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The GEM

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FUN-FICTION-FACT!

"GRUNDY THE HYPNOTIST!"

Starring the St. Jim's Chums.

**"THE FAMOUS FOUR'S
CHRISTMAS!"**

Featuring Harry Wharton & Co.'s
thrilling holiday adventures.

**"HOW'S YOUR LUCK THIS
WEEK?"**

Learn what the stars foretell, by
PROFESSOR ZARRO.

Also Stamp Article, Fun Column,
Pen Pals, and Illustrated Jokes.



PUTTING on the 'FLUENCE!



HOW'S YOUR LUCK THIS WEEK?

Read what the stars foretell,
by PROFESSOR ZARRO.

ASTROLOGERS, who have studied the stars from the beginning of civilisation, base their prophecies on the Zodiac, which is a belt in the heavens through which the sun slowly passes during the course of the year. The Zodiac is divided into twelve sections, and each section has a name and a sign given to it from a constellation contained in it. Here, then, is a list of the various divisions, and the periods which they govern. Look for the division in which your birthday falls, and you will read what this week holds for you.

AQUARIUS (the Water Carrier), Jan. 21st to Feb. 19th.—Those born in this period are often misunderstood, yet become popular amongst many acquaintances without readily making real friends. The next few days may bring a quarrel, probably due to heated argument. Write a letter to anyone you have been neglecting lately. It would be a good idea to join a club or a society of some kind.

PISCES (the Fishes), Feb. 20th to March 21st.—You who were born under this sign are pleasant, friendly people, and usually either very brilliant or hopeless duffers. You will frequently find a Pisces type at the top or bottom of his class in school. Watch your step if you deal with strangers this week, but if a friend wants your help, give it.

ARIES (the Ram), March 22nd to April 20th.—This type are the ones who go ahead, but beware of being over-impulsive this week. Don't quarrel with members of your family, as you are likely to do, and watch out for surprises, pleasant and otherwise.

TAURUS (the Bull), April 21st to May 21st.—Taurians are often stolid people, but good-hearted and

firm friends. This is a week to ask favours, and it is also good for travel. More variety than usual in your life, but at least one unpleasantness awaits you.

GEMINI (the Twins), May 22nd to June 21st.—Having been born in this period, you are by nature quick-witted and quick-thinking. But you are also restless, and find it hard to concentrate on anything. Make sure, this week, that you do not make the mistake of doing too many things at once. Your luck is in at sport, and concerning money.

CANCER (the Crab), June 22nd to July 23rd.—Be careful not to be "touchy" this week, or you will lose a friend. Have you been waiting for something to happen? It will come about within a few days. Anything liquid attracts you; if you think it over, you will probably find you prefer stews to roast joints of meat, for instance, and enjoy boating.

LEO (the Lion), July 24th to August 23rd.—Those born under the sign of Leo are the people whose acquaintances call them "good sorts." But don't let anyone impose on your good nature this week, as they will probably try to do. You will have a worry of some kind; don't let it trouble you, because it will sort itself out quite easily.

VIRGO (the Virgin), August 24th to Sept. 23rd.—The Virgo type are usually industrious people, but this is a week for even more activity than usual. Pay visits, finish any jobs that have been hanging about. You will probably find yourself being late for various minor appointments. A good job it's holiday-time, because otherwise you'd probably have been late for school several times this week!

(Continued on page 24.)

BIRTHDAY INDICATIONS.

LUCKY you, if it's your birthday this week, for the stars smile on those born under the sign of Sagittarius, the archer, and tend to make their lives smooth. Sagittarius rules all those born between November 23rd and December 22nd inclusive, and makes them capable of dealing with most difficulties, and able to make the best of their opportunities.

Here are the predictions for the year for those whose birthdays fall this week:

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 15th.—Most of the things you wish for will come true during the next twelve months. Examinations will be passed, a long-standing quarrel will be mended, or maybe something which has worried you in the past will be set right. Next April is your luckiest month, but you may resent the help others will be giving you in order to make your good fortune come to pass. Sounds to me like ructions with teacher, or an angry father on the warpath with his slipper!

THURSDAY, Dec. 16th.—For those whose birthday this is, a fairly uneventful year, though you will be gaining lots of useful experience which will greatly help you later. Watch how you spend your pocket-money; there are signs that you may buy something which will lead you into trouble. Probably Herries bought his bulldog through disregarding this sort of advice!

FRIDAY, Dec. 17th.—A topsy-turvy year, with all sorts of changes. You may move your home, or change to a new school, or go out to work for a firm you have not yet even heard of. People will try to "do you down," but whether they succeed or not will depend entirely on yourself.

SATURDAY, Dec. 18th.—What is your ambition?

If you have one, this is the year to go out and achieve it, for fate is on your side. But you must be careful of wasting time—you'll have tons of opportunities for doing so. You will probably take up a new sport this year, and be successful at it. So now's the time to polish up your tiddley-winks and snakes-and-ladders if you've been a "flop" at football and cricket!

SUNDAY, Dec. 19th.—Better prospects for girls than for boys, but pretty bright for both. People whose birthday this is are sometimes inclined to be moody; they will sort out a lot of worrying tangles this coming year. Expect a slice of luck during the next few months. Good health is indicated.

MONDAY, Dec. 20.—If this is your birthday, the stars foretell an exciting year for you. You'll probably find yourself wondering all the time what's going to happen next! If you are lonely, start a new hobby, for it will bring you the friends you have been waiting for. You are going to receive unexpected gifts, so rest assured you will not be disappointed on Christmas Day!

TUESDAY, Dec. 21st.—A fine year for school or work lies ahead. If you are entering for a scholarship, or want some kind of promotion, you will get it if you work hard for it. Don't take too much notice of the advice those older than yourself give you, but listen to them, and then work out why their advice is right. That doesn't mean you should tell your teacher to "go and eat coke," though—you'll have to bear the results if you do, not me!

PROFESSOR ZARRO.

IRRESISTIBLE POWER! EVERYONE, FROM THE HEAD DOWN TO THE SMALLEST FAC, COMPELLED TO OBEY HIS COMMANDS! THAT IS THE DREAM OF—

GRUNDY *the* HYPNOTIST!



By
Martin
Clifford

Grundy made rapid passes with his hands, and Arthur Augustus regarded him with astonishment and alarm. "Now," said Grundy, "your name's Winston Churchill!" "Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy. "He's quite mad!"

CHAPTER 1.

Gussy is Obstinate!

"NO footer this afternoon!" Monty Lowther made that announcement in Tom Merry's study. Tom Merry and Manners stared. And Tom Merry replied promptly: "Rats!" To which Monty Lowther rejoined cheerfully: "Same to you, and many of 'em!" "What are you burbling about?" demanded Tom indignantly. "Why, it's lovely weather for footer—and we're going to beat the New House!" "Not this afternoon," said Lowther, with a shake of the head. "Footer's going to be cut for once. Something more important on." "Fathead! There isn't anything more important than footer!" "What about going to the Empire?" asked Monty Lowther. "Blow the Wayland Empire!" growled Tom Merry. "Catch me cutting a footer match to go to the blessed Empire!" "It's an extra-special performance!"

George Alfred Grundy's spell-ing has always been a big joke at St. Jim's. But no less funny are his efforts to cast spells!

"Oh rats!" "And the Head approves—" "Bow-wow!" "And all takings this afternoon are to go to Wayland Cottage Hospital," said Monty Lowther. "Oh!" said Tom Merry. "You see, it's a special matinee in aid of the hospital funds," Monty Lowther said. "I've heard it from Grundy. He's going—he's taken three half-guinea seats—you know how he splashes his money about, and he's hired a car. We can't splash like Grundy, but we're going to do our bit. Half-crowns are our mark." "What's the show like?" asked Manners. "Oh, there's a trick cyclist and an American hypnotist and comic songs and a conjuror, and a trapeze artiste and a sketch," said Lowther.

"But we're fixed to play Figgins & Co. this afternoon," said Tom Merry. "Figgins is going if you do." "The dickens he is!" "Study No. 6 are going—Gussy is standing seats all round. Kangaroo's going with his pals. In fact, everybody's doing it." THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,557.

"Well, if Figgins & Co. are going, we may as well go," said Tom Merry. "Rotten to spend an afternoon like this indoors—but it's for the good of the cause, I suppose. Sure all the takings are going to the Wayland Cottage Hospital?"

"Every red cent."

"Then it's a go."

"We'll get over on our bikes—we can go into the half-crown seats," said Lowther.

"Right-ho!"

Tom Merry put his football list into his pocket, and the Terrible Three left the study.

There were several voices speaking at once in Study No. 6 as they passed, and they paused to look in.

Blake, Herries, and Digby were all addressing remarks at once to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth. Their remarks were:

"Fathead!"

"Ass!"

"Duffer!"

"Hallo! Trouble in the family?" asked Tom Merry cheerfully. "Wherefore that lofty frown upon the noble brow of the great Gustavus?"

"Pway don't be an ass, Tom Mewwy! I insist upon dwessin' respectably when I am goin' to an entaînement! These boundahs want me to wide ovah to Wayland in twousah-clips."

"That all?" asked Monty Lowther, in astonishment.

"Yaas!"

"Jolly cold in this weather!" said Lowther, with a shake of the head. "I should make it trousers, too!"

"You uttah ass! I mean that Blake doesn't want me to change my clobber! The duffah thinks I can go on my bike and wide as I am!"

"Wide as you are! But you are not wide—not as wide as Fatty Wynn, anyway!"

"You are perfectly well aware of what I mean, Lowthah, you funny ass! When I say wide, I mean wide—not wide."

"Clear as mud!" agreed Lowther.

"I am goin' to dwess respectably, and I shall not be more than an hour changin'," said Arthur Augustus. "I am willin' to huwwy. But I uttably wufese to wide on these beastly muddy woads! Besides, Miss Mawie is goin'. Talbot has already started with her, and they are takin' the twain. I am not goin' to let Miss Mawie see me lookin' muddy and slovenly."

"Listen to him!" exclaimed Blake, exasperated. "He wants to waste the funds of the study in railway fares. Of course, we're not allowing it. Gussy is going on his bike."

"I am sowwy, Blake, but I am goin' to do nothin' of the sort! The woads are vewy muddy, and Miss Mawie—"

"But Miss Mawie won't notice you if Talbot's there," said Digby.

Dig meant this remark to be comforting. But it only earned him a freezing stare from the Honourable Arthur Augustus.

"We'll go and get the bikes out," said Blake.

"We shall be ready in five minutes, Gussy!"

"Wats! I shall be weady in an hour, Blake."

Arthur Augustus quitted the study to end the discussion. He made his way to the dormitory to change. Arthur Augustus was a very obliging fellow; but there were limits. To appear at a matinee in muddy clobber when there was a lady present was past the limit—miles past it. Arthur Augustus was determined.

So was Jack Blake.

"You fellows biking it?" asked Blake.

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"Yes, rather! We've no oof to waste on railway fares."

"Then you can come along with us and lend a hand with Gussy," said Blake. "He's going to bike it, too."

"But he's gone to get into his best clobber," ejaculated Tom, "and the roads are really awful, you know, especially the short cuts!"

"That's Gussy's look-out. He's going to bike it if we have to tie him on the bike!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Terrible Three chuckled as they went to fetch their caps.

Then they sallied forth and joined Blake & Co. at the bike-shed.

CHAPTER 2.

A Very Enjoyable Spin!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY was very busy in the Fourth Form dormitory.

"Clobber" that was a thing of beauty and a joy for ever was laid out on his bed, and he was peeling off his everyday garments, when Jack Blake came into the dormitory.

"You fellows goin' on bikes?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Yes."

"Good-bye, then! I shall see you at Wayland."

"You will," agreed Blake. "Come on—"

"I can hardly come in this state, Blake."

"Well, that's so," admitted Blake. "I give you three ticks to get into your clobber!"

"Weally, Blake— Bai Jove! What are you doin' with that squirt, you ass?"

Blake had produced a squirt, and he was taking aim at his elegant chum.

Arthur Augustus dodged behind a bed.

"If you squirt that watah ovah me, you ass—"

"It isn't water," said Blake cheerily; "it's red ink!"

"Gweat Scott!"

"And if you're more than three minutes getting into your clobber, you get it!" said Blake.

"You uttah ass!"

"Time's goin'!"

"If you ink my clobber I shall give you a feahful thwashin', Blake!" said Arthur Augustus, breathing hard through his nose.

"Will that get the ink off the clobber?" asked Blake.

"Bai Jove!"

"Minute gone! Buck up! I don't want to waste this ink!" said Blake.

Arthur Augustus glared at Jack Blake, but he read deadly determination in Blake's eyes. The fate of his best clobber was at stake. There was no arguing with a squirt full of red ink. He bundled into his clothes.

It was a lightning change.

If anybody had told Arthur Augustus that he would change in two minutes, Arthur Augustus would have laughed the idea to scorn. But he did it. The beautifully creased trousers, the natty shoes, the elegant Eton jacket, the nobby tie—all of them seemed to jump, as it were, into their places on the person of Arthur Augustus.

"Bravo, Gussy!" said Blake admiringly. "You never know what you can do till you come to do it, you know!"

"I wegard you as an uttah beast, Blake!"

"Good! Now, where's your cap?"

"I am takin' a toppah."

"Better not."

"I insist upon goin' in a toppah!"



ST. JIM'S JINGLES No. 10.

GEORGE
FIGGINS.

THE fame of Figgins I appraise,
The noble-hearted giant!
Arise and magnify his ways,
So dashing and defiant!
The mighty men in days of yore—
Grim Greek and gallant Roman—
Must pale into the shade before
This fierce, unflinching foeman!

If Figgy fought for Joan of Arc,
He would not fail to please her;
He'd also reap a rich remark
From celebrated Cæsar.
For he displays, when fights rage high,
And foes are sorely smitten,
That deep desire to do or die
Which stamps the true-born Briton.

The School House stalwarts are assured
That nothing shall defy 'em,
And call the New House "casual ward"
And "lunatic asylum."
These doubtful compliments succeed
In rousing Figgy's faction;
And then our hero sees the need
For swift and instant action.

The atmosphere of strife and storm
Pervades the rival studies,
And all the would-be warriors swarm
To where the good red blood is.
The final cry of "Pax!" reveals
A row of blackened orbits;
And many a sad survivor feels
He's smashed in three or four bits.

Such stirring scenes are seldom marred
By actions mean or spiteful;
In fact, the combatants regard
A skirmish as delightful.
And though perhaps 'tis "infra dig."
To sink to such a level,
No person but a hopeless prig
Would spoil a schoolboy revel!

But Figgins sometimes seeks a rest
From cries of "No surrender!"
When peace prevails he is possessed
With feelings true and tender.
For Cousin Ethel's charms entrance
His youthful soul with glamour,
And when he meets her gentle glance
His heart beats like a hammer!

The pioneer of healthy sport,
By decent boys befriended,
Our hero bears a rich report,
And shines in all that's splendid.
Then let us when, on Wednesday morn,
His might is set before us,
Dispense with everything forlorn,
And cheer in hearty chorus!

Next Week:
ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY.

"Well, if you won't be advised, you won't!" said Blake. "Hurry up with the topper! This squirt will go off in a minute!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"March!"

"I wefuse!"

"Then here goes!"

"Stop!" shrieked Arthur Augustus. "I am goin'!"

"Buck up, then!"

Breathing hard, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy marched out of the dormitory, covered by the squirt. He marched downstairs, and out into the quadrangle.

"I shall be early for the twain!" he said. "It is uttably useless startin' now, Blake!"

"Never mind the train! Come on!"

"I weward you— Stop, you wottah! I'm goin'!"

Arthur Augustus, pink with wrath, walked down to the gates.

Blake followed him cheerily into the road. Outside the school gates there were five juniors waiting, with seven bikes. Arthur Augustus glanced at them.

"Here he is!" said Herries. "Come on, Gussy! Here's your bike! I've got it out for you."

"I am not bikin' this aftahnoon, Hewwies!"

"Your mistake; you are!" said Blake. Jump on!"

"I uttably wefuse to do anythin' of the sort!"

"Are you getting on that bike, or are you going to be put on?" roared Blake.

"Wubbish!"

"Collar him!"

"I wefuse to be collahed! Hands off, you wottahs! Yawwooh!"

"Up with him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Manners and Lowther held the bike. Blake, Herries, and Digby laid firm hands upon Arthur Augustus. Wriggling wildly, the swell of St. Jim's was swept off his feet and planted on the bike.

"Oh, you wottahs! Oh cwumbs!"

"Now, then, Gussy, let's start, you ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wefuse—I uttably wefuse—"

"Let go, then!" chuckled Blake. "If he wants to tumble in the mud—"

"Yawwooh! Hold me, you fathead! I shall fall ovah if you let go!" yelled Arthur Augustus.

"Well, hold him," said Blake—"hold him till I get on my jigger! Now, then!"

Blake mounted on one side of Arthur Augustus, Digby on the other. They took an arm each of the elegant junior. Lowther obligingly started Arthur Augustus, and the three cyclists rode away together.

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"I wefuse to wide with you wottahs!" shrieked Arthur Augustus.

"Looks to me as if you'll have to!" remarked Blake, as he ground away at the pedals. "If we let go, you'll go down in the mud! But please yourself!"

"I weward you as 'uttah beasts!"

"Hear, hear! Kim on!"

Arthur Augustus had to ride. The thought of a fall in the muddy road made him shiver. With his shining silk topper on the back of his head and his elegant necktie flying out in the breeze, he rode between his devoted chums. His face was crimson with wrath. Behind the three came Herries, Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther, chuckling.

There was a shout from behind the cyclists.

"Get out of the way, you muddy bounders!"

A car came dashing by. It was Grundy's car, with Grundy and Gunn and Wilkins in it. The cyclists drew aside, and the car whizzed by, casting great splashes of mud upon the wheelers. Grundy, Wilkins, and Gunn grinned at them.

"Hallo! Out mud-collecting?" chortled Grundy.

"Keep clear, you silly ass!" shouted Tom Merry.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Grundy & Co., and their car sped on down the lane.

"Oh cwikey!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "I am muddy alweady. Look at my twousahs!"

"Oh, blow your trousers!" growled Blake. "I'm muddy, too! I'll scalp that idiot Grundy for this!"

"Look at my hat!"

"Blow your hat!"

"Let go my arms, you wottahs! My hat is blowin' off!"

"Well, you shouldn't come out cycling in a topper!"

"Weally, you beast!"

"Set his hat straight for him, Dig!"

Digby grabbed at the hat and tilted it over Gussy's forehead. The beautiful nap of that topper was not improved by Dig's hasty grab at it. Neither did it feel comfortable tilted over Gussy's eyes. He breathed wrath and fury as he pedalled on.

The wheelers turned into the short cut, where the mud was thicker and sloshier. It was certainly a ride for which one should have put on one's oldest clothes.

Arthur Augustus was clad in his best. But they did not look "best" by the time half a mile had been covered.

As he rode with his arms in the grip of his devoted pals, he could not avoid puddles, and the puddles were innumerable.

"Will you let me go, you feahful beasts?" he gasped at last.

"Only if you promise to ride with us like a good boy!" said Blake.

"You wottahs! I pwomise!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Honour bright?"

"Yaas, you feahful wuffian!"

"Done!" said Blake.

Arthur Augustus was released, and he grasped his handlebars. He rode on more comfortably then, but his face was a study. Some of the splashes reached his silk topper. A few splashes did not hurt the caps of the other juniors, but with that shining topper it was a different matter. By the time the party reached Wayland, Arthur Augustus felt as if he had had a mud-bath.

