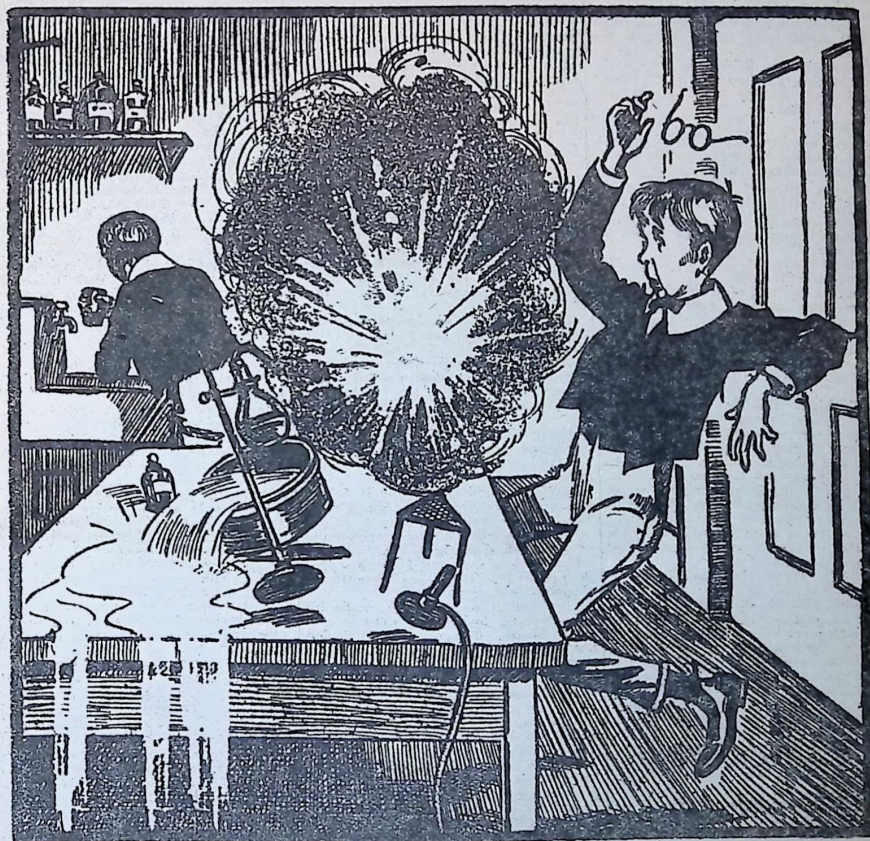


# THE ALL-SCHOOL-STORY PAPER!

## The Penny Popular

No.  
265.

Three Complete Stories of—  
HARRY WHARTON & Co.—JIMMY SILVER & Co.—TOM MERRY & Co.



### A SURPRISE FOR SKIMPOLE!

(An Amusing Incident from the Long Complete Story of TOM MERRY & CO., contained in this Issue.)



A Grand  
Long Complete  
Story, dealing  
with the  
Early Adventures  
of  
Jimmy Silver & Co.

# SMYTHE'S CHINAMEN!

By  
Owen  
Conquest

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

In the Woods.

"THIS—this is awfully curious!" Smythe of the Shell at Rookwood spoke.

He was in his study with Howard, reading, for the fifth time, a letter which he had just received.

Howard emitted a whistle of astonishment as he came to the end of the screed.

"Beastly remarkable!" he responded. "Absolutely!" said Smythe. "There's something awfully deep about the Celestial mind!"

"Eh?"

"The heathen Chinese," said Smythe, in explanation, "never believes in coming straight to the point."

"Apparently so."

"But fancy my uncle sending over three of them for me," said Smythe, in further astonishment. "And it's all so direct, see?"

"Let's have another look at the letter," said Howard.

And the two nuts of the Shell put their heads together, and read the letter through once more.

It was scrawled on a piece of paper, which was unaddressed. The writing was distinctly Oriental, and so was the spelling. It ran as follows:

"To Master Adolphus Smythe,—Your Uncle Cyrius, in land of China, send us, his three very willing slaves, to you while we stay in England in most respectful business for his Excellency. He ask us to meet your most honourable self and lead you to great and mighty secret which his Excellency buried. We will be in roadway to see most honourable Smythe, friend of most excellent Cyrius Smythe, just the other excellent side of Coombe this afternoon.

"WENG, HONG, and LUXE."

Adolphus Smythe dropped the letter on the table, and drew a cigarette from his case with a carefully manicured hand.

"I wonder what they can have to show me?" he speculated as he lit up. His voice was very keen. Uncle Cyrius was reputed to be doing great things in China, and it seemed quite probable that he might have agents in England at any time.

That was how Smythe regarded things, and it never struck him for a moment that someone might be pulling his aristocratic leg.

"I've a jolly good mind to go," he said at length.

"I should!" said Howard emphatically.

"Oh, I don't know about being so beastly keen on meetin' a crowd of yellow beasts," remarked Smythe la-

gually, endeavouring to appear as disinterested as possible.

"Must be something awfully important for your uncle to send them specially to see you," said Howard keenly. "Something that he would not dare to trust to the post. No doubt these yellow boudners know how to keep their mouths shut. That's why he's sent them."

"Very likely you're right," said Smythe, tossing the cigarette into the grate. "How goes the jolly time?"

He drew an elaborate gold watch from his pocket, and consulted it.

"Gettin' late, by Jove!" he exclaimed. "I'll just stray down an' see if I can locate these yellow creatures. So long!"

"I'll come if you like," volunteered Howard.

"Doesn't matter," said Smythe, as he took up his cap. "I don't want to drag you into it. And it might be something that's meant specially for me, you know."

As a matter of fact it was, though not in the way that the nut of the Shell meant. But he did not know that.

It struck Adolphus Smythe as very fortunate that the three Chinese had written and arranged to meet him on a half holiday.

He passed out of the gates with a jaunty step, and made his way to Coombe.

About half a mile from Rookwood, Smythe overtook the Fistical Four. Jimmy Silver & Co. were out for a country ramble, but they were not hurrying.

Jimmy Silver looked at the nut of the Shell, and then at each of his chums.

"Shall we bump him?" he asked sweetly.

Smythe glanced apprehensively behind him, and broke into a run. The Fistical Four grinned broadly.

It was distinctly amusing to see the nut of the Shell speeding along. It was seldom that he went out alone, and that the Fistical Four had such an opportunity of settling old scores.

The Shell fellow, however, made his escape certain by running until he was out of breath. Then he glanced behind him, and, seeing that he was not pursued, settled into a walk again.

Jimmy Silver watched him for a few moments, and then turned to Lovell.

"You're quite right in what you were saying," he observed. "Our respected friend certainly has got something particular on this afternoon."

"Course he has," said Lovell. "Smythe is going like a lamb to the giddy slaughter-house. And our friendly attempts to save him are scorned."

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"Of course, he couldn't be blamed for not knowing that they were friendly!" he said. "But I don't think we ought to let him walk into it like that!"

"Rats!"

"Look here," said Jimmy Silver, "we

know that Tommy Dodd & Co. have got some scheme on hand to rag Smythe. They slipped out early this afternoon, to begin with, and I know that they've been writing to some firm for theatrical costumes."

"Well, what are they going to do?" "Goddness knows," said Jimmy Silver. "I've got an idea that it's going to be Chinese. You know how Smythe has been braying lately about his Uncle Cyrius? Everyone's heard it. The Moderns know all about it. And it's my opinion that they're going to work a first-class rag on Smythe."

"Good luck to 'em!" growled Lovell. "It'll take that conceited boulder down a peg or two."

"I don't agree," said Jimmy Silver. "It would do Smythe good, I'll admit. But we can do all the ragging that's required. We don't want the Moderns butting in on our fellows."

"Smythe don't count!" granted Lovell.

"He's a Classical," said Jimmy Silver, warming to his point. "We're Classics, too. This rag is a Modern rag against a Classical chap. If we let the Moderns get on with it, it's going to be a giddy victory for them over us."

"That's right enough," said Newcome. "What do you say, Raby?"

"Jimmy speaks common-sense," said Raby solemnly.

Lovell hesitated. He was considering.

"Perhaps you're right, Jimmy," he said at length. "Those Modern cads will crow about it for ever. It would be a bit of a victory for us if we butted in and spoilt their rag. But it's a pity that Smythe has got to escape."

"He's only got to escape a ragging from the Moderns," said Jimmy Silver with a grin. "Trust us to see that Adolphus is not forgotten."

"Well, we'd better be getting on at once," hadn't we?" asked Raby.

"Smythe's right out of sight. He's evidently made an appointment somewhere to meet those Modern cads, and they'll have him in their clutches if we don't back him up."

"Yes," said Jimmy Silver. "Come on, you fellows!"

The Fistical Four broke their pace, and made in the direction of Coombe, which was evidently Smythe's destination.

That worthy, meanwhile, had hurried on for all he was worth, and by the time he reached the village was hot and perspiring. He paused for a second to glance back. The Fistical Four were not in sight.

"Good thing I escaped those fags!" said the nut of the Shell to himself. "I wonder if those Chinks are still waiting?"

He wiped his heated brow with a scented handkerchief, and walked on in a more leisurely manner through Coombe.

Then he continued along the road, and



after he had gone about a hundred yards there was a rustling in the hedge.

Smythe stopped.  
Three yellow-robed figures, with yellow faces and drooping black moustaches, stepped from the side of the road. They halted in front of Smythe, and salaamed low.

"Master Adolphus Smythe!" purred one of them.

"How do you know?" demanded Smythe suspiciously.

"By alicotatic walk," said the spokesman. "Most honorable Cyrius Smythe walk just like that."

Smythe paused. His heart was beating a little quickly. The Chinamen were only small, but they looked wiry fellows. The Shell fellow rather wished that he had brought someone with him.

"What do you want?" he asked.

The spokesman of the trio salaamed again.  
"Blingee message from gleat uncle Smythe in China," he said. "He tellee humble servant Weng to lequest honorable Adolphus to walk with him in woods."

"Why can't you tell me here?"  
"Olders to show most excellent Adolphus where gleat and mighty secler is bellied," said the gentleman who called himself Weng. "If Mastrel Smythe walkee in woods with humble Weng, Hong, and Lung, they showee where gleat secler is."

Smythe hesitated.  
"All right," he said suddenly; "I'll come."

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### An Interrupted Hoax.

**S**MYTHE followed the three robed figures into the field. He was trembling like a leaf, although he tried to show a bold front. That was why he did not glance down the road.

If he had done so, he would have seen that the Fistical Four had just come round the bend of the road, and witnessed the whole occurrence.

The Shell fellow paused as they gained the field.

"I think you'd better make a chart of it," he said.

Weng shook his head.

"Honorable Cylius tellee humble servant Weng must showee place himself," he said. "Honorable Adolphus must come."

Smythe shook his head.

The path led straight up to a mass of woods, and the woods looked particularly uninviting as a place in which to walk with three "heathen Chineeess." The Shell fellow found that the ordeal required more pluck than he had.

"I'm going back," he said.

But before he could move, something happened which nearly caused his heart to stop beating. The three Celestials whipped round, and fastened strong hands on the trembling Smythe.

"Must come," murmured Weng, in a threatening voice. "Affaid disobey Uncle Cylius orders. No hurtee if come quietly."

Smythe opened his mouth to yell for help, but a hand was clapped over it. He realised that he was powerless in the hands of the three robed individuals.

Smythe's eyes goggled. Tommy Dodd, whose features were under the disguise which went by the name of Weng, grinned faintly at Tommy Cook. Tommy Cook returned the look. The Moderns were enjoying the joke immensely. But they were not finished yet.

They led the trembling Smythe up the path to the woods. The scheme, so far, had worked beautifully, but they had more ideas to carry out.

The first thing, however, was to calm Smythe's fears that he was in for a rough time. Otherwise, the remainder of the programme could not be carried out.

So Smythe, to his unbounded relief, found himself released from the grip of the three "Chinamen" as soon as the woods were reached.

"Solly to have to p'swade honorable Adolphus," said Weng, in a tone of deep humility. "Velly necessary in case any one see us while we argue and give velly gleat secler away."

"No hurtee any more," added Hong. "Showee treasure light awayee," added Lung.

Smythe pulled himself together with an effort. His belief that the three robed figures were proper "Chinks" was still unshaken. In addition, he was very keen to learn his uncle's secret. His curiosity outweighed his fear.

"Go on, then," he said sharply; "but don't touch me again!"

"No touchee gain," murmured Tommy Dodd.

junior. "Digeee hete velly deep big hole. Digeee 'bout twenty feet—"

"Twenty feet?" gasped Smythe.

"Velly gleat secler," murmured Tommy Dodd. "Must be velly deep."

There was another rustle amongst the trees. Smythe looked round in time to see the Fistical Four burst from cover and charge on the "Chinks."

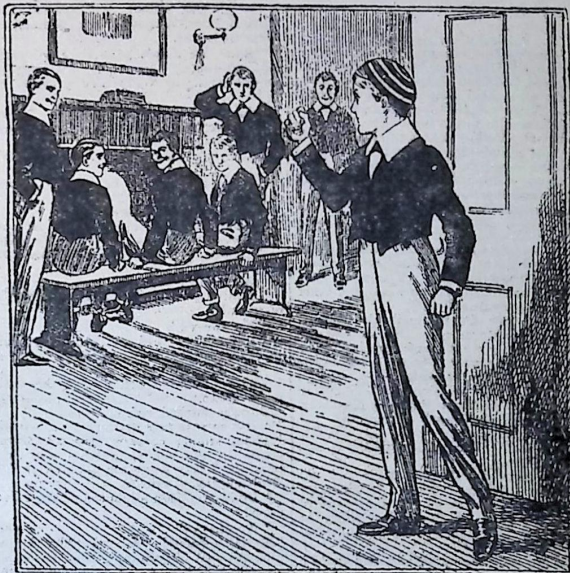
"Stop!" roared Smythe.

Jimmy Silver grinned as he passed. "Stop!" repeated Smythe. "I tell you they're friends! They're not hurting me! They were going to tell me something!"

The three Celestials were fleeing. They had turned and made a bee-line for safety.

"They're friends!" yelled Smythe. The Fistical Four swept on. Smythe was not heeded, as the schemers of the Modern side at Rookwood were putting their best foot forward while they had the chance. The fop of the Shell fumed.

"What on earth is the matter with



"You little fools have spoilt everything!" exclaimed Smythe, shaking his fist at the Fistical Four. "They were friends of mine!" "Velly nice friends, too!" said Jimmy Silver.

He led the way along through the woods. The three hopefuls of the Modern Side were just preparing to launch their latest and greatest surprise. They chuckled silently as the unsuspecting Smythe followed them.

"This is placee," said Tommy Dodd, pulling up suddenly. "Digeee velly, velly"

Tommy Dodd paused; and looked searchingly amongst the trees. He fancied that he had detected a rustling sound.

"What's the matter?" demanded Smythe.

"Make sure no one see secler," murmured Tommy Dodd uneasily.

"There's no one here," said Smythe. "Get on with it."

"This is placee," resumed the Modern

those idiots?" he growled. "Told me to dig twenty feet! What on earth for? I can't dig a hole like that alone!"

And Smythe gazed furiously after the running figures amongst the trees. It had not dawned on him even now that the whole thing was a hoax.

