

3 GRAND NEW SCHOOL TALES!

The Penny **1½^D**
Popular

Week Ending
May 31st, 1919.

No. 19.
New Series.

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



THE END OF BILLY BUNTER'S OUTING!

(An Exciting Scene in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)



Sportsmen of Surrey!

A Grand Story of a Brilliant
New Series, dealing with the
Adventures of the Boys of
Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Rallying Round.

"CRICKET practice!"
Vernon-Smith, of the Greyfriars
Remove, put his head in at the
door of Study No. 2, where
Bulstrode and Hazeldene were scribbling
industriously.

"Can't turn out, Smithy," grunted
Bulstrode.

"Why not?"

"Doing lines for Loder."

"Rats! Loder will have to whistle for his
blessed lines!"

"But he's a prefect—"

"And a silly ass, if he thinks you're going
to grind out lines just before starting on a
tour!" said Vernon-Smith warmly.

Bulstrode and Hazeldene laid down their
pens, and looked up quickly.

"Are we coming on the merry tour?" ex-
claimed Hazeldene.

"Of course you are!"

"Hurrah!"

Bulstrode and Hazeldene promptly made a
rush at Vernon-Smith, and waltzed him round
the study.

"Let up!" roared the Bounder. "Stoppit!
Chuckit! Have you suddenly gone potty?"

"Smithy, you old cherub," said Bulstrode,
"why didn't you tell us this before?"

The Bounder dragged himself away from
his exuberant schoolfellow.

"I wanted it to come as a pleasant sur-
prise," he said, gasping. "Wish I'd told you
in the first place, now. You've punctured my
blessed ribs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come and help me rout out the rest of the
fellows," said Vernon-Smith.

"Like a shot!" said Bulstrode. "Where are
we going, by the way?"

"Surrey. The sports are being held at
Guildford. And we've got to make good.
Wharton's party did rather well against
Lancashire, but we've got to go one better.
It's a case of all hands to the pump."

Vernon-Smith's face was flushed, and his
eyes were sparkling. Although the name of
Bounder still clung to him, he was a bounder
no longer. There was no keener sportsman in
the Greyfriars Remove. And Vernon-Smith
had been selected as leader of the party of
juniors who were going down to Surrey.

The tour of English counties had started
a week before, and Harry Wharton & Co.
were back from Lancashire, bearing their
blushing honours thick upon them.

They had found the lads of Lancashire a
very tough proposition indeed; but they had
won half the events, which was certainly a
great achievement.

Vernon-Smith hoped to do better than this
against Surrey.

His party was not quite so strong as
Wharton's, perhaps, but what it lacked in
the way of physical strength it made up for in
pluck and determination.

The object of the tour was to disprove

certain statements in the daily Press, to the
effect that the modern public-school boy was
a weakling, unable to hold his own in sport.

Harry Wharton & Co. had given the lie to
this assertion in their recent tussles at
Blackpool; and it was now Vernon-Smith's
turn to carry on the good work.

He went along the passage with Bulstrode
and Hazeldene, and opened the door of Study
No. 3.

Dick Russell and Donald Ogilvy were there,
both in their flannels. They knew that they
had been selected for Vernon-Smith's party.

"Cricket practice?" said Ogilvy.

Vernon-Smith nodded.

"Lead on, Macduff!" said Russell.

The numbers swelled rapidly.

Rake and Morgan and Wibley from No. 6,
Penfold from No. 9, and Elliott from No. 10,
turned out promptly.

"There's only Peter Todd and Dutton,
now," said Vernon-Smith. "Leave them to
me. You fellows can carry on at the nets."

Vernon-Smith went along to No. 7.

Strange sounds came from within.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!

Vernon-Smith grinned, and threw open the
door.

"My hat!" he exclaimed.

A punching-ball had been suspended in the
corner of the study, and Billy Bunter, in his
shirtsleeves, and with his fat fists encased
in boxing-gloves, was hitting away vigorously.

The perspiration was streaming down
Bunter's flabby cheeks; and Peter Todd and
Dutton, who were looking on, gave Bunter
the doubtful benefit of their advice.

"Go it, Billy!" said Peter. "Put your beef
into it! Imagine you're hammering at the
ex-Kaiser!"

Billy Bunter warmed to his work.

His fist sailed through the air; but the
punching-ball swerved to one side, and the
fat junior roared as, he smote the wall with
a terrific concussion.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wherefore this thushness, Bunter?" in-
quired Vernon-Smith.

"Ow! I—I'm getting in some practice,
Smithy, so that I can hammer that Surrey
fellow into a table-jelly."

"Eh! Which Surrey fellow?"

Billy Bunter blinked at Vernon-Smith.

"The chap I shall meet in the boxing
contest, of course," he said. "Boxing's part
of your programme, isn't it?"

"Yes, but—"

"Nuff said! I shall make that Surrey
merchant see stars! You see, I'm coming
along with your party, Smithy—"

"First I've heard of it," said the Bounder.

"Oh, really, Smithy! Wharton didn't take
me to Blackpool with him, because he didn't
want to pinch all the best men. He wanted
you to have a fair share of the Remove
talent. So I'm coming along."

"This is a sports tour—not an exhibition of
prize porpoises!" said Peter Todd. "Afraid
you'll have to cool your heels at Greyfriars,
Billy."

"I won't! I'm not going to be left out!
You fellows know what a ripping cricketer
I am—"

"Why, you don't even know which end of
a bat to handle!" said Vernon-Smith.

"When I was at St. Jim's—"

"Oh, ring off! Ready for cricket practice,
Toddy?"

Peter nodded.

"Is Dutton coming on the tour?" he asked.

"Yes. Shake a leg, Dutton!"

The deaf junior spun round as Vernon-
Smith addressed him.

"No, we haven't," he growled.

"Eh! You haven't what?"

"We haven't a leg of mutton. I'm sur-
prised at you asking for such a thing,
Smithy."

"Oh, help! Look here, Dutton, you're
coming down to Surrey—"

"Certainly not!"

"What!"

"Why should I worry?" said Dutton
peevishly. "Nothing to worry about, that I
can see."

Vernon-Smith raised his voice to a roar.

"We're going on tour," he shouted, "and
you've been given a place! Can you
catch it?"

Tom Dutton promptly clenched his fists
and advanced upon the Bounder.

"So I've got a face like a hatchet, have I?"
he roared. "I'll jolly soon show you! Put
up your hands!"

Vernon-Smith gave a groan.

"Talk to him, Toddy," he said. "I shall
break a blood-vessel in a minute!"

Peter Todd made a megaphone of his
hands, and put his lips to Dutton's ear.

"Cricket practice!" he bawled. "You're
coming on the tour with Smithy's party!"

"Oh, all right," said Dutton. "Anybody
would think I was deaf, to hear you yelling
at me like that!"

The three juniors quitted the study, leav-
ing Billy Bunter still hammering at the
punching-ball, and determined that neither
things present, nor things to come, nor
principals, nor powers, should prevent him
taking part in the forthcoming tour.

That evening the following announcement
was posted up on the school notice-board:

"NOTICE!

"The undermentioned members of the
Remove Form will travel to Guildford to-
morrow, to meet a team of Surrey boys at
cricket and other sports:

"H. Vernon-Smith (Captain),

P. Todd,

R. E. Russell,

G. Bulstrode,

R. Penfold,

R. Rake,

P. Hazeldene,

D. Morgan,

R. D. Ogilvy,

T. Dutton,

W. Wibley,

N. Elliott.

"Train leaves Friardale 9.20 a.m. Gwynne of the Sixth will be in charge of the party.
"Any fellow not satisfied with the selected twelve can go and eat coke!"
"Signed) H. VERNON-SMITH,
"Captain."

Needless to say, there were a good many consumers of coke in the Greyfriars Remove that evening!

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Shock for the Tourists!

THE Famous Five turned out to wish their rivals good luck.
"Play up, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton, as he shook hands. "Send us a wire if anything startling happens."

"And mind you throw Bunter off the scent!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "He's quite made up his mind to go with you."
"Faith, an' if he comes within a mile of me," said Gwynne of the Sixth, fingering his stick, "I'll slay him entirely!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The tourists, immune for a whole week from the drudgery of the Form-room, passed through the old gateway.

So far, there was no sign of Bunter. The juniors concluded that he had resigned himself to his fate, and gone in to morning lessons.

The train was in when the party reached the station. They bundled into it with their cricket-bags, and the guard waved his flag.

"Hurrah!"
"Now we're off!"
"Topping idea, this tour," murmured Bulstrode, stretching out his legs and letting his feet rest on the knees of Peter Todd, who sat opposite. "No Latin or Greek for one long week!"

"Shurrup!" growled Dick Rake. "If you start spouting poetry like that I shall pull the communication-cord, and have you ejected as a public nuisance!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd glanced up from the paper he was reading, and caught sight of two very large and muddy boots on his knees.

"My hat! Bulstrode, you dummy! You've ruined my bags!"
"Bust your bags!" growled Bulstrode. "What do your blessed bags matter, so long as I'm comfy?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd grabbed Bulstrode's ankles and gave a pull.

Bulstrode shot out of his seat, and landed with a crash on the floor of the carriage.
"Yarooooc!"

"Order, please!" rapped out Gwynne. "This isn't a bear-garden, you know!"

"Really!" exclaimed Peter Todd, in surprise. "When I caught sight of Bulstrode's chivvy I thought it was!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The train rattled on to Courtfield, where the party had to change.

Then off they went again, through the smiling fields of Kent, past green meadow and shady lane, until dense rows of buildings heralded the approach of London.

Another change was necessary at the capital.

"Strap-hanging" on the Tube, the tourists were whisked from Charing Cross to Waterloo, where they were to catch the connection to Guildford.

"Time for a feed at the buffet," said Russell. "The train's in, but it's not due to leave for ten minutes."

The juniors devoured, with some difficulty, a couple of railway sandwiches, while Gwynne went along to the booking-hall.

When they boarded the train a few moments later, Dick Penfold darted a keen glance along the platform.

"Looking for a long-lost aunt?" inquired Peter Todd.

"No," said Pen. "I was wondering if Bunter had managed to get here, that was all. He seemed jolly determined to come, you know."

"Rats! Bunter's grinding out verbs in the Form-room," said Vernon-Smith. "And he wouldn't possibly be able to raise the fare, anyway—unless his postal-order has come at last!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
It was not a far cry to Guildford, and the train was a non-stop. It thundered through the south-western suburbs of London, and presently emerged into the open country, being swallowed up at length in the thick pinewoods of the Woking district.

Then came the Guildford tunnel, and then, with a jarring of brakes, Guildford itself.

"Here we are!" said Gwynne. "Tumble out, kids!"

The party wandered up the quaint, cobbled High Street, and came to anchor at a very inviting-looking restaurant.

They were meeting the boys of Surrey at cricket that afternoon, and it was necessary to lay a good foundation, so to speak.

Vernon-Smith, however, was careful to see that no one was in danger of overfeeding.

"Hallo!" said Gwynne at length, consulting his watch. "Time we were on the cricket-ground. Do any of you kids know where it is?"

There was a general shaking of heads. The Greyfriars juniors were strangers in a strange land.

"We'll soon find out," said the prefect. From a garage near by he chartered a couple of taxis.

"Take us along to the cricket-ground, please," he said to the driver of the first vehicle.

"Very good, sir!"
The taxis started off.

They plunged down the steep slope of the High Street, and were soon speeding along the open road.

"My hat!" said Bulstrode. "The ground seems to be a jolly long way from the town. We've left Guildford behind. What do you make of it, Smithy?"

A curious expression came over the Bounder's face.

He began to wonder whether this was part and parcel of a plot—a plot to upset the tour.

It was just possible. Skinner of the Remove, angry at being left out of both Wharton's party and Vernon-Smith's, had been heard to make threats. Was it possible that, by means of a deep-laid scheme, he was putting those threats into effect?

"There's something wrong somewhere," said Vernon-Smith at length. "Why, we're two or three miles from Guildford now. This looks like another town."

"Yes; it's Godalming," said Wibley. "I passed through here on my way to Portsmouth once."

"It's all serene," said Ogilvy suddenly. "Here's the cricket-ground. We're slowing up."

The taxis came to a halt, and Gwynne, who suspected nothing amiss, paid the fare out of the sum he carried for travelling expenses. Then he led the way on to the ground.

Stumps had been pitched, and close to the pavilion a number of fine, athletic-looking fellows were practising.

"My only aunt!" gasped Vernon-Smith. "They're a set of blessed giants!"

"Why, they'll simply eat us!" said Dick Russell.

The cricketers were certainly very much older and bigger than the Greyfriars juniors. In fact, most of them looked older than Gwynne.

One of them—obviously the captain—came forward with a smile as the party approached.

"You're jolly early!" he said. "The match was fixed for three-thirty."

"I understood it was two-thirty," said Gwynne. "Anyway, here we are. You're Surrey, I take it?"

"Of course. But I—I say! We're not playing the Lilliputians, by any chance?"
Gwynne laughed.

"They're only juniors," he said, indicating the Remove team, "but they'll give a good account of themselves."

The Surrey captain frowned slightly. He had evidently been expecting to meet a team of bigger and broader fellows than Vernon-Smith & Co.

"Well, we'll make a start," he said. "Who is the captain of this banlam crowd?"

Vernon-Smith stepped forward and spun the coin.

"Heads!"
Heads it was.

"We'll bat," said the Surrey skipper. And a few moments later he walked out to the wickets with another hefty fellow, while Greyfriars took the field.

"My hat!" said Bulstrode. "Aren't they a size?"

"And some of them have got their caps, too!" said Peter Todd. "Where did these merchants spring from?"

"From different schools all over the county," said Vernon-Smith.

"Schools! My only aunt! Some of 'em have grown whiskers!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Surrey captain took his stand with a

very business-like expression on his rugged face.

Vernon-Smith started to bowl. The Bounder was no mean performer with the ball, and he confidently expected the Surrey wickets to fall like ninepins, even though the batsmen were such giants.

But a surprise was in store for Vernon-Smith.

His first ball was smacked contemptuously to the boundary.

His second disappeared far into the long field. His third was lifted clean out of the ground.

"Mum-mum-my hat!" gasped Vernon-Smith. The score went up by leaps and bounds.

Penfold was bowling at the other end, and in the ordinary way he could be relied upon to "bag" a few wickets.

But now all his efforts proved abortive. The Surrey captain, without unduly exerting himself, piled up a tremendous score; and his partner did likewise.

They scorned singles, and each time they smote the ball travelled to the boundary.

The Greyfriars fieldsmen were very tough, and could stand a good deal of leather-chasing; but within an hour they were fagged out.

Fresh bowlers were tried, but to no purpose. The batsmen continued to lay about them with vigour.

The score was soon well over a hundred—for no wicket!

"Oh dear!" panted Vernon-Smith. "If this goes on much longer I shall expire!"

"Wharton said that the Lancashire team was pretty strong," said Rake. "But I bet they were nothing like this!"

"No, rather not!"

The score continued to rise rapidly. What it would have been had the game continued the Greyfriars juniors trembled to think. It would certainly have extended into many hundreds.

That amazing first-wicket partnership was still in progress when a fresh group of cricketers arrived on the scene.

They were public school boys, and seniors at that; and several had their caps.

They appeared to be greatly astonished to see a match going on; and one of them came on to the pitch and addressed the Surrey skipper.

"Say!" he said. "Are you killing time by playing a kindergarten? Sorry we're a bit late, but—"

"Who are you?" exclaimed the Surrey captain.

"Charterhouse First Eleven, of course!"
The Surrey man nearly fell down.

"But I—I thought these were Charterhouse fellows!" he stammered, indicating the Greyfriars team.

"Nonsense! I haven't the pleasure of knowing these young gentlemen, but they certainly don't belong to Charterhouse! Why?—the speaker looked closely at Vernon-Smith's cap—"they're a junior team from Greyfriars!"

"Oh, my stars!"
Gwynne, who had been acting as umpire, listened to this conversation in profound astonishment.

He came forward quickly, and faced the Surrey captain.

"Aren't you the Surrey team who had arranged to play Greyfriars?" he exclaimed.

"Great Scott, no! We were due to play Charterhouse at three-thirty."

"But who are you?"
The burly batsman smiled.

"Surrey Second Eleven, of course!" he said. "M-m-my hat!"

Gwynne saw daylight at last. So did the juniors.

They had come to the wrong ground! Instead of meeting the junior Surrey team they had come up against the strongest side in the county, bar one!

"We've fairly put our little feet in it now!" said Vernon-Smith. "Those taxi-drivers brought us to the wrong ground!"

"But why?" exclaimed Hazeldene.

"I suppose they thought we meant Godalming Cricket Ground. We didn't say which, you see, and they might have imagined we were playing Charterhouse. Anyway, there's nothing for it now but to toddle back to Guildford. We shall have to postpone the real match till to-morrow. Blessed if I feel like any more cricket to-day!"

