

A splendid long, complete story of stirring adventure at sea and on land, introducing the ever-popular boys of the school-ship "Bombay Castle"

THE FIRST CHAPTER

Chums All!

"Hi, George!" cried a cheerful voice from the window of the leading cab of three taxis which were speeding from London towards the Albert Nyanza Dock.

The taxi driver slowed up at the entrance of a large fair on a squalid piece of waste ground surrounded by dingy houses, gasometers, and varnish works.

Two steam roundabouts were blaring against one another, shots sounded from rifle galleries, where the tang of the bullet on the steel plates behind the targets sounded louder than the explosion of the charge.

The night air was filled with the smell of the flare lamps of the side shows, and the reek of the varnish and gas works. And this smell was laced by the rancid reek of fish and chips.

The fair, curly-haired boy who had called his taxi to a halt, leaped out, and looked up at the great, staring announcement over the gates of the fair ground.

It was Master Dick Dorrington, bound for the famous School Ship, Bombay Castle, and he had money burning in his pocket.

The announcement over the gate of the fair ground was attractive.

"Luna Park and Electric Joy World," it

announced. "All the fun of the Fair. Performing elephants. Wild Man of Borneo. The Laughing Hippopotamus. The Murder in the Red Barn. Higgins's Grand Theatre of Varieties. New Exciting Dramas every ten minutes. The Wibblewob and Skyscraping Swings. Patronised by Royalty."

The two taxis following pulled up swiftly at the signal of the leading driver.

"What's the lark?" called a voice from the first of these vehicles.

And Master Chip Progdgers, famous in the records of the Boys of the Bombay Castle, skipped out of the cab.

"It's a show!" replied Dick Dorrington. "We must have a peep at it before we go to sea. We shan't see a real show again for ever so long. And I want to have a squint at the Wild Man of Borneo. Look, it's up there on the board!"

Out of the leading cab had descended Jim Handyman, the son of the famous skipper of the Bombay Castle, and he was followed by a huge and mild-faced boy, Arty Dove.

Yet another figure remained in the cab. It was a large figure, attired in the blue blazer of the floating school. Its hands were neatly gloved, and its feet were encased in patent leather boots. It was larger than most boys, and over its head was pulled a basket. This

was a light, close-woven waste-paper basket, such as are used in hotels.

This figure had marched out of the hotel with the basket over his head. The taxi driver thought he had a queer fare. But he had driven lots of medical students and schoolboys in his time, and nothing astonished him.

And it was no concern of his if this young gentleman chose to walk about with a basket over his head. But he could not account for the huge cricket bat, ten feet long, and weighing hundredweights, which the boys had hoisted on to the roof of his cab.

His orders were to drive them to the School Ship, Bombay Castle, which was due to sail from the Albert Nyanza Dock on the first of the ebb, about midnight. It was now eight o'clock.

"What about the other young gent?" asked the taxi driver, standing by his cab door. "And I suppose you young gents know that you'll have to pay for the wait!"

"That's all right, old chap!" said Dick cheerfully. "You shall have an extra half-crown for looking after our things. And as for the other young gent—well, I don't know!"

"'Im with 'is 'ead in the basket!" said the taxi driver.

"Well," replied Dick Dorrington, "I don't know whether it would be quite wise to take him into the Luna Park. The crowd inside looks a bit rough."

The taxi driver laughed.

"There are some of the lads in there to-night," said he. "It's pay-night in the works round 'ere. But that young gent looks big enough and ugly enough to take care of 'isself. 'E ain't a Mollysop, is 'e?" asked the taximan, rendered friendly by the promised half-crown.

"Have a look at him, George!" said Dick, laughing, and he leaned inside the dark cab, and lifted the waste-paper basket from the figure's head.

"My word!" gasped the taxi driver, as he started back in alarm. "What is it?"

"That's Cecil!" said Dick Dorrington.

"Haven't you heard of Cecil, the tame orang-outang of the Bombay Castle?"

"Can't say as I 'ave!" replied the taxi

driver doubtfully. " 'E don't look very tame. Orful-looking chap, I call 'im!"

"It's only his looks," said Dick. "He's really one of the kindest, dearest old chaps in the world. Look, George, he wants to shake hands with you."

Sure enough, that terrible figure in the cab, pleased with the horror of the taxi driver, and wishing to create a more favourable impression, was holding out a well-gloved paw, clothed in spotless buckskin. It furthermore made clucking noises of a reassuring nature.

"Shake hands with him, mate. Don't be afraid. You'll hurt his feelings if you don't!" said Dick Dorrington.

The taxi driver shook hands timidly.

"My word! What a dial!" he exclaimed, in awed tones.

"Isn't it!" said Dick proudly. "Old Cecil would like to go into the show with us. But if we take him in there and they spot his face we shall be mobbed. The showman might want to swop him for the Wild Man of Borneo. That's what he is, you know, driver," added Dick, always ready to impart information. "Orang-outang is Malay for the Man of the Woods."

"Well," replied the taxi driver firmly, "I don't want to stop outside looking after him. Some of these rough lads might see him, or he might turn ugly on me; then what about it?"

Dick looked up and down the street. Then a happy thought struck him.

The spot where the taxis had drawn up was fairly dark. But a few yards further on were stalls—stalls of cheap hosiery, sweet-stuffs, and toys, attracted to this dismal spot by the fair.

And on the nearest of these stalls Dick's quick eyes noticed, amongst other toys, masks for sale.

They were the usual old Guy Fawkes masks, a job line of left-overs from last November the Fifth.

Swiftly, he ran along to the stall and made a rapid purchase of half-a-dozen of these masks.

One, a nigger's mask, he clapped on his own face.

"Here you are, Skeleton!" he called to a

thin and cadaverous youth who had alighted from the second cab. "Clap this over your ugly face!"

"Why?" asked Skeleton doubtfully. "I say, you chaps, I'm getting so awfully hungry. Do you think I might have some of those fried fish and chips?"

"Never mind about your fried fish and chips!" replied Dick impatiently. "Shove that mask on. I want a few of us to be wearing masks, so that Cecil can wear one, too. The people will think that we are just ragging, and they won't take any notice of us."

"But how am I to eat fish and chips if I've got this mask on?" asked Skeleton miserably, surveying the red-nosed, leering mask with which he had been served out.

"You'll have to wait," replied Dick. "We shall be aboard the ship in half an hour. We aren't far from the docks here. Then you can blow yourself out like a balloon. There's always a tremendous supper first night in the saloon."

This did not console Skeleton much. He had had a very large tea only an hour since. Now he was hungry again. But he clapped on the mask and tied the strings behind. Then Dick, leaning into the cab, slapped a grinning pink and white mask with George Robey eyebrows over Cecil's terrible visage.

"Well, I never!" gasped the taxi-driver, as Cecil took this proceeding quite calmly. "I wouldn't have done that for a thousand quid!"

And he stood back as Cecil alighted from the cab, a roomy ulster pulled over his school blazer, which he wore in common with the boys, and a thick knitted tam o' shanter pulled well down over his huge leathery ears. For there was a chilliness spreading up from the river, and Cecil was susceptible to chills in this northern climate.

Arty Dove had also clapped on a mask. There followed Chip Prodders, Porkis, the fat boy, who had been put in the third cab because he had been eating pickled onions, and Pongo Walker, the boy who could pull the finest monkey faces in the world.

"You don't want a mask, Pongo!" said Dick briefly. "Your face is ugly enough

without any mask. Take Cecil's arm; I'll stand treat."

Few people noticed the merry crowd as they pushed in at the gate of the so-called Luna Park. There were a lot of the lads of Millwall and Poplar and Silvertown disporting themselves in masks, and throwing confetti and fried fish bones at one another.

They started with a splendid ride on the World's Champion Roundabout. Pongo Walker rode on a unicorn. Cecil had a perch on a golden duck which bobbed up and down as they swept round to the inspiring strains of a steam organ which worked a band of golden knights in armour.

Everyone agreed that it was a splendid roundabout, except that it did not run long enough for threepence a shot.

After that they went to see the lion.

The lion was in a tent, shut in a cage which looked none too strong.

"Walk in, gents, and see the great man-eatin' lion that was caught on the plains o' the Sahara by General Foch, the great French general!" called the man at the door. "Admission tuppence. It's generally fourpence, but we are showin' at arf price to-night, 'cause it's near the end o' the week. The real man-eatin' lion o' the Atlas Mountains. 'E's no ordinary lion, young gents! None of them lions at the Zoo 'ave ever eaten a man. This one ate nothin' but niggers till he was caught by General Foch when 'e was out huntin'. An' the laughin' hyena's in the next tent. Admission only tuppence. That's what makes 'im laugh, to think that all you people can see 'im so cheap!"

The boys advanced to the cage.

The man-eating lion was a bit of a disappointment. He was nicely lit by a bunch of electric lights at the top of the cage. But he was a depressed and moth-eaten-looking animal, idly chewing a beef bone.

"I thought you said he was a man-eater?" asked Dick, in rather disappointed tones.

"So 'e is!" replied the guardian of the lion. "But 'e's like the rest of us; 'e 'ad to eat what 'e could get in the war-time."

"Can't you stir him up and make him walk about?" asked Dick.

The man had no time to answer, for the

lion sniffed the air, raised its head, bared its ugly yellow teeth, and without a word of warning, hurled itself at the bars of its cage, uttering an angry roar.

"Take off them masks, young gents!" said the man in great agitation. "It must be them that's upsetting him. Stir 'im up! My word, 'e don't want no stirring up! If 'e 'its the cage like that again 'ell bust it!"

The boys knew that it was not the masks which had agitated the lion, but the presence of Cecil, the orang-outang. All beasts dread the orang-outang.

Skeleton and Dick slipped off their masks. But the lion had shrunk back to the far corner of his cage, growling and snarling in a frightened manner.

"I never seen 'im do that before," said the man. "You'd better get out of it, young gents, and leave 'im to calm down. There's something got on 'is nerves. Maybe it's the smell o' them gas-works."

The boys left the agitated lion. He had set the laughing hyena off, so they did not go in to see that interesting animal.

"His laugh is the best part of him," said Dick, with his usual commonsense, "and we can get that for nothing outside the tent. Come along, chaps; we haven't got much time with those taxicabs ticking up the fare against us! Let's come and see the Wild Man of Borneo!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER

The Wild Man of Borneo!

THE Wild Man of Borneo was stowed away in the corner of the fair ground, far away from the rest of the shows. Perhaps the word had gone forth that the Wild Man of Borneo was not a star turn. At any rate, there were few patrons about in the dark, mouldy corner of the waste ground near the wall of the gasworks.

They met the money-taker for this show coming away from his tent in despair. He took the boys' twopences casually.

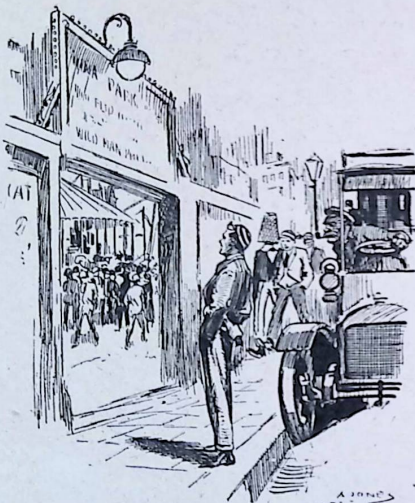
"You'll find him in the corner yonder, young gents," said he. "You can take 'im if you like. 'E's a Dudski, that's what 'e is. There's only one party taken a ticket for 'im all day—a nigger. And 'e's there now. You can stop as long as you like. There's no extra charge. I'm going to supper!"

"I expect it's a swindle," said Jim Handyman.

"Sounds like it," admitted Dick Dorrington. "But

we've paid our twopences, so we may as well go and have a look. Hark! You can hear him howling from here. I expect the poor chap has to howl like that or he does not get his money!"

As the boys approached the tent the howls increased. There was something very genuine in them, something so real that Dick paused and Cecil started to growl softly under his breath.



"It's a show!" cried Dick Dorrington. "We must have a peep at it before we go to sea! And I want to have a squint at the Wild Man of Borneo." (See page 173.)

Cecil always growled like that when anyone was in pain. It was Cecil's way of showing sympathy.

"Shut up, Cecil!" ordered Dick. And Cecil grew silent.

"Stay here a moment, chaps!" whispered Dick. "I'll bet that chap's not howling to attract customers. He's in pain, and he's frightened."

Dick ran forward and approached the tent softly. His footfall made no sound on the soft, muddy waste ground.

The tent in which the Wild Man of Borneo was stowed was the oldest tent in the show. It was full of holes, and advertised plainly that the Wild Man of Borneo was at the bottom of the bill of the Luna Park.