That much certainly stood to the credit of Tommy Dodd & Co. They had succeeded in deceiving the shallow-brained fop of the Shell right along, chiefly on account of that worthy's belief in Uncle Cyrius.

Tommy Dodd & Co. found that their garments made running exceedingly difficult, and in a few minutes the perspiration was causing yellow streaks of paint to run down their faces.

"Look here," gasped Tommy Doyle, THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.



as they ran, "I'm going to make a stand for it."

"But they're four to three! We shall get wiped up!" protested Tommy Cook. "And it will all come out. They may not know who we are yet, and only think we're Chinks out on the ran-tan!"

The sounds of the pursuers drew nearer.

"We'll give 'em what for!" growled Tommy Dodd, pulling up. "They know all about this wheeze. Give 'em socks!" The three yellow-robed figures turned, and squared up. Jimmy Silver & Co. depended upon them in an avalanche.

Weng, Hong, and Lung certainly did not look much like the Celestials they were supposed to represent. Their faces were yellow, blotched with pink.

It was quite certain that they could not have sustained their characters if they had wished to.

"Come on!" roared Tommy Dodd, with a warlike flourish, "We'll give you Classical worms what you want!"

"No likee hurtee!" mocked Jimmy Silver.

"You'll get hurt!"

"Bow-wow!"

The Fistical Four charged.

Tommy Dodd & Co. hit out stoutly. Jimmy Silver marked his man, and secured Dodd for his own special benefit.

Lovell tackled Tommy Cook, and Raby and Newcome fell upon Tommy Doyle and bore him to the ground.

Tommy Dodd put up a mighty struggle against Jimmy Silver, but he found that he had more than his work cut out. The flowing garments wrapped round his arms and legs and hampered him.

He tripped up suddenly against Tommy Cook, and fell to the ground. Jimmy Silver followed him.

To complete the disaster, Tommy Cook lost his balance, and crashed, with Lovell, against the other pair. The whole confused mass rolled over to where the other three were struggling.

There was an indescribable mix-up. For a minute none of the combatants knew exactly what was happening. The Fistical Four were looking for someone to punch. Tommy Dodd & Co. were of the unanimous opinion that discretion would now be the better part of valour.

As the heap sorted themselves out they saw their chance. The three yellow figures broke from their opponents and dashed away.

At this time the Fistical Four did not follow. They had done a considerable amount of damage in a short space of time, and the Moderns were likely to remember the rag. The ground was strewn with spoils.

There were three pigtails, and quite a number of pieces which had been torn from the theatrical garments which the Moderns had hired, including a large piece from the tail of a jumper, and a whole sleeve.

Jimmy Silver grinned as he surveyed the ruins of the Moderns' great stunt.

"Properly put 'em in the shade this time!" he laughed. "But they'd have scored if we hadn't turned up. They took Smythe in all right!"

"Yes," said Raby. "They must have spun him a jolly good yarn. I suppose he thinks they're messengers from his Uncle Cyrus!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four laughed at the memory of Smythe's indignation when his conversation was so rudely interrupted in the woods.

"Poor old Tommy Dodd!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "The Moderns will be jolly sick about this. They'll get a nice little bill for damages when they return those costumes. And we've got enough to remember them by."

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.

He stooped as he spoke, and picked up the pigtails and the portions of torn garments which the Moderns had left behind in their haste to escape.

"Let's get back to the school," said Raby, after a minute. "Not much object in hanging about here. We'll be in for tea if we hurry."

The Fistical Four fell in with the suggestion, and made their way back to Rookwood. They saw no sign of Tommy Dodd & Co. on their way, and they were not in to tea in Big Hall.

Smythe and Howard were there, however, and the former looked up with a venomous expression as the four Fourth-Formers trooped in.

"Poor old Smythe!" murmured Lovell, as they sat down. "Still believes in his friends! He'll be telling Howard a terrible tale of woe in a minute."

After tea the Fistical Four repaired to the junior Common-room. There was a cheerful blaze in the grate, and the juniors sat down in front of it. They were chatting when the door opened, and Smythe burst into the room.

He glanced round, and spotted the Fistical Four. Jimmy Silver grinned as he came across.

"Sorry we didn't have time to speak this afternoon," he said. "I suppose you've come to say you're grateful to us?"

"Grateful!" howled Smythe. "You little fools have spoilt everything! Those were friends of mine!"

"Velly nice fiends, too!" said Jimmy Silver.

"They were going to tell me something."

"Allee lightee, knowee that."

"And you silly fags butted in and spoilt everything!" said Smythe, in great indignation. "I want to know what you meant by it."

"No savvy!"

"You've got no right to attack friends of mine!"

"No savvy!"

"I've a jolly good mind to report you to the Head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors laughed at Smythe with great gusto.

Smythe flushed red.

"It's no grinning matter!" he howled. "These fellows came all the way from China to tell me something very important. I may never see them again."

"No thinkee will!"

"Don't you little idiots see what you've done?"

"No savvy!"

Smythe fumed. He thought for a moment of attacking the grinning juniors. But that, on a moment's reflection, was out of the question. The Fistical Four were a distinct proposition as a fighting force.

"Well, there'll be trouble if I don't meet those Chinks again!" threatened the Shell fellow.

"There'll be trouble if you do!" said Jimmy Silver lightly.

"What do you mean?"

"No savvy!"

Smythe gazed at the grinning juniors in speechless wrath for a moment. Then he turned and strode out of the room, followed by the mocking laughter from the Fistical Four:

## TO THE BOYS AT THE FRONT.

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## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Out of the Window!

"SMYTHE'S fearfully cut up!" Jimmy Silver spoke.

The Fistical Four were talking in the end study of the Fourth-Form passage on the night following Smythe's adventure with the "Chinese."

"He really thinks he's missed something," said Lovell. "Smythe is a jolly sight thicker than I thought he was. He went out again this evening to see if he could pick-up the Chinks."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tommy Dodd & Co. were in," proceeded Lovell, "so he couldn't expect to meet 'em. But that's not the point. He's talking about going to the Head about it!"

"He'd better!" said Jimmy Silver. "He'd make himself the laughing-stock of the school!"

"Yes, he would," said Raby thoughtfully; "but that's going a bit too far. It might get Tommy Dodd & Co. into a scrape. We don't want that."

"Of course not!"

"Well, why not let him into the secret?"

"Eh?"

"He'd never believe it!"

"Just a minute," said Raby. "I've been thinking!"

"Poor old Raby!" murmured Newcome.

"Shut up, ass!" snapped Raby. "This isn't a time for rotting! S'pose, for instance, we kidded old Smythe up that we were going to break out to-night and go and dig for his buried treasure!"

"Don't see what that's got to do with it!" objected Lovell.

"Course you don't," said Raby. "That is where brains come in. You don't give me time to finish. Of course, we shouldn't really break out—not good little fellows like us! We should only kid Smythe that we were going to do so, but make him think that we were keeping it a dead secret. He'd be on the scent like-like anything!"

"Well?"

"Well, Smythe is so ratty with us that he'd do anything," said Raby. "And that is just where we get our own back for a good many things. If he shouts out, we've only got to watch him get caught."

Lovell rapped his forehead significantly.

"Poor fellow!" he said sorrowfully.

"What is the ass talking about?" asked Jimmy Silver.

Raby snorted.

"This is what I suggest!" he roared. "If you fellows don't want to listen to a good plan, you needn't! But it's a top-hole wheeze."

And Raby proceeded to expound. As he did so, the remainder of the Fistical Four looked interested, and when he finished they grinned board grins.

"He deserves a medal," said Jimmy Silver. "The wheeze should go with an exceedingly great slam."

Jimmy Silver & Co. proceeded to make preparations forthwith. What they did was carried out behind the cover of the study door. But from the constant chuckles they were evidently very pleased with themselves.

They went down to supper looking particularly light-hearted. Smythe was down there, and he favoured the Fistical Four with a very unpleasant look.

Jimmy Silver noted it, and turned to Lovell.

"The scheme will work well," he said.

"Don't forget to look mysterious as we go out."

Supper finished, Jimmy Silver and



Lovell lingered in Big Hall until Smythe was just behind them, and then started to talk in mysterious whispers.

It was all part of the scheme, but Smythe did not know that. He was convinced in his own mind that they were plotting something against him.

Jimmy Silver and Lovell, their voices raised a little, walked on towards the darkened cloisters. Smythe heard his own name once as they walked, and that was enough to whet his curiosity.

He followed softly on the heels of the two Fourth Formers, and entered the dark cloisters.

Here, apparently, the two youngsters passed to continue their scheme. Smythe drew into a recess, where he could hear every word of what was said.

He listened intently. Jimmy Silver was speaking.

"Then it's agreed?" he asked Lovell. "Half-past eleven to-night, and we go down a rope from Smythe's study. That will be the easiest thing to do. We can easily dig a hole in that wood, and find out what is there."

"Good scheme!" said Lovell. "But Smythe might come along!"

"No fear of that," said Jimmy Silver easily. "He'll be asleep by then. Coming back to the study?"

"Yes," said Lovell, and they moved off.

Smythe drew a deep breath as the juniors passed him and made off.

"Perhaps he won't be asleep!" he muttered, as he followed. There was plenty of meaning in the words as he said them.

Jimmy Silver & Co. went up to the dormitory in high spirits. They turned in without saying a word of what was on, however, to anyone. But shortly after eleven Jimmy Silver slipped cautiously out of bed and shook his chains.

"Ready?" he asked. Raby, Newcome, and Lovell stepped quietly out of their beds and dressed. Then, with soft steps, they made their way to the study in the Fourth-Form passage.

Here they unearthed their evening's labours. It was a life-size figure of a boy, padded out to look natural, and wearing a pair of heavy boots.

All the clothing, as a matter of fact, belonged to Smythe. The cap, too, was an old one of his, which the japing

Fourth-Formers had borrowed from that worthy's chest, together with the other things.

The only part that belonged to the Fistical Four was the stuffing, which consisted of paper and three Chinese stigs—all of which had been obtained without much trouble!

The dummy looked remarkably life-like in the starlight in the study, and Jimmy Silver grinned as he tied a rope firmly round its middle.

"Now for the great wheeze," he said. "You fellows ready?"

"Yes." Jimmy stepped across to the window and looked into the quad. He saw a shadowy figure and then another dart out of cover and then disappear into the shadows again. He turned excitedly to the others.

"I just saw Smythe and Howard in the quad," he said. "Come on up to their study. The coast will be clear, as they're waiting down below!"

The precious dummy was carried up to the Shell passage, and into Smythe's study. Then the window was cautiously opened, and the dummy was helped through in as lifelike a manner as possible.

It slid gently over the window-ledge, and went sailing down towards the quad as the Fistical Four played out the rope.

Jimmy Silver peered cautiously over the ledge as it went.

"Steady!" he warned. "Stop! Good! It's standing!"

There was a moment's pause. Then Smythe and Howard broke cover. Smythe had resolved on a scheme for revenge against the Fistical Four which they had quite anticipated, but which was caddish in the extreme. He resolved to denounce the breaker-out!

"Help!" he yelled, as he dashed forward.

Jimmy Silver chuckled. "Now, heave up!" he whispered.

The dummy started to ascend the wall again. Smythe let out another shout, and dashed to the spot where it had just been standing.

"Come down!" he shouted. "Come down, you rascal! I've caught you!"

"Pity to disappoint!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "Let go!"

The Fistical Four let go. The dummy hurtled down again towards the ground.

Smythe and Howard had certainly not expected that, and they did not move quickly enough. The dummy came right on top of them. A heavy boot struck Smythe's head, and the other tickled Howard somewhere in the back of the neck.

"Yarooooh!" roared Smythe. "Groooog!" roared Howard.

"Time to go to bed!" grinned Jimmy Silver, as he shut the window.

The Fistical Four dashed back to their dormitory. And they were only just in time. Smythe's shouts had roused several people, and a couple of masters had gone into the quad to investigate the cause of the noise which had disturbed their night's sleep.

The tables had been turned on Smythe with a vengeance. The dummy was found to consist of his own clothing, plus the three Chinese wigs—sufficient to enlighten him to the fact that the three Chinese he had met had been ragging juniors. That news was easy.

But Smythe found it more difficult to explain why he was out of his dormitory at that time of night. If he had caught one of the Fourth Formers red-handed it would have been a different thing. But his scheme for getting the Fistical Four into very hot water had rebounded on himself.

He realised that he could say nothing without committing himself, and his story of thinking that he saw a burglar did not wash at all well. The nut of the Shell and his chum Howard found themselves gated for a week, and with a thousand lines to do during their stay indoors.

The Fistical Four escaped scot-free. There was nothing to connect them with the affair. And they soon saw that, although Smythe quite understood what had happened, he intended to keep silent about it.

He did make one attempt to involve them. He visited the end study with the three wigs in his hand.

"Belong to any of you?" he asked.

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"No savvy!" he said.

And Smythe went away with a frowning brow and memories of his "Chinamen."

THE END.

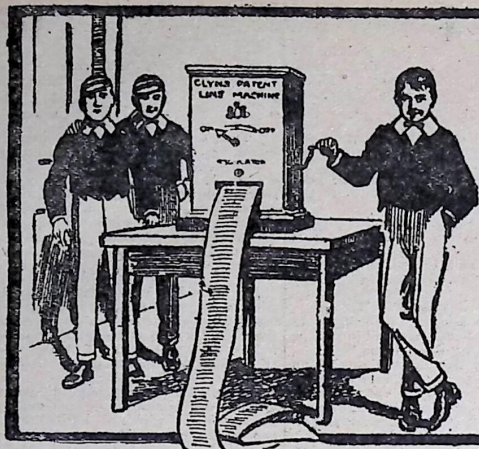
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BY

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Study No. 6.

"O H!"

"What's the mattah, deah boy?"

"Who did that?" demanded Herries.

"Eh?"

"Who did it?"

And Herries, of the Fourth Form, glared round the table in Study No. 6 in the School House at St. Jim's.

There were six juniors at the table, and the table was laid for tea—quite a generous tea, too. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had lately expended one of his celebrated fivers, and Study No. 6 was in clover. Blake and Herries, and Digby and D'Arcy, the four chums who shared that famous study, were all there, and so were Tom Merry and Monty Lowther of the Shell. Manners would have been there, too, but Manners was developing films in some mysterious recess of the School House.

Tea had been progressing quite cheerfully and amicably in Study No. 6. The heroes of the Fourth forgot that they were at war, more often than not, with the champions of the Shell Form. All, as Byron so happily expresses it in describing a less important feast, went merry as a marriage bell. Then came the trouble. Herries had been raising a cup of tea to his lips, when he suddenly set it down, and snorted. Then he demanded who had done it.

Herries was a big, good-tempered fellow, but he could get excited. He would get excited if anybody criticised his bulldog, Towser. He got very excited when Bernard Glyn, the amateur inventor of the School House, used his cornet to assist in an invention he was making, and nearly ruined it. Herries said that the cornet would never play as it did before, and got only more angry, when Glyn suggested that that was a jolly good thing. But just now neither Towser nor the cornet was in evidence, and it was rather a puzzle what made Herries so excited.

"Who did it?" he repeated.

"That depends," said Jack Blake thoughtfully. "What do you mean by 'it'?" If you mean who made the toast, I did it. If you mean, who fetched the cake, Lowther did it. If you mean, who

played the giddy ox, Gussy did it. If—"

"Weally, Blake——"

"If it's a joke, I don't like it!" growled Herries.

