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No. 38 (New Series)

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July 17, 1920



OVERBOARD!—DRAKE'S DESPERATE PLIGHT IN MID-ATLANTIC.

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By Harry Wharton.

OUR ESSAY COMPETITION!

My dear Chums,—It is with great pleasure that I am able to tell you that I had a simply splendid response to my invitation to you given in the issue of June 12th of THE GREYFRIARS HERALD to express your opinions as though you were editor. A whole shoal of "Essays" arrived which, almost without exception, were creditable to you in the extreme, and helpful to me in gauging your tastes in stories and other reading matter.

WANTED—A MIXTURE.

Typical of a great number was the neatly written, pale blue postcard sent by Miss M. Jarvis, of Barnes. "I think the HERALD is the jolliest weekly book on record," she wrote, "because there is a mixture of stories—some very funny and some quite serious. Too many stories of one kind. I think, would become dull." And so, my chums, think the majority of you, apparently.

Of course, there were some who plumped for all school tales, and others who voted, "Let's have more serials!" But, unfortunate though it be, it is impossible to satisfy each one individually, so the majority must have their way. I was jolly glad, however, to see such a sporting spirit among you. As one chum said in his "Essay," "Although I do not care for the adventure tale so much as the Jack Drake story, I've no doubt any number of fellows do, and therefore I say, 'Let them have what they like as well!'" That shows a fine spirit!

A DIFFICULT JOB!

The judging of our little "Essay" competition was a difficult task, but I solved it by allowing each member of my regular staff to read the postcards after I had done so myself. Then we balloted for the winner. The most votes were recorded for the sound policy indicated in the thoughtful "Essay" sent in by F. W. Milne, 38, Fairhaven Grove, Chiswick, W 4. Congrats, Comrade Milne!

Through lack of space I cannot deal with some of the suggestions sent in as I should like to do in this number, but I will take an early opportunity of doing so. Meanwhile, my heartiest thanks to all who wrote to me. Your cheery pal,

HARRY.



THE OWL SINKS TO A LOW DODGE! - - - Drawn by FRANK NUGENT!



1. Dear All,—The above handsome athlete and walking advertisement for Cherry Blossom is none other than Koumi Rao, the Jam of Blundelpore, one of the lights—even though a bit smoky—of St. Jim's college. He is playing golf against Greyfriars.



2. But our ancient aunt! When Koumi struck at the ball with his brand-new three-and-ninepenny championship driver, the head of the beastly weapon went hurling through the air—so. Then loud chuckles came from Billy Bunter in the next picture.



3. Yes, Bunter, his wily opponent, had sunk a white-enamelled bedpost in the first tee, and when he showed Koumi the dodge the Indian junior developed complicated convulsions of the cranium, and needed fourteen ginger-beers to revive him!

THE MUTINY SHIP!

A splendid, long, complete tale of our magnificent new series dealing with the adventures of the boys of the Benbow

By OWEN CONQUEST

(Author of the famous Rookwood school stories appearing weekly in the Boys' Friend)

CHAPTER I.

Missing!

"**D**RAKE!"
No reply.
"Drake!" repeated Mr. Packe, raising his voice a little.

The boys of the Benbow were gathered on the deck for evening call-over, and all of them were there—with one exception.

Jack Drake, of the Fourth, had not turned up.

Dick Rodney glanced round, looking for his chum. He was tempted to answer "Adsum" for Drake, but he refrained. He was, in fact, feeling rather uneasy about Jack Drake.

At St. Winifred's, on shore, it was not uncommon for a fellow to miss call-over; but in the narrow confines of the school at sea, there was no excuse for not turning up in time. Nobody on board the old ship could fail to be aware that the roll was being called on deck.

Mr. Packe frowned and went on with the roll when it was clear that Jack Drake was not present.

When the school was dismissed, the Form-master called to Rodney.

"Do you know where Drake is, Rodney?" he inquired severely.

"No, sir; I haven't seen him for an hour or more," answered Rodney. "He must be somewhere about the ship, of course."

"Naturally. Find him and tell him to come to my cabin at once," said Mr. Packe.

"Yes, sir."

The Fourth Form-master retired to his cabin, and Dick Rodney began the search for his chum, assisted by Tuckey Toodles.

What had become of Jack Drake was a mystery; and the other fellows were soon interested in the search, and looking for the missing junior high and low.

He was not in the Fourth-form cabins or in the common-room, and he was not to be seen about the decks, and hailing the tops for him brought no answer.

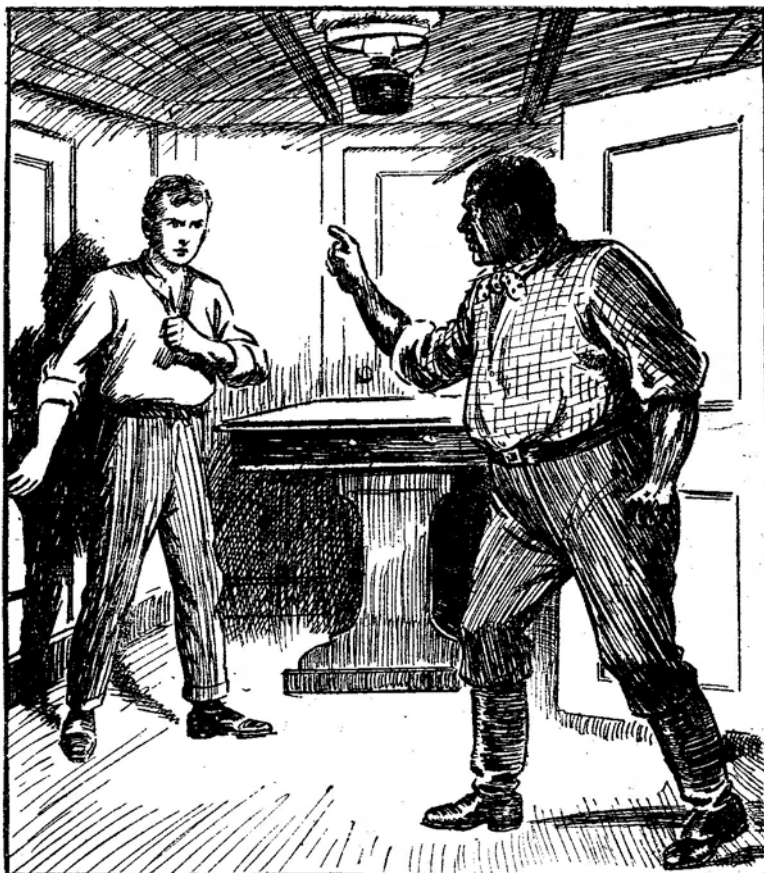
It was close on bedtime when Dick Rodney tapped at the door of Vernon Daubeny's cabin, in the Shell quarters.

He looked in, and found Daubeny of the Shell there, with Egan and Torrence.

The latter two were discussing Drake, but Daubeny was silent, and the cigarette between his teeth was unlighted. His face was pale and drawn in the light of the swinging lamp.

"Have you fellows seen anything of Drake?" Rodney inquired.

"Nothin' at all," said Egan, staring at the Fourth-former. "Drake's no friend of ours. You



"You no loaf 'bout, you white trash," said Napoleon Bonaparte severely. "You clean up cuddy, and get busy!"

don't expect to find him here, I suppose?"

"Not likely," grinned Torrence.

"I'm speaking to you, Daub!"

"I don't know anythin' about him," said Vernon Daubeny, speaking with a visible effort.

Rodney's eyes dwelt upon his pale face very sharply.

"Are you sure of that?" he asked.

"Of course I'm sure!" broke out Daubeny irritably. "What the thump do you mean? What should I know about Drake?"

"There was a fight arranged between you and Drake, and you kept out of sight to keep clear of it," said Rodney coldly. "I thought perhaps Drake might have found you."

"He didn't."

"If you've played any trick on him," said Rodney quietly, "you'd better own up. If he's still missing at bedtime there will be a row."

Daubeny breathed hard.

"What do you mean, you chump? What trick could I play on him?"

"He must be shut up somewhere, or he would have shown up before this," answered Rodney. "I thought you fellows might have caught him napping, and stuck him in the hold, or something!"

"Well, we haven't."

"Perhaps he's fallen overboard!" suggested Egan. "He was always doin' some stunts in the riggin'."

Rodney started.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed.

"I don't see that it's impossible," said Daubeny, with dry lips. "Fellows do fall overboard, I suppose?"

"The sea's runnin' fairly high, and the watch on deck mightn't hear a splash, you know," continued Egan, with a grin. "Better dive over and look for him in Davy Jones's locker, Rodney."

Torrence chuckled.

As a matter of fact, the two Shell fellows did not think for a moment that Jack Drake might have fallen overboard, or they would not have been so humorous on the subject.

But the suggestion sent a chill to Rodney's heart.

If Drake was still on board the Benbow, where was he? Unless he had been shut up in some recess of the ship by Daubeny and Co. for a "lark," there was no accounting for his disappearance, unless he had slipped over the side.

Dick Rodney left the cabin with a deeply troubled face.

"You—you fellows shouldn't joke about a thing like that," muttered Daubeny. "It's not a jokin' matter."

Egan laughed.

"Only pullin' Rodney's leg," he said. "He shouldn't come here askin' for his precious pal. We don't know anythin' about him, and don't want

to. All the same, it's queer what's become of him."

"Daub's been dodgin' him to keep out of the scrap," said Torrence. "Is it possible that Drake is dodgin' Daub, too?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon Daubeny was silent. Torrence's remark would have brought angry words from his lips at any other time, but Daub was not capable of anger now.

Still before his eyes was the dreadful vision of Jack Drake, slipping from the maintop under a hasty blow and vanishing into the darkness of the sea.

That vision haunted Vernon Daubeny; it was likely to haunt him to his dying day, if Drake had indeed found his death in the depths of the Atlantic.

He did not dare to confide the fearful secret to his chums.

It had been an accident; he told himself feverishly, over and over again, that it had been an accident. But it had been his hand that had struck the junior from his hold—his hand that had sent Jack Drake spinning into the shadowed sea. He dared not speak.

Dick Rodney went directly to Mr. Packe's cabin after leaving the Bucks of the Shell.

"You have found Drake?" asked the Form-master, as Rodney presented himself. "Why has he not come here with you, then?"

"I've not found him, sir."

"What?"

"He can't be found. It—it"—Rodney's voice faltered—"it begins to look as if he isn't on board the Benbow at all, sir."

Mr. Packe started to his feet.

"Not on board the Benbow! What do you mean? It is not possible that he has fallen overboard?"

Rodney did not answer.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Packe. "This must be seen to at once!"

The Form-master hurried on deck.

In a few minutes more Captain Topcastle had called all hands to search the ship.

But the search was in vain.

And the boatswain remembered that earlier in the evening he had seen Drake climbing the main shrouds. Two or three seamen searched the maintop and the cross-trees. From end to end of the Benbow every recess was ransacked.

Bedtime was forgotten. There was a thrill of excitement and horror through the school ship.

For it was plain to all now that Jack Drake, of the Fourth, was no longer on board the Benbow; the dark waters that whirled by the hull alone knew his fate.

"Bout ship!"

That was Captain Topcastle's order.

Jack Drake was overboard; how many a long mile behind the ship no one knew or could guess.

The hope of saving him was faint; indeed, there was no hope. But not a chance was to be left untried; and the Benbow surged back upon her course, with eager eyes watching the sea in the faint glimmer of the stars.

Overboard!

LIGHTS danced before the eyes of Jack Drake as he came to the surface after his deep plunge.

They were the stern lights of the Benbow, gliding away into the night.

The fall from the maintop, the sudden plunge into the sea, had dazed the St. Winifred's junior; for some moments he hardly knew what had happened, though he struck out by instinct and kept himself afloat.

The slant of the ship as she rolled had caused him to fall clear when he was struck down, otherwise he would have crashed on the Benbow, and the fall would have killed him instantly. But it remained to be seen whether he had escaped that terrible fate, only to die a more lingering death. He was alone—alone on the wide sea, with the ship's lights fading away in the distance, and not a soul on board aware of his fate—excepting the white-faced, trembling, guilty Shell fellow crouching in the maintop.

As his brain cleared, the junior shouted, but shouting was in vain. The dash of the waves and the murmur of the wind would have drowned his voice if the Benbow had been close, and the ship was already distant.

Desperately the junior struck out after the fading, winking lights that mocked him from the distance.

It was well for him that he was a good swimmer, though perhaps his desperate swim was but prolonging his fate.

Swimming did not serve him, however. The swell of the ocean tossed him like a cork, and the lights of the Benbow died away in the distant night.

When he rose on the sea-swell he looked eagerly for the lights again and again, but they had vanished.

It was then that despair rushed upon him.

Evidently his fall overboard had not been seen on board; probably he would not even be missed till evening call-over.

Would Daubeny speak?

Doubtless Daubeny supposed that he had gone straight down to his death like a plummet, for evidently he had not spoken. If Daubeny had given the alarm the ship would have stopped for him. Daubeny could not know, he could not guess, that the hapless junior was still swimming for his life; and believing that Drake was dead, terror tied his tongue.