"Here we are!" said Blake, as he jumped off

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his machine. "Shove the bikes into the station; we'll trot down to the Empire."

"I wefuse to go to the Empire in this state!"

"Take his arm, Herries—"

"Hewwies, you beast!"

"Take his other arm, Dig. We'll look after the bikes."

"I wefuse. Hewwies, I shall stwike you! Dig, I shall thwash you! I decline—"

Arthur Augustus was marched off, still declining. Blake and the Terrible Three put up the machines, and followed, grinning. They arrived in great spirits at the Wayland Empire—all excepting Arthur Augustus. He was furious.

"This way in," said Blake. "Here's where you take the tickets, Gussy."

"I wefuse to take the tickets, Blake!"

Blake had a pained look.

"Oh, Gussy, after offering to stand treat for the study!" he murmured. "I'm surprised at you. After we've saved your railway fare for you, too! Is there such a thing as gratitude in this world, I wonder?"

"You—you unspeakable wottah! I will take three tickets for you fellows, but I will not take a ticket for myself."

"But you must, old chap. We can't countenance your trying to dodge in without a ticket."

"You uttah ass, you know I do not mean anythin' of the sort! I am not goin' in!"

"Bow-wow!"

Arthur Augustus, breathing hard, took three tickets. Blake promptly took a fourth, and his three chums marched Arthur Augustus in. Exasperated as the swell of St. Jim's was, he did not dare to start a rough-and-tumble in the theatre vestibule. He resigned himself to his fate and marched in. The seven juniors found seats all in a row, and sat down.

"In good time," said Blake. "The orchestra's only tuning up—unless that's a bit of Debussy's music. We've saved you from missing the show, Gussy."

"Pway don't speak to me, Blake. I weward you as a wottah!"

"Hallo!" Grundy of the Shell looked round in the stalls, several rows in advance of Tom Merry & Co. "My hat! What a slovenly gang! Dash it all, D'Arcy, you might wash your face when you're going to a theatre!"

"Is my face muddy, Blake?"

"Only a splash or two," said Blake. "There's a daub on your nose, and another under your eye, and one on your chin. Nothing to speak of."

Arthur Augustus jerked out his handkerchief and a pocket-mirror, and began to rub. His face was crimson when he had finished. By that time the entertainment was beginning.

CHAPTER 3.

The Hypnotist!

"NOT much of a show, so far," remarked George Alfred Grundy, with a yawn, when the third item of the programme came to an end.

"Oh, it isn't so bad!" said Wilkins. "These seats are jolly comfy, anyway. Better than crowdin' back there w'ith those blessed fags!"

"Next item, Dr. Hunk," said Gunn, reading from the programme. "Dr. Cornelius K. Hunk, American hypnotist. Some spoof rot, I suppose."

"Hypnotist—eh?" said Grundy. "I'm rather interested in hypnotism."

"Spoof, I expect," said Gunn.

"Oh, I don't know," remarked Grundy thoughtfully. "Of course, this fellow may be a spoofer. But I believe in hypnotism myself. It's the power of the eye, you know, and a strong will and personality over a weaker personality. A fellow like me—"

"Like you?" said Wilkins.

"Yes, a fellow like me would make a good hypnotist, I should say. I've got an iron will."

"And a wooden head!" murmured Wilkins.

"What did you say, Wilkins?"

"I say it's very likely, Grundy, old chap. I shouldn't wonder if you'd make a first-rate hypnotist," said Wilkins, remembering that Grundy had paid for the seats and the hire of the car.

Grundy nodded thoughtfully. The St. Jim's

hypnotist, by means of a steady stare and certain curious passes of the hand. Dr. Hunk's skinny hand waved rhythmically before his grinning black face, and the grin died away, and the little black assumed a sleepy expression.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Dr. Hunk. "Pompey is now under the fluence, I guess. Pomp!"

"Yes, massa!" said the assistant in a sleepy voice.

"Your name is Hore-Belisha, Pomp!"

"Yes, massa!"

"Now, Pomp, what's your name?"

"Hore-Belisha, massa!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "That is



The St. Jim's cyclists drew aside and the car whizzed by, casting great splashes of mud upon the wheelers. Grundy, Wilkins, and Gunn grinned at them from the car. "Hallo! Out mud collecting?" chortled Grundy.

juniors turned their attention to the stage. Dr. Cornelius K. Hunk had appeared.

He was a little thin man, in a tight, black frock-coat that made him look thinner. His features were sharp and pointed, his nose long and beaklike, his chin almost conical, his forehead bumpy. On the tip of his chin was a little beard, somewhat like a billy-goat. His eyes were deep-set and very sharp. When he spoke it was with a nasal twang.

He strutted rather than walked on the stage, every movement of his skinny and ungainly person showing that he entertained a high opinion of himself.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "That chap is a wegulah boundah, deah boys. I wondah who his tailah is? Look at the knees of his twousahs, bai Jove!"

The doctor—if he were a doctor, as the programme declared—was accompanied by a little negro in Oriental costume. The little black was promptly placed under the weird influence of the

wevy remarkable. Fancy makin' that little black boundah believe that he is Hore-Belisha!"

"Yes, if he does," grinned Monty Lowther. "I fancy it's spoofer, my innocent Gustavus."

"Oh, bai Jove, I nevah thought of that!"

The doctor proceeded to put the hypnotised black through several absurd tricks. He gave him a cushion, assuring him that it was a pumpkin, and Pomp proceeded to attempt to eat it. He told Pomp that there was a chair behind him, and Pomp sat down, and bumped on the stage, amid loud laughter from the audience. He told Pomp that he was a cat, and Pomp mewed dismally.

Then the doctor turned to the audience.

"Ladies and gentlemen, in order to demonstrate that there is no deception, I shall be glad if a gentleman will step out of the audience and allow me to put the fluence on him. No harm will be done."

There was a buzz.

"By gum," said Grundy, "I'm going in for

that! I'll jolly soon see whether he's spoofing or not!"

Up jumped Grundy of the Shell. Grundy had no objection to coming into the public eye; in fact, he rather liked it.

There were plenty of other takers, too. But Grundy was the first to reach the stage, and next came Kerr of the Fourth, who was in the audience with Figgins and Fatty Wynn. Mr. Griggs, a local knut of Wayland, was the next, and a stout old gentleman followed. There would have been several more, but the "doctor" waved his hand.

"Gentlemen, many thanks! But time is short, and I have time only for one experiment."

"Try me, sir!" said Grundy.

"Ahem!" The doctor looked over the four applicants for hypnotism. "It is a matter of indifference to me, personally, though I will decide by seniority. Which of you is the eldest?"

It was rather a superfluous question, as two of the fellows were junior schoolboys, and another, a young man of twenty-five. Evidently the stout gentleman, who looked about sixty, was the eldest.

The doctor made him a sign to come forward.

All eyes were on the doctor and the stout gentleman.

The hypnotising of Pompey was comic, but as he was the hypnotist's assistant, there was no evidence that the whole affair was not prearranged. But if Dr. Hunk succeeded in hypnotising a stranger, selected at random from the audience, it was evident that he was a potent hypnotist.

The stout gentleman was looking a little nervous.

"Now—" began Dr. Hunk.

The stout gentleman interrupted.

"You are sure there will be no harm done?" he demanded.

"None at all," smiled the doctor. "Reassure yourself, my dear sir. None at all. I simply place you under the fluence—you become the slave of my will—then, with a few passes, I restore you to

NOTE THIS, CHUMS!

Owing to the Christmas holidays, the next issue of the GEM will be on sale TUESDAY, December 21st.

your ordinary state. You will remember nothing of what has passed. Have no fear! If you feel nervous pray retire, and allow another gentleman to take your place."

"Oh, no; I'll go through with it now!" said the stout gentleman.

"Very good! Your name, please!"

"Colonel Pipkin."

"Ah! A military gentleman?"

"Retired, sir."

"Very good! Now, Colonel Pipkin, pray seat yourself here. Thank you! Now look me straight in the eyes. Exactly! Fix your eyes upon mine. Thank you!"

Dr. Hunk fixed his keen, twinkling eyes upon those of the retired colonel, and began to make passes with his thin, clawlike hands.

The expression on the colonel's face was dogged and determined. He looked as if he had resolved to nerve himself to the utmost, and to defy the influence the American hypnotist sought to put him under.

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The audience watched with keen interest.

There was quite a thrill of excitement as the dogged, defiant expression faded from the stout gentleman's face, and a bewildered look came there, which gradually changed into an expression of drowsiness.

"Bai Jove! It's workin'!" said Arthur Augustus.

Grundy was watching with all his eyes.

Dr. Hunk turned to the audience.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the fluence is now on! Colonel Pipkin is the slave of my will. He no longer has the slightest volition of his own!"

"What a wotten state to be in!" murmured D'Arcy.

"Rise!" commanded the doctor.

The stout gentleman rose, swaying a little.

"Tell me your name."

"Silas Pipkin."

"You are a colonel?"

"No; I am a grocer."

There was a howl of laughter from the audience. Under the weird fluence the stout gentleman was letting out awkward truths.

"Bai Jove!" chuckled Arthur Augustus. "The boundah was swankin' when he said he was a colonel. But it's wathah a wotten twick to show him up like this!"

"Now listen to me!" said the doctor. "Your name is Winston Churchill. Got that?"

"Yes."

"What's your name?"

"Winston Churchill," came the unhesitating reply.

There was a murmur of applause. Evidently the stout gentleman was completely under the fluence.

CHAPTER 4.

Grundy Gets Going!

TOM MERRY & CO. were watching the peculiar scene with keen interest now. But their interest was nothing compared to that of George Alfred Grundy.

Grundy's eyes were simply glued upon Mr. Pipkin and the doctor. Deep thoughts were working in George Alfred's powerful brain.

"Looks the real thing—what?" he whispered to Wilkins.

Grundy and Kerr and Mr. Griggs had now returned to their places.

"It does, bai Jove!" admitted Wilkins.

"The old johnny doesn't know his own name," said Gunn, with a low whistle. "Blessed if I'd go to anything like that! Might let out something you want to keep dark!"

The doctor glanced triumphantly at the audience. He had made an impression. But he was not finished yet.

"Now, Mr. Churchill, as you've been in the House, you can tell us some parliamentary news," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The stout gentleman looked puzzled.

"What's the latest news about the Spanish Civil War?" demanded the doctor.

"I don't know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I guess nobody knows!" remarked the doctor, and there was a fresh burst of laughter.

"Now, sir, you are a frog. Got that?"

"Yes."

"What are you?"

"A frog," said the stout man submissively.

"Jump!"

The stout gentleman proceeded to jump, amid shouts of laughter.

"Stop!" commanded the doctor.

The stout gentleman stopped.

"Now, sir, you are a schoolboy, and I am your master. Twice one?"

"Two," said the stout gentleman.

"Twice two?"

"Four."

"Twice a hundred and forty-six?"

The stout gentleman hesitated.

"You cannot do that simple sum? Go into the corner and stand on your head!"

The stout gentleman went into a corner and proceeded very clumsily to stand on his head. He rolled over on the stage with a bump.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The stout gentleman sat dazedly. Dr. Hunk proceeded to make the magic passes before his face, this time backwards. The effect was electrical. The stout gentleman seemed to awaken as from a deep sleep. He gazed around him.

"Wha-what has happened? Have I—I fallen down?" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Pipkin scrambled to his feet. He looked very angry.

"Have you made me go through ridiculous antics?" he shouted. "I protest! You have no right, sir, to play such tricks upon a colonel in the Army!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The audience yelled with merriment. After Mr. Pipkin's confession while under the influence his lofty attitude struck them as very funny.

The doctor made soothing gestures.

"No harm done, sir—no harm at all! You have talked a little freely, that's all. I appeal to the ladies and gentlemen in front!"

"Bravo!"

"Quite right!"

The stout gentleman frowned majestically and came off the stage, looking very disturbed. He did not go back to his seat, but left the theatre at once.

Then Dr. Hunk made his bow to the audience and retired, amid loud applause.

"By gum!" said Grundy. "That was ripping! He's a jolly good hypnotist. The genuine thing, no mistake about that! Bravo!"

George Alfred Grundy hardly noticed the turns that followed. His thoughts were elsewhere. In the middle of the trick-cycling act Grundy astonished Wilkins by suddenly waving his hands before his face. Wilkins stared at him.

"Hallo! What's the game?" he demanded.

"You don't feel anything coming on?" asked Grundy anxiously.

"Eh?"

"Sort of sleepy?"

"Sleepy? No! What the thunder are you driving at?"

Grundy looked disappointed.

"I suppose I haven't got it right!" he said.

"All serene! I was only trying the doctor's passes on you!"

"Oh! Blessed if I didn't think you'd gone mad!" said Wilkins.

Grundy grunted and relapsed into silence, with wrinkled brows. He was evidently trying to recall the exact passes the American doctor had used to reduce his victim to the hypnotic state.

When the entertainment was over the juniors rose to go, and Grundy paused suddenly.

"Gunn, old man—"

"Hallo!" said Gunn. "Dropped something?"



Ghost (to Christmas party telling eerie stories): "Now I'll tell one!"
Half-a-crown has been awarded to C. Sellar, 49, Louis Street, Spring Bank, Hull.

"No, no! Look me in the eyes!"

"I-I-look you in the—the eyes?" stuttered Gunn.

"Yes; keep still!" Grundy waved his large hands before Gunn's eyes, and Gunn jumped back in alarm.

"What are you trying to do, you silly ass?" he demanded.

"Oh, you crass idiot!" said Grundy. "I was trying the passes. I hope I've got 'em right. Stand still!"

"Rats!" said Gunn promptly. "Don't play the giddy ox!"

And Gunn followed Wilkins. Grundy snorted and followed him. George Alfred was evidently thoroughly taken with the idea of becoming a hypnotist, being, as he had explained, peculiarly qualified by nature for the part, owing to his iron will and powerful personality. Somehow his studymates did not seem enthusiastic about it. But that was just like Wilkins and Gunn. Grundy had a real regard for his two faithful chums, but he often felt that his brains were thrown away in Study No. 3.

"Pway don't twead on my feet, Gwunday!" remonstrated Arthur Augustus, as the burly Shell fellow pushed into him in the departing crowd. Grundy was so deep in thought that he hardly saw where he was going.

"Oh, rats!" said Grundy. "I think I've got it."

"Eh?"

"Stand still a minute, D'Arcy!" Grundy was eager to experiment. He drew the astonished swell of St. Jim's aside from the crowd. "Stand there for a minute—look me in the eyes!"

"Wha-a-at!"

Grundy made rapid passes with his large hands. Arthur Augustus regarded him with astonishment and alarm. He had often suspected Grundy of being very nearly off his rocker. The conviction came into his mind now that Grundy was quite off it. He stood rooted to the floor.

Grundy's eyes gleamed with excitement. He quite misunderstood. He supposed that the Fourth Former was yielding to the fluence.

"Now," he said, "your name's Winston Churchill."

"Bai Jove! He's quite mad!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"What's your name?" demanded Grundy majestically.

"You know my name perfectly well, Gwunday!"

"Tell me your name, I command you!"

"I wefuse to be commanded by a Shell boundah, Gwunday!"

"Will you tell me your name?" shrieked Grundy.

"Gweat Scott! He's gettin' dangewous!" gasped the alarmed Gussy. "It's all wight, Gwunday—all sewene, deah boy! I'll tell you my name like anythin'! D'Arcy."

Grundy looked deeply disappointed.

"D'Arcy?" he repeated. "Not Winston Churchill?"

"I am sowwy, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, fully convinced that Grundy had taken leave of his senses, and humouring him. "My name happens to be D'Arcy."

"Oh, go and eat coke!" growled Grundy, in disgust.

He stepped back, and Arthur Augustus, glad to escape from the dangerous proximity of a lunatic, dashed after his friends.

"Hallo! Where have you been?" demanded Blake, as the swell of St. Jim's joined the party outside the theatre. "Thought you were lost!"

"Gwunday!" gasped D'Arcy. "He's mad!"

"Pooh! That's nothing new!"

"But he is maddah than evah, deah boy! He cornahed me in the theatre, and told me my name was Winston Churchill!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not a laughin' mattah, deah boys! Gwunday ought to be placed undah westwaint before he does some damage! He is quite wocky in the cwumpet!"

Grundy came out, with Wilkins and Gunn. He paused a moment to speak to Tom Merry.

The juniors regarded him curiously, and D'Arcy backed away.

"Just a word with you, Merry!" said Grundy.

"Go ahead!" said Tom.

"I've been left out of the footer ever since I've been at St. Jim's—"

"Great Scott! You're not going to begin on that now, are you?" exclaimed Tom, in astonishment. "I want to get home to tea."

"Humah him, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, in a stage whisper. "You have to humah lunatics, you know. He may become violent."

"I've got only a word to say," said Grundy. "I've told you before that I never stand any rot! I'm not only going into the junior team, but I'm going to captain it!"

"Are you, by Jove?" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Yes, I've decided."

"I haven't a say in the matter, I suppose?" grinned the captain of the Shell.

"In the circumstances, I consider that I am justified in not allowing you a say in the matter," said Grundy. "However, I'm going to give you a chance. Think over it! Put me in the team and I'll let you off!"

"Let me off?" said Tom, bewildered.

"Yes. I don't want to be hard on you, but if you keep up that ridiculous jealousy, and keep me out of the footer. I shall have no resource but to put my foot down. Then I shall make you retire from the team altogether!"

"Mum-mum-make me retire from the team?" stuttered Tom Merry.

"Yes. I mean it!" said Grundy darkly.

"Think it over!"

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Grundy strode on without waiting for a reply, followed by Wilkins and Gunn, who were looking astonished—as well they might. Tom Merry gazed after him like a fellow in a dream.

"Is he dotty?" he ejaculated.

"Mad as a hattah, deah boy!"

"Must be potty!" said Blake, in wonder.

"Dash it all! Wilkins and Gunn ought to get him home as soon as possible. He ought to see a doctor!"

In utter astonishment, the chums of St. Jim's left the theatre and went for their bikes.

Grundy's remarkable words had more than astounded them. What on earth those dark and mysterious words could mean they could not imagine, unless they meant that Grundy was out of his senses.

Arthur Augustus was quite concerned. Everybody rather liked Grundy, though he was well known to be every imaginable kind of an ass. He was high-handed, and he had a surprisingly good opinion of himself, and he was a first-class duffer. He was the despair of his Form-master and a standing joke on the playing fields. But he was good-hearted and good-natured, and always ready to lend a fellow a hand, or lend him money. Arthur Augustus was not surprised that it had come to this.

And he was so concerned about poor old Grundy's mental state that he even forgot the mud that splashed on his unfortunate clobber during the ride home.

CHAPTER 5.

Dangerous!

GRUNDY paused in the old High Street of Wayland, and Wilkins and Gunn paused, too, regarding him anxiously. His words to Tom Merry had astonished and alarmed them, and Grundy's manner, too, seemed queer.

Several times they had seen him smile sardonically, without apparent reason. Once or twice he had burst into a chuckle, and Wilkins and Gunn could see nothing to chuckle about.

Wilkins had more than once confided to Gunn his opinion that Grundy would finish up in a home for idiots. But he had never thought of a lunatic asylum. But now it really appeared to him that a lunatic asylum was nearer the mark.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Grundy.

"Wha-what's the joke, old chap?" asked Wilkins, with a sidelong, alarmed look at Gunn.