Through one of these square, torn holes in the canvas Dick peeped.

The tent was lit by a single flare lamp, and in it was a small cage, the sort of cage that would be awarded to one of the humbler species of the wild cats. In the corner of the cage crouched a man, tattooed and painted, a man with a great wig of frizzy hair that made him look like a golliwog.

Dick knew at once that this man had never seen Borneo. He was a Gilbert Islander, a Kanaka of the Pacific.

And, standing by the cage, prodding the unhappy occupant with the point of a sharp and glittering sword, drawn from a sword-stick, was a well-dressed nigger attired in a neat tweed suit and Tribby hat.

"You hurt me too much!" stammered the Wild Man of Borneo, trying to get away from the cruel point of the sword-stick.

"I t'ink I hurt you some mo'," grinned the nigger, "s'pose yo' not tell me where Cappen Davis hid der pearls from der wreck ob der Haliotis!"

The Wild Man of Borneo shrank away in the corner of the cage.

"I promise not to tell," he muttered, his teeth chattering. "I promise Cappen Davis when he die dat I no tell to anyone but——"

Then he paused like one who is about to say too much.

"Who did yo' promise to tell?" demanded the nigger. "Dat am what I wan' to know. Yo' tell me quick, Mister Mitui, or——"

Dick saw the point of the sword-stick lick into the cage again, and the unhappy Wild Man of Borneo squirmed into the corner of the cage, twisting his legs to avoid the steel that stabbed under his feet.

Dick had seen some bullying in his time, and made no doubt of the nigger's mission. The Wild Man of Borneo had a secret which the nigger wished to worm out of him. And here he was caught and secured in the cage in which he earned his daily bread by masquerading and playing the fool, and at the mercy of this enemy who had found him out.

For a moment Dick saw red. He would have burst into the tent and snatched the sword from the nigger. Any sight of bullying always came near to driving Dick Dorrington mad.

But he commanded himself. He slipped back to his friends, made a sign to them, and noisily they approached the tent.

"Here you are, chaps!" cried Dick, aloud. "Here's the Wild Man of Borneo. And I don't wonder that he's jolly wild, being stowed away in a dirty corner like this."

He lifted the flap of the tent, and entered.

There was nothing suspicious to be seen, nothing save a wild, trembling, tattooed figure shrinking in the corner of the cage, and a grinning, smartly-dressed nigger carrying a Malacca cane and smoking a bad cigar with a big red band round it.

The nigger looked round quickly and suspiciously as the boys entered. But he seemed assured that they had heard nothing when he saw their masked faces.

"Hallo!" said Dick, advancing into the tent. "Here he is, in the cage. This is the Wild Man of Borneo."

"He doesn't look very wild," said Skeleton, eating fish and chips out of a paper bag.

Dick's kind heart smote him as he saw the look of dumb misery and appeal in the eyes of the wild, tattooed figure in the corner of the cage, and noted the grotesque woman's rudi, or skirt of bass, that it was wearing, and the strings of beads and shells and the tufts of ostrich feathers that were thrust in the frizzy hair to add to the impression of wildness.

"He doesn't look wild!" he agreed.

"Let's undo the cage!"

And he advanced to the padlock which

fastened the cage. It was merely hanging in the staples.

But the nigger was quick to interpose with a greasy, oily smile on his black face.

"No, young gentlemen," said he. "Yo' mus' not unfasten this chap. He is really a wild man, and he is dangerous!"

Dick pretended to swallow this piece of information.

"All right!" said he. "Lend us that swell stick of yours, chappy, to stir him in the ribs and to see if he will roar!"

The nigger handed over the stick readily enough. Dick felt the weight of it and knew that he had got the sword-stick.

He dug the Wild Man of Borneo in the ribs sharply.

"Hi!" he cried. "Why don't you yell? You aren't much of a wild man!"

The nigger guffawed. There is nothing that pleases many niggers more than the sight of pain inflicted.

"He am not a bery wild man, sar!" said he obsequiously. "Stir um up again, sar. Hit um on de haid!"

Dick's heart blazed within him, for he could see the tears in the wild, hunted eyes which were the only wild thing about the Wild Man from Borneo.

"Doan hit me, sar!" pleaded the Wild Man. "I ain't well!"

Dick pulled the stick out of the cage.

"If you aren't well," he answered, "you ought not to be in that cage!"

"He's well enough, sar!" put in the nigger. "He am only shammin'. You hit 'im ober de haid, sar. Dat'll make 'im roar!"

But Dick had made up his mind what he was going to do. He had heard enough outside the tent. This so-called Wild Man had got a secret which concerned pearls. He was plainly a Kanaka from the South Seas. To the South Seas the Bombay Castle was bound.

Time was short. He must move quickly. The nigger must go into the cage and the Wild Man of Borneo must come out of it.

He made an almost imperceptible sign to Cecil, who, with that silly George Robey mask hiding his terrible face, slipped behind the grinning nigger.

Dick looked round on his chums and laughed. "He's the tamest Wild Man I ever met," said he. "What will you chaps bet I won't get in the cage with him?"

"Bet you a bo-bo-bottle of bullseyes," mumbled Skeleton, taking up the challenge, with his mouth full of chips.

"Done!" said Dick, and he advanced to the door of the cage.

But the nigger seemed strangely perturbed. He jumped forward and laid a huge black hand on Dick's shoulder.

"No, sar," said he, his black eyes rolling and showing bloodshot and yellow. "You mus' not open dat door!"

"Take your dirty hands off me," said Dick, in affected anger as he twisted open the padlock and swung the cage door wide.

The negro tried to swing him aside.

"Bombay Castle to the rescue!" called Dick. "Pull the Wild Man out of the cage, Arty!"

Arty Dove caught the astonished Wild Man and lifted him out of the cage in his powerful arms as easily as if he had been a child.

"I teach yo'!"

The nigger, with a sudden rush of mingled anger and fear, closed with Dick, and received that young gentleman's fist hard on his rubber-like nose.

He gave a cry of rage and strove to snatch his sword-stick from Dick's hand.

But Dick neatly threw the sword-stick into the cage. The nigger reached after it.

"In with him, Cecil!" gasped Dick.

The nigger gave a yell of fear as he found his fat waist surrounded in the terrible grip of the long, hairy arms of the orang-outang. He turned and saw the grinning pink mask, with its George Robey eyebrows peering over his shoulder.

In vain he twisted in the grip of the orang-outang. Though a tremendously powerful man, he was no more than a child in that terrible hold.

He managed to tear the mask from Cecil's face, and at the sight of the hideous visage beneath, with its sparkling eyes and flashing white teeth, the strength seemed suddenly to go from him.

Cecil boosted him into the cage. The door

was clashed to and the big padlock slipped into the staples.

The positions were now reversed. The nigger was caged and the Wild Man of Borneo was free. The latter had sunk down on the ground in an almost fainting condition.

The nigger woke up from his trance of terror with a howl, and dashed at the bars of the cage, shaking them in his great black hands.

"Let me out!" he cried. "Let me out, or I will kill you!"

"That's a very good reason for not letting you out, old sport," answered Dick Dorrington. "And let me tell you, Quashie, I saw you torturing the poor beggar when you thought you had him alone in your power. You can think yourself lucky that we don't handle you in the same fashion, you cowardly bully!"

"Let me out!" yelled the nigger.

"Not a bit of it," answered Dick. "You are doing the Wild Man of Borneo act far better than this poor chap you were prodding up with that rotten sword-stick. You stay and keep it up. We are going to take the Wild Man of Borneo back to Borneo. You've met the real Wild Man of Borneo this time, that's what's the matter with you."

And Dick pointed to Cecil, who was staring through the bars of the cage at the infuriated nigger with a pensive expression on his awful visage, as much as to say that there are some human beings who are beneath the contempt of a respectable ape.

Then Pongo picked up the mask and slipped it over Cecil's face again.

"What are you going to do about the Wild Man?" he asked.

"Take him with us," replied Dick, lifting the Wild Man to his feet. "Shove your overcoat on him, Arty. Now the nigger's hat. Now a mask. That will do. Come on—link up arms, boys. Cecil one side of him—you, Arty, on the other."

And they hustled the poor bewildered Wild Man out of the tent and hurried him across the dark corner of the fair ground to a hole in the fence.

Behind them they could hear the caged nigger bully giving forth desperate howls for help and release.

But no one took notice of these. The two steam roundabouts were working up to full steam, and were crashing out "Lead Me to that Beautiful Band" and "Coal Black Mammy" in fierce opposition.

And the poor Wild Man of Borneo had been howling all day in the tent in the hope of attracting a few customers.

"Let him howl," said Dick, grinning. "If we had had a little more time I'd have given the brute something to howl about."

They slipped through the hole in the fence and made for their waiting taxis.

The poor Wild Man was staggering between Arty and Cecil.

"What's the matter with him?" asked the taximan, as they pushed him into the cab with Porkis.

"He's all right," said Dick glibly. "The naphtha lamps have made him feel queer.



Standing by the cage, prodding the unhappy occupant with the point of a sharp and glittering sword, drawn from a sword-stick, was a nigger. "You hurt too much!" stammered the Wild Man of Borneo. (See page 177.)

Drive on quick, you nuts, or we'll lose the boat."

And the boys leaped into their cabs and were whirled away, leaving the nigger in the cage to howl unnoticed.

In the cab with Porkis, the Wild Man of Borneo had fainted from pain and fear and hunger, for in the Luna Park he was only paid by results, and business had been bad.

Porky was a resourceful boy.

"Poor chap!" he muttered. "He's empty—that's what's the matter with him."

He took the mask off the wild man and fanned his face till he revived. At Porky's feet was a hamper destined for an illegal night feed in the Glory Hole, as their dormitory cabin on the Bombay Castle was called.

Porky opened the hamper quickly as the cab rolled on.

He produced a couple of the largest sausage rolls that were ever seen off the pantomime stage. They had been made specially to his order. He handed these to the Wild Man, who devoured them as if he had never before in his troubled life tasted a sausage roll.

"That's better," said Porky affably, as the two sausage rolls disappeared in a twinkling. "Now try a couple of our famous meat pies. They're as good as Bovril!"

The meat pies disappeared in the same fashion as the sausage rolls.

Then the Wild Man of Borneo laid his hand timidly on Porky's arm.

"Where you go?" he asked.

"We are going to the school ship, Bombay Castle," said Porky. "We sail to-night for the South Seas—you know, the Pacific."

"You take me to Pacific?" asked the Wild Man wistfully.

"I believe that's the idea," said Porkis. "We've pinched you out of your cage and left that big nigger in exchange. And he's a good swap!" chuckled Porky. "I bet he's a heap wilder now than you have ever been. You are our nigger now. And we are the Glory Hole Gang of the Bombay Castle. What we have we hold. And what we pinch we keep."

A sudden change came over the Wild Man of Borneo. He seemed revived with a new life.

"You boy too good," he exclaimed. "Name belong me Mitui. Me no wild man, me Kanaka boy. S'pose you take me back to Pacific, me make you rich. Me make you all rich."

"Steady on, old chap," answered Porky, who was, above all things, a matter-of-fact fellow. "Don't promise too much. You don't look as if you could make anyone very rich just now."

But Mitui's eyes rolled.

"He know," said he, "dat nigger, he know dat Mitui know. For dat he stuck his skewer into feet."

And he lifted his feet, covered all over with jabs and punctures, showing them in the light of a passing lamp.

"Who did that?" demanded Porky.

"Dat nigger," replied Mitui. "He catch me in cage an' he try to make me tell 'um where to find de pearl and gold."

"If I'd known that," said Porky slowly, "we'd have put Cecil in the cage along with him, and seen which of them was the wildest. But I say, what a rotter! I've a good mind to go back and thump him!"

But the Wild Man grasped his arm in terror.

"You no do dat," he exclaimed. "Dat nigger am de wustest man in London. Take Mitui away quick out o' London."

"All right," said Porky placidly. "And what did you say about gold?"

"See dat hat," said the Wild Man, pointing to Porky's bowler which lay on the cab seat, "dat your hat?"

"Rather!" replied Porky. "It was a classy hat. I gave six-and-six for it two years ago, but the chaps have used it a good deal for baling out boats and for football. They once made a Christmas pudding in it. But it's a good hat still."

Mitui gripped Porky's hand hard. And there was terror in his grip.

"You take me to Sout' Seas again, and I fill dat hat along gold," he said.

And Porky was left gasping with wonder, as the string of taxis raced along for the Albert Nyanza Docks.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

A Great Surprise!

CAPTAIN JAMES HANDYMAN, master of the school ship *Bombay Castle*, was standing on the bridge of that vessel looking anxiously through the darkness in the direction of the dock gates.