Drake realised it, and he realised that the ship would not turn back—not, at all events, until his fate was discovered by someone other than Daubeny.

That would be too late.

Even if he was still afloat, what chance had they of finding him on the boundless expanse of the Atlantic?

With a shudder and a chill at his heart, Drake realised that there was no hope of rescue.

He continued to swim, keeping himself afloat; mere instinct impelled him to do that, though he was in despair.

Overhead a star or two glimmered from banks of clouds, here and there he caught a white glimpse on the

crest of a wave. Save for that darkness enwrapped him.

The murmur of the water in his ears began to lull him into a kind of stupor.

A wave broke over him, and for some seconds he was under water, and he came up again dizzy and dazed.

Dimly he understood that the end was coming; his strength was going, and ere long a wave would swamp him and he would not rise again, or rise only to toss to and fro, inert, like a log on the sea.

Suddenly he started from the lethargy that was falling upon him—the lethargy that was the precursor of death.

A sound came through the murmur of the pitiless waters—a sudden sharp sound, so strange in the midst of the waters, that it startled all his faculties and recalled his wandering senses.

It was the report of a firearm.

Drake pulled himself together and stared round dazedly over the tumbling waters.

Crack! crack!

It was no feverish fancy, the sound was repeated again and again—almost a fusillade of sharp shots.

Drake panted and swam more strongly.

The thought came into his mind that the firing was a signalling from the Benbow, searching for him on the sea.

He strained his eyes to look.

Two lights came winking across the dark waters—so close at hand that he gave an involuntary cry as he saw them. But for the lethargy that had seized on him, he must have seen them earlier.

But they were not the lights of the Benbow, they were too close down to the water for that. They were the side-lights, red and green, of a small vessel coming almost directly towards him. And it was from that vessel that the firing came.

Crack! crack!

They were the last two shots.

The firing was followed by silence, and in the silence Jack Drake thought he heard a distant splash.

The winking lights came on.

He could see other lights now, and dimly there loomed up, in the shadows, the form of a small schooner under mainsail and jib.

All the junior's senses were on the alert now; the chance of rescue had given him new life and strength. He shouted with all his force.

"Help! Ship ahoy! Help!"

The lights came on, but there was no answer to his call. The schooner was very close now, the red and green lights seemed to glare down on him, the mainsail shut off the stars. He shouted again and again desperately, in the fear that the vessel would run him down and glide on her course over his body.

Something that floated on the water struck him, and he threw out his hand to catch hold for support. His grasp closed on the collar of a pea-jacket, and for an instant he saw a white, set face, ere he let go his hold with a shudder. He remembered the

splash he had heard. It was a lifeless body that was floating past him in the sea.

"Help! Help!"

What was happening on board the strange schooner? He did not know—he hardly cared. He was only thinking of a helping hand to draw him from the engulfing waves.

"Help!"

To his amazement there came a hoarse shout not a dozen yards from him in the shadowed water.

"A moi! A moi!"

A man was shouting for help in French, and his shout mingled with that of the junior.

"A moi!"

Lights flashed on the mysterious schooner, and Drake heard a hoarse shouting. He saw the schooner round to when it was almost upon him; he heard the creaking of the flivits, and knew that a boat had dropped into the sea. The schooner had stopped, and a boat had been lowered.

A lantern gleamed over the waters.

"Hola! Hola! Ou etes vous?" shouted a deep voice.

"Here!" shouted Drake.

"Ioi!" shrieked the voice near him.

The boat came on.

A dark-skinned man, with curly black hair, was standing up in the bows, lantern in hand. Two seamen were at the oars, and a third at the rudder. Drake's face showed white in the lantern light.

A hand grasped his shoulder, and he was dragged, gasping, into the boat. He sank down in a pool of water.

"Voila!" said the black-curl'd seaman, with a laugh.

"A moi!" came a howl from the sea.

The man started.

Evidently he had supposed that it was the Frenchman he had dragged into the boat.

"Mon Dieu!" he ejaculated, in astonishment. He bent over Drake, and turned the light full on his face, staring at him blankly. "Mon Dieu! C'est un garçon—un Anglais, je crois! Mais comment?"

Before Drake could speak he turned away, and the boat glided on to the drowning Frenchman.

The black-locked seaman dragged him aboard, and the boat pulled back to the waiting schooner.

Then the man, who was evidently in command, turned to Drake again, and spoke to him, scanning his face intently in the lantern light.

Saved From the Sea!

JACK DRAKE sat up in the bottom of the boat, drenched with water and panting for breath. His strength was spent. But exhausted as he, he was wondering into what strange hands he had fallen. That there was something amiss on board the French schooner he could not fail to know. The firing and the dead body that had floated by him in the sea told as much, too plainly to be mistaken.

The face that looked at him in the lantern light was not a pleasant one. It was a rather handsome face, swarthy and reckless, with a black

curly beard and black hair, evidently a Frenchman's face. The look in the black, glinting eyes was not reassuring.

He spoke in English.

"Who are you? How did you come here, boy?"

"I fell overboard from the Benbow!" gasped Drake.

"The Benbow? An English ship?"

"Yes."

"Is she near at hand?"

"No. It was more than an hour ago, I think."

"Ma foi! And you have been swimming all that time?"

"Yes."

"Bon! You are a good swimmer, mon garçon, and you may go for another swim," said the black-bearded man.

Drake stared at him, hardly comprehending.

With a mocking grin, the black-bearded seaman pointed over the gunwale of the boat, to the dark waters.

"Vous comprenez?" he asked.

"Are you mad?" panted Drake. "You will not refuse to save my life?"

"Alas, monsieur, I am not here to save the lives of strangers, and there is no room on board my ship for you," said the black-bearded man, still with the mocking grin on his swarthy face.

"Your ship?" exclaimed Drake. He could see that the man was dressed like a seaman. "Where is your captain? I demand to speak to your captain."

"Parbleu! You will have the opportunity, since our captain is in the locker of Davy Jones, and you are going there!" answered the man coolly. "Give him the regards of Gaston Dubois."

Drake shuddered.

He remembered the body that had floated past him in the sea.

The boat was close under the schooner's quarter now. Gaston Dubois laid a heavy hand on the junior's shoulder.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

Drake panted.

"You can't mean it! You can't mean—"

The Frenchman who had been dragged into the boat moved forward, and caught Gaston Dubois by the arm.

"Jamais!" he said sharply. "Laissez le garçon! Mais vous etes fou."

"Taisez-vous, Pierre Dandin."

Two or three faces looked down from the schooner into the boat. They were bearded, excited faces; there was a jabbering of voices in French. Gaston Dubois tightened his grip on Drake's shoulder, but Dandin continued to speak in rapid French—so rapid that Drake, though he knew French fairly well, could scarcely follow his meaning. But he understood that the seaman was speaking for his life.

"Soit!" exclaimed Dubois at last. He released the junior. "What is your name, boy?"

"Jack Drake."

"If I take you aboard my schooner, will you make yourself useful? We are short-handed—our crew has had losses this night." He grinned.

"We are several hands short, and Dandin thinks you may be useful. After all, a boy will do no harm."

"I am willing to work, if that is what you mean," answered Drake, his heart throbbing with relief.

"Allons, done."

Drake was passed up the side of the schooner, and in a few moments the boat was slung up to the davits, and the vessel was under way again.

Once he was on the deck, no further notice was taken of the school-boy.

Hardly one of the French seamen glanced at him, and both Dubois and Dandin seemed to have forgotten his existence.

Drake remained in the shadow of the boat, resting, and only too glad to keep out of the way of the ruffians into whose hands he had fallen.

He did not need telling now that there had been a mutiny of board the French schooner, and that it was taking place at the very time he sighted the vessel's lights.

And the struggle was not, apparently, over yet.

Gaston Dubois had gone down the companion, and Drake could hear his voice shouting in the cuddy, in French.

From what he said, it was easy to gather that two at least of the ship's officers had barred themselves in their cabins, and were still living. The remainder of the crew seemed to be under Dubois' orders.

The cuddy was swarming with seamen, and Drake heard a sound of hammering, followed by a revolver-shot.

Then there were oaths and shouts, and the hammering ceased.

The two mates were evidently defending themselves in their quarters.

Drake's brain was in a whirl.

He was fervently glad to have escaped the peril of the sea, but it looked as if he had escaped from the frying-pan into the fire.

Seamen passed him in the shadows, and from their excited talk the junior soon learned more completely how matters stood.

The mutiny had come suddenly, when the French captain was taking the watch on deck. The mutineers had rushed him, and he had used his revolver, before he was tossed overboard, and in the struggle Pierre Dandin had been knocked into the sea. It was, the latter circumstance that had saved Drake's life; the ruffians had stopped for their comrade, as they would not have been likely to do for Drake's cries for help. The two mates below, alarmed by the firing, had had time to bar themselves in their quarters when the rush of the mutineers came, and they were still holding out.

The hapless junior felt sick at heart. Dandin had saved his life, whether from an impulse of humanity, or from the knowledge that, the schooner being short-handed, the boy would be useful. Probably from both motives mingled. But he knew that his life hung upon a thread.

It seemed like a ghastly dream to him.

He was startled from his miserable reflections by two splashes in the sea, and he knew that two bodies had been

slid overboard. He did not doubt that they were the bodies of mutineers who had fallen in the conflict. Gaston Dubois came back on the deck at last, and his eyes fell on the schoolboy. He gave a start.

"Ah! J'avais oublié!" he exclaimed, showing his teeth in a grin. "You belong to my ship now, mon garçon."

"Yes," said Drake quietly.

He did not show the horror and disgust that he felt in the presence of the ruffian. His life depended on a word from Gaston Dubois.

The Frenchman pointed forward.

"You will find yourself a bunk in the fore-castle. You are not wanted now. Allez-vous-en."

"Very well."

Drake stumbled forward to the little, dark, evil-smelling fore-castle of the schooner.

He found it quite deserted; all the crew were aft now. He was glad to find an empty bunk, and turn into it.

The junior was utterly exhausted, and in great need of rest. In spite of his wild surroundings, he was soon in a sound sleep—dreaming that he was back on the Benbow, in his hammock slung between those of Dick Rodney and Tuckey Toodles.

In Desperate Hands!

JACK DRAKE was awakened by being turned bodily out of the bunk. He came to the floor heavily, and picked himself up, rather dazed. A rough seaman grinned at him, and pointed to the deck, jabbering in French. Drake caught the word "travailler," and comprehended that he was to turn to work.

He emerged from the fore-castle, and blinked round him in the sunlight. It was morning, and the sun was high in the heavens. Drake cast a quick, searching glance round the horizon, in the faint hope of seeing the sails of the old Benbow. But he was disappointed. Only a blur of smoke from a distant steamer broke the line of sea and sky.

Five or six seamen were loafing about the deck, most of them smoking, and two or three under the influence of liquor. Discipline on the vessel evidently had been ended by the mutiny. Gaston Dubois and Pierre Dandin were chatting aft. Drake wondered what had become of the two mates in the cabin below. If they had fallen into the hands of the mutineers, there was no doubt as to their fate.

Dubois beckoned to him to approach. "Bonjour, mon garçon!" he said, with his evil, mocking smile. "I am going to make you my cabin-boy. You will turn to on deck when you are wanted. You'll take your orders from the cook. Go to the galley at once."

"Very well," said Drake.

He found his way to the little, dirty galley of the schooner, where a fat, perspiring black man was engaged in cooking. The black man looked round at him.

"Who de dickens are you?" he inquired politely.

"Cabin-boy, at present," answered Drake. "I'm at your orders."

"Touch hat to your superior officer, den."

"What?"

"Or I soon make you!" added Cooky, picking up a big wooden ladle with a flourish.

Drake's cap was gone, but he touched his forelock to the important black man. Cooky grinned approval.

"You 'bey orders, and you get on all right in dis galley," he said. "You find Napoleon Bonaparte all right if you 'bey orders."

Drake grinned.

Napoleon Bonaparte speedily set him to work, and his first task was to take the new captain's breakfast into the cuddy, where he laid the table and set out the meal, under the instructions of the black cook, aided by an occasional curse.

Gaston Dubois and Dandin came down to breakfast together, and Drake was kept pretty busy waiting on them.

returned to the deck, and Drake was left alone in the cuddy to clear up.

He stepped to the companion, and looked up the ladder, and listened. There was a murmur of voices above, but he could not distinguish the words. Feeling secure now, he stepped back, and approached the barricaded cabin doors, and tapped lightly upon the first door.

To his surprise, an English voice answered the tap from within.

"Are you there agin, you lubbers? You can come in as soon as you like."

"Hush!" There was a bullet-hole through the door, and Drake, approached his lips to it to whisper, "I am a friend."

"Who are you? I don't know your voice. English?"

"Yes. I was picked up last night, at sea."



A dark-skinned man was standing up in the bows of the boat, lantern in hand.