"If what's a joke?" demanded Tom Merry.

"It!" said Herries.

Monty Lowther tapped his forehead gently. He meant to indicate that he entertained grave doubts of Herries' sanity. Herries looked still more angry.

"If it was you, Lowther——" he began.

"Weally, Hewwies," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, jamming his eyeglass into his eye, and surveying his study mate severely, "I twust you are not goin' to be wude to a guest."

"Well, I don't like such jokes!" said Herries. "It's all very well, but I might have upset the tea into my waistcoat."

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind explaining what you're talking about?" Tom Merry suggested blandly.

Herries grunted.

"Somebody chucked a splash of water in my eye," he said.

"Bai Jove! I regard that as a wido-culous twick!" said D'Arcy. "If you had explained that at first, Hewwies, I should have undahstood."

"Well, don't do it again, Gussy," said Blake. "Pass the jam, Tom Merry."

"Weally, Blake," said D'Arcy, with dignity, "I twust you do not think that I could be guilty of playing such a wido-culous twick."

"Well, I didn't do it," said Blake.

"Did you, Dig?"

Digby grinned.

"No!"

"And I didn't," said Monty Lowther.

"Did you, Tommy?"

Tom Merry shook his head.

"Must have been imagination," said Lowther; "or perhaps Herries was shedding a tear of sensibility, without noticing it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" growled Herries.

"Skimpole was talking very feelingly to-day about the sufferings of the toil-worn millions," Monty Lowther went on.

"Perhaps it weighed on Herries' spirits, and he's started weeping all of a sudden!"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Herries. "Some

silly ass buzzed a drop of water in my eye, and I don't like it."

"Wathah not! I should not like it myself," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I quite agree with my friend Hewwies. I should not like it at all."

Herries went on with his tea, looking a little disturbed. The other juniors looked puzzled. Any of them might certainly have played that little joke on Herries, but none of them would have told an untruth about it. They had all denied knowing anything of it, and yet it seemed unlikely that Herries was mistaken. It was a very curious thing.

Herries refilled his cup, and milked it and sugared it, and stirred it, and then raised it to his lips.

Then there was a clatter. His arm jerked, and half the tea swamped out over his wrist, and he dropped the cup into the saucer with a crash, and jumped up.

"You ass!" he roared.

"My hat!"

"Bai Jove!"

Herries shook teardrops from his drenched cuff, and glared round the table at the astonished juniors.

"Who did that?" he roared.

"Eh?"

"Some silly ass buzzed a jet of water on my nose while I was drinking!" yelled Herries. "Look here, I'm not going to stand it!"

"But I say——"

"Weally, Hewwies——"

"Who was it?" yelled Herries.

Jack Blake looked bewildered.

"It wasn't anybody here," he exclaimed. "There can't be anybody hidden in the study playing tricks on us, surely?"

He stared round the study in amazement.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "It's quite poss."

"Look!" said Tom Merry.

Blake jumped up from the table and looked round the study. He dragged out the screen, and looked behind the book-case, and even under the table. But there was no one to be found. Study No. 6 contained the four chums of the Fourth and their two guests from the Shell, and no one else.

The juniors stared at one another blankly. Unless Herries was the victim of a most peculiar hallucination, it was a very strange case. Herries was mopping



his drenched cuff and sleeve with his handkerchief and grunting.

He was in a bad temper, and very naturally; and he was not at all disposed to believe that he was the victim of a hallucination. His look at Monty Lowther showed that he suspected the humorist of the Shell of somehow contriving that little joke.

"It is very remarkable," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, at last, "Jolly queer!" said Tom Merry. "Sure you didn't fancy it, Herries?" Herries snorted.

"Fancy it, you ass! Could I fancy getting a dot of water in the eye, and another on the nose, you silly ass!" "P'way wemembah that Tom Mewwy is a guest in this study, Hewwies, deah boy."

"Oh, rats!" "Weally, Hewwies——" Herries plumped down again at the table into his chair. He cast a glance round the table that was a warning of trouble to come.

"It is weally vewy cuwious——" "Oh!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "What's the mattah, deah boy?"

Tom Merry rubbed his nose in amazement.

"I just got a dot of water on the nose!" he gasped. "Look here——"

"Bai Jove!" "Look out!" roared Blake, jumping up.

There was a sudden splashing of water on the table. It came down in a rush, and the tea-things were swamped, and the juniors were splashed right and left, in the twinkling of an eye. Tom Merry gave a roar.

"Groo! Oh! It's coming through the ceiling! Oh! Groo!"

"Bai Jove!" "Splash! Splash! Splash!"

Water came sweeping down upon the study table, and fragments of plaster came with it. And jam and cake, and dough-nuts and meringues, swam in a flood of plasterly water and watery plaster! And the juniors, dodging the showers, gazed upward in dismay and amazement.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Schoolboy Inventor at Work.

"GREAT Scott!" "What the——" "Who the——" "Bai Jove!"

Splash! Splash! Splash! Water was pouring through the ceiling of Study No. 6, and fragments of plaster fell with it upon the unfortunate tea-table.

The juniors gazed upward. "What on earth can it be?" Blake exclaimed, in amazement.

"That's where the water's coming from," said Tom Merry, rubbing a splash from his face. "Somebody's upsetting water up there, and it's coming through!"

"Blessed if I can understand it!" said Blake. "It's a box-room up there, over this study, and there's a tap and a sink in it. It's been used as a dark-room. But——"

"Bai Jove! Somebody's left the tap wunnin'!"

"Manners!" exclaimed Digby. "He's doing his blessed developing up there!"

"The boulder!"

Tom Merry shook his head. "It's not Manners!" he exclaimed.

"He's using Lathom's dark-room downstairs. Some ass has turned the tap on!"

"Let's go and see!" exclaimed Herries. "Good! Come on!"

"We can't finish tea now, anyway!" ejaculated Tom Merry, with a glance at the table. "Looks to me as if the tea's mucked up!"

"Yaas, wathah! It's wotten!"

The juniors left the study in great wrath. Blake picked up a cricket-stump before he started. If he found a practical joker in the box-room over the study, it was likely to go hard with that practical joker.

They ran up the stairs to the upper passage, and Blake kicked at the door of the box-room over Study No. 6.

There was a yell from within.

"Oh!" Blake tried the door. It was locked. He hammered over the upper panels with the cricket-stump.

"Open this blessed door!" he roared.

"Yaas, wathah! Open it, you ass!"

"You chumps!" came a voice from within, which the juniors recognised as

"I insist upon your openin' the beastly door at once, Glyn, you twifghful ass!"

"Rats!"

"I am goin' to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"More rats!"

"What are you doing in there, you chump?" shouted Tom Merry, through the keyhole.

"Working at my invention," replied Bernard Glyn cheerfully.

"Oh, he's making another rotten invention!" grunted Monty Lowther. "He won't open the door till he's finished. I know him."

"Let us in to see the invention, Glyn?" shouted Herries.

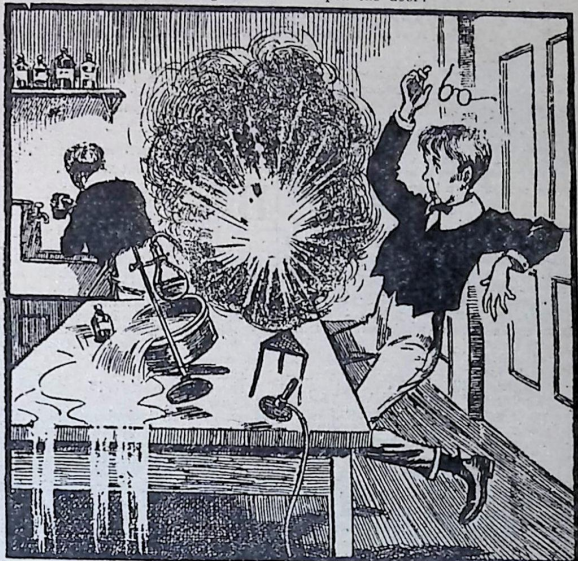
Glyn chuckled again.

"No fear!"

"What's it about?"

"You'll know some time."

"Open the door!"



"There was a terrific explosion in the room, and Skimpole staggered back from the table, his spectacles flying off. "Oh—ow! Oh! Oh, dear! Help!" he gasped wildly.

that of Bernard Glyn, the inventive genius of the Shell. "You frabjous fat-heads! You've made me muck this thing up now!"

"You've mucked up our tea!" roared Blake. "The water's coming through the ceiling!"

"Phew!"

"Have you left the tap running, you chump?"

"By George! Yes!"

"Turn it off, then, you dangerous ass!"

"All right!"

"Now open the door!"

"Can't be done!"

"Why not, you ass?"

"I'm busy!"

"Rats!"

There was evidently no chance of getting in. The excited juniors bestowed a succession of terrific kicks upon the door, and retired.

Within the box-room a chuckle was heard again, and the schoolboy inventor went on with his work, whatever it was, as if there had been no interruption.

The School House inventor did not allow small things to disturb him when he was at work carrying out his wonderful ideas.

A voice upon the stairs greeted the juniors as they descended to the Fourth Form passage. It was the acid, unpleasant voice of Knox, the prefect.

"What's that row up there?"

"What row?" asked Tom Merry innocently.

Knox scowled. "You've been hammering and bang-



ing up there," he said. "Take a hundred lines each."

"Weally, Knox—"  
"Buzz off, or I'll double it!" said the prefect sharply.

The juniors went down the passage. Knox could impose lines if he liked, and he had a special fancy for imposing them upon Tom Merry & Co.

"The wotah!" muttered Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"The beast!"

"The cad!"

"All Glyn's fault!" growled Monty Lowther. "We'll scrag the bounder when he comes out of his blessed den!"

"Hallo! What's that about, Glyn?"

Kangaroo asked the question. Kangaroo and Clifton Dane, of the Shell, were Bernard Glyn's study mates. They were coming along the passage, and had overheard Monty Lowther's remark.

Lowther snorted.

"It's that blessed ass Glyn again!" he growled. "He's got us a hundred lines each!"

Kangaroo chuckled.

"And he's left the tap turned on over our study, and flooded us out!" growled Herries.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if it seems funny to me!" said Blake, glowering at Kangaroo and Dane, who had burst into a roar of laughter.

"We'll bump him when he comes out! Why couldn't you keep him in your study to work his rotten invention?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling asses!"

"We're fed up with his inventions there," grinned Clifton Dane. "We made him take the blessed machine up into the box-room."

"You ass! He's flooded us out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothin' whatever to cackle at, deah boys!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You asses!" shouted Blake. "I say, we can't get at Glyn; let's bump those two silly chumps instead. They're his chums, and it's the next best thing, any way."

"Good egg!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Kangaroo, as the chums of the School House rushed upon him. "Hands off! I say—Ow!"

"Hands off!" roared Clifton Dane.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Bump, bump!

The exasperated juniors bumped the two Shell fellows, and bumped them hard. It was some compensation for being flooded out of their study, and getting a hundred lines each from Knox, the prefect.

"Ow!"

"Yarooop! Hold on!"

"Give 'em another!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Bump, bump!

Kangaroo and Dane struggled furiously. They dragged Tom Merry and Blake and Lowther over on the floor, and the juniors rolled in a tangled heap, struggling furiously. A voice came along the passage from the head of the stairs. It belonged to Kildare of the Sixth, the captain of St. Jim's.

"Stop that row, you young rascals!" shouted Kildare angrily.

But the juniors were too excited to hear.

"Go it, Tom Merry—go it, deah boys!" shouted Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Bump the wotahs!"

Bump, bump!

Kildare came striding along the passage.

THE PENNY POPULAR—No. 265.

age, his brows wrinkled in an angry frown.

"Stop it!" he shouted.

"Bai Jove! Kildare!"

Tom Merry jumped up, red and panting.

"You young ruffians!" exclaimed the St. Jim's captain. "Stop that row at once! I've a jolly good mind to give you a licking all round!"

"Weally, Kildare—"

"Take two hundred lines each, the lot of you, and bring them to me in my study at bed-time!" said the captain of St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove!"

"I say, Kildare—"

But Kildare was striding away, and he did not listen. The juniors, somewhat dusty and dishevelled, looked at one another in dismay.

"I say, that's too jolly thick!" growled Blake. "That makes three hundred lines each for us!"

"It's wotten!"

"Wait till we see Glyn again!" growled Tom Merry.

And the other fellows shared his sentiments. There was a warm time awaiting the schoolboy inventor when he showed himself in public again.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Great Wheeze.

BERNARD GLYN was not seen again that day until late in the evening. He came down from the box-room at last, after locking the door and carefully placing the key in his pocket. It was evident that he did not mean to run any risk of his invention being disturbed in his absence.

The schoolboy-inventor was looking somewhat fatigued, but very satisfied with himself. When he came into the junior class-room there was a general exclamation.

"There he is!"

"There's the bounder!"

"Collar him!"

Bernard Glyn looked surprised. The Liverpool lad had already forgotten the accident of the flooding of Study No. 6 in the engrossing interest of his invention.

"Hallo! What's the matter?" he exclaimed, as Tom Merry & Co. crowded towards him.

"Bai Jove!"

"You flooded our study!" roared Blake.

"You've got us a heap of lines each!"

"Oh, I'm sorry about the flood!" said Glyn, with a grin. "It was an accident. I'm really sorry! About the lines—they don't matter!"

"Don't matter!" repeated Tom Merry.

"We've got three hundred each!"

"That's all right!"

"Is it all right?" grunted Herries.

"We haven't written them, and we shall most likely have them doubled in the morning."

"Never mind!"

"Never mind!" howled Monty Lowther. "Listen to him! We'll bump him till he's black and blue! Collar the duffer!"

Bernard Glyn backed away.

"It's all right!" he exclaimed hastily.

"Hold on a minute!"

"Wats!"

"Never mind about the lines. I'll do them for you."

"What!"

"I'll do every blessed line for you," said Glyn. "It's all serene—honest Injun!"

"But you can't!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Six of us have got three hundred each; and that's a total of eighteen hundred."

"I can do them. You fellows can do one each, and I'll do the rest."

"To-night?" demanded Blake.

"No; I'm not quite ready yet. To-morrow."

"They'll be doubled by then."

"Never mind."

"Do you mean to say that you can write out three thousand, six hundred lines for us to-morrow?" demanded Dighy.

Bernard Glyn nodded coolly.

"Yes," he answered.

"Rats! You can't do it!"

"I can do it easily."

"How?" demanded a dozen voices.

"I've got an invention—"

Tom Merry started.

"An invention for writing lines!"

"Yes."

"By Jove!"

"Oh, it's all rot!" growled Herries.

"It won't work."

Bernard Glyn laughed.

"You'll see," he replied.

"It's all serene!" grinned Kangaroo. "I'll leave my lines for him. Glyn's inventions generally do work, you know. You remember the dummy he made like Skinnople—it walked, and everybody took it for Skimmey."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaas, wathah! That's quite twee, but—"

"Suppose we let the lines go on accumulating, and the blessed invention doesn't work?" said Monty Lowther suspiciously.

"Impossible! It will work!"

"Have you finished it?"

"Not quite. I'll give it the finishing touches to-morrow," said Bernard Glyn.