"You heard what I said to Tom Merry?" grinned Grundy.

"Ye-es. You were joking, of course!"

"No jolly fear!" said Grundy emphatically. "I meant every word!"

"D-did you?"

"You fellows know what sort of a fellow I am?" said Grundy.

"We do!" said Wilkins.

"We does!" murmured Gunn.

"Yet Tom Merry keeps me out of the team. I don't like to say anything rotten about a chap, but it's jealousy, you know. I don't say Tom Merry is really quite conscious of it, for he's a good chap. But there it is. He doesn't want a better player to get into the limelight. That's why I'm kept out of the matches."

"Ye-es, we know why you're kept out of the matches, old fellow," murmured Wilkins. "You'd get such a heap of goals—for the other side!" he added to himself.

"I'm not standing it any longer!" said Grundy.

"Now I've got the power in my hands I'm quite justified in using it. Don't you think so?"

"Ye-es. Of course! But—"

"I've made up my mind," said Grundy. "I thought it out while we were in the theatre. I feel it's my duty, for the sake of the school."

Wilkins gave Gunn a helpless look. Grundy was so evidently in earnest that it was impossible to suppose that he was joking. The only possible conclusion was that he was insane.

"I say, it's past tea-time, old chap," said Wilkins. "Let's get home. The car's waiting, too."

"Tea! Blow tea! I've no time for tea!"

"But the car!"

"Hang the car!"

"I—I say, it costs money, you know!"

"Money!" Grundy chuckled. "What does that matter? Why, if I choose to be dishonest, I could be a millionaire! I could walk into the bank over there, and make the manager hand me out all the money there is in the bank!"

"C-could you?" gasped Wilkins.

"Certainly! Not this evening, perhaps, but next week at the latest. Not that I am going to do anything of the kind, of course. Even with irresistible power in my hands, I shall always be careful to use it with strict honour and integrity."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Later on," said Grundy, "you'll be astonished."

Wilkins and Gunn were astonished now. They could not possibly be more astonished later on than they were now.

"Look here, let's go home to tea, there's a good chap!" said Gunn.

"You can go home to tea," said Grundy; "I've got business here."

"Bub-bub-business?"

"Yes. I'll tell you afterwards; no time now. You run along! I'll be back by calling-over, I expect."

"I say, if you're not, Railton will rag you, you know."

Grundy laughed.

"Railton! Who cares for Railton?"

"Well, he's our Housemaster, you know!"

"Housemaster be blowed! Next week I'll make Railton crawl at my feet, if I like!"

"You'll mum-mum-make Railton crawl at your feet?" stammered Wilkins.

"Yes, if I like—and the Head, too!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"You buzz off!" said Grundy. "I'm busy now! Good-bye for the present!"

"Here, I say!" Wilkins caught Grundy's arm as he was striding away. "Grundy, old chap"—Wilkins was almost tearful in his earnestness—"do come home! You're not safe here by yourself!"

"Let me go, you ass!"

"I'm not going to let you go!" said Wilkins. "You're not going to stay out alone in that state! Take his arm, Gunny!"

"You silly asses! What are you up to?" roared Grundy, as his alarmed chums grasped him by either arm. "Leggo! Do you hear?"

"Come home, old fellow!"

"Will you let me go?" bellowed Grundy.

"No, we won't!" said Wilkins desperately. "We're your pals, and we're going to look after you! Come on!"

"Yes; come on, Grundy— Yaroooh!"

Grundy struggled violently. His fist came into Gunn's chest, and Gunn sat down on the pavement. Then Grundy grasped Wilkins, and bumped him down beside Gunn.

(Continued on page 12.)

LAUGH THESE OFF!



—with Monty Lowther.

Hallo, Everybody! Herries has just played over his new song hit—his own composition. Hit is the word. It very nearly left a scar.

A reader inquires how he can avoid being a bore. Easy. Just praise the person to whom you happen to be talking.

"Ice Skating All The Rage." Yes, we noticed Knox of the Sixth seemed in a bit of a rage after slipping over fourteen times at the Wayland Ice Rink.

Blake inquires, what are those folk called who keep on talking when people aren't interested? I know that one. Schoolmasters!

An innovation in a London club is a loud-speaker, suspended from the ceiling. This should appeal to listeners who like their wireless programmes a little over other people's heads.

A piece of dry toast will prevent sea sickness, Figgins tells me. So will a piece of dry land.

Rare Old Scottish Saying: "Keep the Change."

"Longer Dog Races," we read. A Derby for dachshunds?

A reader tells me he played all the jazz tune successes of the past three years through in twenty-four hours. Little man, you had a busy day!

I hear police are now waging war on crooks from aeroplanes. Coppers from heaven.

News: A part of the ceiling fell on a comedian at the Wayland Hippodrome. He really did "bring down the house."

Then there was the crystal gazer who told the plain clothes policeman that he would meet royalty. But it was the crystal gazer who was "presented at court"!

D'Arcy says it must be rather thrilling to be a spy. The spy-ee of life?

£5,000 damages was awarded a Wayland resident for a blow on the head. A lump sum!

Enjoy yourselves, chums!

"You silly asses!" he said witheringly. "If you weren't pals of mine, I'd jolly well crack your heads together! Shut up, and go home!"

Grundy strode away. Wilkins and Gunn sat on the pavement, and looked at one another hopelessly.

"We've done our best!" gasped Wilkins. "Let's get home, Gussy! I—I wonder whether we'd better tell Railton?"

"Who'd have thought it would come to this?" groaned Gunn. "I—I hoped he was only spoofing at first. But he's mad—stark, staring, raving mad! Violent, too!"

The two Shell fellows, very uneasy about what might happen to Grundy, returned to the car, and drove home to St. Jim's.

They were in a state of alarm and disquietude. Anything might happen to a fellow in Grundy's mental state. They hoped—though it was a faint hope—that when he reappeared at St. Jim's he would be in his normal state.

Grundy's chums looked so worried and troubled when they came into the School House that their looks attracted attention at once.

Tom Merry & Co., as a matter of fact, were waiting for them, and they bore down on Wilkins and Gunn at once.

"Hasn't Grundy come in with you?" asked Tom.

"Bai Jove! Where's Gwunday?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"He's staying at Wayland!" groaned Wilkins. "He's potty!"

"Yaas, wathah! I noticed that!"

"You shouldn't have left him there by himself," said Blake anxiously. "I can't help thinking he's a bit queer in the head!"

"A bit queer?" said Gunn. "He's stark mad—almost raving! He pitched into us because we wanted to bring him home! He's as mad as a hatter! He said if Railton ragged him for missing call-over, he would make Railton crawl at his feet!"

"And the Head, too?" gasped Wilkins.

"G'weat Scott!"

"Crawl at his feet!" ejaculated Manners.

"C'rawl at his feet, bai Jove! That's pwoof, deah boys!"

"What on earth's come over him?" said Tom Merry. "He was always a silly ass, but I never thought he was potty!"

"He says he's got business in Wayland," said Wilkins. "I only hope he won't chuck himself under a railway train, or anything like that! We tried to get him home, and he became fearfully violent."

"Raging!" said Gunn.

"Bai Jove! The Housemastah ought to be told," said Arthur Augustus. "The poor chap ought to be placed undah westwaint!"

"Sure he wasn't spoofing and pulling your leg?" asked Monty Lowther.

"He was in earnest. I know that. He's mad—as mad as a hatter, or jolly nearly!"

"Well, my hat! What can he be up to now?"

"Goodness knows! Perhaps the police will notice him and take him in charge. I hope so!"

Tom Merry wrinkled his brow.

"If he's really potty, the Housemaster ought to know," he said. "But he may be playing some fatheaded joke. We'll wait for him to come in and keep an eye on him. Poor old Grundy!"

"He was a decent chap in his way," said Wilkins. "He can't help being an idiot. I'm awfully sorry it's come to this. We shall miss

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him when he's taken away to Colney Hatch! It's really rotten!"

Wilkins and Gunn went to their study for tea; but—to their credit, be it said—their appetites were actually impaired by their anxiety for George Alfred Grundy.

CHAPTER 6.

Taking Grundy In!

GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY, little dreaming of the anxious perturbation of mind he was causing in the School House at St. Jim's, was proceeding, meanwhile, about his business in Wayland. While his chums were anxiously pondering upon his probable fate, Grundy was ascending the stairs of a shabby lodging-house in River Street in Wayland.

He reached a door numbered "24," and knocked.

"Come in!" came a voice from the interior.

Grundy opened the door. He stepped into a little bed-sitting-room. A little skinny gentleman with a goaty beard rose from a rickety armchair to greet him, and took a pipe from his mouth. He was the hypnotist of the Wayland Empire—Dr. Cornelius K. Hunk. He looked slightly surprised at the sight of the Shell fellow of St. Jim's.

"Excuse me," said Grundy; "I've called on business."

"Sartingly," said the doctor. "Take a seat."

Grundy took a seat.

"I saw your show at the Empire this afternoon, sir," he said. "It was great."

Dr. Hunk smiled genially.

"I guess I've knocked them with my show," he remarked. "Nothing of the kind seen in this benighted town like that before, I reckon."

"It was great," said Grundy. "I asked them at the stage door for your address, sir. They gave it to me. You don't mind my calling?"

"Not at all. What can I do for you?"

"Do you ever take pupils?"

"Pupils!"

"Yes; to teach hypnotism."

Dr. Hunk stared at Grundy blankly for a moment. But he was not taken at a loss. The American gentleman was always open to do business, or probably to "do" anybody. He nodded quickly.

"Sartingly!" he replied.

Grundy brightened up.

"That's why I called," he said. "I want to learn your methods. I could see that the whole thing was really genuine. Can it be taught?"

"I guess so."

"And you'll teach me?"

"Yep. If you can pony up the spondulics."

"The—the what?"

"My fees," explained the doctor, "are rather high. Hypnotism is a rare art. Very careful instruction is needed. Of course, everybody ain't fitted to learn it, but you, I should say, are the very galoot. Mind, hypnotists are born, not made. It can't be taught to anybody who isn't fitted by Nature for the part."

"Just what I thought," said Grundy eagerly. "It struck me while I was watching you at the Empire. A hypnotist needs a strong will."

"Yep!"

"Then I think I'm the very chap," said Grundy. "What do you think?"

"I should have to put you to the test, young

gentleman," said the doctor, eyeing George Alfred Grundy very narrowly.

"You want to put me under the fluence?"

"N-no," said the doctor hastily. "What I mean is, a galoot can't be a hypnotist, unless—unless he has such a strong will that he can resist the influence himself—see? If you can resist the hypnotic influence, you are cut out for a hypnotist—not otherwise. If you can't resist it, I should simply be wasting my time and your money in teaching you."

"Oh!" said Grundy, a little dismayed. "Then if you can put the fluence on me, I'm no good as a hypnotist myself?"

"Correct."

"It's a question, then, whether my personality is strong enough to resist?" said Grundy thoughtfully.

"That's it in a nutshell. If your personality is strong enough to resist the influence, then it's strong enough to put the fluence on others. Then it becomes simply a matter of teaching you the passes."

"I—I see."

"I think you're the right sort," continued the doctor. "You have, what we call in the profession, the hypnotic eye."

"Have I really?" ejaculated Grundy, greatly flattered.

"Yep. Of course, as you are a stranger to me, I know nothing of your characteristics, but I should say that you are a young gentleman with an iron will and a strong personality. Is that correct?"

"That's me exactly," said the delighted Grundy.

"Then I guess it's a cinch," said Dr. Hunk. "But we'll put it to the test. Stand up."

Grundy stood up. The doctor looked Grundy straight in the eyes.

"Now, summon up all your will power to resist," said the doctor. "Exert every ounce of your—your personality. Say to yourself that you will not yield to the fluence. Stick to it. Now!"

Dr. Hunk proceeded to make mysterious passes before Grundy's face with his skinny, clawlike hands. The Shell fellow stood like a rock. He summoned all his determination to resist the influence. To his unbounded delight, he found that he resisted it with perfect ease. The steady stare of the doctor's eyes, the weird waving of his bony hand, had not the slightest effect upon him.

"Feel it coming on?" asked the doctor at last.

Grundy shook his head.

"Not the slightest."

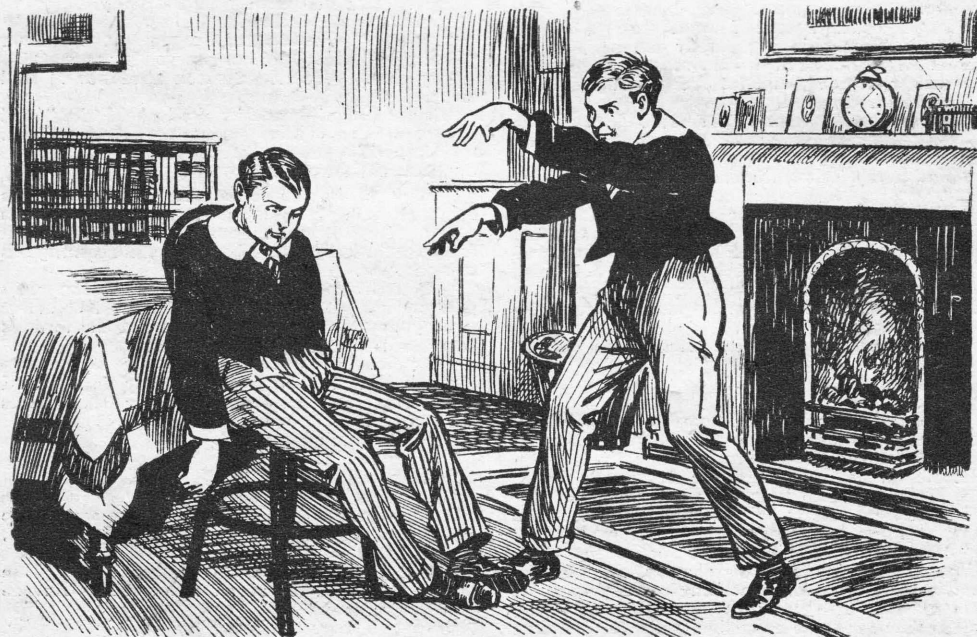
"By hookey!" exclaimed the doctor, in great admiration. "You're a splendid subject—simply splendid! Gad, what a—a personality! What a will! Young gentleman, if you take up hypnotism seriously, you will become greater than I am myself. Your power over others will be unlimited."

"By gum!" said Grundy.

"You are the first pupil, sir, I have had who has shown such marvellous powers of resistance," said the doctor. "You must have an iron will."

"I think I have," said Grundy. "Then you will teach me the passes?"

"Sartingly! One moment, though. It must be understood that if I pass on my own marvellous



Grundy went on making passes, faster and faster, till his arms ached. Levison's eyes closed. "Levison, your name is Dr. Holmes," said the would-be hypnotist. "Yes," murmured Levison. "I'm Head of St. Jim's."

powers to you, you will not start in opposition to me," said Dr. Hunk, very seriously. "Mind, I do not conceal that you will be able to equal my show if you choose—perhaps excel it. But you must promise not to give any public performances for the space of six months. By that time my tour will be completed, and I shall have returned to the Yewnited States. After that you will be free to do as you please. Is it a go?"

"Certainly!" said Grundy, at once. "I wasn't thinking of giving any public performances. I want to become a hypnotist for private reasons of my own. I promise."

"Good enough! I usually charge one guinea a lesson—"

Grundy's face fell a little. He had plenty of money, certainly; but guinea lessons would put a heavy strain on his finances. His expression did not escape the eagle eye of the American gentleman.

"That is my usual charge," continued the doctor calmly. "But when I come upon a specially promising pupil, there are other considerations. You, sir, would do me honour as a pupil. To you, my charge would be reduced one-half."

"I say, that's awfully good of you!" said Grundy gratefully. "If you could manage it half-a-guinea a time—"

The doctor waved his hand airily.

"Money is little to me," he said. "Consider the power in my hands! With my hypnotic powers, I could force any millionaire to hand me a cheque for a million dollars, if—if I chose. I guess, sir, that it's a fortunate thing that I was brought up on lines of the strictest integrity; fortunate for the world at large, sir. The same power will be in your hands, when—when your lessons are completed. Naturally, I rely upon you to follow my example, and use your power only for—noble purposes."

"That's exactly what I want to do," said Grundy. "I'm thinking chiefly of the good of the school I belong to. I want to influence fellows for their own good, and for the general good."

The doctor coughed.

"A very noble purpose," he said; "very noble indeed! You are a young gentleman after my own heart!"

"How many lessons do you think I should need, sir?"

"That depends on your progress. I am in Wayland for a week. By the end of that time, I have no doubt, you will have made good progress. Perhaps you will have fully developed your latent powers. If not, I shall leave you complete instructions for subsequent practice at—a nominal charge."

"Could you give me the first lesson now?" asked Grundy eagerly.

"Sartingly!"

"I am ready!"

Dr. Hunk proceeded to impart his valuable instruction. In the Form-room at St. Jim's, Grundy was not an apt pupil. He had sometimes made Mr. Linton feel as if life was not worth living. But his keenness to learn now was remarkable.

He imitated the mysterious passes with sedulous care, and for ten minutes he was very busy.

"Splendid!" exclaimed the doctor at last. "You are making progress already. This is the first lesson. Keep on practising those passes. It is a good idea to practise upon a dog or a cat, as—as they are more amenable to the fluence than human beings. But, of course, Rome was not built in a day. You are a born hypnotist; not the slightest doubt about that. Half-a-guinea, please!"

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Grundy handed over a ten-shilling note and a sixpence very cheerfully. Never had he paid out money more cheerfully. And never, probably, had the worthy doctor made it so easily.

"I can give you your next lesson to-morrow at the same hour," said the doctor. "Let me see, your name is—"

"Grundy—George Alfred Grundy!"

"I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Master Grundy! This is a great pleasure to me! Good-evening!"

The doctor shook hands very heartily with George Alfred Grundy.

Grundy departed as if he were walking on air. When the door closed upon him the doctor winked one eye at the ceiling, and smiled.

"Waal I swow!" he ejaculated.

Grundy walked home to St. Jim's in great spirits. The tremendous power he was shortly to wield dazzled him. The captaincy of the junior eleven was in his grasp; indeed, he could have made himself Head of St. Jim's if he had liked—after a few more lessons! It was tremendous—almost unnerving! But Grundy was a good-hearted fellow, and he resolved manfully that he would never use his tremendous powers for any but the very noblest purposes.

CHAPTER 7.

Not a Lunatic!

"HERE he is!"

It was quite a chorus.

Grundy looked surprised. He had reached the gates of St. Jim's, fortunately, before locking up. He found a dozen fellows, at least, waiting for him there.

"So you've got back!" said Tom Merry.

"Eh? Yes, of course!" said Grundy.

"How are you feeling, old chap?"

"Feeling?" said Grundy, in astonishment.

"Feeling all right! What are you getting at?"

"By gum! He doesn't look mad now!" said Herries.

"Might be quite sane by the look of him," said Blake, after a critical survey of George Alfred.

"Perhaps it's passed off."

"Poor old Gwunday!"

George Alfred stared at the juniors, and his brows knitted. He could only suppose that it was a rag. He was quite unaware of the fears and doubts entertained by the juniors concerning his mental state.

"Oh, don't be funny!" he said. "You can't pull my leg, you know! You fellows had better mind your eye! How would you like me to duck your heads in the fountain—what?"

"Bai Jove!"