He soon discovered that the two mates were still in the cabins, which opened off the little cuddy.

The doors were closed, and fastened within, and outside them some articles of furniture had been piled, to keep the mates from making a sudden appearance and attacking the mutineers without warning. The two officers were prisoners in their cabins, and the mutineers appeared to be content to leave them there rather than face their revolvers at close quarters. Probably Dubois was postponing their fate till they should be weak from hunger. It went against the grain with Drake to wait upon the two villains in the cuddy, but he had no choice about the matter, and besides, he did not forget that Dandin, at least, had put in the word that saved his life. He owed the mutineer that much.

After breakfast the two rascals

"You've landed in a bad box, then."

"You are English?" asked Drake.

"John Jones, chief mate of the schooner," was the reply. "Do you know what's become of the captain?"

"Overboard," answered Drake.

"So that rascal said. Then there's only me and Gautier, in the next cabin. I suppose the villains mean to starve us out." An eye was glimmering through the hole, taking stock of the schoolboy from within. "I suppose the coast is clear there, as you are speaking to me?"

"I'm alone in the cuddy. Can I do anything to help you?" whispered Drake. "Speak low. The cook may come in any minute."

"They mean to starve me out," muttered the mate. "I've tried to get out of the cabin, and chance it, but

the door's blocked. If you could let me loose—"

"What could you do, against so many?"

"I reckon there's one thing I could do, if I could get out of this without being shot down as soon as I show my nose," answered Jones. "I reckon I could turn the tables on those rascals, in a way they don't look for. Are you game to help?"

"Hush! I'll do what I can. Hush, now."

Drake stepped quickly away from the cabin door, as he heard the shuffling footsteps of the cook. Napoleon Bonaparte shook a black and dirty forefinger at him.

"You no loaf 'bout," he said severely. "You no loaf 'bout, you white trash. You clean up cuddy, and get busy, or I make you understand."

"All right," said Drake.

"You say 'Ay, ay, sir,' to superior officer," said Napoleon.

"Ay, ay, sir," said Drake meekly.

"Dat better," said Napoleon; and with a satisfied grin he returned to the cuddy, after setting the new cabin-boy to work.

Drake set cheerfully to work with the broom, making a good deal of noise with it. He was determined to do as the chief mate had asked him, but there were several heavy articles piled outside the cabin door, which could not be removed without noise. He clattered the broom in the companion-way, and then about the cuddy, and then he began to shift aside the furniture from the door. Soon the door was free.

He whispered a word in at the hole, and the next moment the door opened. A thick-set man with a bushy red beard stepped out into the cuddy, revolver in hand.

He did not speak a word to Drake. There was no time, but he motioned to the schoolboy to help him free the other cabin door. In a few minutes the second cabin was open, and a slim young Frenchman stepped out. It was Gautier, the second mate of the schooner.

"You white trash—"

It was the voice of the black cook.

He came along suddenly into the cuddy, and almost staggered with astonishment at the sight of the two mates.

With a wild yell he turned and fled. "Now for it!" muttered the chief mate. "There's only one way, Gautier. Come on!"

The second mate nodded, and followed his companion, with a rush, through the alley-way into the galley.

Napoleon Bonaparte had fled from his quarters to the deck, and Jones was only just in time to shut the galley door and secure it. Then he turned up a hatch in the galley floor, disclosing a ladder leading into the depths below.

Drake had followed the two mates, in a state of bewilderment. The mutineers were firing into the cuddy through the broken skylight. Drake caught Jones by the arm, as he was plunging down the narrow trap into the hold.

"What are you going to do? What—"

"Follow me!"

The chief mate disappeared, and Gautier followed him instantly, and Drake was left alone. But there was nothing to do now but to follow, and he clambered down the ladder into the dark and somewhat noisome depths. He stumbled blindly in the hold among the cargo of the schooner, unable to see even his companions in the darkness. A minute later a face appeared at the galley-hatch above. The chief mate fired up at it, and it vanished instantly.

"They won't follow us here, I reckon," said the mate grimly. "We've got plenty of time. Gaston Dubois will never sail this schooner to the South Seas, Gautier!"

"Jamais, je crois," answered the second mate, with a grim chuckle.

"What are you going to do?" panted Drake.

"What do you reckon?" answered the chief mate. "We're done for, and the schooner's in the hands of those murderous thieves. It's hard on you, youngster, but you'd never have been allowed to leave this craft alive, to put justice on their track. It's Davy Jones for all of us—and we're all going together."

Drake panted.

"But—but what is it you mean to do, then, in the hold?"

The mate's answer was short and sharp.

"Scuttle the schooner."

THE END.

Next week's ripping, long, complete tale of the school at sea will be "The Scuttled Schooner!" Don't miss it!

RESULT OF TUCK HAMPER COMPETITION.—No. 32.

In this competition two competitors sent in correct solutions of the pictures. The First Prize of £2 10s. has therefore been divided between:

JOHN O'BRIEN Junr.,
13, Old Mill Road,
Uddingston, Lanarkshire;

BRIAN DUNCAN,
Culverlands, Green Lane,
Stanmore, Middlesex.

Tuck Hampers have been awarded to the following eight competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

Cecil E. Ward, 3, Wilmington Square, Finsbury, W.C.1; Reg. Walker, 7, Henrietta Street, Coventry; L. Williams, Woodland House, Plymouth; A. C. Gunn, 80, Netherfield Lane, Parkgate, near Rotherham; N. Wildsmith, 12, Brunswick Street, Leamington; Thos. Jillagee, 29, Ophir Gardens, Belfast; Lilian Cornelius, 21, Compton Road, Canonbury, N.1; Edwin Coates, 20, Chuckyry Road, Walsall, Staffs.

CORRECT SOLUTION:

Dear Readers,—It is extraordinary but true that Billy Bunter's "Krieket Kollum" has "caught on." Judging from the large numbers of letters received, it is very popular. I tell you this in a competition so that the porpoise can't read it, otherwise he would want two more doughnuts a week for writing it.

HARRY

MY KRICKET KOLLUM

By
BILLY BUNTER

"I SAY, Wharton," I said, intercepting the kaptin of the Remove in the passidge. "Am I to play this afternoon against Wapshot Wanderers, or knot?"

"Knot!" Wharton's anser rang owt like a pistle-shott.

"Why knot?" I demanded. "Bekaws you let the team down larst week. Instedd of fixing your attenshun on the game, you sneeked up to the tee-tables and skoffed all the grubb."

"In a moment of weeknes," I replied, "I sertinly helped myself to the grubb. But you shouldn't have putt temptashun in a felo's way. Now look here, Wharton, be a sport, and let me akkompany the team to Wapshot. If you don't, you'll get a terribul licking!"

"From you?" asked Wharton, klenching his hands aggressively.

"Nunno! I meen from Wapshot." Wharton gave a larf and beet it.

As I rolled away in grate defeckshun, I met Wingate of the 6th. in the Close.

"What's rong, Bunter?" he said.

"Ahem! The fackt is, Wingate," I replied, "I want to borro ½ a krown untill my postal-order arives, to pay my fare to Wapshot. You see, I've bean selekcted to play krieket for the Remove; and unless I can raise the munny for my fare, I shall be farely in the kart!"

Wingate seemed impressed, and arfter sum debait, gave me a 2 shilling peace, and a tanner from his peckit.

"Thanks orfully, Wingate!" I cride gratefully. "If I skore a sentury—and I'm pritty sertain to do that—it wil be dew entirely to yore jenny-rossity!"

I hurried away, but I must confess that I got no ferther than the refreshmeant buffay on Friardale stashun.

By the time I had bought a few sandwidges, I lacked the wearwithall to proseed to Wapshot.

It was farely late in the day when I got back to Greyfriars. And I had the missfortune to bump into Wingate in the Close.

"Who wun?" he asked.

"We did, Wingate!" I said proudly. "And I managed to skore a sentury!"

"You yung fibber!" rored the kaptin of Greyfriars. "I have reeson to no that you haven't bean to Wapshot at all!"

"Oh, crumms!"

"You will follo me to my studdy," said Wingate, "and I will endever, with the ade of a nash-plant, to teech you to speek the trooth!"

And for the rest of that day I felt very soar, both fizzically and mentaly.

THE END.

THE CASE OF THE MUSICIAN!

Our Great New Series dealing with the amazing adventures of

HERLOCK SHOLMES
DETECTIVE

Written by

PETER TODD

A MYSTERIOUS case, Jotson, remarked Herlock Sholmes. "Put on your hat, my dear fellow, and I will tell you about it as we go along. I have promised to call at Mrs. Mopley's flat immediately."

I purred with pleasure as I walked down Shaker Street with Sholmes. It was always a delight to me to share in the investigations of my amazing friend.

"Some mysterious murder?" I inquired.

"Not so bad as that. It appears to be a case of theft—a very mysterious case. On half a dozen separate occasions a bottle of medicine has mysteriously disappeared from the Mopley flat. A few weeks ago, Mrs. Mopley began to take Toxin's Tonic regularly. Her husband is a musician, at present engaged in composing a symphony, and Mrs. Mopley has found it necessary to keep up her strength by this means. Now, on almost every occasion when Mrs. Mopley has been absent from the flat, her tonic has disappeared during her absence."

"Extraordinary!" I exclaimed. "She is accustomed to leaving the bottle of tonic on the mantelpiece in the sitting-room of the flat. On almost every occasion on her return from any absence she has found the bottle empty. The contents have most mysteriously disappeared."

"The servants—"

"There are none. No one has access to the flat excepting Mr. and Mrs. Mopley."

"There are, perhaps, some suspicious characters in the same block of buildings?"

"Two," said Sholmes. "The flat above is tenanted by a Member of Parliament, and the flat below by a house-agent. But these could hardly be suspected of annexing the contents of a bottle of tonic mixture; they fly at higher game. So far, it is inexplicable. But we shall doubtless learn something from our investigations on the spot!"

We arrived at Mrs. Mopley's flat, and were admitted by the lady herself.

Mrs. Mopley was very agitated. "It is gone again, Mr. Sholmes," she exclaimed, as we entered. "While I was calling upon you, my tonic mixture was abstracted once more."

"You locked the door when you went out?" inquired Sholmes.

"Yes, it is a spring lock!"

"The flat was left empty—"

"Excepting for Mr. Mopley. He was at work in the next room as usual. He is there now!"

Sholmes nodded.

A sound resembling an air-raid mingled with a railway accident was proceeding from the adjoining room, and Sholmes had already divined that Mr. Mopley was there at work upon his symphony.

He stepped to the mantelpiece, and examined the medicine bottle. It was a large bottle, holding about a pint. It was quite empty.

"I left it nearly full," said Mrs. Mopley tearfully.

"Did Mr. Mopley hear anything during your absence?"

"Impossible. While he is composing, nothing else can be heard."

"True!"

"I have not mentioned the matter to Mr. Mopley at all, Mr. Sholmes, his mind is wholly occupied by music, and impenetrable to all other con-



A gentleman with rather wild eyes, and a remarkable head of hair, came into the sitting-room.

siderations. Will you—can you—solve this amazing mystery?"

I gazed silently at Herlock Sholmes. Well, as I knew his extraordinary powers, it appeared to me that this problem was beyond elucidation.

Sholmes was very thoughtful. "It will be necessary for me to remain here for some time," he said, at last. "Place a new bottle of tonic on the mantelpiece, madam, and leave the flat as usual. I will remain in concealment with my friend, Dr. Jotson, and I have no doubt whatever that the mystery will be revealed."

A few minutes later we were alone. On the mantelpiece stood a fresh bottle of Toxin's Tonic full of the mixture. Sholmes and I took cover behind a music-stand, to watch.

For a long time we waited. From the adjoining room came crash on crash of sound, showing that Mr. Mopley was very busy with the piano.

The sounds ceased suddenly. Then there were footsteps, approaching the communicating door.

Sholmes pressed my arm. It was a warning to be silent; and I scarcely breathed as I crouched behind the music-stand, and watched.

The door of Mr. Mopley's room opened.

A gentleman with rather wild eyes, and a remarkable head of hair, came into the sitting-room.

He did not observe us.

He moved restlessly about the room, muttering feverishly, and I caught the words "K sharp minor."

He seemed to be in search for something, and we watched him breathlessly.

He paused at a table where there stood a carafe, and seemed about to refresh himself with a glass of water. But he paused, and moved across to the mantelpiece.

I could scarcely repress an exclamation when I beheld him lift the bottle of tonic, draw the cork, and place the bottle to his lips.

Without stopping to take breath, he drank the contents of the bottle. Herlock Sholmes sprang to his feet. "Hold!" he exclaimed.

In a moment more, his grasp was upon Mr. Mopley's arm.

The musician spun round, with a startled exclamation, and the bottle fell with a crash to the floor.

II.

"**S**HOLMES!" I exclaimed, when, ten minutes later, we were walking back to Shaker Street together.

Sholmes smiled genially. "The denouement surprised you, Jotson?" he said.