"Nor I," growled Peter Todd. "I feel absolutely whacked!"

The captain of Surrey Second Eleven smiled.

"Well, you've given us some batting practice," he said. "Many thanks! We ought to be able to lick Charterhouse now."

He shook hands with Gwynne; and then the Greyfriars party gathered up their goods and chattels, and, after refreshing themselves in Harvey's tea-rooms in the High Street, started back to Guildford.

It had been an eventful, and, in some respects, a disappointing afternoon; but the juniors had at least the consolation of knowing that the team they would play on the morrow would not be up to the weight of Surrey Second Eleven!

When they reached their hotel at Guildford they found Jimmy Carr awaiting them.

Carr was the captain of the genuine Surrey team, and he had come along to find out what had happened to the Greyfriars fellows.

He laughed heartily when Gwynne explained the extraordinary mix-up.

"Never mind!" said Carr. "The match can easily be postponed till to-morrow, when we shall be delighted to knock spots off you fellows!"

Whereat the Greyfriars juniors responded, with great heartiness and unanimity:

"Rats!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Misadventures of a Sportsman.

"B LESS my soul!" Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars, rose to his feet in great annoyance as the telephone-bell rang in his study.

This was the fifth time the Head had been rung up that morning.

He had no love for the telephone at any time; and he glared at the instrument now as he took the receiver off its hooks.

"Are you there?"

"Yes," came a voice from over the wires.

"Is that Dr. Locke?"

"It is."

"This is the stationmaster at Courtfield speaking."

"Yes, yes! What is it?"

"One of your junior boys—Bunter by name—has been apprehended here for travelling without paying his fare."

"Bless my soul!"

"As he happens to be a Greyfriars boy, sir," went on the stationmaster, "I do not wish to press the charge. I would prefer to hand him over to you, so that you may deal with him."

"That is very considerate of you," said the Head. "I quite fail to understand why Bunter should be at Courtfield at all! He is supposed to be in the Form-room."

"He was on his way to Guildford, via London," said the stationmaster. "He tells me that he had your permission to go to Guildford and take part in a sports tour."

"Nothing of the sort!" said Dr. Locke. "Dear me! I shall have to deal very severely with the boy! This is only one of many complaints I have recently received concerning him."

"He wants a good thrashing, sir, if you'll excuse my saying so."

"And he shall have one!" said the Head grimly. "Would it be asking too much of you to send him back to Greyfriars under escort?"

"Not at all, sir. I'll send him back at once!"

"I am much obliged to you. Good-morning!"

"Good-morning, sir!"

And the Head rang off.

Mr. Quelch, the Remove-master, came into the study with a worried frown.

"I have to report, sir," he said, "that Bunter has absented himself from morning lessons. He appears to have left the school building."

The Head nodded.

"The foolish boy has broken bounds, with the object of going to Guildford to take part in the sports tour," he said. "He told the stationmaster at Courtfield that he had my permission to do so. I have requested that he shall be brought back to the school at once. You may leave the young rascal to me, Mr. Quelch."

"Very good, sir."

And the Remove-master quitted the study. Half an hour later a couple of railway officials entered. Billy Bunter, like Eugene Aram in the poem, walked between.

"We were instructed to bring this boy to you, sir," said one of the men.

"Thank you!" said the Head. "I am extremely obliged to you."

The men touched their hats and withdrew. Billy Bunter stood at the seat of judgment, with his knees fairly knocking together.

The fat junior had quite made up his mind to go to Guildford.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 19.

Even the fact that he was without money had not shaken his resolution.

Anybody but Bunter would have realised that the risk was too great.

But the Owl of the Remove had not counted the east, and he had been scared out of his wits when the ticket-examiner dragged him out of the train at Courtfield.

"Bunter!" said the Head sternly.

"Ow!"

"You have behaved in a most outrageous manner! You have absented yourself from the school without permission, you have lied about it, and you have travelled with intent to defraud the railway company! What have you to say for yourself?"

Billy Bunter blinked at the Head through his big spectacles.

"I—I—ahem—I wasn't—I didn't!" he stammered.

"Do not mumble to me in that incoherent manner!" thundered the Head in tones which made Bunter jump. "I am waiting for an explanation from you!"

"It—it was like this, sir," said Bunter desperately. "Being the finest sportsman in the Remove—"

The Head stared.

"The best cricketer, boxer, runner, and oarsman—"

"You do not underrate your abilities, Bunter!" said the Head drily.

"Ahem! Well, being such a jolly good all-round fellow, sir, I considered I ought to go to Guildford, to—to uphold the honour and glory of Greyfriars, sir!"

"Were you selected a member of Vernon-Smith's party?"

"Yes. I—I mean, nunno, sir. But that was owing to personal jealousy, sir. The fellows have never given me a fair chance, sir, and—"

"Nonsense, Bunter! If you were indeed a first-class sportsman, as you pretend to be, your prowess would not be overlooked. In any case, how dare you leave the school in this way without permission?"

"I—I didn't, sir!" Bunter said wildly. "Old Quelch—I mean, Mr. Quelch—said I could go!"

"What!"

"He told me to—to go forth and prosper. Shook me warmly by the hand, sir, and said,

'Now then, Bunter, it's up to you' or words to that effect, sir."

"Bunter!"

"He said, 'Mind you kick plenty of runs'—I—I mean, 'hit plenty of goals,' sir."

The Head rose up in wrath.

"How dare you concoct such a jargon of falsehoods, Bunter? Hold out your hand!"

"Mum-mum-my hand, sir?"

"Yes; at once!"

"But I—I wasn't—I never—"

Swish!

"Yaroooooop!"

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Bunter roared with anguish as the cane bit into his fat palm.

"Now the other hand!" said the Head grimly. "I will endeavour to teach you,

Bunter—swish!—that falsehood and wrongdoing—swish, swish—are not to be tolerated—swish, swish, swish!"

Billy Bunter nearly curled up.

This was not the first swishing he had received at the hands of the Head, but it was certainly one of the most severe.

"Now go to your Form-room," panted Dr. Locke, "and never dare to resort to such duplicity again!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow! Oh dear! Oh, crumbs! Hellup!"

The Head lifted his cane suggestively, and Billy Bunter fled from the study.

With aching heart—and hands—he realised that the immediate future would have to be spent at Greyfriars in lieu of Guildford!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Sons of Surrey.

"A LAS!"

"Alack!"

"Oh dear!"

These doleful exclamations burst from the lips of Vernon-Smith's eleven.

The match with the boys of Surrey was progressing—not at all in the way that the Greyfriars juniors had intended it should progress.

Vernon-Smith, winning the toss, had decided to bat first.

A chapter of accidents had befallen the Remove team, and this, coupled with the fact that Surrey possessed a couple of demon bowlers, had brought about an extraordinary collapse.

The Remove team had been dismissed for the anything but grand total of 12!

With a groan Peter Todd bent over the scoring-book.

This is what he saw:

GREYFRIARS REMOVE.

First Innings.

H. Vernon-Smith, 1-b-w., b. Carr..	0
P. Todd, run out.....	0
G. Bulstrode, b. Jackson.....	2
R. Penfold, c. and b. Carr.....	1
R. D. Ogilvy, b. Carr.....	0
R. Rake, hit wkt., b. Jackson.....	1
R. P. Russell, not out.....	5
W. Wibley, b. Carr.....	0
D. Morgan, b. Carr.....	0
P. Hazeldene, retired hurt.....	0
T. Dutton, b. Carr.....	0
Extras.....	3

Total..... 12

Bad luck had dogged the movements of the Remove eleven.

Vernon-Smith's first ball had struck his pad, and the umpire had given him out leg-before, a decision which was open to doubt.

But Vernon-Smith had not stayed to argue the point. An umpire's decree was as inexorable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

A few minutes later, Bulstrode had called Peter Todd for a short run, and Peter could not cover the ground in time. A smart throw had brought about his downfall.

As if this were not bad enough, Dick Rake had had the misfortune to knock down his own wicket.

Shortly afterwards, Hazeldene had received an accidental but painful crack on the head with the ball, and had been compelled to retire to the pavilion.

"All out for 12!" gasped Ogilvy. "Carry me home to die, somebody!"

"It's awful!" said Vernon-Smith. "Wharton told me to send him a wire if anything startling happened. I think he would find this just a little too startling!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Thank goodness there's a second innings!" said Bulstrode.

Vernon-Smith turned to Hazeldene.

"Are you fit to carry on, Hazel?"

"Afraid not, Smitty. My head's going round and round!"

"Hard cheese! I must play Elliott, then." The Surrey boys were in high feather.

Having disposed of Greyfriars for the inglorious total of 12, they anticipated no difficulty in winning the match.

But a surprise was in store for them.

Vernon-Smith and Penfold opened the bowling, and they were dead on the mark.

Jimmy Carr was the first victim.

He ran out to a simple-looking ball from Penfold—a ball which curled round the bat in a most uncanny manner, and flicked off the baits.

The captain of the Surrey team made his way back to the pavilion.

"Hard luck, old man!" said Jackson, his second-in-command.

Jimmy Carr grunted.

"Have you ever seen those two famous pictures, 'The Hope of His Side,' and 'Out First ball'?" he asked. "Well, that's me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jackson walked out to the wickets, padded and gloved, and looking capable of mighty things.

The next moment he walked back again, whistling "The Death of Nelson." Penfold had committed assault and battery on his middle stump.

The remaining Surrey batsmen were not so easily disposed of. They batted slowly and stolidly, and figures began to appear in place of the "big round noughts" on the telegraph-board.

But Penfold and Vernon-Smith were in excellent trim, and they were well backed up in the field.

Surrey's first innings closed for the moderate total of 35.

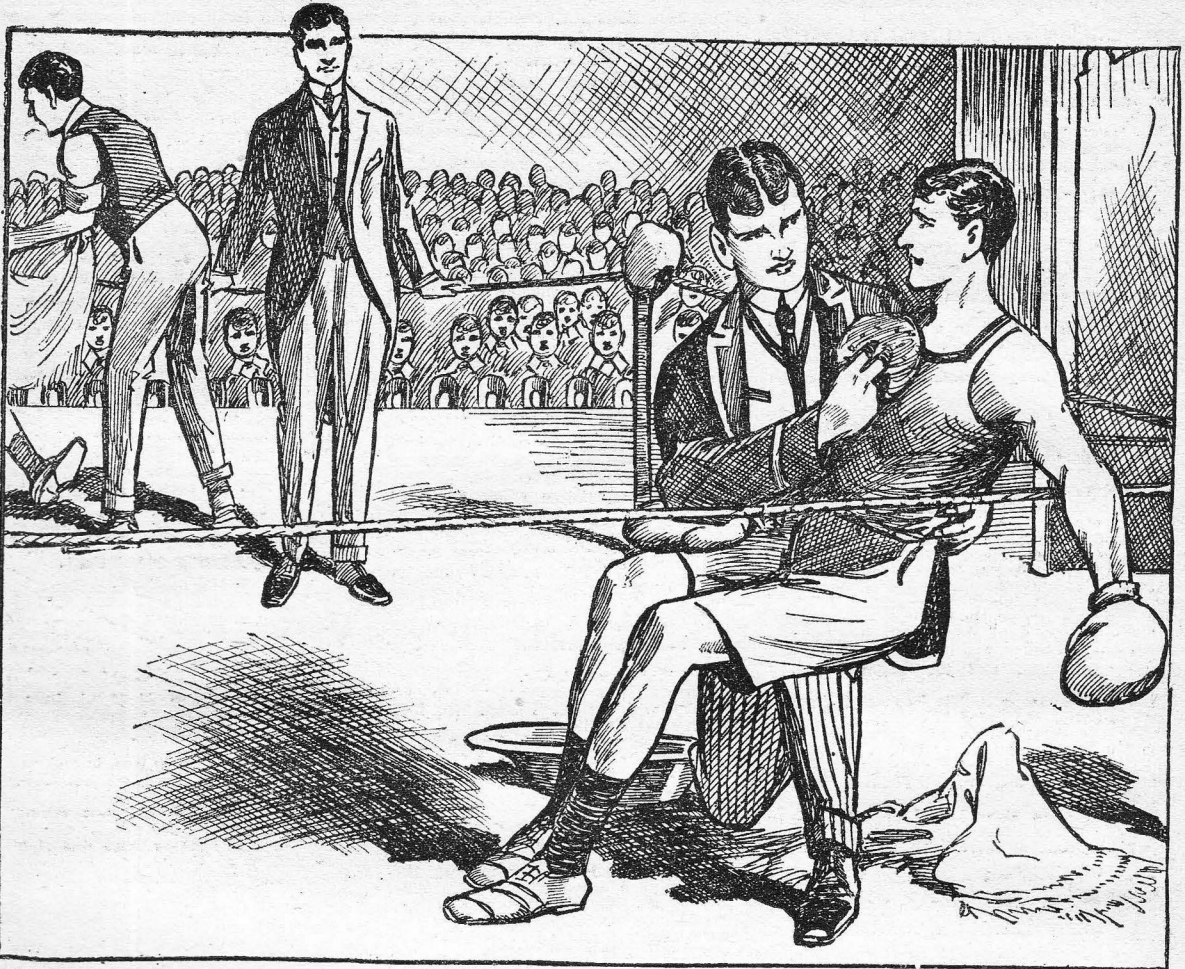
Then came an interval for lunch, which was served on the ground.

Under the genial influence of cold veal and ginger-pop, the hopes of the Greyfriars juniors revived.

When the game restarted, quite a crowd had collected on the ground.

It was fortunate that the Removites didn't suffer from stage-fright, or their second innings would have been little better than their first.

As it was, they batted with briskness and



"Finding the pace too hot?" inquired the Bounder, as he brought the sponge into play. "I shall lick him," replied Dick Russell. "It's only a matter of time." (See page 6.)

determination, and the boys of Surrey were given a couple of hours' leather-hunting.

Vernon-Smith rattled up 40 before he was bowled; and Penfold and Peter Todd and Bulstrode each contributed useful scores.

The Greyfriars seconds innings totalled 122. Surrey therefore required exactly 100 to give them the victory.

"What hopes?" murmured Jimmy Carr, strapping on his pads.

"The prospect's decidedly rosy," said Jackson, "if we keep an eye on that fellow Vernon-Jones—"

"Vernon-Smith, rathead!"

"Just as you like. If we watch those leg-breaks of his, we shall be all serene."

"I don't know so much," grunted Jimmy Carr. "I'm wondering if the light will hold out."

"If it doesn't," said Jackson philosophically, "we shall have to slog boundaries in the dark, that's all!"

There was a cheer as the first Surrey pair walked on to the pitch.

The cheer was repeated when, a moment later, Jimmy Carr smote a half-volley of Vernon-Smith's, and placed the pavilion roof in jeopardy.

"Well hit, sir!"

"That's the stuff to give 'em!"

Jimmy Carr continued to go great guns. The bowling was good, but he never faltered.

Ten—20—30 went up on the board; and the Greyfriars fellows began to look anxious.

"Take a turn with the ball, Dutton!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith.

"Eh? Of course they'll stonewall," said Dutton, misunderstanding as usual. "It won't do for them to be reckless."

Vernon-Smith groaned.

"I want you to start bowling at this end!" he shouted.

"Sorry," said Dutton, "but I haven't a copy!"

"What?"

"I haven't a copy of 'The Boys' Friend.' And if I had, I shouldn't let you have it. I'm surprised at you, Smithy. You should take more interest in the game."

Peter Todd approached Dutton, and gave a bellow which could be heard all over the ground.

"Bowl, you duffer—bowl!"

"Oh, all serene!" said Dutton, catching the ball as Vernon-Smith tossed it to him. "I can hear you all right, Toddy, when you don't mumble."

"My hat!"

Dutton went on to bowl, and the batting career of Jimmy Carr came to a sudden full stop.

He slashed Dutton's first ball in the direction of point, and was preparing to run, when a flannelled figure dashed up and brought off a brilliant catch.

It was Dick Rake.

"Well held, by Jove!" said Jimmy Carr, as he walked out. "Thought I was good for a century. However, it's no use shedding tears. We've got the game well in hand."

And so it seemed; for the telegraph-board registered 35 runs for the loss of only one wicket.

The Greyfriars fieldsmen warmed to their work. Tom Dutton bowled well; but the batting was slightly superior.

The scoring, however, became slow—very slow. The batsmen snickered an occasional ball through the slips, but there were no big hits and no boundaries.

Jimmy Carr shouted a word of warning from the pavilion.

"Time's getting on, you fellows!"

Jackson of Surrey opened his shoulders to a slow ball from Dutton. He expected to send it soaring to the pavilion; instead of which an ominous rattling sound behind him told its own tale.

Surrey still required 50 runs. The question was, would they have time to get them?