The Dock Police were also on the look-out for the late arrivals. They knew the boys of the *Bombay Castle* only too well, and were always relieved when they saw the last of the ship and her high-spirited crew.

For the boys were always managing to get into mischief. They fell in the docks, they monkeyed with the cranes, they got into rows with native seamen and firemen, and they wandered on board other ships, doing their best to fall down their holds, or to get knocked over by bales of goods as they swung in their slings.

It was two of the boys of the *Bombay Castle* who had climbed up the funnel of the great New Zealand packet *Tangarura*, and had fallen down the enormous funnel, giving the dock staff endless trouble to fish them out again.

And the Dock Police had not forgotten how a gang of these high-spirited lads, full of boyish curiosity to find out how a dock tug worked, had gone aboard a small tug, had cast her adrift, and had set the engines running without knowing how to stop them. With the result that they had had to steer her in circles till she sank two empty barges and had ended up by colliding with the dock gates.

There was, therefore, little wonder that Captain Handyman was looking out anxiously for the last of his crew. The rest had arrived an hour since by a special train, and had been shepherded safely on board.

And Captain Handyman had clapped a couple of quartermasters on the gangway with orders and ropes ends, to turn back any boy who might try to get ashore again.

By his side stood a Hindu gentleman, who wore a turban of bright cerise silk, a smart frock coat, golf knickers of the Guards cut, which are known as plus fours, and strapped sandshoes.

This was Mr. Chatterjee Lal Tata, Master of Hindustani and of the higher Mathematics,

and M.A. of Calcutta University, a gentleman who had been led into more scrapes by the boys of the *Bombay Castle* than he cared to think about.

Mr. Lal Tata shivered a bit, for the cold night wind blew over the black waters of the dock, setting the flaring white arc lamps swinging. And there was a promise of snow in the wind.

"I wish those boys would turn up," said Captain Handyman, impatiently. "I always like to see the *Glory Hole Gang* safe aboard. Then I know that we are all right and ready for sea. Last time they came they ran a cab into the dock."

"Here they come!" exclaimed Mr. Lal Tata. "So they do!" replied Captain Handyman, in tones of great relief. "Look at the coppers clearing the way for them as if they were royalty. I wonder what the young scoundrels have been up to to make them so late!"

"You may be sure, sir, that they have been guilty of usual rascalities," laughed Mr. Lal Tata. "I never knew a more devilsome gang than our young friend, Master Dick Dorrington and his satellite fellows. They are all mischief stars, those nuts."

Three taxicabs lurched and rolled over the cobbles and rails of the quay, drawing up at the gangway of the ship.

Out of the first cab leaped Dick and Jim Handyman, Arty Dove, and Cecil.

"There's that boy of mine!" exclaimed the captain, waving his cap. "And my hat, just look at the size of that new cricket-bag that they've got for the crocodile. Where are we going to stow it this trip?"

Captain Handyman knew well the contents of that vast cricket-bag. It contained Gus, the mascot of the Boys of the *Bombay Castle*. Nearly everyone knew Gus. Caught in the River Nile, near Khartoum, when he wasn't much larger than a sixpenny haddock, Gus had been carried about the world in a cricket-bag by the Boys of the *Bombay Castle*. With the fine ship's fare and regular feeding, he had grown larger and larger, outgrowing cricket-bag after cricket-bag, till this last new and enormous bag had to be made for him.

The trouble about Gus was that you could not put him into a travelling-cage or a packing

case, or any other form of travelling home. He had been put into a cricket-bag when he was an infant, and he had lived all his youth in a cricket-bag. And as soon as he was taken out of a cricket-bag he started to pine and to get ill-tempered and thin.

Hence this gigantic cricket-bag. In the ordinary course of things, when dormant in the cold climate of England, Gus lay quite still in the bag and slept week in and week out. The boys had often put him in a cloak-room at a railway station, and no one had been any the wiser.

But to-night they had dropped him down the stairs of the hotel, and that had wakened him up. He knew that he was off to sea again, and was going to steam over the briny down to the warm weather that he loved. He knew that he was going where the palm trees grew and that made him feel lively.

As Captain Handyman watched the cab from the high bridge, there was a crash of glass, and the window dropped out of the second cab.

Captain Handyman knew what had happened. The boys had been foolish enough to untie the neck of the canvas-sail bag in which

was stowed the second mascot of the Bombay Castle, Horace, their famous Egyptian goat. And Horace, excited by the fizzing of steam, the rattle of winches, and all the sounds of a great steamer getting near ready for sea, had naturally shoved his great head out of the bag and had endeavoured to struggle out of the taxicab through the glass window.

Now his huge head, with its spreading

horns and its evil green eyes which shone like emeralds, was hanging out of the broken window.

The two quartermasters were hurrying down the gangway. They were ready for Horace, for they knew what he could do when he was excited. They were rattling two pairs of the ship's handcuffs. And, before he could get out of the cab, Horace was manacled fore and aft and was thrown out, bleating, on his side.

"By Jingoos!" exclaimed Mr. Lal Tata, looking down from the bridge as the driver of the first cab struggled with the great cricket-bag on the roof. "That taxi-fellow does not know what sort of cricket apparatuses our boys carry or he would not handle that so heavy bag with such joysomeness."

The taxi-driver was wrestling with the end of the bag, levering it from its perch.

Of a sudden the man yelled, for the end of the bag flew open under the pressure of something that twisted and turned and squirmed within.

He saw the huge shovel-head and scaly shoulder and stubby foreleg of a crocodile force its way out almost in his face.

Then he gave a yell and let the bag drop, jumping back as though

Gus were a bagfull of snakes.

Gus hissed like a punctured tyre. Then, freeing himself from the bag, he turned on the taxi-driver who had thus let him down on his nose.

"Stop him, you idiot!" yelled Dick.

"Not me," replied the taxi-driver. "I may be an idiot, but I ain't quite barmy—not yet!"



As Mitui caught sight of the captain, his whole expression changed. "Cappen Jim!" he gasped. "It am Cappen Jim himself." He rose and staggered. Captain Handyman held out his arms and caught him. (See page 184.)

"Stop him, Arty!" cried Dick, heading Gus round.

But Gus was not going to be stopped by Arty or by anyone. With a swift twist of his serrated tail he knocked Arty's legs from under him and raced up the gangway on to the ship.

There are a lot of people who think that a crocodile can't run when he wants to, but Gus went up the gangway like a streak of lightning. He shot along the promenade-deck, making for the well-deck forward where he usually had his perch near the water-taps.

But alas for Gus, here under the bridge the deck was dark. He did not see that planks were laid from the ladder of the well-deck to the steel coaming of the No. 2 hold, which was still open to take the last stores coming aboard. He shot down the ladder and along these planks, and a shout went up from Captain Handyman and from Mr. Lal Tata as they heard a yell and a tremendous thump from the bottom of the ship.

It was a sheer fall of forty-seven feet from that coaming to the spot below where the dockers were working.

Captain Handyman rushed from the bridge to the hatchway, Mr. Lal Tata following more slowly.

"If crocodile has necks, that crocodile has spifflicated himself," muttered Mr. Lal Tata to himself.

Captain Handyman was leaning over the open hatchway.

"Below there!" he shouted. "Anyone hurt?"

"What's it doin' up there?" demanded an aggrieved voice from the depths of the ship. "Ramin' crocodiles!"

"Is he killed?" demanded Captain Handyman.

"Killed!" replied the voice. "Why, when 'Arry went to see if 'e was stunned, 'e put a crowbar in 'is mouth an' 'e's chewed it up like a straw!"

"Put him in a sling and send him up!" ordered Captain Handyman.

"Not me!" replied the voice. "I ain't 'andling no crocodiles, captain. You send someone down as understands 'em. My chaps

are all standin' on packin' cases to keep out of 'is way."

Captain Handyman had just superintended the hoisting out of the unhappy Gus, who was chained up on deck with the water tap running on his bruised nose, when a footfall behind him caused him to turn.

"Please, sir!" exclaimed the voice of Dick Dorrington.

"What is it?" demanded Captain Handyman. "What do you want, Dick, and you, Jim?"

"Please, sir, we've put a chap up in the chart room—a nigger," said Dick.

"A nigger in my chart room!" exclaimed Captain Handyman. "What d'ye mean by putting a nigger in my chart room? What with Gus tumbling down the hold, and nearly killing a member of the Dockers' Union, and you putting niggers in my chart room, you boys seem to be out to give me a Saturday night at sea. What's the nigger?"

"He's the Wild Man of Borneo, sir," explained Dick. "We found him in a cage at the Luna Park, where a nigger was ill-treating him. So we pinched him out of the cage and we shoved the nigger in the cage in his place!"

Captain Handyman gasped.

"Do you mean to say that you've stolen a nigger out of a show, and stuck him in my chart room?" he demanded, unable to believe his ears at the piece of unparalleled impudence.

"Please, sir," explained Dick, "his name is Mitui."

Captain Handyman's jaw dropped.

"Say that again," he exclaimed dully.

"Mitui, sir, and he comes from the Gilbert Islands—the Kingsmills, as they call them. And he wants you to give him a passage back to the South Seas," said Dick.

"Mitui!" muttered Captain Handyman, staring at the boys. "Get out! It can't be true! What's he like?"

"Biggish chap, sir," reported Dick. "Tattooed with palm leaves in fine lines all over him. He was doing the Wild Man of Borneo in the show. And we caught the nigger digging at him with a sword-stick—big nigger, well-dressed, marked with small pox, and half his right ear missing."

Captain Handyman put a hand on each knee, and stared into Dick's face.

"Gumbo! By Jingo!" he exclaimed. "And you shoved that nigger in the other chap's cage?"

"Yes, sir," replied Dick.

"Did he know who you were, or where you are going?" demanded Captain Handyman, strangely moved.

"He could find out, sir," replied Dick.

"Then the sooner we are out of this dock and off to sea, the better!" snapped Captain Handyman. "That nigger is the blackest nigger inside and out that walks this earth! And we shan't be long hearing about him, either! Who shoved him into the cage?"

"Cecil, sir!" replied Dick.

"Then Cecil was handling a more dangerous brute than himself," said Captain Handyman.

He shouted for the boatswain.

Mr. Galloper came running up.

"Galloper," snapped Captain Handyman, "clear out the shore gangs as quickly as possible. Arm both quartermasters on the gangway. Stop all strangers coming aboard, and keep a sharp look-out for a nigger with half an ear. If he tries to force his way on board, chuck him down the gangway. If he tries to come aboard after that, hand him over to the police. And snatch his stick first thing. It's a sword-stick. He is likely to be armed. Get the tug alongside and pass the word to the dock people that I want to get out as soon as possible!"

Mr. Galloper hurried off, and Captain Handyman raced up the ladders to the chart-room, followed by the two boys.

He flung the door open.

There, huddled up on a chair, was the Wild Man of Borneo, his eyes bright and staring. He seemed half insensible.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER

Mitui's Story

MITUI looked up dully as the crowd entered. Then, as he caught sight of the captain, his whole expression altered.

"Cappen Jim!" he gasped. "T'ank de Lord. It am Cappen Jim himself!"

He rose and staggered.

Captain Handyman held out his arms and caught him.

"Mitui!" he exclaimed. "Mitui, my poor boy! What have they been doing to you?"

Mitui could hardly answer. He was shaking with fever.

"Pneumonia!" muttered the captain. Then he turned to the boys. "Call two hands!" he cried. "Tell them to carry this chap to the sick bay and send for the surgeon at once. And you get down below and stay below till we've cleared the docks. If that nigger comes along I don't want him or any of his pals to see you. He's the Bad Man of Badville, and dangerous, especially to boys who have shoved him in a monkey cage! And that's that!"

The boys did as they were told. They hurried down to the saloon to supper. There was a first-class supper on the table, and Skeleton showed them how to knock the newness off a York ham. They moved amongst the new boys of the Bombay Castle, and showed them how to stow themselves away in their cabins.

And it was ten-thirty by the time they had gathered in the Glory Hole to discuss the strange happenings of the evening.

They would have given anything to go on deck to look for the nigger of whom Captain Handyman had given such an evil account. He was a nigger worth meeting.

They listened to the sounds of the ship preparing to leave. They heard the dock tug come alongside, and they heard the deep-throated roar of the Bombay Castle's steam whistle announcing that she was on the move down to the lock gates.

Then Porky's hamper was opened and laid out on the beds. Sausage rolls, meat pies, ginger beer, cake, and other fodder made its appearance, and the Glory Hole Gang gathered round to keep up the tradition that healthy English schoolboys can always eat two suppers and drop asleep to dream of angels.

