, Redman Buildings, Bourne Estate, Holborn, London, E.C.1, wants girl correspondents; age 16-18.

Billie Lloyd, Albemarle Hotel, Marine Parade, Brighton, wants to hear from stamp collectors.

Miss Jeannette Wong, 146, Boundary Street, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong, China, wants girl correspondents; age 16-20; music, stamps, films; Europe, America, Africa, Australia.

Alec G. Kitroeff, 36, Rue Fouad (1st), Alexandria, Egypt, wants pen pals; boxing, swimming, football, animals.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

Ronald Bradley, 27, Regent Street, Sandbeds, Queensbury, Halifax, Yorks, wants pen pals; age 16-19; news and views.

Miss Gladys Bowers, Camban, Thomson Road, Claremont, Cape Town, South Africa, wants girl correspondents, preferably America and Ireland; age 16-18; life in South Africa.

B. Caplan, 42, Ashbourne Avenue, Golders Green, London, N.W.11, over 14; British Empire, South America; stamps.

J. Goldhill, Janette, Southbourne Crescent, Finchley, London, N.3; age 13-16; overseas; football, pets.

K. Johanson, 44, High Street, Miller's Pt., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia; age 18-19; cats, dogs, horses.

Gow Harvey, 923, Byng Place, Fort Garry, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada; stamps, football; British Empire.

Leonard G. Berry, 24, Alleen Park, Norwood Green, Middx., requires members for the Lyle Talbot Fan Club.

John A. Fitzpatrick, 28, Parks Street, Solomontown, South Australia; stamps; British Empire, S. America.

A. Kiverstein, 19, Nova Road, W. Croydon, Surrey; keeping animals; age 12-13.

Arthur Diamond, 5047, Park Avenue, Montreal, Pro. Quebec, Canada; British Empire.

David McLeod, Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada; age 12-14; swimming, films, sports; England, Scotland, Australia.

Alf White, Southwark Boys' Hostel, Pocock Street, Blackfriars, London, S.E.1; age 16-20; overseas; sport, stamps, printing.

IT'S TOUGH AND GO FOR HANDFORTH & CO.—THEY'RE NEARLY BURNED AT
THE STAKE!

The SECRET WORLD!



While Nelson Lee and Lord Dorrmore fired at the Gothlanders, the St. Frank's juniors rushed recklessly upon the fires and kicked the burning sticks in every direction. "Hurrah!" yelled Handforth and his chums lustily. "You're just in time, you chaps!"

By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS

Rapid Action!

THE boys of St. Frank's, in the service of Northestria, an old-world secret country in which they have been stranded with Nelson Lee, Lord Dorrmore, and others, are patrolling in a galley a large lake which divides Northestria from Gothland, with whom the Northestrians are at war, when they rescue a woman bound to a raft. She is a Gothlander who has been set adrift by the soldiers of Kassker, the cruel ruler of Gothland, because her husband was an army deserter. As further punishment her five children are to be burned at the stake. But the boys of St. Frank's pluckily go to the rescue and save them in the nick of time. Unfortunately, Handforth and his two chums are captured, and, the other juniors believe, killed. Safe on board their galley, Nipper and his companions are wondering what to do when Nelson Lee and Lord Dorrmore arrive on the scene in a motor-boat. Nipper tells Lee that Handforth & Co. are dead.

For two seconds, Nelson Lee said nothing, but his lips were compressed. "Dead?" repeated Lee, at length. "We fear so, gov'nor."

"You fear so?" interrupted Lee sharply. "Then you don't know?"

"It's almost a certainty—"

"Almost! Quickly, Nipper—tell me!" rapped out Lee. "You are here, within a hundred yards of the Gothland coast, in defiance of my strict orders. I take it that something very exceptional impelled you to disregard—"

"Don't blame Nipper, sir!" interrupted Pitt. "We were all in it."

"I'll tell you exactly what happened, sir," said Nipper.

He told the simple story—how they had first seen the raft—how they had saved the unfortunate woman from death. Every detail of the events were told in as few words as possible.

"In the circumstances, gov'nor, I thought we were justified in doing the thing," concluded Nipper. "There were no enemy ships here, and there was no time to get you here. Even as it was, we only rescued the poor little mites at the last minute."

Nelson Lee patted him on the shoulder.

"Of course you did right, Nipper," he said quietly. "I am proud of you all for this exploit. At the risk of your own lives, you entered the enemy country to save those children from the stake."

"Gad, it was noble!" exclaimed

Dorrie. "But what an infernal shame that those poor chaps should have been lost! So near to victory, too! Isn't it often the case, Lee? 'Everything' all right until the last minute—an' then dashed tragedy! Life's a queer thing!"

"You tell me that you all escaped, after being showered with arrows?" said Nelson Lee. "How many soldiers were there?"

"Not more than fifteen or sixteen, sir," said Nipper. "But what could we do against them?"

"Nothing," said Lee. "It would have been sheer suicide to remain on the beach. You did quite right to escape. This tragedy might have been appalling, indeed, if you had given way to any quixotic impulse to help those unfortunate boys. But tell me. You saw them surrounded?"

"Yes, sir."

"Handforth fell first, and Church and McClure rushed up to him?"

"That's what happened, sir—"

"Do you know where Handforth was hit?"

"I can't be sure, but I believe an arrow struck him on the head, and glanced off," replied Nipper. "But perhaps he was killed outright—"

"It's far more likely that he was hit."

only stunned," interrupted Lee. "Church and McClure did not actually fall in your sight? They were just surrounded by these enemy soldiers?"