"I was astounded. It was, then, Mr. Mopley who abstracted the contents of the bottles of tonic—"

"Undoubtedly. Mr. Mopley is a musician, it was therefore easy for me to deduce that he was of a thirsty nature!"

"True. But why should he drink a tonic mixture—a very disagreeable concoction?"

Sholmes smiled. "Yet it is simple. Mr. Mopley, afflicted with the thirst natural to a member of his profession, came into the sitting-room for something to drink. You saw him pause at the carafe, as if he had resolved to take a glass of water. Then he crossed to the mantelpiece where the bottle stood. Had Mr. Mopley been an architect or a painter, or a poet, undoubtedly he would have quenched his thirst with the water instead of the tonic mixture. But he was a musician, and that made all the difference."

"I am still in the dark, Sholmes. Why—"

"Yet you have studied my methods, Jotson," said Sholmes, with some severity. "Mr. Mopley was undecided with what to quench his thirst. But he is a musician. It was natural—in fact inevitable—for a musician to resolve upon the tonic. Simplicity itself, my dear Jotson!"

THE END.

Next week's laughable adventure will be "The Mystery of the Taxi-cab!"



The GREYFRIARS POLICE COURT

A Vivid Account of all
the latest Charges & Convictions
by Our Special Representative.



Mr. Justice Wharton was asked if this week's police court proceedings might be heard in camera. His worship replied in the negative. The press representatives were therefore allowed to remain.

THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!

His Worship Collars the Loot!

Harold Skinner, Sidney Snoop, William Stott, and Fisher T. Fish, were thrown into the dock in a struggling heap.

Magistrate: Hallo! The old familiar faces! What have these bounders been up to now?

Mr. Robert Cherry, K.C., who conducted the prosecution, said that the four prisoners were charged with breaking out of the Remove dormitory in the middle of the night, and purloining a quantity of pears from the Head's garden.

Magistrate: Do they admit taking the pears?

Prisoner Skinner: No, old fruit! (Laughter.)

Mr. Cherry: I have ample evidence to prove that prisoners are guilty, your worship. I hereby call Inspector Penfold, of Jotland Yard, as first witness.

Magistrate: Where is he? I don't see any sign of him.

Court Usher: He's taking forty winks on the School House steps, your worship.

Magistrate: 'Pon my word, I never saw such a dozey lot as these Jotland Yard officials! Go and rouse him—with a boot, if necessary—and bring him here at once!

The Court Usher departed, returning in a few moments with the yawning inspector.

Magistrate (sharply): Come, sir, pull yourself together, or you'll find yourself in the dock! What do you know about this case?

Detective-inspector Penfold: Last night, your worship, I was suffering from insomnia, having slept too much during the day. I awoke about midnight and discovered that four beds were empty. I surmised that Skinner, Snoop, Stott and Fish had gone on a scrumping expedition.

Magistrate: And what did you do?

Detective-inspector Penfold: Disguising myself as a camp-bedstead (Laughter) I awaited their return.

Magistrate: And then—

Detective-inspector Penfold: I caught them red-handed, your worship, in the act of dragging a sack of pears into the dormitory. "You've been raiding the Head's garden!" I exclaimed. "Right on the wicket!" said the prisoner, Skinner. "If you promise to keep mum about this, you shall have a share in the loot!"

Magistrate: Ho, ho! Bribery and corruption, what? This is a serious matter. Any more witnesses?

Mr. Joseph Mimble, the school gardener lumbered into the witness-box.

Magistrate: What are you, a son of toil!

Mr. Cherry: Judging by his muddy appearance, your worship, he looks more like a ton of soil! (Laughter.)

Magistrate: What do you know of this affair, Mr. Mimble?

Witness: This mornin', Master Wharton, on goin' into the 'Ead's garding, I discovered that one o' my sacks was missin', an' that certin' young raskils 'ad stripped one o' the pear-trees durin' the night.

Magistrate: Good enough! (To prisoners.) I can scarcely find words in which to express my horror at your base and disgraceful conduct! Pear-stealing is a most dastardly offence. You will be sentenced to penal servitude for the rest of the term! By the way, is the sack of pears in court?

Mr. Cherry: Yes, your worship.

Magistrate: Very well. Pass it over here! (Loud laughter.)

His worship then held a disgusting orgy, in which the gentlemen of the jury joined.



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When answering advertisements will our readers kindly mention this paper.



For the best storyette printed on this page a hamper crammed full of delicious tuck will be awarded. Money prizes will be given for all other contributions used. When more than one reader sends in the same acceptable storyette, the prize is awarded to the first read. Remember your joke should be written plainly on a postcard.—Editor.

He'll Get On!

Two clerks, who were having a quiet little game of draughts in office hours, were surprised one day by the sudden appearance of their boss on the scene. The old man was justly indignant.

"Look here," he roared. "How is it working when I come in?"

"I really don't know, sir," remarked the younger of the lads, mildly, "unless it's on account of those rubber-heels you wear!"—Sent in by T. W. Davies, 4, Stanley Road, Skewen, near Neath, Glamorgan, South Wales.

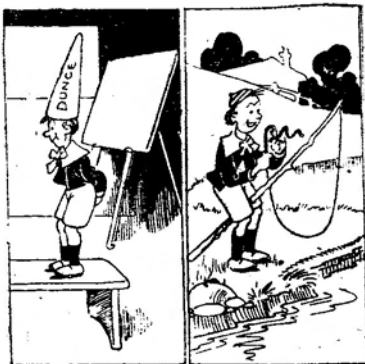
A N-ice Mess!

Bob Cherry: I say, Harry, have you heard that Bunter is very ill this morning?

Harry Wharton: H'm, I suppose the greedy porpoise has been over-eating himself, as usual?

Bob Cherry: It's worse than that. Last night at the tuck-shop, he was eating a huge ice. The silly ass swallowed the spoon, and this morning, in consequence, he can't stir!—Sent in by F. James jun., 521, Fishponds Road, Fishponds, Bristol.

ON THE WRONG LINE!



Now, chums all, answer me this: What is the difference between Percy Potter in school and out of school?

Well, you see, in school he hates his book, whereas out of school he baits his hook. Haw, haw, haw!

Who Was the Lier?

"In that far corner," said the guide to the party of tourists in the ancient edifice, "lies William the Conqueror. Behind the organ, where you can't see 'em, are the tombs o' Guy Fawkes, Robin 'Ood and Sam Weller. Now does that guide book, as I see you have in your 'and, tell you who is lying 'ere, sir?"

"No," murmured the sceptical tourist, "but I can guess!"—Sent in by Eric Durrant, Old Lodge, Morden Hill, Lewisham, S.E.

OUR TUCK-HAMPER PRIZE STORYETTE

NO GROUND FOR COMPLAINT!

The hard-bitten sergeant was teaching the squad of cavalry recruits to jump hedges, but among the number there was one diminutive individual whose motto appeared to be "discretion is the better part of valour." Each time he reached an obstacle he pulled his mount sharply up, and clung tightly to its neck.

"Look 'ere, Bumper," roared the exasperated sergeant, "let me see you go right over next time. All you 'ave to do is to stick your knees in and hold on by 'em."

When the squad attempted the next jump the horse of the unwilling recruit sailed on, while Bumper described a graceful curve through the air, to land with a sickening thud on the ground.

"You silly ass!" howled the sergeant, as he came running up. "Why didn't you do what I told you to?"

Bumper looked up into the face of the irate instructor with a benign expression on his countenance.

"Calm yourself! Calm yourself, sergeant!" he said evenly. "When I found the gee wasn't under me I got off to investigate."—Sent in by A. J. Coote, 17, Richmond Place, Beacon Hill, Bath, to whom a hamper crammed full of delicious tuck has been despatched.

Nothing But the Truth!

Pa: I am very grieved to know, my son, that you have told your mother several falsehoods recently. Always tell the truth, even if it should bring trouble upon you. Will you promise me to do so in future?

Sonny: Yes, father.

Pa: That's right, my little man! Now go and see who's banging at the door, and if it's the landlord, say I'm not at home.—Sent in by N. Steel, 7, Spring Bank, Dalton-in-Furness.

He Got the Bird!

The lecturer on the platform was delivering an address upon the necessity for conserving the remaining forests of the land, and having informed his rural audiences how the timberland of the country had been destroyed ruthlessly in the past, he went on to state that there was much careless and wanton destruction of trees still going on.

"It is my belief," he said raising his voice, "and I venture to assert that there isn't a member of this audience, who has ever raised a finger to prevent the destruction of our forests!"

Silence followed, and then a timid-looking little man quietly arose at the back of the hall.

"Pardon me, sir," he piped, "I've shot woodpeckers!"—Sent in by L. Yarnold, 17, Murrell Street, New Town, Tasmania.

Heavy Humour!

Struck by a notice "Iron sinks" displayed in the window of an iron-monger's shop, a wag entered the place, and stated that he was perfectly aware of the fact.

Alive to the situation, the witty shopkeeper retaliated:

"Yes, and time flies, but wine vaults, sulphur springs, jam rolls, grass slopes, music stands, Niagara falls, moonlight walks, sheep run, Kent hops, holiday trips, scandal spreads, standard weights, India rubber tyres, the organ stops, trade returns and—"

But the would-be wag had bolted. After collecting his thoughts, however, he returned, and thrusting his head inside the door, shouted:

"Yes, I agree with all that perfectly—and marble busts!"—Sent in by Miss Myrtle Lavender, Ivy Cottage, Wheelock Heath, near Sand-bath.

"HARD" LUCK!



Harry Hooper, the crack inside-right of the Wobbleton Wanderers, forgets himself in his first cricket match and heads the ball!



A Startling Mishap!

FOR a few moments Jerry Groat, the bookmaker, listened at the open doors leading to the balcony of the room, at the same time trying to pierce the darkness of the night.

"That sound you heard was only the wind in the old elm-tree," said Andy Finch reassuringly.

Not seeing nor hearing anything further to rouse his suspicions, Groat withdrew into the room again, and took up his theme where he had left off, greatly to the relief of Tony Draycott and Dick Selby, concealed in the foliage without.

"Yes, could we only ship Ginger on board some old windjammer," he said, "the difficulty would be solved. If we discovered a reliable skipper, we could take Ginger along to the seaport in a car, and deliver him on board in his care. And good riddance to the double-dealing rascal, I should say!"

"But wouldn't it look kinder suspicious gettin' him off to the ship, boss?" put in Jim, one of the two ruffians who were holding Ginger down.

"You've got about as much imagination as a tadpole, Jim," said Groat. "It would be as easy as falling off a log. Before we started out we could give Ginger a taste o' what 'Strawberry' gave his lordship's Derby mare

"Ow, don't gimme the dope, Jerry!" howled Ginger, starting up from the couch in a sudden paroxysm of fear. "My delickit constitooshun wouldn't—Woof!"

Bill's ham-like fist prodded him hard in the region of the belt and the spy sank down again with the wind knocked completely out of his thin body.

From their perch in the tree, Tony and Dick exchanged nudges.

"Another clue!" whispered the former delightedly. "Our next job will be to find out who 'Strawberry' is."

"Yes," murmured Dick, "and also who Jerry meant by 'headquarters.'"

But Jerry Groat started speaking again, and both boys listened intently, so as not to miss a word that might help them further to the full elucidation of the baffling case of the plot which had been engineered against their master and his stable.

"Having doped Ginger," continued the bookie evenly, "we could disguise ourselves in blue jerseys, and if we were seen gettin' him on board, folk would only think it was a drunken sailor, being helped back by his mates. Then o' course, by the time Ginger came to his senses again, the windjammer would be miles away at sea. After he's had a voyage to Australia and back, the folk here will have forgotten the name o' Sunfire, and be discussin' next year's Derby."

While the bookmaker was addressing his underlings, the unhappy Ginger sat between Bill and Jim evidently greatly concerned in his mind about the arrangement for dealing with him. His shifty eyes roamed unceasingly round the room, and his lean hands clenched and unclenched nervously.

"Well, we might as well leave things in the 'hands o' Andy for the time bein'," went on the bookmaker, "and see what he can arrange. Now

we'll discuss plans for dealin' with that young rip, Tony Draycott, who started to follow you this afternoon, Jim. We must hit on some method o' dealin' with the nose young pup, in case he gets too troublesome. But first take Ginger back to the middle cellar in the basement."

Ginger sprang to his feet waving his hands wildly.

"I won't go," he howled. "I'll yell the place down first!"

Bill immediately clutched his arm, and Jerry Groat wagged a plump forefinger before the tout's nose.

"Make so much as another cry," said the bookie, "an' you'll get a taste o' what you got before." He picked up a heavy hawthorn stick, and balanced it lightly in his hand. Then, dropping his threatening attitude and tone, he said: "You get plenty of food, Ginger, an' altogether you're bein' treated a good deal better'n you deserve."

But Ginger had apparently a greater dread of his quarters in the cellar, where large rats played among the empty wine casks, than of his former accomplices. As Bill and Jim started to lead him away, the tout suddenly wrenched his arms free and made a frantic dash for the balcony outside the room. Groat shot out his foot to trip up the spy, and Bill, who had been nearly capized by the unexpected break-away, with commendable presence of mind, snatched up a heavy hassock and flung it at Ginger's head.