"I could if I liked," said Grundy darkly. "I could make you start punching one another's noses if I liked. My power is irresistible."

"He's beginning again!"

"There he goes!"

"Better tell Railton!"

"He wants a strait-waistcoat!"

Grundy snorted and strode away across the dusky quadrangle. The juniors looked after him, and looked at one another.

"Well, he's fairly off his rocker!" said Tom Merry. "No doubt at all about that. But he seems calm now."

"Suppose he gets violent?" said Digby uneasily.

"Then we shall have to collar him and hold him down and call the Housemaster," said Tom. "But give him a chance. It seems to be more idiocy than madness upon the whole."

CHRISTMAS IN YOUR STAMP ALBUM

How the spirit of Yuletide generosity has found its way into your album.



One of the earliest Christmas stamps of Luxembourg.

THE Christmas spirit of generosity and good will has invaded even the stamp album.

Every Christmas for some years past now certain countries have issued special stamps, a premium on whose sale helps deserving charities.

Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, and Switzerland are the most consistent Christmas supporters in this way, and mighty interesting and beautiful some of their efforts have been—so interesting, indeed, especially in the case of the second and fourth countries, that they deserve special articles to themselves. So let's kick off this week with Holland.

HOLLAND'S YULETIDE STAMPS.

Her first Yuletide specimens appeared as far back as 1906, and were sold to help the Amsterdam Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

Seventeen years passed before this Christmas experiment was repeated. Then, in 1923, the Society for the Benefit of Poor Artists was chosen to receive the profits from the new stamps, and, appropriately enough, Jan Toorop, one of Holland's leading artists of the time, was called in to design them. They depicted rather queer-looking figures doling out "pennies" to the poor.

Next year, 1924, saw the first of Holland's Christmas "children's" stamps. They showed a child's head supported by guardian angels.

Some of the loveliest and most interesting Yuletide stamps of the Land of Dykes were issued in the next three Christmases. In all, there were eleven different stamps—one for each of the eleven provinces of Holland, whose arms are featured, together with some other appropriate design.

In the 1925 series, the 2c. + 2c. showed the arms of North Brabant, beneath which are a pair of lilies. These latter commemorate a legendary heroine, Genevieve of Brabant, who was supposed to have been imprisoned for six years in a cave in the Ardennes.



This Dutch stamp commemorates the Zeelanders' endless fight with the sea.

On the 7½c. + 3½c. we see the arms of Gelderland, supported by a medlar blossom—the emblem of the Earls of Gelderland. The rose symbol and arms of South Holland are the subject of the 10c. + 2½c., the highest value of this set.

THE CRYSTAL ERROR.

In the lowest value of the 1926 issue, the 2c. + 2c., we come across the famous error—already referred to in these columns—of the incorrect drawing of a snow-crystal. The stamp specimen is shown with eight arms, whereas, in Nature, a crystal never has more than six radii. This stamp's subject is the Province of Utrecht. From time immemorial, the people of Zeeland have been fighting to keep the sea back. This province's arms, illustrated on the 5c. + 3c., depict a lion fighting against the waves, and underneath we see a large wave stemmed by seaweed.

Oranges, the emblem of the House of Orange, the Dutch Royal Family's name, are a feature of the 10c. + 3c., which is devoted to North Holland.

The leaves of a water lily, unique in stamp illustration, appear on the 15c. + 3c., dealing with Friesland. The leaves come from the ancient flag of the province, so much of which adjoins the sea.

Similar to many parts of Scotland, the province of Drenthe is carpeted with heather. Accordingly, heath bells appear on the 2c. + 2c. of the 1927 series. Grass and buttercups are a feature of the 5c. + 3c., in token of Groningen's importance as an agricultural centre; while fires support the arms of Limburg on the 7½c. + 3½c.—a reminder of this province's flourishing coal-mines. Finally, on the 15c. + 3c. we see the arms of Overijssel, with bulrushes and running water.

Most of the Dutch Christmas issues since then have had "child" subjects.

"Sort of wandering in his mind," agreed Lowther. "What can have put these queer ideas into his head, I wonder?"

"Goodness knows!"

The juniors followed George Alfred to the School House. Grundy went up directly to his study.

Wilkins and Gunn were there, and they had finished tea and were beginning their preparation. They exchanged a quick glance as Grundy came in, and smiled at him feebly. They had agreed that, so long as Grundy did not become violent, he was to be humoured, and, if possible, persuaded out of his curious hallucinations. But Wilkins kept a cricket stump near him, and Gunn picked up the poker in a careless sort of way. They meant to be prepared for all eventualities. It was no joke to be shut up in a study with a lunatic.

"Had tea?" asked Grundy cheerily, in quite his old manner.

"Yes; but we've left you some," said Wilkins, reassured a little. "I'll get it out for you, old man."

"Thanks! I'm jolly sharp set."

Wilkins and Gunn proceeded to get the provisions out of the study cupboard. Grundy threw himself into the armchair. He was tired.

"Wilkins!" he rapped out suddenly.

"Ye-es," said Wilkins, with a start.

"What the dickens are you doing with that cricket stump?"

"This—er—cricket stump?" stammered Wilkins.

"Yes; not going to play cricket at this time of the year, I suppose?" said Grundy sarcastically.

"N-no!"

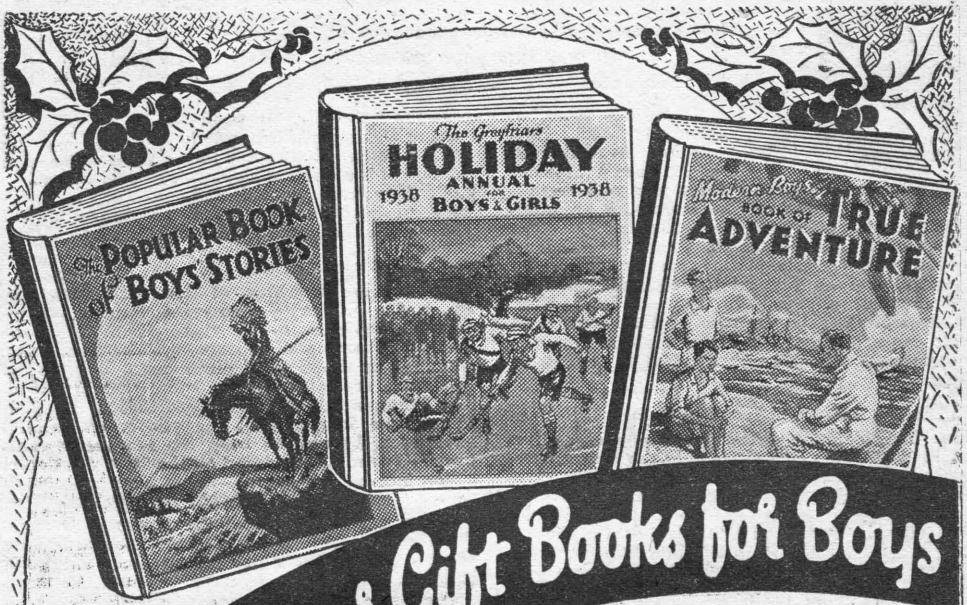
"And what in thunder are you carrying the poker about for, Gunny?"

"The—the poker?"

(Continued on page 17.)

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A volume of humorous and thrilling adventure stories. Hundred and ninety pages of entertainment: stories by famous authors of boys' literature. **2/6**

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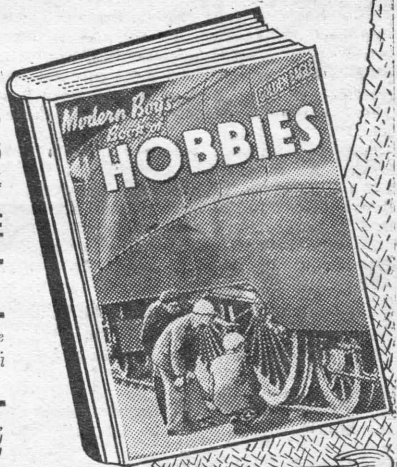
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"Yes; what's the little game? Have you fellows gone potty?"

Wilkins and Gunn exchanged a hopeless glance. They knew that it was a proof of insanity to suspect insanity in others, Grundy was evidently far gone.

"I—I was going to—stir the fire!" stammered Gunn.

"Well, stir it, then, and don't be an ass," said Grundy irritably. "Put the poker in the fender, can't you?"

"Ye-es! Certainly!"

Gunn stirred the fire, and put down the poker—as far as possible from Grundy. Wilkins slipped the cricket stump under his arm. He was determined not to part with it. He felt that he might need it at any moment now.

"Pile in, Grundy!" said Wilkins. "You must be hungry."

"Come here a minute, Wilkins!" said Grundy.

"Eh? What for?"

"Sit on that chair, facing me, will you?"

"Oh scissors!"

"Can't you do as I ask you, you ass?"

"Yes. All right!"

Grundy was showing signs of excitement again. Wilkins dropped into the chair facing him, still with the cricket stump handy. He would not have relinquished it at that moment for untold gold.

"Look me in the eyes."

"Ye-es. Stir the fire, Gunny, old chap!"

Gunn understood that skilful hint. He promptly repossessed himself of the poker and stood in readiness. But Grundy was not heeding him. He fixed his eyes upon the startled orbs of Wilkins and waved his large hands in the air before the alarmed face of his studymate.

Wilkins watched him as if frozen. At any moment now he expected Grundy to spring upon him like a tiger. But the cricket stump and poker were ready.

"Do you feel a sort of drowsiness coming on, Wilkins?" asked Grundy.

"N-no!"

"Sure?"

"Yes, quite sure!"

"Not a sort of sensation of floating on air?"

"Oh crumbs! No!"

Grundy snorted impatiently.

"Oh, you're a rotten subject! You come here, Gunn! Don't bring that poker, you fathead! What on earth do you keep carrying the poker about for? Sit there! Look me in the eyes!"

"Oh, this is awful!" groaned Gunn. "I—I can't stand it, Wilky! I'm off!"

"Where are you going?" roared Grundy, as Gunn made for the door. "Come back, you ass! Sit down! I'm going to put the fluence on!"

"The—the what?"

"The fluence! What the dickens do you think I was doing?"

Gunn stared at Grundy blankly.

"The—the—the fluence?" he stammered.

"Of course! I'm a hypnotist!"

"A—a—a what?" yelled Gunn and Wilkins together.

"A hypnotist! Like that American chap we saw at the Empire to-day. I'm going to him for lessons and learning the passes. He says I'm a born hypnotist, so he's letting me have the lessons extra cheap—only half-a-guinea a time. I've had the first lesson this afternoon. In a short time I shall be irresistible—monarch of all I survey, you know! I'm going to practise on you chaps!"

"Oh, my hat! Then—then you're not mad!" gasped Wilkins.

"Mad!" ejaculated Grundy.

"We—we thought you were mad, of course," said Gunn. "You've been talking out of your hat just like a madman, you know."

"Why, you silly asses—"

"A hypnotist!" shrieked Wilkins. "Oh, my hat! I'm jolly glad you're not mad, Grundy, old man, but— Ha, ha, ha!"

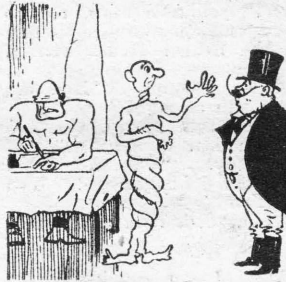
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gunn.

Grundy jumped up wrathfully.

"You silly, cackling asses! What are you gurgling at? I'm a born hypnotist, I tell you. With my iron will and strong personality, I'm exactly fitted for it. Dr. Hunk said so."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm going to hypnotise Tom Merry and make him retire from the junior eleven in my favour. I'll hypnotise the whole footer committee, if necessary. And if I ever have any more rot



India-rubber Man: "I'm quitting, boss. Every time the Strong Man writes a letter he wants to use me to rub out the mistakes with!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to B. Cooper, 1, Waterloo Road, Burslem, Staffs.

from Railton, I'll hypnotise him, and make him cane himself, by gum!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?"

But Wilkins and Gunn were in no condition to explain what they were cackling at. The poker and the stump had crashed to the floor, and Wilkins and Gunn were doubled up with mirth. The stump and the poker were not needed after all. Grundy wasn't mad. He was only playing the "giddy ox," as usual. He was famous for it—and he was only going a little further this time, that was all.

The idea of Grundy hypnotising the junior football committee doubled up his studymates. They shrieked.

Grundy glared at them in great wrath. There was, so far as he could see, nothing whatever to laugh at. Indeed, such tremendous power, carrying with it a tremendous responsibility, was a very serious matter. How the situation could possibly appear comic to Wilkins and Gunn was a mystery. But it did! They were shrieking like hyenas.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Oh, my ribs! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grundy, old man—ha, ha, ha!—don't! You're too funny to live, Grundy! Ha, ha, ha!"

That was too much. Grundy made a jump for the cricket stump.

Wilkins and Gunn rushed out of the study, still shrieking.

CHAPTER 8.

Grundy's Latest!

"WESCUE, deah boys!"
 "Pile in!"
 "Rescue!"

In the Shell passage Tom Merry & Co. had gathered. They were very uneasy as to what might happen in Study No. 3. They were ready at a moment's notice to rush to the rescue of Wilkins and Gunn.

When the study door was flung open, and the two Shell fellows staggered forth shrieking and gasping, and Grundy after them with a cricket stump brandished in his hand, they naturally thought that the hour had come.

There was a rush to the rescue at once.

Grundy was seized on all sides, the stump wrenched away, and he was pinned against the wall in the grip of a dozen hands.

"Got him!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Hold him!" panted Tom Merry.

"Leggo!" roared Grundy furiously. "Wharrer you at? What's the game?"

"Call Railton, somebody!"

"Don't call Railton!" yelled Wilkins, as two or three juniors were cutting away down the passage to summon the School House master. "It's all right!"

"Right as rain!" gasped Gunn. "He's not mad! Only fatheaded. It's all right!"

"Not mad!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"N-no—I mean, not madder than usual."

"Mad!" yelled Grundy. "I'll show you wheeher I'm mad or not! Lemme go! You silly cuckoos, leggo! Yow!"

"If he's not mad, what does it mean, then?" demanded Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you duffahs, I am convinced that he is vewy mad. Hold him till the Housemastah comes! He must see a doctor!"

"Ha, ha, ha! It's all right!" shrieked Wilkins. "Only Grundy playing the giddy ox. He's taking up hypnotism."

"Wha-a-at!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Hypnotism!"

The juniors released Grundy in sheer astonishment. Grundy set his collar straight and smoothed his ruffled hair and snorted.

Gunn and Wilkins leaned feebly on the wall. They were gasping.

"Yes—hypnotism!" moaned Wilkins. "Like that American spoofer at the Empire. Grundy thinks he can hypnotise."

"Oh cwumbs!"

"He's going to hypnotise everybody, from the Head downwards!" gasped Gunn. "He could make himself King of the Cannibal Islands if he liked. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's going to hypnotise the football committee—put 'em all under the giddy fluce—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The passage rang with merriment. It was a relief to know that George Alfred was not, after all, mad. But the announcement that he was starting in life as a hypnotist took the School House by storm. The juniors howled and wept with merriment.

"You can cackle!" roared the wrathful Grundy.

"Thanks—we will!" gasped Blake. "Ha, ha, ha!"

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"Yow-ow-ow!" roared the peace-making Skimpole as he got on his ear. "Ow-wow! Yow!" Getting between two

"Bai Jove! Oh, you funny ass, Gwunday!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "You were twyin' to hypnotise me, I suppose, and I thought you were potty! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle! You'll cackle another way when I put the fluce on you!" roared Grundy. "I'm a born hypnotist—"

"A born idiot, you mean!" grinned Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dr. Hunk told me so himself. He told me I shall be a better hypnotist than he is!" said Grundy crushingly.

"Well, that might not be difficult!" chuckled Lowther. "He can't hypnotise worth a cent! He's a spoofer—"

"He's been paying that American swindler money for lessons!" gasped Wilkins. "The man ought to be locked up for swindling him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He wasn't swindling me, you fathead!" yelled Grundy. "Do I look like a fellow to be swindled? He knew me at a glance as a born hypnotist; he said so. That's why he took me as a pupil at half-price. And he proved it."

"Proved it!" exclaimed Tom Merry, wiping his eyes. "Did he prove that he was a hypnotist?"

"He proved it at the Empire. You saw him hypnotise the nigger—"

"Spooof, you ass!" roared Lowther.

"What about that fat chap, Pipkin, then?" demanded Grundy. "You saw him put the fluce on Pipkin—a perfect stranger, and make him believe that he was Winston Churchill?"

"Spooof! Oh, you duffer!" said Lowther.



received Grundy's drive in the ribs and Gore's fist crashed angry and excited combatants was a dangerous pastime!

"That man was put in the audience ready. That's why the spoofer selected him."

"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Tom Merry, with a nod. "Now I come to think of it, it's jolly likely."

"What utter rot," said Grundy contemptuously. "If you fellows can't believe the evidence of your own eyes, it's no good talking to you. Besides, the doctor proved that I was a hypnotist when I called on him."

"Did he put the fluence on you?" demanded Manners. "If he did, that's a proof that he can do it, of course."

"Of course he didn't. He proved that I was a hypnotist myself, by my power to resist the fluence."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy's statement had the effect of doubling up the juniors again. Grundy's power to resist a non-existent fluence proved, to his satisfaction, that he was a born hypnotist. He was not likely to prove it to the satisfaction of anybody else. Grundy was not likely to believe that the cunning American had deliberately taken him in and swindled him. He was quite satisfied that there did not exist in the wide world a man keen enough to take him in.

Grundy stared angrily at the howling juniors. It was evident that he would never be taken seriously as a hypnotist—until he put the fluence on somebody. Grundy snorted and went back to his study and slammed the door.

He left Tom Merry & Co. weeping.

"Well, this takes the cake!" gasped Lowther.

"I thought I knew every kind of an idiot Grundy was. But he's always surprising us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Within ten minutes all the Lower School knew of George Alfred's new departure, and the news was greeted with howls of laughter on all sides.

That Grundy was almost every conceivable kind of a fathead was already known to all St. Jim's; but this, as Figgins remarked, put the lid on. Grundy had "outgrundied" himself, so to speak.

When Wilkins and Gunn came back to Study No. 3 to get on with their preparation, they tried to look serious, but it was difficult.

Grundy greeted them with a portentous frown. He was annoyed and exasperated.

"Finished your cackle?" he asked sarcastically.

"Ha, ha, ha! I mean, yes!" said Wilkins.

"Well, now you can clear out," said Grundy.

"Eh! What?"

"Clear out!" said Grundy firmly. "I'm not having cackling idiots in my study—fellows who cast doubt on my word, too. I give you one minute to get your stuff out of my study."

"Your study!" shouted Wilkins. "Why, it was my study before you came here."

"No good jawing—you're going!" Grundy rose and pushed back his cuffs. "You can go quietly, or you can scrap first. I don't mind."

"Oh my hat!" said Gunn.

Grundy was always a high-handed fellow. He had a terrific drive, and he was always ready to bestow it upon anybody who contradicted his sovereign will. And Grundy was evidently very ratty now. He meant business.

"L-look here," said Wilkins. "We're not going to be turned out of our own study. Don't be an ass."

"Where will you have it?" asked Grundy.

Wilkins dodged round the table.