"Yes, gov'nor."

"And then the three of them were whisked off and carried into the wood?"

"Yes—we all saw them taken, sir," put in Reggie Pitt.

Nelson Lee slammed his fist into his other palm.

"They're alive!" he said, with untold conviction.

"Alive?" yelled the juniors.

"Of course they're alive," put in Willy, pushing forward. "Didn't I say so all along?"

"You're a wonderful chap, Willy, and I admire your courage," said Leo quietly. "We'll do everything we possibly can to save your brother—"

"Hold on—hold on!" begged Lord Dorrmore. "I may be as dense as a Dutch cheese, but I'm hanged if I can see what you're drivin' at, Lee. Why are you so sure?"

"To my mind, it is absolutely obvious," replied Nelson Lee. "If those soldiers had intended to kill the boys, they would have done so on the spot."

"I don't quite see—"

"And we know that the boys were carried into the wood," continued Leo tensely. "That's another item of proof. They were taken alive, Dorrie—and with a purpose. There's not a moment to be lost."

Nipper suddenly gave a jump.

"Gov'nor!" he gasped. "You—you don't mean—"

"What else is there to think?" asked Lee.

"When you two have finished these secret chats, perhaps you'll explain?" asked Dorrie gruffly. "Hang it, I'm not a thought reader—"

"Those boys were taken away alive, and with a purpose, Dorrie."

"Yes, you said that before—"

"The Gothlander soldiers saw their five victims being taken away from them," went on Lee significantly. "They seized three other victims in place of them. As I first said, it seems obvious."

"Great glory!" shouted Dorrie. "You mean they're goin' to be burnt at the stake?"

"I mean that we've got to get into that motor-boat, and make a dash up the river as fast as we can go," said Lee curtly. "Thank heaven, the village is near—we can get there within ten minutes. And the boys were captured less than an hour ago. I don't suppose those brutes will delay, but there's still a chance."

"Good man!" roared Dorrie. "I'm on!"

Lee and Dorrie made a swift move for the side.

"I'm coming, sir," said Willy Handforth steadily.

"My dear boy—"

"I'm coming, sir!" repeated Willy. "You needn't try to put me off, because I mean it! Please, sir!" he added huskily.

"Get down into the boat!" said Lee, nodding.

"And I, sir?" asked Nipper. "The boat can hold half a dozen of us—"

Dorrie came to the rescue.

"We'd better have them—it may be a tight thing!" he said. "There's no time for pickin' an' choosin', though. Nipper—Pitt—Fullwood—Christine! What do you say, Lee?"

"All right," replied Nelson Lee. "Perhaps you'll come in useful—and I haven't the heart to refuse you. The rest of you must stay on board—and

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

your oarsmen will make straight for Northestria at full speed."

"And you, sir?" asked Watson huskily.

"We'll follow as quickly as we can, and you may be sure that we'll not linger," replied Lee, as he climbed overside.

Handforth & Co.'s Fate!

BY my bones! A goodly trio, I'll swear!" The Gothlander officer was gloating openly as he surveyed the three figures which were prostrate at his feet. Round him stood his men—ugly, coarse-looking ruffians of Kaskker's army.

"'Twas a good capture, Redwald," said one of the men, with a laugh. "Though 'tis a pity we failed to kill the other young curs."

"No matter—we'll make these suffer," said the officer. "'Tis a rich haul—for good Kaskker hath promised much reward for their heads."

The soldiers were within the wood, and their victims were scarcely in a position to put up any fight. For the three juniors were cruelly bound, and could scarcely move an inch.

They were very much alive.

Church and McClure were not even scratched. They had come out of the fight unharmed, for they had been seized before they could even ascertain the extent of their leader's injuries.

Handforth was only just recovering.

As Nipper had suspected, an arrow had hit him on the side of the head, glancing off. A nasty cut had been inflicted, and for the time being Handforth had been stunned. The blow had felled him as though he had dropped dead.

His chums had been terribly scared at first, for they had thought Handforth a corpse. The wound had bled profusely, and the unfortunate Handforth presented an ugly spectacle. But, as a matter of fact, he was very little hurt. Once the effects of that stunning blow wore off, he became himself. But for a headache and a feeling that he was weakened, he had no ill-effects. His spirit was as strong as ever, and now that full consciousness had returned to him, the glare that he bestowed upon the enemy was as powerful as his best. And Handforth's glares could be very baleful.

"You think you're clever, don't you?" he shouted. "But you'd better go easy! Those other fellows'll come along, and—"

"Silence, brat!" interrupted Redwald. "A murrain take thee! I'faith, thou hast a ready tongue for one who stares into the face of death! 'Twould be better if thou didst prepare thyself for the torture which awaits thee."

"What are you going to do—behead us?" asked Handforth contemptuously. "That's just about your mark—"

"Nay, fool!" snarled Redwald.

"The stake! That is thy fate—ay, and the fate of thy companions, too! By my soul, 'twas a good deed, perchance, to take the children, but thou wilt suffer in their stead, so what matters?"

All the soldiers shouted with laughter. "We're going to be burnt at the stake!" muttered Church. "We rescued those poor kids, and now we're going to be put in their places! Oh, crumbs! It's—it's too awful—"

"Don't you believe it," growled Handforth. "We'll get out of this somehow. Just leave it to me—I'll see you through."

He looked at them rather mistily.

"After all, you came back to save me, didn't you?" he muttered. "Good old Mac! Good old Churchy! You're not going to be sacrificed like this if I can help it!"