Away over the imposing range of hills called the Hog's Back dark clouds drifted ominously. And shortly afterwards heavy drops of rain began to fall.

The batsmen started to hit out. It was the only game to play now.

Wickets fell with delightful frequency. But the score mounted considerably, and when the last man hurried out from the pavilion the situation was interesting in the extreme.

Ten runs were wanted to give Surrey the victory; and there were ten minutes to go.

A murmur arose from the crowd, swelling into a roar.

"Play up, there!"

"Let's hear from you, Surrey!"

Jimmy Carr was a wise skipper. He had not—as many captains do—sent the worst batsman in last.

The fellow who now ran out to the wickets was Stanley, and he was a smiter.

But Greyfriars were on the alert now.

The fieldsmen crouched low, watching the batsman as if they would mesmerise him.

Penfold was bowling, and, although tired, he never lost his head or his length. He was bowling as well now as he had done in the beginning.

Stanley cast a wary glance round the field. He could see no loophole. Fieldsmen seemed to be everywhere. Two balls from Penfold were tapped back to the bowler.

The third was not quite so deadly. Stanley ran out to it, and, by a superhuman effort, lifted it out of the ground for 6!

"Only 4 more!" chortled Jimmy Carr.

"Play up, Stanley!"

But Stanley took no more liberties with Penfold. And now it was the other batsman's turn to face Dutton.

Tom Dutton might have been as deaf as a doorpost, but he knew how to bowl.

The batsmen could do nothing with the first four balls. They swerved wickedly, and

only by a miracle was the wicket kept intact.

The fifth ball was pulled round to leg for two.

A hush fell upon the spectators.

Surrey were within two runs of victory; but the umpire was already looking at his watch.

The last ball of Dutton's over was a beauty. The batsman scraped at it feebly; and the next instant it reposed in the wicket-keeper's hands.

"Howzatt?"

It was a sharp, strained cry from the fieldsmen.

"Not out!" said the umpire.

Fortunately for Surrey, the batsman had not actually hit the ball.

And now the excitement was at fever pitch.

The rain came down in a deluge, soaking players and umpires alike. But no one heeded it. Surrey needed two runs, and Stanley was facing Penfold for the last over.

Crack!

There was a sound of bat meeting ball, and Stanley started to run.

But his partner waved him back.

"No, no!" he cried.

Dick Rake had fastened on to that ball like a terrier. He returned it to the bowler on the instant.

Penfold's next ball all but shattered the wicket. It flashed past the off-stump, and thudded into the wicket-keeper's hands with an impact which made the umpire shudder.

"Great, Pen—great!" murmured Peter Todd. "Keep it up, old scout!"

The remaining balls of Penfold's over were far too good to hit. The neighbouring clocks began to chime, and the umpire came forward.

The match, so splendidly contested from start to finish, had ended in a draw.

"Oh, my hat!" muttered Vernon-Smith, mopping his heated brow. "That was warm while it lasted! They only wanted two, and they'd have got 'em, but for Penfold. Well played, Pen!"

"A jolly close game!" said Jimmy Carr, coming out to meet the fieldsmen. "I thought it was all over with us once or twice."

"And I thought the same about us," said Vernon-Smith. "You fellows deserved to win."

"I'm not so sure. I rather think you did."

The Greyfriars juniors walked back to their hotel in a very cheerful mood.

It had been a great tussle; and they rejoiced in the knowledge that there were even greater tussles to come.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Rivals in the Ring!

GUILDFORD is not a "modern" town. Although one of the most familiar stopping-places on the London to Portsmouth road, it is quiet and old-fashioned.

To the Greyfriars juniors it seemed another Courtfield.

There was no tramway system—no roar and hum and bustle. Once or twice a day an ancient motor-charabanc floundered through the town on its way to Hindhead. Otherwise, there was no traffic to speak of. But Guildford is none the less charming by reason of these deficiencies.

There was one theatre of note; and this had been booked by the tourists for the afternoon following the cricket-match, when a Greyfriars representative was to meet one of the Surrey boys in the ring.

Dick Russell was the chosen candidate for Greyfriars.

The Remove was rich in fighting-men, and Russell was one of the best of them. Time was when he had won the light-weights' championship at Aldershot, in the Public Schools Boxing Tournament. Remembering this, Vernon-Smith had wisely selected Dick Russell to do battle on this occasion.

Russell's opponent was a boy named Belton, who had already won a great name for himself locally. He was a slim youngster, very docile-looking, but possessed of a punch which, when it got home, usually landed the recipient on the mat.

Long before the time fixed for the contest the theatre was packed; for the affair had been advertised for miles around.

Gwynne was to referee the fight; while Vernon-Smith acted as Dick Russell's second, and Jimmy Carr as Belton's.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 19.

A ring had been made on the stage, and great was the excitement when Gwynne got to business.

"Seconds out! Time!"

Dick Russell, a lithe figure, in his tight-fitting vest and shorts, rushed to the attack.

Russell, like many an older and more experienced boxer, believed in getting off the mark well. Many a bout has been lost through a good boxer dallying, and keeping all his energies in reserve, only to find himself "outed" by his opponent at an early stage of the fight.

"Go it, Russell!" came a voice from the front row—the voice of Donald Ogilvy.

"Sock it into him, Belton!" came a much more impressive shout from the back.

Gwynne raised his hand for silence.

The first round provided plenty of thrills.

Belton, like Russell, had determined to force the fighting from the outset; and the result was plenty of give and take.

Quite early in the proceedings Russell was sent spinning against the ropes by a powerful right-hander. He rallied, however, and his left and right thudded in swift succession against Belton's ribs.

There was something very clean and sportsmanlike about the contest which made an irresistible appeal to the spectators.

Both Russell and Belton received a good many hard knocks, but there was a smile on the face of each. They took their gruel with characteristic pluck, and always came up for more with a cheery grin.

Dick Russell had bellows to mend when, at the end of the first round, he planted himself on Vernon-Smith's knee.

"Finding the pace too hot?" inquired the Bounder, as he brought the sponge into play.

Russell grinned breathlessly.

"He's certainly more than up to my weight," he said. "But I shall lick him. It's only a matter of time."

"Use your left more," said Vernon-Smith. "Drive it home as hard as you can."

"When he gives me a chance, Smithy!" gasped Russell. "He's got a left as well, you know, and I've got to be on my guard. I had a taste of it in the first round, and it turned me giddy."

"Time!" said Gwynne.

Belton came forward in an apparently listless manner, as if he would not harm a fly. But within ten seconds he was raining a shower of blows upon his opponent.

Russell guarded some; but he did not easily shake off the effects of the others.

People who had expected the bout to extend into ten or twelve rounds were likely to be disappointed.

Such a hurricane pace could not be maintained for long.

There was hard hitting, and plenty of it; and the fellow who hit hardest and more frequently would win.

Dick Russell seemed all at sea in the second round.

So persistent was Belton's attack that the Greyfriars fellow could neither see clearly nor think clearly.

He took a great deal of punishment; but just before the end of the round, when the audience expected to see him swept off his feet, he skipped smartly to one side, and shot out his left with tremendous force.

Belton went to the boards with a crash. But the call of "Time!" saved him.

Vernon-Smith dabbed at Russell's heated face in silence. Comment was superfluous. Russell had the upper hand now. He needed no further incitement to go in and win.

Belton came up for the third round looking—and feeling—a wreck. But the light of battle still shone in his eyes, and in spite of Russell's relentless attack he kept his feet.

But not for long.

Russell's right smote his chin with a jarring impact, and then Russell's left—a far more formidable affair—crashed upon his temple, making him reel.

The Surrey fellow knew that the game was up. But, being a Surrey fellow, he kept on. His head was swimming, and his legs were no longer self-supporting. The murmur of the crowd sounded far away. His strength was failing him, his eyes blinked uncertainly.

But he told himself that he must not give up yet.

Russell was by no means as fresh as a daisy; but he saw that he had his man beaten, and resolved to clinch matters at once rather than let Belton go on fighting a hopeless battle.

Dashing in, Russell shot out his left.

It was not a particularly powerful blow, but it was powerful enough for the purpose.

Belton lurched unsteadily for an instant, and then fell for the second time.

Gwynne began to count.

"The poor beggar's done!" said Jimmy Carr.

Jackson nodded.

"They teach 'em how to box at Greyfriars," he said admiringly. "That fellow Russell's a corker!"

Gwynne continued to count, and Belton looked for a moment as if he would rise.

But he sank back again, utterly spent.

"Russell wins," said Gwynne quietly.

And the cheers which followed rang very pleasantly in the ears of the Greyfriars junior.

"Whither bound, Smithy?" asked Peter Todd, as Vernon-Smith was about to leave the building.

"I'm going to send a wire to Wharton," said Vernon-Smith. "There's something to write home about at last!"

And Harry Wharton, in the midst of prep. that evening in No. 1 Study, read the following telegram to his chums:

"Dick Russell defeated Belton of Surrey in three rounds.—Vernon Smith."

Every schoolboy has a day which stands out prominently from the rest—a day of achievement and triumph, ever to be looked back upon with the keenest pleasure and delight.

This was Russell's day!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Close of Play.

VERNON-SMITH'S party enjoyed their sojourn in Surrey immensely. The sports themselves were splendidly contested, and in the intervals the juniors rambled through the pleasant countryside.

A visit was made to Hindhead, from the topmost crest of which the juniors could see, with the aid of a telescope, the sparkling waters of the Solent.

There were other sights, too, in and around Guildford, which the Greyfriars juniors would not easily forget.

There was Waverley Abbey—a crumbling relic of the days of the monks; there was Guildford Castle; there was the famous picture-gallery at Compton; and the huge military camp at Witley, where cheery-faced Colonials, their task in the Great War accomplished, were packing up in readiness for their return to civil life. And there was the memorial to Jack Phillips, the famous wireless operator who remained loyally at his post during the sinking of the Titanic.

The pleasant River Wey, which rippled melodiously through green meadows and mossy paddocks until it joined the Thames at Weybridge, was a great source of attraction.

On this river—which was little more than a stream at this part—the juniors enjoyed many a pleasant trip in Rob Roy and Canadian canoes, or tried their skill at punting.

In the river the swimming contests were held, and here the boys of Surrey came into their own.

The Greyfriars fellows had been accustomed to bathing in the Sark and in the sea; but they had not taken up the sport of swimming so seriously as their opponents.

Besides which, the Remove's best swimmers, such as Harry Wharton, Hurree Singh, and Mark Linley, were at Greyfriars.

There were seven races in all. Surrey won five of them, and Greyfriars two.

Dick Penfold won the thirty yards' race after a wild scramble on the part of the competitors, and Vernon-Smith carried off the chief event—a race of half a mile.

In the running races Greyfriars gave a better account of themselves.

Peter Todd, flashing over the ground like a hare, won the hundred yards by a foot.

The hurdle-race fell to Surrey, likewise the quarter-mile. But immediately afterwards Hazeldene of the Remove staggered his friends, and himself into the bargain, by squeezing home first in the obstacle race. Then came the tug-of-war.

There was a great demonstration of enthusiasm as the rope was uncoiled.

"We've simply got to pull this off!" said Jimmy Carr, addressing his comrades.

"Or perish in the attempt!" agreed Jackson.

Surrey won the first pull, and Greyfriars the second.

The third and last pull provided a Spartan tussle.

First one side, then the other, gained the advantage; and finally, Vernon-Smith's team, gathering all their remaining strength,

threw themselves upon the rope in a last united effort, and the Surrey boys came sprawling over the line, baffled and beaten.

A long interval followed, while the competitors pumped in breath. And then came the mile—a race which sorely taxed the energies of the fittest.

Jimmy Carr established a good lead early in the race, and he looked a sure winner; but in the last lap his knees gave way, and he came crashing to earth. The strain of the preceding contests had proved too much for him.

Vernon-Smith, who had been coming along at a jog-trot, thinking the race was as good as over, now quickened his speed.

Shaking off all opposition, he breasted the tape six yards to the good.

A Marathon race had been included in the list of events, but Gwynne, in consultation with a group of Surrey supporters, decided to postpone it until the morrow.

Most of the fellows had run themselves to a standstill, and to hold a Marathon there and then would have been little short of martyrdom.

But a long and refreshing sleep worked wonders.

When the Greyfriars fellows awoke next morning, and looked from the windows of their hotel towards the smiling pastures of Surrey, they experienced a sense of fitness and exhilaration.

"If we can only pull off the Marathon," said Vernon-Smith, "we shall deserve well of our country. Who's going to enter for it?"

"I am, for one," said Peter Todd.

"Same here!" said Bulstrode and Penfold and Dick Rake together.

"Afraid I shall have to be a looker-on in Vienna," said Dick Russell. "That fellow Belton's made me feel a jolly sight too stiff and sore to run in a Marathon."

"Never mind, old man," said Donald Ogilvy. "We shall be well represented. Wib's running, and so's Morgan—likewise your humble servant."

"What about you, Dutton?" asked the Bouncer.

"I strongly object!" said Tom Dutton.

"What?"

"I strongly object to having my brekker of mutton," said the deaf junior. "I should prefer eggs and bacon."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Are you running in the Marathon race?" exclaimed Peter Todd.

"Look here," said Dutton warmly, "if you talk to me like that, Toddy, we shall quarrel. What's the matter with my face, anyway?"

"You chump!" hooted Peter. "I was talking about a race!"

"So's yours!" said Dutton promptly.

"Eh?"

"Your chivvy is just as much out of place as mine. And if you make any more remarks of that sort, I'll pulverise you!"

Peter Todd sank down on to the bed, gasping.

But Bulstrode and Morgan succeeded at last in making Dutton understand, and the deaf junior readily signified his willingness to take part in the Marathon.

The course was a long one.

The race was due to start at Guildford, and the track led through Godalming and Witley, and back to Guildford by a circuitous route.

Surrey were strongly represented.

Jimmy Carr was there, with shining morning face; and Jackson and Stanley were also conspicuous figures.

The Surrey boys had the advantage of knowing every inch of the road. They knew where the big hills loomed up. They knew where the road declined into a valley.

The word of command was rapped out, and the runners were off.

It was a long race and a hard one.

All the previous events seemed to pale into insignificance before this strenuous ordeal.

Jimmy Carr took the lead at an early stage. The Surrey boy went ahead with long, swinging strides, and he maintained a capital pace for half a dozen miles.

Then he began to fall back a little.

But Jackson of Surrey was just behind, and Jimmy Carr had no doubt that, if he himself failed, his chum would carry off the honours.

The sun blazed down from a cloudless sky. It beat upon the heads of the runners, as if determined to weaken their efforts.

When the last mile came to be run very few fellows were still in the running.

Jackson had taken the lead, and was clinging to it doggedly.

Behind him plodded a Greyfriars fellow.

It was not Vernon-Smith. It was not Peter Todd. Neither was it Dick Penfold, who generally made a good show in a race of this description.

The solitary runner was Tom Dutton.

How he had got so near the front was a puzzle, even to Dutton himself.

But he had got there, and he meant to stay there.

More than that, he meant to forge ahead of Jackson.

They had reached the outskirts of Guildford now.

Only half a mile to go!

Tom Dutton overcame an irresistible impulse to throw himself down to rest.

For the sake of his school he must struggle on.

He kept his eyes glued on the figure in front, and was not satisfied until he had overtaken it.

Jackson made desperate efforts to retrieve his position, but he could not make up the leeway, and Tom Dutton won a magnificent race with a dozen yards to spare.

It was a tremendous triumph for the deaf junior, and he bore the congratulations of his schoolfellows with becoming modesty—chiefly because he quite failed to understand what was said!

All too soon the time of departure came, and there was great cordiality on all sides when the Greyfriars fellows bade farewell to their recent opponents.

Weighing the whole of the events together, honours were easy; but Vernon-Smith's party had fared every bit as well as Harry Wharton & Co. had done in Lancashire—a fact which gave cause for much rejoicing.

"Well, we've had our innings," said Peter Todd, as the train steamed out of Guildford Station. "Now we've got to go back to Latin and Greek, under Quelch's gimlet eye!"

"Never mind," said Vernon-Smith; "this is only a beginning. There are heaps more counties to visit yet; and if they're all like Surrey, we shall have the time of our lives!"

"Hear, hear!"

Quite a crowd of juniors had collected in the dusky Close to greet the Removites on their return.

A mighty cheer went up as Vernon-Smith & Co. came in at the gates, and combs and tissue-paper and tin-whistles were much in evidence.

The Head himself sat for Vernon-Smith that evening, and congratulated him in glowing terms upon the splendid leadership of his side in the thrilling and exciting tussles with the sportsmen of Surrey!

THE END.

In Deep Disgrace!

(Concluded from page 16.)

"Lathom?"

"Holmes, I cannot believe it! I know that boy's sterling honour and straightness. And he is but a child. I—I can't believe it, and yet I must!"