"I give you my word it will be all serene."

"That's all very well," growled Blake. "but if the lines are doubled, we sha'n't be able to do them all to-morrow, and that means staying in on Wednesday afternoon to do them. And we've got a footer match with the Grammar School for the half."

"I tell you it's all right."

"We'll give him a chance," said Tom Merry, after a pause. "If the invention works all right, well and good. If it doesn't, we'll give the silly ass the bumping of his life!"

"Good egg!"

"Yaas, wathah! That's all wight!"

And the matter was allowed to rest at that. Upon Bernard Glyn's success as an inventor depended whether he received a record ragging. But the schoolboy inventor's confidence in his powers was evidently strong. He was not in the least disturbed at the prospect.

Kildare looked into the junior Common-room in the School House at bed-time. There was a grim expression on his face.

"Bed-time, you kids!" he said.

"Right-ho, Kildare!"

"I gave lines to six of you," said Kildare. "You were to show them up at bed-time. You have not been to my study, Merry."

"N-no," said Tom Merry.

"Have you done your lines?"

"N-no."

"Very well. They are doubled," said Kildare grimly. "Have you others done your lines?"

"N-no."

"They are all doubled, then, and I shall expect them before afternoon school to-morrow," said Kildare. "If they're not done by then you will have them doubled again, and will be detained all Wednesday afternoon to write them."

"Oh!"

"Now go to bed!"

And the juniors went up to bed. Knox met them in the dormitory passage.



"Have you kids done your lines?" he asked.

"Wathah! not!"

"They are doubled," said Knox. "If they are not handed in before afternoon school to-morrow, I shall report your names to the Form-master for punishment."

"My dear Knox," said Skimpole, of the Shell, blinking through his big spectacles at the prefect. "I must regard that as somewhat excessive, as Kildare has already doubled the lines he imposed. Consider—"

"Hold your tongue, Skimpole!"

Skimpole shook his head. Skimpole was a youth who had studied many things. He could babble for hours about geology, and evolution, and determinism, but he had never learned to hold his tongue. He blinked at Knox.

"My dear Knox, allow me to point out—"

"Shut up!" shouted the prefect.

"That under the circumstances—"

"Take a hundred lines!"

"Indeed, my dear Knox—"

"Two hundred lines!"

"You cannot be serious. You see

"Five hundred lines!"

"My dear—"

"A thousand lines, and show them up before afternoon school to-morrow, or I will cane you!" exclaimed Knox. And he strode away before Skimpole could speak again.

Skimpole blinked round at the chums of the Shell, who were grinning.

"I cannot help regarding that as almost rude of Knox!" he exclaimed. "Besides, a thousand lines is a very large imposition, and, deeply engaged as I am in the study of the more important subject of the evolution of the human race, I cannot possibly find the time to do them."

"Then Knox will find the time to lick you," grinned Kangaroo.

"Under the circumstances, my dear fellow—"

"Unless Glyn comes to the rescue with his patent line-writer," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"Dear me! That is an excellent idea!" exclaimed Skimpole. "My dear Glyn, I will help you to-morrow to finish your invention."

"That you jolly well won't!" said Glyn emphatically. "I don't want the whole blessed thing mucked up."

"My dear Glyn—"

"B-r-r-r!" said the Lancashire junior. And he went to bed, leaving Skimpole blinking.

When Kildare came back to the Shell dormitory to see lights out, Skimpole received another hundred lines for not being in bed, and an additional hundred for trying to argue with Kildare. Then even Skimpole gave it up and turned in.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### Skimpole Helps.

THE next morning Bernard Glyn did not wait for the rising-bell. He was up before the rest of the Shell, and he made his way to the top box-room. When he was engaged upon any of his wonderful ideas, the Lancashire lad was tireless. He was prepared to put in an hour's work before breakfast upon his patent machine.

Skimpole sat up in bed as he went out. He groped for his spectacles, and jammed them upon his nose, and blinked after the Lancashire junior.

"My dear Glyn," he called out, "if you will wait a few moments while I put on my attire, I will accompany you and render you assistance."

"Rats!" said Glyn cheerily. "Stay

where you are! You'll be much more useful if you stay in bed."

"Really, Glyn—"

But Glyn was gone.

Skimpole turned out of bed. He was a very obliging fellow, and he was determined to be useful. Skimpole had rather a turn for mechanics himself, and had a secret belief that he should really have been the principal, not the assistant. He dressed himself, and descended in search of the schoolboy inventor.

Bernard Glyn, at that early hour, when only the early housemaids were up, had not locked the door of his improvised laboratory. Skimpole blinked in through his big spectacles. There was a large table in the middle of the room, and Glyn was at work on a bench at the side. Upon the table there were bottles containing liquids of curious colours, and there were several retorts, and saucers, and basins, and packets of powder. Skimpole blinked curiously round the room. Glyn was very busy, and he had not heard the door open.

"Glyn, my dear fellow—"

Glyn jumped, startled by the sudden sound of a voice. A glass retort dropped from his hand, and was shattered in pieces on the floor.

"You ass!" he roared, turning round.

"Really, Glyn—"

"Buzz off, fathead!"

"But I have come to help you, my dear Glyn," said Skimpole, coming into the study. "It is a Determinist's duty to help other people. Glyn, and you are aware that I am a Determinist."

"You can't help me," growled Glyn. "You haven't sense enough!"

"Ahem! Perhaps you would like me to amuse you with cheerful conversation while you work, then?" suggested Skimpole. "I should be glad to explain to you the first principles of the great science of Determinism, as laid down by Professor Balmycrumpet in his famous work, 'Why This Thinness!' In the first place—"

"Shut up!" roared Glyn.

"Ahem! Perhaps I can mix some of those liquids for you," said Skimpole, blinking at the bottles on the table.

"Let 'em alone, you ass!" said Glyn. "If you mix those powders and the fluids there will be an explosion."

"I hope there is nothing dangerous here, Glyn."

"Yes, there is."

"What is it?"

"A silly ass named Skimpole!" growled Glyn.

It took Skimpole some minutes to realise the force of this remark. He stood silent, thinking it out, and Bernard Glyn went on with his work, and was soon so deep in it that he forgot that Skimpole was in the study.

"What are you going to use this stuff for, Glyn?" he asked presently.

"Making ink."

"Ink?"

"Yes, ass! I shall require a special sort of ink for the line-writer, chump; and I'm going to make it myself, ass!"

"Really, Glyn—"

"Oh, dry up!"

"But you are not going to use the explosive powders to make ink, Glyn?" persisted Skimpole.

"No, fathead! They're for something else."

"I should be very pleased to assist you."

"Oh, bosh! Don't talk; you're interrupting the work."

And Bernard Glyn bent over his bench again. Skimpole blinked at him, and then blinked at the articles on the table.

Skimpole could see no reason whatever why he should not lend his valuable aid in making the ink. He wanted to be of

use; and, besides, he wanted to show Glyn that he was not useless.

It would be really a triumph to have the ink nicely made when Glyn turned his head again. He did not know which fluids and which powders to use; but, after all, he could settle that by trying them all in turn. Skimpole was a genius, and, as is well known, geniuses are not governed by the same considerations as common persons.

So Skimpole started mixing.

Bernard Glyn gave a sudden yell and jumped. There was a terrific explosion in the room.

Bang!

"Xow!" roared Skimpole.

"Great Scott! What—"

"Yarook!"

Skimpole staggered back from the table, his spectacles flying off, his eyebrows singed till hardly a hair was left. He gasped wildly.

"Ow—ow! Oh! Oh, dear! Help!"

"You frightful ass!" roared Glyn.

"You've wasted my powder!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"You—you chump!"

"Good heavens!" Mr. Railton, the

Housemaster of the School House, came

striding to the door of the box-room.

"What has happened? What—"

"You silly fathead!"

"Glyn!"

Bernard Glyn jumped.

"I—I beg your pardon, sir! I—I

wasn't speaking to you, sir."

"I should hope not," said Mr. Railton

severely.

"I—I was speaking to Skimpole, sir."

"Goodness gracious! What has hap-

pened to the boy?" exclaimed the House-

master.

"He's been meddling with my stuff,

and it's gone off," said Bernard

Glyn. "He's all right, sir; he's only

lost his spectacles and his eyebrows!"

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"Glyn, you should not have such dan-

gerous stuff about. I forbid you to

purchase any more. And you will take

five hundred lines for this offence!"

said Mr. Railton sternly.

Bernard Glyn chuckled. He could not

help it. Considering the invention upon

which he was engaged, the imposition

struck him as comical. Mr. Railton

looked at him very sternly.

"Glyn, how dare you laugh when I

give you lines! Take a thousand lines,

instead of five hundred!" he exclaimed.

"I'm sorry, sir!" said Glyn meekly.

"Yes, sir. Certainly, sir!"

Mr. Railton strode away. Skimpole

recovered his spectacles, and placed them

on his nose, and blinked at Glyn through

the empty spaces where the lenses had

been.

"I refuse to help you any more,

Glyn!" he said.

"Hurrah!"

"I regard you as a dangerous person."

"Good!" said Glyn. "Now, travel!"

And Skimpole travelled.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

##### Quite a Success.

FIGGINS, of the New House,

tramped in the quadrangle with a

moodily brood that morning. Kerr

and Wynn, who were with him,

looked equally moody. The three

Fourth-Formers evidently had something

on their minds. As a rule, Figgins

looked cheerful enough; and as for Fatty

Wynn, he was always sunny, unless some-

thing had gone wrong with the commis-

sariat. Kerr was a cheerful fellow, too,

as a rule. But the faces of the chums of

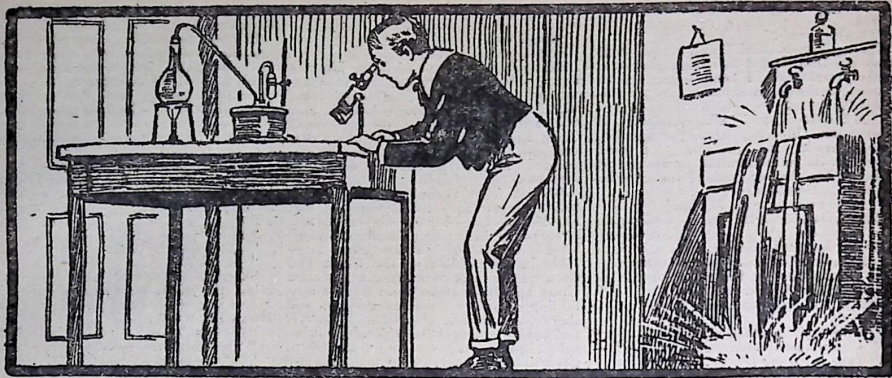
the New House were deeply clouded now,

as they tramped in the quadrangle that

bright, keen morning.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 255.





The schoolboy inventor worked away at his invention, utterly unconscious of the fact that the water from the tap was overflowing.

"It's rotten!" said Figgins, breaking a long silence.

"Beastly!" agreed Kerr.

"It may muck up the footer match to-morrow with the Grammar cads," said Ratty Wynn.

Figgins snorted in an exasperated way. "Between Monteith and old Ratty life isn't worth living in the New House!" he exclaimed. "We shall have to slog every spare minute to-day over those blessed lines, or we shall be done in for the half to-morrow."

"Hallo!" exclaimed a cheery voice, as Jack Blake came by, on the track of an elusive footer. "Wherefore those worried looks, my sons?"

Figgins grunted. He was greatly inclined to bump Blake, as a relief for his feelings. But peace was established between the two Houses of St. Jim's just now. It had been tacitly agreed that the usual rivalry was "off" till after the football match with Gordon Gay & Co., of the Grammar School. On that occasion the juniors of both House were to play up for the whole school shoulder to shoulder, as they always did for the school.

"Oh, it's Ratty!" said Kerr. "He's been at it again! We're swamped in lines."

"And Monteith," said Figgins. "He's still in a rotten temper; he's been like it for weeks. He's lalled out lines in chunks."

"Lines!" said Blake.

"Yes. We've got a thousand each altogether," said Figgins dolorously.

"What do you think of that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Figgins & Co. stared at Blake wrathfully.

"What are you cackling at, you bouncer?" exclaimed Figgins angrily. "There's nothing funny in getting a thousand lines each, I suppose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you cackling ass—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Blake.

"Oh, collar him!" exclaimed Kerr.

Blake backed away, holding up his hand.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed. "It's all right! Pax! Look here, I couldn't help laughing. I know how you can do the bouncers in the eye."

"Going to offer to write the lines out for us?" asked Kerr sarcastically.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.

"Exactly!" said Blake coolly.

"What!"

"It's all serene. Glyn's made an invention," Blake explained.

"Blow Glyn! What's that got to do with it?" growled Figgins.

"Lots!" said Blake cheerfully.

"He's invented a dodge for writing out lines by the hundred. It doesn't matter how many; he can do them."

"Seen it at work?" asked Kerr dubiously.

"Not yet. But I'm sure it's all right. You know his wheezes always work." Blake said. "We've promised him a big bumping if it doesn't. But he generally does the things he begins on, you know. You know he's getting money now from a patent bowler he invented. We're going to use some of them here when the cricket begins. I'm feeling pretty certain that it's all right, and we've all got a heap of lines piled up for Glyn to grind off on his machine."

Figgins chuckled.

"My hat! It would be ripping if it worked!" he said.

"What-ho!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Well, I think it will work," said Blake. "We shall all look pretty blue if it doesn't, when the Grammarians come over to-morrow afternoon. Gordon Gay's coming over on his bike to-day to fix up about the match, too."

The breakfast-bell rang, and Blake scudded back to the School House. Figgins & Co. returned to their own House for breakfast, looking considerably less clouded. They, too, had great faith in the genius of the Lancashire junior, and they hoped for the best.

Bernard Glyn had just come down from his laboratory when the juniors of the School House came into breakfast. Blake tapped him on the shoulder.

"Finished it?" he asked.

"Yes, it's done! Skimpole's been helping me, but I managed to get it finished all the same, ink and all. It's ready for bizney immediately after morning school."

"Oh, good!"

"I shall want a specimen line of the handwriting, you know, for each imposition," the Lancashire lad explained, "that's all. Then the machine reproduces it ad lib. It writes Latin up to Cicero's mark."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a jolly wonderful thing, if it works," said Tom Merry.

"Oh, it will work all right!" said Glyn confidently. "I simply have to turn the handle, and the lines roll out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Figgins & Co. have a thousand each," said Blake. "I've told them you'll see them through."

Bernard Glyn laughed.

"The more the merrier," he said.

"I suppose it's quick work?" asked Manners.

"Oh, yes; I shall get the whole lot done in half an hour!"

"Phew!"

The juniors went into breakfast, feeling very excited and considerably elated. Most of them, by this time, had complete faith in Glyn's invention. And a blissful prospect was opening before them. With such a machine at their command, they would have hitherto undreamt of liberties. The ambition of every junior—the ambition to "cheek the prefects" could be indulged in almost without limit. For they could easily deal with any impositions that were imposed. Even Knox would have his teeth drawn now, so to speak; he could shower lines upon them, and they would not mind at all.

Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, glanced severely at Bernard Glyn, as the schoolboy inventor sat down at the breakfast-table.

"Glyn, your hands are not clean!"