They said nothing, for Redwald's threat had horrified them.

"We will see how ye like the licking tongues of flame," jeered the officer. "I'll take good care that the faggots are placed wide, and then the torture will be prolonged. 'Twill be a rare spectacle, i'faith! And Kaskker will pay much gold for your heads!"

Handforth laughed.

"You can't fool me with that bluff!" he retorted. "If Kaskker's going to pay a lot of money for our heads, how are you going to burn us at the stake? I've caught you, you rotter!"

Redwald roared in derision.

"Thinkest thou that Kaskker cares!" he replied. "'Twill be of no concern to him if thy head is charred! And thou wilt be dead, I'll swear, long before the flames reach that wagging tongue of thine!"

For once that tongue was stilled. Handforth was utterly startled. The man was probably speaking the truth. Kaskker the Grim would still pay the money, even if the three juniors were dead!

"My only hat!" murmured Edward Oswald. "This doesn't look any too healthy."

Without any further delay, the captives were roughly hoisted up and carried. They were being taken to the village—to that market square—where the stakes and the faggots were still ready.

At first, Redwald had been infuriated at the loss of his victims. But now he was in the best of humours. He had lost five, but he had gained three. And the three were far better prizes!

For this Gothlander officer had been merely pandering to his own blood-thirsty pleasures when he had ordered the deaths of the five children. But the burning of Handforth & Co. would be a very different pleasure!

Firstly, they were three members of the accursed stranger tribe from Northestria; and, secondly, he would gain much money from Kaskker when he made his report, and exhibited his gruesome proofs. So, while he had been angered at first, he was now delighted.

His men had already reported that the galley had made no move, and Redwald was quite satisfied that there would be no other attack. He and his men had given the enemy a taste of the arrows, and they were not likely to come again.

So he went forward with his fresh plans complacently.

Several of his soldiers had been sent on in advance, to round up the peasantry again. There should be a good audience for this great spectacle! What did it matter who was burned so long as there were victims? Redwald was not particular.

Handforth & Co. were not carried far, for their captors found them rather too heavy. After about a hundred yards they were set down, and their legs were freed. They were compelled to walk.

"Now, my fine young puppies, walk!" said Redwald coarsely. "And remember, if ye are tardy, a pike is ready to bestir ye. Spare them not, men. A wound or two will make little difference, I vow."

Handforth & Co. walked. They didn't argue. Even Edward Oswald made no attempt to tarry. He was a good fellow for arguing—but not with

the business end of a pike. He received just one jab, and that was enough for him. By a supreme effort he succeeded in holding himself in control.

"It's all right—our time will come soon!" he muttered tensely. "These brutes are going to pay for this piece of work!"

But Church and McClure were not such optimists.

As far as they could see, they were utterly doomed. It was like Handforth to fool himself—to think that he would be able to extricate himself from this ghastly tangle. But his chums had no such delusions.

They were unarmed, and they were surrounded by over six times their number of savages. If it came to an attempt to escape, these men would inflict the most terrible wounds without compunction. What did it matter? They were going to be burnt at the stake, anyhow, so a little torture in advance might be all the better.

The juniors were very cautious, therefore, and gave their captors no opportunity of attacking them. They obeyed orders implicitly, and were spared. Spared so that they would reach the stake whole!

For that was what it really amounted to. And Handforth & Co.'s feelings were indescribable when they were marched into that peaceful market place. The crowds were there—old men, boys, women, and children. Everybody had been brought out to witness this torture.

There were many looks of compassion, particularly from the women. Perhaps some of them realised that these youths were their friends. They had seen the children rescued, and by these very boys. Obviously, since they were about to be tortured by the soldiers, they were worthy of compassion. For the soldiers were the enemies of all.

If Handforth & Co. had doubted this before, they did not doubt it any longer.

The soldiers of Gothland were all-powerful. To even question their methods was to invite death. Small wonder that Kaskker was hated throughout his land.

The St. Frank's fellows had only just begun to realise this. Originally they had thought that all the Gothlanders were cut in the same mould. But this was not the truth. The country people seemed to be harmless; it was only the hardened soldiers who were such outrageous brutes.

Handforth & Co. were placed with their backs to the great stakes, and there they were bound, side by side.

The soldiers gave themselves up to the pleasure of this entertainment. They had not bargained for three such prizes as these boys! Redwald, no doubt, felt that it was his real duty to hand the trio over to a superior officer. But he wanted to burn them himself. Their heads would be sufficient!

Faggots were placed round the hapless juniors—but at a distance. There was an object in this arrangement. Redwald did not want his victims to die too quickly.

"I'm afraid it's all up, Handy!" said Church, turning his head and looking at his leader. "We're beyond help now."

Handforth's face was ghastly—haggard, blood-smearred, and white as a sheet.

"It's my fault, you chaps!" he muttered. "It wouldn't matter if it was only me—but I've dragged you into it, too."

"That's all right, Handy," put in McClure. "You couldn't help it—and Church and I haven't got anything to

JUST MY FUN



Monty Lowther Calling

Hallo, everybody! Always begin at the bottom. Except, of course, when you're learning to swim. "The automobile combining roadcar, aircar, and watercar will come," says an authority. Yes, but will it go? A Barking dog bit a tramp. Ah, so barking dogs *do* bite! "Why do people jest about strap-hanging?" asks Reilly. It's a "standing" joke! "Old Selby is like a lion," said Wally D'Arcy. "Why?" asked Gibson. "Because he is the 'king' of 'beasts,'" said Wally. "Why does a Scots piper walk up and down while playing the bagpipes?" asks Blake. To avoid being hit. "How many collars do you wear a week?" asked the rich man. "You mean, how many weeks do I wear a collar?" retorted his poor relation. "What is a hypocrite?" asked Jameson. "A fellow who comes into class smil-

blame you for. We just happen to be in the same boat, that's all."