They were in the last lock, and now the Bombay Castle was booming her message that she was coming out into the great, dark river.

Peeping through the porthole they could

see the granite kerbing of the lock slowly moving past.

The lock gate was open, and the Bombay Castle was moving into the river.

Dick laughed as he took a bottle of ginger beer and popped the cork.

"Well, that nigger has not turned up, at any rate," said he. "Perhaps he's still locked up in his cage at the show. But he seems to have put the wind up your father, Jim," added Dick. "Never mind! Here's to the Bombay Castle and the voyage!"

"What did dad say his name was?" asked Jim Handyman who, attired in his pyjamas, was sitting on the edge of the bed eating raspberry puffs.

"Gumbo!" replied Dick. "Here's to Gumbo with half an ear, the blackest nigger in the world!"

The bottle was half-way to Dick's lips when it suddenly shattered into fragments.

"Lights out!" cried Chip Producers.

The electric lights in the Glory Hole were snapped off, leaving the long cabin in darkness.

"On the floor all of you!" cried Chip.

The boys slipped on the floor.

"What was it?" cried Dick from the floor.

"Crumbs, my bed's swamped with ginger beer!"

Chip had seen all he wanted. Under the glare of the arc lamps which lit the lock, he had caught sight of a big nigger running off with two policemen after him.

"It's a bullet," cried Dick Dorrington.

"Here it is in my pillow! A bullet fired through the porthole! Who fired it?"

"It was your friend, Gumbo!" answered Chip, turning on the light again. "It's all right. We are clear of the lock now and out of range."

And the crowd in the Glory Hole gathered round the flattened bullet and marvelled over the smashed bottle of ginger beer.

"That bullet was meant for you, Dick!" said Chip. "And it was a near thing, too!"

"A miss is as good as a mile!" replied Dick gaily. "Let's have another bottle!"

But all the same he could not help thinking of Gumbo, the blackest nigger in the world, who had managed to get out of the cage of the Wild Man of Borneo and to track them down to the Glory Hole of the Bombay Castle.

"He must have peeped in every port!" said he at length. "We shall hear of him again!"

"I think you will!" said a voice at the door of the Glory Hole.

"I thought that I'd come down and see that you boys were all right. The ruffian had a shot at me on the bridge as well, and smashed the glass at the bridge end. Look!"

Captain Handyman held out his cap, which was pierced through above the badge by a bullet.

"If the police haven't got him," said he, "he'll be off on our track within the week, boys. So keep your weather eye open for a nigger with half an ear. You won't cage him again. You can't sting that nigger in the



The bottle was half way to Dick's lips when it suddenly shattered into fragments. "On the floor, all of you!" cried Chip. "That was a bullet!" (See this page)

same place twice. Now, to bed with you, and thank your lucky stars Master Dick, that it was only the ginger beer bottle he hit. That shot was meant for your brains. But you haven't got any!"

And, with that, Captain Handyman marched off to the bridge again.

There is no need to tell here of the voyage of the Bombay Castle to the Pacific.

It was like most of the other voyages of that famous craft. Dr. Crabhunter, the head-master, was seldom seen. He remained in the lab. all day working at his microscopes, examining the white ooze and the shrimps that were trawled up daily from the bed of the sea for his benefit.

The Bombay Castle steamed slowly along the eastern edge of that great Atlantic gulf which is called the Eastern Azores Trench, where the water is over five thousand fathoms in depth.

And from this deep were dredged some very interesting holothurians and shrimps over which the worthy doctor went nearly wild with enthusiasm. He was so pleased at one haul that he named a new shrimp after Dick Dorrington, who had helped in the hauling of the deep-sea trawl. He called it the Dorringtonii. But the next day when Dick gravely brought in a specimen of deep-sea sludge embedding an unmistakable smoked kipper, he was handed over to Scorchers Wilkinson, the Sixth Form master, who swished him with a new swishing which he called the Jellyfish Sting. After that Dick did not find any kippers in the depths of the Atlantic.

The first part of their voyage was saddened by the illness of their new chum, the "Wild Man of Borneo." In that damp tent poor Mitui had caught influenza, which had turned to pneumonia, and for some days he lay between life and death. But Dr. O'Sullivan nursed him with his great skill and, presently, as the Bombay Castle ran into the warm blue seas where the air was as soft as milk, Mitui began to recover.

Presently the boys were allowed to go in and to talk to him, and Mitui began to cheer up.

Then they got him out on deck in a long

chair, and Cecil, who had taken a great fancy to this brother Wild Man, would sit by him for hours handing him his glass of soda and milk, and bringing him his rice pudding from the galley punctually at eleven in the morning.

And as they steamed round the islands of the Spanish Main, Mitui grew stronger and stronger. He began to walk about the deck, and presently he started to work with the crew. And, bit by bit, the boys learned from him the whole story of the wreck of the Haliotis.

The Haliotis had belonged to Captain Joe Davis, an old South seaman who, in the old days, had been Captain Handyman's greatest chum. And the Haliotis had been the smartest schooner trading amongst the islands of the Paumotus—or the Dangerous Archipelago, as that wonderful labyrinth of islands is called which lies midway between Australia and the South American coast.

Mitui had been Captain Davis' boy, and he had learned from his master to regard Captain James Handyman as the greatest seaman in the world next to Nelson.

It was Mitui who had turned his master's attention from trading to pearling. Trade was bad in the South Seas. There were few freights of copra or dried coconut running between the islands and Australia. So it was Mitui who had persuaded Captain Davis to stake his all in a diving outfit to pearl in the lesser islands of the Paumotus. And it was to Captain Handyman that Captain Davis had turned for the money to buy the diving outfit, for his own means were exhausted, the Haliotis having swallowed up all his money.

Captain Handyman was hard up also at that time. But Davis was his oldest friend, and he had raised five hundred pounds and had staked it on his friend's venture, more to help his friend than to help himself.

And Captain Davis had sailed from Brisbane for the Paumotus, and for two years had worked amongst the labyrinth of the low coral islands searching for pearl oyster.

Once he got amongst them, but it was what pearlery call a dead lagoon. The oysters were there, but they were dead and worthless.

Sick at heart, having no more money to pay his native crew, Captain Davis was going to

quit the thousand islands and to make for the Marquesas, there to sell his schooner, beggared of everything but his good name.

But Mitui, watching in the cross-trees, had picked up the misty cloud that shows a low island. They had sailed up to this island, which proved to be just a ring of coral, studded thick with coco palms and enclosing a lagoon six miles in diameter.

There, in the lagoon, they had struck the pearl. The floor of the lagoon was rich in shell, and when the great oysters were laid out to be washed they had yielded such a show of pearls as happens only once in a century. There were white pearls, blacks, and smokes, all as large as peas and of wonderful quality. There were pink and flesh-coloured pearls running wonderfully regular in size, which adds to the value of a pearl for, as such gems are matched into a necklace or a rope, each pearl increases in value as it helps to make up the complete string.

And, more than this, there were wonderful baroques, or pearls of irregular shape. Chief amongst these was a wonderful smoke-coloured baroque which had the exact shape of the letter H. And Captain Davis had set this aside and had called it the Handyman pearl.

They had not cleaned out the lagoon of Pearl Island when provisions and water began to run out, and Captain Davis had been forced to leave this Tom Tiddler's Island, as he called it, and sail for the Marquesas to repair his ship and to load up with fresh stores.

And, whilst navigating the treacherous thousand miles of the Paumotus, the schooner Haliotis had been overtaken by one of those great hurricanes that, every thirty years or so, sweep the Pacific.

Captain Davis had seen the barometer falling, and he had taken shelter in the lagoon of a strange island which no man had ever visited before. It was called Hump Island, because of a strange hump or tumulus of coral which was lifted to fifty feet above the sea, whereas the low islands are rarely ten feet above high tide mark.

And in this lagoon the hurricane had caught the ill-fated Haliotis. Had she been a new ship she might have stood it. But her anchors were second-hand stuff, and her chain was old and

rusty. In the top of the hurricane she had parted from her anchors and had been driven ashore to become a total wreck. Only Captain Davis and the faithful Mitui had escaped. The Kanaka crew had taken the boat, and all were drowned.

But Captain Davis and Mitui had drifted ashore on a heneoop, in which were lashed the precious pearls, wrapped in cotton wool and enclosed in two tin canisters.

Captain Davis had buried the pearls, and only Mitui knew their resting place. And Captain Davis had made his will, in regular and proper shape, leaving the pearls to Captain Handyman.

He had warned Mitui that, if he ever escaped from this lonely island, he must not take the pearls with him. No wandering Kanaka could escape from that island or get a passage through the South Seas carrying fifty thousand pounds worth of pearls without being robbed. It was well known that Captain Davis had gone pearling, and if anyone found the wreck of the Haliotis he knew that he would be charged fifty thousand pounds for his passage from that island.

Captain Davis knew also that his days were numbered. He had been badly bruised when they were cast ashore, and the hammering of the seas had affected his lungs. The pearls belonged to Captain Handyman, and he had warned the faithful Mitui that if he survived he must not try to take the treasure to Captain Handyman, but that he must bring Captain Handyman to the treasure.

For two years they had lived on that island together, Mitui spending his time in fishing in the lagoon and making puddings of the sprouted coconuts to tempt the invalid's appetite.

Mitui had nursed his master with all the love and care that could have been bestowed upon him. But there had come a day when Captain Davis was dying.

Mitui had carried his master out from his house of palm leaves and laid him on the bed of coco fronds outside, and again Captain Davis had given his last instructions about the pearls.

And then, wonder of wonders, a schooner had sailed into the lagoon. It was a schooner

called the Black Arrow, commanded by a nigger who flew the Peruvian flag, and who called himself Mr. Gumbold. But his real name was Gumbo, and both he and the Black Arrow had a bad name in the Pacific.

Gumbo had come ashore in his whaler, and had recognised Captain Davis at once.

He had pretended a great sympathy and talked a lot. And his talk had ended in one thing. He suspected that Captain Davis had pearls. He was sure that Captain Davis had pearls. He looked into the wreck of the old Haliotis and he had discovered that she was packed with pearl shell. And where there is pearl shell of that type there are pearls.

Gumbo knew a good deal about pearls. He priced the gems which Captain Davis had taken from that shell at fifty thousand pounds, and he was within five thousand pounds of their price.

And he had offered to take Captain Davis from the island and to sail him straight to the nearest hospital, which was in the Marquesas, for the sum of fifty thousand pounds paid in pearls.

And Captain Davis had listened to him.

Then he had made his answer, and it was a straight one.

"Those pearls belong to my friend Jim Handyman, who put up the money to fish them," said he. "As for me, I don't want

any voyage to the Marquesas. I'm going on a longer voyage. You can take the shell from the wreck, which is worth a few thousand, and you can give my boy Mitui a passage and a hundred pounds. But I know you are a rascal and you won't do it."

And, with that, Captain Davis had died.

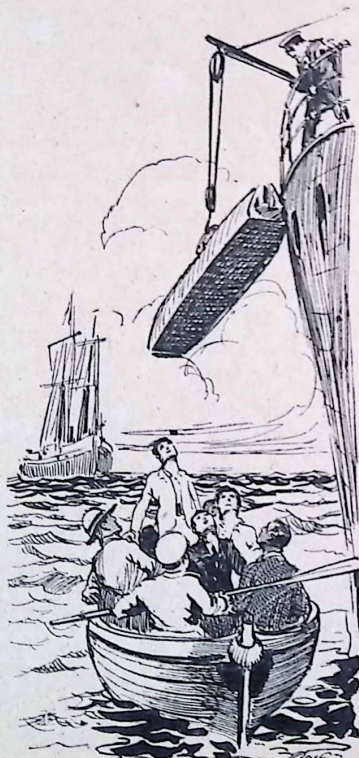
Mitui got a board and shovelled up the sand and buried his master, saying a prayer

over him. But none of Gumbo's crew had helped him in this pious task. Gumbo had looked on, sneering. Then he had called all his crew to search the island, and they searched it high and low. But they could find no trace of the pearls, for two tins of pearls buried on a coral atoll are lost as a needle in a bundle of hay.

They promised Mitui a passage. But Mitui knew better than that. He watched them one night and saw them make a fire. There was no reason why they should make such a fire, or why they should thrust into the fire iron rods which they had brought ashore to probe amongst the sands.

The Pacific is a great ocean, but a great ocean gives up its secrets, just as one of these days it will give up the dead which are in it.

And Mitui had heard the story how Gumbo had once tortured a native with



The cricket bag was rushed along the deck, and Gus was bundled into it, and lowered over the side to be rowed to the Moonstone. (See page 494)

hot irons to discover the secret of his hidden pearls.

