

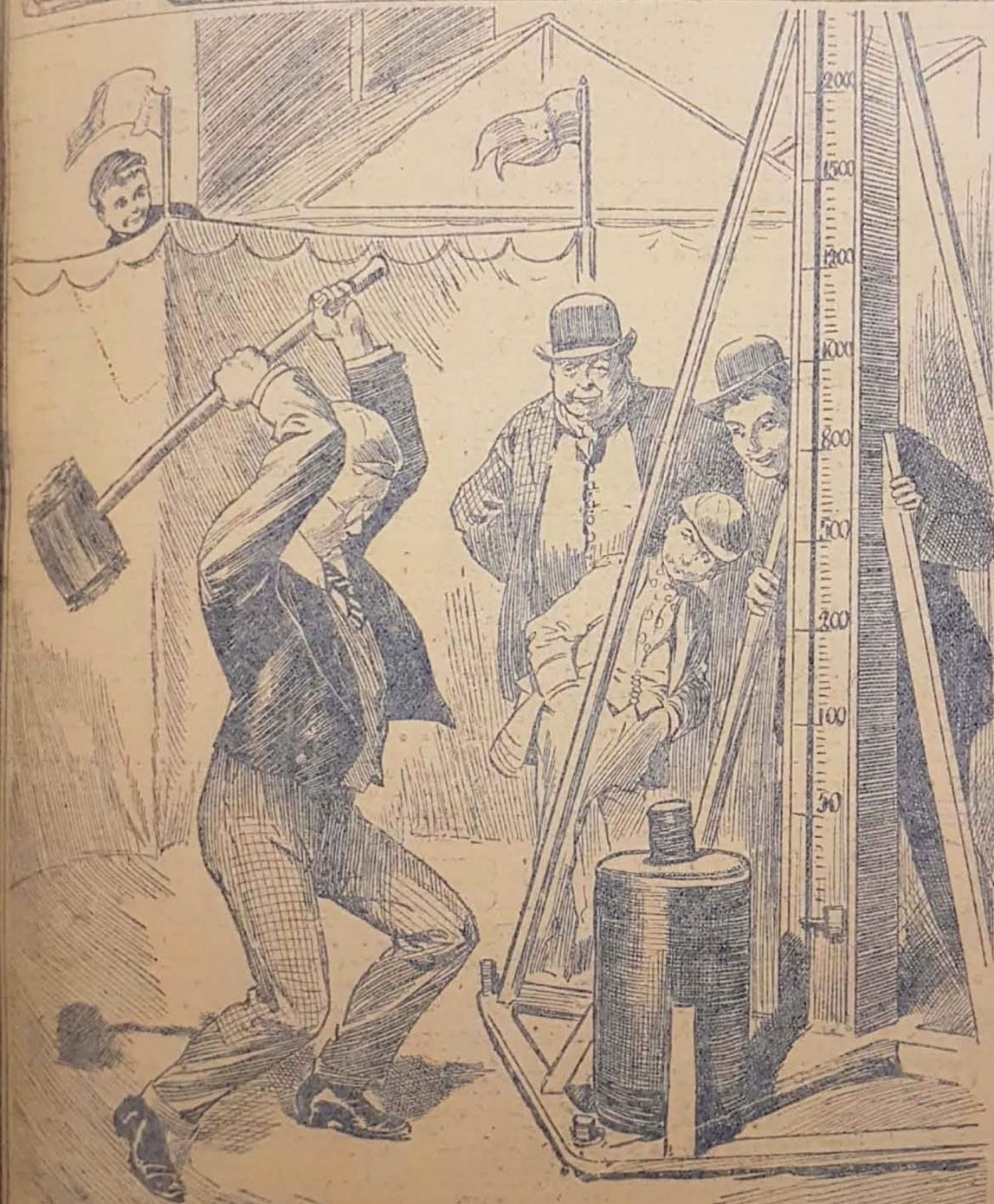
SPECS, THE VENTRILOQUIST.

PLUCK

GRAND SCHOOL TALE.

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THRILLING ADVENTURE TALE.



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NO. 133. NEW SERIES

NEW SCHOOL TALE.



A Splendid New School Story,

BY
MARTIN CLIFFORD.Author of the tales of Tom Merry,
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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 Trilawney, 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 Stossel, the German master. The Herr orders them to return; and on gaining the school the two boys encounter Fisher, who annoys Clive, and the two start quarrelling.

(Now go on with the story.)

"Herr Stossel Meets His Match."

"Oh, shut up, both of you!" said Locke pacifically. "Don't start ragging one another at this time in the morning, and before we've had any breakfast, too!"

"By Jove, I'm ready for breakfast," Clive remarked; "the sea air gives one a jolly good appetite. Let's go in." The three juniors entered the dining-hall.

Breakfast at St. Winifred's was of a solid description, and Clive Lawrence found plenty on the table to satisfy his inner man after the ramble on the sea-shore.