Handforth nearly choked.

"And I—I promised you that everything would be all right!" he muttered. "I thought we might be able to escape. And now—and now it's too late! We're going to be tortured by these curs!"

For once in his life, Edward Oswald Handforth was face to face with facts—or, to be more exact, for once in his life he realised the true position. There could be no escape! His crazy optimism could do no good now. And he felt that he was the cause of the whole disaster. He had dragged his chums into this position of horror.

"Forgive me, old chaps!" he said brokenly. "We've had some good times together, haven't we? We're all finished now—this is the end!"

Strangely enough, now that Handforth was filled with a realisation of the true position, his chums attempted to be hopeful.

"We're not dead yet, Handy," said Church, with an effort. "Don't forget those smoke rockets! They must have been heard in Northestia, and Mr. Lee could be across the lake in an hour by using the motor-boat. It's been well over an hour since the signal was given."

For a moment Handforth's eyes gleamed, but then he gulped.

"What can they do?" he muttered. "Look!"

A soldier was coming forward—Redwald himself—and in his hand he held a great blazing torch. He held it away from him as he gazed gloatingly at his victims.

"'Tis the moment, my merry youths from Northestia!" he exclaimed. "But 'twill be many minutes before the life is choked out of ye by the heat. Watch the flames—'tis an interesting occupation for one who is doomed to taste them!"

Handforth wanted to shout out every imprecation he could lay his tongue to, but with a great effort he controlled himself. He said nothing. He just held his head up and stared at Redwald with contempt.

And the Gothlander flung his torch into the faggots at Handforth's feet, and

ing!" replied Wally D'Arcy. Blake says Mellish always looks grubby. He ought to be clean enough—he's always sponging! Reminds me of the village lad who had a new bike for his birthday. "Why don't you let your brother have a ride?" asked a stranger. "I do," came the reply; "he has it up the hills and I have it down them!" How's this: "The burglar swung round and said he'd blow my brains out!" said the club bore. "Oh!" exclaimed his listener. "So that's how you lost them?" After being nearly run down by a car, Skimpole says he is going to take out one of those incomprehensible policies. "Golfers always talk golf," says Blake. The old hole story! Figgins tells this: "Why don't you comb your hair?" asked the employer of the office-boy. "Got no comb," said the boy. "Couldn't you have used your father's?" "He's got no hair," said the office-boy. "Hold a horse by the head, and he can't kick you," says D'Arcy. Yes, but if you hold him by the tail he can't bite you! Special: Tartan ties are to be all the rage this summer. Unless, of course, the idea gets "scotched"! Skimpole says he put a penny in a stamp machine and six penny stamps came out. That's nothing. Young Gibson put a button in a chocolate machine, and the shopkeeper came out! Keep moving, boys!

at the same moment two other torches were set kindling the faggots of the other victims. The twigs crackled and blazed, and the flames spread rapidly. Waves of choking hot air and smoke burst into the faces of the juniors.

"Good-bye, you chaps!" muttered Handforth brokenly.

They tried to reply, but their voices had deserted them. All their efforts were required to keep themselves outwardly calm. For they swore to themselves that they would never give these Gothlander brutes the satisfaction of a single outcry.

And the flames licked closer.

Touch and Go!

REDWALD seemed to remember something, for he came up close.

The three stricken juniors could see him beyond the walls of flame and smoke, like some grinning demon.

"A last word to cheer ye!" shouted the man jeeringly. "'Twill give ye satisfaction to know, I doubt not, that Kaskker's armies are descending upon Northestia to-morrow. Ay, not one army, but three, and the invasion will be no mistake this time!"

Handforth gave a great laugh.

"You'll be thrown out again!" he snorted. "And, if there's any justice in this world, you'll be one of the first to get killed!"

"Fool!" sneered Redwald. "Kaskker's armies will smash into Northestia at three spots, and the whole accursed tribe will be wiped out. Take these thoughts into the grave with ye! And now to watch the interesting part. The flames are licking nearer, and the end is nigh. Scream, ye young dogs! Why don't ye scream for mercy?"

This taunt was enough to silence Handforth and Church and McClure until the last atoms of consciousness left them. The fumes swirled round them, and their ears were filled with the crackling roar of the ever-increasing flames.

If those faggots had been placed close they would have been suffocated by this time. But the sticks were round in a

wide circle, it being Redwald's intention to throw other faggots at the very feet of his victims when the first were blazing well.

It seemed to Church that the fires were burning with a sudden curious intensity. Handforth noted the change, too. Not only was there a roaring cackle, but a strange throb, too—an insistent, rhythmic beat. Strangely enough, it somewhat resembled the sound of a powerful motor—

"The boat!" screamed Handforth. "The motor-boat!"

"They're coming for us!" choked McClure, his eyes blazing.

"Help—help!" shouted Church. "Rescue, Remove!"

Redwald laughed in derision. He mistook these shouts for cries of fear, for he failed to note that rhythmic throbbing. He was so intent upon his victims that he had no eyes for any other spot—notably the swift river, which flowed almost at his back past the very edge of the village.

The river lay only just beyond the fringe of houses, and if Redwald had turned he would have seen something to give him pause.

