

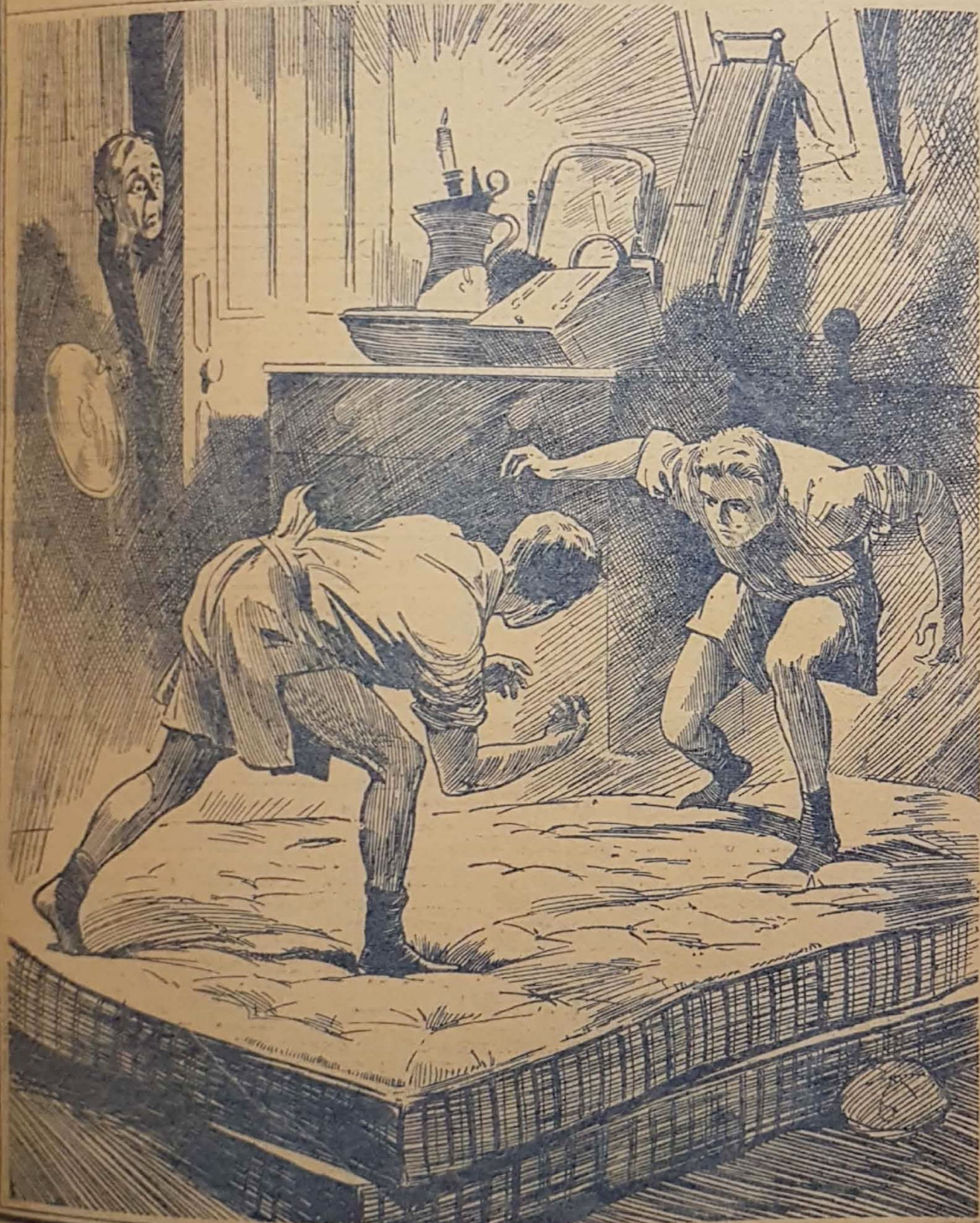
SCHOOL AND DETECTIVE TALES FOR ALL IN THIS NUMBER.

# PLUCK

GRAND TALE OF SCHOOL LIFE.

1<sup>d</sup>

THRILLING DETECTIVE STORY.



A FIGHT TO A FINISH! (An incident in the Splendid Long School Tale contained in this issue.)  
NO 182. NEW SERIES.



Slowly the window-sash went up. Now the inspector was poised upon the ledge, his body leaning so that he could pass through. There a slight wind blew in through the window. Tippit felt behind his head. But he was too late. Instantly Nichols, grim and irresistible, sprang forward, and the next moment Tippit's revolver went flying across the room, and he was a prisoner in the hands of Martin Stern and Inspector Nichols.

