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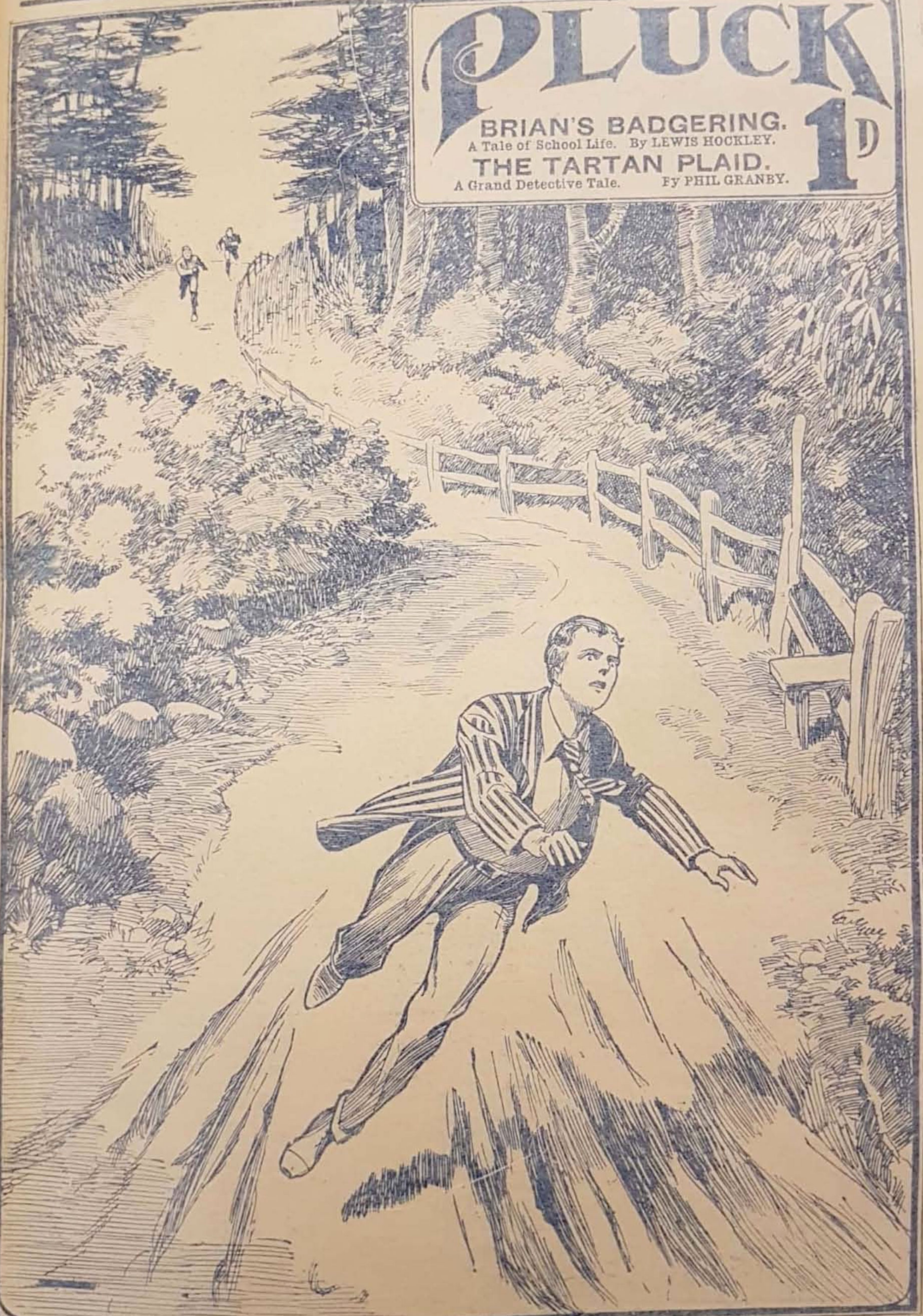
The "Harmsworth History of the World" will be ready on Friday, Oct. 11th. Newsagents and booksellers wishing a supply of advertising matter should send a postcard to the Publisher, 2, Carmelite House, London, E.C.

PLUCK

BRIAN'S BADGERING.
A Tale of School Life. By LEWIS HOCKLEY.

THE TARTAN PLAID.
A Grand Detective Tale. By PHIL GRANBY.

1D



BRIAN'S FLIGHT FROM THE PREFECTS.

(See the Splendid Long, Complete School Tale by Lewis Hockley.)

NO. 152. VOL. 6, NEW SERIES.

GRAND SCHOOL TALE.

THE RIVALS —OF— ST. KIT'S.

What Pat Heard.—When Greek Meets Greek.

A murmur of voices could be faintly heard in the quiet night, but, of course, could not be distinguished by the boys standing far below the window. Pat strained his ears to listen; and then he gave a sudden start, and gripped Blagden's arm.

"I heard Talbot's name mentioned," he whispered. "I can't make out what they're saying, but they're talking about Talbot."

"It's exasperating!" growled Blagden. "Perhaps the whole giddy plot's being unfolded in that room, and we can't discover a word. I wish I had a pair of stilts."