The hassock missed the tout, who sprawled headlong over the bookie's foot, and went flying through the open doors of the room. Before the two stable-lads concealed in the elm-tree could apprehend the danger to themselves, the hassock caught Dick a heavy thump on the chest, bowling him clean from his precarious perch among the branches. Next moment a loud crash of broken glass woke the echoes as he descended into the middle of a large cucumber frame.

With a white face, Tony gazed down into the darkness below him, while Jerry Groat and the other scoundrels, all unheeding of their captive, who lay groaning on the floor of the room, rushed out on to the balcony.

READ THIS FIRST.

Lord Estor, a grand old British sportsman, is attending Epsom with his daughter, the Hon. Dorothy Cavanagh, a charming girl of sixteen. The bad luck which has dogged the Estors for some time reaches a climax, for Sunfire, the Derby favourite, with Danny Wade up, loses the great race. Afterwards a veterinary surgeon examines Sunfire, and he gives the startling verdict, "The mare has been doped!" Arriving back at Newmarket, Tony Draycott and Dick Selby, two stable-boys, set out to solve the mystery. They suspect that a racecourse tout known as Ginger, and a ruffian with a scar on his cheek, are members of a gang which engineered the affair. They track the latter to the house of Jerry Groat, a notorious bookmaker, where the gang are debating what to do with Ginger, who has tried to betray them. The boys climb into an elm-tree outside and watch the rogues. Suddenly Groat is alarmed by a slight noise and steps on to the balcony.

Jerry Groat Investigates.

UPON the appearance of Jerry Groat and his three underlings on the balcony outside the room, Tony Draycott crouched down on the bough to which he was clinging, and stayed as motionless as the branch itself. Only too well did the boy realise that it was his one chance of remaining undiscovered, for the light from the room, shining into the foliage of the elm-tree, would have revealed assuredly any moving object to the gaze of the gang.

His heart was thumping heavily against his ribs, and a terrible dread gripped his mind as to the fate of his chum, Dick Selby, who had been hurled so suddenly from the tree by the hassock thrown by Bill Simes at the unfortunate Ginger.

But Jerry Groat and Co. had no eyes for the elm-tree opposite the room; their gaze sought to pierce the darkness below the balcony, in an effort to discover the cause of the tremendous crash that had so startled them.

"It—it could only 'ave been that 'assock Bill threw, Jerry," said Andy Finch doubtfully. "It must 'ave dropped into the cucumber-frames."

"Sounded more like a cartload o' bricks!" muttered the bookie. "Listen!"

The four rogues leaned over the balcony, straining their ears to catch any sound from the depths below. Next moment they all started back, as a terrific crash of thunder rolled out, seeming to shake the old mansion to its very foundations.

"I—I expect it was a spatter o' raindrops you heard, boss," said Bill Simes nervously. "W-what else could it 'ave been?"

"I thought I heard a groan, and somethin' moving," said Groat. "I think we'd better investigate."

"Your nerves are gettin' a bit shaky, Jerry," said Andy Finch. "You want a drop o' somethin' to pull you together."

But the bookmaker was too uneasy in his mind to notice the remark. He turned to Bill Simes and Jim Furby, and indicated the grovelling form of the racecourse tout inside the room.

"Take Ginger down to the cellar again, you two," he commanded peremptorily. Then to Finch he said: "You come with me, Andy. We'll go an' have a look at the ground below the balcony. I'll be more satisfied if I see with my own eyes that it was only the hassock which smashed that cucumber-frame."

While Ginger, whose small amount of courage had again completely ebbed away, was being taken back to his rat-infested apartment in the basement of the old house, Jerry Groat and his right-hand man descended to the front door, secured a lantern, and stepped out into the night.

Directly Tony had heard their intention to investigate the cause of the commotion, and had seen them start from the room, he slipped down the branches of the tree with the agility of a monkey. As he did so a fierce spatter of rain commenced, which was quickly followed by the torrential downpour which had been threatening all the evening.

Despite the perilous nature of his swift descent from the tree, Tony reached the ground without mishap. A sudden flash of lightning revealed the cucumber-frames beneath the branch on which Dick had been sitting, and also a dark object huddled up among the broken glass and woodwork of one of them.

His heart beating with apprehension, Tony darted across and dropped on his knees beside the inanimate form of his chum.

"Dick—Dick!" he whispered hoarsely. "Are you hurt badly?"

A low groan was the only response.

Another lurid flash of forked lightning revealed the pouring rain and the grounds of the old mansion in dazzling white relief, and, seizing the opportunity, Tony placed his arms round his chum, and raised him from his huddled position in the broken cucumber-frame. Then, staggering beneath Dick's weight, he made for the shelter of the shrubbery as fast as his heavy burden would permit.

Reaching the far side of a large clump of laurel bushes, he set Dick down on the sodden ground and stood up, panting from his exertions, to listen for any signs of the advent of Jerry Groat and Andy Finch. He could hear nothing, so he stooped down again, and rapidly ran his hands over his chum, in an effort to discover whether any bones were broken.

While thus engaged, he heard the bookmaker and his underling coming round the side of the house, and a moment later the two appeared, bearing a lighted bull's-eye lantern. As they drew nearer he could hear the gruff tones of Andy Finch grumbling about the other's whim, which had led them out into the pelting downpour of the thunderstorm.

Arriving at the cucumber-frames, the two rogues held their steaming lantern before them, and stooped down to better view the damage. Then a low exclamation left Groat's lips.

"See here, Andy!" he said excitedly. "D'you mean to tell me that damage was done by a fallin' hassock?"

Apparently the view of the smashed wooden framework and glass caused Finch to forget temporarily his own discomfort beneath the drenching torrent of rain, for his reply was uttered in tones of concern as deep as the bookie's.

"You—you were right in sayin' it wasn't the 'assock which caused the smash, Jerry," he muttered. And then, as though to reassure himself, he added, "Maybe the 'assock dislodged a dead branch o' elm, and it was that what did the damage."

"You idiot!" snarled the bookie. "There's no hassock nor branch near the frames, and— Why, look at this!"

While flashing the lantern round, the rays had lighted up that portion of the wet ground close beside the frames, where there clearly showed the deeply imprinted footmarks made by Tony as he had staggered away, bearing Dick in his arms.

In his hiding-place behind the laurels, the stable-lad tingled with apprehension as to what might be the next move of the rascally pair.

Beyond an almost inaudible groan now and again, Dick remained perfectly quiet. Tony guessed rightly that he had struck his head on the woodwork of the frame, and had been stunned by the blow. Although he was anxious to have the satisfaction of knowing that Dick had not received any really serious damage, Tony nevertheless devoutly hoped he would not return to consciousness until Jerry Groat and Andy Finch were out of ear-shot, for he dreaded to think what might be the consequences if the unscrupulous bookmaker discovered them.

For some moments the bookie and his accomplice examined the footprints on the ground, following, by the aid of the lantern's yellow light, the path Tony had taken to reach the laurel bushes.

After the first shock of discovering that actually someone had been outside the window of the room in which the pow-wow was held, Andy Finch gave vent to his fears by laying the blame on his employer for the whole occurrence.

"You must 'ave been mad, Jerry," he growled, "to 'ave the glass doors open, and the blinds raised. Anybody could 'ave come spyin' around. I told you it wasn't safe."

"Pah! You were the very one who wanted the room aired!" snapped the bookie, who, wet through and uneasy in his mind concerning the footprints, was not by any means in the best of humours himself. "Howsomever, it's no good rowing about the matter now. Let's have a look among these bushes. If anyone was skulkin' around the house, and tripped into that cucumber-frame, he might ha' cut himself badly, and ha' crawled into the bushes for hiding."

Picking his way slowly and carefully, Groat worked his way past the elm-tree directly towards the clump of bushes behind which Tony was crouching with the unconscious form of his chum. It was obvious Andy Finch had no taste at all for wandering among the ghostly trees and eerie bushes of the old mansion at that hour of the night, for he gingerly followed a few paces in rear of his employer.

"I expect," he said gloomily, "someone was hidden in that tree outside the room we were in. As like as not 'e was skeered when Bill threw the 'assock at Ginger, and fell out o' the tree into those 'cumber frames."

Groat gave a violent start. This possibility had not occurred to him.

"But—but who would want to come spyin' around here late o' night?" he stammered feebly. "Nobody suspects me o' havin' anythin' to do with Ginger's disappearance. All who know him think he's gone across to Dublin."

"Well, what about that young rip, Tony Draycott, what followed Jim on the 'ay-waggon?"

"But Jim gave him the slip—he told us so."

"Anyway," growled Finch, "if anyone was concealed in the elm, you can bet your boots, boss, that he heard everythin' what was said to-night, and you can expect to 'ave the police round makin' a few kind inquiries into your business before very long."

By this time the two precious rogues had slowly worked their way almost to the clump of bushes which concealed the forms of the two stable-boys from view. Tony's heart thumped madly against his ribs, for he felt that discovery was inevitable. But whatever the consequences, he could not desert his chum, and so he remained kneeling by Dick's side, and peering through the laurels at the two advancing scoundrels.

Now Groat, who was feeling less brave the deeper he advanced in the shrubbery, strove to hide his fears beneath a big show of bravado.

"Who cares for the police?" he said contemptuously. "If by any chance that young pup Draycott, o' the Estor stables, or anyone else, did hear anythin' to-night, he won't have any proof to offer. Besides, I shall take special precautions now I've been forewarned."

"H'm! Maybe," grumbled Finch; "but I still hold it'd 'ave been safer to 'ave put Ginger out o' the way. It's askin' for trouble, keepin' 'im in the house."

Groat stopped, and shone his lantern on a clump of rhododendrons to his right before replying.

"There's no danger from Ginger," he said peevishly. "If it wasn't for gettin' a bit o' my own back on the double-dealing worm, I'd let him go to-night. He wouldn't dare squeal to anyone; he knows I could make things too mighty warm for him as well with the police, come to that."

So, gruffly conversing between themselves, and stopping every now and again to shine the lantern on the surrounding bushes, the two rogues reached the clump of laurels behind which Tony lay palpitating. It was fortunate that the lamp they were carrying was dimmed with smoke and rain, otherwise its piercing rays shining between the leaves of the bushes must have given indication of the presence of the two boys.

"Aw, let's be goin' back, Jerry," whined Andy Finch. "It's no good meanderin' about 'ere. If anyone was hangin' around, he's cleared off long ago."

"On the other hand," retorted Groat, "there's the chance that if it was young Draycott who fell into the 'cumber frames, he might ha' been hurt, and is now hidin' among these bushes somewhere, waitin' for a chance o' beatin' it. I'll just have a look behind these laurels, and if there's nothing there I'll come back to the house with you."

Tony absolutely quaked at the words, for discovery seemed certain. He rapidly debated in his mind whether to launch a fierce attack on the bookie, or to adopt, for Dick's sake, the equally hopeless-looking course of appealing to the rogue's generosity.

But even as Groat was about to step round the bushes, Andy Finch laid a restraining hand on his arm.

"You—you'd better be keeful, Jerry," he warned. "It ain't safe, pokin' your head round places o' that sort. You know 'ow easy it is for a chap to bring a sandbag down on your cranium, if he's so minded."

Groat, with the other members of his

gang, knew quite well from experience how easy it was to use a sandbag in such circumstances, but so positive was he in his own mind that nobody was lurking in the shadows behind the bushes that he professed an utter contempt for the danger.

"Pooh! My nerves ain't always on edge, like what yours are, Andy," he smiled. "I ain't to be scared so easy. You wait here, if you're so funky, while I just pop round and—"

He stopped abruptly, and his jaw dropped as a vivid flash of lightning illuminated the shrubbery. At the same moment a long-drawn, hollow moan arose, as it were, from the very ground behind the bushes.

Next moment Jerry let out a wild yell of terror, and, dropping his lantern, he dashed madly away, bowling the astonished Andy completely from his pins. Another groan rose from the bushes, and Finch jumped to his feet and followed the bookmaker as madly as though a host of demons were at his heels.

The Police Step In!

TONY, crouching behind the laurels, could hear the two scoundrels gasping and gibbering as they crashed through the undergrowth in their headlong flight back to the house. In spite of his uncomfortable predicament, he could not repress a smile at the thought of Jerry's sudden change from a demeanour of blustering boldness to the most abject terror when Dick had groaned so alarmingly.

Soon the imprecations of the two ruffians died away, and nothing but the spattering of the pouring rain could be heard. Then it was that Tony turned to his chum again, to find, to his great delight, that Dick was slowly endeavouring to raise himself from the ground.

"Thank goodness, he's pulling round!" he said aloud fervently.

Dick opened his eyes, and gazed up into the younger lad's face.

"Hallo, Tony!" he muttered with a shiver. "What the dickens is happenin'? Turn the water off! D'you want to drown me?"