The motor-boat was in sight, making straight for the bank.

It contained a group of horror-stricken rescuers. For it seemed to them, indeed, that they had arrived too late. They gazed at the spectacle with unbelievable agony. They saw three stakes, with flames leaping up round them. And beyond, just a faint glimpse of three helpless figures.

"Oh, we've failed!" sobbed Willy. "I can see Ted! There he is, in the middle! We're too late!"

"Poor boys! Heaven help them!" panted Nelson Lee.

The nose of the boat rammed into the river bank, and Nelson Lee and Lord Dorrimore leapt ashore. Even if they couldn't save these poor victims, they could, at least, avenge them.

Behind them came Nipper, Willy, and the others. For even now they tried to make themselves believe that there was a faint hope.

Redwald turned, startled by the shouts from some of his soldiers. He staggered back as he saw the approaching group. They were within ten yards already.

"Kill them!" he thundered, in alarm. Crack!

Those words were Redwald's last. Lord Dorrimore's revolver spurted flame, and Dorrie was famed as a dead shot. The Gothlander officer fell, shot through the brain. And Dorrie killed him with less compunction than he would have killed a savage wolf. In any case, it was self-defence, since this raid was a desperate venture, with the rescuers hopelessly outnumbered.

Crack! Crack!

This time both revolvers spoke. Two more of Redwald's soldiers fell, and the others, panic-stricken by the fate of their comrades, staggered back. They had no stomach for such a fight as this.

"The boys!" shouted Lee. "Kick away the faggots!"

Nipper and the others needed no telling. They rushed recklessly upon the fires, and as they did so they gave shouts of joy. For now, at close quarters, they could see that Handforth & Co. were not only alive, but conscious.

"Hurrah!" yelled Handforth & Co. lustily. "You're in time, you chaps!"

"Quick!" gasped Church. "I'm getting scorched!"

"Scorched!" shouted Pitt. "We thought you were dead!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,424.

"Not likely!" gasped Handforth.

The burning sticks were being kicked in every direction. Lee and Dorrie found it impossible to help, for all their attentions were needed elsewhere. The soldiers, reluctant to come to grips with the raiders, took note of the fact that they were only a small group. And arrows were beginning to hiss.

"Fire away, Lee!" roared Lord Dorrimore. "The boys are safe, and we're not going to have any casualties now!"

Crack! Crack! Crack!

If the arrows hissed, so did the bullets. Half a dozen of the Gothland soldiers fell, screaming and writhing, and the rest took utter fright and fled. Firearms were new to them, and they were panic-stricken. They bolted in every direction, leaving the entire market-place in possession of the newcomers.

Most of the peasants had gone, too, streaming away into the village streets, bewildered and dazed by all this confusion.

Handforth found himself free. Somebody had cut the ropes, and he staggered clear of the now smouldering faggots. Church and McClure at the same time broke out of that deadly circle of fire.

"Boys!" exclaimed Lee, running up. "Are you really alive? Thank Heaven for this deliverance!"

"Alive!" said Lord Dorrimore gleefully. "Look at 'em! Except for a few blisters they're as sound as I am! Somehow, I think we'd better be makin' a move, though I'm a great chap for adventure, but I've had enough for one dose."

"Yes, to the boat," said Lee briskly.

"Oh, Ted!" grinned Willy, clutching at Handforth's arm. "Good old Ted! You're alive! And I—I thought you were killed."

"Rats!" said Pitt. "You told everybody that you knew Handy was alive."

Willy lost his smile.

They hardly remembered getting back to the motor-boat. In fact, Handforth & Co. knew nothing until they found themselves rushing down the river—leaving that hapless village of Gernfrith well behind. And everybody was on board—and most of the fellows, too, were rather lightheaded. They had all expected the worst, for they had never dared to hope for such a wonderful outcome as this.

"What about the chaps on board?" asked Church, when he could get a coherent thought. "That brutal officer told us that half of them were killed on the way to the galley—"

"He was a liar!" interrupted Nipper. "We were hardly hurt, and now that you three chaps are back with us, there aren't any casualties worth speaking of. But exactly what we should have done without the gun'nor, goodness knows!"

"Three cheers for Mr. Lee!"

"Hurrah!"

Nelson Lee held up his hand.

"There's no need for you to cheer me, boys," he said quietly. "All the honours of this affair are yours, and I need hardly tell you how thankful I am that the outcome is so happy. You did a noble thing in saving those helpless children from the flames, but after this, I rather fancy I shall confine you to the Northestrian side. You're liable to turn our hair grey."

"I'm nearly white already," said Lord Dorrimore. "These young beggars have aged me ten years in less than ten days. All the same, they're a pretty fine crowd, an' I'm proud of 'em! We'll have some fine yarns to tell when we get back home—ch? I'll

bet you'll startle the other fellows at school!"

"We're not back yet, Dorrie," said Nipper. "And it looks as though we never shall get back."

"Why, my lads, we'll have you at St. Frank's almost in time to start the term!" declared his lordship. "According to latest reports, they're getting into wireless communication with the outer world already."

"Have we got signals through?" asked Nipper eagerly.

"So Sparks says, but we had no time to give the thing a test," said his lordship. "We heard your signals, and buzzed off to see what the noise was about. We thought another invasion was beginnin'."

Handforth started.

"An invasion!" he said, turning, and looking from Nelson Lee to Lord Dorrimore with wide-open eyes. "That reminds me. The invasion is going to happen to-morrow."

"Indeed!" said Lee. "How do you know?"