"Kildare?"

"Don't ask me, sir! I can't stand it!" Kildare was very near the breaking-point. Not nearer than Mr. Lathom, perhaps. But he was so much younger—a boy among men.

But just because of that the Head felt he must have his verdict.

"It is hard for all of us," said the Head gently. "But you represent what none of us does—the present St. Jim's generation. What do you say?"

"Guilty!" breathed Kildare. And then: "Poor kid!" he murmured.

"I will not send for him yet," said the Head. "Even now, though I see expulsion inevitable, I do not quite see my way clear. This looks like a case of unsuspected homicidal tendencies—something apart from the boy's known character."

"It is easier to credit that. I can't believe him wifully wicked," said Mr. Lathom.

Kildare went out without a word.

In the junior Common-room he found practically the whole of the Shell and Fourth gathered. Some of the Third had come in, too, and had been allowed to stay unrebuked.

"I can't believe it, whatever the evidence may be," said Tom Merry. "I've been convicted myself when I wasn't guilty, and I haven't all the faith in evidence that I used to have."

"I cannot believe it because I am quite sure that Fwanky could not have done it!" Arthur Augustus said.

"And I don't believe it!" Talbot affirmed.

"Nor I!" said Clive.

"What I say is—why all this fuss?" drawled Cardew. "I'm not goin' to chuck my pal Franky even if he did scheme to get merry old Selby biffed on the napper! Dash it all, it's what the old bouncer's been askin' for these terms an' terms!"

"That sort of talk won't do, Cardew!" said Kildare sternly from the door.

"Hallo, Kildare! Is Selby—er—an angel?" inquired the unabashed Ralph Reckness. "If so, I withdraw my unfeelin' remarks, not otherwise."

"He's not an angel, nor likely to be yet, if ever!" replied Kildare. "Is Levison major here?"

"With the kid in our study," said Clive.

Kildare went. But Study No. 9 was empty.

Well, there was no compulsion on the Levisons to stay there, and it was not exactly Kildare's business. It worried him; but then the whole affair worried him. He went off to find Darrel and tell him all about it.

More than an hour passed before Frank Levison was sent for again.

And then he did not come. It was Ernest who came.

His face was pale and drawn, his eyes were unnaturally bright, but the uplift of the chin was more defiant than ever.

"Where is your brother?" asked the Head.

"On his way home by now," answered Levison major. "Oh, I suppose I shall be sacked for it! I don't care! I knew it was the best place for the kid, and I wasn't going to have him staying here, just to be kicked out in disgrace! So I took him to Rylcombe and put him in the train. You can do what you like to me, but the pater will see that you don't touch Frank!"

The Head looked at him, sternness and sympathy mingled in his face.

"I am not sure that you are not right, Levison," he said. "You have acted very wrongly, very foolishly; and yet you may be right. You can go!"

But Frank Levison had not gone home. He had gone no further than Wayland.

Of what happened to him afterwards, of Piggott's subsequent proceedings, and of Cardew's unravelling of the tangled skein, another story must tell.

THE END.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 19

SCHOOL

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A Grand Long, Complete Story
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Chums of Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Quaint Arrival!

HALLO, hallo, hallo! Who's the merchant?"

Jimmy Silver, of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood, paused on his way from the playing-fields, and pointed towards the gates with his cricket-bat.

Raby, Newcome, and Arthur Edward Lovell, who were with Jimmy Silver, followed the direction indicated by their leader, and with one accord chuckled.

A boy of about their own age stood at the gates, looking very confused. He was dressed in Etons which had undoubtedly seen better days, whilst a top-hat, which had long lost its gloss, adorned his head.

Jimmy Silver looked sharply at his chums. "Chuck it, you fellows!" he said shortly. "Blessed if I see any cause to laugh at him."

"Some hat—some clobber—some boy!" murmured Raby.

"Perhaps it's not his fault!" said Silver. "Shouldn't laugh at a kid because his clothes are shabby, you know."

Raby, Newcome, and Lovell glared. "Ass!" said Lovell witheringly. "What d'y mean? Who's laughing, fathead?" "You were—all of you were. Anyhow, I'm off to see the kid," said Silver.

He suited the action to his words, and strode off quickly towards the gates. For a moment his three chums stood looking after him, then they followed.

"The ass! Just as if we'd laugh at a kid because he wore shabby clothes!" said Lovell fiercely. "I've a jolly good mind to bump him!"

Raby looked a trifle sheepish as he walked along.

"Well, we did chuckle," he said slowly. "However, he didn't hear us, so it doesn't matter."

They nearly chuckled again as they saw the boy at the gates touch the brim of his topper as Jimmy Silver approached him.

"Please, zur, can 'e tell Oi if this be Wookrood?" he said.

Jimmy Silver stood still very suddenly. Raby and Newcome and Lovell came up, doing their best to hide a grin.

"Do what?" exclaimed Silver in surprise.

"Be this Wookrood?" asked the boy again.

"It be!" murmured Raby, with a slight chuckle. "Bain't it, Lovell?"

"Say it again—slowly, kid," said Silver, with a glance of warning towards his chums. The boy's eyes roamed from the Fistical Four to the grand old buildings that formed Rookwood. He seemed at a loss.

"Oi be comin' to Wookrood—"

"Oh, you mean Rookwood!" interrupted Jimmy Silver quickly. "I'm getting the hang of it now. You're a new kid, eh?"

The boy stared.

"Oi bain't be a kid, zur," he said slowly. "Oi be fourteen an' a half next week, zur. My feyther, 'e says—"

"Don't stand gassing in the gateway," interrupted Lovell. "Let's take him up to the study."

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"Can 'e tell Oi—" began the new boy.

Jimmy Silver thrust his arm through the other's.

"Come up to our study, kid," he said kindly. "We'll put you right when we get there."

He led the way up to the study. As soon as they entered the stately portals of the Classical House the new boy removed his topper, and carried it the remainder of the way under his arm.

Raby and Lovell stared at him, but did not venture to make any remark.

"Here we are, kid!" said Jimmy Silver, flinging open the study door. "Make yourself at home."

The new boy sat on the extreme edge of the one armchair which the study boasted, and peered slowly and somewhat dully about him.

"What's your name?" asked Silver.

The new boy jumped.

"They do call me Garge when Oi be out," he said slowly. "But my feyther he calls summatt else when Oi be at home."

Jimmy Silver & Co. chuckled, but did not ask "Garge" to enlighten them as to the name his father bestowed upon him.

"An' Oi coom to Wookrood—"

"Rookwood!" corrected Silver softly.

"Yes, Rookwood," said Garge.

Then he stopped. Raby looked at his chums and winked.

"Quite a talkative chap, you be, Garge," he said, imitating the country dialect with which Garge was afflicted. "Be you come to larn things?"

Garge did not so much as flicker an eyelid as he stared steadfastly at Raby.

"Ay. That be for what Oi've coom," he replied.

"Have you another name besides Gerge?" asked Silver.

Gerge nodded.

"Phipps they calls me—them as don't know Oi much," he said.

"I see. Come along with me—" began Silver.

But the study door was flung violently open at that moment, and Tommy Dodd, Tommy Cook, and Tommy Doyle appeared.

Jimmy Silver & Co. faced them hurriedly. They suspected a "rag" at once. But Tommy Dodd waved his hand and smiled.

"Don't get the wind up," he said magnanimously. "We come as friends. We hear, in fact, that you've picked up a pickled antique from the country."

He saw Phipps sitting down the next moment, and flushed.

"S-s-sorry, kid!" he said hastily. "No offence, you know."

Phipps stared at him, but did not speak.

Tommy Cook looked at Dodd, and Doyle looked at Cook.

"Mum!" whispered Cook. "Potty!"

"What's the giddy game, you chumps?" demanded Silver. "I'll have you know that we don't allow insects from the Modern side to crawl about here."

Tommy Dodd glared, and for the moment it looked as if there was going to be trouble for Jimmy Silver. But the leader of the Modern Fourth passed Jimmy Silver's remark over.

"Just came over to see the new chap," said Dodd quietly. "It takes a lot, you know, to get us into this place. Gives me a good idea as to how the soldier chaps must have felt when entering a dug-out known to be filled with gas. However—"

"Look here—" began Raby fiercely.

"I can't for long, my dear chap," interrupted Tommy Dodd coolly. "We have respect for our eyesight in the Modern House."

The Classical Co. glared.

"I know what they've come for," said Lovell impressively.

"Eh?"

"They've got over the last thick ears we gave them," went on Lovell. "They evidently think it time they had another one or two to help them along. Collar them!"

"Keep off, you dummies!" howled Dodd.

"It's Zimmerman—"

That was as far as he got with his re-

mark. Jimmy Silver & Co. were upon them the next moment, and Tommy Dodd & Co. found themselves sprawling on the study floor.

"Gerroff m' chest!" panted Tommy Dodd, as Silver climbed on top of him and seated himself across his rival.

"Not yet, ducky!" gasped Jimmy. "Wait until I get my breath back!"

He looked about him, and saw that Raby had Tommy Doyle in close embrace, rapidly nearing the door. At the same moment, with a sudden heave, Lovell and Newcome sent Tommy Cook flying through the doorway.

Cook met the passage floor with a bump.

"Ow!" he gasped.

He sat up, panting for breath.

"You silly asses!" he ejaculated. "Just you wait until I get some breath back, and I'll— Yoop!"

Tommy Cook did not mean to say he would yoop. That exclamation was caused by Tommy Doyle's form, propelled by Raby's lusty arms, meeting his own.

They sat up, glaring at each other.

"What did you do that for?" demanded Cook wrathfully.

Doyle stared.

"Fathead!" he snapped. "Do you think I came out like that for fun?"

"Couldn't beat one Classic rotter off your own bat!" snapped Tommy Cook. "I had two against me. Look out!"

Cook uttered a shout of warning as Bulkeley, the captain of the school, came striding down the passage. The two juniors struggled to their feet to get out of the way of the prefect, who, judging by his expression, was not overpleased with the row the juniors were creating.

Inside the study, Jimmy Silver and Raby were swinging Tommy Dodd by the arms and legs.

"Throw him out!" growled Newcome.

"One—two—three!"

"Go!" said Silver and Raby together.

And as Tommy Cook's warning reached them, Tommy Dodd went hurtling towards the doorway.

It was unfortunate that just at the moment Bulkeley should appear. He got in the way.

Tommy Dodd crashed into him, and sent him staggering back against the opposite wall, where he reeled and sat down with a bump.

"Ow! Fathead—" howled Tommy Dodd.

"Groogh! Oh, my hat!" gasped the Sixth-Former.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked amazed, and not a little nervous, when the fullness of their deed dawned upon them. It was not exactly the right thing for a junior to bowl over the captain of the school.

Bulkeley jumped up, and as Tommy Dodd endeavoured to do the same, the Sixth-Former gave him another push that sent him to the floor again.

"Ow! M-m-my hat! Is that you, Bulkeley?" he stammered, as he saw Bulkeley.

Bulkeley glared at him.

"Certainly, it is, you—You— Clear out of this back to your own House, you young scalliwags!" he said wrathfully.

Tommy Dodd & Co. fled. They had no desire to argue with the irate prefect. Bulkeley had been known to wield a cricket-stump with painful effects.

Bulkeley watched them until they disappeared round the corner of the passage, then he turned his attention to the occupants of the study from which Tommy Dodd had come—with painful results to Bulkeley!

Jimmy Silver & Co. eyed him nervously.

"Ahem! I say, Bulkeley—" began Silver.

"It's like this—" Raby commenced to say.

But Bulkeley was not in the mood to listen to explanations.

"Shut up!" he snapped. "Get to bed, you kids!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. edged towards the door, taking care to keep their faces towards the prefect. They expected Bulkeley to take advantage if they turned their backs.

Bulkeley smiled slightly as he saw the movement.

"I sha'n't kick you, you scamps!" he said quietly. "You jolly well deserve it—Hallo, who's the kid?"

He caught sight of George Phipps, and for a moment his eyes twinkled humorously as he noted the boy's appearance. Then he looked to Jimmy Silver for an answer to his question.

Jimmy Silver started. He had forgotten all about Phipps in the excitement of the row with Tommy Dodd & Co.

"M-my hat!" he stuttered. "Blessed if I didn't forget all about the kid!"

"Who is he?" roared Bulkeley. "I didn't ask you to tell me you forgot all about him, fathead!"

"He—he—he's Garge—from Zummerz!" stammered Raby. "He doesn't talk very much, Bulkeley!"

"Well, take him up to bed!" snapped the Sixth-Former. "And, mind, if there's a row up in the dormitory I shall bring a cricket-stump along with me!"

"Yes, Bulkeley!" said the juniors meekly. And, taking Phipps with them, they went up to the dormitory.

"Can 'e tell Oi—" began Phipps, as soon as he saw the rows of beds.

Jimmy Silver held up his hand.

"Shush! Not a murmur, kid!" he said. "Bulkeley is on the war-path!"

"Oi don't 'old with—" said Phipps.

"What we don't hold with is lickings from Bulkeley!" said Lovell emphatically. "Get your giddy clobber off, and get to bed!"

"Which be 'un?" asked Phipps slowly.

Jimmy Silver pointed to one that had been unused for some time.

"That be 'e!" he said, with a chuckle. "Get into it, kid!"

And George Phipps, proceeded to slowly undress himself for the night's repose. But there was an expression of bewilderment on his face as he did so.

For some reason, the country boy seemed amazed by his reception at Rookwood. He was quite slow of understanding, and showed a reluctance to speak.

As he lay in bed, Jimmy Silver thought of George Phipps, and mentally pitying the new junior, he made up his mind that "Garge" should have friends to protect him from the chipping and ragging which would inevitably follow when the fellows got to know about his presence at Rookwood.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Tubby Muffin Helps the New Boy.

TUBBY MUFFIN met George Phipps, the new junior, as he came downstairs the next morning.

"Hallo, kid!" he said cheerily.

"Pass a good night?"

George Phipps nodded.

"Oi did that, zur!" he said. "What I says is there 'ere. If we allus has them beds for to sleep in, then Oi'll be foine, zur!"

Tubby Muffin nodded impatiently.

"Yes—yes!" he said hastily. "Of course, you'll always have that bed, old friend!"

He spoke as if he had known and had been close chums with, George Phipps from early childhood. Tubby Muffin, in fact, was keen on making friends with the new boy.

His reason was made obvious in a very few moments. Anybody who possessed a little foresight would have seen the danger-signal, so to speak, and hurried away—without Tubby Muffin.

"Haven't had your breakfast yet?" asked Tubby.

George shook his head.

"No, zur," he said slowly. "Oi don't know where to go."

Tubby Muffin smiled affectionately, and thrust his hand through the new boy's arm.

"Come along with me, old chap!" he said cheerfully. "I'll show you where to go. I'm—ahem!—I'm famous in the school for the way I look after new chaps. Come on!"

George meekly suffered himself to be led along the corridor and down to the tuckshop. He seemed surprised that the small place could be the dining-room for the many fellows he had seen in the Fourth Form at Rookwood since he arrived the night before.

Tubby Muffin hustled his charge into the shop, and carefully closed the door. He did

not want other Rookwood fellows to see him there at that time of the day, for reasons of his own.

"Mornin', Master Muffin!" said Sergeant Kettle.

The sergeant kept the tuckshop, and he knew the little ways of Tubby Muffin—eat as much as he could and pay when he had the money.

He eyed the fat junior disparagingly.

"Which I wants to see the colour of your money, Master Muffin!" said Sergeant Kettle firmly.

Muffin coloured.

"Ahem! Really, sergeant, I think you're most rude!" he said indignantly. "Anybody would think I tried to obtain food—ahem!—under false pretences from the way you speak!"

Kettle raised his brows slightly.

"Don't you, sir?" he asked innocently.

"No!" roared Muffin excitedly. "Blessed if I can see why you are trying to—to—to lower me in the estimation of my friend here!"

"Oh!"

That was all Sergeant Kettle said. But his tone made up for what he left unsaid.

"This is the shop," said Muffin, turning to Phipps. "You can get all sorts of stuff here, you know. What shall we have?"

George Phipps looked round slowly.

"Oi don't umerstan', zur!" he said. "Do 'e have to pay for breakfast? In my last job, they allus—"

"Shush!"

Tubby Muffin held up a warning finger. He didn't want to give Kettle the impression that George Phipps had been taken to the shop under the impression that it was the dining-room.

"Sausages, Kettle!" he said. "And some ham and eggs, and bread-and-butter, and toffee for in class this morning, and perhaps a few biscuits for mid-morning lunch; and, yes, a couple of apples, and—"

"And the money?" asked Kettle firmly.

Tubby Muffin pointed to Phipps.

"Old friend of mine, Kettle," he said. "His treat!"