Martin Stern's face was steeped in perspiration from his recent effort. Ernest Tippit—or Bertram Rolls, ex-convict—lay upon the floor; for Inspector Nichols was a grim, hard man, and as he sprang from the window-ledge he had aimed a blow with his iron fist.

"You're a knock-out!" said Nichols. "Ever been on the floor?"

"I repeat the first part of your remark to you, for how did you get here?" said Martin, smiling.

"Nothing extraordinary in that," answered the inspector coolly. And then, noticing a movement on Tippit's part, he said: "Wait a minute. I've got assistance outside."

He went to the open window, and gave three short blasts on his whistle.

In a moment three plain-clothes men came through the window. They had been awaiting a possible signal from him, in hiding on the roof outside.

Tippit, the new partner, was taken away.

"It's like this, Mr. Stern, we seem to have been after the same game, only you began one end and we the other. The police were instructed in certain districts to stop certain stores and shops from selling stolen goods. In fact, it's been the biggest long-firm fraud ever known!"

"I see," said Martin Stern. "You have worked backwards to here?"

"That's it. And you started from here, and found the man first."

"Do you know how these goods have been stolen from here?"

"No."  
"By means of duplicate sets of books—good to be stolen always being entered in one set, and ordinary merchandise in the other! They were transferred from here to Oaklands."

"Yes; I got so far as that, and I know what became of them. I'm told the robbery is extensive; several thousands of pounds' worth having been captured. And I know you'll be pleased to hear that two carmen are in custody."

"Higham and Bill?"

"That's them."

"Now, how did you come on to this window-sill at that moment?" asked Martin Stern.

"I was going to arrest him, after he had got in bed, in connection with the long-firm frauds."

After this Nichols completed a search of the room, discovering, among other things, plans stolen from the lad Mason, whilst Martin went in search of Whistler.

The door of Tippit's room was still locked. How, then, had he got out?

Entering, Martin Stern found that a door, unnoticeable on account of pictures which hung over it, now stood open. There was a dimmed passage from here to the part of the building where Tippit's bed-room was situated.

"So, while Middleton has imagined him in here drinking, with the door locked upon him, he has in reality been about the building in all kinds of disguise, arranging his robberies with Stanley and the others!" muttered Martin Stern, as he proceeded in search of his young assistant.

Suddenly, in a bend of the passage, lying in an alcove, he found Whistler, stunned.

"Poor lad!" muttered the detective.

"That you, sir?"

"Yes. Thank Heaven you're all right!"

"I tried to keep up with him, sir," groaned the lad; "but I got too close, and he saw me, and knocked me out. I hope you're not angry. I shall manage better next time."

Martin Stern comforted Whistler with kind words, and led him removed to a bed, while a doctor was summoned.

It was then that Middleton, who had been engrossed over the account-books on the ground floor far below, appeared.

He was probably more genuinely shocked than he had ever been in his life, when he learned that Tippit was his partner.

For, as it was abundantly clear afterwards, beyond meaning in regard to money matters, there was nothing wrong with Middleton of Middleton's Stores. And it may be truly stated that he will never be tempted again to look out for a new partner.

THE END.

Two long, complete stories again next Saturday. Please order your copy of PLUCK in advance. Price 1d.

NEW SCHOOL TALES.



**The Secret of St. Winifred's**  
A Splendid New School Story,  
BY  
**MARTIN CLIFFORD**

Author of the tales of Tom Merry, appearing every week in the "GEM" Library.

READ THIS FIRST.

Clive Lawrence, a new boy at St. Winifred's, is put into the Fourth Form, which is at daggers drawn with the Fifth. The leaders of the Fourth are Fisher and Locke, Clive's study-mates, and those of the Fifth are Kendal and Keene. Courtney, a bully, takes Clive for "fag," and sends him on an errand to the Jolly Seaman, a public-house in the village. Clive arrives at his destination, and is shown into a back room to wait for a Mr. Napper. He falls asleep before the fire, and is awakened by the sound of voices. Concealed as he is by the high-backed chair, he overhears a plot between Napper and a German to get possession of the clue to a hidden treasure, which Trelawney, the Captain of St. Winifred's, holds. Having discharged his errand, Clive returns to the School. The next morning Clive and Locke make an early excursion down to the sea shore. As the two chums near the Penwyn rocks, they are surprised to see Herr Stessel, the German master. The Herr shows bad temper, and commands the boys to return to the school.

(Now go on with the story.)

Mr. Napper Again!

Locke was the first to speak. He had cast several very curious glances at his companion's face. He was puzzled.

"I say, Lawrence, there's our morning ramble spoiled!" he exclaimed.

Clive Lawrence nodded without speaking.