He had crept away in the darkness and had hidden.

There were few places in that island to hide, but Mitui had hidden in one of the places where few could find him.

He had climbed up one of the three thousand coco palms which grew round the lagoon, and he had hidden himself in its great fronds. And there he had stayed three days whilst these scoundrels searched for him.

But they did not find the pearls, neither did they find Mitui. The Black Arrow sailed away, leaving Mitui marooned.

But Mitui was all right. He was a born islander. He fished the lagoon and harvested the coconuts. The scoundrels had smashed up his canoe and had removed all the tools he had saved from the wreck. But there still remained an axe, which he had stowed away in a cleft of the coral, and the penknife which he carried.

And with these tools Mitui had built the canoe with which he had escaped from the island, to be picked up at sea after many days by a German warship. And he had learned that all the world was at war. He had escaped from the warship on the east coast of Africa, and bit by bit he had made his way to London, working on all sorts of strange ships. He knew very little English, only the name Captain Handyman; and he had searched for Captain Handyman in vain, because the captain was away at sea. Then, in this hard, grey northern climate he had fallen sick and could get no employment save that of the Wild Man of Borneo; and at last Gumbo, having lost his schooner, had come to London and found him in his tent. By threats and tortures he was trying to get from him the secret of Captain Davis's treasure, when the boys of the Bombay Castle had surprised the ruffian.

That was Mitui's story, and over and over again he told it to the boys as the Bombay Castle coasted down the South American coast, through the Straits of Magellan, and northwards to Valparaiso.

And at Valparaiso Captain Handyman went ashore and had long talks with the agents

of the ship, and there Mitui was left behind whilst the Bombay Castle cruised in the China Seas and the Malay Archipelago.

The boys often thought of Mitui and wondered what he was up to. But amidst wonderful new sights and many adventures they did not have much time to wonder what their friend was doing.

And Captain Handyman kept his counsel when questioned on the matter.

"Never you mind what Mitui is up to," said he. "He'll turn up one of these days like a bad ha'penny, when you least expect him, and when he comes you boys shall have your share of the fun."

THE FIFTH CHAPTER

Getting Rid of the Shark

THE boys managed to get a very fair share of fun as they went along. There was the day when Horace, the goat, got loose in a Chinese town and butted a Chinese mandarin of the highest rank into a mud barge. That day nearly cost them their heads, and if they hadn't set the prison on fire they would probably be there still.

There was also the day when they took Gus ashore for a run in a Malay village, when Gus broke his dog collar and chain and got in amongst the piggeries, chewing up the native pigs. There was a deal of trouble over that, especially when Gus fell foul of the tame crocodiles of the village, which were kept moored to stakes, and put up the biggest crocodile fight ever seen in that place.

And when the boys managed to grab one of the fighting crocodiles and to shove him in the cricket-bag and to get the bag to the boats, which pulled off to the ship amidst a volley of musketry from the angry villagers, they thought they had had a pretty lively time. But the time was nothing to the time they had when they let the supposed Gus out of the bag. Then they found that they had brought off the wrong crocodile, for their supposed pet started to chase them all round the ship.

They climbed into the rigging and looked over the side, and there was the original and only Gus swimming alongside, asking to be

taken on board. He had followed the boats like a dog.

And just as a sling was being lowered for Gus a big, grey nurse shark came cruising along and thought that he would like to try his teeth on Gus.

The boys hung in the rigging with the wild crocodile trying to climb after them whilst they cheered Gus, who rolled into the astonished shark and came away with the best part of his tail.

They were looking for another crocodile fight on deck, but the quartermasters came along and shot the visitor from the village, hitting him with fifty bullets before he crawled into the music-room and died under the grand piano.

Then Gus was hoisted on board, and his late enemy was disposed of over the side.

After that do the boys were not allowed to take interest in anything. They had taken Gus ashore without leave, and Scorcher Wilkinson descended upon them and said that they were getting too fresh.

He came down upon them as the Assyrian came down, like a wolf to the fold. His cohorts weren't gleaming in purple and gold. They wore their gowns and they hammered lessons into the unhappy boys as the Bombay Castle steamed southwards across the Pacific, heading for the Dangerous Archipelago.

It was something awful.

Scorcher started work at six in the morning. He took the boys in French and Latin. Then he handed them over, after breakfast, to Mr. Lal Tata, who gave them trigonometry and Hindustani till dinner-time.

There was no rest after dinner. Dr. Crabhunter woke up then and gave them biology, chalking out the nervous system of a starfish upon the blackboard, in the Chemmy Lab, in coloured chalks.

Then Lal, who had been snoozing in his cabin all the afternoon, took them on for chemistry till supper time. After that they had home lessons.

And, all the while, the Bombay Castle was making what Captain Handyman called "a passage," steaming southward over warm, blue, sticky seas. It was tremendously hot, specially in the Chemmy Lab, and a six-foot

shark, which had been caught and which Dr. Crabhunter was preparing as a dissection, began to smell horribly.

Even Porky got mutinous. He was thick in the neck, and felt the hot weather. It was 105 degrees in the Chemmy Lab, and the boys were nearly worn out with this intensive education.

"Hang the nerves of a starfish," said Porky, one gorgeous tropic afternoon when Lal had gone out of the Chemmy Lab. "My nerves are all to pieces with overwork. It's cruelty to dumb animals working chaps like this under the Equator. But you wait a minute, nuts!"

The boys woke up with interest. Some of them had taken a brief respite, and were napping with their heads on their arms.

They looked up.

Porky had produced from the corner of the Chemmy Lab a queer scientific shape of glass, which had several bulbs in it. These bulbs were filled with various coloured liquid.

"What is it, Porky?" asked the chorus of voices.

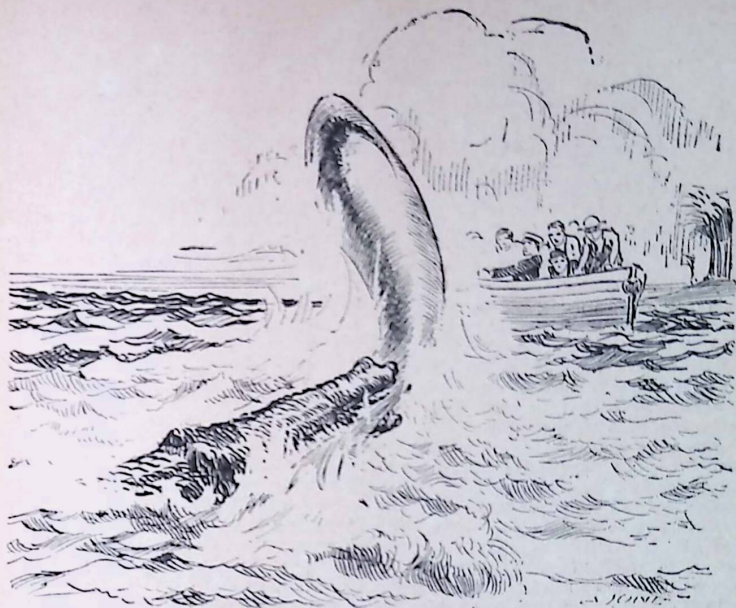
Porky made a sign to Chip to go to the door of the Lab and to keep caved down the deck for Mr. Lal Tata.

"He's all right," reported Chip, as he popped his head out cautiously. "Old Lal is up on the bridge with the captain. They are staring at the sea with telescopes. Go ahead, Porky!"

Porky clapped Lal's mortarboard on his head, and picked up Dr. Crabhunter's tortoiseshell glasses and perched them on his nose.

"You see this little instrument, gents," said he. "This is the Porkis Patent Perfume Pump, a little invention of my own. You have heard, gents, that ill-conditioned Hindu nigger, Lal Tata, refuse to give us a half holiday. Neither will he have that beastly shark removed from the room and properly buried at sea. He is grinding us down. We are working twelve hours a day and that is seventy-two hours a week, which is more than the forty-four hours allowed by the School-boys' Union. What I propose to do is to insert my patent perfume pump in the shark on the board there."

There was a low murmur of approval from the class.



Gus dived like a streak of lightning. Then there was a foaming boil in the water. Gus had got the shark where the shark did not like it, about three feet above his great tail (See page 197)

"You will observe that it is a tube attached to three bulbs and some twiddle bits," continued Professor Porky. "The three bulbs are filled with various chemical mixtures which are my own formulae. They are divided by small plugs of shellac which will dissolve away when the pump is placed in a certain position. I am going to insert this pump into the defunct shark, and you will see the fruity result as the various chemical come in contact with one another."

There was a murmur of applause.

"Bravo, Porky!" exclaimed Dick Dorington, jumping up from his desk. "You are a proper scientific. It's some sort of fume, I suppose?"

"Fume!" exclaimed Porky, with con-

tempt. "Fume's not the word! It's a gasworks explosion!"

He had taken a dissecting scalpel and had neatly made an incision in the shark, which was lying on its back with its ugly mouth wide open.

"Hurry up, you chaps," called Chip from the door. "Lal is coming off the bridge!"

"Give us the nitric acid quick, Dick!" said Porky. "It's the third bottle on the fourth rack."

Dick snatched down the desired bottle, and Porky, with a glass tube, gently dripped a dozen drips into the carefully hidden incision.

They had just time to replace the bottle and to gain their seats when Lal made his entrance at the door of the Chemmy Lab.

He was rubbing his hands, and looking very pleased.

"Ha, boys!" said he. "We are nearing the region of the Paumotus, or the Low Archipelago. Soon we shall see some land again after so long sea passage, and you shall have some holiday fun. In the meantime, we will take up this very interesting problem that I chalk upon the board. Pay attention now. Dorrington, why do you stargaze with your mouth open as if it was a flytrap? Wake up, sir, and pay attention!"

"Please, sir," said Dick, mildly. "Can't we have that beastly shark taken out of the room? It is getting most offensive and dangerous to health. It's giving me a headache!"

"Nonsense!" replied Lal. "What is the matter with the shark? He is as sweet as nuts, and prepared with arsenic. It is much as the life of any man is worth to move that shark. Our reverend and learned Head has spent hours in making careful preparation of that shark for the museum at Oxford. It is no longer a shark. It is works of art! Two hundred pounds would not buy that shark now!"

"Hear that!" whispered Porky to Pongo Walker, who was entertaining the company with some monkey faces whilst Lal, at the blackboard, had his back to the class. "Work of art is right!"

"Now, boys," began Lal, twiddling the chalk in his dark fingers. "This, that I have marked on the board, is a given straight line. Upon it we shall have much pleasure in describing one of the most simple and delightful problems of applied mathematics."

Lal paused and sniffed the air suspiciously. Those who were in the know could see a slight blue fume arising from the region of the waistcoat pocket of the dead shark.

"It is very close in this Laboratory this afternoon," said Lal. "I think wind has changed, or ship has changed course. Open two portholes, boys."

There was a rush of the whole class to perform this service.

"Back to your seats, gentlemen!" roared Lal. "It does not need thirty boys to open two scuttles. Dorrington, Skelton! You will

open portholes. Other boys will resume seats. Walker will stand in corner for pulling foolish and disrespectful faces resembling those of lowest type of monkey peoples. It is sad to see human boy defacing already ugly face which Nature has given him in such evil contortion!"

The scuttles were opened, and Pongo stood out near the tail of the deceased shark.

Lal chalked a number of complicated lines on the board, which promised trouble for all concerned.

Suddenly he turned on Pongo.

"Walker!" said he sternly. "You continue to pull monkey-faces for amusement of your fellow conspirators."

Pongo was not pulling faces now. He was nearly choking with the fume that was arising from the shark.

"Please, sir," he stammered, "I am not making faces. It's that shark— Oh, dear!"

And he hid his face in his handkerchief.

The blue film of fume round the shark was thickening now, and Porkis was surveying the work of the Porkis Patent Perfume Pump with considerable pride.

"Good old shark!" he muttered. "He's beginning to talk!"

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Lal Tata, gazing at the blue fumes arising from the shark. "What on earth is the matter with the shark?"

"It must be the arsenic, sir!" exclaimed Dick, holding his handkerchief to his nose. "My hat! It may be a gas main gone wrong inside him!"

The choking fumes were spreading round the Chemmy Lab, and every boy had clapped his handkerchief to his nose, and was gasping for breath.

"Gas mains! What nonsenses are these?" demanded Mr. Lal Tata.

Then he had to draw out of his pocket a huge coloured handkerchief and clap it to his nose.

Of a sudden the shark burst out into a black smoke, thick and dark. One of Porky's divisions of shellac had dissolved away under the fumes, and a new chemical combustion was going on.

"Good heavens!" stammered Mr. Lal Tata.

"I have never seen a shark smoke himself before!"