Kettle eyed the country lad, and doubtless thought him rather quiet for a junior at Rookwood. But, fortunately for Tubby, he did not ask Phipps if that statement was correct.

Sergeant Kettle mounted a small pair of steps, and proceeded to take sausages and several of the other commodities Tubby Muffin had ordered, from a shelf.

Tubby's eyes glistened hungrily as he saw the heap of good things grow high on the counter.

"My hat, George, old top, this is fine!" he said enthusiastically. "You're the sort of chap I like to see about. Wish to goodness there were a few more like you at Rookwood!"

Phipps appeared to think he ought to at least nod his head. He did so in his slow way, and Tubby smiled almost lovingly upon him.

"Yes, I should have the time of my life!" went on Tubby. "You see—"

He broke off and turned to the door. There came the sound of merry laughter and the pattering of feet, and Tommy Dodd & Co. flung open the door of the tuckshop and grinned amiably at the fat junior.

"Hallo, Tubby!" said Dodd cheerfully. "Found another victim?"

"Oh, really Dodd—"

"It's Garge from Zummerz!" ejaculated Tommy Cook wrathfully. "Oh, you blessed gormandising maggot, Tubby! Taking advantage of the kid's simplicity!"

"I'm not!" howled Tubby Muffin.

He began to wish he had let the new junior alone.

"Then how is it he's not at breakfast, you fat spoofer?" demanded Cook.

"Ahem! I—I—I was giving him a helping hand," explained Muffin nervously. "I—I—I say, Dodd, what's that for?"

Tommy Dodd was taking the spoon out of the huge pot of jam on the counter and advancing towards Tubby Muffin. His objective was obvious.

Muffin backed away.

"Keep off, you Modern rotter!" he howled. "I've just washed!"

Tommy Dodd grinned.

"You'll want a shave when we've finished with you!" he chuckled. "If Jimmy Silver & Co. can't look after the rotters of their House we'll do it for them!"

"That's the stuff!" said Cook heartily.

George Phipps stood looking on dazedly. He could not make out the juniors at Rookwood, who always seemed to be rowing with one another.

And when five minutes later he saw Tubby Muffin, even he could not help laughing.

Tubby was a sight for sore eyes. He was smothered in jam from head to foot—strawberry jam, raspberry jam, and all the other kinds of jam with which Sergeant Kettle's shop was amply stocked.

He sat on the floor, when Tommy Dodd & Co. had finished with him, and fairly howled.

"Ow! Groogh! It's in my mouth—"

"That's the proper place for jam, isn't it?" said Dodd innocently.

"And in my eyes—"

"You should have kept them closed."

"Ow! And in my hair! Groogh! You—you rotters!"

"Do instead of brilliantine!" said Cook comfortingly. "Think what we have savca you!"

Apparently that saying did not appeal to Muffin, for he did not cease howling. He was almost crying with rage and mortification. Certainly his victimisation of George Phipps had not been so fruitful as he had hoped.

"Think we had better send him back in charge of Phipps?" asked Cook of Dodd.

"Eh? Garge couldn't take charge of a pussy!" said Dodd. "Had your breakfast, Garge?"

George shook his head.

"Master Tubbin was just a-gooin' to give it Oi," he said slowly.

He was somewhat mixed in the names, and Tommy Dodd chuckled.

"Well, you won't get it here, kid," he said kindly. "He was just playing on your simple ways—ahem!—I mean, he was taking advantage of your being a new boy. All meals are chucked in with the fees the old man pays."

Slowly it dawned upon Phipps what Tommy Dodd meant, and he stood surveying the juniors.

"He be a bad 'un?" he asked, pointing to Tubby Muffin.

Tubby Muffin was still sitting on the floor, moaning, as he endeavoured to get the jam from out of his eyes.

"A rank outsider—a Classic fellow, in fact!" said Dodd. "On the whole, I think you'd better take him home. Chuck me a piece of string, Ket!"

Sergeant Kettle willingly obliged. Tommy Dodd & Co. were good customers, and always paid for what they consumed—or used for such purposes as they had used the jam for Tubby Muffin.

"Come on, Tubs!" said Dodd cheerfully.

He advanced towards Muffin, string in hand, and Tubby leapt to his feet with surprising agility, considering his weight.

"What! Keep off! Gerraway, you rotter!" he howled.

"Not a little bit, Tubs!" said Dodd. "We're going to send you home in charge of Garge!"

Muffin, probably realising his helplessness, did not struggle as Tommy Dodd fashioned the string into a loop and fastened it round his collar. He did not use up all the string, but left about a yard hanging loose from the loop.

"Lemme see," said Tommy Dodd thoughtfully. "Shall we give him a little more jam first?"

Muffin backed nervously.

"I say, Dobby old chap, 'uff's as good as a feast, you know!" he said in alarm.

"Dobby old chap" grinned.

"But seeing that you're so affectionate this morning I'm inclined to let you off," he said slowly. "Here, Garge, take this end of the string, and lead your—er—friend back to the Classical House!"

George looked dully at Tubby's jammy figure.

"Oi don't 'old—" he began.

"Hand him over to Jimmy Silver—you know him, chap who met you at the gates last night—with Tommy Dodd & Co.'s compliments!" interrupted Dodd coolly. "And Tubby!"—he raised a forefinger and shook it warningly under Tubby's nose—"if you break away from your leader, we'll come over in the dead of night and sow thistles and—and— and nests of ants to your fat carcass! Got me?"

"Ow! You—you— Ow!" was all the fat junior could say.

Tubby Muffin, quite overcome with the mere idea of such a punishment, made an effort to get away as he was led by the string across the quadrangle to the Modern House by the simple lad from the country.

Shrieks of laughter greeted him when he reached the House; and Jimmy Silver & Co., who happened to be passing, stopped and surveyed the fat junior through eyes dimmed with tears of merriment.

"It's our Tubby," gurgled Jimmy Silver, "in charge of his trainer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

George made straight for Silver without a smile on his face. He took in all seriousness the little job Tommy Dodd had given him. "Oi was to 'and Master Muffin over to you, zur," he said. "Master Tommy Dodd & Co. sent 'e, with their complements."

Jimmy Silver & Co., at the mention of their rivals' names, suddenly ceased to laugh. "My hat!" said Silver. "The cheeky bouncers! Their complements—I mean compliments—indeed!"

"There's more in this than meets the eye!" snorted Raby. "Take him up to the study, and we'll investigate!"

And Tubby Muffin, though howling to be freed, was led up to the study.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. The Old Boys' Joke!

NOW tell us what happened, Tubby!" Jimmy Silver surveyed the fat junior critically. Funny though Tubby's appearance had been, for the Modern House to rag the Classical juniors in this way was unthinkable—to Jimmy Silver & Co., at any rate.

"I—I—was—ahem!—going out of my way to help Garge," said Tubby nervously, "when those rotters set upon me. That's all—that's all there is in it, Silver!"

Silver glared. Despite Tubby's endeavours to hide the fact that he had been doing his best to "cadge" a feed at the simple junior's expense, Silver saw through the story at once.

"You—you fat fraud!" he snorted indignantly. "I suppose you were cadging a feed from Garge?"

"Nunno—not at all, Silver, old chap," stammered Muffin.

"Pouf! Not so much of the 'old chap!'" snapped Silver. "Then I suppose Tommy Dodd & Co. came along and tumbled to your game?"

"Nunno!"

"Nother pouf! I consider you've let the House down!" said Silver angrily. "And, as captain of the Fourth, I jolly well think you ought to be scragged!"

"No need to think about it!" growled Newcome. "Let's do it!"

And Tubby Muffin, now thoroughly sorry he had allowed his appetite to lead him into "helping" George Phipps, was seized by four pairs of strong hands, and bumped—hard!

Bump!

"Ow! Yaroooh! Oh dear! Yooow!"

Tubby roared as he was bumped. Jimmy Silver & Co. did not bump him very lightly, so he had good cause to roar.

"There, you rotter!"—bump! "There, you scamp!"—bump!

"Ow—yow!"

And when Tubby Muffin was eventually allowed to leave the study he was not only deeply sorry for having "helped" George, but distinctly distressed in mind and body.

"That's for Tubby!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "Now, Garge, I want to give you a friendly word of warning. That bouncer will always try and worm a feed out of you, so keep clear of him. Savvy?"

George nodded to signify that he "savied."

"But can 'e tell Oi where I can find the—the—"

He broke off suddenly, and dived his hand into the pocket of his well-worn waistcoat.

When he extracted his fingers, they held a dirty envelope.

He turned it over, and glanced at it. Then he smiled.

Jimmy Silver & Co. watched him in amazement, and when he smiled they simply stared.

"My hat, he's human!" ejaculated Lovell. "Did you see him smile, chaps?"

The Co. laughed.

"Well, kid?" asked Silver.

"Oi wants the captin of the—" began George, and looked at the envelope again.

"The Fourth Form captin, zur. Oi was told to give 'un this writin' by the master."

Jimmy Silver jumped.

"Eh? What's that?" he said quickly.

"Who's the master?"

"Whoi, the master be 'im who Oi worked for," replied Phipps simply.

The Classical Co. looked at one another in amazement.

"What the dickens is he talking about?" said Newcome. "Works for! Here, Jimmy, collar that letter and see what it says!"

Almost dazedly Jimmy Silver took the letter, and opened it. He read it through, and as he did so his expression turned from one of amazement to incredulity. His chums watched him in perplexity.

"Here, what's the giddy thing say?" demanded Raby impatiently.

Jimmy Silver reached the end of the letter, and by then the incredulity had given place to merriment.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he roared. "Oh, my aunt! This is the latest! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What is it!" roared his chums.

Jimmy Silver, unable to speak for laughter, held out the letter, and Raby, Newcome, and Lovell gathered round in a little circle to read it.

It read thus:

"Dear Whoever-You-Are.—The bearer has instructions to give you this the day after he arrives. He is the new boot-boy, whom Dr. Chisholm is employing on my recommendation. I expect he has been the source of considerable wonder to the members of the Fourth Form at Rookwood. I have taken advantage of his simplicity to have a little joke for old time's sake. I still like to think of my old schooldays, you know! You needn't tell Garge to send the clothes back—I've quite grown out of them! Cheerio!"

"GEORGE JENNER."

The Co. shrieked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The boot-boy!" gasped Newcome. "Oh, my hat, what a lark!"

Silver sat down hurriedly. He could hardly stand up for laughter.

"Jenner was captain of games once!" he said, between shrieks of laughter. "Oh, the giddy rogue to play that trick on us! Wish he had fallen into Tommy Dodd's hands instead of ours! We shall never hear the last of it!"

Twenty minutes later George Phipps was cleaning boots. The Head, who had not been apprised of his arrival, commended Jimmy Silver & Co. upon having looked after the country lad for the night. But when Jimmy Silver showed him the letter from Jenner, Dr. Chisholm's usually dignified expression relaxed, and he broke into a peal of laughter.

But, as Jimmy Silver feared, it was a long time before Tommy Dodd & Co. let them forget about the Old Boy's Joke!

THE END.

NEW TALES TO TELL.

TIMELY HELP.

"Alas, multiplied by alas!" moaned the writer of jokes.

"What has happened?" asked his wife, as she brought a wet towel to wrap about his temples.

"I have just had orders," he said in a voice husky with emotion, or something, "that I am to submit no more jokes on lodgers, motor-car accidents, Irishmen, mothers-in-law, umbrella stealing, milkmen, football referees, teachers, fowls in a neighbour's garden, cat concerts, husbands' late home-comings, and the wifely search through her lord's pockets during the stilly watches of the night. Woe is me! I am indeed undone! My profession is at an end!"

"William," she whispered as she smoothed his tangled locks—"William, we have still the mangle, and besides, you can make a joke about joke-writers!"

"Saved from the jaws of want!" he muttered.

Then he set to work on the above.

GEORGE WASHINGTON, JUNIOR.

It had been a hard task, and had taken the whole of his Saturday afternoon, but now it was accomplished, and Mr. Urbsub viewed it with delight.

Little cared he for the fact that he had crushed his thumbnail with the hammer, that he had spilt a pot of paint over his best trousers, and that the job had cost altogether twice what a carpenter would have charged. The clothes-post was now erected, and he retired to his house a proud and happy man.

Ten minutes later he returned to feast his eyes once more on his triumph, but, to his horror unspeakable, the post now lay prone on the lawn.

"You pushed it, did you?" he yelled, seizing his youthful heir, who was sporting in the family demesne.

"No, father," said the boy. "A sparrow perched on it, and over it went. I saw him do it!"

YO HO, MY HEARTIES!

It was an ocean tramp, and some of its fittings were just about as good as those of the land variety.

There was no doctor, and the captain felt quite capable of doing the physicing himself. He had a medicine-chest with a score of bottles, each numbered to correspond with an account of their uses, which appeared in the ship's medicine-book.

One day the bo'sun complained of a violent headache. This, the captain read in his book, demanded a dose from No. 7.

But that particular bottle was empty. They had called at several ports, and headache cures had consequently been in request.

The captain, however, was not to be beaten. Pouring a dose from bottle 3, he mixed it with a similar quantity from bottle 4, for he knew the meaning of arithmetic.

The bo'sun got better. What did it matter that No. 3 was a cure for corns and No. 4 a lotion for dislocated diaphragms?



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In Deep Disgrace

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

A Magnificent New Complete School Tale of TOM MERRY & Co. at St. Jim's.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Piggott Hears Something.

I SAY, youngster, do you belong to St. Jim's?"

Reuben Piggott, of the Third Form at the school named, turned.

"Yes," he said, eyeing doubtfully the man who had spoken.

Piggott had been coming out of a shop at Rylcombe when he had first seen that man. On his way back to St. Jim's he had heard hurrying footsteps behind him, and had glanced round once or twice.

It could not be said that Piggott's conscience pricked him on account of his errand in the village, which had been an illegal one. Other things troubled Piggott much more than his conscience ever did, and one of these things was fear of detection. He had fancied that the man had given him a quick, suspicious glance as he came out of the shop, sticking a box of cigarettes under his jacket; and he felt uneasy now.

The man was young—not more than twenty-six or so. He had a somewhat dissipated look, and there was a curious gleam in his eyes that Piggott did not like at all. He wore good clothes, but they were unbrushed and badly creased.

"Ah! Know a gentleman named Selby there?" he queried now.

There was a stress on the word "gentleman" that Piggott did not fail to notice. It was as though the stranger would have preferred applying quite another epithet to Mr. Selby.

But there was really nothing very singular in that. So felt everyone who knew Mr. Selby well—and particularly the boys in his Form.

"Of course I know him. I'm in his Form," replied Piggott.

"Ah! You're lucky!"

Again there was a sardonic note in the speech.

"Dashed if I think so!" said Piggott.

"Isn't he a good sort?"

"Look here, what are you asking me all these questions for?"

"Never mind that, kid. By the way, I suppose Mr. Selby knows that you smoke?"

"Not likely—I mean, I don't smoke! Who says I smoke?"

"What do you buy cigarettes for, then? You have some under your jacket now, you young dog!"

"I—I haven't! And if I have they're not mine."

"Not yours—eh? Whose, then?"

"They're for Racke of the Shell."

"Oh, for Racke, are they? And you'd stick to that yarn even if you were on the rack—eh?"

"He, he, he!" tittered Piggott, with a view to propitiating the fellow.

"I want to see Mr. Selby."

"Well, there's nothing to hinder you. If you go to the lodge, Taggles, the porter, will take you to him."

"Thanks! I won't mention the cigarettes to him—at least, not this time."

"Why, there he is!" said Piggott, pointing down the road to where Mr. Selby came stalking along.

The Third Form-master looked much as usual, which is to say decidedly unpleasant. If ever he looked otherwise it must have been in his sleep, when no one saw him.

"I'll bolt!" said Piggott. "I say, don't go sneaking, will you?"

But the stranger's hand seized his shoulder before he could get away.

"One moment, my playful puppy! What's your name?"

If Piggott had not been in such a hurry he would have answered untruthfully. He had no regard whatever for the truth, and he had much for his own skin.

But, being in a desperate hurry, he blurted out his name.

"Ah, I sha'n't forget!" said the stranger meaningly.

Then, unseen by his Form-master, who had turned his head to gaze at something to the right of him, Piggott slipped over the gate and into a field. He did not care to pass the inquisitive Mr. Selby with that suspicious lump under his jacket.

Screened by the hedge from both the stranger and the master, Piggott plucked up spirit, and curiosity seized him.

What did that man want with Mr. Selby? His feelings towards the Third Form-master were not exactly friendly, Piggott was sure of that.

If they were going to have a row, it would be rather interesting to witness it, he thought.

He lay down behind the hedge, and waited. The stranger waited, too, standing in the middle of the road, with his legs apart and his arms folded. Piggott wondered whether he was an actor. There was something that smacked of the footlights in his pose.