"What's this trouble between you and Stessel?" went on Locke, curiously. "He says this is the second time you've broken bounds since you came to St. Winifred's yesterday. Did he see you when you went to the Jolly Seaman for Courtney last night?"

"Yes; he saw me there."

"My hat; he saw you at that low den?" exclaimed Locke in amazement. "Then you're booked for a fearful row; a fellow might be expelled for that!"

"I don't think so," said Clive, with a short laugh. "I don't imagine Herr Stessel is anxious to have people know that he was there himself."

"Ah, yes; I never thought of that! But what was he doing there? I never thought he was the kind of chap to hang about a place of that character!"

"I—it—I can't exactly explain," said Clive, colouring a little. "I don't know whether I ought to do so. I'll think about it. But I'm pretty sure that Stessel will keep mum about that little incident. He wouldn't have referred to it before you just now if he hadn't been in such a temper that he forgot himself."

"Good-morning, young gentlemen!"  
A voice broke in as a red-faced man, with a terrier at his heels, came out of the wood into the tangled path before the juniors.

It was Mr. Napper, to whom Clive had taken the note from Courtney the previous evening, and whose strange talk with the German he had heard.

"Good-morning!" said Clive abruptly; and he would have passed on quickly enough, but the gentleman from the Jolly Seaman put out a detaining hand.

"I'd like to speak a word to you alone, young sir," he said, with a meaning glance at Locke.

"Rats!" said Clive cheerfully. "You can speak before Locke! Go ahead, and cut it short; I don't want to stand here talking!"

"Oh, all right; I suppose your friend knows all about it!" Mr. Napper grinned confidentially at Locke. "Well, well, what I want to say is—mum's the word!"

NEXT SATURDAY: "THE LAST MATCH OF THE SEASON." AND "UNDER THE BRITISH FLAG." IN "PLUCK," 1D.

A Splendid Long, Complete School Tale of Adventure, by Arthur B. Harde.

AND

A Thrilling, Complete Story of Adventure, by Arthur B. Harde.

IN "PLUCK," 1D.



"What are you driving at?" demanded Clive impatiently. "Mum's the word!" said Mr. Napper again. "When a gentleman overhears something said by another gentleman, not intended for his ears, mum's the word!"

"Oh, I understand!" said Clive. "Then it's all right; mum's the word!" "I shall suit myself about that," said Clive. "I don't see why I should talk about the matter at all, but if the time ever came when I thought it best to do so, I should do so at once, without hesitation. I don't consider myself bound to silence in any way. I overheard what I did by accident."

A very ugly look came over Mr. Napper's face. "Then you did overhear us?" he cried. "You wasn't asleep?"

Clive bit his lip with vexation. He saw that the man had been playing for that admission, and had learned what he wanted to know.

"I did not hear all," he said; "but all that was spoken after I awoke I certainly did hear, and there's an end. I shall repeat it or not, just as I choose. And now let me pass, if you please, Mr. Napper."

Mr. Napper stood aside, and called his dog. The juniors went on through the wood, Mr. Napper staring after them with a gloomy, threatening brow.

**Enemies.**

Fisher was standing at the door of the schoolhouse, looking out into the morning sunlight in the quad., when Clive Lawrence and Locke came in sight. The chief of the Fourth Form at St. Winifred's took his hands out of his pockets, and stared at them.

"Where the dickens have you been?"

"Out," said Clive laconically.

"Not out of bounds?"

"Why not?"

Locke nodded as he met Fisher's puzzled look.

"We bunked over the wall, and went down to the sea," he said.

"This bouncer yanked me out of bed before the birds were up!"

"All right for a new kid!" grunted Fisher. "Of course, old hands like us break bounds, but I can't say I like a new kid taking so much upon himself all of a sudden!"

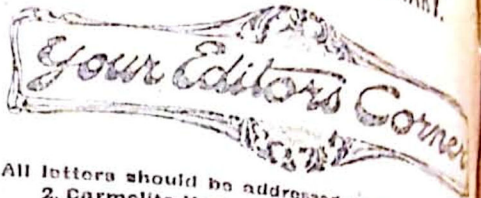
"Oh, don't let it worry you, old fellow," said Clive genially; "I shall be doing lots of things like that, you know, and you haven't come to the end of things you won't like, not by a long chalk!"

Fisher frowned.

"Not so much talk, kid!" he exclaimed. "You keep on forgetting that I am head of the Fourth Form!"

"I've got a bad memory on that point, I suppose," replied Clive.

(An extra long instalment next Saturday.)