"Perhaps he thinks he's a giddy kipper, sir!" choked Dick Dorrington. "Can't we chuck him overboard?"

But Mr. Lal Tata was still doubtful. The shark was a beautiful specimen of dissection, and he knew that Dr. Crabhunter would be excessively annoyed if anything happened to it.

But something was happening to it. The volume of black smoke increased, and the great open mouth of the brute started to pour forth a black-brown smoke like a factory chimney, filling the room with the dark cloud which poured out of the door.

"Whoop! Whoop! Whoop!" went the whistle of the Bombay Castle. It was the call to fire quarters. Those on the bridge had seen the cloud of smoke pouring out at the Chemistry Lab door.

"Every boy down on hands and knees!" shouted Mr. Lal Tata. "Crawl out of doors at once, or we shall be spifficated!"

The order was swiftly obeyed. One by one the boys crawled out at the door of the Chemistry Lab, keeping as far as they could below the black fumes.

Porky and Chip had snatched down towels, and had wetted them in the fresh water basin.

Chip was ready to do gallant and noble deeds. Porky knew that the sooner the shark was overboard and back in the vasty deep, the better for him. The Patent Perfume Pump was working better than he expected, and he did not know what would be the result of the last combination of chemicals.

"Quick, Chip!" he gasped. "Get hold of the rope round his tail and overboard with him!"

They snatched at the cord that was fastened to the brute's tail, and hauled it out of the Chemistry Lab as it belched forth huge volumes of sickening fumes. They dragged it to the rail and shot it over the side.

The boys cheered as they saw volumes of smoke pouring up from the sea. And hardly was the shark clear of the ship than a sharp explosion rent the air, and a column of broken water and flame shot up from the sea, mixed up with strange coloured lights.

The shark was gone.

The fire crews came rushing along the deck, unreeling the hose with lightning rapidity. The ship's whistle was tooting the fire call, and everyone who was sleeping in his cabin turned out and rushed to the scene, armed with axes and fire extinguishers.

Captain Handyman came running from the bridge.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed. "What's all this!"

"Why, sir," explained Dick, "something went wrong with that shark which Dr. Crabhunter is fixing up. It had been drinking, may be. It had been dipped in alcohol, and it probably went off by spontaneous combustion. But it's all right now, sir, though we shan't be able to get into the Chemistry Lab for another half hour. Porky has thrown the beast overboard!"

"Oh, Porky's thrown it overboard, has he?" asked Captain Handyman, with a very direct glance in that young gentleman's direction. "Let me tell you, Porky, that where there's smoke there's fire!"

"Excuse me, sir!" answered Porky, modestly. "Where there's smoke there's shark!"

"But I never saw a dead shark blow up with coloured lights before, Master Porkis," answered Captain Handyman, trying to disguise a twinkle in his eyes.

Porky feared that he was going to say more. But there came from the bridge a sudden beat of a gong. A sail had been sighted.

Captain Handyman suddenly dismissed the shark as if a matter far more significant had overshadowed it.

"Glory Hole Gang!" he ordered. "Get yourselves and your things together. If this is the ship I am looking for I shall want you ready in half an hour!"

The boys raced off downstairs to wash themselves free of the soot of Porky's Patent Perfume Pump. And when they got out on deck again the Bombay Castle was coming to a standstill on a smooth blue sea. Hove to, a quarter of a mile away, was a graceful schooner of no more than a hundred tons. Her sails were shining in the afternoon sun, and her long spars were reflected in great swirls on the oily water.

And, from the wheel, Mitui was waving his hand to them, signalling with his arms the ship's name. It was the "Moonstone."

There was no need to tell them now of the mission of this graceful schooner. A ship of the size of the Bombay Castle was too large to navigate the dangerous channels and reefs and to enter the lagoons of the Dangerous Archipelago. And the Moonstone was Captain Handyman's favourite book. This Moonstone was the ship in which they were to seek the buried pearls.

Soon the boatswain's call was shrilling along the deck, and Mr. Galloper was ordering out two of the lifeboats.

These were lowered and the boys' gear was dropped into them. Captain Handyman, with his sextant base under his arm, was coming along the deck giving his last instructions to Mr. Gates, the First Officer. Mr. Lal Tata stood by the gangway, carrying his suit case in one hand and a brown paper parcel containing his pyjamas in the other.

"All ready?" demanded Captain Handyman.

"Please, sir," gasped Dick, "can we bring Horace?"

"What do you want that infernal goat for?" demanded Captain Handyman.

"He's a mascot, sir!" said Dick cunningly.

"That's true!" replied Captain Handyman. "Can he live on coconut?"

"He can live on anything!" replied Dick.

"Then bring him along."

"And what about Gus, sir?" asked Porkis.

"Hang it!" exclaimed Captain Handyman. "We are going on a secret expedition. You can't bring a menagerie!"

"But Gus is a mascot, too, sir!" urged Porkis.

Captain Handyman was shaken. He was seeking fifty thousand pounds worth of pearls, and in the Paumotus there is always a big element of chance.

"Bring him along, if he can live on biscuit and cokernut!" he answered.

And with a loud cheer the cricket bag was rushed along the deck, Gus was bundled into it and lowered over the side to be rowed to the Moonstone.

Soon they were on board the little yacht. Mitui greeted

them with tears in his eyes, and the crew of the six Gilbert Islanders grinned at the boys approvingly. They had heard from Mitui how these were the boys who had saved the Wild Man of Borneo from Gumbo the nigger.

The lifeboats passed between the liner and the graceful little schooner twice, and the sun was setting in the west as they delivered the last load of stores, and the sails of the Moonstone were hoisted.



"Dat my ghost ship," said Mitui. "Dead men down dere and plenty money!" "Find the place where you got in!" said Captain Handyman, gasping and staring at the huge galleon (See page 199)

The ensigns dipped. Then the sun dipped also, and soon the boys were seated on the deck watching the stars reflected in the great oily swells of the Pacific.

Near the horizon showed two large stars. These were the masthead lights of the Bombay Castle following a more or less parallel course, steaming at slow speed.

"My word!" exclaimed Dick with a sigh of relief. "Just think of those poor beggars on board swotting away at their home lessons! My hat! Home lessons on a night like this! Where are we bound for, Mitui?" he added.

"We are sailing for Hump Island," replied Captain Handyman, who stood by the wheel of the Moonstone, peering in at the lighted binnacle. "You may have dodged your home lessons, young gentleman, but this is where you can keep your eyes skinned for Mr. Gumbold, or Mr. Gumbo as he's known!"

"Is he about, sir?" asked Dick eagerly.

"Sailed a week before this craft cleared from Valparaiso," answered the captain. "Sailed out of Callas with a couple of schooners filled up with the worst riffraff of South America. One schooner is called the Black Moth and the other is called the Black Arrow. They are supposed to be after guano, but their job is piracy. Now get below, boys. Supper is ready!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER

Treasure Hunters!

FOR two weeks the Moonstone had cruised amongst the outlying islands of the Paumotu, looking for Hump Island.

And never had the boys of the Bombay Castle, with all their experience of the sea, sailed in such magic waters as these of the Low or Dangerous Archipelago.

Islands and reefs they sighted, atolls which rose suddenly from the sea, crowned with long lines of green coco palms which seemed to be standing in the sea itself, so low was the elevation of the coral beaches on which they stood.

And, passing these, they had glimpses into still lagoons, sea ponds encircled by walls of coral.

By day the sun blazed down on the decks of the Moonstone, making the pitch bubble

in the seams so that, when they turned Gus out of his cricket bag for an airing, he got stuck down to the deck like a postage stamp.

By night the stars blazed and swirled in the sky overhead to the rolling of the schooner on the long backed Pacific swells.

Sometimes a covey of flying fish would come scattering aboard. Sometimes fair islands would seem to float by them, the beaches showing white and gleaming under the dark, nodding coco groves.

The tides were a puzzle. They set in all directions, and Captain Handyman said that the Tides of Dover Straits were fools to them.

Sometimes, at night, in the quietness of the ocean, they would hear a distant roaring like the passing of a distant train. This was the surf beating on some reef or island, past which they were drifting on the mill race of the tide.

Captain Handyman began to think that they would never find Hump Island in this uncharted sea. The boys almost wished that he wouldn't. They could have gone on sailing through the witchery of these magic seas for ever.

Even Mr. Lal Tata relaxed and forgot that he was a schoolmaster. He played deck games with the boys—skittles and "Are you there, Mike?" and "Swing the Monkey." They all had a splendid time except Horace. Horace did not like the heat. He had eaten all the newspapers on board, he did not like the ship's biscuit, and he was pining for the land.

But there came a sunrise on this blank sea when Horace sniffed the morning breeze with a new vigour and bleated loudly.

"What's up with old Horace?" demanded Porky, who was sluicing himself down with warm sea water from a bucket.

"He can smell land," said Dick. "And it does show a bit misty ahead, too. All these low islands are like that. First you see the mist set up by the breakers on the outer beaches, and then you get a sight of the palms and the—"

"Land O!" came the cry.

The curtain of morning mist on the blue sea was swept up by the heat of the rising sun, and before them rose the palms of a fairy island from the sea.

It was just the same as countless islands of

its sort, a great ring, or bank, of coral crowned with thick woods of palms, enclosing a lagoon some five miles long and three miles wide. But this island was different in one respect. At one part of it rose a long low ramp of coral about three hundred yards long. This ramp was surrounded by palm trees, but there were no trees on the crest of it. It was about fifty or sixty feet high.

To the boys it looked like some ancient burial tumulus or mound. But on that low-lying, sea-washed shore it appeared like a mountain.

Mitui shot out of the galley, where he was getting the kettle on the boil for breakfast.

"Hump Island!" he cried. "It am Hump Island!"

The cry brought Captain Handyman running out on deck.

"Are you sure, Mitui?" he asked.

"Sure, sar!" replied Mitui. "Dere am no other island wid de hump in all de Pacific."

Captain Handyman laughed.

"Well, I hope it won't give me the hump!" he exclaimed. "Up to the crosstrees, Mitui, and con her in. You know the passage better than anyone here, seeing that you are the only one that's been here before."

Mitui climbed up to the crosstrees and soon, under his guidance, with Captain Handyman at the wheel, the Moonstone found her way in the lagoon channel and sailed into the most beautiful sea pond the boys had ever set eyes on.

It was a perfect South Sea lagoon, surrounded by thick groves of drooping palms which appeared to be gazing at their own reflections in the water. And as soon as they were in the lagoon the sea breeze died quite away and the Moonstone glided slowly onward over a sheet of water as smooth and polished as a mirror.

The boys, looking over her rail, were entranced by the wonderland below her keel, for the water of the lagoon was amazingly clear, and they looked down on masses of rare corals, coloured seaweeds, and countless sea creatures that made up a perfect mermaid's garden.

Across these submarine flower beds glittering fishes swam like groups of brilliant butter-

flies. And there on the rail they hung spell-bound till the anchor went down with a crash amongst the coral, the sails were stowed, and the Moonstone lay at rest in this marvellous haven.

Mitui called them to breakfast.

The crew of Gilbert Islanders gathered on the deck, and Cecil squatted down with them to a big bowl of rice and bananas. Cecil always liked feeding with men, though he hated sitting up at table and handling a knife and fork. Table manners worried him. He always wanted to put his knife in his huge mouth, and he knew that was not allowed.

So he sat in the mess, where fingers were made before forks, and the Gilbert Islanders made him welcome, addressing him respectfully as Great Monkey Man, for the myth of the orang-outang has spread in many wonderful forms from the Malay Archipelago to the uttermost of the lonely islands of the South Seas.

They made short work of breakfast. The whalers were got out, Gus was lowered in his cricket bag for a run ashore, and Horace, without waiting for the crew, leaped nimbly into the first whaler.

Then away they went for the shore, the lazy, triangular fin of a shark following them up.

"Here! I'd sooner have that chap's room than his company," said Captain Handyman, who detested sharks. And he picked up a rifle that was laid under the curtained gunnel of the whaler in true South Sea fashion.

"Half a mo', sir," said Dick. "Let old Gus have a run at him. Gus wants some breakfast and he's sick for a fight with something."

The big cricket bag was hauled out, and one end opened. And the Gilbert Islanders looked on in wonderment as they saw the bag thrust out over the stern of the whaler like a torpedo tube.

They gave a yell as Gus, smelling the water, struggled out of the bag wildly and flopped in with a heavy plunge.

And the shark hearing the flop and, naturally enough, thinking that there was something doing, shot forward on Gus with a few powerful sweeps of his tail.