Mr. Selby stopped suddenly. Piggott could not see it; but an expression of alarm came over his face.

He half-turned. The stranger took a step or two towards him. Mr. Selby swung round again and faced him.

"How do you do, Uncle Henry?" asked the younger man, holding out his hand.

The master did not take it.

"You here, Osbert Deadland?" he said huskily, as if the name stuck in his throat.

"Come, come! This is scarcely a hearty welcome to a long-absent nephew—even of the prodigal type!"

"I am glad to find that you have at last realised your own character!" replied Mr. Selby harshly.

"Character? I lost everything of that sort I possessed years ago. I have nothing now but what I stand up in and the strength of my body. If you will not help me, I fear that I shall be driven to robbery on the King's highway—which, when the inevitable consequences followed, would be a very nasty thing indeed for my respectable Uncle Henry!"

"You will not move me by empty threats!" answered Mr. Selby, trembling with wrath and fear. "I have done for you all I ever mean to do."

"Bah! You have done little enough for me! When my mother died she left half her fortune to you, half to me, her son. Was that a fair division? I think she could hardly have been sane. What anyone—even a sister—could see in you beats me!"

"The money was her own—it came to her from people who were also my people. And your half, properly invested, would have kept you in all the comfort a man has a right to ask. But you made ducks and drakes of it inside a year."

"You promised her you would look after me—you cannot deny that!"

"And I did it—at least, I tried to do it. But you were of age, and consequently your own master."

"Well, you can try again, mon oncle! For the past three years I have been in that inferno over there while you middle-aged gentlemen sat at home at ease. I have been wounded—gassed—left for dead. My nerve has collapsed under the strain. I am quite unfit to earn a living, and even were it not so, I have really no inclination that way."

"What, then, do you propose?" inquired Mr. Selby harshly.

"Simply a fresh divvy-up. That you should hand over to me half of what you cajoled my mother into leaving you, that's all."

"And you say your nerve has given way!" gasped the master.

"I should have said my nerves; some nerve, in the other sense, I may still flatter myself that I possess. What do you say, mon oncle?"

"I say no—a thousand times, no! You shall not have another penny from me, Osbert Deadland! Your grossly false accusation that I influenced your mother in her testamentary depositions has settled that once for all!"

For the moment Mr. Selby was so angry that he forgot to be afraid.

He was an unpleasant, ungenerous man at best; but at worst it was hardly likely that he deserved the charge levelled at him. That charge made him honestly indignant.

"Oh, I'm not implying that you forged the will, or anything of that kind. You're the respectable sort of intriguer, not the criminal sort. But you had better think over your refusal—you had better think over it very carefully indeed!"

Piggott had drunk in every word eagerly. Now he noted a change in the tones of the younger man. He had spoken alike to Piggott and to his uncle in a brutal, cynical way. Now he spoke in a manner that seemed to the concealed junior half-mad. The threat was made with a deadly intensity which its vagueness hardly lessened.

Just then Mr. Selby caught sight of Messrs. Lathom and Linton, coming together from the direction of Rylcombe. Their nearness gave him an access of courage.

"Pooh!" he said. "Your threats are empty words! What can you actually do?"

"Don't you make any mistake about that, revered kinsman! I can do, and I will do—But to tell you in advance would only be to put you on your guard. Remember that I am practically penniless and absolutely desperate—remember the things you have heard of my doing when I was a mere boy—and then sit down in comfort and picture to yourself what I may do!"

"Ah, Linton! Ah, Linton!" cried Mr. Selby. "Going back home, eh? If you do not mind I will walk with you."

"Pleased, I'm sure, Selby," said kindly little Mr. Lathom.

Mr. Linton said nothing. The masters of the Fourth and Shell felt very much the same about Mr. Selby; but it was not in their natures to behave in quite the same way.

The Fourth Form-master avoided even a glance at the stranger, whose somewhat threatening attitude both he and his colleague had noticed from a distance. But Mr. Linton gave him a cold, disapproving stare.

The three walked on together. The stranger stood watching them for a minute or two. Then he shook his fist savagely at the back of Mr. Selby.

He turned and stalked away to the village, muttering as he went.

Piggott came out of his hiding-place. He was thrilled with excitement by the scene he had witnessed and the words he had heard. He was just a trifle frightened. And he was more than a trifle glad to have a secret of Mr. Selby's in his keeping.

"I believe that boulder's potty!" he murmured to himself, as he slowly followed the three masters. "I wouldn't like to be old Selby! But what's it matter if he does do the old sweep some injury? I don't care, and I don't know who would!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Justice of the Tyrant.

"**Y**OU'RE a beastly cad, Piggott! You let me be punished because you hadn't the pluck to own up!" cried Frank Levison.

It was the afternoon of the same day, and the Third had just surged out of their Form-room.

Levison minor, with hands tingling from the savage strokes of Mr. Selby's cane, had completely lost his temper for once.

It was not often Frank did that. He was really quite the best-tempered fellow in the Third, except for a few whose easiness came from mere dullness.

Frank was not dull. His feelings were strong; and he could grow passionately indignant against unfairness and cruelty.

He was passionately indignant now both with Piggott and Mr. Selby. The master had taken his guilt for granted, because he chose to do so, Frank being in his black books. Piggott—who could have cleared him, who should have confessed, for his alone was the fault—had not only kept silent, but had grinned derisively when Frank came back to his seat after that savage caning.

"Look here, young Levison—"

"Was it Piggy, Frank?" broke in Wally D'Arcy, leader of the Form and Frank's best chum.

"Of course it was! I didn't do a thing."

"That's right," said Manners minor. "I saw it all, and I'd a jolly good mind to sing out to Selby. But a chap can't do that."

"A chap can own up, though," said Curly Gibson, with a dark look at Piggott.

"Not Piggy! If you ask me, he's a giddy Bolshevik!" snorted Hobbs.

"Slap his ugly face, Franky!" said Jameson.

Just for a moment Frank hesitated.

He was not quarrelsome. Often did he act as peacemaker between his chums.

But he had plenty of spirit, and the sneer on the evil face of Reuben Piggott was too much for his patience now.

Smack!
His hand left a red mark on the sneering face.

"You know what that means, young Levison?" snarled Piggott.

"What's it mean?" asked Wally disdainfully. "You've played the cad. That's as per usual. You've had a smack of the face. That finishes it, doesn't it? It's not a hundredth part of what you deserve, but—"

"It means a fight!" Piggott snorted.

"Oo's goin' to fight?" asked little Joe Frayne. "Not you, Piggy! Tain't in your line."

"I'm going to give Levison minor the hiding he's asked for!"

"If you can!" retorted Frank.

"He can't," said Wally confidently. "But let the sweep try! There's no harm in that, anyway, and it will be something to do between now and tea-time."

"Come along to the gym," Jameson said.

"I'm not going to the gym," Piggott replied sulkily. "No gloves for me, thank you! I mean to leave the marks of my fists on Levison's face, to make even for this!"

And he touched his own smarting countenance.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 10.

"Right-ho! I don't mind a scrap without gloves," Frank said. "And I fancy I can make as many marks on Piggy as he can on me!"

No one appeared to doubt that, though Piggott was somewhere about the biggest fellow in the Form—as he was quite the oldest—and Frank was very nearly the smallest.

"Let's cut along Rycombe Lane," suggested Reggie Manners. "Plenty of places there that will do all right."

So along Rycombe Lane they went, a score or more of them.

Six chums surrounded Frank—D'Arcy minor, Manners minor, Frayne, Hobbs, Jameson, and Gibson. Others clustered round them, well-wishers if not close chums. Every decent fellow in the Form liked Frank; no one had any real liking for Piggott.

But he found a second, and there was some slight sympathy for him among those who were inclined to resent the autocratic ways of Wally.

Piggott, though he hated being hurt, was screwed up to fighting-pitch this time. He believed that, with bare knuckles, and by making all possible use of his superior height, weight, and reach, he could lick Frank, not easily, perhaps, for he knew his small opponent was a cleverer boxer than himself, but pretty certainly.

He was wrong, bar luck. For Frank Levison, for all his good nature, had the true fighting spirit, the spirit that holds on to the last gasp.

Frank had rather the worst of it at the outset. Piggott attacked with unexpected vim and resolution, kept Frank at a distance by his length of arm, and got in a few punishing blows.

Wally D'Arcy, who had appointed himself referee and timekeeper, began to wish that he had taken on the job of seconding Frank instead. He must not give advice or encouragement as it was; and he fancied Frank would be needing both.

But Joe Frayne, who was attending to Frank, knew better.

"I'm all right, Joe—right as rain!" Frank said. "He'll hammer me for a bit, I dare say; but it won't last. When I begin to hurt him he'll curl up."

In the third round Piggott tried clinching, paying no heed at all to Wally's shouts of: "Break away! Break away there!"

But he got little change out of that. Somehow Frank wriggled out of his clutch, and two small, hard fists gave Reuben Piggott's face a hefty punch or two as he swung round.

Then Frank began to get home on his body, and soon had his opponent blowing hard. Piggott was not fit. He ate too much, and smoked, and was a slacker. Frank was as fit as a fiddle and as hard as nails.

Round five found Piggott gasping hard and thinking harder.

The victory he had counted upon at the outset, that had seemed to be his in the first two rounds, was slipping away from him.

He could no longer fend Frank off by length of arm. Frank slipped under somehow, and his half-arm jabs at close quarters were exceedingly painful to Piggott's soft body.

Round six found Piggott almost ready to throw up the sponge.

He could not stand much more of this. He was getting hurt, and that hurt a good deal. Frank had been hurt, but it had not seemed to hurt him much. The measure of pain is a matter of the spirit as well as of the body.

Biff!

"Hooray! Piggy's claret tapped!" howled Hobbs.

Piggott staggered back, with a hand to his nose.

Frank followed him up, punching hard. Frank knew well enough that a bleeding nose is no very serious matter.

Biff!

On the point of the jaw that time!

Piggott dropped.

Then from the rear of the little throng came a snarl like the snarl of an angry dog.

"D'Arcy! Levison minor! Hobbs! What does this mean?" demanded the harsh voice of Mr. Selby.

"My hat! This is where we get it in the neck!" muttered Reggie Manners to Curly Gibson.

"Looked safe enough," said Jameson to Hobbs. "Who'd have thought the old hunks would have dogged us through the wood like this?"

"Most likely he saw us go out, and guessed there was something up," replied Hobbs. "It would be just like him to wait till there was

something to make a song and dance about. It will be all our fault. Poor Piggy's nose is bleeding, so it couldn't be his, you know."

And Hobbs was not far wrong, either, in his guess or his forecast.

Mr. Selby had happened to see the little crowd pass out, and when he had followed he had purposely hung back, that they might commit themselves before he came upon the scene. He had watched almost the whole of the fight, and it is even possible that, had Piggott been victorious, he would never have disclosed his presence at all.

There was no justice in him. But, like most thoroughly unjust people, he did not realise that.

It was Wally who answered him.

"Only a bit of a scrap, sir!" said Wally. "A bit of a scrap!" repeated the master in tones of concentrated fury. "I should call it a massacre!"

"Piggott's bigger than Levison, anyways!" said Joe Frayne boldly.

"Silence, Frayne! Levison minor, with one exception, you are quite the most unruled and quarrelsome boy in my Form! I feel sure that it was you, and not Piggott, who forced this fight. Was that not so? Answer me!"

Frank did not answer at once. There was a belief in the Third that Piggott was a favourite of Mr. Selby's. As a matter of fact, Mr. Selby liked no member of his Form. He detested all boys. But he was often easier to Piggott because he knew that the youngsters he detested most had nothing but dislike for that sweet youth. Again, it is likely that he did not realise his true motive.

"Levison! Do you hear me?" he snapped. "I heard, sir," said Frank in a low, troubled voice. "I can't explain so that you would understand. But—"

"Have you the impudence to insinuate that I am of defective understanding, Levison?"

"No, sir. But—"

"Don't prevaricate! Answer me this: Was it you or Piggott who struck the first blow?"

Piggott, on his feet now, mopping his bleeding nose, and sniffing dolefully, opened his mouth to speak.

Then he shut it again. It was unnecessary for him to say anything. Frank would give himself away; and he could be trusted, in his boyish pride, not to say too much—things that he would hear about afterwards from the rest.

"I slapped his face, sir!" replied Frank.

Now he looked straight into his master's unpleasant countenance, and spoke out boldly.

"And why did you slap Piggott's face, if not for the purpose of making a quarrel and forcing a boy who, with all his faults, is not quarrelsome, to pander to your bloodthirsty tastes by fighting you?"

It was all so absurd that some of the faces could not help tittering. Frank Levison's bloodthirsty tastes! Why, they all knew of a score of fights that might have taken place but for Frank's peacemaking activities!

"I can't explain that, sir," said Frank quietly.

And, of course, by the code he knew he could not. It would have been giving Piggott away.

"Will you explain, Piggott?" rapped out Mr. Selby.

"I'd much rather not, sir," answered Piggott, truthful for once.

"Will anyone have the kindness to explain?" snapped the master, throwing the whole crowd a sour glance.

But no one else had that kindness.

"You will take five hundred lines each, except for Piggott, who seems to have been the victim of a general persecution, and who has already suffered heavily. Piggott, I must give you fifty lines for fighting, though I hardly think you had much choice in the matter. Go, all of you, except Levison!"

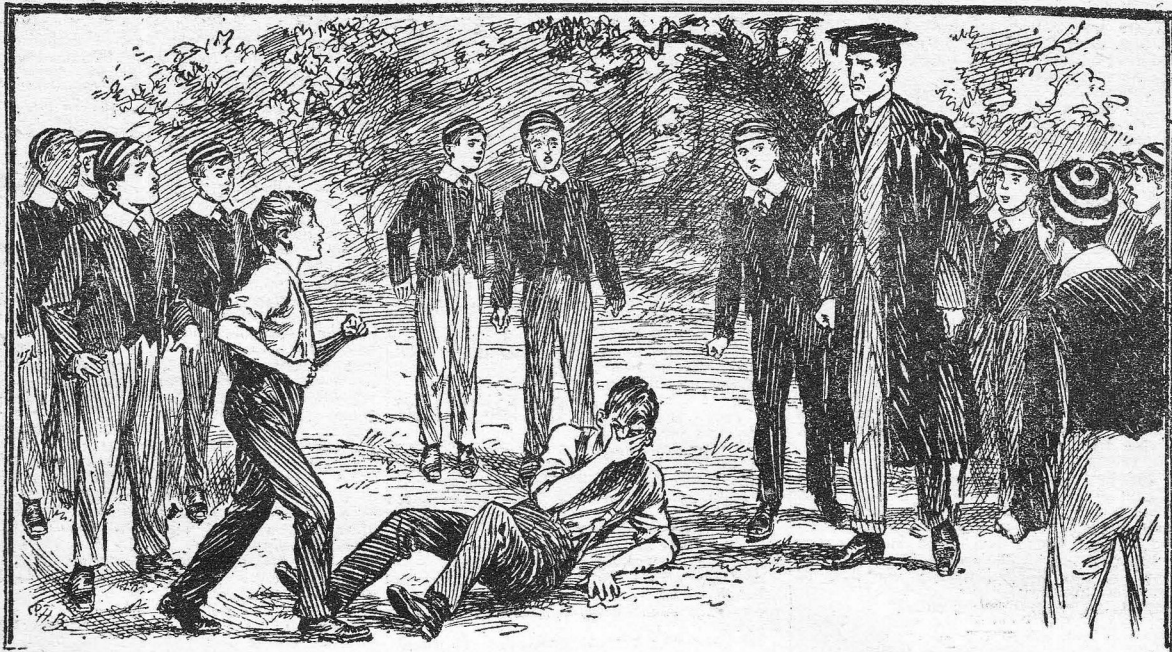
They went. They had to. But Wally and Reggie and Hobbs, Jameson and Frayne and Gibson, waited for their chum in the lane.

"Levison, I take a very serious view of this occurrence!" said Mr. Selby.

Frank lifted his clear young eyes to the angry face, but he did not answer. His heart was full of bitterness. He knew why Mr. Selby took so serious a view of it. Just because it was he; that was all. It would have been the same if it had been Wally; not much better, perhaps, if it had been anyone else among the brotherhood of seven.

But it was very different when it was Piggott.

"I await your reply, Levison minor!"



"D'Arcy! Levison minor! Hobbs! What does this mean?" demanded the harsh voice of Mr. Selby.

The clear young eyes had a tortured look in them now.

Frank felt himself utterly helpless against this tyrant. He was alone, too; and, for all his pluck, that made it worse.

"I have nothing to say, sir," he faltered at length.

"Obdurate and rebellious as ever! I have a very great mind to take you before the Head, and to recommend your expulsion!"

"I wish you would! Oh, I only wish you would! I should get justice from the Head!" cried Frank in agony.