Glyn glanced at his hands. He had come down in a hurry from his laboratory, and there were many stains on his hands from his latest labours in the manufacture of a suitable ink for the line-writing machine.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said. "I've been making ink."

"Go and wash them immediately, Glyn, and take a hundred lines!" rapped out Mr. Linton.

"With pleasure, sir," said Glyn un-ruffled.

Mr. Linton looked at him angrily.

"Five hundred lines, Glyn!"

"Certainly, sir!"

And he left the table quite cheerfully. If Mr. Linton had said five thousand lines, it would not have troubled the Lancashire lad very much.

The juniors were in a state of suppressed excitement in morning school.



Figgins whispered to Blake in the Fourth Form-room, asking further particulars of Glyn's "latest." Blake whispered back, and both of them received impositions from Mr. Lathom, the Form-master. But they did not mind.

In their present mood, the juniors were likely to reap quite a harvest of lines—and they did! The fellows in the Fourth Form and the Shell were heavily visited with imposts that morning, and they took them with unusual placidity. Neither Mr. Lathom nor Mr. Linton could quite understand it.

After morning school, the "lined" juniors gathered round Bernard Glyn in the passage. The Lancashire junior was serenely confident.

"Get a line each of your list, and come up to the lab," he said.

And the juniors responded enthusiastically:

"What-ho!"

Ten minutes later there was a crowd in the lab, and anybody passing outside the door might have heard a faint whirring, grinding sound, punctuated with subdued chuckles.

**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.  
Many Lines!**

**K**ILDARE was in his study after dinner that day, with a slight frown upon his brow. He was waiting for the juniors to come in with their impositions. As a matter of fact, the St. Jim's captain was feeling that he had been a little too severe, and he did not want to run any risk of spoiling the junior footer match on the morrow afternoon. But, like a celebrated statesman, what he had said he had said, and there was no getting away from it. He hoped that Tom Merry and Co. would show up the lines by the time they had been ordered to do so, and save further trouble.

The lines had to be shown up before afternoon school, or it would be too late. It wanted twenty minutes to the hour, when there was a tramp of feet in the passage. Kildare smiled slightly as a knock came at his door.

"Come in!" he called out.

The door opened. Tom Merry and Lowther, Blake and Digby, Herries and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came in in a crowd. Each of them had a bundle of papers in his hand.

"Please we've brought the lines, Kildare," said the six juniors together, in a sing-song voice.

"Put them on my table," said Kildare.

The juniors laid them down.

"All here?" asked Kildare suspiciously.

"Yes, you can count 'em if you like," said Monty Lowther blandly.

Kildare smiled slightly. He was not likely to count up eighteen hundred lines. But he knew how many each page should contain, and he counted the pages.

The number was correct. He glanced over the handwriting. It was much neater and cleaner than was usually the case with junior impositions.

"All right?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yes," said Kildare. "You can go!"

"Oh, good!"

The juniors walked out of the study, and Tom Merry drew the door shut.

In the passage the juniors grinned at one another.

"My hat!" said Blake, with a deep breath. "It's worked like a charm!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hear us grin!" said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.

Kildare's door reopened. The captain of St. Jim's looked out suddenly into the passage. The laughter of the juniors died suddenly away.

"Well," said Kildare grimly, "what's the joke?"

The juniors looked at him sheepishly.

"J-j-joke!" repeated Blake.

"J-joke, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Kildare looked at them suspiciously.

"Clear off!" he said abruptly.

"Certainly, deah boy!"

Kildare went back into his study, and the juniors hurried out of the Sixth Form passage. Kildare picked up the imposts on his table, and looked at them again. He had not been taken in. The lines were all there. All was plain sailing.

There was a knock at his door, and he rapped out "Come in!"

Kangaroo and Clifton Dane of the Shell entered, with lines in their hands.

"We've brought our lines, Kildare," Kildare took them.

"Very well," he said shortly.

The two Shell fellows turned to the door.

"I suppose you've bucked up to get these done, so as not to be detained to-morrow afternoon?" said the St. Jim's captain.

"Well, we were feeling a bit nervous about the footer match with the Grammar School," said Kangaroo. "You see—"

"I see. Get out!"

The chums of the Shell got out.

Five minutes later there was a timid tap at the door, and Skimpole of the Shell came in. He had quite a sheaf of papers in his hand.

He blinked at Kildare through his big spectacles, and laid the papers on the table. The St. Jim's captain glanced at them in surprise.

"I gave you only a hundred lines, Skimpole," he said. "How on earth many have you got there?"

"Eleven hundred, Kildare. Knox gave me a thousand last night."

"What rot!" muttered Kildare.



Water came sweeping down on the study table, and fragments of plaster came with it. "What on earth can it be?" exclaimed Blake in amazement.



"He told me the lines were to be brought to you, as he was going out," Skimpole explained. "You will find one thousand one hundred lines there, Kildare."

"Very well."

"Under the circumstances—"

"You can go!"

"Certainly, Kildare; but I consider—"

"Get out!" rapped the captain of St. Jim's crossly. And Skimpole got out.

Kildare looked very much puzzled. After a little reflection, he picked up some of the manuscripts, and walked along to Mr. Railton's study with them.

The School Housemaster greeted him with a cheery nod.

"What have you got there, Kildare?"

"Lines, sir."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Railton, looking somewhat surprised.

"Yes, sir. The juniors have been getting an extraordinary number of lines lately," said Kildare, "and, what is more extraordinary still, they have written them out, and brought them in to time. I suppose they're all right?"

Mr. Railton glanced at the lines.

"Certainly," he said. "They seem to be written even more carefully than usual, too."

There was a knock at the door.

"Come in!" called out Mr. Railton.

Bernard Glyn entered the study.

ginning to end. Each junior has evidently written out his own lines without assistance."

"Yes; but it seems queer," said Kildare.

And he retired from the study. He paused outside Mr. Lathom's door. Five or six juniors were inside the study, and Kildare recognised Blake and Digby through the half-open doorway. He could not help hearing what they were saying.

"Please, we've brought our lines, sir!"

"Very well," said little Mr. Lathom, in his kind way. "Pray lay them on my desk. You may go."

Kildare walked on, feeling very much puzzled. There had been more lines in the Fourth Form, evidently, and they had been faithfully written out, in addition to the many lines he had already seen.

Struck by a sudden thought, the captain of St. Jim's turned his steps in the direction of Mr. Linton's study. He was not surprised to see Tom Merry, Manners, Glyn, and two or three more Shell fellows inside the study, with papers in their hands. He heard Monty Lowther's bland tones.

"Please, we've brought our lines, sir!"

Kildare almost gasped.

"Well, this beats me!" he muttered.

He walked away very much puzzled. He did not return to his study, but went

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Quite Triumphant!

TOM MERRY grinned a cheerful grin as he came out of the Shell Form-room after lessons that afternoon. He had earned a hundred lines during lessons. But they did not weigh upon his mind. With the aid of Glyn's new invention, they would be knocked off in the course of five minutes or so.

Monty Lowther and Manners had hundred lines each, and Kangaroo had fifty. Never had Mr. Linton known his pupils to accept impositions with such equanimity, and he was puzzled.

The Fourth Form were out of their class-room, and Blake greeted the Terrible Three in the passage with a cheerful grin.

"Lines?" he asked.

"Yes, rather. A hundred each," said Tom Merry laughing.

"I've got fifty!" said Blake. "Gussy has scored a hundred!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Herries and Dig fifty each, and Reilly a hundred!" grinned Blake. "Where's Glyn?"

"Here I am!" said Bernard Glyn cheerfully.

"Good! We've got to show up the lines by eight!"

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"Please, I've done my lines, sir," he said, starting a little at the sight of the captain of St. Jim's.

"Very well. Give them to me," said Mr. Railton.

He glanced at the lines.

"Very good, Glyn," he said. "You may go."

"Thank you, sir!" said Glyn demurely, and he quitted the study.

Both the Housemaster and the school captain looked curiously at the paper he had brought in.

"My hat!" ejaculated Kildare. "I—I mean, it's jolly surprising, sir! I never knew the juniors turn up with their lines to time like this before."

"I suppose they are afraid of being detained for the holiday to-morrow," said Mr. Railton. "I believe the Junior Eleven is playing the Grammar School team."

"Yes, I suppose that's it," said Kildare.

"The lines are certainly genuine," said Mr. Railton. "You have only to look at them. I know it is a common practice for the boys to help one another with their lines; but that has certainly not been done in this case. You see, here is Blake's handwriting—it is the same all through—his hand, exactly. Here is D'Arcy's—a very good and elegant hand—it is the same from be-

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.

out into the quadrangle. It was close upon time for afternoon school, and he met Monteith, the head prefect of the New House, as the latter came over for afternoon classes when the bell rang.

"Just a minute, Monteith!" said Kildare.

Monteith nodded, and paused.

"I believe some of the juniors in your House have had rather heavy impots lately," said Kildare.

Monteith frowned.

"I don't see what that has to do—" he began.

"With me?" said Kildare, with a nod. "Quite so. I was only asking out of curiosity, not because it's my business."

"Oh!" said Monteith. "Yes, Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn had a thousand lines each to-day—half from me and half from Mr. Ratcliff. Why?"

"Have they done them?"

"Yes."

"That's all!" said Kildare. "I wondered, that's all!"

And he nodded, and walked away, leaving Monteith considerably perplexed. But Monteith was not so perplexed as Kildare himself was. The captain of St. Jim's was amazed. It had been the same in both houses, then. It was not only Tom Merry & Co. who had been seized with that wonderful fit of industry.

Kildare simply could not understand it!

"Show them up before six, if you like!" grinned the Lancashire lad.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's go up and see 'em ground out!" said Herries.

And all the juniors who had lines—including Figgins & Co. of the New House—flocked up to the Lancashire lad's laboratory over the Fourth-form study.

Bernard Glyn's machine was ready for use. It was a curious-looking contrivance, and the juniors, though they had already seen it at work, watched it with much interest as the Lancashire lad fed in the paper, and turned the long handle at the side.

It was certainly a marvellous contrivance. It required only a line done by the supposed writer of the lines, and the machine reproduced ad lib.

Arthur Augustus jammed his monocle into his eye, and watched the machine at work, with the steady hand of the inventor on the handle.

"Bai Jove! It's wippin'!" the swell of St. Jim's ejaculated. "I should weally nevah have thought of anythin' of that sort myself, you know."

"Go hon!" grinned Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"It's splendid!" said Kerr. "It will be a lot of use to us, now that Monteith has taken to lading out lines so liberally. You should have seen his chivvy when



we look in our lines this afternoon. He was hoping to have an excuse for detaining us to-morrow afternoon."

"The wotah!" said Arthur Augustus. "There's your little lot, Gussy!" said Bernard Glyn. "You will notice that I've improved upon the writing with the machine."

"Weally, Glyn——"  
"Kildare was looking like a chap in a dream when he got our lines!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "He couldn't make it out."

"He never can make out your lines!" said Monty Lowther.

"Rats! We might get a few hundred lines done, to keep in stock on this blessed machine, in case it busts," said Blako thoughtfully.

"It won't bust!" said Bernard Glyn confidently. "It's all right—all wood and a yard wide! Only we shall have to keep the secret. Mellish or Levison would give the game away to the prefects, if they knew."

"Better lock up the machine in the study when we go to bed," said Tom Merry. "It won't be safe up here. Anybody has a right to enter the box-room."

"What-ho!" said Kangaroo.

And when the lines were finished the machine was enclosed in its cover, and the juniors carried it down to Bernard Glyn's study, the end study in the Shell passage. And when it was deposited there, the door was locked on the outside, and Glyn deposited the key safely in his pocket.

The juniors had been ordered to show up their lines before eight o'clock. Quite early they brought them in to their Form masters.

Mr. Lathom and Mr. Linton were surprised. But the lines were excellently written, and they could not complain. The juniors departed in triumph, and in the passage they hugged themselves with glee. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther celebrated the triumph of genius with an extra special tea in the study, to which five or six of the other fellows came.

They were in the midst of it when the captain of the Grammar School junior eleven arrived, with a couple of other Grammarians, to settle the final details of the football match for the morrow afternoon.

Gordon Gay, Frank Monk, and Carboy were heartily greeted as they came into Tom Merry's study. The two schools—the junior portions of them, at all events—were generally at war. But on the occasion of football matches they sometimes suspended warfare, though a footer match between the two schools had

once been known to finish up in a free fight.

But the Lancashire lad's invention had thrown Tom Merry & Co. into such high good humour that they could cheerfully have hugged the Grammarians.

"You fellows seem to be specially jolly just now," Gordon Gay remarked, as he accepted a place at the tea table, and a cup of tea.

Tom Merry laughed. "We've got good reason," he replied. "Without being personal, Gay, old man, I think we've got a peg or two ahead of the Grammar School this time."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Rats!" said Gordon Gay cheerfully. "What have you done? Got a new dodge to save yourselves from being licked in the match to-morrow?"

"Weally, Gay——"

"Oh, we shall win the match as usual," said Tom Merry airily. "It's not that. But we've got a big score over masters and prefects."

"Knocking them hollow!" said Blako, with a grin.

The Grammarians were interested at once. They could thoroughly sympathise with anybody who scored over the natural enemies of youth—masters and prefects.

"Go ahead!" said Frank Monk.

"What's the wheeze?"

"A new invention of Glyn's," said Tom Merry. "A patent line-writer!"

"A patent which?" ejaculated Carboy.

"Well, it isn't exactly patent, but it ought to be," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"You see, the invention is the sort of thing that requires to be kept secret.

But if it could be patented and sold cheap, it would come as a boon and a blessing to thousands of schoolboys.

There's nothing like it."

"Nothin', deah boy!"

"Let's have a look at it!" said Monk.

"Come into my study after tea, and I'll show you the thing at work," said Bernard Glyn.

"What-ho!" said Gordon Gay.

The Grammarians were evidently thinking about the invention over tea. They laughed aporously at Tom Merry's description of the lines taken in to Mr. Railton and Mr. Lathom and Kildare. It was a joke that they could understand and appreciate.

Over tea the details of the footer match were settled. Frank Monk and Gordon Gay promised the Saints the licking of their lives, and Tom Merry promised them a record walloping, and both sides intended to do the best they could to keep their word.

But keen as the Grammarians undoubtedly were over the football match fixed for the morrow afternoon, it was evident that just at present the patent line-writer was occupying most of their thoughts.

As soon as tea was over, they accompanied the juniors to Bernard Glyn's study. The Lancashire lad lifted the cover of the line-writing machine with a very impressive air.

"There you are!" he exclaimed. The chums of the Grammar School looked at the wonderful machine with great interest.

"And does it really write out lines?" asked Carboy, with a slight touch of doubt in his tones.

"Write a line on a sheet and give it to me, and I'll show you!" said Glyn.

"Good!"

Carboy wrote a line, and handed the sheet to Bernard Glyn.

The Lancashire lad inserted it into the machine, and then manipulated the handle. The Grammarians watched him in amazement.

In a minute Glyn handed Carboy a page neatly written out.

"There you are!"

"My hat!" ejaculated Gordon Gay.

"What do you think of it, deah boys?" asked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I regard it as amazin' myself!"

"Wonderful!" said Frank Monk.

"Yes, rather!"

"We've turned in thousands of lines, and we're going to turn in a few thousand more," grinned Blako.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gordon Gay's eyes twinkled.