Tony smiled broadly at the other's wild remark, which showed clearly enough that his friend had not yet regained complete possession of his senses.

"I can't turn this water off, old fellow," he murmured soothingly. "I wish I could. It's a thunderstorm."

"My aunt, so it is!"

Dick sat bolt upright, and then plumped back heavily again with a groan.

"Where are you hurt, Dick, old chap?" cried the younger stable-boy, in deep concern lest, after all, his chum had received some severe injury.

"It's—it's my left shoulder," groaned Dick. "I—I remember now. We were listening to Groat and his gang, when something knocked me out of the tree, and I fell. My collar-bone must be smashed."

Assisted by Tony, Dick rose painfully to his feet and stretched his legs. As far as he could discover, only his shoulder and the back of his head, where a large bruise was apparent, had received injury.

"Well, if you can manage it, Dick," said Tony, "I think we'd better be making tracks away from this place." And he told the other how Groat had so nearly discovered their hiding-place in the laurels. "But first," he added, "I'll borrow that lantern Jerry dropped. It may come in useful when we get away from here."

Rummaging about on the ground, he soon discovered that useful article, which the bookie had dropped in his sudden fright, and then, with Dick resting heavily on his arm, he picked his way towards the exit from the grounds of the old mansion.

Without mishap the two soaked and bedraggled amateur detectives reached the lane outside, and, keeping close to one of the hedges by which it was bordered, they made their way in the direction of Framham. On their way they held an earnest confab upon the best plan to adopt in consideration of the momentous discovery they had made.

"I vote we go straight to the police-station in Framham," said Dick, "and put the cops on the track of Groat's gang. We heard quite enough to land the whole caboodle in quod."

But for some time Tony was very doubtful as to the wisdom of following this course.

"You must remember, Dick," he pointed out, "that we have no definite proof that Groat and those other chaps were actively responsible for the doping of Sunfire at Epsom. Lord Estor has preferred to hush the matter up, and therefore the police, who know nothing whatever about the incident, are bound to think we are pitching a cock-and-bull story to them. On the other hand, we can accuse them of illegally holding Ginger a prisoner at The Poplars, and this the cops can prove for themselves by making a search of the house."

"Then you think it would be wiser to see the Owner before making any accusations about the Derby doping affair?"

"Yes, I do. In my opinion, Groat and the other rascals we saw to-night are only a portion of as powerful a gang of rogues as ever infested the Turf. We have yet to find out who is at the head of it—the man or men that Finch referred to as 'headquarters'—and also the identity of 'Strawberry,' who apparently was the wielder of the hypodermic needle that spoiled the chances of Sunfire for the Derby."

"But what about that spy, Ginger?" asked Dick. "We can't leave him in the hands of the gang. For all we know, they may yet follow the advice of that villain Finch, and drop the tout in the river, instead of putting him on board a ship, as they decided to do."

Deep in his heart Tony had little desire to invoke the aid of the police at all in the affair for the time being, but, after carefully considering the point Dick had raised, he came to the conclusion that it was up to them to leave no stone unturned in an effort to release the tout, despicable sneak and toady as he undoubtedly was, from the clutches of the gang.

Therefore the boys finally agreed to inform the police, beginning their story at the point where they had

heard the cry from the lighted room in The Poplars, and making no mention whatever of anything connected with the racecourse.

The police-station in Framham, which they found after some trouble, was a kind of converted cottage, overgrown with sweet-smelling honeysuckle, and not at all the sort of place to strike terror in the breast of any wrong-doer. The relief to the drenched stable-lads of obtaining shelter from the storm inside the congenial little place was intense, after their long exposure to the fury of the elements, especially so to Dick, whose face was drawn and white from the pain of his shoulder. But it was not the pain of the injury that worried the plucky lad so much as the thought that it might prevent his riding in the Apprentices' Handicap on the morrow.

Not seeing anyone in the police-station at first, they entered an inner room, in which a light was burning, and there they found the official in charge—a ruddy-faced rustic constable—peacefully snoring, his regulation number elevens crossed gracefully on the small table in front of his chair. Despite his un-sleuth-like appearance, the fact that he was a zealous and ambitious member of the force was proved by an old periodical in close proximity to his feet, opened at a page dealing with the adventures of Gordon Pyke, detective, in "Held to Ransom."

It seemed like sacrilege to disturb this peaceful guardian of law and order, but Tony and Dick were anxious to see the business of the night through. The former grasped the shoulder of the bobby, and gave him a violent shake.

"Hi, wake up!"

Snore!

"Hi, rouse yourself, man! There's a fire—thieves—murder!"

Snore!

After several further fruitless efforts Tony turned and faced Dick.

"Gad!" he muttered. "He must be doped!" He went to the back of the constable's chair, and wrung a stream of rain-water from his saturated cap on to the face of the sleuth-hound, but only a long and satisfied snore came in response.

"Here, stand back a bit, Dick," commanded Tony, eyeing the cane seat of the chair on which the village policeman was reclining. "I'll rouse the chump!"

He swung his foot with all his force beneath the chair, and his muddy boot came with a dull thud against the cane seat supporting the yielding form of the unfortunate bobby.

"Ooooooch! Woof!"

Suddenly grasping his coat-tails in both hands, the policeman leapt fully two feet into the air before he landed on his ample pedal extremities, and gazed dazedly at the two stable-lads.

"Good-evening, sir," said Tony politely. "I hope we've not disturbed you?"

"D-d-d-disturbed me, you young varmint!" spluttered the outraged limb of the law. "I'll—I'll flay you, I will! Which one o' you did it?"

"Did what, sir?"

"Struck, bang, or otherwise biffed me!"

"Biffed you, sir?"

"Yes, you outrageous young rip!" cried the injured constable. "I felt somethin'—"

"A mosquito, perhaps, sir?" suggested Tony helpfully.

"Pah!"

The excited bobby threw his hands up over his head, as though he were about to wreak immediate vengeance on the two boys, when he stopped suddenly, and his expression changed. Dick's face had gone as white as a sheet, and he was swaying as though about to fall.

The policeman, who was a kindly enough man in his way, immediately forgot his own injury in the suffering of another. He made a quick step forward, and caught the lad in his arms and escorted him to a seat. Then, having forced a strong-smelling flask to Dick's lips, he turned to Tony.

surprised to read against the address: "J. Groat, Turf Commission Agent."

So impressed was the police-officer with this corroboration of the lad's story—for Jerry Groat was known to the force as an unscrupulous character, upon whom an eye had to be kept—that he 'phoned to a couple of other police-stations in the district, requesting that three men might be sent to meet him outside The Poplars in half an hour's time, for the purpose of investigating the circumstances of Ginger's detention. Then he went out to secure the necessary search-warrant.

Meanwhile, the doctor had completed his examination of Dick.

"Severe contusion of the head," murmured the medico, "and a broken collar-bone."

Dick groaned aloud.

"Hang it all, Tony," he said, in



The hassock caught Dick a heavy thump on the chest, bowling him clean from his precarious perch among the branches.

"What's the matter with your chum, lad?" he asked. "He seems to be properly done up."

In a few words Tony poured the story of their night's adventures into the ear of the astonished policeman, omitting, however, all reference to Turf matters, as previously agreed with Dick. Slow-moving though the country constable was as a rule, he was swift to act on this occasion. He immediately telephoned for a doctor, and roused the police-inspector, who was occupying a bed on the premises.

To the inspector Tony repeated his story, and, as he finished, a medical man arrived, and set about the task of examining Dick.

The first thing the inspector did after listening to Tony's narration of the strange events of the night was to look in a directory for the name of the occupier of The Poplars. Tony glanced over his shoulder, and was not

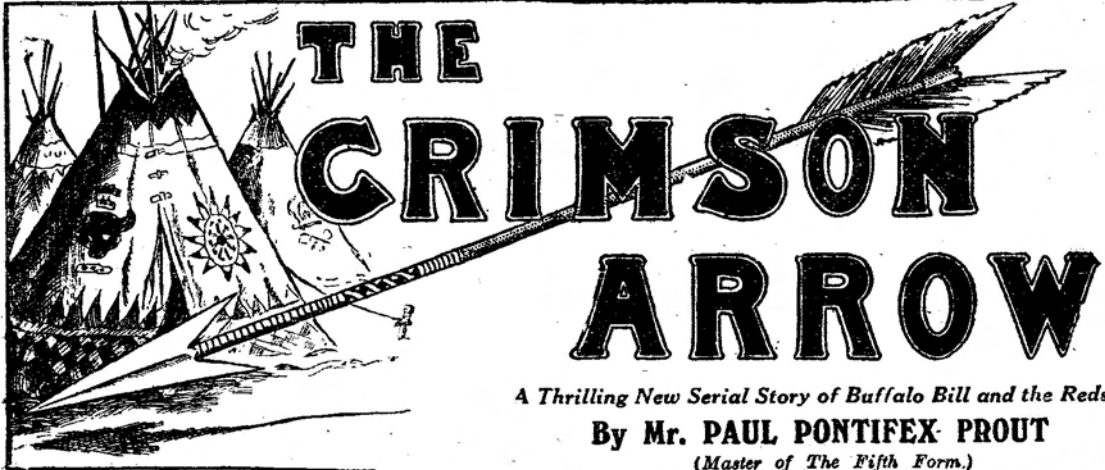
annoyed tones, "this means I'm ditched for the Apprentices' Handicap to-morrow. Gad, I wish you'd got a better mount than Wavecrest, Tony—one with at least a chance of taking the violet-and-white past the post first."

"There's a chance as it is, Dick," said Tony optimistically.

"Yes, but a mighty small one." Dick gave another deep groan. "But, gad, wouldn't I give something to see Jerry Groat's face when you unearth the tout from the cellar in his home!"

Little, however, did the boys know the card the wily bookie had up his sleeve, ready to play in case any unwelcome official inquiries were made at his residence, The Poplars.

Another long, stirring instalment of this magnificent tale of the Turf will appear in next week's "Greyfriars Herald."



A Thrilling New Serial Story of Buffalo Bill and the Redskins

By Mr. PAUL PONTIFEX PROUT

(Master of The Fifth Form.)

Prairie Wolf Goes Hunting!

SOON as the sun rose higher over the prairie, the Soshone encampment was fairly buzzing with activity. The Indian boys and louts were already driving in the shabby looking ponies from the grazing, whilst the squaws struck the seventeen poles which supported the buffalo-skin lodges, and tied them up into bundles, which they fastened, one bundle on each side of a travois pony.

The long ends of these poles trailed on the ground, and the tents of sewed buffalo-skin were folded up and placed on the poles.

These painted tents folded quite neatly, and in small compass, considering that they were of leather, for the hides of which they were made were of dubbed and curried buffalo-hide, very neatly sewn with the strong sinews of the buffalo-hump, which hold all the weight of the enormous head. The hide forming these tents had been brought down to the requisite thinness by currying or scraping with a knife, and well dubbed or made supple by repeated rubbing with the brains of the animal which wore the skin.

But the travois pony, which dragged the two bundles of eighteen-foot tent poles behind him, was not allowed to get off with carrying the tent alone.

Neat little basket chairs were lashed between the poles by thongs of buffalo-hide, and into these little carriages were placed the Redskin children and such small parcels and traps as could not well be packed on the pack-animal's back.

The squaws did all the work, their lordly masters standing around smoking their beloved mixture of tobacco and sumach leaves, in their stone calumets.

The teamsters of the waggons in the Paleface party were all ready, and the long string of waggons with their teams of oxen drew out into line, their great wheels creaking and biting deep into the soft prairie turf.

The escort of the Fifth Cavalry sent out an advance guard, whilst a powerful rearguard dropped behind, the waggon-masters riding by the side of the waggons, and bring up the rear with the escort was the cavayard driver, whose duty it was to drive all the lame or loose cattle.

Soon the call went down the long line of waggons, "All set!" The whips

cracked and the long line of white, tilted prairie-schooners lurched slowly forward.

The Indian column kept pace with it, a queer tagrag and bobtail mob of men, squaws and animals, looking more like a vast mob of gipsies than anything else.

Every animal was heavily laden with buffalo meat and hides, and even the dogs were trotting along with loads of meat strapped on their backs.

Kit swung himself on to Moonlight's back, and the powerful horse paced slowly alongside the waggon in which Big Tree, the Apache chief, was seated, manacled hand and foot.

Big Tree looked very sulky and scowling. But Uncle Baldy, seated in the waggon with him as guard, lit a pipe for him, and pushed it into his mouth.

"Thar you are, chief," said Uncle Baldy, "you'd best have a smoke whilst you can. Cheer up an' look at the bright side o' things, for you'll be hanged to-morrow, sure as death!"

The waggons lurched down a long, gravelly slope, to a shallow river, and rolled across the ford, whilst the Indian ponies, all following their bell-

pony, trailed across one after the other, with much splashing.

The Indian children, who were riding in their little chairs behind the ponies on the long travois of lodge poles, all looked very frightened, as the poles splashed into the water, their ends bumping and jerking on the gravelly bottom. They would have liked to have cried, but they dared not, especially the boys, for crying is held as a great sign of weakness, by the Redskin, and a Redskin boy would sooner die than give way to tears.