"Levison! I can hardly believe my ears! Do you mean to infer that I have ever been unjust to you?"

"You've never been anything else—to me or to Wally or to any of us! You watch out for chances to drop on to us, and you never bother about whether we're really to blame! It's us, and that's enough for you!"

Rebellion had flamed up now.

"You will do me two hundred lines each day for the next three weeks, Levison, and during that time you will not go outside the gates on any pretext whatever! At six o'clock you will report yourself in my study for a caning; and unless your bearing towards me changes materially you may expect much more of the same sort of discipline during the period of your punishment! Not another word! I have borne too much from you already!"

Mr. Selby swept away, casting a scowl at the half-dozen who waited in the lane as he passed them.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Hard Up Against It.

"W^HY don't Franky come?" asked Joe Frayne.

Mr. Selby had disappeared. The six had waited some minutes, and still Frank did not show up.

"Let's go and fetch him!" said Reggie. They went back through the little wood.

Suddenly Wally, in advance, halted. "Stay here, you chaps!" he ordered. "You can come, Joe; not anybody else."

The rest stayed without a murmur. They had caught a glimpse of Frank down on the grass beyond the trees, his face buried in his hands, and they knew that it was best that only those two, who were his closest chums, should go to him.

It was reckless, wayward Reggie Manners, so often down on Frank, who said huskily:

"Stay clear out! We can't wait for them in the lane. Franky doesn't want us."

"That old brute!" snorted burly young

Jameson, clenching his hands. "I wish I could go for him fairly! I'd make him sit up!"

They stole away, Reggie and Jameson muttering threats against their Form-master, Hobbs and Gibson quite silent. But the face of Hobbs was grim and set, and Curly was winking hard to keep back his tears.

"Franky, old fellow!" breathed Wally, kneeling by his chum and trying to lift his head.

"Go away! Let me alone for a few minutes, do! I can't bear talking to a crowd now."

"It's only me and Joe, kid. You don't mind us, do you?"

Wally spoke very gently. Joe did not speak at all, but he slipped his hand into Frank's.

Frank sat up. There were traces of tears on his bruised face, but he was not crying now.

"I can't stand it! I won't stand it!" he cried passionately. "There isn't any fairness in him! Oh, I could kill him! I never hated anyone before like this—not even him! Oh, I think I'm going mad!"

"Franky!"

Wally was at a loss. It was a new Frank Levison whom he saw, and he knew not how to deal with him.

Never had Frank given way to such an outburst as this on account of Mr. Selby's persecution, though from the first he had been a victim of it.

But he had several times flared up in hot passion during his early days at St. Jim's, when nasty things had been said about his brother.

Wally remembered that. Frank would cool down again, he felt sure—well, almost sure. There was a difference, somehow. Perhaps it was the complete injustice of it all. In those former days Frank had soon learned that there was a good deal that could truthfully be said against Levison major, and though his championship of his brother had not slackened because of that, the rankling sense of injustice in it all had been lessened.

"Let 'm alone for a minute or two, Wally!" said Joe Frayne. "E'll get over it. 'Tain't like our Franky to—"

"I sha'n't get over it—not ever!" sobbed Frank. "I shall hate that beast as long as I live, and if ever I get the chance I'll do something to him that will show him how I hate him!"

"Don't, Frank!" pleaded Wally. "I hate him as much as ever you do, you know. And I've tried it, and it's no go. You only feel worse after it, and most likely get other fellows into trouble."

"Oh, you needn't worry!" retorted Frank. "I sha'n't go getting you into trouble. If I do anything it will be done all on my own, and I'll answer for it myself."

A hot reply trembled on Wally's lips. But he checked it at a glance from the eyes of Joe Frayne. They were like a dog's eyes in their pleading. Joe's friendship was different from Wally's. Wally wanted to understand; to take things in hand in his own masterful way. Joe only wanted to comfort; he did not mind much even about understanding.

In the lane Reggie and Curly, Hobbs and Jameson, waited, fidgety but faithful.

Beyond the little wood, Frank's head was down again, but he kept his grip on Joe's hand. Joe sat still as a statue. Wally plucked at the grass as he sat, and his face worked. He was fighting down resentment against his chum.

He fought it down at last. But still he waited.

At last Frank sat up, his face tearless, but a wild light in his eyes.

"I'm to be gated for three weeks," he said, in a hard, dry monotone. "I'm to do two hundred lines every day. And, as far as I can make out, he's going to cane me every day."

"Crumbs!" ejaculated Wally.

The punishment was monstrous. Any offence that could have deserved so big a penalty should have been dealt with by the Head. But Piggott's offence had really been a heavier one than Frank's; and Piggott had been given fifty lines!

Even the onlookers had five hundred each to do—Piggott had fifty!

The flagrant injustice of it was like an iron in Frank's heart. He felt such bitterness as he had never in his life before felt.

"Wally," said Joe Frayne, "I reckon as it's up to us to go to old Selby an' explain it all. 'Tain't reelly sneak-in', an' I don't care not a row of pins if 'tis!"

"I'm game!" said Wally at once.

"I'll never speak another word to either of you again as long as I live if you do that!" cried Frank passionately.

Wally and Joe looked at one another.

It was plain that that notion must be given up.

There was not really any great hope in it, anyway. Mr. Selby would probably refuse to listen.

"Look here, Franky, tell your major all about it, and see what he says," suggested Wally, after a pause.

"I won't! You know what Ernie is. He's—he's very fond of me; and it would send him just about mad. I don't know what he'd do!"

There was reason in that, too. Ernest Levison, dead straight now, though as crafty and long-headed as ever, was a queer fellow when anger seized upon him.

"Tell Cardew and Clive, then. They think a heap of you too," said Wally.
"Or Tom Merry. 'E does, too!" Joe chipped in. "Everybody that's any good at all likes Franky."

"I don't want to tell anybody!" replied Frank obstinately. "I wouldn't even have told you fellows, only you forced it out of me. I'd rather go to Tom Merry than to my brother, and I think I'd rather go to Cardew and Clive than to Tom; but I sha'n't go to any of them. I shall get even with the old brute myself!"

Again Wally was checked by a look from Joe. He had been going to argue against the uselessness of attempted revenge on Selby. But Joe saw more clearly than he. It was futile to argue while Frank felt like this. Let him have time to get over it a bit, and he might see reason.

Then Wally had a notion—a notion worth while. He got up and stole silently away, leaving Joe and Frank together.

In the lane he faced the other four. "Franky's hard up against it, you fellows," he said quietly—so quietly, so gravely, that it hardly seemed to them like Wally speaking. "Selby's piled it in on him till the poor kid's half potty. Would you mind clearing out and leaving him to Joe and me?"

And it was Reggie, usually the first to kick, who answered:
"Right-ho, Wally! We'll clear!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Putting On the Screw.

FRANK LEVISON tapped at the door of Mr. Selby's study.
There was no response.
He tapped again; but again no reply came.

He opened the door and walked in. Less than an hour had passed since he had come away from the scene of his victory over Piggott; but that time had sufficed to make a good deal of change in him.

The rankling sense of injustice was as keen as ever; but much of the frantic desire for vengeance had ebbed away.

Frank was a sensible little fellow. He was generous, too. He had not forgiven the tyrant; but he no longer wanted to kill him. He would have caught at the chance to play on him a jape that would make him feel uncomfortable and look absurd. But there was nothing much in that, for a jape of that kind appealed to most of the Third at any moment.

Mr. Selby was not in his study. Frank thought he had better wait. It would save him nothing to say that he had been there and had found the master absent.

So the youngster waited, shifting about from one foot to another, gazing idly round him, and finding every minute like an hour.

He looked at the heavy, old-fashioned chandelier that hung right over Mr. Selby's chair, and wondered whether it was ever lighted.

Presently his eye was caught by a faded photograph on the wall, which he had never noticed before, though his visits to Mr. Selby's study for punishment had been frequent.

He fancied that he could discern Mr. Selby's face among the half-dozen or so faces in that group photo.

It seemed a family group. Somehow it was a new thought to Frank that the tyrant of the Third had ever had people of his own. He was the sort of man who always seemed sufficient unto himself—and too much for anyone else.

The photo hung rather high on the wall, and Frank got up on a chair to inspect it.
Yes, it was Mr. Selby right enough, between a lady who might have been his mother, and another who must almost certainly have been his sister.

He was quite a young man in that photo; but already, it seemed, his face had become hard and unpleasant. All the faces were hard and unpleasant except that of the girl on Mr. Selby's left.

Frank wondered vaguely what had become of her, and whether she was still alive. She must have been fond of her brother; she had stood there with her arm through his, nestling close to him.

It was she who was afterwards to become Osbert Deadland's mother, in fact. But, though Piggott knew Osbert Deadland, Frank had never heard of him.

A footstep sounded in the passage, and

Frank jumped in haste from the chair. He came down with rather a clatter, and when next moment the door opened Mr. Selby asked, harshly and suspiciously:

"What were you doing, Levison?"
"Nothing—at least, nothing much, sir. I jumped from a chair!" blurted out Frank. His impulse was always to speak truly; but he would not have told the whole truth then for anything. He would have endured any punishment rather than have admitted his interest in that photo group. He did not want to think of Mr. Selby as a human being, with people who cared about him, but only as the remorseless tyrant whom he hated.

"Oh! Ah! Your spirits were so high that you felt you must indulge in acrobatic feats here—eh? We will tone them down for you, Levison! Hold out your hand!"

Frank extended his right hand at once. But just then there came a tap at the door. Mr. Selby lowered the cane.

"Come in!" he called.
Piggott appeared. He gave a sidelong leer at Frank. But the face he presented to Mr. Selby was very humble.

"If you please, sir," he said meekly, "will you be kind enough to let me off prep to-night? My nose has been bleeding; I thought it would never stop. And I really feel very queer!"

"One moment, Piggott; I have something else to attend to before I can give consideration to your request."

And the tyrant turned back to Frank. Frank's blood fairly boiled, and his desire for revenge momentarily returned back in full flood.

He knew why Piggott was there. It would suit that sweet youth very well to get off prep, of course; but there was more than that in it.

He had come to triumph over the fellow who had licked him. And Mr. Selby was going to let him see that fellow canted!

Well, there was no help for it. Frank had kept his hand out. It did not shake. He set his teeth now.

Three times the cane came down across that hand—swish, swish, swish!

Frank took the pain without a murmur. Piggott was gloating over him, he knew; but Piggott should not see him show the white feather.

"The other hand, Levison!"
Out came the left hand, firm and steady. A child's hand, almost—to a more generous man than the tyrant of the Third the very smallness of it would have been disarming. But not thus was Mr. Selby to be disarmed.
Swish, swish, swish!

Not a sound from Frank. He would have bitten out his tongue first.

"You can go, Levison minor. Yes, I will excuse you from evening preparation, Piggott."

It really had not taken Mr. Selby long to consider Piggott's request!

The two fags went out, Frank ahead. Piggott would dearly have liked to jeer, but he dared not.

Frank went on to the Form-room. Piggott went out into the quad.

He could loaf for an hour or two instead of working, and loafing was much more to his taste.

He thought of a cigarette or two in some secluded place. But there was time enough for that. He mooched about the quad first, gloating over the thought of what he had just seen. But even now his bitter spite against Frank Levison was not appeased.

"Master Piggott!"
It was Taggles who called, from his lodge. Piggott started. What could Taggles want with him?

"Mister Piggott! Which what I says is, come 'ere!"

The Third-Former went, though he did not hurry himself.

"Look here, Taggles, you silly old bounder," he said, "I'm not going to be ordered about by you! 'Tain't dashed likely, is it?"

"Who's a-horderin' of you about, you young rip? Which what I says is, you was wanted, an' I called you, sich bein' my dooty, though 'ow it is as you ain't where you did oughter be at this time of day, which is at your books, is more'n I know. But likewise I don't care, tankin' 'evins as you ain't no concern of mine. An' 'ere's the gent as wants to see you!"

Then Piggott saw Osbert Deadland, who had stood behind Taggles till that moment.

Piggott's head swam, and craven fear was in his heart.

He believed this fellow mad, and in that he was not far wrong. He feared injury from him, but in that he was altogether astray. If Deadland was mad, it was a kind of mad-

ness that had much cunning in it—not an uncommon kind, by the way. The madman will often go about a quite insane scheme in a quite sane and balanced way.

Osbert Deadland had need of Piggott. He did not seek to hurt him, but merely to use him.

"How do you do, my young friend?" he said genially.

"Oh, I'm all right, thanks!" replied Piggott awkwardly. "I say, Taggles, there's no need to go in! This—this gentleman won't keep me a minute. I suppose it's really Mr. Selby he wants to see."

But Taggles paid no heed. He passed into his lodge, not even hearing Mr. Selby's name mentioned.

"You're wrong, dear boy," said Deadland. "I propose to occupy more than a minute of your valuable time. By the way, you have been going in for some decorative process since I saw you this morning. Who has been your—decorator?"

Piggott felt his sore and bruised face. Some of his dread of Deadland was going. The fellow spoke sanely enough now, though Piggott did not like his ironic tone.

"Nobody you know," he answered. "A bit of a fight—the other chap got the worst of it. And he's got more to pay yet!"

"You're quite a nice boy—quite! A fellow after my own heart! I also believe in getting even with my enemies. By the way, Piggott, I've been making some inquiries about you. I was interested, you know. You are really quite an interesting study."

"Look here, I don't see why—"

"There is no need that you should, my infant! Let it suffice that I see why. I know all about the cigarettes. And there's also the Green Man. Quite a gamesome, sporting place, the Green Man—what! But I doubt whether Mr. Selby would consider it the proper place for you, my gay puppy!"

Piggott gasped. He saw himself in this fellow's power.

"I—I—What do you want me to do?" he faltered.

"Very little, mon enfant! Very little indeed. Merely to show me round the place. I have never been at St. Jim's before, and I am curious concerning it."

"I shall get into a row if anyone catches me showing a stranger round," objected Piggott weakly.

"Not at all. You can say that I am a relative of yours."

"But that would be a lie."

"Your first lie, eh, Washington junior? Well, it falls to be told at some time. That I should be the occasion of it would be a grief to me, but—Lead on!"

The screw was being put upon Reuben Piggott, and he realised it. But he had not the courage to refuse.

"All right," he said. "After all, there's no real harm in it. And as you're Mr. Selby's nephew—"

"Oh, you know that, do you?" snarled Deadland.

"I—I guessed it!"

"Don't get guessing, my cock of the game! It's dangerous!"

The gleam in Osbert Deadland's eyes was quite mad now, Piggott thought. It frightened him; he would not have dared to refuse anything the man had demanded of him.

Their talk had taken place just out of earshot of the lodge. Now they moved on.

Deadland asked many questions. Piggott almost began to believe that he was really interested in St. Jim's.

"And what is that room?" he inquired at length, pointing to a window.

He had put the same query half a dozen times before, but Piggott's mind experienced a new spasm of uneasiness as he answered: "That's Mr. Selby's study."

"Ah! I am not interested. Let us get away. Show me the place where you young night-rakes get in and out when you visit the Green Man in forbidden hours."

"We—we don't!" faltered Piggott.

"Truly not, Washington junior? Show me, then, the place where the gay and wicked—surely there are some such among you, though you be not of their company—pass!"

Piggott showed him it. Then he went with him to the gates.

Deadland departed, taking leave lightly of his miserable dupe.

But Piggott was neither so wholly a dupe as Deadland may have thought, nor so wholly miserable as most fellows would have been in his place.

He fancied that Mr. Selby's nephew meant to steal in and have a row with his uncle. Piggott did not mind that; all he minded was anyone connecting him with Deadland.

Even if the row led to Mr. Selby's getting damaged Piggott would not be greatly grieved, and he had only the least lurking suspicion, easily quieted, that worse than mere damage might chance.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Squeak for the Tyrant.

WHACK! Bang! Thump!
"What was that?"
"Where did that row come from?"

It was nine o'clock, and the Third had gone to bed. But their seniors were still up, and most of them heard that noise—or, rather, that complication of noises, for there had been more than one.

"Selby's study!" said someone in the crowd that thronged the corridors, though how he guessed, or whence he heard that, or even who he was that said it, no one afterwards knew or remembered. Probably it was a guess.

But, if so, it was a correct one.

Kildare, captain of the school, his chum Darrel, Tom Merry, the junior skipper, and Mr. Linton, whose study was not far away, all reached the Third Form-master's door together. They were followed by scores more.

The captain stood back to let Mr. Linton open the door. But the master was shaky and nervous. His fingers fumbled upon the knob.

From inside came a groan.

Mr. Linton drew back, his face ashen. Kildare turned the knob and opened the door.

Mr. Selby lay on his back on the floor, his knees huddled up strangely.

Close to his head lay the great, heavy gas chandelier. It was plain that he had been felled by it.