"That brute of an officer told me, sir!" said Handforth breathlessly. "I remember now. It was while he was gloating over us—he thought it was our last minute. He said that Kasher's men are starting out to-morrow, and they mean to invade Northestria in three different places at once."

"Did you hear this, too?" asked Lee, turning to the others.

"Yes, sir," said Church and McClure. "The man was in earnest, sir. I could see that in his eyes," said Handforth. "It's going to be a terrific affair, too, a threefold invasion. But what do we care? We'll give the brutes invasion, won't we?"

Nelson Lee was looking very thoughtful as the motor-boat swept out of the river mouth into the lake.

On the galley, now far out on the lake, eager eyes were watching—anxious, frantic eyes. And at the very first sight of the motor-boat a shout of relief went up.

"They're coming!" panted Buster Boots. "Oh, but what have they done? They haven't had time to rescue those poor chaps! I expect they're all dead, and they've given up the quest as hopeless."

"I can see Handy!" shrieked Juicy Lemon, as he held a telescope tremblingly to his eye. "Yes, it's Handy, with Willy beside him."

"Gimme that telescope!" roared one of the others, grabbing it.

And all doubts were set at rest some little time later when the motor-boat drew alongside.

Not only Handforth, but Church and McClure were there—grimy and stained, but obviously safe. Everybody was looking happy, and after they had all come on board, the calm air of the lake was echoing to the sound of cheers.

The juniors got back into the motor-boat, and the galley slowly followed as it made straight for the Northestrian coast. Truth to tell, the boys were not sorry to get back.

"Well, anyway, we've had a jolly good day," said Handforth happily, as the cut on his head was being dressed. "And to-morrow, it seems, we're going to be in the thick of another invasion. Who says we don't get plenty of excitement?"

What would the morrow bring? None of the juniors could quite express their feelings, but they all had a sort of inner sensation that something big was in the wind. That reference to the wireless signals. Would it be possible to get away from this lost world? The future

was all vague, except for the one solid fact that Kassar the Grim and his hordes were preparing to pounce!

Naval Manœuvres!

“**B**Y Jove! Look at that!” said Reggie Pitt, coming to a halt. He and a group of other Removites were strolling down to the lake front. The city of Dunstane—Northestria’s capital—was built almost on the water’s edge, the great wall, with its towering battlements, overlooking the water.

Willy and his two chums of the Third had gone off on a shopping expedition. And Handforth had dragged Church and McClure on a similar jaunt. There were plenty of shops in the city—quaint old establishments, each distinguishable by its sign, as in the olden days in England.

But Nipper & Co., with Pitt, Fullwood, and a few others, were more interested in the preparations for war. For, on his return from Gothland after rescuing Handforth & Co., Nelson Lee had lost no time in preparing for Kassar’s threatened invasion.

Having passed out of the city gates, the juniors now stared on to the lake.

“They’re wonderful!” ejaculated Nipper admiringly. “The gov’nor’s excelled himself this time!”

“Absolutely!” agreed Archie Glen-thorne, screwing his monocle into his noble eye and gazing lakewards. “I don’t know what they are, laddie, but I must confess they look dashed business-like!”

Not far from the shore, two extraordinary craft were careering up and down, to the accompaniment of a terrific roar of motors with open exhausts. Hundreds of Northestrians were watching; rather awe-stricken. The strange vessels were twisting, turning, veering round, and performing the most remarkable evolutions, and all at high speed.

“Manœuvres of the Northestrian navy!” grinned Pitt.

“Our galley looks a bit sick now, doesn’t it?” said Watson ruefully. “She was about the fastest thing on the lake barring the motor-boat, but she’ll be like a Thames barge compared to these speed merchants!”

The speed merchants in question were nothing more or less than the two main engine gondolas of the wrecked airship, complete with enormously powerful motors, air propellers, and everything. They had been fitted with cunningly devised floats, and were now undergoing their tests.

Nelson Lee was piloting one, and Lord Dorrimore the other. They were astonished at the nippy way these improvised craft answered their controls and at the high speed they attained. Captain Waring, the airship’s skipper, had had a lot to do with the actual designing of the floats.

“They ought to be jolly useful if those rotten Gothlanders come across the lake,” said Nipper grimly. “They’re both fitted with machine-guns, and they’re like a couple of destroyers.”

Curiously enough, this was the third “life,” so to speak, of those gondolas. Having served their original purpose until the dirigible was wrecked, they had then been converted into tanks. But Nelson Lee considered that they would be of greater service on the water. So they had shed their wheels, and were now additional units of the Northestrian navy.

The juniors hurried down to the beach as the two noisy monsters veered round and came shorewards. And they greeted

Nelson Lee with cheers as he climbed down from the leading craft as it grounded on the beach.

“Jolly good, sir!” sang out Nipper eagerly.

“They haven’t behaved so badly, young un!” admitted Lee, with satisfaction. “Much better than I expected, in fact. But what are you boys doing here? You ought to be in bed and asleep!”

“We’ve had over six hours, sir,” protested Pitt.

“You ought to have had twelve, after the adventures you went through yesterday!” declared Lee, with a frown. “I don’t want you to get up to any mischief.”

“Well, I like that!” protested Nipper indignantly. “We’re all bursting to help in the defence work.”

Nelson Lee had ordered all the St. Frank’s fellows to bed in the royal castle, and they had obeyed. But now, after a good meal, they were intent upon being active again. The Moor View girls, of course, were with the Princess Mercia, safe in an inland retreat.