The boys standing in the boat saw a strange sight. They could see the gleam of the shark's underside as he rolled over to take his prey. They saw Gus dive like a streak of lightning. Then there was a foaming boil in the water. Gus had got the eighteen-foot shark just where a shark does not like it—about three feet above his great tail.

The Gilbert Islanders yelled with delight and awe. They had never seen a shark tackled by a crocodile before, and they started to bet in sticks of tobacco that the shark would win.

But Mitui, who knew that a crocodile can tackle a shark every day in the week and twice on Sundays, took all the challenges.

Nor was he wrong, for in five minutes the great shark rolled wrong side up and Gus began tearing him up for breakfast.

Other sharks, attracted by the struggle, came sailing up, eager and expectant, but they soon sheered off when they found that there was a crocodile in Hump Island Lagoon.

The boat rowed on for the shore, and presently Gus came sweeping after them, shooting past them and drawing his shining armoured body out on the warm sand, waited for them like a fox terrier dog. Gus was a queer crocodile. He had lived with the boys so long that he hated to be left alone even for a few minutes.

He followed them up the beach to the spot where a rough wooden cross showed where Captain Davis had been buried.

Captain Handyman and the boys removed their caps reverently as they looked at the humble grave, and the boys noticed that Mitui had carved the cross in beautiful South Sea patterns such as the natives love.

Mitui pointed out to them the few timbers sticking up in the sand that were all that was left of the ill-fated Haliotis.

"My ship," he said, his dark eyes filling with tears. And, pointing to the grave, "My Captain!"

"And the best captain that ever



The captain gave a cry, for the lump of coral he heaved out revealed the lid of a wooden box. "Dat him!" exclaimed Mitui eagerly. "All pearl in him, sar!" (See page 198)

sailed the seas!" muttered Captain Handyman, visibly moved. "Come along, Mitui, show us where you hid in the trees from those scoundrels!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

Mitui's Ghost-Ship

MITUI led them along through the silent coco groves, where Horace eagerly devoured the fallen fronds of the coconuts and the young nuts which had fallen.

Horace was quite another goat now. He leaped and he skipped like a kid with delight at finding himself ashore, and he playfully jumped on Gus, who was following the party like Mary's little lamb, until Gus lost his temper and with a swipe of his tail cut Horace's legs from under him.

Mitui showed them the tall coco palm where he had hidden from his enemies. He had marked it by carving a cross on its polished shaft. Then onward he led them through the coco groves to that queer mound.

Goodness knows what it was. The boys guessed that perhaps it was the last resting place of some South Sea Island king, whose devoted subjects had reared over him a heap of coral just as the Pyramids were reared over the Pharaohs of Egypt.

Mitui sprang up the side of this mound eagerly, and Horace leaped after him. Captain Handyman and the boys followed more sedately, for they were laden with sacks of gear which Captain Handyman had put together to cover all contingencies.

There were ropes, dynamite, flares for signalling, picks, axes, and arms.

There were no signs of any occupation of the island. Captain Handyman, however, was taking no chances with Gumbo in the offing.

"Anyone been here, Mitui?" he asked anxiously, as the party came toiling up the slope.

Mitui shook his head.

"No, cappen," said he. "Me find pearl plenty soon."

And he started casting about the top of

the long mound like a hound picking up the scent.

"Where's that crocodile?" demanded Captain Handyman. "We can't do without our mascot!"

The boys ran back and there, on the bank of the tumulus lay Gus hissing and much annoyed by the steepness of the slope.

The boys gathered round him, slipped a noose about his neck, and with loud cheers, Gus was hauled to the top of this, the largest hill in Hump Island.

Captain Handyman watched Mitui anxiously.

Mitui had started to pace out the mound from corner to corner, counting his steps and marking where his path crossed.

"We dig here!" said he.

"Well, I hope you are right!" said Captain Handyman. "It seems a rough and ready way of playing hot butter beans and bacon for fifty thousand in pearls."

He started to pick up the rock. It came up queerly in great lumps.

"This is a bag of mystery!" muttered the captain, the perspiration pouring from his forehead. "I suppose this lump of coral must have been forced up from the floor of the sea by some volcanic action! They do say that all these islands are built up on the craters of submarine volcanoes."

He dug down a foot. Then he gave a cry, for the lump of coral he heaved out revealed the lid of a wooden box.

"Dat him!" exclaimed Mitui eagerly. "All pearl in two canister, sar, and Cappen Davis him writing. Me make my mark!"

Captain Handyman lifted the broken lid of the box and there lay two canisters.

He opened the first of these. In the top was a paper, the will of Captain Davis duly made, and accounting for the presence of but one witness. There was also the last sheets of the log book of the ill-fated *Haliotis*, all the evidence that a proper Court of Law would require. And beneath this, shimmering on layers of cotton wool, were such pearls as Captain Handyman had never seen in his life before, liquid molten jewels of the sea which caught the sunlight and dazzled his eyes.

Or perhaps his eyes were dazzled by jewels more precious than pearls, human tears for the friend who had pencilled those shaking lines "to my dear and staunch friend and shipmate, Captain James Handyman!"

Somehow Captain Handyman did not want to look at his wealth any more. He held out his hand to Mitui.

"Shake, Mitui!" said he. "There's one white and honest man in the South Seas, and his name is Mitui. You'll never want again as long as you live. Nor will you be the Wild Man of Borneo in a show any more. It's halves to you when we get home and your job will be to ride on the roundabouts."

Then, to disguise his feelings, Captain Handyman turned and muttered irritably.

"Where the deuce are the crocodile and the goat?" he asked.

They soon saw where Horace and Gus had got to. They were playing like kittens, and thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Gus was dashing at Horace with his jaws open. Horace was leaping into the air to avoid the rushes, kicking Gus in the neck at every rush.

"My word! Look at them!" exclaimed Captain Handyman in admiration. "Aren't they a couple of nibs?"

"Horace had best look out!" exclaimed Mr. Lal Tate, "or the crocodile fellow will eat his trotter. My hats!"

The last sudden exclamation was wrung from Lal as Horace bounded high in the air came down with a thump on the crocodile, and suddenly disappeared as though the mound of Hump Island had opened and swallowed him up.

The boys rushed forward and stopped at a cry of warning from Captain Handyman.

"Look out, boys," cried the skipper. "It's a subsidence. Mind you don't go through as well!"

The boys stood back from the hole in the ground. The crust of the coral had given way, and down below Horace could be heard bleating dismally.

"Give me one of those portfires!" exclaimed Captain Handyman.

He lit a flare and hurled it down into the space revealed. The flare fell for sixty feet and burned fiercely on a sandy floor, flaring and fizzing.

There lay Gus, annoyed and hissing loudly. And there stood Horace, looking rather dazed in the white glare.

And Captain Handyman had a glimpse of something else, that made him gasp and stare round at Mitui. For he was looking down on the great carven stern of a huge galleon.

"What's this, Mitui?" he asked. "What's this?"

Mitui shook his head.

"Dat am my ship!" said he. "My ghost ship!"

"You have never told us about any ghost ship!" exclaimed Captain Handyman.

Mitui shook his head.

"Me fright too much along dis ship," said he. "Dead men down dere and plenty money! Me find him one day all alone, but me fright too much. Me run away!"

"Which way did you get in?" asked Captain Handyman.

"Down below!" replied Mitui, pointing down the slope of the ramp.

"Find us the place where you got in!" said Captain Handyman. "I suppose you aren't frightened to come in with all this gang of tugs?" he added, pointing to the boys and Cecil.

Mitui shook his head, and smiled.

"Me no fright now!" said he. "Me too much fright when me all alone an' Capten Davis dead."

Captain Handyman nodded. He understood now how this poor chap, left alone on the lonely island, had suffered from the South Sea Islander's fear of the dead, a fear which every Kanaka has born in him.

Mitui bounded down the slope of the ramp and soon shouted as he parted the brushwood. Here was a passage or rift, and the party, following it, found themselves soon treading a slope of fallen rubble down to the floor of a great cave.

Stalactites, born of the rains, falling through roof of limestone above, hung like draperies from the ceiling and there, lit by the flares, showed the great carven and gilded stern of a

huge galleon. It was plainly a Spanish ship, for on each quarter were the great arms of Castille and Aragon.

Her lower gunports were open and she lay on her side half buried in the sand. Captain Handyman, stepping into her, found himself on a deck littered with the dry bones of men in armour.

Captain Handyman knew every story of lost treasure and hidden treasure of the Southern Seas. He looked round at the red-painted gun deck and at the name of the ship that was engraved on the bell of pure silver. It bore the legend in raised letters of ancient fashion: "Nuestra Senora de los Dolores."

Captain Handyman staggered back like a man in a dream.

"Boys!" he exclaimed hoarsely. "That little fortune of mine is nothing! This is the flagship of Diego Moreno, the Spanish admiral who bunked with the Lima treasure. There's half a million in this ship!"

Mitui listened, and nodded approvingly. He was afraid of the dead men in this strange cavern, and he wanted to get out of it.

"Money belong boys!" said he. "Dey too good to de poor old Wild Man of Borneo!"

And Captain Handyman stared at this poor Kanaka, who gave away fortunes as easily as if they were cigarettes



Before Gumbo could reach the captain, Cecil, with a cry of rage, brought down his shattered cricket bat on his head. "Boundary hit!" called Arty (See page 202)

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

Gumbo's Defeat

HALF a million it was. They got it out by a hole tunneled in the side of that great mound. It took them a week, the boys toiling like navvies to get it safely stowed on the Moonstone.

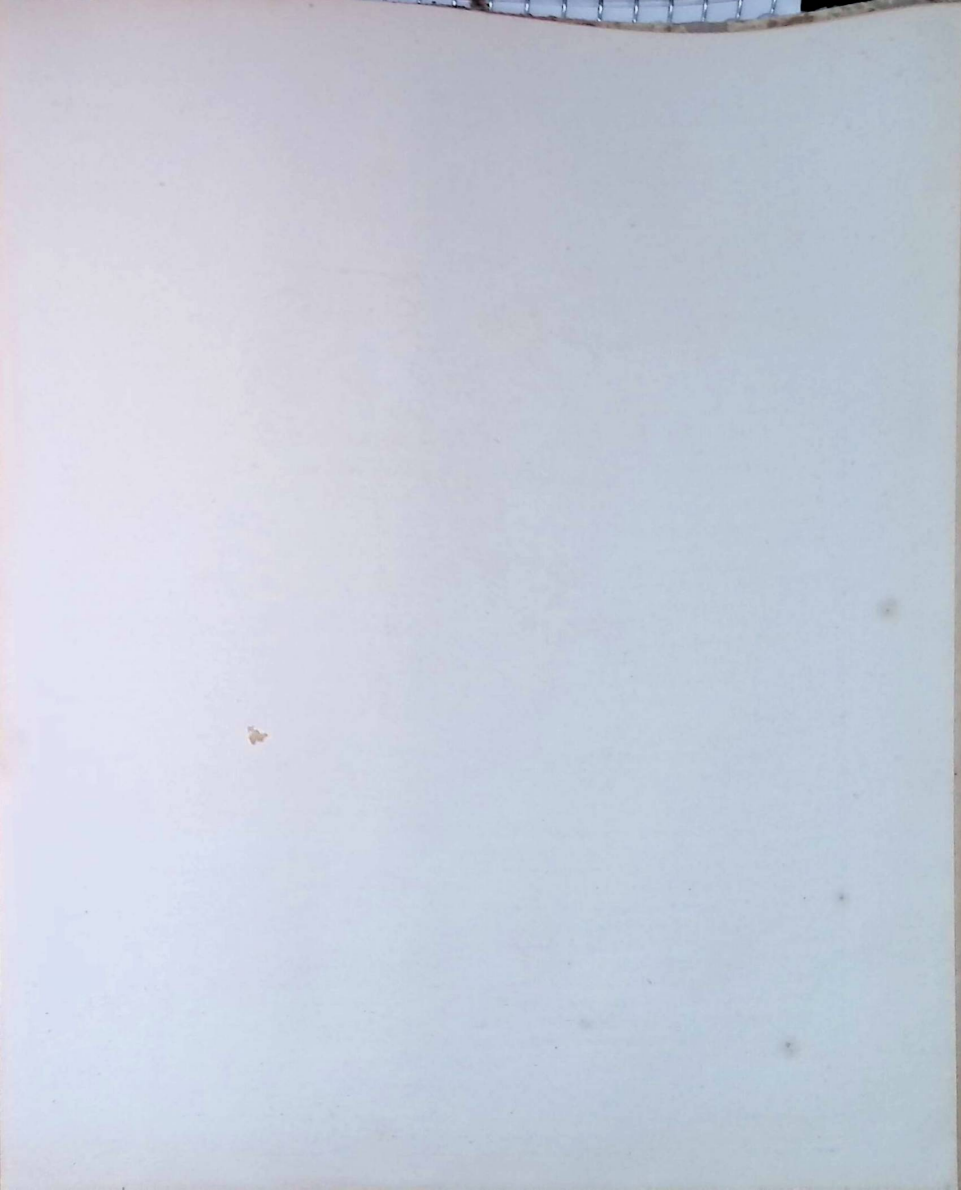
And, better than the gold, they treasured the splendid suits of gold-inlaid armour, the morions and the Toledo blades that were found, almost as good as new, in that strange old hulk.