The thing was of an old-fashioned type rarely seen nowadays. Two lead-filled weights regulated its height, and upon these weights and their pulleys depended its keeping its place. The falling of the weights would inevitably bring it down.

And the weights had fallen! They lay apart from the chandelier itself, with their chains broken.

The chandelier ended in a long spike projection, intended doubtless for ornament, but constituting an additional danger in the event of the thing falling.

This spike had struck Mr. Selby's head—mercifully, not directly on top. Had it done that it must have been fatal. But he had apparently been bending forward at the moment of the chandelier's fall. Thus the spike had struck at the back, without full weight behind it; and it was the weight of the chandelier itself that had brought the master down.

He was bleeding in two or three places, and quite senseless.

"Upon my soul!" gasped Mr. Linton, looking sick and faint.

Kildare lifted the unconscious master's head. Tom Merry slipped on to his knees, and received it. The crowd pressed round the door, but did not venture into the room. Kildare had called to them to keep back.

But Darrel had come in with Tom Merry and Kildare, and it was he who saw the weights lying separately, and, knowing how such things worked, sensed something more than an accident at once.

He picked up one of them. He saw that the chain at its top had been filed almost through in one link, leaving it depending by so slight a thread that the least jar—even the movement of a chair beneath—might bring it down.

Then he picked up the other. That had been treated in the same way!

He laid them on the table just as Mr. Raitton, the Housemaster, came into the room.

"Clear away!" rapped out Mr. Raitton to the crowd. "You can do no good here! Ah, that's right, Kildare! Mr. Linton, will you be good enough to see that Dr. Short is sent for at once? Lefevre, I shall be obliged if you will inform the Head—"

"I am here, Raitton!" spoke the deep voice of Dr. Holmes. "What is the matter?"

"This wretched chandelier appears to have come down upon poor Selby's head! No, it has not killed him, though it might well have done so. The wounds are little more than superficial; I can see that at a glance. It is probably the concussion which has taken away his senses."

The crowd had cleared away at the Head's approach, though all had gone reluctantly. Not one member of that crowd had the least

liking for the injured man. But at such a moment one forgets that kind of thing.

Lefevre of the Fifth, who had stolen into the room, closed the door just after Mr. Lathom had entered. There was then in the room four masters besides Mr. Selby himself, with Kildare, Darrel, Lefevre, and Tom Merry.

"Noble and Dane have gone for Dr. Short," said Mr. Linton, in a trembling voice. "Good heavens! Who could have expected this?"

It was a foolish question, and no one troubled to answer it. Mr. Lathom came forward.

"I never liked those chandeliers," he remarked, in an unsteady voice. "They are dangerous things at best. That in my study was removed long since. Poor Selby had an unaccountable liking for his."

"Don't talk about poor Selby as though the man were dead!" snapped Mr. Raitton, his nerves also on edge, though he was not so shaken as his older colleagues. "He is neither dead nor likely to die, as far as I can judge. Do you think we had better get him on to his bed, Dr. Holmes?"

"I think so, Raitton. Yes, that would certainly be best."

Kildare and Darrel carried the unconscious form upstairs, the Head and the Housemaster going with them. In a few minutes Mr. Raitton and the two Sixth-Formers came back. Not a word had been spoken meanwhile, but when they returned one of the weights was in the hands of Tom Merry and the other in those of Lefevre. The two boys, less unnerved than the masters with them, had noticed something.

"I say, sir—"

"Yes, Merry?"

"There's something queer here!"

"Here, too!" said Lefevre.

"I noticed it," put in Darrel quietly. "I

picked those things up and laid them on the table. And I know how those chandeliers work; we have two of them at home. The chains of those weights have been filed through—almost through, rather. Any jar would bring them down after that, for the body of it depends on weights."

"Great heavens! There must have been foul play!" gasped Mr. Linton, his face changing from ashen to livid.

Mr. Raitton examined the weights carefully before he spoke.

"Yes, there has undoubtedly been foul play," he said. "And the inference that whoever was responsible for it schemed Selby's death is one not to be resisted. A full and searching inquiry must be made, of course. But there is no chance of catching the scoundrel; this may have been done hours ago. Kildare, you might go along to the lodge and ask Taggles whether he has seen any suspicious characters about. But it is difficult to imagine how anyone outside the school could have done this; and, surely, surely, it is impossible that anyone among us could have been so base!"

No one answered that. But it must have occurred to all there that Mr. Selby had not exactly endeared himself to his Form. From that, however, to the wild theory that any fag had tried to compass his death seemed a long, long way.

They did not guess then how much shorter a way it was to seem in a few hours, when the clouds of circumstantial evidence began to lower over an innocent head.

Kildare and Darrel went to the lodge. They came back to say that Taggles had not observed anyone at all suspicious. There had been two or three callers; but the only one strange to him was, as he understood, a relative of the boys. It had not seemed to the seniors worth while to institute further inquiries as to that particular caller.

Dr. Short came, and looked very grave at first. But after a close examination he pronounced the wounds comparatively small account; all that mattered was the concussion of the brain, and the extent of that, as in any case, was a mere matter of surmise.

He gave directions as to what should be done, and Nurse Marie Rivers came across from the sanatorium to take care of Mr. Selby, while Mr. Raitton stayed up, close at hand.

In the dormitories of the senior and middle Forms that night there was any amount of talk concerning the outrage. That it was no accident was certain; but that anyone within the walls of St. Jim's had been responsible for it few were ready to believe.

It was not until the morning that the news reached the Third Form.

A babel ensued. While they washed and dressed in haste the fags chattered like so many excited monkeys.

But two of them were silent. Piggott was afraid. Frank Levison felt a heavy weight on his mind. It was only yesterday that he had talked about killing Selby; and now—and now—he could hardly bear to think of it! He loved the tyrant no more than before; but he could not hate him while he lay stricken thus, and he would gladly have taken his place.

"Crumbs, Franky, he's got it in the neck for what he did to you!" said Reggie Manners. "Don't!" cried Frank, shrinking back as if hurt.

"Why, 'tain't your fault, kid," said Wally; "and I'll bet you're sorrier than most of us—you're so jolly soft-hearted! Why, what's the matter?"

Frank had fallen forward. They lifted him up, to find that he had fainted.

"Whew!" whistled Reggie.

"Look here, you know, that's all blessed rot!" said Curly Gibson shrilly. "He didn't mean what he said yesterday—he couldn't have! And anyone who says that Frank would have thought even of doing old Selby in is a liar! You're a liar if you say so, Reggie!"

"You silly ass! I didn't say so—I didn't think it, even!" howled Manners minor.

"I wish I hadn't told you young idiots!" snapped Wally, with Frank's head on his knee. "Of course, he didn't mean it! There isn't a fellow at St. Jim's less likely to do such a thing than Franky. I might have done it—I don't say I would have. Reggie might—"

"Here, stow that!" cried Reggie angrily. "You needn't get owning up for me, you know. I don't say Frank did it; I don't believe he did; but he's jolly upset about something or he wouldn't faint like that!"

"What's that about my brother's fainting?" spoke Ernest Levison at the door.

As he came in Piggott slipped out unnoticed by anyone.

Piggott went down to the quad. Groups of fellows from the four upper Forms were already standing about discussing the mystery, though rising-bell had not yet gone.

The cad of the Third avoided all the groups. He was in abject fear. As well as anyone could know it he knew that Frank Levison was innocent. He felt certain that Osbert Deadland was the criminal.

But he was not going to say anything about that—not if he knew it!

He would be incalculable if he let out anything about Deadland and his own knowledge of the fellow's relationship to Mr. Selby.

If Frank were found guilty expulsion would be the least penalty that awaited him—Piggott knew that.

Well, what of it? If Piggott's wishing would have brought it about Wally & Co., the whole seven of them, would have had the sack.

Piggott had wandered close to the old tree by which was the accustomed way over the wall for fellows breaking bounds at night. He had not thought of the possibility of finding there any trace of Deadland's passage.

But something just under the tree caught his eyes. He picked it up and thrust into his pocket—a file!

And then there came into his vicious, scheming mind a darker thought than any yet.

He had made up his mind to say nothing that would throw suspicion upon Deadland—for his own sake, not for Deadland's. If Mr. Selby's nephew was to be accused, let Mr. Selby himself make the accusation. That way Piggott would be kept clear of it all.

But now his thoughts went farther than merely keeping dark about the fellow. He saw the chance of blackening the clouds that were gathering above Frank, and he seized it.

He slunk off to the Third Form-room, found it empty, and put the file in Frank's desk. Then he slunk out again unseen.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Pronounced Guilty!

ISENT only for Levison minor!" said the Head sharply.

Dr. Holmes sat behind the writing-table in his book-lined study. Mr. Raitton, Mr. Linton, Mr. Lathom, and Kildare were present, the three masters seated, the captain of the school standing behind the Head.

Ernest Levison lifted a haggard face, and there was a look of uttermost appeal in his dark eyes.

"I came with him, sir," he said, huskily but

steadily. "He's only a kid, you know. And he's such a straight, decent kid—not revengeful a bit. You mustn't judge him by me! I've done things—I know I have—black things that can't be forgotten. But Frank—he never would! There isn't a straighter kid anywhere!"

Mr. Railton turned his strong face away. Kildare bit his lip. Mr. Lathom coughed nervously, and the Head and Mr. Linton were plainly moved.

"You may stay, Levison major," said Dr. Holmes kindly. "And do not think that anything you may have done in the past will be held against your brother. It is not you we have to pronounce sentence upon."

"I wish it was! Oh, I wish it was!" moaned Ernest Levison. "I'm not much account, anyway. But, Frank, it will kill my mother! But she won't believe it—she can't!"

"Don't, Ernie!" said Frank tremulously. "I can't bear it! I'd rather you went."

"No, it is better that your brother should stay, Levison minor," said the Head. "What is it, D'Arcy minor? You must not enter this room without knocking!"

"I did knock, sir—twice," answered Wally.

"Wally! Weally, Wally, you young wuffian, you must not; it is very disrespectful to the Head! An' if you are to be let in I am comin', too, for I am as snash as you are that Frank neverah—"

"Go away, Gussy!" howled Wally. Kildare went to the door, and ordered D'Arcy major off. The Head looked very hard at D'Arcy minor.

Wally was not the crying sort; but his eyes were heavy with unshed tears, and his face was as haggard as Ernest Levison's—more haggard than Frank's.

For Frank knew himself innocent; and in the minds of those two, brother and dearest chum though they were, there could hardly be certainty, so strong seemed the evidence against him.

"You may stay, D'Arcy minor," the Head said. "I might have had to send for you a little later."

"Thank you, sir!" said Wally gratefully. And he took his stand by Frank's left, sticking an arm through his chum's. On Frank's right his brother stood, with his hand on the youngster's shoulder.

None of the five who watched was hard of heart, and the devotion of Ernest Levison and Wally touched them all.

The Head blew his nose hard before he addressed Frank.

"Now, Levison minor," he said, "you must answer my questions, and I feel sure you will answer them truthfully. Black as the case looks against you, I am very unwilling to believe you guilty, and if you were guilty I feel that— No, I must not say what I was going to say! It would be wrong on my part to seek to extenuate such a crime."

Dr. Holmes had been going to say that if Frank were guilty he could hardly have been responsible for his actions. The other masters and Kildare guessed so much, if the juniors did not.

Frank lifted his clear, candid eyes to the Head's face.

"I will answer you truly, sir," he said. "But I want to say, first of all, that I hadn't anything to do with what happened to Mr. Selby."

"I regret to say that Mr. Selby believes otherwise," said the Head sternly. "He, in fact, brings a definite charge against you!"

A thrill ran through the listeners at that. The masters and Kildare had known that Mr. Selby had recovered consciousness and had

spoken; but only the Head had heard what he had said.

"Mr. Selby never was fair to Frank!" said Ernest Levison passionately.

"That's true, sir," said Wally, very earnestly.

"I cannot listen to that sort of thing, Mr. Selby says, Levison minor, that you were in his study yesterday evening, summoned thither for punishment, and that when you heard him coming you jumped off the table. What have you to say to that?"

"I didn't, sir! I was never on the table. It was off a chair I jumped."

"What were you doing on a chair?"

"I—I got up to look at a photo on the wall. There—there wasn't any harm in that, surely, sir?"

"For what were you being punished?"

Frank hesitated. He felt inclined to say, "For nothing!" But he did not.

"I suppose for fighting, sir," he said.

"You held that you were punished unjustly?"

"He was punished unjustly!" cried Wally. "Why, the other chap— But that isn't the thing! Frank was gated for three weeks, and he was to do two hundred lines every day, and he was threatened with a caning every day, too! And it wasn't his fault that he fought, either, not really."

Wally's outburst went unrebuked. But it did not make the faces of the judges less grave.

The punishment was abominably heavy for a comparatively slight offence. All of them saw that.

But the fact did not help Frank. It might serve to explain his smarting sense of justice. It could not excuse in the least what he was supposed to have done.

"You uttered threats against Mr. Selby—said that you would like to kill him. Is that not so?" murmured the Head.

"Yes," murmured Frank, his pale face going scarlet.

More had come to the Head's ears than Wally had expected. He felt sick with himself now to think that he should have talked, though it was only to his own and Frank's chums. Joe Frayne had tried to check him; but Joe had tried in vain.

"Will you tell me that you did not mean those threats?"

Frank hesitated. Had he meant them? It hardly seemed possible now. But—yes, he had; he knew it! He answered pluckily.

"I meant them for a time, sir, but only for a little while."

"Have you seen this before, Levison minor?"

Dr. Holmes held up the file. It was the crowning piece of evidence. He hated using it, for he was essentially a kind and merciful man. But he had his duty to do.

If Frank Levison were guilty—and it almost seemed that he must be so—he was unfit to live with decent boys. There must be a criminal strain in him somewhere, and who could tell when it might break out again? Perhaps he was not fit even to be at large.

"No, sir, I never saw it before—at least, I don't think so. I've seen files, but I haven't noticed one about lately," replied Frank.

He spoke with such candour that it was hard to disbelieve him. It seemed to those who heard, or some of them, that he really had no notion why that question was put.

And he had not. Others—many others—knew now how the chandelier had come to crash down. But Frank had not heard. His brother had taken him to Study No. 9, and everyone else had been kept out. Even Cardew and Clive had stayed out, though

they were very fond of Frank, and Ernest Levison had very few secrets from them.

"It was found in your desk!" said the Head sternly.

Even yet Frank failed to comprehend. He passed his hand over his forehead with a weary gesture.

But Ernest Levison's face changed suddenly—grew more haggard, older. The hand on Frank's shoulder shook, then grew tighter.

Even though his brother had done this thing, yet still Levison major would stand by him!

"It's not mine, sir," Frank said.

"Do you know that the chains attached to the chandelier were filed almost through?" asked the Head. But the tone was hardly that of a question. To him it seemed that Frank must know—that Frank had done it.

"I didn't know, sir," faltered Frank. "I don't know anything about the chandelier! I never touched—even thought of touching it!"

Mr. Lathom got up and went to the window. Mr. Railton put his elbow on the table and covered his eyes with his hands. Kildare turned and gazed blankly into the grate.

Wally's face had changed. Almost he believed Frank guilty—not quite. But he did not remove his arm.

The Head was shaken. He knew nothing but good of Frank Levison. But the evidence seemed overwhelming. There was motive, there was opportunity, there was the finding of an instrument such as must have been used for the foul trick played.

True, the motive seemed inadequate. The opportunity might have seemed but a slight one had it not been for Frank's unlucky inspection of the photograph. The file remained, and also the damning inference that any boy capable of such a crime would be capable also of lying about it.

"Levison major, you had better take your brother away! I entrust him to your charge. But he will be wanted before long. I must talk this over. I cannot decide on my own single judgment. D'Arcy minor, I have asked you nothing, as Levison minor admitted the threats; but I understand you heard them. Do you sincerely believe they were mere boyish anger—spite—call it what you will?"

"It wasn't spite, sir! Frank's never spiteful. But he meant them—at the time. He—he didn't know how to bear the way he had been treated. But he didn't do that thing! He couldn't have done it!"

Wally was arguing against his own doubts; they all saw that.

"You can go, I think, Levison, you had better keep your brother apart from the rest."

"I am going to, sir!" said Levison major, with a defiant uplift of the chin. The three juniors went. There was silence for a minute or two among those left behind.

Then the Head spoke.

"Railton, I ask your opinion."

"I am sorry, Dr. Holmes. I think that a heavy weight of guilt lies upon Mr. Selby for this. He has goaded the poor boy beyond endurance; and it is not the first time, he has done that, though the result has never before been so dreadful. But I cannot believe Levison minor innocent."

"Linton?"

"I agree with every word Railton says about Selby. To my mind, he is unfit to have the charge of boys. But—I must say 'Guilty!'"

(Concluded on page 7, column 3.)

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