Greene joined them. Pat Nugent swiftly explained the situation to him, and Greene came to the rescue with a brilliant suggestion.

"Look here," he said, "that window-sill is only about ten feet from the ground. If I were to stand on Blaggy's shoulders, Pat, and you were to stand on mine, you'd be able to look into the room if you wanted to."

Pat gave him a slap on the back that made him stagger.

"Bravo, old chap!"

"Well, you needn't break my back," gasped Greene. "Do you think it's a good idea?"

"Rather, if you chaps could stick it out."

"I think I could," said Blagden. "I'm pretty strong, you know, and you're a rather light weight, Pat. It's Greene's big feet I'm nervous about."

"Let me feet alone," said Greene.

"I wouldn't touch 'em with a telegraph-pole," assured Blagden. "Don't be nervous about that, my dear fellow."

"Look here—"

"Sure, and dry up, both of ye!" whispered Pat. "Is this a time to start ragging, ye gossoons? Stand against the wall, Blaggy darling."

Blagden did as requested.

"Come on, Green!" he said. "Quiet, fathead!"

"Give us a bunk up, Tipperary."

"Here you are."

Pat Nugent gave him the required "bunk," and Greene mounted slowly and carefully upon Blagden's shoulders, holding on to a drain-pipe that ran down the wall close beside the window. Under the window of Seth Black's room the wall was blank.

"Now, hold fast," whispered Pat Nugent.

Holding on to the drain-pipe with one hand, and the juniors with the other, the chief of the investigation committee commenced a difficult and perilous ascent. Pat Nugent was as nimble as a monkey, or he would certainly never have succeeded in effecting that peculiar climb. But he did succeed.

His knees were planted upon Greene's shoulders, and then he was able to reach up and hold on to a corner of the window-sill of Black's room, and so he did not attempt to rise upon his feet.

Now the sound of the voices from within came clearly to his ears. There was a flare of light in the room. Black had lighted the gas; but he did not trouble to close the window, for the night was hot, and, of course, he had no thought of listeners at a window overlooking a blank wall.

Pat was inclined to whoop aloud with triumph, but he refrained. The position was certainly a dangerous one, for if Black had looked out of the window he could not have failed to immediately spot the committee of investigation. The back of the house was dark, yet it was quite possible that someone might come out of it at any moment.

But Pat neither thought nor cared for those risks. He was on the track of the conspirators; that was all he cared about at that moment. The voice of Black came clearly to his ears as he put his head above the level of the sill, just out of sight at the side of the window.

"You can say exactly what you like, Master Lacy. I'm in no hurry, and you can talk all night if you choose; but Arthur Talbot is not to leave St. Kit's."

"He will leave St. Kit's!"

"I say he won't, and he sha'n't!"

"Are you mad, Black? He has been proved guilty of theft—"

"Moonshine!"

"The proofs are as clear as daylight, and not a single fellow in the school has the slightest doubt upon the point."

"Gammon!"

Talbot entered the Head's study in his absence, and when the Head came back the desk was found to be robbed. The Head himself believes that Talbot is guilty, and it's as clear as daylight to everybody."

"Rot!"

"He's going to leave St. Kit's, and if he didn't he would be expelled, so there's not much difference. There's no hope for him!"

"Stuff!"

Lacy snapped his teeth. Black's contemptuous interjections showed that the ruffian was fully determined upon what he had in his mind, and that not all the arguments the prefect could advance would shake his determination.

"He must go," said Lacy. "You speak as if I could prevent it somehow. I can't, and you couldn't expect me to do it if I could."

"You can, and you must!"

"What do you mean?"

Black brought his fist down with a thump upon the table.

"I mean that this is a plot against Talbot, and that, if you can deceive the whole of the school yonder, you can't deceive me!"

"I'm not seeking to deceive—"

"Don't lie!" interrupted Black roughly. "I can see right through all that. Do you think I am a baby to have the wool pulled over my eyes? I've helped you to humble Talbot before all the school because I hated him, because he scorned me." The ruffian ground his teeth. "If it wasn't for other reasons, you could get him kicked out of St. Kit's and welcome!"

"What other reasons?"

"Good reasons, which you needn't ask me anything about, because I sha'n't tell you if you do!" Black said rudely. "It doesn't suit my purpose for Arthur Talbot to leave the school, that's all. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"You dislike him as much as I do, and—"

"I'm not saying I don't; but he's worth a lot to me at St. Kit's, and he's worth nothing if I lose sight of him. Do you understand that?"

"No, I don't," said the prefect testily. "I think you are mad or drunk."

Seth Black chuckled.

"I suppose the squire has told you nothing, then," he said. "That shows a wise head of his, 'cause you ain't got any more sense than the law allows. But he's at the bottom of this game to drive Talbot from St. Kit's."

"He knows nothing—"

"Lies!" said Seth Black calmly, stuffing tobacco into his pipe. "Lies, my young friend! If you knew the whole story, you wouldn't think it possible to take me in. The squire's game is to drive Arthur Talbot from St. Kit's, and I don't blame him; only I'm not going to let him do it. It doesn't suit my book, you see."

"I can't see how it matters to you whether Talbot goes or stays."