Prayers were at nine, school at nine-fifteen, and, when the clock from the tower of St. Winifred's chimed out the quarter, Clive Lawrence went into the Fourth Form room with the rest of his Form.

Morning lessons went off much the same as usual at St. Winifred's, the boys being already in the process of settling down for the new term, and Mr. Neill being a Form-master who was not to be trilled with.

But when the last lesson—which happened to be German—came round, there was a change. Herr Stossel took charge of the class, and Herr Stossel was plainly in a bad temper. Perhaps the meeting with the juniors on Penwyn shore had annoyed him, and perhaps he had other cause of worry. At all events, he was in a bad temper, and Clive Lawrence felt the effects of it.

It was upon the new boy that his anger fell. Clive was really a passable German scholar, and he would have been able to easily satisfy any reasonable master, but Herr Stossel was not in a reasonable mood.

He picked on Clive, and asked him questions which a Fifth-Former would have found it difficult to deal with, and held him up to ridicule before the class as a dunce because he could not answer.

Clive soon realised that he was being purposely "ragged" by the master, and a light began to gleam in his eyes which showed that his temper was rising.

"I see that the latest addition to my class is an absolute fool!" Herr Stossel said at last.

Clive's lips set hard.

"You will write out a hundred lines from Schiller's 'Jungfrau von Orleans'!" the German master went on.

The boy did not speak.

"Do you hear me, Lawrence?"

"Yes, sir."

"You will bring me the lines before you go to night."

"I am afraid I shall not be able to," said Clive, bowing his ears, as was very possible, the German master stared, too; they doubted the German master, but to one in the Fourth had even dreamed of it.

"Do I understand you aright, Lawrence?" Herr Stossel said.

"I really don't know, sir," replied Clive, with coolness; "I spoke plain enough, and I should think I did."

"Insolent bound! You dare to say that you do not hear the lines?"

"You have no right to call me by such a name, Clive."

"Ach, what!"

"If Dr. Esmond knew that you need such an excuse, he would agree with me, I know," said Clive.

Herr Stossel stared; he could do nothing at those moments, in his blank amazement; he had never had contact with a junior quite like this before.

"Lawrence, do you know what you are saying?" Herr Stossel said at last.

"Yes, sir; I know very well that what I say is true."

"Come out before the class."

The new boy at St. Winifred's hesitated.

"Stand out!" roared Herr Stossel.

"Better go," whispered Locke, "Don't be a fool; the Herr will be angry with you."

Lawrence reddened, and stepped out before the German master came closer to him, a pointer in his right hand.

"Hold out your hand, Lawrence!"

Clive Lawrence put his hands behind him.

There was a murmur of the Fourth. They were pluck and nerve, but Clive Lawrence's words were a savour of foolhardiness. They did not know what was going in the mind of the new junior at St. Winifred's.

"Lawrence, do you dare to disobey me?"

"Yes, sir."

The words seemed to strike Herr Stossel like a lightning bolt. He almost staggered, staring blankly at the looking junior.

"Lawrence!" He sprang forward with a muttered word in German, which it was as well the class did not understand.

"Lawrence! Hold out your hand instantly, or I will put you within an inch of your life!"

The hard wooden pointer whirled in the air. Clive Lawrence did not shrink. He looked like one who had seen the hand held the trump card. The Fourth looked on with interest. With his hands still behind his back, Clive Lawrence looked steadily at the furious German.

"I will not," he said. "And if you touch me, Herr Stossel, I will go straight to Dr. Esmond and tell him you have punished me."

"Because you are insolent."

"I have never been insolent. You picked on me because you hate me," Clive's voice rang out, so that every word was audible to everyone in the room; "and, if you touch me, Herr Stossel, I will let Dr. Esmond know why you hate me!"

The German's face was like a tiger's for a moment, and he seemed that, in spite of the junior's words, he would have sprung forward, and that the boy would fall under a savage blow.

But it was only for a moment that it seemed so. The pointer was slowly lowered, and the German master's face rose slowly to point to the seat Clive Lawrence had taken.

"Take your seat, Lawrence."

"Certainly, sir."

Clive Lawrence, without the slightest sign of being hurt in his manner, but perfectly calm, walked back to his seat. There was a murmur of utter amazement in the class. That Clive Lawrence should defy the German master was astonishing, but that Herr Stossel should have been "ragged" so, so to speak, was simply astounding. They were utterly unable to account for it, and were considering that what Clive had done could be done by others, ventured to show impertinence to the German master. The pointer came into play so rapidly, and so accurately, that they soon repented of their temerity.

Clive, on the other hand, showed no sign of triumph in his manner, and was perfectly attentive during the remainder of the lesson. Herr Stossel, too, had had a sudden end. Herr Stossel had had a sudden end. Herr Stossel had had a sudden end. Herr Stossel had had a sudden end. Herr Stossel had had a sudden end.