A shout went up when a lanky figure emerged from the second gondola.

“Old Browne of the Fifth!” said Fullwood. “There’s a nerve! He’s been cruising on one of these ripping new boats, and we’ve been left in the cold!”

“Like his blessed cheek!”

William Napoleon Browne came forward, smiling.

“Jealousy, brothers, is an unfortunate trait, and must be sternly curbed!” he observed. “I would have you know that I am second engineer of this warship! If on active service, I shall probably manipulate a rifle in my spare time!”

“Can we be appointed, too, sir?” asked a dozen voices.

“If you boys are thinking of actively participating in a battle, you’d better put the idea right out of your heads,” said Lee. “By a merciful Providence, you are all alive and well, and I don’t want you to take any unnecessary risks. I think I’ll have a guard placed on that galley of yours, so that you can’t sneak off in her!”

Nipper stroked his chin. “That’s not a bad idea, sir,” he said thoughtfully. “Sneak off—eh? H’m! I’ll think about it!”

“You young ass! We’d run you to earth in ten minutes!” grinned Lord Dorrimore. “You can’t try those games—”

He broke off, staring. A figure on horseback was galloping up recklessly, and they all recognised Handforth. And it was quite easy to see that Handforth was desperate with excitement.

“What on earth’s he been up to now?” growled Nipper. “I thought he went shopping?”

“So he did, but there’s never any telling with Handy,” replied Reggie Pitt.

“News!” roared Handforth, as he reined in his horse and leaped to the ground. “Marvellous news, you chaps!”

In spite of their disregard for Handforth’s “surprises”—which generally turned out to be mares’ nests—the fellows crowded round him.

“What news?” they shouted.

“Sparks has got in touch with the outer world!” panted Handforth, trembling with excitement. “The wireless is working!”

(This is good news for the St. Frank’s adventurers—but they have yet to face the Gothland invasion! Don’t miss next week’s gripping chapters.)

The Top Scorer!

"POP O" THE CIRCUS!"

Forced to give up his job in a circus, Cecil Popper, a boy acrobat, comes to Greyfriars—and never has that school had such an amazing new boy! For “Pop” is unable to resist the call of the sawdust ring, so he deliberately sets out to get himself “sacked” from school! Here’s a great yarn of school and circus adventure, featuring Harry Wharton & Co., that every boy will delight in.

Ask to-day for

No. 243 of

SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY

At all Newsagents and Bookstalls 4d.

FROM FOURTH FORMER TO GROCER'S BOY!

(Continued from page 16.)

the way the millionaire had dealt with his son, though, of course, the millionaire had had to have his way.

But Mr. Lumley-Lumley looked now as if he had come in a more amenable frame of mind.

"Ah, you are watching the cricket!" he said, shaking hands with Dr. Holmes. "Bless my soul, is that my son there, batting?"

"Yes, that is Lumley-Lumley."

"You have not received the boy back into the school, Dr. Holmes?"

"Certainly not! He is playing with a visiting team."

"I guess I'm glad to hear it! I've run down to see you to-day," said the millionaire abruptly. "You thought I was hard upon my son."

"I still think so!" said the Head dryly.

"Ahem! I—I think I will speak to my son," he said. "If you are willing to take him back into the school, Dr. Holmes, I shall be very pleased!"

"I shall be pleased," said the Head.

"Good! And—and I am sorry I was so hasty!" said the millionaire.

The Head smiled.

"Not at all! But this will be good news for your son. He seems to have succeeded in looking after himself very well; he has a decidedly strong character. But I am sure he will be glad to return to the school."

"I guess so," said Mr. Lumley-Lumley.

And the millionaire took his leave of the Head, and walked down to the cricket field.

The village innings was drawing to a finish—only one wicket was wanted to fall, and it would be over. But Lumley-Lumley and Grimes, between them were keeping the game alive in fine style.

Mr. Lumley-Lumley sat down outside the pavilion and looked on.

A murmur ran round the crowd that Lumley-Lumley's pater was there.

The millionaire watched his son at the wicket and there was pride in his glance. Grimes was backing the Outsider up; but there was no doubt that Lumley-Lumley was doing the cricketing. He piled up the runs, and the total was already ninety-two.

Tom Merry gave the ball once more to Fatty Wynn, adjuring him to take wickets.

The fat Fourth Former did his best. But the first ball of the over gave Lumley-Lumley 4 for a boundary, and the Rylcombe total was now 96.

Fatty Wynn sent the ball down again, and Lumley-Lumley drove it to the boundary with a terrific slog.

There was a yell. The batsmen did not need to run.

"Hundred up!" roared Figgins.

"A tie, bai Jove!"

The scores had tied. If another run was scored St. Jim's was beaten—beaten by a village team!

Fatty Wynn, as he prepared to deliver the third ball of the over, felt as if whole worlds depended upon him. The burden of Atlas, with the world on his shoulders, was as nothing in comparison. Fatty Wynn's eyes gleamed and he took a hard grip on the round red ball, and backed away for his little quick run.

"Go it, Fatty!" shouted Figgins.

Fatty Wynn took his run, and the ball flew from his hand.

Click!

Away went the red leather, and the batsman were running. It came whizzing in from the hand of Tom Merry—a second too late. The batsmen had made their ends good, and there was a roar:

"Well run!"

The match was won!

Lumley-Lumley grinned as he sauntered off the field, with his arm linked in Grimes'. But he started at the sight of his father, waiting to meet him outside the pavilion.

Mr. Lumley-Lumley looked at him

grimly, and Lumley-Lumley and Grimes raised their caps.