As they toiled, they puzzled how she came there. Captain Handyman guessed that she had been driven ashore in the cleft of that great upheaved ridge and that, shaken by a subsequent earth tremor, the cleft had fallen in on the galleon,

burying her, whilst the action of water had hollowed out the cave around her.

Captain Handyman was a haggard man in these days. He hurried the loading of the treasure as much as he could. He shifted the Moonstone to bring her closer to the treasure chamber. He worked the boys night and day. A schooner ballasted with half a million in gold, and another two hundred thousand in rare, jewelled cups whose price and craftsmanship was far beyond their metal and jewel value, made him an anxious and careworn man.

"Now I understand why millionaires are





QUEEN OF THE SEAS !

The White Star Liner "Majestic," the largest ship afloat, in Mid-Atlantic

THE MOST WONDERFUL SHIP IN THE WORLD

THE Royal Mail Steamship, *Majestic*, 56,551 tons, of the famous White Star Line, is the largest steamship in the world, and makes the passage across the Atlantic Ocean in 5½ to 6 days. She is 955 feet long, 100 feet in breadth, and possesses a deck area of no less than 7½ acres. She carries a crew of 1,000, and has capacity for 3,816 passengers.

Her engines are of 100,000 horse-power, and she burns oil fuel. The principal advantage of oil over coal is that the ship can carry sufficient oil to last for the double journey across the Atlantic and back. With coal it would be necessary to replenish bunkers after each single passage.

As well as having 1,011 separate state-rooms, the *Majestic* is amply supplied with means for healthy exercise, amusement, and recreation. There is a ballroom, a gymnasium, and a swimming bath, while a special playground is provided for the children on board.

The restaurant, the Palm Court, and the lounge are superb apartments, only comparable in size and luxury with those of a first-class hotel ashore. The Promenade Deck is more than fifty feet above the sea. Walking along it one gets the impression of strolling along the sea front at a fashionable watering-place rather than of being on board ship.

Needless to say, this huge ship is absolutely steady except in the roughest weather.

To provide for the feeding of the population of this floating town, the foodstuffs carried for one voyage only include about 25,000 pounds of fresh meat, 48,000 eggs, 26,000 pounds of vegetables, and 31,000 pounds of milk. The weight of fuel, water, provisions, baggage, mail, passengers, and crew constitutes nearly the whole deadweight capacity of the vessel. There is, therefore, not much room for cargo, but the *Majestic* is essentially a passenger vessel, and a truly wonderful example of the modern shipbuilder's art she is.

such miserable beggars!" said he, as he marched down to the shore with a bag of pieces of eight over his shoulder. "But that's the last of it, boys. One more trip, and we'll be off by this afternoon's tide. This place is not called Hump Island for nothing. I've got a hunch that those scoundrels with their Black Arrow and the Black Moth are not far off us. I've got a tickling in my foot that tells me I want to kick someone."

It was four o'clock in the afternoon, when the boys were loading up the last sacks in the cavern, that Mitui came running down to them, his eyes rolling.

He had been on top of the mound to take a squint round at the sea, for he was as jumpy to get away as Captain Handyman.

"Dey come!" he cried. "Dey come! Two bad ship!"

The boys ran up to the top of the mound, and sure enough, coming down on the wind at a great pace showed two schooners, whose very appearance together was sinister. Schooners seldom sail together on an honest errand in the South Seas.

Captain Handyman had also bolted up to the top of the mound.

He took one look at the oncoming ships.

"The Black Arrow and the Black Moth, for all our cargo!" said he. "This is where we get out of it quick, boys. There's no false pride about Jim Handyman when his pockets are full of money. I'm going to run—quick as I can!"

They hastened down to the shore and pulled off to the Moonstone, and soon the schooner was buzzing with activity as they made ready for sea. But the preparations took some time, and their anchor was hove short and the sails ready for hoisting as round the bend of the lagoon entrance came sailing the two evil black-hulled schooners.

Their decks were crowded with men.

"Hold on, boys!" said Captain Handyman, in a low voice. "Keep hidden behind the bulwarks. They'll not see that we are ready to push off, and we can leave our anchor behind us. Let them get their hooks down and their boats overside. Then, when I whistle, hoist for your lives. The breeze will hold."

The two schooners came sailing up the lagoon, till the colour of the water warned them that what would float the little Moonstone would not float them.

Then they lowered their sails and let go their anchors. They were much larger than the Moonstone, and they made no effort to hide their numbers. There were a hundred yellow and brown and black men aboard them.

And as their boats touched the water, four in number, crowds of armed men tumbled into them.

"Here they come, boys!" said Captain Handyman, watching his visitors narrowly. "When I give the whistle, up with the head sails and knock the pin out of the anchor shackle. We can leave them an anchor!"

On came the boats, and Captain Handyman started, as in the sternsheets of the leading boat he saw a grinning nigger with half an ear.

The nigger stood up and yelled with excitement as he saw Captain Handyman standing on the deck, apparently alone, calmly smoking a cigar.

"Hi! Cappen Handyman!" he called. "I know you! You hab come hyar wid dat nigger Mitui to take my pearls!"

"Good job he don't know what our ballast is!" muttered Captain Handyman, watching the boys, who lay flat on the deck.

"Who are you?" he called.

"I am Mistah Gumbold, sah!" replied the nigger. And unable to contain himself he pointed to the two sinister flags which were hoisted to the peaks of the two schooners.

A flutter of breeze caught them, and they opened out their folds, revealing the vaunting, wicked old sign of the skull and crossbones.

"Oh, that's your game, is it?" asked Captain Handyman, his voice carrying clear across the smooth water. "Right, Gumbo! When you come in it's time for honest men to clear out!"

He gave a whistle, and as if by magic, the little Moonstone clothed herself in white canvas. The boys and crew hoisted as they had never hoisted before, and the well-oiled blocks made no sound as the sails went up.

Dick Dorrington, ready with a mallet, knocked the pin out of the anchor chain shackle.

There was a rattle in the hawsehole, and the Moonstone started to glide through the water just as the four pirate boats closed on her stern.

"You shall not escape us!" yelled Gumbo.

And he urged his boats forward as a catspaw of breeze came sweeping up the lagoon, filling the sails of the Moonstone, and sending her scudding forward.

Captain Handyman made a sign to the boys, and they dropped flat on the deck.

Down he went himself, steering by the lower spokes of the wheel, and lying flat as a storm of bullets swept over the Moonstone, slapping into her masts and punching little holes through her canvas.

But they were only bullets, and cut no halliards.

Three of the boats were left in that sprint of breeze. The fourth boat, that of Gumbo, was pulling ten oars a side, and was travelling as fast as the Moonstone as she pulled through the rather sluggish water.

Captain Handyman lay low, doing a masterpiece of steering as he flattened himself on the deck, and allowed the pirates to empty their weapons. For, without looking at his course, he was running the narrow channel of the lagoon in his head.

He was one of those skippers who are not above learning from the Scouts, and he had learned the maxim never to get in where you can't get out. He had come in by one entrance of the lagoon. He meant to go out by the other, travelling a dangerous course between the reefs of the lagoon.

One touch and it would be all over with them.

Captain Handyman lay flat, and prayed for wind. He began to get it. The breeze came up with a stronger puff, and the pirate boat fell back in the race.

Then the puff failed, and on came the boat at redoubled speed.

"Now for it, boys!" exclaimed Captain Handyman. "Stand by to repel boarders!"

The big boat came racing along. A grappling iron was hurled on the side, and with a yell and a roar the pirates boarded. They drove the boys forward by the sheer weight of their rush. Then they made a rush back as, with a roar, Cecil burst up from the

forecastle, swinging a cricket bat and hitting right and left with terrible blows.

They almost forgot Captain Handyman as he stood by the wheel. But Captain Handyman did not forget them. As the weaker hearted raced back, he picked up a short red stick like a sugar stick, touched its fuse to his cigar, and threw it into the pirate boat. There was a shattering explosion, and the great boat dragged alongside with half her side blown out.

Then came another rush back, for Gus had shot out on deck, snapping right and left, and these pirates who were so brave in fighting boys found they had no nerve to stop a crocodile.

They leaped back into their sinking boat and Dick, with the swipe of an axe, cut the grappel line as Arty, catching one of the last of them, hurled him over into the lagoon as if he had been a baby.

Gumbo, left alone, looked round him, bewildered.

His pistol was empty, and he had dropped the cutlass with which he had boarded.

With a yell of anger he sprang for Captain Handyman. But he was too late. Before he could reach the wheel Cecil, with a cry of rage, brought down his shattered cricket-bat on his head.

"Boundary hit!" called Arty, as the nigger went down on deck like a log.

It was a good job for Gumbo that a nigger's head is thick, and a better job that Cecil had already splintered the bat before he hit him.

When he came back to consciousness he found himself handcuffed, sitting up against the mainmast with his head tied in bandages. On his knees rested the huge head of Gus, the crocodile, who was looking up at him with his evil eyes as much as to say, "I like you so much I could eat you!"

And standing calmly at the wheel, Captain Handyman was finishing his cigar.

The Moonstone had passed out at the windward entrance of the lagoon, and was slashing through the open sea at a fine speed. She already had ten miles' start of her adversaries, and a big bank of clouds told of rain and a night of moderate squalls in which no chase could be held.

Gumbo gnashed his teeth with rage. His prey had escaped him when he had it within his jaws.

"Don't you gnash your teeth at me, Gumbo," said Captain Handyman pleasantly. "That gentleman with his head on your lap can do all the gnashing that is wanted in this ship. You've got to make up your mind to it. You are left! You are left twenty streets behind. And let me tell you, you penny plain, twopence coloured pirate, that you bit the wrong dog when you tried biting me. I've been a bit of a pirate myself, and I think you'd better chuck piracy and take to holding horses' heads and picking pockets. That's more in your line, my boy!"

Captain Handyman lit another cigar and looked up at his masts as he sailed into the windy sunset.

"In three days we'll pick up the Bombay Castle, my boy," said he, "and you shall then handle more gold than you ever thought to handle in your life. But not a penny of it shall be yours. It all belongs to the Wild Man of Borneo."

But the Wild Man of Borneo shook his head, and grinned.

"Me plenty rich already, cappen," said he. "What belongs to Mitui belong to de boys of the Bombay Castle who were kind to a poor caged Kanaka. Now git up, you black trash. Mitui am goin' to lock you up in de chain locker, a good safe place for pirates!"

With Gumbo completely under his thumb, Mitui might easily have tormented the prisoner as Gumbo had tormented the Wild Man of Borneo on show at Luna Park. It said much for Mitui that he did nothing of the kind, treating Gumbo with the contempt he deserved.

And thus the Moonstone came sailing back to the safe open seas and the Bombay Castle, where the Wild Man of Borneo would not rest till he had filled Porkis's bowler with the noble golden cartwheels of Old Spain, according to his promise.

And that finished Porkis's bowler hat. It had stood the Christmas pudding, but the crown fell out under the weight of the splendid pieces of eight of the Wild Man of Borneo.

THE END

The Snow Fight!

By
Dick Penfold



Down on hands and knees we go,
Plunging in a sea of snow;
Gathering lots of ammunition,
Ere we take up our position.

Now the foe appears in sight!
Rally, comrades, for the fight!
Let your snowballs, hard and round,
Whizz and whistle all around!

They are many, we are few;
Let your aim be swift and true.
"We're outnumbered; what's the odds?"
Shouts a voice. 'Tis Peter Todd's.

Forward, fellows, to the fray!
Fight the fight and win the day!
See, the foe is backward driven,
And the air with shouts is riven!

One for Temple—down he goes!
One for Dabney—on the nose!
One for Fry, and one for Scott!
Onward, boys, with zeal red-hot!

See, the Upper Fourth retreat!
Fast they fly on nimble feet.
Feeble fighting-men they prove
When they tackle the Remove!

Scores of snowballs rend the air,
Wreaking havoc everywhere!
Scores of foemen are in flight;
'Tis a wild and thrilling sight!

Comrades, we have proved victorious,
And our victory was glorious!
Let us celebrate it, pray,
At the tuckshop right away!