"Look here—"

"I'm not having fellows in my study who don't back me up. Why, you silly idiots," said Grundy, with ineffable scorn, "when I've had a bit more practice with the doctor, I shall be cock of the school. This study will be top study. I'll make the prefects kowtow to us, and the Housemaster, too, by Jove! That's what you're missing. We shall be jolly well able to do as we like. I'll hypnotise the Form-master, and we'll make him excuse us prep. I'll put the fluence on the Head whenever we want an extra holiday."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's what you're missing," roared Grundy. "And now you can jolly well miss it. Out you go!"

"I—I say," stammered Wilkins, closing one eye at Gunn, "on the whole, Grundy, I think it's a jolly good idea. Of course, you ought to know whether you're a born idiot—I mean hypnotist—or not. We'll take your word for it."

"Certainly," said Gunn, taking his cue from Wilkins. "After all, why couldn't Grundy be a hypnotist? I dare say he can hypnotise as well as he can play footer."

"Quite as well," said Wilkins, with sincere conviction.

Grundy's face relaxed.

"Well, if you're going to take it sensibly, all right," he said. "I don't want to be rusty. If we three stick together, we shall be monarchs of all we survey. We can run the whole blessed School House just as we please—when I've had a bit more practice. I'm going to have a jolly good time, I can tell you, and I don't want to leave my pals out of it."

"Thanks!" gasped Wilkins.
 "Awfully good of you, Grundy," said Gunn, in a suffocated voice.

And harmony having been restored in Study No. 3, the three sat down to their preparation, which was only interrupted from time to time by surreptitious attempts on the part of Grundy to put the fluence on his studymates—attempts which had no success whatever.

CHAPTER 9. Success at Last!

DURING the next few days, Grundy of the Shell was very busy.

All the Lower School had cackled joyously over Grundy's new departure, and for a day or two many humorous inquiries were made as to how he was getting on. But interest in the matter petered out, and Grundy, the hypnotist, ceased to enjoy the limelight.

But Grundy was still going strong.

Every day, after lessons, he cycled over to Wayland to visit the estimable Dr. Hunk at his lodging for a new lesson. Every visit to Dr. Hunk cost him ten shillings and sixpence. Naturally the worthy doctor could afford to pull his leg ten minutes daily at that price.

Grundy had plenty of money, but half-guinea lessons came expensive. However, an urgent letter to Uncle Grundy brought him a handsome remittance, which found its way by instalments into the pockets of the astute American gentleman.

Every evening, Grundy practised in the study. Wilkins and Gunn, for the sake of peace and quietness, allowed him to practise on them at first. But, naturally, they were soon fed-up with it, and they began to have pressing engagements, which kept them away from the study.

Then Grundy practised before the looking-glass, getting the hypnotic passes into perfect working order. He was satisfied with the progress he was making. Besides, he had the doctor's professional assurance that he was getting on famously.

At every visit to Wayland the good doctor expressed unbounded admiration. He even allowed Grundy to put the fluence on him, and yielded to it helplessly. Grundy told him his name was George Washington, and then asked him what his name was, and Dr. Hunk dreamily replied that his name was George Washington—which was by no means a suitable name for Dr. Hunk.

That clear and indubitable proof of his progress delighted Grundy. If he could hypnotise a professional hypnotist, certainly his powers must be simply unlimited over others.

He came back to St. Jim's chirping with glee. He insisted upon putting Wilkins to the test; but, to his disappointment, Wilkins did not yield to the fluence as Dr. Hunk had done. More practice with those mystic passes was evidently necessary.

Wilkins and Gunn being fed-up, Grundy fell into the way of tipping fags sixpences to go under the fluence. The fags accepted the sixpences willingly enough, and grinned cheerfully while he was trying to put the fluence on. But, somehow, the fluence never got on.

It really seemed that St. Jim's fellows were somehow immune from hypnotic influence, just as if they had been inoculated for it, as Grundy remarked discontentedly.

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But George Alfred was a stickler. "Nil desperandum" was his motto. And at last came amazing success.

It came by means of Levison of the Fourth. Levison, the black sheep of the School House, had had bad luck with his favourite gee-gees. Levison was in want of tin, and he had cast about in his mind for methods of raising tin, and cast in vain. Then he thought of Grundy.

Grundy was making passes before the looking-glass in his study, when Ernest Levison looked in. He glanced round and pointed to the door.

Grundy did not like Levison, and he never had any hesitation in making known his likes and dislikes.

"Cut!" he said laconically.

"Sorry to interrupt," said Levison, stepping in. "I'm awfully interested in hypnotism, Grundy. I wondered whether I was a good subject. I thought perhaps you'd like to put the fluence on me."

Grundy smiled genially.

"Come in, old chap!" he said. "I'm glad to see that you've got more sense than the others. Sit down. Like a tart?"

"Thanks!" said Levison, helping himself.

Grundy's study was a land of plenty, but Levison had never had the run of it before.

"By the way, I wonder if you could lend me a quid—to buy a book on hypnotism?"

"You don't need to buy a book," said Grundy. "I can tell you all about it, if you're interested in the subject."

"Oh!"

"Sit there!" said Grundy. "Now fix your eyes on mine, Levison. Gaze at me."

Levison gazed at him.

Grundy proceeded to make passes before his face. For some moments Levison looked quite normal, and then his eyelids drooped sleepily.

Grundy's heart beat faster. That sleepy look coming over Levison's sharp, shrewd face was a sign that the fluence was working at last. Grundy's big hands waved like sails of a wind-mill.

"Levison."

Grundy's voice almost trembled with eagerness.

"Yes?" said Levison dreamily.

"You feel a drowsy feeling coming on?"

"Yes."

"A sort of sensation of floating into space?"

"Yes."

Grundy nearly shouted "Hurrah!" But he kept himself well in hand. He felt that it was a critical moment. Success was dawning at last, after so many efforts. He went on making passes, faster and faster, till his arms ached. Levison's eyes closed.

"Levison, your name is Dr. Holmes."

"Yes," said Levison.

"What's your name?"

"Dr. Holmes. I'm Head of St. Jim's."

Grundy chuckled with glee. At last!

"Stand up, Dr. Holmes!"

Levison stood up.

"Raise your right hand and touch your left ear," commanded Grundy.

Levison raised his right hand and touched his left ear.

"Now take up that poker. That is a stick of candy. Eat it."

Levison moved mechanically to the fender, picked up the poker, and put the clean end into his mouth.

Grundy was delighted.

"Put it down!" he commanded.

Levison put the poker down. At the word of

command he sat down again. His eyes, half-closed, looked dreamily at Grundy.

Grundy rubbed his hands.
"Right under the fluence!" he muttered.
"The slave of my will, by gad! I could make him jump out of the window, if I liked! Hallo, he's grinning! What are you grinning at, Levison?"

Levison became very grave again at once.
"Must I tell?" he asked dreamily.
"You must! You have to obey my slightest order," explained Grundy. "You are the slave of my will now. Now tell me why you grinned."

"I smiled," said Levison, in the same dreamy way—"I smiled to think of the joy I could bring into a poor and lonely home in the village if I could raise a pound from somewhere."

"My hat!" Grundy was astonished. For Levison to think of anybody but himself was extraordinary. The fluence was evidently bringing the better part of his nature to light. "What's that, Levison? You want a quid to help a poor family?"

"Yes. A sad and shadowed home, where a poor woman works hard to keep nine children. But, alas, I have no money! Where shall I find a generous friend to advance me the pound she requires to pay her rent?"

"I'll see to that," said Grundy. "I'm jolly glad to see that you've got some good in you, Levison! This isn't like you, at all. If you weren't under the fluence, I should think you were trying to spoof me. Now go to sleep."

Levison's eyes closed fast. He began to snore a little.

"Oh, good!" said Grundy, rubbing his hands. "Now wake up, Levison!"

Levison woke up.
Grundy made the passes backwards, to remove the fluence.

Levison watched him, and suddenly stood up and shook himself.

"Where am I?" he gasped.

Grundy chuckled.
"You're in my study. It's all right, old chap. You've been under the fluence."

"Under the fluence?" exclaimed Levison.

"Yes, rather. The slave of my will!"

"I—I don't remember," said Levison confusedly. "I—I remember sitting down in that chair, and you made some passes, and then—it's all blank!"

"Exactly!" agreed Grundy. "I made you think the poker was a stick of candy, and you tried to eat it."

"Did I?" ejaculated Levison.

"You did. I made you think you were Dr. Holmes, too."

"Great Scott!"

"You're a good subject," said Grundy. "You haven't a very strong will, or a determined character, you see. Now, I've got an iron will, and a very powerful personality. That makes all the difference."

"I—I say, you haven't been making me talk, and tell things, have you?" asked Levison, with a look of alarm.

"Don't you worry," said Grundy reassuringly. "I wouldn't play a mean trick like that. I intend to use my irresistible power with perfect uprightness. All you told me was about a poor woman in the village you want to help with some money. You smiled to think of the joy you could bring into a poor and lonely family. And I must say, Levison, that I'm pleased, as well as surprised, to find you thinking of poor people like that, and I'm quite willing to stand you the quid you want."

"You're awfully good!" said Levison, his eyes glistening. "I could cut down on my bike before locking-up, and—and hand it to her to pay her rent. I think I ought to tell you it's for her rent."

"You've told me already," grinned Grundy.
"Told you already? I don't remember—"

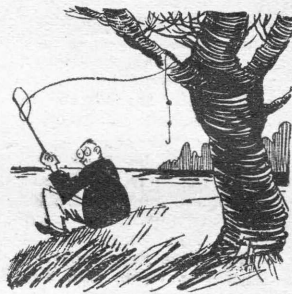
"When you were under the fluence," explained Grundy. "Here's the quid, old chap. You're quite welcome to it for a purpose like that, and I must say, Levison, I think better of you than I did."

"Thank you, Grundy!" said Levison meekly. "I hope that, in trying to model my conduct on yours, I may become more worthy of your good opinion."

"I hope so," assented Grundy, who never could see when his leg was being pulled. "Stick to that, Levison."

"I will," said Levison.
He slipped the currency note into his pocket and left the study. He closed the door very carefully after him. Then he closed one eye, and chortled.

"Lemme see! I've got time to cut down and see Joliffe," he murmured. "That's the fifteen bob



Short-sighted Angler: "I don't care if I have to wait a month—I'll get a bite!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to P. Martin, 337, Camden Road, Holloway, London.

I owe him—and five bob for a little flutter on Bonny Boy. I've got time, if I buck up. The silly idiot nearly kept me too late!"

And Levison fairly ran for his bicycle.

Grundy of the Shell, in his study, was rubbing his hands and chirruping. Success was his at last—striking, stunning success, and it only remained to put his astonishing powers to the proper use.

CHAPTER 10. Put to the Test!

TOM MERRY was alone in his study. Manners and Lowther had finished their prep, and gone along to Study No. 6, and Tom was writing out, at a great rate, fifty lines that he owed Mr. Linton. Virgil was racing off his pen, when there was a tap at the door, and it opened.

Grundy looked in with an agreeable smile. Tom waved his pen at him.

"Hook it!" he said.

"I've got something rather important—"

"Busy!"

"This won't wait," said Grundy, coming into the study. "It's a bit too important to wait!"

"I've got my lines to do!" roared the captain

of the Shell. "Don't bother now. What the dickens are you up to?"

Grundy was turning the key in the lock.

"Now we shan't be interrupted," he remarked.

Tom Merry stared at him blankly. He wondered for a moment whether Grundy was mad. Grundy came up to the study table and stared at Tom across it.

"Fix your eyes on mine," he said.

"Eh?"

"Fix your eyes on mine!" thundered Grundy. "I command you!"

"You command me?" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Yes. Obey!"

"Obey you?" stammered Tom.

"Certainly!"

Grundy began to make the magic passes across the table, and then Tom understood. Grundy was trying to hypnotise him. He burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, you funny ass!"

Grundy did not reply. His hands waved away at a terrific rate. If there was any fluence in those rapid passes, certainly Tom Merry ought to have surrendered on the spot. But he didn't. He roared.

"Don't you feel a drowsy feeling coming on?" asked Grundy anxiously.

"Ha, ha, ha! No!"

"A sort of sensation of floating away into space?"

Tom Merry shrieked.

"Oh, don't! Ha, ha, ha! Don't be funny, Grundy! You're giving me a pain!"

"That's jolly odd!" said Grundy, puzzled. "I've just done it on Levison, and he went off at once, right under the fluence."

"Ha, ha, ha! Pulling your leg, more likely!"

"It isn't so jolly easy to pull my leg!" said Grundy disdainfully. "I suppose you've got a bit stronger will than Levison, or perhaps a more powerful personality. Still, I'm going to put the fluence on. It's the House match to-morrow, and that was put off from last week, and I'm going to play. Fix your eyes on mine!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The door-handle was tried, and then a voice was heard.

"Tom Mewwy, you ass, haven't you finished your lines? The chestnuts are goin' fast. What's the door locked for?"

"I'm being hypnotised!" shrieked Tom Merry. "Grundy's hypnotising me! He's putting the giddy fluence on me!"

"Bai Jove!"

"You don't seem any good as a subject!" growled Grundy. "Perhaps I want a lot more practice, after all."

"You do—lots!" chortled Tom Merry.

Grundy snorted, and unlocked the door.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stepped into the study. He turned his eyeglass upon Grundy.

"You uttah ass, G'wunday!"

"You fix your eyes on mine!" commanded Grundy.

"G'weat Scott! Don't wave your silly hands at me like that, you widiculous ass!"

Grundy was making passes again. On the football ground Grundy always muffed a pass. Perhaps his ill-luck was sticking to him now that the passes he favoured were of the hypnotic variety. He certainly seemed to be muffing them—at all events, they had no perceptible effect whatever upon the swell of St. Jim's.

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"Don't you feel a sort of drowsy feeling coming on?" asked Grundy, in almost a pleading voice.

"You cwass ass, of course I don't!"

"Or a sensation of floating away into space?"

"Ha, ha, ha! You fwightful duffah, I don't feel anythin' of the sort!" shrieked Arthur Augustus. "I only feel that a widiculous ass is playin' the giddy ox!"

"I must have got the passes wrong somehow," said Grundy, somewhat discouraged. "It worked all right with old Hunk, and again with Levison. Yes, you can cackle, you silly chumps! You wait till I get the fluence on you, that's all!"

Grundy stamped out of the study, leaving Tom Merry and D'Arcy yelling. He slammed the door after him, and knocked at the next door and went in.

Talbot, Gore, and Skimpole were in the study at that moment.

"Hallo, Grundy!" said Talbot. "What's the joke? Fellows in the next study seem to be enjoying themselves."

"Oh, never mind those cackling duffers!" said Grundy. "Fix your eyes on mine, Talbot!"

"Certainly!" said Talbot, with a chuckle.

He guessed what was coming. Gore and Skimpole looked on in wonder as Grundy began the hypnotic passes.

"Well, of all the blithering idiots!" commented Gore. "Why don't your people have you shoved into an asylum, Grundy?"

"What very extraordinary proceedings!" said Skimpole. "Is that a new form of gymnastic drill, my dear Grundy?"

Grundy did not heed. His eyes were fixed upon Talbot's handsome, smiling face.

"Feel sort of drowsy?" he asked.

"No."

"Or a sensation of floating away into space?"

"Not in the least."

"You don't feel the fluence creeping over you?"

"Not the slightest."

"Oh, you're a rotten subject!" growled Grundy. "I'll try you, Gore. You haven't much of a personality!"

"Haven't I?" growled Gore.

"Fix your eyes on mine!"

"Go and eat coke!" said Gore. "And don't wag your silly paws at me, or I'll jolly well rap them with this ruler!"

But Grundy, unheeding the ruler, proceeded to make weird passes

Gore kept his word.

Crack!

Grundy uttered a fiendish yell, and the magic passes suddenly ceased as the ruler rapped on his knuckles. He sucked his knuckles, and glared at Gore.

"Groogh! Oh, yow! You silly beast—Yooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gore. "Try again! I'll keep it up as long as you do!"

Grundy did not try again. He made a rush at Gore instead of making an hypnotic pass. He seized the burly Shell fellow and dragged him out of his chair. His many disappointments had tried his temper, and the rap on his knuckles was the last straw. In a twinkling the two Shell fellows were rolling on the carpet, punching one another with terrific punches.

"Yow! Take that, you rotter! Yooop!"

"Yaroooooh! Take that! Groogh!"

"My dear fellows," exclaimed Skimpole, "pray do not quarrel! My dear Grundy—Gore, my dear



"Here, chuck it!" howled Wilkins; and he and Gunn dragged the warlike Grundy away from Dr. Hunk at last. "Well, perhaps he's had enough!" panted Grundy. There was no doubt about that! The doctor looked a sorry sight as he lay sprawling amid his overturned furniture!

fellow, allow me! Pray help me to separate them, Talbot! Oh crumbs! Yow-ow-ow!"

Getting between two angry and excited combatants was a dangerous pastime. The peace-making Skimmy received Grundy's celebrated drive in the ribs, and at the same time Gore's fist crashed on his ear. Skimpole crumpled up on the floor, roaring, and groping wildly for his glasses.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Bai Jove! What's the mattah?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Tom Merry looked in. Gore and Grundy were rolling over Skimpole, punching one another, and punching poor Skimmy, who was in the way. Talbot was yelling.

"Ha, ha, ha! It's Grundy hypnotising, you chaps! Lend me a hand, will you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry and Talbot and Arthur Augustus seized the combatants and wrenched them apart.

Grundy was bundled into the passage. Gore panted and mopped his nose.

"Lemme gerratt him!" shouted Grundy.

"Let him come in if he wants any more!" bellowed Gore. "I'll give him hypnotism! I'll put the fluence on him, the silly ass! Ow, my nose!"

"Keep your idiot quiet while we drag our idiot away, Talbot," said Tom Merry.

"Right-ho! Ha, ha, ha!"

Talbot closed the door and kept Gore in the study. Tom Merry and D'Arcy rushed Grundy down the passage.

Kangaroo and Glyn came to lend a hand.

George Alfred, struggling wildly and in a very untidy state, was pitched bodily into his study.

Wilkins and Gunn were working at the table

when Grundy collided with it and sent it flying. Books and papers and an inkpot mixed together on the floor, and Wilkins and Gunn bounded to their feet in great wrath.

"What the thunder—"

"That's your tame lunatic!" gasped Tom Merry. "Better put a strait-jacket on him, or tie him up. He's getting dangerous."

The door slammed, and Grundy sat up. Wilkins and Gunn looked at him as if they would eat him.

"What on earth have you been up to?" snapped Wilkins.

"Groogh! I—I've been hypnotising," stammered Grundy. "Somehow it didn't work. I don't know why. I'd swear I had the passes all right. Groogh! But it's coming—ow!—it's coming all right. Groo-ooogh!"

In Study No. 6, over the baked chestnuts, Tom Merry & Co. chuckled over Grundy's latest essay in hypnotism and its painful results. But Grundy was not doing any chuckling. He was suffering from the painful results.

CHAPTER 11.

Sticking To It!

THE next day was the date of the postponed House match, and Tom Merry & Co. were thinking chiefly of football. Grundy was thinking of football, too—and of hypnotism, as a step to footer—as *it* means to an end. Grundy felt that he had to play in that match.

Tom Merry had proved an extremely unfavourable subject. He simply declined to come under the fluence. Doubtless that would come later—

unless all George Alfred's half-guinea lessons were to be wasted. But, so far, Grundy had to confess, the junior captain of St. Jim's was not amenable to his influence. Without the fluence Tom Merry certainly would not step down and resign the captaincy to Grundy.