"I guess we should like a machine like that at the Grammar School!" he remarked. "When Hake, our prefect, hands out lines—which he's always doing—it would be ripping to be able to rip them off in a few minutes on a machine. But you've got all the brains at St. Jim's."

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy innocently.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gordon Gay & Co.

And then the Grammarians took their leave. Gordon Gay's eyes were twinkling as he mounted his bicycle. The sight of the patent line-writer seemed to have put a new idea into the head of the Grammarian. What his idea was is another story, and cannot be told here.

"THE END

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## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Bulstrode Takes His Medicine.

"HURRAH!"

It was Bob Cherry, of the Remove, who gave utterance to that shout, which rang through the passages far and wide, and was heard over half the extent of Greyfriars.

Bob Cherry had glanced up at the notice-board in the hall, to see if there was anything new in the football line, and the sight of a notice in the Head's handwriting had brought forth that formidable cheer.

The Head's little notices did not generally evoke enthusiasm. But this was a special occasion. Bob Cherry was the first to see this particular notice, but his "Hurrah!" brought a crowd to the spot, and there was a general shout.

"Hip, pip—"

"Hurrah!"

"Here, cheese it!" said Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove. "Not so much row, you know. It's all right for us, but—"

"Oh, rats!" said Bulstrode. "Why shouldn't we cheer if we like? Hurrah!"

"Hip, pip!"

Wharton frowned. "I wasn't thinking of the row, but the chap principally concerned. If he hears us yelling like this—"

"Serve him right! Hurrah!"

"Shut up! Here he comes!"

"Hurrah!" shouted Bulstrode defiantly. "Hip, pip, hurrah!"

Wharton set his lips. But he could not silence Bulstrode just then. A pleasant-looking gentleman was coming along the passage, and the noise made by the enthusiastic juniors had evidently attracted his attention, for he stopped and looked at them.

It was Mr. Chesham, the temporary master of the Remove at Greyfriars.

Mr. Quelch, the Remove-master, had had to leave Greyfriars for a time on account of his health, and Mr. Chesham had taken his place. Mr. Quelch had returned to the school too early, with the result that he had been compelled to go away again. On each occasion Mr. Chesham had stepped into the breach, but his attempts to control the Removites had not met with a great deal of success on either occasion.

The Remove—the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars—were not an easy form to handle, and Mr. Chesham was the least likely of all men to succeed with them. He was given to fancying himself, and everybody else, ill, and to prescribing weird and wonderful remedies for the imaginary ailments; and if the Remove hated anything, they hated medicines and laying up.

Mr. Chesham was good-natured and kind, but he did not understand boys. He meant well; but good intentions were not quite enough.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.

The group of juniors standing in front of the notice-board grinned as they saw him stop and look at them, and Bulstrode chuckled audibly.

"Give him a rouser!" he muttered.

"Shut up!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"Don't be a cad!"

"Why, you were the first to yell when you saw the notice!"

"Yes; but Chesham wasn't in hearing then."

"All the better if he's in hearing. It will show him what we think of him."

"Don't be a pig!" muttered Wharton.

"He's going for good to-night. Can't you be decently civilised for a bit, Bulstrode?"

"Oh, rats! Give him a cheer!"

"Shut up!"

"Hurrah!" roared Bulstrode. "Hip, pip!"

Mr. Chesham came up, looking somewhat curious.

"Dear me!" he remarked. "There must be a very interesting notice on the board. Please allow me to see it."

"Certainly, sir!" said Bulstrode, making room. "It's a notice from the Head, sir."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir. We're jolly glad to see it!"

"Ah! Please let me look."

Mr. Chesham glanced at the notice on the board. Then a dark shade overspread his face.

The notice which had called forth the cheers of the Removites ran as follows:

"Mr. Quelch will resume his duties permanently at Greyfriars to-day at afternoon school."

"J. LOCKE, Headmaster."

It was short, but very sweet.

Mr. Quelch was a Tartar sometimes. He ruled the Remove with an iron hand—the only way they could be ruled—and they knew it.

But there was no nonsense about him. He had never been fussy. He did not bother his head about matters that did not concern him. If a fellow had a cold, he sent him into the sanitorium; but he did not trouble to be always poking his nose, as Bob Cherry expressed it, into a fellow's chest, and asking questions about the state of his lungs and his heart.

Harry Wharton hardly dared to look at Mr. Chesham's face as he read the notice.

The gladness of the Remove at the promised return of their old Form-master was natural enough, but such a demonstration as this was an insult to Mr. Chesham.

Bulstrode fully intended it to be taken as one. He had suffered as much as anybody from the attentions of the faddist Form-master, and he wanted to get his own back a little.

Mr. Chesham frowned as he read the notice.

"Ah! You are pleased with Mr. Quelch's return?" he remarked.

"Yes, sir," said Wharton, at whom Mr. Chesham was looking as he made the remark.

"Very pleased, sir!" said Bulstrode. "We all like Quelch—ahem!—Mr. Quelch, I mean. We all respect him, sir."

Bulstrode placed an emphasis on the word "him" that made the remark utterly insolent, but Mr. Chesham did not appear to notice it.

"Well, I'm glad you are pleased," he remarked. "I am glad to see you so attached to your master. I hope I have made you like me during my stay here, though we have not been able to agree always upon all matters. I hope to leave you all in better health when I go than you were when I came."

"Thank you, sir," said Harry. "We're all right."

"I wish I could think so. Bulstrode does not appear to me to be all right," said Mr. Chesham, looking attentively at the bully of the Remove. "You were shouting very loudly just now, Bulstrode."

"Yes, sir."

"Did you find that it placed any strain on your chest in any way?"

"No, sir!" said Bulstrode hastily.

"Ah! You are quite sure?"

"Quite sure, sir."

"One cannot be too sure," said Mr. Chesham, with a thoughtful shake of the head. "You would be better for taking precautions against any strain. A dose of the—"

"Oh, no, sir! I—"

"A dose," went on Mr. Chesham, unheeding, "of the Golden Gargle for the Little Larynxes would be of great assistance to you."

"Oh, no; not at all, sir!"

"I think you must allow me to know best on this subject, Bulstrode. Pray follow me to my study."

"If you please, sir—"

"That will do. Follow me."

Mr. Chesham stalked away, Bulstrode, casting a savage look at the grinning Removites, reluctantly followed him.

As they went down the passage the Remove bully consoled himself by clenching his fists and brandishing them behind Mr. Chesham's back, as an indication of what he would like to do if he dared.

The Form-master looked round suddenly, and caught him with his clenched fists in the air.

"My hat!" murmured Harry Wharton.

The juniors looked on open-mouthed. Bulstrode, stricken with dismay, remained petrified, his fists still in the air.

"Dear me! What is the meaning of that peculiar attitude, Bulstrode?" asked Mr. Chesham in his soft voice.

"I—I—I—"



"I did not know that you were afflicted with stammering, Bulstrode."

"Dear me! Is that a peculiar form of exercise, or what?"

"I—I was doing some gymnastics, sir," gasped Bulstrode.

"A very peculiar moment to choose for doing gymnastics, Bulstrode. Kindly follow me to my study without any further gymnastics."

And Bulstrode followed Mr. Chesham in. Some of the juniors waited for him to come out. It was not a caning he was to have, though he certainly deserved one. But his ordeal would be probably be worse than a caning.

It was five minutes before Bulstrode came out, and when he came out his face was pale, and he was gasping like a fish. He glared at the juniors and rushed past them.

"My hat!" said Nugent. "He's had it bad. What was it like, Bulstrode?"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Nice?"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Did you like it?"

"Groo! Gerrooh!"

And with that intelligent and intelligible reply Bulstrode dashed off to the nearest bath-room, and for the next five minutes he was busily engaged in washing out his mouth under the tap.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Good Wheeze.

BOB CHERRY looked into Study No. 1 in the Remove passage. Bob did not belong to No. 1 now, having been moved up the passage to No. 13, which he shared with Mark Linley and Wun Lung, the Chinese junior. Between the two ends of the passage there was a great deal of rivalry; and when Bob Cherry looked in at his old quarters a row was as often as not the result.

But just now Bob was on a peaceful errand.

"Wharton, old man—"

But Harry Wharton was not there. The only tenant of the study was a fat junior with a large pair of spectacles—Billy Bunter, generally called the Owl. He blinked at Bob Cherry.

"I say, Cherry—"

"Where's Wharton?"

"I think he's gone down to the footer with Nugent and Brown. He seems to be chumming up a lot with that chap Brown from New Zealand," said Billy Bunter. "I offered to take Brown up, but he wasn't even civil about it."

Bob Cherry laughed, and, leaving the study, went down to the football-field, where he found most of the Remove, filling in the time before afternoon school. He called to Harry Wharton, but the captain of the Remove did not hear or heed.

He was engaged in a desperate struggle with Tom Brown, the New Zealander, and Frank Nugent for the possession of a football, and a crowd of juniors were looking on and cheering.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, approaching the three combating juniors. "I want to speak to you, Wharton!"

"On the ball, Browney!"

"Have it out, Wharton!"

"Buck up, Nugent!"

"Go it!"

"Wharton, I want to speak to you!"

"Go it—go it!"

Tom Brown hooked the ball away from Nugent, and ran with it; but Wharton was on it like a shot. He brought it round, and Nugent rushed at him, and Wharton kicked clear—or, rather, he

would have kicked clear if Bob Cherry hadn't been there.

But Bob was there.

He was directly in the path of the ball, and before he knew it was coming, he had stopped it with his nose.

There was a terrific biff, and a bump, as Bob Cherry sat down suddenly and violently.

The juniors roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat! I—ow—what was it?"

"Something hit me on the nose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling asses! I'm hurt!" Bob Cherry put his hand to his nose, which felt as if it had swollen to double its usual size, and was certainly turning of a fiery red. "Ow! Who biffed that footer at me?"

"Awfully sorry, old chap!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "What did you come so close for? I didn't see you."

"You ass!"

"Sorry! Ha, ha, ha!"

him as he comes into the Form-room?" suggested Nugent. "That would be effective."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"Or I would play a triumphal march on my mouth-organ," said Nugent more seriously. "I could strike up 'See the Conquering Hero comes,' and—"

"You're jolly well not going to make Quelch an excuse for inflicting that mouth-organ on us!" said Skinner.

"Look here—"

"I don't care! I'm agreeable to anything but the mouth-organ," said Skinner. "I appeal to the fellows!"

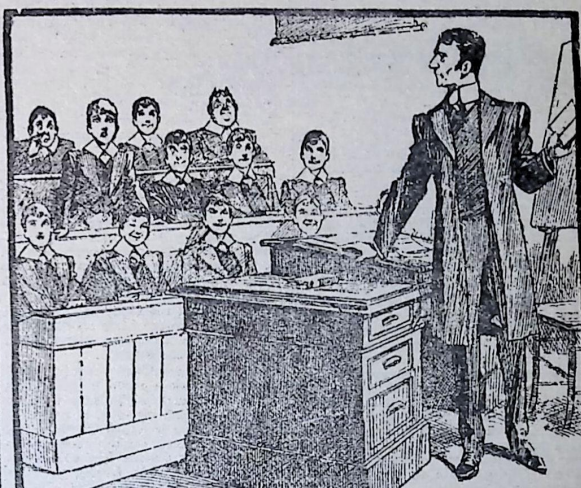
"What-ho!" said a dozen voices. "Besides, it wouldn't be fair on Quelch."

Nugent snorted.

"What price illuminating the classroom with signs of 'WELCOME HOME!' and coloured paper chains?" suggested Russell.

"Rotten!" was the general verdict.

"I've got an idea," Bob Cherry remarked. "I don't want to put it forward if anybody else has a better one, though."



"Under the auspicious circumstances of your return—" began Bob Cherry. Mr. Quelch stared. "Are you joking, Cherry?" he asked sternly.

"Yes, you look sorry!" growled Bob Cherry, getting upon his feet. "Nice sort of a boko I shall have for some time to come."

"Well, if a chap will shove his nose in the way of a football—" began Nugent, in an argumentative tone.

"Br-r-r!" said Bob Cherry, rubbing his nose. "I came here to speak to you chaps. It occurs to me that as Quelch is returning for good this afternoon, we ought to get up a welcome for him."

"Good wheeze!" said Harry Wharton; and Hureco Janset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, added, in his peculiar English, that the wheeziness of the suggestion was terrific.

"Well, what shall we do?" asked Bob. "There isn't much time. If he's going to take afternoon classes it won't be long before he is at Greyfriars, so we can't go down and meet the train. Besides, that would be no good."

"Suppose we all rush at him and hug

"Fire away!"

"Get it off your chest!"

"And buck up, my worthy chum, for the return of the august Quelch is at hand, and the procrastinationfulness is the timely thief," urged the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Well, I was thinking of a little speech in the class-room," said Bob Cherry, colouring a little. "I shouldn't mind making the speech—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you sniggering at, Snoop?" "Oh, nothing!" said Snoop. "It strikes me you've got the speech cut and dried already, that's all. He, he, he!"

"Something else will strike you if I have any more of your he, he, he!" growled Bob Cherry. "If you think that sounds pretty, you are making a ghastly mistake. Look here, you chaps, do you think a speech is a good wheeze?"



"Jolly good!" said Wharton, with a smile.

"If anybody else thinks he could make a better speech than I could, I'm willing to resign in his favour," said Bob Cherry, glaring at the grinning juniors.

"Not a bit of it, dear boy."

"Go ahead!"

"Let's have a rehearsal of it now, look you," said Morgan.

"Hurrah! Rehearse, Bob!"

"Rats! I'm not going to be such a giddy ass!" grunted Bob. "I haven't quite finished the speech yet, either. I've just sketched it out, that's all. My idea is that when Quelch comes into the class-room, we're all there first, and we all rise to our feet, and I make the speech of welcome."

"Good!"

"The goodness is terrific!"

"Then Quelch will make a handsome reply, I expect, and we shall give him a cheer. He may be so pleased that he'll let us off early this afternoon. You never know."

"My hat! What a head you've got, Bob!"

"Well, I think of these things," said Bob Cherry modestly. "One thing's jolly certain, the speech-making will take up some time out of the first lesson, so we shall be much the gainers, at any rate."

"Hurrah!"

"It's settled, then?"

"Rather!"

"Then mind you're all in the class-room five minutes early, so as to be in order, and ready to rise to the occasion when Quelch enters."

"Agreed!"

And, that important matter having been settled, Bob Cherry walked off to give the finishing touches to his speech.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Bob Cherry's Speech.

FIVE minutes before the usual time, the Remove marched into their class-room, and took their seats.

Mr. Chesham was gone; they had seen him drive off to the station, and though no one could be supposed to be sorry that he had gone for good, the Form had maintained a respectful silence.

Now that Mr. Chesham was gone, and the Form were prepared to receive their old Form-master back again, and with some difficulty the whole Form had been persuaded to get into their places five minutes early.

The first they would see of Mr. Quelch after his return would be when he entered the room to take them for afternoon lessons; and even Bulstrode agreed that it was a good "dodge" to take up some of the time of first lesson in speech-making and cheering.

Bob Cherry had finished his speech—not to his satisfaction; but, then, great artists never are satisfied with their work.

He confided to Wharton that it was pretty good, though not so good as he might have made it with longer notice, and Harry assured him that he had no doubt it was first chop.