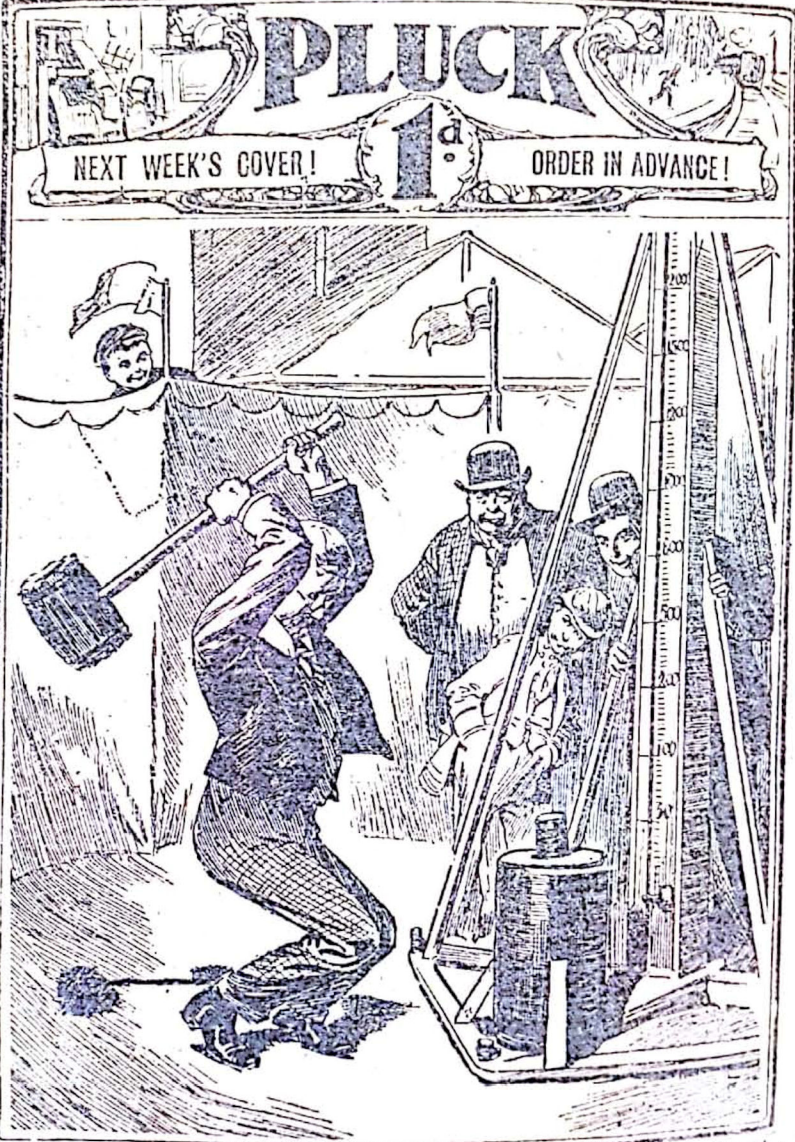
All letters should be addressed, "The Editor, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London."

"THE LAST MATCH OF THE SEASON" Specs and his chums the Rosses will figure in our issue, and you will be pleased to know that much quism is practised by the One and Only.

"UNDER THE BRITISH FLAG" is the title of the second long story by Arthur S. Hardy and you will find it full of romance and adventure.

TWO MORE ADDITIONS TO "THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3<sup>d</sup>. LIBRARY.

I must remind you that Nos. 51 and 52 of this library are now on sale.



Next Saturday's two long complete stories: "The Last Match of the Season," a splendid tale of Specs and Co., by H. Clarke Hook; and "Under the British Flag," a story of romance and adventure, by A. S. Hardy. Please order your copy of "Pluck" in advance. Price One Penny.

No. 51: "EXPULSION FROM HIS SCHOOL" A grand school tale, by Cecil J. Mansford.  
No. 52: "STRONGHOLD THE GLADIATOR" A thrilling tale of romance and adventure, by Henry St. John.  
Ask for "The Boys' Friend" 3<sup>d</sup> Library.

**NEXT SATURDAY'S COVER.**

**GOOD TESTIMONY!**  
"Dear Editor— After seeing the letters printed in last week's 'Gem' I feel I now have the right to write and tell you how very much I and my friends enjoy your paper. We are surprised to be given so much space in our news, and but I am sure both boys and girls will be glad to see us say so in the neighbourhood. I may add that we know most of the schoolboys living near us and they are equally glad on 'The Boys' Friend'."  
—W. Smith and the boys of every school in the neighbourhood.  
Merry and his chums are all here and I have for you and I love to see you.  
Yours very truly,  
Cecil J. Mansford.  
"The Boys' Friend" 3<sup>d</sup> Library.  
**YOUR EDITOR.**