"Hallo, pop!" said the Outsider. "Fancy meeting you!"

"You young rascal, are you going to give in, and do as I have ordered you?" demanded the millionaire.

Lumley-Lumley grinned.

"Oh, come off, pop!"

The millionaire burst into a laugh.

"Very well, Jerrold!" he said. "I've seen Dr. Holmes, and you are to return to St. Jim's—"

"That spoils my chance of learning the grocery business," grinned Lumley-Lumley. "But it's all serene. I'll come back, if you like. By the way, popper, this is Grimes, a most particular friend of mine, who has stood by me like a real pal. Grimes, this is my popper—one of the best, though he has a rotten temper at times."

Mr. Lumley-Lumley glared at his son for a moment, and then he grinned and shook hands with Grimes.

Lumley-Lumley turned to the grinning crowd of fellows.

"Gentlemen, I am returning to St. Jim's, and there is going to be a big feed to celebrate that important event. Everybody is invited, and I recommend you not to spare the grub, as there is a millionaire footing the bill. You'll stay for the feed, won't you, popper? You ought, you know, as you'll be paying for it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Mr. Lumley did, and by the time he left St. Jim's he had a bill of very considerable dimensions to pay at the tuckshop, which he paid with very good humour. And when Grimes & Co. quitted St. Jim's after that joyous celebration, they went minus one member of their team—the junior who for a short time had changed from Fourth Former to grocer's boy.

(Next Wednesday: "PLAYING THE GAME!" Every boy will revel in this great yarn of sport, drama, and adventure at St. Jim's. Order your GEM early to make sure of reading it.)

ROSS for HEIGHT

Client, age 19, gains 5 ins. in 6 weeks.	No Appliances —No Drugs. No Dieting. ROSS SYSTEM NEVER FAILS <i>Hundreds of Testimonials from all over the world.</i>
" " 21, " 5 " in 5 months.	
" " 20, " 3, " in 16 days.	
" " 16, passes 6 ft. mark!	
" " 18, " 6 ft. 2 ins.!!	

Increased my own height to 6 ft. 3 3/4 ins.

P. MALCOLM ROSS, Height Specialist,
SCARBOROUGH, Eng. P.O. Box 15.

SPUR PROOF TENTS

Made from specially Proofed Canvas, complete with 3 Piece Jointed Poles, Guy Lines, Pegs and Runners. Packed in waterproof holdall with handle. Size 6ft. x 4ft. 8 x 8ft. 6 with 6-in. wall. —Carr. paid



6/9

Sond for Art Coloured Illus. List Post Free

GEORGE GROSE, New Bridge St., **LUDGATE CIRCUS**

BE TALL

Your Height increased in 14 days or Money Back. Amazing Course, 5/-, Send STAMP NOW FOR free book.—**STEBBING SYSTEM,** 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

ROYAL JUBILEE PACKET FREE. 60 different stamps. Cyprus (Jubilee), Newfoundland (K. and Q.), Australian, (Macarthur), Tanganyika, Jamaica, Persia, Turkey; also duplicate album and Prince of Wales stamp. 2d. postage, requesting approvals.—Lisburn & Townsend (U.J.S.), Liverpool, 3.

BLUSHING.

—FREE to all sufferers, particulars of a proved home treatment that quickly removes all embarrassment, and permanently cures blushing and flushing of the face and neck. Enclose stamp to

Mr. A. TEMPLE (Specialist), Palace House, 128, Shaftesbury Avenue (2nd Floor), London, W.1.

(Established 30 years.)



9/6

THE ROAMER TENT

Size 6ft. long, 4ft. 6ins. wide, 3ft. 6ins. high, 12in. walls. Made from strong material. Brass-jointed poles in 3 sections. Complete with all accessories, in valise. (Postage 1/-)

In strong green proofed material, 13/6. Ground Sheet to fit, 3/9.

BLANKS, 303, GRAYS INN RD., LONDON, W.C.1.

STAMMERING, Stuttering. New, remarkable. Certain Cure. Booklet free, privately.—**SPECIALIST,** Dept. A.P., 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

TALL

Your Height increased in 12 days or no cost. New discovery adds 2.5 ins. I gained 4 ins. Guaranteed safe. Full Course, 5/-. Details: **J. B. MORLEY,** 8, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, LONDON, E.C.4.

BE STRONG

I promise you Robust Health, Doubled Strength, Stamina, and Dashing Energy in 30 days or money back! My amazing 4-in-1 Course adds 10-25 lbs. to your muscular development (with 2 ins. on Chest and 1 in. on Arms), also brings an Iron Will, Perfect Self-control, Virile Manhood, Personal Magnetism. Surprise your friends! Complete Course, 5/-. Details free, privately.—**STEBBING INSTITUTE (A),** 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

BLUSHING,

Shyness, "Nerves," Self-Consciousness, Worry Habit, Unreasonable Fears, etc., cured or money back! Complete Course 5/-. Details—**L. A. STEBBING,** 28, Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

DON'T BE BULLIED!

Some splendid illus. lessons in Jujitsu. Articles and full particulars free. Better than Boxing. 2d. stamp for postage. Learn to fear no man. Or send P.O. 1/- for First Part to: "A.P." "Blenheim House," Bedford Lane, Fetham, Middx.

STAMPS

300 DIFFERENT, incl. Airmail, Barbados, Old India, Nascia, New South Wales, etc. Price 6d.—**W. A. WHITE, ENGINE LANE, IYE, WORCS.**