But something had to be done.

"There are some fellows who are subjects and some who aren't subjects," Grundy told Wilkins and Gunn. "That must be it. Frinstance, old Hunk couldn't hypnotise me, but he hypnotised that man Pipkin as easy as falling off a form, as you saw yourselves."

"Well, I've thought about that," said Gunn. "Very likely that fat fellow was one of the gang, you know—employed to have the fluence put on him."

"That's suspicious, Gunn. It shows a rather low mind to be suspicious," said Grundy crushingly.

"Oh, does it?" said Gunn, rather nettled. "Well, my opinion is that that American is an impostor and a swindler, and I believe all hypnotists are, and you can put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"It wasn't only the American," said Grundy. "But there was Levison; I hypnotised him!"

"He was pulling your leg," said Wilkins.

"If you think a fellow like Levison could take in a fellow like me, Wilkins, I can only say it shows what an ass you are."

"Oh!" said Wilkins.

"The question is what's going to be done?" said Grundy. "It's the House match this afternoon. Now, I'm determined to play in it; not for my own sake, as I've told you before, but because I think it's rotten that the best footballer in the Lower School should be left out owing to petty jealousy on the part of the footer committee. Now, I've tried Tom Merry and Talbot and D'Arcy, and they didn't come under the fluence. Then I tried Kangaroo, but he didn't go under, and Blake didn't. It's jolly odd, you know, for I'm sure I had all the passes correct, just as Dr. Hunk told me. The only thing is to go through

the whole school eleven, and among the lot I'm bound to find one who'll go under the fluence. Don't you think so?"

"Ahem!"

"You see, among eleven chaps there must be one good subject," said Grundy. "Hallo, here's Manners! Manners, old fellow!"

"Hallo!" said Manners, stopping.

"Are you in the House eleven this afternoon?"

"No; I'm going out with my camera."

"Oh, rotten!" said Grundy. "You'd be a good subject—a rather weak-minded chap like you."

"What!" roared Manners.

"Go and eat coke!" said Grundy crossly.

He walked away in search of a member of the School House junior eleven, leaving Manners staring after him wrathfully, and Wilkins and Gunn grinning.

Grundy was in a determined humour. Since the magic fluence could not make Tom Merry resign the captaincy in his favour, Grundy's idea was to put the fluence on a common or garden member of the team, and make him step out of the eleven, leaving a vacant place for the great Grundy. But all the members of the eleven that he had tried, so far, had only chortled, instead of coming under the fluence according to programme. But Grundy prided himself upon being a stickler.

Tom Merry and Monty Lowther were chatting by the football ground, where some of the fellows were punting a ball about. Grundy bore down on them. He tapped Monty Lowther on the shoulder.

"Hallo!" said Lowther cheerily. "Have you made Railton crawl at your feet, yet, old chap? Have you made the Head flog himself under the fluence?"

"I dare say I could if I liked!" said Grundy.

"Fix your eyes on mine, Lowther."

"Got any gum or sticking-plaster about you?" asked Lowther. The humorist of the Shell asked the question with perfect gravity.

Grundy, whose sense of humour was not highly developed, looked puzzled.

"I don't mean exactly fix them on mine, of course," he said. "What I mean is, look me straight in the eyes."

"Oh, I see! You don't want me to mingle mine eyebrows with thine?" asked Lowther seriously.

"No, no! Just look me straight in the eyes. That's right." And Grundy started the magic passes under Lowther's nose. Lowther regarded his large hands, as they waved, with some curiosity.

"Soap and water," he said.

"Eh—what do you mean—soap and water?"

"Aren't you showing me your hands to ask my advice about them?" said Lowther, in surprise. "Very grubby, I must say. Soap and water, dear boy. I should recommend the water hot. And plenty of soap."

"I'm making the passes, you thundering ass! Now, do you feel a drowsy feeling coming on?"

Monty Lowther closed one eye at Tom Merry, who was chuckling.

"Drowsy isn't the word," he said sleepily. "It's a sort of floating away into space."

"Oh, good!" said Grundy. "That's right. It's the fluence. Now, you're a member of the eleven, Lowther."

"Yes, my lord!"

"I'm going to take your place."

"Yes, my lord!"

"By gum, it's working like a charm!" said

HOW'S YOUR LUCK THIS WEEK?

(Continued from page 2.)

LIBRA (the Scales), Sept. 24th to Oct. 23rd.—Librans are so particular about everything, that they are in danger of seeming snobs where other people are concerned, and fuss-pots over little details. This week, they will find themselves irritated by minor events, but should seek the company of their friends. Going to a party this week? If so, you'll have a grand time.

SCORPIO (the Scorpion), Oct. 24th to Nov. 22nd.—It is hard for other people to get "under the skins" of the Scorpion type. If girls, Scorpions are especially secretive. But they make good fighters, both against human opponents and against difficulties. An eventful week for all, but especially those born in October.

SAGITTARIUS (the Archer), Nov. 23rd to Dec. 22nd.—People of this type can do almost everything moderately well. They are fairly brainy, fairly athletic, but rarely outstanding in anything. This week's prophecy from the stars tells you to take chances. Promotion of some kind is coming your way.

CAPRICORN (the Goat), Dec. 23rd to Jan. 20th.—Ambitious folk, you Capricornians, making good engineers, scientists, pilots, and business men. This week you will travel, and may have a slight illness, such as a cold. Make the most of your chances of enjoyment, for you will have many.

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Grundy. "Look at that, Tom Merry. How'd you like to be in that state—the hypnotic trance?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing to cackle at, you ass! Now I've got it right I'll put the fluence on you, too! Fix your eyes on mine!" thundered Grundy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lowther closed his eye at Tom again. The captain of the Shell suddenly ceased to laugh. His eyes half-closed.

"Got him!" chirruped Grundy. "Got the pair of them. Tom Merry!"

"Yes, my lord!" murmured Tom.

"You're resigning the captaincy of the team into my hands this afternoon."

"To hear is to obey, my lord."

"What the thump is the name of this game?" exclaimed Jack Blake, coming up with two or three juniors.

Grundy looked at them with lofty, disdainful scorn.

"They're under the fluence," he said. "I've got it right at last. Better mind your p's and q's, or I'll put you under it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll jolly soon show you," said Grundy. "Now then, Merry and Lowther, raise your right hand, clenched."

Tom Merry and Monty Lowther raised their right hand, clenched.

"Now punch each other's noses!" said Grundy triumphantly.

"I don't think!" murmured Blake.

"Do you hear me?" thundered Grundy. "Punch away! Ow—ow—yaroooh!—not my nose, you silly fatheads! Yaroooh!"

The two hypnotised juniors had punched according to order; but whether there was something wrong with the influence, or whatever might be the reason, it was Grundy they punched instead of one another. Grundy sat down with great force, and a loud yell. Then they grasped him, and went on punching, while Blake & Co. howled with laughter.

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Grundy. "Chuck it—stop it—leave off—yoop!"

"Can't, while the fluence is on," said Lowther. "You commanded us to punch, my lord, and we're bound to go on punching while the fluence lasts."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy struggled wildly to escape. He tore himself away at last.

"You silly asses! Oh dear! Keep off!" yelled Grundy, as the hypnotised juniors rushed at him. "Keep away! Oh crumbs!"

Grundy fairly ran for it. He did not stop till he was half-way across the quad. Then he looked back, panting. Tom Merry and Lowther—without a trace of the fluence now—were yelling with laughter. Grundy shook his fist at them.

"Hallo!" said Wilkins cheerily, as he joined him. "Fluence going on all right, Grundy—why, you ass—ow-ow-ow!"

Wilkins sat down in the grass as he received a shove from the indignant Grundy, and George Alfred strode away with knitted brows.

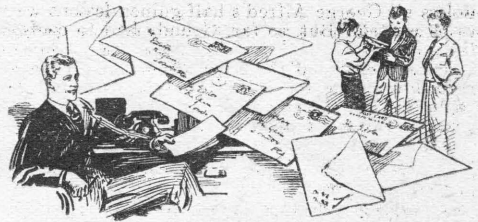
"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Wilkins.

Grundy strode away to his study. Gunn was there, and he looked curiously at George Alfred's frowning face.

"Got that place in the eleven?" he asked affably.

"So you're going to be funny, too, are you?" howled Grundy.

(Continued on the next page.)



THE EDITOR'S CHAIR.

Let the Editor be your pal. Drop him a line to-day, addressing your letters: The Editor, The GEM, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, CHUMS! Well, here we are in the new pocket size, and I am sure you will all agree that for brightness of make-up, convenience, and value for money—for the new size contains quite a lot more reading-matter than before—the present issue of the good old GEM is the best ever!

Then there is the new feature by Professor Zarro, who claims to interpret the stars—that gives you something to think about, doesn't it? Many people believe that the stars have a profound influence on our fortunes, so that it is just as well to have an expert to tell us, every week, what the indications are, isn't it? I can tell you this much, the professor states emphatically that all the signs point to the new GEM being a winner all the way—and in that I feel quite certain that he is not exaggerating.

My next duty—a very pleasant one—is to convey to you all the best wishes of my staff, the GEM authors and artists, and myself. We extend to readers all over the world, hearty greetings for

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

As I haven't too much space at my disposal, I must turn now to next week's programme. By the way, don't forget that the next number will be on sale Tuesday instead of Wednesday.

The chief feature of the programme is a humorous, long yarn telling how Bagley Trimble comes to St. Jim's. Trimble soon shows himself to be a very unpleasant specimen—fat and fatuous and a first-rate "fibber." He claims the friendship of Gussy, on the grounds of a chance meeting prior to his arrival at St. Jim's. Arthur Augustus nobly plays up—and Trimble is installed in Study No. 6. Then the trouble starts, and Blake & Co. become heartily fed-up with

"TRIMBLE THE TWISTER!"

The second item on the programme is part two of the Christmas holiday adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. The Greyfriars chums set out at midnight to round up a gang of poachers. It is a foolhardy adventure, but the juniors don't think of that until they get on the track of the poachers—and then it's a case of neck or nothing!

Professor Zarro will be in his place again to tell readers how their luck stands, as read from the stars. Our stamp expert provides another topical article, and Monty Lowther is full of fun as usual. The St. Jim's Jingle features our old friend Gussy, and another big batch of Pen Pals and more illustrated jokes complete the number.

"See" you next Tuesday, chums!

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"Eh—what? Here, you keep off! Oh, my hat!"

Gunn dodged round the table and fled for his life.

Grundy slammed the door after him. Then he kicked a chair across the study. After all his visits to Dr. Hunk—after all his painstaking practice—after all his hopes of stunning success—the House match was to be played that afternoon, after all, without his assistance. It was enough to make any fellow wild.

CHAPTER 12.

Grundy Gets His Money's Worth!

"MASTER GRUNDY!"

Toby, the page, looked into Grundy's study. Grundy turned upon him with a snort. He was feeling fed-up with everything and everybody.

"Get out, blow you!"

"Suttlingly, Master Grundy," said Toby, in alarm. "But Mr. Railton—"

"Blow Railton!"

"Oh!" said Toby. "Well, I can't blow a Housemaster, Master Grundy. You'd better go and blow him yourself. He wants you in his study."

"Oh, rats!"

Toby retired, with a shrug of the shoulders. He had delivered his message, and that was all his business. It rested with Grundy whether he would obey the summons, or "blow" the Housemaster.

"I'm jolly well not going!" growled Grundy. "There's Digby; he hasn't got much of a personality. I might get him under the flunce, and shift him out of the eleven. Blow Railton! I suppose I'd better go."

It was really more judicious to go. Grundy went.

Mr. Railton was looking very severe when Grundy came in. He looked quite sternly at the Shell junior.

"Grundy," he said, "I have sent for you upon a very serious matter: I have heard most extraordinary reports about you."

"Have you, sir?" said Grundy. "Perhaps you could see me later about it, sir. I am rather pressed for time just now."

Mr. Railton's eyes opened wide. Certainly Grundy was the only fellow at St. Jim's who would have thought of stating that he was rather pressed for time just now.

"Boy," thundered Mr. Railton, "are you out of your senses?"

"N-no, sir."

"I think you must be. Now listen to me, Grundy. It appears that you have taken up some ridiculous nonsense which you call hypnotism. You have made the acquaintance of a very questionable character in Wayland, a man with a far from good reputation, as I understand, and you have visited him in River Street—a low quarter which is out of bounds for boys of this school. You appear to have made yourself the laughing-stock of the House by your absurd attempts at hypnotism, and to have committed assault and battery upon certain boys who regarded your absurdity with just ridicule. The matter has become the talk of the school, Grundy, and it has reached my ears. I have, therefore, inquired into it."

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"I don't see anything absurd in it, sir," said Grundy. "The fact is, I'm a born hypnotist. With my iron will and powerful personality—"

"Don't talk nonsense, Grundy!"

"That isn't nonsense, sir. Dr. Hunk said so. He took me as a pupil at half-fees because I was such a ripping hypnotist."

"You have been paying that man money?" exclaimed Mr. Railton.

"Certainly, sir, for the lessons."

"How much have you paid him in all?"

"Only two guineas and a half, so far, sir. I'm going to have another lesson to-day."

"You have thrown away such a sum of money, Grundy. Cannot you see that the man is a mere swindler?"

"Oh, no, sir; not at all! The fact is, I've hypnotised several fellows already. One of them was Levison of the Fourth, and I made him try to eat the poker, sir."

"Utter nonsense! Levison must have been deceiving you. You are a very simple boy, Grundy."

"Me simple!" ejaculated Grundy, in astonishment. "Not at all, sir. When I was at Redclyffe, I can tell you they thought me the deepest chap in the school. And here, sir, there isn't a chap who's up to me for real braininess. I—"

"Grundy, kindly understand that I forbid you to go to River Street again, or to hold any kind of communication with this disreputable character, Hunk."

Grundy looked utterly dismayed.

"But—but I haven't had all my lessons, sir!" he exclaimed. "And Hunk leaves Wayland to-night, and before he goes he's going to give me written instructions for keeping on my practice. He's only going to charge me two pounds, sir, for a set of complete instructions."

"If you pay a single shilling to that man, Grundy, I shall request the Head to flog you for wilful disobedience to my orders!"

Grundy breathed hard. The hypnotism was getting on famously, but it had to be acknowledged that more lessons were required. On the very threshold of success he was to be cut off from the fountain-head of knowledge. It was not, of course, to be stood for a single moment. But the Housemaster's word was law—there was the rub. Evidently there was only one thing to be done. All was lost, unless Mr. Railton could be put under the flunce.

That was the only resource.

It was a risky proceeding, certainly; but desperate diseases required desperate remedies. It was neck or nothing now.

Grundy fixed his eyes upon Mr. Railton. He began to make passes. The Housemaster looked at him in utter astonishment, as well he might.

Grundy's large hands waved at him across the table. For a moment Mr. Railton thought the junior had gone out of his senses. He stared at him blankly.

His silence encouraged Grundy. It seemed as if the flunce was beginning to work. Otherwise, why did the Housemaster sit there, quite still, with that blank expression on his face?

Grundy kept on.

Mr. Railton found his voice at last.

"Boy! What are you doing? Are you insane?" he gasped. Then a new and illuminating thought flashed into the Housemaster's mind.

"Grundy, is it possible that you imagine you are hypnotising me?"



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Grundy's magic passes ceased suddenly.

"D-d-don't you feel the fluence?" he stammered.

"The what? The fluence! Boy, you dare to— to attempt your absurd tricks on me, your House-master!" Mr. Railton was almost purple. "I have never heard of such astounding impertinence! There shall be no repetition of it. I see that stern measures are required in your case, Grundy. Hold out your hand!"

Grundy's hand came out.

Swish!

There was a wild roar from Grundy. Mr. Railton was putting his beef into it.

"Now the other hand!"

Swish!

"Now the other again!"

Swish!

"Yow-ow-ow! Oh my hat! Yow!"

"You ridiculous, impertinent boy!" exclaimed Mr. Railton. "If I were not convinced, Grundy, that you are more stupid than impertinent, I should request the Head to administer a public flogging. You will take five hundred lines, and be detained for two half-holidays. You may go. Stay, one moment!"

Mr. Railton touched the bell.

"Toby, find Master Levison and send him here!"

"Yes, sir!"

"As you persist in your absurdity, Grundy, I will make one more attempt to show you that you have been deceived by an unscrupulous charlatan."

"Yow-ow-ow!" said Grundy, rubbing his hands. Levison of the Fourth entered the study. Levison was looking a little uneasy, wondering which of his many delinquencies had come to light.

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PEN PALS COUPON

18-12-37

"You sent for me, sir?" said Levison meekly. "Yes, Levison. It appears that Grundy fancies that he hypnotised you. Kindly tell me the truth of the matter."

"Certainly, sir," said Levison. "Grundy is such an ass, you know. He simply goes about begging to have his leg pulled. He was so keen on hypnotising somebody that I thought I'd spoof him—ahem!—I mean pull his leg, sir. Of course, he never hypnotised me. He couldn't hypnotise a stone image. It was only a joke on Grundy, sir."

"I was quite aware of that," said Mr. Railton. "You hear, Grundy?"

"You spoofing worm!" yelled Grundy furiously. "Why—I'll—I'll smash you—"

"Grundy! How dare you threaten Levison in my presence? If you touch Levison, I shall have you flogged. Levison, you may go. You should not play such stupid jokes on Grundy, though the boy's utter stupidity is perhaps an excuse."

Levison departed, grinning. Grundy was the picture of dismay. His house of cards had tumbled down.

Even George Alfred Grundy had to admit to himself that the fluence he had exercised was a thing of the imagination only.

The dismay in his face touched the House-master a little.

"I presume, Grundy, that you can see now that you have been deceived," said Mr. Railton, more kindly.

"I—I suppose so, sir," stammered Grundy. "That Yankee swindled me, I—I suppose. The other fellows said he was a swindler, but—but I—I didn't think so. I—I shouldn't wonder if

he was only spoofing when he let me put the fluence on him, like that worm Levison. Oh dear!"

"Then let there be no more of this nonsense," said the Housemaster. "You may go, Grundy."

"Yes, sir," mumbled Grundy.

The unhappy hypnotist left the study. He came out of the School House rubbing his hands. Wilkins and Gunn eyed him in the quadrangle, but did not approach. But Grundy bore down on them. On the football ground, the House match was in progress. But Grundy did not even look towards the footballers.

"You fellows coming with me?" he asked.

"That depends," said Wilkins sourly. "I'm fed up with you, Grundy. You're not going to shove me about like a sack of coke, I can tell you!"

"I'm sorry!" said Grundy. "I've been taken in. Me, you know—taken in! That cad Levison was spoofing me. I never put any fluence on him at all. I've tried it on Railton—"

"Great Scott!"

"And it didn't work—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I've been licked and lined and gated—"

"Serve you jolly well right," said Gunn. "What the thump did you expect? Playing tricks on old Railton! My hat!"

"You come along with me," said Grundy. "I'm going to see that Yankee. I'm going to give him a hiding."

"Jolly good idea!" said Wilkins heartily. "We'll come with pleasure!"

"Yes, rather!" said Gunn, with equal heartiness.

Grundy hardly spoke a word during the ride to Wayland. But he thought the more. He was simmering when he arrived at the Yankee hypnotist's lodging.

Dr. Hunk was expecting him for the lesson. He had the written instructions all ready for Grundy's further practice, to be handed to Grundy for the nominal price of two pounds. But those two pounds were never to be paid!