Their mothers took no notice of them, but Kit noted that the braves, their fathers, spoke encouragingly to them, and cheered them up during the passage of the wide, shallow ford.

The Redskin father, whatever may be his faults, is always kind to his family, especially boys, and a Redskin boy is never frightened or beaten, lest his spirit be broken, and he should become a squaw boy or a coward. The mammy's darling gets very little encouragement amongst the Red Men, who hold courage above all virtues.

And strange to say this view of the upbringing of children has, in the last few years, been endorsed by a very great doctor and a very great teacher of children, Madame Montessori. So it may be seen that there is wisdom even amongst savages.

The column had crossed the river, and Kit was riding alongside Prairie Wolf, and a second chief of the Soshones, who rejoiced in the name of Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud, when a bumble bee, heavy laden, flew overhead with a busy droning.

A look of great cunning passed over old Prairie Wolf's face as he watched the bee, and tracked its flight towards a great belt of woodland, that lay along the course of the river, about three miles away.

"Now we go hunting—heap good hunting!" said he.

"We shall have to ask Buffalo Bill!" replied Kit.

"Good!" replied Prairie Wolf. "Buffalo Bill him come!"

And sure enough, Buffalo Bill was riding down the long line of waggons.

Kit was greatly mystified. What was Prairie Wolf going to hunt. It was just possible that they might find a buck in that timber, or maybe a grizzly bear.

READ THIS FIRST.

Into Fort Madison, the headquarters of the 5th United States Cavalry—the famous "Dandy Fifth"—rides a little group of horsemen bringing news of an uprising of the Redskins. The leader of the party is Buffalo Bill, and other members are Buck Dixie, Deadwood Dick, Uncle Baldy, Jake Bellew, old Prairie Wolf, a former Navajo chief, and Kit and Joe Desmond, two British boys whose father is a prisoner in the hands of the Indians. A mock convoy sets out from the fort, and the Redskins make an attack, which is beaten off with heavy loss. Afterwards some mysterious crimson-coloured arrows are found seen into the quivers of the fallen braves. One night on the prairies Buffalo Bill captures a famous wild horse known as the White Horse of Death, and this he presents to Kit. While breaking camp one day old Prairie Wolf invites the boys to a hunt, but is so mysterious about the arrangements that he leaves them wondering greatly what it is they are going after.

He wanted to know what he was going to hunt, for he had what was called a scatter gun in the waggon. This was a shot-gun, a weapon which was regarded with great contempt by all the old hunters and trappers, who always used the bullet, whether it was for a buffalo or for a turkey.

"If you can't hit with a bullet, you can't hit with anything!" said the old trappers. And they were so contemptuous of the scatter gun, with its charge of small shot, that Kit was quite ashamed of it, and had hid it up in the waggon to which he was attached.

Prairie Wolf brought Maud the mule close alongside Buckskin, and preferred his request that he and Kit, and Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud might be allowed to go hunting in the belt of woodland along the river.

Kit was astonished to hear the old chief's request granted with a shout of laughter from the scout.

"What are we going to hunt?" asked the boy. "I want to know what weapon to take."

"You'd better take your rifle with you, anyway, my boy," laughed Buffalo Bill. "The man who leaves camp without his rifle is asking for trouble. He may go out with it a hundred times and not see fur or feather. But at the hundred and first time, when he leaves it in camp, he's likely to run in the arms of a grizzly. But old Prairie Wolf and Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud are after bees—not buffaloes!"

"Bees?" exclaimed Kit in astonishment.

"You bet," replied Buffalo Bill. "These chaps are red-hot on spotting bee-nests. They love honey, and it's the Indian belief that the bee is the harbinger of the Paleface, just as the buffalo is of the Red Man, and, where the buffalo and the bee lines meet, there is the frontier. It is certainly true that the bees and the Palefaces have advanced together from the Atlantic coast, and the old settlers of the West swear that they can name the very year when the bees crossed the Mississippi, and they do say that when the bees reach the Pacific there will be no more Red Men, and no more buffaloes left in the land."

Kit listened with interest to this account of the bees, and Buffalo Bill assured him that these wild bees were escaped colonies from the hives in the gardens of the old time settlers of the Atlantic states, the symbolic fore-runners of a busy civilisation, which one day would cover this great boundless prairie with dwellings and villages and factories.

Having received permission to leave the convoy, Joe borrowed a horse, and the four set off together, followed by much laughter from the troopers of the Dandy Fifth, for both Prairie Wolf and Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud had their steeds hung round with Indian baskets and earthenware crocks to take the honey they hoped to find.

"Mind you don't get stung, Prairie Wolf!" shouted Uncle Baldy.

"Why don't you stick to the buffaloes?" demanded the troopers of Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud.

There must have been some Red-skin joke in the name of this chief, for he was the most silent Redskin

Kit had ever met. He said nothing. He only grunted now and then when he was spoken to, and was a very quiet man indeed.

Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud was a very handsome Soshone. He would have been the better for a good wash. But he was a real statuesque figure of a wild Red warrior, and as dignified as the manager of a cinema house.

He was mounted on a large piebald horse, which he had taken in single-handed fight from an Apache warrior. And decorating the bridle of this steed was the scalp of the late owner, together with a fine collection of Apache scalps. For Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud collected Apache scalps as a postage-stamp collector collects postage stamps. He specialised in them.

as the two sailed round in great mile-wide circles over the flower-spangled prairie. Moonlight had him at a standstill and was only playing with him.

He would allow Joe's steed to close up behind him. Then, lengthening his stride he would sail away at a pace which would not have disgraced a Derby winner.

Sometimes he would turn at right angles to his course, and dart across the prairie in long mile stretches, enticing Joe's horse after him. It was plain that when he was running wild, it was in this fashion that he used to fall in with all the little bands of wild horses that he met and try his speed against them in play.

So the boys drew away from the two old chiefs who were ambling along to



The tree fizzled like a soda-water bottle, and a cloud of bees poured out, surrounding the two chiefs in a thick, angry buzzing mob.

(Read the account of this laughable incident in next week's splendid instalment!)

Prairie Wolf glanced at this collection from the corner of his eyes. Perhaps he was looking to see if there were any Navajo scalps amongst the collection of Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud. In this case, he might not have been quite so friendly with his new pal.

But they were all Apache scalps, as was betrayed by a slightly reddish or henna tinge in the black hair, and the close plaiting of a few strands of the hair, for it was the fashion amongst the Apaches to slightly dye the ends of their hair with a reddish stain.

So Prairie Wolf got easy in his mind again, deciding that Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud, not being a collector of Navajo scalps, would not attempt to do anything tricky about collecting his own top-knot.

The two chiefs ambled on towards the woodland in friendly fashion, whilst Kit tried the paces of Moonlight, against Joe's horse.

Joe's horse did not stand a chance,

together heading towards the long belt of woodland.

The chiefs did not take much notice of the racing horses of the boys, which were sometimes hidden from them by the folds of the prairie. Otherwise they might have warned them that they were heading towards a patch of sandy soil, that was the home of the prairie-owls and the prairie-dogs.

But their eyes were in the air, for they were tracking not buffaloes, but bees.

There were lots of bees flying towards the woodland, for the prairie was covered with the wild flowers from which they sipped their supplies of nectar.

So it happened that the two racing horses drew far away from them into the sandy country, where the prairie-dogs had their burrows.

The prairie-dog is one of the curiosities of the far West, about which travellers delight to tell marvellous tales, endowing him at times, with

something of the political and social habits of the human being.

The prairie-dog is an animal of the coney kind and about the size of a rabbit. He is of a sprightly and mercurial temperament, quick, sensitive, and rather short of temper. He is very matey and gregarious, and lives in large communities, very often of many acres in extent, where innumerable little heaps of earth show the entrances to his underground runs. And the well-beaten tracks, like lanes and streets marked the roads by which this restless little animal goes visiting, when he is not scampering through his underground tubes.

It is said that, at nights, especially when the moon shines, the prairie-dog spends half the night in revelry barking and yelping in short, quick notes, which are weak, like the barking of young puppies.

But the greatest mystery about the prairie-dog is his lodger, the prairie-owl, and his other lodger, the rattlesnake.

Nobody has ever yet decided if the prairie-owl lives with the prairie-dog as a guest or as an unwelcome intruder.

Some say that the owls and the rattlesnakes only inhabit the burrows which the prairie-dog has deserted, and left to go to rack and ruin, on account of some death of a relative in the burrow.

There are others who declare that the owl acts as a sort of housekeeper to the prairie-dog, and, since it has a note very closely resembling the bark of its landlord, it is said that it teaches the prairie-puppies to bark.

These owls are of a peculiar kind, and seem to partake more of the character of the hawk than of the owl, for they are taller, and more erect on their legs, more alert in their looks, and more rapid in their flight than any owl. Nor do they confine their excursions to the night, but also fly and hunt by day.

As for the rattlesnake, which frequents the burrow of the prairie-dog, nobody knows anything about him at all. He is supposed to be an undesirable lodger, who pushes his way in and who intrudes on the simple-minded and fussy prairie-dog, taking advantage of his mateyness and hospitality.

There were a few little prairie-dogs sitting sunning themselves at the entrances to their burrows, as the two boys raced on to this dangerous soil.

But at the sight of the horses racing together, they all suddenly yelped and popped down into their burrows like lightning.

The boys had not had any experience of prairie-dog country. So they kept on galloping.

All of a sudden, Joe's horse put his foot into the burrow of a prairie-dog, and simply turned head over heels, slinging Joe from his saddle, and standing him on his ear in the sandy soil.

The horse and Joe seemed to turn half a dozen somersaults.

Then the horse got up, unhurt, but looking rather dazed.

Joe sat up, too, and rubbed his head. He also looked rather dazed

"Are you hurt, Joe?" asked Kit anxiously, as he reined in the docile Moonlight who had been far too wide-awake and experienced in prairie gallops to put his foot in a dog burrow.

"I don't think I am!" replied Joe doubtfully. "But, my hat! I saw dozens of stars when I hit the earth!"

Joe rose and shook his legs and arms, and raked the sand out of the neck of his shirt, and finally decided that he had had neither broken his neck nor a limb.

And now thousands of prairie-dogs popped up from their burrows, yelping derisively like a lot of rude Lower-School fags, as though they were rejoicing in Joe's spill.

Kit pretended to throw a stone, and in the twinkling of an eye every prairie-dog vanished. Then a few dozen owls popped up out of the burrows and stood watching the boys with an unwinking stare.

Kit waved his hand again. But the owls did not disappear. They were apparently more cheeky than the prairie-dogs.

Joe's cropper had taught them a lesson. So they walked their horses off this danger patch, and as they rode away, all the countless hordes of prairie-dogs popped up to the surface of the ground again, piping their little barks after them as though in derision.

In the Backwoods.

It was not till they got to the hard clay prairie again, that they put their horses to the gallop, overhauled Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud and Prairie Wolf, who were now on the belt of the woodland.

This was one of those queer patches of thick forest that break the prairie wherever there is water, giving the open country a strange likeness to an English woodland.

But, when the boys neared these

woods, they realised that they were a very different sort of woodland to those English woods, which, for two thousand years, have known the axe of the woodman, the furnaces of the charcoal-burner, and the passage of the timber-tug.

These woods had never been cut for timber. At best their boundaries had been raked for firewood, and their saplings cut for the tent-poles of the wandering Redskins. Trappers had worked through them in search of the beaver pools hidden in their thickets, and, in their depths, the deer and elk still had their haunts.

But the undergrowth was a thick tangle of wild raspberries and bramble runners. Here grew the great American blackberry in profusion, and the tanglefoot of mock pine, which covered the ground with the thick carpet of its tough, trailing branches.

Great trees lay where they had fallen under the blasts of the tornadoes or whirlwinds which sometimes sweep the great open plains of America.

Such a whirlwind will cut through a wood in a fifty-foot path, levelling all the trees in a common ruin as cleanly as though a squad of woodmen had passed through. Then, between these fallen and decaying trunks, would spring up the tall young saplings, covering the great fallen giants of the forest in their tender greenery.

And it was amongst these fallen trunks that the Redskins looked to find the nests of the wild bees.

They resented the bee as the pioneer of civilisation, but they appreciated the honey and the beeswax, for which they found a hundred uses in preparing their weapons, and in coating the sinew threads with which they sewed their tents and garments.

The two old chiefs slipped from their mounts and tied them to a fallen tree outside the wall of the forest.

But the boys noticed that they were careful to take their rifles with them.

Prairie Wolf slapped the stock of the rifle he was carrying.

"Take um gun. Sposum no gun, find um bear!" said Prairie Wolf.

"Are there bears here?" asked Kit.

Prairie Wolf nodded.

"Bear him like honey. Bee he no bite bear!" said he. "Bear him come among woods to sleep in winter. Him go bye-bye heap long time in winter!"