"I dare say you can't, and I'm not going to explain. If you want to know all about it, ask the squire; he can tell you as much as he likes."

"He has told me nothing."

"And I'm not going to tell you nothing, neither. Only this: that Arthur Talbot is to stay at the school."

"I have no influence—"

"You can tell the truth. Tell the Head he is innocent."

"I should not be believed."

"You could make him believe you. You say some money has been stolen. Find it."

"How am I to find it?"

"Those who hide can find," said Seth Black, with a leer.

Lacy flushed hotly.

"Do you mean to insinuate—?"

"Nuff said. You took the money, I expect, and threw the blame on Talbot. If a detective was to watch you, I guess he'd find you had the cash hidden somewhere."

Lacy was pale with rage.

"But I don't care how you fix it," said Black. "Talbot has got to stay, that's all. You know as well as I do that he did not steal the money, and if you don't make it possible for him to stay, I will."

"What will you do?" said Lacy, biting his lips.

"I'll go up to the school and see the Head."

"What can you tell him?"

"I'll tell him of your plot to ruin Talbot, by making out that I was his father, and if that isn't sufficient to convince him I'll tell him more," said Seth Black, lighting his pipe.

"I tell you, Talbot sha'n't leave St. Kit's."

NEXT SATURDAY: "THE CAPTAIN OF WYCLIFFE,"
A Splendid Long, Complete School Tale
by Jack North;

AND "FEARLESS AND FREE,"
A Thrilling Tale of Adventure,
By Owen Leach. IN "PLUCK," 1d.

"You would ruin me, and—"
 "Do as I tell you then."
 "I can't," cried Lacy desperately. "I can't clear Talbot without implicating myself! You must be mad to think that I would do that."
 "Find some other way, then. I've told you what's got to be done."
 "Listen to me! Squire Lacy is in this, as you have guessed. If you interfere in the matter you will have the Squire of Lynwood to deal with."
 Black snapped his fingers.
 "That's how much I care for the Squire of Lynwood!"
 Lacy breathed hard.
 He was in a terrible position, and he realized it. It would hardly be possible to clear Talbot without confessing that he had plotted against him. That was as good as inviting a sentence of expulsion from St. Kit's.
 Yet to defy the ruffian was equally dangerous, for if Black fulfilled his threat, and paid that visit to the Head of St. Kit's, the truth was equally likely to come out.
 Black watched the wretched prefect with a grim smile.
 "Well, have you made up your mind?" he exclaimed.
 "I must see my brother," said Lacy desperately. "I must see him, and see what he says about it. I'll let you know what I decide."
 "When is Talbot to leave St. Kit's?"
 "He's expected to go to-morrow."
 "Then before to-morrow something must be done. I'm going to see the squire to-night at ten o'clock," said Seth Black. "I'll talk to him. I'll tell him that you couldn't help yourself. That's all right."
 The prefect gritted his teeth.
 "I can't do it," he said thickly—"at least, I can't do it till I've seen my brother. I can't give you my word till then."
 "Very good!" said Seth Black. "Please yourself. Talbot is going to-morrow, is he? Unless I receive a note from him, first thing in the morning, to say he's not going, up I come to the school. You can fix it with him how you like. I'm done with it. Now you can go. No good talking any longer."
 "Once more. If it is money you are holding out for—"
 "It isn't," said Seth Black coolly. "As a matter of fact, Talbot is like the goose that laid golden eggs, and if he was gone, I shouldn't have your brother the squire in my grip any longer."
 "How so? You—"
 "Never mind how it is; that's no business of yours!" said the ruffian. "It's my affair and the squire's. Good night!"

Another fine instalment next Saturday.)

Your Editor's Corner

All letters should be addressed, "The Editor, PLUCK, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London."

"THE CAPTAIN OF WYCLIFFE," in the title of next Saturday's Special Second Tale. It will deal with the adventures of Rawson, Wicks, Harris, Murray, Jackson, Donald, Sinhji, Paddy, Merritt, and Tally—in fact the Brothers of Borden have so increased in numbers that a week's issue will deal with the adventures of the whole of Wycliffe.
 The second story, entitled "FEARLESS AND FREE," is by Owen Leach, and is another tale—what I am sure, you will enjoy reading—of Phil, Pat, and Patsy.
 Please do your Editor a favour by ordering PLUCK in advance.



This picture depicts an amusing incident from "The Captain of Wycliffe," by Jack North, one of the two complete tales in next Saturday's PLUCK. Price 1d.

IN THE PRESS.
 Real after rest of paper is being set up by our modern printing-machine. They are turning out the three new editions of "The Boys' Friend" Threepenny Library.
 No. 21:
 "A WOOLWICH ARSENAL MYSTERY," a thrilling tale of Sexton Blake, detective.

NEXT SATURDAY'S COVER

No. 23:
 "CIRCUS NED," a splendid tale of life in the Ring, by Henry St. John.
 No. 29:
 "PLAYING TO WIN," a grand tale of football life and adventure, by A. S. Hardy.
 Price threepence each. Out next Friday, October 4th. Order your copies to-day.
 YOUR EDITOR.