"Good-afternoon, Master Grundy!" said the doctor, as the burly Shell fellow came in, followed by Wilkins and Gunn.

"Good-afternoon!" said Grundy grimly. "I've brought these chaps to see how I can put the fluence on, Dr. Hunk. I'm going to show them how genuine it is!"

"Ahem!" said the doctor, eyeing Wilkins and Gunn rather dubiously. "Jest now, I guess, I'm rather squeezed for time."

But Grundy was already making passes, with his eyes fixed on the doctor. Wilkins and Gunn looked on.

The estimable Hunk was in a difficulty. If he resisted the fluence, it was an acknowledgment that he was deceiving Grundy. If he yielded to it, he had doubts about deceiving the two witnesses as well as Grundy. However, there was nothing else to be done, so he decided to yield to it. He assumed a drowsy expression.

"Fairly under it, you see," said Grundy, with the same grimness of expression. "Now, Dr. Hunk, your name's Hore-Belisha. Now, what is your name?"

"Hore-Belisha," said Dr. Hunk dreamily.

"Spoof!" said Wilkins.

"Now you're the slave of my will," said Grundy. "Open the window."

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Dr. Hunk rose to his feet and opened the window. Certainly, he looked as if he was under the fluence.

"Now jump out!" said Grundy.

Dr. Hunk did not move.

"Jump out!" roared Grundy.

Wilkins chuckled.

"I don't think!" he remarked.

"Got a pin, Wilky?"

"Here you are!"

"Stick it into him. He won't feel it, being under the fluence."

"Hyer, you keep off!" yelled Dr. Hunk, as Wilkins willingly made for him, pin in hand. "I guess this hyer joke has gone far enough, by thunder!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gunn. "Where's the giddy fluence now?"

"There isn't any fluence," said Grundy. "I was just showing him up. He's swindled me—the Yankee rotter! Now, you skinny specimen, you've bagged my cash and taken me in! Now you're going through it!"

Grundy rushed at the hypnotist.

For the next few minutes the scene in Dr. Hunk's apartment resembled pandemonium. Chairs and table went flying, trunks and boxes were kicked over, and in the midst of the wreckage Grundy had Dr. Hunk's head in chancery, and was pounding away as if he mistook it for a punchball. The yells of the unhappy Yankee rang far and wide. Grundy was getting the full value of his two guineas and a half.

"Here, chuck it!" howled Wilkins; and he and Gunn dragged Grundy off at last. "You aren't allowed to kill him. Come along!"

"Well, perhaps he's had enough!" panted Grundy.

"Ha, ha, ha! He looks like it! Come on!"

Grundy & Co. departed, leaving the doctor sprawling amid his overturned furniture, gasping for breath, and clapping his nose and blinking his eyes. Undoubtedly he looked as if he had had enough. He probably felt as if he had had too much.

Tom Merry & Co. came off the football field. The House match had ended in a draw; perhaps owing to the absence of Grundy from the School House team. They met Grundy & Co. coming in.

"How's the fluence getting on?" asked Tom Merry cheerily.

Grundy snorted, and stalked away without replying.

"The fluence is off—quite off!" chuckled Wilkins. "Grundy's chuckled it. Goodness knows it was time! He's bowled out old Hunk and nearly slaughtered him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared over the description of Grundy's parting interview with the worthy Dr. Hunk. Never again did George Alfred attempt to put on the fluence. The last had been heard of Grundy the hypnotist.

(Next Wednesday: "TRIMBLE THE TWISTER!" Look out for the humorous long yarn telling how the fat and fatuous Fourth Former arrives at St. Jim's. Order your GEM early.)

OFF FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS—AND A HUMOROUS AND THRILLING TIME AWAITS HARRY WHARTON & CO.! GET GOING WITH THEM—BUNTER'S ONE OF THE PARTY!

The Famous Four's Christmas!

By FRANK RICHARDS. (orig. "Home for the Holidays")

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.") Reprint from Magnet

1909

Off for the Holidays!

"ARE they coming?"
"No—yes! Here they come!"
"Stand ready, you chaps!"

It was snowing in the Close at Greyfriars—roofs and walls, flower-beds and walks, were covered with a sheet of dazzling white. The flakes were falling thick and fast, but the dozen or so fellows who were gathered outside the door seemed to care nothing for the snow.

The station taxi was standing near at hand, the driver slapping his hands to keep them warm. The cab was evidently waiting for passengers from within the School House, to convey them to the railway station, but none of the passengers had as yet made his appearance.

Greyfriars was breaking up for the Christmas holidays, and Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, was taking a little party of his chums home with him to Wharton Lodge for the vacation. The taxi was waiting for them, and so were Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth.

"They're coming!" chuckled Temple. "We must give Wharton a good send-off! Got your snowballs ready?"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.
"Mind, give them the first volley when I give the word, and then pelt as hard as you can!" grinned Temple. "They shall never say that we failed to give them a good send-off for the holidays!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Shut up!" said Fry. "I can hear them coming!"

And the Upper Fourth Formers stood well back from the doorway, with snowballs ready. There were certainly footfalls audible from within, and as a figure appeared in a cap and coat the excited juniors let fly.

Swish! Smash! Squash!
"Hallo!" roared a startled voice. "What the dickens—"

"Hold on!" shrieked Temple. "You asses—it's Wingate!"

Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, staggered under the showering snowballs, and sat down violently. He jumped up again, red with wrath.

"You young sweeps!" he roared. "I'll—I'll give—"

"Sorry!" gasped Temple. "It was an—an



As snowballs began smashing all over Bunter, he staggered, missed his footing and slipped over. Next moment he was rolling head-first to the bottom of the steps. The Upper Fourth Formers yelled with laughter, and kept up the bombardment of the fat junior.

accident. We—we thought it was those Remove kids coming!"

Wingate glared at them for some seconds, greatly inclined to rush at the scared juniors and cuff them right and left. But a grin broke over his face at last, and the Upper Fourth juniors were relieved.

"Well, be more careful next time, you young duffers!" he grunted, and strode away.

Temple drew a breath of relief.

"Good old Wingate! I expected a fearful row. Hallo, I can hear them coming now!"

"Make sure this time!" grinned Fry.

"Ha, ha! It's the kids this time. I can hear the Chinese talking!"

The voice of Wun Lung, the Chinese junior in the Greyfriars Remove, was audible, and it showed that the right parties were coming at last.

"Ready!" muttered Temple.

Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, appeared in the doorway with the Chinese junior.

"Let 'em have it!" shouted Temple.

And the snowballs flew. Three or four broke over Wharton, but he only laughed good-humouredly, and made a run for the taxi and clambered in. Wun Lung was after him in a twinkling, opening an umbrella as a defence against the flying snowballs.

"Look out, there!" shouted Harry Wharton.

But the warning came too late.

Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent were coming out, and a volley of snowballs biffed all over them.

Bob Cherry sat down on the steps, and Nugent sat down on him, and Bob roared.

"Ow! Gerroff!"

"Go it!" roared Temple.

The two Removites picked themselves up and dashed for the taxi. The fun was waxing fast and furious now, fellows gathering from all quarters to back up Temple, Dabney & Co. in the snowballing.

Harry Wharton and his friends were the first to leave Greyfriars for the vacation, catching an early train that morning. Most of the school were going some time later by the special, and so they gladly gathered to give the early goers a good send-off.

Bob Cherry and Nugent dashed through a cloud of whizzing snowballs to the taxi, and Harry Wharton helped them in while Wun Lung gallantly held out his umbrella against the showering missiles.

"Look out!" cried Fry. "Here come the others!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, was the next Removite to come out and enter the taxi. The Indian junior jumped as the snowballs burst on him. He broke into a desperate run, and with snow smashing all over him, clambered into the taxi.

"My solitary hat!" he exclaimed. "The bashfulness of the snowballs is terrific! I am smotherfully covered with the esteemed snow, my worthy chums!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here comes Billy Bunter!" chuckled Nugent. "He was staying behind to look in the study, in case any grub should have been left behind! My hat! He's eating now!"

"The surprisingfulness of the honourable Bunter will be terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Billy Bunter was coming out, all unconscious of the ambush laid by the merry youths of the Upper Fourth.

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The fat junior was eating toffee, and one of his cheeks bulged out, as he appeared in the doorway.

Bunter was wrapped in coat and scarf, which made him appear shorter and fatter than ever, and made his plump figure look like a barrel.

"Look out, Bunter!" shouted Harry Wharton.

Billy Bunter blinked round through his spectacles. He was too short-sighted to see what was the matter.

"Oh, really, Wharton," he exclaimed, "there's plenty of time, and if I hurry I shall get short of breath, and then—ow—ow—ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Snowballs were smashing all over Bunter.

The fat junior staggered back, missed his footing, and slipped over. Next moment he was rolling, head-first, to the bottom of the steps.

The juniors shrieked with laughter as he sat up blindly in the snow, with the missiles still pelting all over him.

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gr-r-r! Hold on! I'm chook-chook—"

"What the dickens does he mean?" said Temple.

"Is that a word they use in the Remove?"

"Blessed if I know!" said Fry. "Give him some more snowballs!"

"Oh, rather!"

"I'm chook-chook— I say, you fellows, I'm chook-chook-choking!"

The lump had disappeared from Billy Bunter's cheek, and the toffee had evidently slid down his throat in the shock.

Harry Wharton jumped down and lifted the fat junior up, amid a shower of snowballs.

"Help! I'm chook-chook—"

Wharton thumped him on the back.

"All right now?"

"No—yes—stop!" howled Bunter. "Yes, I'm all right! What are you knocking me about for, you beast?"

"I was trying to help you."

"Well, don't, then! I don't want you to help me by busting my beastly backbone! Help me into the taxi!"

Wharton laughed, and obliged him. Billy Bunter was hoisted into the taxi, and sent rolling among the legs of those already there.

"Go it!" shouted Temple. "Give 'em socks!"

And a perfect hurricane of snowballs smashed on Harry Wharton as he clambered in after the fat junior.

He was not sorry to regain his place, and the driver set the taxi in motion, and it moved down the snowy drive to the gates, leaving the Upper Fourth fellows behind.

The Sandwiches!

HARRY WHARTON laughed as he rubbed the snow out of his hair. The juniors in the taxi were pretty well smothered, but it did not damp their good humour. They laughed as the taxi sped on to the station. Billy Bunter's was the only face that wore a serious expression. He was feeling in one pocket after another, with growing anxiety, without finding what he sought.

"It's gone!" he exclaimed suddenly. "I put the packet into my coat pocket, and now it's gone! Tell the driver to turn back, will you, Wharton?"

Harry laughed, and shook his head.

"Can't be did, Bunter! We've only just time to catch our train!"

"But it's gone—the packet of sandwiches Mrs. Keble gave me to eat in the train! It must have fallen out of my pocket when I fell in the snow,

when those beasts were pelting me! I say, you fellows, we must go back!"

"Rats, my son!" said Bob Cherry. "We're going on!"

"But I shall be hungry in the train!" exclaimed Billy Bunter, as if that were a contingency not to be calmly contemplated for a moment.

"Awful! But we're going on!"

And they went on. Billy Bunter blinked indignantly, but it was of no use. The cab went on without a stop, and the juniors alighted at Friar-dale Station. For a wonder the train was prompt to time, and it was already in the station when the Greyfriars chums hurried on to the platform.

"In you get!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, grasping Bunter by the shoulder as he was starting off down the platform. "Where on earth are you going?"

"I was just going into the refreshment-room for a minute!"

"I know your minutes when you get into refreshment-rooms!" grinned Bob Cherry. "You just come along, my son!"

And the fat junior was bundled headlong into the carriage. He sprawled over Wun Lung, and the little Chinese bumped down. Bunter fell on him, and Wun Lung gave a squeak of anguish.

"Ow! Me velly plenty clushed!"

"Sorry!" gasped Bunter. "It was the fault of that beast Cherry! You shouldn't get in the way, though! Look here, I'm going to get out again and—"

Slam! The guard closed the door, and the train started, and Billy Bunter had to give up the idea of getting out and making a desperate rush into the refreshment-room. He scrambled to his feet, put his spectacles straight, and blinked round at his companions angrily.

"I say, you fellows, I shall probably arrive at Wharton Lodge in a state of utter collapse!" he exclaimed. "You know perfectly well that my delicate constitution requires to be kept up by constant nourishment!"

"Have sandwich?" said Wun Lung hospitably.

The little Chinese had opened a packet of sandwiches, and extended them to Billy Bunter, who promptly accepted the offer. Then Wun Lung passed the packet along, and the chums helped themselves. It was not long since they had breakfasted, but the keen winter air gave them an appetite.

"I say, you fellows, these are ripping sandwiches!" said Billy Bunter. "They're exactly like those Mrs. Kebble made for me! This beef is grand! Where did you get these sandwiches, Wun Lung? You didn't make them yourself?"

"No makee."

"Did Mrs. Kebble make them?"

"Me tinkee so."

Bunter looked at him in astonishment.

"You don't know? Where did you get them, then?"

"Me findee."

"You—you found them?" said Bunter, a glimmering of the truth beginning to dawn upon him as he saw the juniors grinning. "Where did you find them?"

"Me findee in taxi."

"You—you found them in the taxi?"

The Celestial nodded.

"My sandwiches!" shrieked Bunter. "You—you beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

And the Removites roared in chorus. Billy Bunter did not laugh. He looked at the empty packet that had been filled with sandwiches, and he looked at the bland, smiling face of the Chinese.

Wun Lung appeared to be absolutely unconscious of having given offence. He smiled sweetly at Bunter.

"Nicee sandwich!" he said. "How luckee me findee in taxi!"

"You—you blessed heathen! They were my sandwiches! They must have dropped out of my pocket when I fell in!" shouted Bunter.

"No savvy!"

"I tell you they were my sandwiches!"

"No savvy!"

And Wun Lung was determined not to "savvy," and Bunter failed to make him understand. The chums of the Remove were roaring with laughter, and Billy Bunter sat in a state of boiling indignation while the train rolled onward.

Wun Lung's Little Joke!

BUNTER did not smile again till the party reached a junction where they changed trains. Harry Wharton had a good-sized lunch-basket put into the carriage. Then the fat face of William George Bunter beamed again.

"I must say I like cold chicken!" he said, proving his words by his accompanying actions. "This is very thoughtful of you, Wharton! I'm not what you'd call a greedy chap, but I do like a lot. I think it's quite possible that a chicken, a veal-and-ham pie, and some sausage rolls will last me till we get to Wharton's place!"

"Oh, really?" said Bob Cherry. "Don't you get stinting yourself. You know that your delicate constitution requires bolstering up by gorging!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

But Bunter did not waste time in words. He travelled into the eatables, and nothing could exceed the seraphic contentment of his smile as he did so.

The juniors did justice to the lunch, and then Wun Lung produced a wallet from under his coat, opened it, and began counting the thick wad of banknotes in it. Wun Lung was probably the richest junior at Greyfriars and he was always

(Continued on the next page.)

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rolling in money; a fact of which Billy Bunter took full advantage. Wharton glanced at Wun Lung in surprise, and the little Chinese met his glance with a sweet smile.

"Plenty cash," he remarked. "Me givee Christmas tippee, you savvy?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Better keep it out of sight, though," he said. "It's not safe for a kid of your age to carry so much money about. And silver tips are good enough as a rule."

"Poor people likee cashee Christmas-time."

Wun Lung had been handing out tips royally ever since leaving Greyfriars. He had started with Gosling, the porter, surprising that worthy with a pound note. And then the porter at Friardale had been amazed with another. Wun Lung evidently meant to do the thing in style, and as it was his good little heart that prompted him, no one was inclined to say him nay.

Billy Bunter glanced at the leather wallet with a glimmer in his eyes. The lunch-basket was empty now, Bunter having finished up the last crumb.

"I say, you fellows, I forgot to look in the rack for a letter before I came away," he remarked. "I was expecting a postal order this morning, and I've no doubt it arrived. It's very unfortunate, as it will have to stay at Greyfriars now, and I'm rather short of tin. I say, Wun Lung, would you mind cashing the postal order for me?"

"Which?"

"The one in the letter at Greyfriars," said Bunter in a tone of patient explanation, as if it was fully established by this time that there was one in a letter at Greyfriars.

"No savvy."

"It's for ten bob. Will you stand the ten bob, and have the postal order when we get back to Greyfriars?"

"No savvy."

Billy Bunter gave it up in disgust. The train rushed on, through a fleeting landscape dazzling in a winding sheet of snow. The juniors made things lively by singing at the top of their voices. Bob Cherry broke off in the middle of a chorus as the train slowed down.

"Here we are, my sons!"

Wharton Magnus was the name of the station. The train stopped and the juniors poured out. A brisk breeze blew up and down the platform, keen from the frozen woods. A couple of porters were on the spot in a moment, ready to take the luggage—and any tips that might be forthcoming. Harry Wharton was well known there, of course. There was a cheery greeting for the heir of Colonel Wharton of Wharton Lodge.

The luggage was piled on the station cab, but the juniors elected to walk. A walk through the frozen lanes in the crisp air would be very pleasant after the confinement of the railway carriage.

Harry Wharton was generous enough, but the gratuities laddled out by Wun Lung made the porters open their eyes. The juniors left the station and walked briskly down the old High Street of Wharton Magnus.

A shade crossed Harry Wharton's face as the juniors turned from the High Street into the lane that led towards the Lodge.

A fellow in shabby attire, with a face that showed the effects of strong drink, was lounging by a fence, and trying to light a pipe, the keen wind baffling his efforts. The expression of the man's face was very savage, and he was muttering

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to himself. His face was turned partly from the juniors, and he did not see them coming.

As they advanced they heard his flow of language, which consisted principally of curses. A dog was slinking at his feet, and as the match was blown out for the fourth or fifth time, the loafer gave the wretched brute a sudden kick that sent it yelping away into the hedge.

"Cowardly beast!" muttered Bob Cherry. "I've a jolly good mind to chuck him over that fence, the cruel rotter!"

"The beastfulness of the honourable rotter is terrific," purred the nabob. "Suppose we bump him duckfully in the esteemed ditch?"

The man heard the murmur of voices and turned his head. Instantly the savage expression of his face changed, and it was replaced by a look of mean and fawning humility. It was the professional beggar's look at once replacing that of the brutal hooligan. He slipped his pipe into his pocket and came towards the juniors, touching his cap and almost squirming with meekness.

"Do you know that chap, Wharton?" asked Nugent, noticing the look on Harry's face.

"Yes," said Wharton. "His name is Purkiss, and he is a rotter, as you've just seen for yourself. The brute has never done a day's work in his life, I believe."

"A merry Christmas to you, young gentlemen," said Purkiss. "You remember me, Master Wharton—Corporal Purkiss—"

"Bosh!" said Harry, in his decisive way. "You worked that on me before, and I asked my uncle, and he says you never were in the army."

"It's bitter cold weather, sir," said Purkiss, prudently changing the subject. "It's 'ard on a pore man this time of the year, and I don't know 'ow to get a meal."

"What's the matter with work?" asked Bob Cherry innocently.

The loafer shivered, whether at the cold or the idea of work was not clear.

"There ain't much work to be got in the country this time o' year," he said. "And it's rough passin' Christmas with nothin' to eat, young gentlemen."

"I wouldn't give you a penny!" said Harry. "You deserve a hiding for kicking that dog so brutally."