Bob had the speech written out in big round hand, on a sheet of foolscap under his desk, and while the class waited for Mr. Quelch to come in, he frequently consulted it, refreshing his memory on various points.

Bob Cherry hadn't a very good memory for this sort of thing, but he hoped to be able to take surreptitious glances at the speech while he was making it, and to be able to keep up the thread of his discourse.

There was a buzz of voices in the room, and Bob Cherry looked round irritably at the muttering juniors.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 255.

"Here, shut up, some of you!" he said. "How the dickens am I to get this speech off by heart while you're jawing?"

"Blessed if I know," said Skinner.

"Ask us another."

"Ring off, you magpie!"

"Oh, blow your old speech!" said Bulstrode. "It's beginning to get on my nerves. The only important thing is to spin it out as long as Quelch will stand it."

"Look here, Bulstrode—"

"Then we'll fill up as much time as possible cheering," said Bulstrode. "We may be able to cut half the Latin lesson that way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The ha-ha-hafulness is terrific!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur. "It is a rippingful wheeze of our worthy chum Cherry."

"This speech is going to be a success," said Bob, glaring at Bulstrode. "You chattering asses shut up while I get it off!"

"Rats!"

"Mind, you've all got to rise as Quelch comes in, and remain standing while I deliver the welcome-home speech."

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"But I say—"

"Cave! Here he comes!"

The handle of the door turned in the midst of the argument.

The Remove dropped into silence, and Bob Cherry remained standing with the speech in his hand, and with a very red and flustered face.

Mr. Quelch entered the room.

His clear-cut, strong face—very different from the irresolute countenance of Mr. Chesham, was a welcome sight to the juniors, though it meant the return of a time of hard rule and hard work.

He glanced at the class, and seemed a little surprised to see them all there, for he was a couple of minutes early himself. It was not like the Remove.

The juniors remained standing, and Bob Cherry took a hasty glance at his speech. He coughed violently to clear his throat, and fell into a fit of coughing in consequence; and if Mr. Chesham had been there, he would infallibly have made him swallow half a dozen Little Lozenges for Chalky Chests. Mr. Quelch gave his class a nod.

"I am glad to see you all again, my boys!" he remarked.

Bob Cherry made an effort.

"Under the auspicious circumstances of your return, sir—"

Mr. Quelch looked at him with eyes like a pair of gimlets.

"What did you say, Cherry?"

"Under the auspicious circumstances of your return—"

"What do you mean?"

"Oh?"

"Are you joking, Cherry?"

Bob Cherry star-d.

"Joking, sir? Certainly not!"

"Then what can you possibly mean by such a remark?"

"Under the auspicious circumstances of your return, sir, I wish to give you a welcome in the name of the whole Form—"

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch.

That monosyllabic rejoinder seemed to take Bob's breath away, and he began to stammer. But from various places came encouraging whispers—stage whispers—which were perfectly audible to Mr. Quelch.

"Go it, Bob!"

And thus encouraged, Bob Cherry plunged into his speech.

"We were awfully sorry, sir, that you had to go away a second time. We trust, however, that you are now fully recovered from your recent indisposition. I wish to give you a welcome in the name of the whole Form—"

"Thank you, Cherry!"

"We all join hands in extending to you a hearty cheer—I mean we all join cheers in extending to you a hearty hand—"

There was a suppressed chuckle behind Bob, which added to his confusion.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch.

A slight smile was lurking round the corners of his mouth now, and he seemed to have made up his mind to give Bob a chance, as Bob's good intentions were plain enough.

"We all join hands in giving you a hearty welcome home," said Bob Cherry. "We have missed you, and are sorry you are back—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I mean we are sorry you have been away, and are glad to welcome you home, with a hearty cheer," mumbled Bob, "and to cheer you back to the sphere of your scholastic labours—"

"Go it, Bob!"

"Shut up, Skinner! We intend to work hard and prove—prove—prove—"

Bob Cherry took a glance at the paper in his hand, saw the wrong part, and, in his confusion, went on with it. "And prove that during your absence we have not made the progress that—that since your return we—we—we give you a hearty cheer, and hope that while the scene of your scholastic labours is under the auspicious circumstances of your return, we shall always fail to appreciate the trouble you take with us, and—"

The Remove were in convulsions now.

Bob was getting more and more mixed as he proceeded, and the juniors could not restrain their merriment.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That roar of laughter finally put Bob Cherry out, and he broke off helplessly, and stood with a scarlet face staring at his paper.

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"Thank you very much, Cherry!"

"Not at all, sir, I—"

"Thank you for your speech of welcome—"

"I—I haven't finished yet, sir—"

"I am very much obliged," said Mr. Quelch, apparently not hearing Bob Cherry's remark. "I am glad to see that my return is so appreciated. We will now—"

"Oh, hold on, Quelch!"

The juniors simply jumped. The tones were so exactly like Bob Cherry's that no one suspected for a moment that it was the Greyfriars' ventriloquist at work. Even Bob Cherry was amazed, and almost fancied for the moment that he had spoken.

Mr. Quelch stared.

"Cherry!"

"Ye-e-e-s, sir."

"How dare you!"

"I—I—I—"

Bob Cherry broke off helplessly; but there was a voice exactly like his own to carry on his remarks. Billy Bunter was out for vengeance.

"I think you might hear the rest, sir, and cut some of the rotten lesson. Blessed if any of us are anxious to grind Latin."

"Cherry!"

"Oh, sir! I—I—"

"Stand out here, Cherry!"

"I—I—I didn't—"

"Stand out here!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Bob Cherry staggered out before the class.

"Now, Cherry, I do not wish to cause



any boy immediately upon my return to the school, but I cannot pass over this impertinence!"

"But, sir, I—I didn't—"

"Not a word, sir!"

Bob Cherry gasped helplessly. The Greyfriars' ventriloquist would have filled up the pause, but Harry Wharton had tumbled to it this time, and his grasp was upon Billy Bunter's plump arm.

"Another word, and I'll wring your neck, you young sweep!" he muttered.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Shut up!"

Billy Bunter thought he had better shut up. But he was pretty well satisfied. Bob Cherry was in the hottest of hot water now!

"Not a word!" said Mr. Quelch.

"This impertinence is astounding!"

"But—"

"I will not censure you, Cherry—"

"But, sir—"

"Do not interrupt me, boy! Go and stand in the corner, and remain there, sir, for the whole of the first lesson!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

Bob Cherry's face went scarlet again. It was a punishment more suitable for an infant in the Second Form than for one of the burliest fellows in the Lower Fourth.

"Oh, sir, I—"

"Obey me instantly, Cherry!"

Mr. Quelch's voice seemed to cut like a knife. When he spoke in that tone, it was useless to argue.

Bob Cherry walked to the corner, and stood there with a face like fire and his eyes upon the floor.

Mr. Quelch went to his desk with a heightened colour.

"I say, this is where we cheer!"

whispered Bulstrode.

"Oh, shut up!"

"Sha'n't! It was in the programme to cheer when Cherry had finished his speech, and he has finished it now!"

"You ass—"

"Rats! I'm jolly well going to cheer, anyway!"

"What-ho!" said Skinner.

"Now, then, kids—all together!"

"Hurrah!"

"Hip, hip, hurrah!"

Mr. Quelch started.

"Boys!"

"Hurrah!"

"Silence!"

"Hip, pip—"

"Boys! I—"

"Hip, pip, hurrah!"

The Remove simply roared it out. Mr. Quelch came in front of his desk with a very pink face.

"I presume, this is intended for impertinence?" he said.

"Oh, no, sir," said Bulstrode. "It's the cheer Cherry was speaking about in his speech, sir—the hearty cheer to welcome you home, sir!"

"Very good! You will take a hundred lines, Bulstrode!"

"But—but we were only cheering!"

"The class-room is not the place to cheer."

"But, sir, that was the hearty cheer to welcome you—"

"Take two hundred lines, Bulstrode!" Bulstrode relapsed into silence. It was evident that Mr. Quelch was not to be imposed upon, and his impertinence might cost him dear if he proceeded.

"We will now commence," said Mr. Quelch, with a glance at the clock over the bookcase. "A quarter of an hour has been wasted in this nonsense. The class will remain in until a quarter to five, instead of dismissing at half-past four, as usual, in order that the work may not suffer."

That was the last straw!

The whole Remove glared at Bob

Cherry with basilisk eyes, and Billy Bunter groaned in spirit. It was his ventriloquism that had brought this about, added to Bulstrode's impertinence.

But the Remove had caught it now, and there was no help for it.

Lessons went off that afternoon without the cheery alacrity which should have been displayed on the first day of the Remove-master's return.

At half-past four the juniors cast fresh looks at Bob Cherry, expressing a yearning desire to scalp him.

It was not till the extra quarter of an hour had ticked away that the Remove were dismissed, Mr. Quelch seeing them out of the class-room with a grim smile.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Something Wrong with the Pie!

"BLESSED if I know what the little game is!" said Frank Nugent, at tea-time, a day or two later, in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

Harry Wharton looked up from chipping his second egg.

"What little game?" he demanded.

"Study No. 13 up to something again!"

"Oh, no! It's Tom Brown."

"What's the matter with Mutton?"

"It's some little game," said Nugent.

"I suppose it must be a jape of some sort. He's got something going in the too-shed. Gosing's in the secret, for he keeps everybody o'so out of the too-shed. I suppose Brown tips him."

"Most likely," said Wharton. "He's making something or other, perhaps."

"Then why doesn't he let a chap see it?"

"The yfulness is terrific."

"I say, you fellows—"

"It's some little game," said Nugent, with conviction. "I asked Gosing to lend me a saw to-day, just to go into the shed. He lent me the saw, but he fetched it himself, and wouldn't let me go in."

"Brown is squaring him, of course."

"I suppose he is; but what's it all about?"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter! We know you're hungry!"

"I wasn't going to say that, Wharton."

"Oh, have you got a new record on at last?"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I mean, I think I could tell you something about Brown's little game. It's something up against this study. I'll undertake to find out if you like. You know my abilities as a Boy Scout!"

"Yes, we know 'em, Bunter. You young ass!"

"The assfulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!"

"Well, I don't think you ought to let a new-comer get ahead of this study," said Billy Bunter, blinking at Wharton.

"However, there is another and more important matter to settle. I suppose you know that we're celebrating the Fifth on Saturday, this week."

"Go home!"

"To-morrow's Saturday, and you chaps haven't laid in your stock of fireworks yet. Of course, there's going to be a bonfire in the Close, and we shall want a lot of fireworks. Now, I've got a scheme for getting them at a fifty per cent. reduction, through my relation in the business. What do you think of the idea?"

"Rotten!"

"Oh, really, you fellows! I can save you pounds! You raise a sum by subscription, and place it in my hands, and you—"

"Never see it again?"

"I don't mean that. You get fireworks at half price, through my influence. You don't get a chance like this every day.

If you were at all business-like, you would jump at it."

"We must be awfully unbusinesslike, then, for we're not going to do any jumping," grinned Nugent. "Put on another record."

"But look here. I save you pounds. Suppose you have a liver in my hands—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Where are we to get the liver, you young ass?"

"I don't think you ought to be mean when I'm trying to do you a favour. But suppose we say five shillings, then? You place five shillings in my hands—"

"And you take it for a walk to Mrs. Mimble's—"

"If you doubt my honesty, Nugent, this discussion had better cease," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity.

"A jolly right better!" agreed Nugent.

"Pass the marmalade."

"It's not a chance to be lost—"

"Oh, ring off, old chap. Your scheme's rotten, like yourself," said Wharton. "As a matter of fact, we've raised ten bob for fireworks, and we're going to spend it at Mrs. Mimble's—not in grub for a young porpoise, though. When you fellows have finished tea, we may as well get along. Mrs. Mimble will be doing a roaring trade to-night."

Mrs. Mimble was indeed doing a good trade.

The boys had the Head's permission to have a bonfire in the Close on Saturday night, and with the usual desire of energetic youth to celebrate any occasion by making a row, they were investing most of their spare cash in fireworks.

The Fifth of November always brought a little harvest to Mrs. Mimble, and the present occasion was no exception to the rule.

In the school shop the usual display of "tuck" was half-hidden by arrays of fireworks of all sizes and colours and all sorts of conditions.

There were a crowd of purchasers, and the shop was very full, and a placid smile of contentment sat upon the features of Mrs. Mimble. She greeted Harry Wharton & Co. with the utmost sweetness.

"What can I do for you, Master Wharton?"

"Fireworks," said Harry, with a smile. The chums of the Remove proceeded to select their purchases. Billy Bunter blinked at them discontentedly. His scheme, by which he could save them pounds—according to his own account—was ruthlessly and contemptuously passed over and neglected. It was enough to make a fellow, conscious of his own cleverness, discontented.

Tom Brown gave the fat junior a slap on the back.

"Anything wrong, Bunter?"

"Ow! Don't break my back, you ass! Yes, those dummies are chucking their money away. I could save them pounds if they would let me."

"Well, it's awfully generous of you to take it to heart like this."

"Well, I am a generous chap, Brown. Look here, you haven't treated me well, but I never bear malice. I'm willing to save you pounds if you like. I suppose you're going to lay out some tin in fireworks."

"What-ho!"

"If you like to place it in my hands, I can get the stuff at half price, through my influence. I've a relation in the line—"

"More rats! But I'll tell you what. You know those old clothes of yours—those old loud check duds that Nugent said ought to be buried alive?"

"They're jolly good clothes—"

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.



"Well, will you swap them for a half-crown?"

"Make it five bob."  
"All right," said Tom, who was never given to haggling over money. "They're not worth it, but here you are, Jacket, trousers, and waistcoat, mind."

"Yes, you can have the lot. They're going at a big bargain," said Bunter, with a sigh. "But I always like doing a fellow a good turn. But, I say, what do you want them for?"

"That's my business!"  
And Tom Brown left the tuckshop. Billy Bunter looked after him inquisitively. He was intensely curious, and he always liked to know everything that was going on. He was strongly inclined to follow Brown, but there were the five shillings in his hand, and there was Mrs. Mimble's counter, with an array of goodly comestibles upon it.

Bunter turned towards the counter. He did not buy any fireworks. He depended upon being able to handle those purchased by others on bonfire night. He selected several very tasty dishes, and sat down at a little table to enjoy himself.  
"My hat," said Nugent, "Bunter's going strong! What bank have you been robbing, Bunt?"

"Oh, really, Nugent! I've sold some of my clothes, at a great sacrifice. It comes rough on me, but what am I to do, when the fellows don't care whether I starve or not?"

"Blessed if I can see how it's our business whether you starve or not!" said Nugent. "That's a ripping pie! I suppose you're standing a study feed with this pie?"

"Nothing of the sort. I should be very glad to do so; but there is barely enough for me, and I have to think of my health."

And Bunter started on the pie.

"It was a big meat-pie, with a nicely-browned crust that looked very tempting. Bunter took a big slice out of the crust, and a liberal helping of the savoury interior, and began. Skinner strolled up to the table, with a repeating cracker in his hand, which he had just purchased.

"Did you call me, Bunter?" he asked.  
Billy Bunter blinked at him over his steaming plate.

"No, I didn't, Skinner."  
"Ah, I thought perhaps you wanted me to help you with that pie!"