And when the boys had slipped off their horses and tethered them Prairie Wolf explained how the bears go to sleep in the winter, finding out some cave or hole under the stump of an uprooted tree, which they filled with moss and dried leaves. Then, outside the mouth of their winter refuge, they gather up another huge pile of leaves and dry moss, which they pull in after them as a sort of counterpane for their long winter sleep.

"But what does the bear live on in the winter, Prairie Wolf?" asked Kit. "Doesn't he wake up sometimes, and take a little nourishment?"

Prairie Wolf shook his head. He explained that the grizzly or silver tip, the brown and the black bear, all got as fat as butter in the fall when the berries were out in profusion, and

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NUGGET
WEEKLY

there is plenty of game about. Then when they turn in for their winter sleep, they live on their overcoat of fat till the spring. Which probably gives rise to the superstition that the bear lives by sucking his paws.

But Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud, who was a great bear hunter, and who wore a hunter's proud trophy in the necklace made of the claws of a grizzly bear, shook his head. He said that sometimes the bears woke up from their winter sleep and went for a walk round, for he had seen their tracks in the snow in the depth of winter, after a spell of mild weather.

"What do you do if you meet a bear?" asked Kit.

"Shoot um!" replied Prairie Wolf solemnly "Bear him eat heap good!"

"But supposing you haven't got a gun?" asked Kit.

"Sposum bear all lone him run way!" said Prairie Wolf. "Sposum bear, squaw bear along papoose, you run away. Sposum grizzly bear, you run away all the time!"

Kit laughed at this.

"Well, I hope we sha'n't meet a grizzly bear!" said he, as the two old Indians led the way into a tangle of thickets. "It looks to me as though the bear could run fastest through this sort of stuff!"

And, indeed, as soon as they were in the forests, they found the going a regular monkey puzzle, consisting of an abatis of great, fallen trees, half decayed, which were interlaced with new growths of the woods.

They had to clamber over great tree trunks which lay, still supported by their massive branches, and whose roots had turned up great caves in the red earth.

"Big wind him come through here, some time!" said Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud pointing to the solid wall of forest on either side, which showed where a cyclone had ripped through the forest some years before.

And the boys found the forest curiously silent. There were very few singing birds, such as would be found in profusion in an English woodland.

Now and then, they could hear the steady "tap-tap-tap" of a woodpecker seeking for grubs behind the bark of some tall tree. But they never got a sight of the bird.

And once a brilliant red cardinal bird flashed through the forest glade giving his call.

But the Redskins were not on the look out for birds. They were looking upwards for the returning bees, which had been out on the prairie since dawn, and which would now be winging their way homewards with their load of honey.

Old Prairie Wolf and his chum Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud looked like a couple of Redskin Christmas trees, for they were slung all round with jars and pots destined to hold their capture of wild honey.

Presently, Great-Dog-Who-Barks-Loud caught sight of a bee flying high through the trees.

"Waugh!" he grunted. "Bee him come home!"

Another long, thrilling instalment of "The Crimson Arrow" will appear in next Tuesday's issue.

My Weekly Interview

By the Special Representative of
"The Greyfriars Herald."

This week:
HAROLD SKINNER

I was with a firm tread and an equally firm countenance that I stepped into the editor's sanctum.

"Well!" said the chief.

"No, I am far from well!" I retorted. "To tell the truth, I'm fed-up with these interviewing stunts. They nearly always end in disaster."

"Well, go along and see Skinner. He's only a few doors away, and you needn't be scared of him."

I didn't mind interviewing Skinner in the least. He's not exactly a nice person to know, being rather a gay dog in a dingy way; but I've always been on fairly good terms with him.

On entering Skinner's kennel—No. 4 Study—I found the cad of the Remove busily employed. He had a huge paper-bag on the table in front of him; and he was engaged in filling that bag with the most abominable concoction you ever saw.

Treacle and soot and coal-dust and feathers—all these ingredients were mixed together and deposited in the bag.

Skinner seemed to be enjoying his weird task, but I confess that I could not refrain from shuddering as I watched him.

"What's the little game, Skinny?" I inquired at length.

"This," said Skinner blandly, "is for Bolsover's benefit!"

"What do you mean?"

"Bolsover cuffed me on the head this morning, just because I barged into him by accident. I'm not used to having my head cuffed. And when anything of that sort does happen, I usually endeavour to make things warm for the cuffer!"

"But—but I fail to see—"

"Then you ought to apply for admission to a blind-school! This is a booby-trap, my son—a gilt-edged, eighteen-carat booby-trap, which is being prepared for the benefit of Beastly Bully Bolsover. He said he was going to call here at four o'clock, to squeeze a free tea out of me. Well, it's nearly four now. And instead of getting a free tea, he'll get the shock of his life!"

I gave a chuckle.

"This is an awfully cute wheeze of yours, Skinny!" I said.

Skinner tapped his forehead significantly.

"This," he said, "is the home of cute wheezes! Trust me to get my own back on anybody who ruffles my feathers!"

Skinner continued to work with deft and sticky fingers. And presently the paper bag was filled almost to overflowing.

"If Bolsover gets that little lot on his napper," I remarked, "he'll have to spend the remainder of the day in the bath-room!"

Skinner crossed to the door, and opened it a few inches. Then he mounted a chair and poised the paper-bag in position.

"I guess this will do the trick," he murmured. "And now, my friend, we must vamoose through the window. Come on!"

He clambered through the open window, and dropped down into the Close. It was only a matter of a few feet. I followed suit.

"There's one great drawback to that booby-trap of yours," I said. "We sha'n't have the satisfaction of seeing Bolsover with the paper bag on his head, and with treacle and soot streaming down his chivvy."

"True enough," said Skinner, "but we can't have all we want, in this perfect world. Bolsover will be dangerous to be near."

And Skinner strolled away chuckling.

In a short space of time, I had forgotten all about the booby-trap. The fact that I should be unable to witness its descent caused me to lose all interest in it.

I was strolling to and fro in the Close, when a magnificent car swung into view through the school gateway.

I recognised the car at once as being the property of Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, the millionaire.

The car came to a halt close beside me, and a brisk voice exclaimed:

"Might I trouble you to find my son for me? I wish to speak to him on a matter of urgency, and I am in a hurry."

"I'll send him out to you, sir!" I said.

And I dashed into the building. The Bouncer, I concluded would be in his study. And I set off in that direction.

Bolsover major was ambling along the Remove passage. Brushing past him, I pushed open the door of Smithy's study. And then—

Swish! Sweoosh!

Something smote me on the head with terrific violence, and my face was instantly covered by a mask of treacle, soot, coal-dust, and feathers.

I staggered back, spluttering, and remembered, too late, my mistake.

For Vernon-Smith shared Skinner's study in which the booby-trap had been planned and prepared!

I could not see out of one eye, but out of the other I beheld Bolsover major, the fellow for whom the booby-trap was originally intended. He was holding his sides with helpless laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! This is too funny for words!"

Bolsover may have thought so—but I didn't!

Forgetting my promise to Smithy's pater—forgetting everything save the fact that I looked as big a guy as any that ever adorned a bonfire on the Fifth of November, I groped my way to the nearest bath-room.

For the next hour or so, I was busily engaged with soap and scrubbing-brush. And bitterly did I regret my interview with Harold Skinner!

THE END.

BESSIE BUNTER'S BENEFIT!

A humorous complete story written by

BOB CHERRY

I.

SCENE: The gateway of Greyfriars.
Time: After dinner on Saturday afternoon.

Dramatis personæ—as these playwright jinnies say: The Famous Five of the Remove and Billy Bunter.

The six of us were waiting for the postman.

Harry Wharton was expecting a remittance. So was Frank Nugent. Johnny Bull was half expecting a remittance. So was Inky. I was fully expecting nix! I bore in mind the words of the philosopher:

"Blessed is he that expecteth nothing; for he shall not be disappointed!"

As for Billy Bunter he was expecting a postal-order. The same old postal-order! Bunter's been expecting it for whole terms; but he hasn't got beyond the expectation stage yet!

That postal-order has been coming since the Flood; but we've seen no sign of it yet.

By the time it does arrive I dare say it will have grown a beard and side-whiskers!

There was a sound of approaching footsteps in the roadway.

"Here he comes," said Wharton.

But it wasn't the postman who turned in at the school gateway. It was a dapper little man, with a twirling moustache and a gleaming monocle. Very smartly dressed he was, in a frock coat and striped trousers. And a shining silk "topper" was perched at a rakish angle on his head.

The dapper little man stopped short, and surveyed us through his monocle. His gaze finally rested on Billy Bunter.

"Ah," he said, extending a neatly manicured hand. "How do you do, nephew William?"

We fairly gasped. And so did Billy Bunter.

"Who—who are you?" faltered Billy.

"I am your Uncle Toby. You are doubtless surprised to see me?"

"I—I've never heard of you!" faltered Bunter.

The dapper little man raised his eyebrows.

"Has your father never mentioned me to you, William?"

"Never!"

"He has never referred to your Uncle Toby, from the Balmly Islands?"

"Never!" said Bunter again.

"That is astonishing! Well, here I am, back in England again, and I have taken an early opportunity of coming to Greyfriars to see you and my nephew Samuel. I understand that I have a niece, too, at Cliff House School. Name of Bessie. But

I don't like girls. I don't like the other sex at all. In the days of my youth"—Uncle Toby didn't exactly look a hoary veteran—"I was jilted—cruelly jilted!"

"Oh," said Bunter.

He could think of nothing else to say at the moment. He had often boasted about his swell relations, who existed solely in his fertile imagination. And here was one of them in the flesh! It seemed altogether too good to be true.

"I am a person of means and position," continued Uncle Toby. "I attribute that to the fact that I have remained single. I have in my wallet"—the speaker tapped his breast pocket—"sufficient money to buy up this place, and all that therein is. And I have decided to deal very handsomely with you and Samuel!"

"Oh!" said Bunter, again.

He was almost overcome.

And then it flashed upon the fat junior's mind that this was a jape. You see, he has been japed before—many a time and oft. Wibley of the Remove is a jolly clever actor, and he has often played the part of Bunter's Uncle Jim or Jerry or Jehoshaphat. Bunter looked hard at the dapper little man, and noticed that he was just about Wibley's height.

The moustache, Bunter reflected, was false. The monocle was merely part of the make-up.

"Uncle Toby be blessed!" thought Bunter. "This is Wibley of the Remove!"

A gleam of wrath came in to the fat junior's eyes. He clenched his plump fists, and squared up to the dapper little man.

"You—you—" he spluttered. "What do you take me for—a blind idiot?"

Uncle Toby was fairly taken aback.

"My—my dear William—"

"I'm not your dear William, and your not my Uncle Toby!"

"What!"

"Clear out, before I dot you on the boko!"

"You—you would assault me with your fists?" gasped the dapper little man.

"Certainly!" said Bunter. "I can't stand impostors at any price! I'll give you ten seconds to get clear. And if you're not of this gateway by then, I'll jolly well chuck you out! And these fellows will give me a helping hand—though I don't suppose that will be necessary!"

Uncle Toby hesitated. And the silence was so intense that you might have heard an acid drop.

Then, just as Billy Bunter was about to say "Time's up!" the dapper little man turned on his heel and walked away.

Glancing back over his shoulder, he said dramatically:

"Very well! Since you have treated me with such impertinence and indignity, I go—never to return!"

And he walked on.

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" murmured Johnny Bull.

Billy Bunter gave a chuckle.

"He, he, he! Wibley thought he'd be able to spoof me all right, but I was a jolly sight too clever for him!"

Five minutes later, a junior came strolling down to the school gates. And Billy Bunter's eyes nearly goggled out of his head when he saw him.

For the junior was Wibley of the Remove.

II.

SCENE: The gateway of Greyfriars.

Time: Seven o'clock on Saturday evening.

Dramatis personæ: Same as before.

We weren't waiting for the postman this time. We were waiting for the bogus Uncle Toby to come in, so that we could discover the japer's identity.

Ten minutes passed. And then who should come rolling to the school gates but Bessie Bunter?

Bessie's plump countenance was beaming like a full moon.

"Say, Billy," she ejaculated; "I'm in clover!"

"Eh?"

"Uncle Toby's been to see me—"

"What!"

"And he's given me a fiver, a whole fiver!"

And Bessie produced, for her brother's inspection, a crisp and rustling banknote.

"Mum-mum-my hat!" gasped Billy Bunter, and his fat face was a picture.

"You—you don't mean to say that Uncle Toby's genuine?"

"Of course he's genuine!"

"I don't believe it!" shouted Bunter wildly. "I can't believe it!"

Bessie grinned.

"He left me his card," she said. "Here it is!"

Billy Bunter nearly fell down as the following evidence of Uncle Toby's identity greeted his gaze.

Mr. Tobias Toploose,
Chief Lunacy Commissioner,
Balmly Islands.

"Of course, I sha'n't stand you a feed out of this fiver," said Bessie.

"It's all my own—my very own!"

Billy Bunter scarcely heard.

With feelings too deep for words, he rolled away towards the building.

THE END.