And he strode on. His chums followed him, but Wun Lung seemed to linger. He had taken half-a-crown from his pocket, and was holding it between thumb and finger, as if undecided whether to bestow it on the tramp or not. He had a penny concealed in the palm of the same hand, but that the tramp could not see. The man's beery eyes glimmered at the sight of the silver.

"Bless your kind 'eart, sir," he said. "It's little I've 'ad to eat all to-day. As for the dog, he deserved it."

Wun Lung hesitated.

Mr. Purkiss stretched out his hand, and the half-a-crown was still between the Chinese's finger and thumb.

"Which I'm nearly starvin', sir—"

"Velly lough," said Wun Lung sympathetically. "If you leally deserve chality, me tinkee me givee cashee."

"I swears, sir, that I 'aven't tasted—thanky kindly, sir!"

Wun Lung pressed a coin in the man's hand.

The tramp almost wriggled with delight as the junior passed on. It was not till Wun Lung rejoined his chums that the tramp looked at the coin in his palm.

Then he gave a sudden jump.

"It was not a half-crown that rested there; it was a penny!"

Mr. Purkiss stared at it for some moments in dismayed amazement. Then he looked after the juniors, and saw them laughing heartily.

A black look came over Mr. Purkiss' face. He realised that the Chinese junior had tricked him by a very simple bit of sleight-of-hand, and that he had not intended to give him the half-a-crown at all.

The things Mr. Purkiss muttered to himself would have made the juniors blush had they heard them. He slouched off down the lane, gritting his teeth. But one thought was clear in his mind, and that was what he would do if he met Wun Lung on a dark night. If Mr. Purkiss' chance came, he would not be slow to take advantage of it.

The Poacher!

"MARJORIE!" The Greyfriars juniors uttered the name together as they entered the footpath that afforded a short cut from the road, through the wood, to the Lodge. In the path ahead of them two figures had caught their eyes—a girl and a boy. The latter was Hazeldene of the Remove at Greyfriars; the former was his sister Marjorie.

Marjorie was on the best of terms with the Greyfriars chums, and Colonel Wharton had asked her to the Lodge with her brother for the vacation, and Hazeldene had brought her over from their home. The juniors quickened their pace, and at the sound of footsteps Hazeldene and Marjorie turned their heads.

"Hallo! Here you are!" said Hazeldene. "We've walked from the lower station. Fancy meeting you here!"

There was a general handshaking. Bob Cherry took Marjorie's hand as if it were a delicate piece of china and he were afraid of breaking it. His cheeks were very red, and he seemed shy. A curious change had come over the sturdy junior, who was wont to greet his acquaintances with a slap on the shoulder and a boisterous "Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

They walked on together, Harry Wharton walking beside Marjorie. Bob had made a move to take the place, but he yielded it tamely to Harry, who did not even notice that he had wanted it. Hazeldene was on the other side, and the three chatted together cheerfully as they tramped on.

Bob Cherry's usually sunny face wore a slight cloud, and Bunter noticed it. He dug the junior in the ribs, and Bob started out of a brown study with a gasp.

"I say, Cherry, it's rotten, isn't it?" "Eh? What do you mean?" said Bob, turning red.

"It's rotten! I'm in the same case myself, so I know how it is!" said Billy Bunter, with a pathetic look.

Bob Cherry stared at him. "It's beastly!" said Bunter. "I suppose nothing can be done but to grin and bear it."

Bob Cherry took the fat junior by his fat ear, much to Bunter's amazement.

"You're a funny beast, Bunter," said Bob Cherry quietly, "and you amuse us sometimes; but if you start being funny on that topic, it will mean a licking for you! Do you understand?"

"I say, Cherry, I don't understand you. I'm not being funny."

"Oh, shut up!" "Haven't you got an inward pain?" "Will you shut up?" growled Bob Cherry savagely.

"Hallo! What's the matter here?" said Nugent, looking round.

"I—I don't know," said Billy Bunter, bewildered. "I was just telling Cherry that I feel hungry after a long walk, the same as he does, and he's flying into a temper about it. He knows I get hungry."

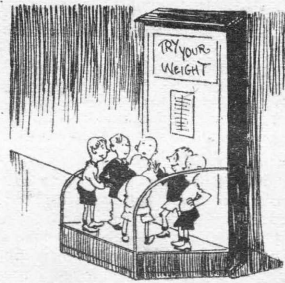
"You—you were talking about getting hungry?" stammered Bob Cherry. "You—you idiot! I—I thought you were speaking about something else!"

"What else should I be speaking about?" "Oh, nothing! Shut up!"

And Bob Cherry quickened his pace and went ahead.

The party walked on, Bunter still suffering from the pangs of suppressed hunger, and wearing a pathetic expression of which nobody chose to take any notice.

Crack! Marjorie started at the sudden sound of a gunshot from the wood.



"Now we only need someone to divide it by six!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to N. Spenceley, 8, Fatherson Road, Reading.

The juniors stopped and looked quickly round them.

Crack, crack, crack! "Somebody potting rabbits," said Harry Wharton. "Hallo! Look there!"

A frightened rabbit came skipping across the footpath and vanished into the thickets on the other side. The next moment there was a crash in the bushes, and a powerfully built man leaped into their path. He had a gun in his hands which was still smoking at the muzzle.

Harry Wharton uttered an exclamation: "Seth Ives, the poacher!"

The man looked quickly round. There was a stubble of black beard on his bronzed face, and a cap was drawn low over his brows.

"Young Wharton, by—"

"Poaching!" exclaimed Harry; and he ran quickly forward.

The poacher muttered an oath, and disappeared into the thickets.

"Harry!"

It was Marjorie's voice, with a note of alarm in it, that made Harry turn back. He laughed.

"It's all right," he said. "But this is my uncle's land, and that rascal has been a poacher in this district for years. He takes pheasants, rabbits, anything, and it can never be brought home to him." The junior's face clouded. "He isn't one of the poor wretches who knock over a rabbit

for dinner," he explained. "There's a gang in this district who have dealings with buyers in London. The rascal was fairly caught in the act this time, and I wish we could have nabbed him."

"He looked a desperate man," said Marjorie. Harry laughed carelessly.

"Oh, he's only a hulking ruffian! But, I say, you chaps, we shall be out potting rabbits to-morrow, and it will be ripping! I want to get a good bag to send to the village hospital, and there are plenty here."

"I could do with a rabbit stew now!" sighed Billy Bunter. "It's amazing how hungry you get walking. I say, you fellows, how much farther is it to the Lodge?"

"There it is!"

Harry Wharton's hand rose to point. The red roofs of the Lodge could be seen showing through the leafless trees. Billy Bunter breathed a sigh of relief.

"Buck up, then!"

And in ten minutes they were at Wharton Lodge, and before long they were discussing a lunch which even Billy Bunter found satisfying.

The Shooting Party!

CHRISTMAS at Wharton Lodge was a very cheery season. Colonel Wharton and his sister, Harry's Aunt Amy, were an ideal host and hostess, and there were many attractions in the fine old place.

With skating, sliding, snow-fighting, and shooting, the days passed in a rush of fun and gaiety, and the long evenings were a round of merriment. There had seldom been so merry a party at Christmas-time at the Lodge.

Wun Lung, the Chinese, could do many things, but handling a gun was not one of them. He declined at first to join the shooting parties, but he allowed himself to be persuaded at last.

On a crisp morning a few days after Christmas the juniors set out in high spirits, with gun on shoulder. Wun Lung, having carefully loaded his piece according to Harry's instructions, proceeded to carry it in the hollow of his arm, with the barrel horizontal and the muzzle pointing directly into the small of Bob Cherry's back.

Harry grasped the barrel and turned it hastily downwards, and, of course, Wun Lung's sleeve caught in the trigger, and the gun exploded.

Crack!

Bob Cherry gave a jump and turned round.

"Anything wrong?"

"Nothing. Only I've just saved your life!" said Harry, laughing. "Wun Lung wanted to shoot you in the back!"

"Why, the dangerous lunatic—"

"No shootee!"

"Look here, you can keep the gun unloaded for a bit," said Harry, "and practise carrying it with the muzzle pointing to the ground!"

"Me remember." And the Chinese junior pushed the muzzle down.

"Did you load my gun, Nugent?" asked Billy Bunter. Nugent winked at Wharton and Bob Cherry. As a matter of fact, he had loaded Bunter's gun with a blank cartridge, in case of accidents.

"Let me see," he said thoughtfully.

Bunter rested the butt of the gun on the ground, and blinked down the barrel.

"You ass!" shouted Hazeldene. "You'll blow your head off!"

"I'm looking to see if it's loaded," said Bunter, whose knowledge of firearms was limited.

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"Take it away from him!" exclaimed Hazeldene, in alarm. "He's bound to have an accident!"

"The boundfulness is great!"

"Rot!" said Bunter. "Do you think I can't handle a firearm? I—"

Bang!

"Oh! Ow! I'm shot! Murder! Fire! Help!"

The gun had gone off! Exactly why it had gone off Bunter did not know. He fell flat on his back, his little, fat legs kicking the air. The gun crashed down into the grass with a smoking muzzle.

"Help!" moaned Bunter faintly. "I—I'm dying! My brains have been blown out! Send for the doctor! I'm expiring in agony!"

"It's all right, Bunter—you're not hurt!"

"I'm expiring!"

"You see, it was a blank cartridge!"

"The blankfulness was terrific!"

Bunter sat up, recovering suddenly from his fatal wound.

"Did you say it was a blank cartridge, Nugent?"

"Ha, ha! Yes! I thought it would be safer, in case of accidents!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hazeldene.

Bunter blinked at the shrieking chums.

"I say, you fellows, that was a mean trick to play on a fellow, you know!"

"Would you rather have had your silly brains blown out?" shrieked Nugent.

"Well, certainly there's something in that! But upon the whole, you fellows, I don't think I'll do any shooting to-day. A shock to the system always gives an edge to my appetite, and I think I'll get back and have some more breakfast!"

"Good wheeze, Bunter!"

As a matter of fact, the shooting party were not sorry to be relieved of so extremely an amateur shot. The Chinese junior was still marching on with his gun held as Harry had told him to hold it. Bunter put his discharged gun under his arm, and walked back in the opposite direction. The laughing juniors hurried after Wun Lung.

"You brought some more blanks, Bob?" Harry asked in a low voice.

Bob Cherry laughed and nodded.

"May as well load Wun Lung's gun for him. We don't want him to kill himself or anybody else if it can be avoided. An inquest would mar the festive season!"

"Ha, ha, ha! You're right!"

"Me cally gun alleè light," said Wun Lung proudly. "Where we findee labbit?"

"We're nearly on the ground," said Harry. "You stand beside Bob, and he'll load for you while you blaze away."

"Me savvy."

The juniors moved along the wood, and the barking of the keeper's dogs beyond the trees showed that the rabbits were being driven out.

Bang, bang, bang!

Harry Wharton was a dead shot, and Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent were passable, while Hazeldene could hit things sometimes. Wun Lung probably could not have hit the side of a house, but with blank cartridges he hadn't much chance.

Bob Cherry cheerfully loaded the Chinese junior's gun that morning. It is probable that Bob saved several lives during the next hour.

Wun Lung's idea of firing a gun was to hold

it to his shoulder, pointing it in any direction, and then to shut his eyes and pull the trigger.

He was likely to do more execution among his companions than among the game, but in the circumstances he was quite harmless.

The Chinese looked a little disappointed at the absence of the game, while the others were bagging a good number. Nothing fell victim to his shooting.

When the shoot was over Wun Lung could not count a single "labbitt" as his own, and he was a little shamefaced.

"Me shootee velly quick," he remarked. "Labbitt quicke, too. Lun away too fast!"

"Hard cheese!" said Bob Cherry sympathetically. "Of course, you're new to it; you'll be better with practice."

"Hallo!" said Hazeldene, coming along. "How many have you bagged, Wun Lung?"

"No baggee."
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The shooters turned homeward, with fat bags destined for the Wharton Magnus Cottage Hospital. Billy Bunter met them as they came in.

"Good sport?" he inquired.

"Ripping!" said Harry.

"How many did you bag, Wun Lung?"

"Me no baggee," said the little Chinese.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Me catchee labbitt if tinkee catchee," said Wun Lung. "Next time me catchee mole labbitt than you."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "How are you going to catch them—by their tails?"

"I say, Wun Lung, I'll come and put you up to a wrinkle or two next time," said Bunter patronisingly. "You only want to know the ropes, you know!"

"Me savvy lopes!" said Wun Lung, rather excitedly. "Me show you how catchee labbitt. Me catchee mole than allee you to-morrow!"

The little Chinese spoke with great earnestness, but his promise was received with a shout of laughter. But there was a very determined expression on the quaint little face of the Chinese.

Wun Lung on the Ice!

"FREEZING like anything," said Bob Cherry, when the juniors came out after lunch.

The weather had taken a sudden turn, and the frosty grass crackled under the feet of the Greyfriars juniors. "What price the lake?"

"Good!" said Harry. "Let's get the skates!"

"Is the ice safe?" asked Billy Bunter, with a glance towards the great sheet in the grounds of the Lodge, which glistened in the cold wintry sun.

"Safe as houses, Bunter."

"Me likee skatee," said Wun Lung. "Supposee Hullee Singh holdee me, me skatee."

"The pleasurefulness of my honourable self will be terrific!" said the nabob politely.

The juniors grinned. It was not so very long since Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had learned to skate, and his extraordinary exploits on the ice at his first lesson had furnished the whole school with food for laughter for a long while. But the nabob had stuck to it, and he had picked up lately.

"Come on, then!" said Nugent. "There's plenty of room for a good run, anyway. The lake must be half a mile long."

"More than that," said Harry. "It ends at the wood—you remember, where we saw Seth Ives, the poacher, the day we came down from Greyfriars."

The lake was long and winding in form, and in places it was encroached upon by trees, so that

it varied in width from a quarter of a mile in the widest place to a hundred yards in the narrowest. Harry and Bob, Frank Nugent and Hazeldene, were soon on the ice with Marjorie, Billy Bunter preferring to watch them from the bank. Hurree Singh and the little Chinese found greater difficulty in getting going.

Hurree Singh had been helpless enough when he was learning skating, but he had been an adept compared with the Chinese junior. Wun Lung simply clung round his neck, and refused to let go. The nabob argued patiently.

"Hold a little fartherher away!" he urged. "The easiness of the skateful exercise is terrific! There is not the slightest dangerfulness, my worthy Chinese chum."

"Me slippee!"

"I will holdfully grasp you by your honourable collar, and the slipfulness will be the verge of the impossibility."

"Me slippee plenty!"

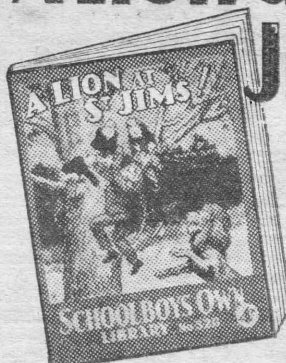
"The skatefulness consists in the slipfulness," explained Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Unless you slipfully glide on the esteemed ice, there is no possibility of skatefully progressing. I will hold you with the firm grip, and the safefulness of the attempt will be terrific!"

And Hurree Singh urged the Chinese farther on the ice.

Wun Lung promptly collapsed into a sitting position and shot away, dragging the nabob after him.

Then, with a clatter of skates, the Chinese scrambled up and shot off in another direction, grasping Hurree Singh by his scarf and dragging the astonished nabob along after him.

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Then suddenly Wun Lung let go and twisted away. Hurree Singh shot forward, unable to stop himself, and collapsed into a heap of frozen reeds.

Wun Lung made rapid play with his skates, as if unable to keep his footing, while Hurree Singh sat up in the reeds ruefully.

"Dear me!" said Marjorie. "Your Chinese friend wants a few lessons, Harry."

Harry Wharton laughed heartily.

"I don't know," he said. "You see, he hasn't had any bump himself. Wun Lung is a little joker, and I fancy he's only rotting."

"Looks like it," grinned Hazeldene.

"Helpee me!" called out the little Chinese to Bob Cherry, who was nearest. "Helpee me learnee skatee!"

Bob Cherry grinned. He was beginning to understand that Wun Lung could skate if he liked, and that it was his curious sense of humour that had caused the late catastrophe.

"Come on, then!" he said cheerily. "Give me a grip on your pigtail!"

And he skated towards the little Chinese, with outstretched hand, with the evident intention of grasping him by his prized pigtail.

Then Wun Lung promptly showed that he could skate.

He glided swiftly away from Bob Cherry. The junior dashed after him, but Wun Lung swept round in an extended circle and eluded him. Bob Cherry shook his fist at him.

"You young bounder! I knew you could skate!"

"Me learnee quicke!"

"The jokefulness of the esteemed rotten Chinese is great!" said Hurree Singh. "I think I will bump him on the ice for a further great jokefulness!"

And the nabob shot towards the Chinese.

But Wun Lung promptly dodged out of the way, and Hurree Singh, who was going at a great rate, ran right into Bob Cherry, and both of them went spinning.

Wun Lung, grinning gleefully, skated away at a great speed, and vanished along the lake under the leafless branches of the trees.

"The young bounder!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

Harry, Hazeldene, and Marjorie skated on in the wake of the Chinese. Wun Lung was skimming along, his loose garments fluttering in the wind. His quaint little face was glowing.

Too intent upon his skating to observe his surroundings very keenly, the little Chinese did not see a pair of savage eyes that were watching him from the thickets ahead, and noting his closer approach with spiteful satisfaction.

The coppery complexion and stubbly chin of Mr.

Purkiss were hidden by the frosty thicket, and the rascal was grasping a short, thick cudgel.

Wun Lung skated right on, within a couple of feet of the end of the lake, and then spun round on his skates.

Whiz!

The oak cudgel flew through the air. But the Chinese junior was a difficult target, and an unexpected turn saved Wun Lung from the missile.

The cudgel flew past his head and crashed down on the ice a dozen yards away, and the Chinese looked at it, with a scared start.

Purkiss ground his teeth.

His hand sought the ground for a stone. But Harry Wharton had seen the flying cudgel, and he was shouting to Wun Lung:

"Look out!"

Wharton left Marjorie's side and made a straight run for the bank. In a few seconds he was there, and kicking off his skates. Purkiss, from his position in the ruffian, could not see Harry, a big tree intervening. But as soon as the junior had got rid of his skates, and came plunging through the bushes towards him, the ruffian realised that he was in danger, and he turned to run.

Harry burst through the bushes as he ran, sprang upon him from behind, and dragged him to the ground.

"Purkiss!" he exclaimed. "I thought as much!"

"Let me go!" panted the ruffian, with an oath.

Purkiss struggled savagely, and Harry was dragged to the ground. He shouted to his chums, who were coming as fast as they could. Bob Cherry, on his skates, came plunging through the bushes and threw himself headlong on Purkiss. The rascal was crushed to the ground under the junior's weight.

The ground at this spot was sloping, with a steep slope to the frozen lake. The three struggling forms rolled down the bank together, crashed through the reeds, and rolled on the ice.

Wun Lung came gliding up.

"Me teachee lesson!" he said. "Lettee go!"

On the ice Purkiss was helpless. Wun Lung took a grip on his ankles and started skating off. With the ruffian sliding on his back on the smooth ice, his weight was nothing. With his arms outspread, and one leg kicking wildly in the air, Purkiss was dragged along in the wake of the Chinese, while the Greyfriars juniors stood round roaring with laughter.

(Wun Lung's making Purkiss look small now—but the ruffian gets the Chinese into his power in next week's thrilling chapters. Don't miss the Greyfriars chums further Yuletide adventures.)



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