"I don't want any help, thank you."

"My hat! Mrs. Mimble makes those pies to be sold in six portions!" said Skinner. "You don't mean to say that you're going to wolf the lot?"

"I have to keep myself going by constant nourishment, Skinner. I never get enough to eat in my own study, either."  
"I wouldn't mind wiring in, if you want me to."

"Thanks! I don't want you to."

Skinner grinned. He made a sign to Hazeldene, who was standing behind Bunter, and showed him the jumping cracker in his hand. Hazeldene understood, and grinned. He was to divert Bunter's attention for a few moments, while Skinner played the little joke that had occurred to his brilliant mind.

"Hallo! Did you drop a half-crown, Bunter?" exclaimed Hazeldene.

"Yes," said Bunter, turning round promptly. "Where is it?"

Billy Bunter squeezed down, and blinked under his chair. Skinner lifted the cracker to the gas-jet on the wall, and lighted the tip of the fuse, and poked the cracker inside the pie, through the opening Bunter had left in the crust.

There was a general chuckle from the fellows who saw him. Bunter straightened up in his chair, and blinked indignantly at Hazeldene.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 265.

"There isn't any half-crown under the chair," he grunted.

"Ha, ha! I never said there was."  
Billy Bunter grunted again, and resumed operations on his plate. It was nearly cleared now, and he was ready for a second helping.

Skinner and Hazeldene cleared back from the table. The cracker was fizzing away inside the pie, and it might explode at any moment now.

"Sounds as if somebody were lighting fireworks here," said Bunter. "Better not play the giddy ox with fireworks indoors, you fellows."

He thrust the knife into the crust of the pie.

"Crack!"  
"Ow!"

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Bunter jumped up as if electrified. The repeating-cracker was cracking away merrily, and the pie-crust flew in all directions, accompanied by spouts of grey.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter jumped away from the table.

"Ow! The pie's exploding! That

was to take place, and most of the fellows had made some preparations for a high old time, with the exception of the grave and reverend seigneurs of the Sixth.

The Sixth affected to look with lofty indulgence upon bonfire celebrations; but, as a matter of fact, most of them enjoyed the noise and the shouting as much as the juniors.

The Remove always "went strong" on the occasion of a celebration of any kind, and on the Fifth of November they were not likely to be found wanting. The stock of fireworks laid in by the juniors was enough to start a shop with, and if there was not a deafening noise on Saturday night it would not be the fault of the Remove.

Several "gus" had been constructed, and, though they were not things of beauty or joy for ever, they were likely to be joys for that night, when they blazed up in funeral pyres.

"I'm sorry the affair to-night will be messed up, you fellows," Billy Bunter remarked thoughtfully, when the Remove came out after morning lessons.


"What's that?" said Bob Cherry. "Do

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**—IN NEXT MONDAY'S BOYS' FRIEND.**

utterly stupid woman has been mixing gunpowder in my pie! Ow! Yow! I must have eaten some. Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dear me!" gasped Mrs. Mimble.

Crack! Crack!

"Yow! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter staggered against the counter with an expression of almost idiotic bewilderment upon his face. The cracker, with a final crack-ack, finished its performance by jumping out of the wrecked pie, and then Billy saw what was the matter.

"Skinner, you beast—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the yells of laughter from the juniors drowned all the indignant remarks of the Owl of the Remove.

**THE FIFTH CHAPTER.  
Another Guy!**

There was a great deal of suppressed excitement in the Greyfriars Remove on Saturday morning.

That evening the Guy Fawkes celebra-

tion was a fine as anything."

"Oh, no! I wasn't thinking of the rain. I was thinking what a splendid show of fireworks there would have been if the fellows had taken advantage of my scheme to get them at a fifty per-cent. reduction, through my relation in the business."

"Oh, crumbs! Can't you bury your scheme?" said Nugent wrathfully.

"Blessed if we hear about anything else!"

"Well, I could have saved you pounds—"  
"Brr-r-r-r!"

It was too late for the scheme now. Most of the available cash of the juniors had been expended in the fireworks, and Mrs. Mimble was very nearly sold out.

The early dusk of the November night was eagerly awaited, and when it came it found the Greyfriars juniors ready.

Tom Brown met the chums of No. 1 in the passage as they came out after tea. There was a cheerful grin on the face of the New Zealander.

"I want to speak to you chaps," he remarked. "I suppose you've noticed



that I've been making something the past few days in the tool-shed?"

"Yes, rather! What's the little game?"

"Come along and see."  
"Good egg!"

The chums were curious to see the secret, whatever it was, and they willingly followed Tom to the tool-shed. It occurred to them now, for the first time, that it probably had something to do with the bonfire celebrations.

They reached the tool-shed, and Brown pushed open the door. It was very dark within, and the New Zealander struck a match and lighted a candle. He held up the candle, and a form loomed up in the flickering light.

"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton. "Bunter!"

It was Billy Bunter—not the real Bunter, but a remarkably lifelike image of him. The fat form, the fat little legs, the round, fat face, were all there, and the face, painted upon a rounded cardboard mask, had really been done with great skill.

A huge pair of spectacles adorned the face, and gave the finishing touch to the resemblance. The figure was clad in the check suit which Bunter had been wearing a few weeks before, and which was known all over Greyfriars.

Many times he had been recommended to bury that suit, or to kill it, and it was even whispered that he had given it up on a hint from the Form-master.

"My hat!" repeated Wharton. "It's—it's ripping! It looks like Bunter's twin! Blessed if I should know them apart if I met them!"

"I say, you fellows—"  
Nugent pulled the fat junior into the shed.

"Hallo, Bunter! Come in and be introduced to your twin."

Bunter blinked at the figure through his big spectacles.

"Oh, really, you fellows! You don't mean to say that that's anything like me!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha! It's your double!"

"Look here—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So, that's what Brown was doing all the time!" growled Bunter. "I warned you fellows that it was something up against our study. You'd better smash that thing up and give Brown a jolly good licking!"

"No fear! It's good fun!"

"But I say, you fellows—"

"Look here, Bunter, you can join in the procession if you like," said Tom Brown generously. "That will show the chaps that we're not really burning you; though, of course, you deserve melting down."

"Oh, really, Brown—"

"Let's get out into the Close," said Brown. "We'll march it round first, and then stick it on the bonfire."

"Good egg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The figure was carried out of the tool-shed, and there was a fresh yell of laughter from every fellow who saw it. A crowd of Removites were soon gathered round it. Billy Bunter blinked at the scene in great indignation.

Bunter's face and form lent themselves only too easily to caricature; in fact, caricature was hardly necessary in his case to produce a comic effect.

Tom Brown dragged an old cane chair out of the shed, and the figure was solemnly mounted upon it, and borne high towards the Close.

"Beasts!" murmured Bunter. "Fancy pretending that I look anything like that! It's because they're jealous of my good looks, I suppose."

He followed the procession with a discontented brow.

But Bunter's objections to this repro-

duction of himself were not likely to count with the merry Removites. They were entering joyously into the joke, and the figure was greeted with laughter and cheers wherever it appeared.

In a spot of the Close, safe from the buildings and trees, a huge bonfire had been piled up by the Removites. The Upper Fourth had another bonfire at a distance, but it had to be admitted that the Remove pyre was the statelyst of the two.

Firewood and shavings mingled with old casks and broken-down chairs and defunct articles of furniture, in making the Remove pyre tower high.

The fire was not yet lighted, but fireworks were going off in all directions already. Most of the juniors were impatient to begin.

There was a roar as the procession halted with the figure of Bunter.

"Here's another guy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

signed to such a cruel death!" grinned Nugent. "Never mind; shove a match to it."

The pile was lighted. The lower chunks of fuel had been smeared with paraffin, or resin, and they quickly caught, and a pyramid of flame shot skyward.

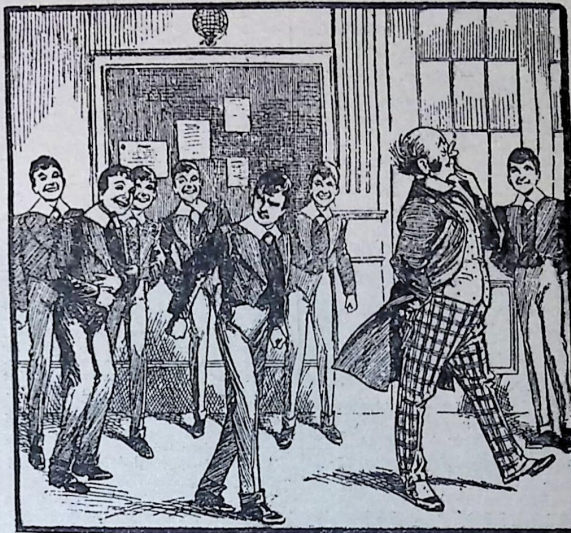
For a moment the figure of Bunter the Second, on top of the pyre, was hidden by a rush of flame and smoke.

Then the wood crackled and burned, and the smoke cleared a little, and the figure emerged partly into view, though still clouded by smoke.

As the pyre stirred and trembled in the blaze, the chair moved, and the figure moved with it. It was so lifelike that many of the juniors gazed at it open-mouthed.

Suddenly a voice was heard, apparently proceeding from the heart of the fire, and it sent a thrill to every heart.

"Elp!"



"Pray follow me to my study, Bulstrode," said Mr. Chesham. And he stalked away, with Bulstrode, who cast a savage look at the grinning Removites, reluctantly following him.

"Good old Bunter!"

Billy Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. He drew back into the shadow of the nearest tree, and watched the proceedings. An idea had come into his mind for getting his own back, and he was biding his time.

The chair was fastened in the centre of the pyre, and the fuel piled round it and the figure it bore.

"Now light up!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Good-bye, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat!" ejaculated Skinner, coming up. "That isn't Bunter you've got there, is it?"

"Ha, ha! No; it's Bunter's double!"

"Blessed if I should know the difference!"

"Bunter's about here somewhere. He ought to have a hand in this. Bunter! Bunter! Where are you, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter kept cover.

"He doesn't like his twin being con-

Wharton gave a jump. "I'm burning! Rescue!"

Faces went ghastly pale. "My only hat!" muttered Bulstrode. "You've done it now! That's the real Bunter you've got there."

From the fire came a deep groan.

#### THE SIXTH CHAPTER. Bonfire Night.

HARRY WHARTON and his chums stood petrified for a moment. Wharton was quick to recover himself, however.

"It's all rot!" he exclaimed. "I fastened it on the chair myself! It's the dummy!"

"Murder! Fire!"

"Hark at it!" said Skinner. "You've got the real chap there! Pull him out!"

"Don't be an ass! I tell you—"

"Pull him out!"

"But—"



"Rescue! Fire! Murder!"  
The bound figure in the chair was swaying in the flames. Smoke and blaze licked round it, and the swaying of the figure bore a ghastly resemblance to the struggles of a doomed wretch trying to escape.

"Rescue! I'm burning! Fire!"  
"I know what it is!" exclaimed Wharton, in sudden relief. "That young bouncer's hidden about here somewhere, and it's his giddy ventriloquism!"

"Why, of course it is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, with a deep breath of relief. "Blessed if I didn't begin to think for a moment that we were burning the wrong dummy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Rescue! Fire! Murder!"  
"What on earth's that?" exclaimed Carberry of the Sixth, stopping as he passed the bonfire. "What does that mean?"

"Elp! Murder!"  
The prefect stared at the blazing bonfire in amazement.

"You young idiots! You don't mean to say you're playing such a trick as tying up somebody in a bonfire?"

"It's all right, Carberry. We—"  
"Murder!"

"Why, it's Bunter!" Carberry stared at the figure in the fire in amazement and horror for a moment. Then a blaze of spiteful satisfaction came over his face. Surely he had caught Wharton at last, playing a dangerous trick that would result in his expulsion from Greyfriars!

"You see—"  
"I'm burning! 'Elp!"  
Bunter could not sound the aspirate with his ventriloquial voice; but Carberry did not notice that.

"You mad young villains!" he gasped. "Why, he's actually burning!"  
"I tell you—"

"You'll be sacked for this."  
"But I tell you—"

Carberry did not stay to listen. He dashed into the bonfire, scattering it right and left, to the rescue of the supposed sufferer.

The juniors gave a shout of wrath as they saw their pyre kicked to pieces. But the humour of the matter struck them at once.

Carberry was playing the heroic rescuer, and getting pretty severely burnt,

too; and the utter absurdity of it made the juniors yell again, with laughter.

Bob Cherry clasped Tom Brown in his arms and almost wept.

"Touchin' sight, ain't it?" he sobbed. "Heroic rescue! Facing the flames! Medal of the Humane Society! And all that! Touchin'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Carberry!"

"Have him out!"

"Carberry to the rescue! Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter came out from behind the tree. He was sniggering away. Carberry was the most unpopular prefect at Greyfriars, and his motives even now were rather to get the Removites into trouble than to rescue the supposed victim of their brutality.

Bunter, his good humour completely restored, blinked at Carberry in the fire-light, and wondered what the prefect would say when he saw him.

It did not take Carberry long to find out his mistake.

As soon as he reached the scorching figure in the pyre, a touch was sufficient to show him that it was made of lath and padding.

He sprang back from the bonfire with a savage brow.

His clothes were scorched, his hair singed, his hands burnt, and he was in a towering rage.

"You young hounds!" he yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—"

"Ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "It wasn't our fault you barked into the bonfire. We tried to stop you. Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—"

The prefect was about to hurl himself upon them; but the juniors lined up to receive him. They had certainly tried to stop Carberry from making an ass of himself, and he had refused to listen to them.

They were not inclined to have his temper wreaked upon them in consequence; and Carberry, after a look at them, decided that it would be better not.

He swung away savagely, and a yell of laughter from the Removites rang in his ears as he departed.

"Ha, ha, ha!" gurgled Bunter. "That was funny!"

Bob Cherry gripped the fat junior by the back of the neck.

"Ow! Wow! Leggo!"

"You young sweep! You gave us all a start for a moment."

"He, he, he!"

"Shove him into the fire!" said Tom Brown seriously. "I should like to see him melt!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here! Hold on! Really! Stop! Chuck it! Ow!"

"Well, no more of your little games," said Bob Cherry, releasing the fat junior, who promptly gave the bonfire a wider berth. "Don't get too near the fire, Bunter, or you'll find yourself running into tallow before you know where you are."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Pile up that wood again, now that Carberry has done the heroic rescuer act!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The fuel was quickly piled up round the smoking figure of Billy Bunter's double, and the bonfire blazed away merrily again.

The roar of the flames mingled with the cracking of squibs and crackers, the streaming of rockets and Roman candles.

Higher and higher grew the flames round the doomed figure of Bunter the Second. Billy Bunter blinked at his double in the fire. The spectacles cracked in the heat, and finally the figure itself blazed up, and fell into the fire with a crash, that sent up pyramids of sparks.

"Good-bye, Bunter!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Good-bye, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter stalked away; and in the midst of the bonfire the remnants of the Second were quickly consumed.

It had been a merry evening, and the juniors were likely to "Remember the Fifth of November," as the song has it. Carberry was likely to remember it, too, for it was some days before the scorching disappeared from his hands and the singeing from his eyebrows.

But everybody but Carberry was satisfied; and, as Bob Cherry remarked, that was good enough. And the Remove agreed with him.

THE END.

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