

HARMSWORTH'S UNIVERSAL ENCYCLOPEDIA PART 1
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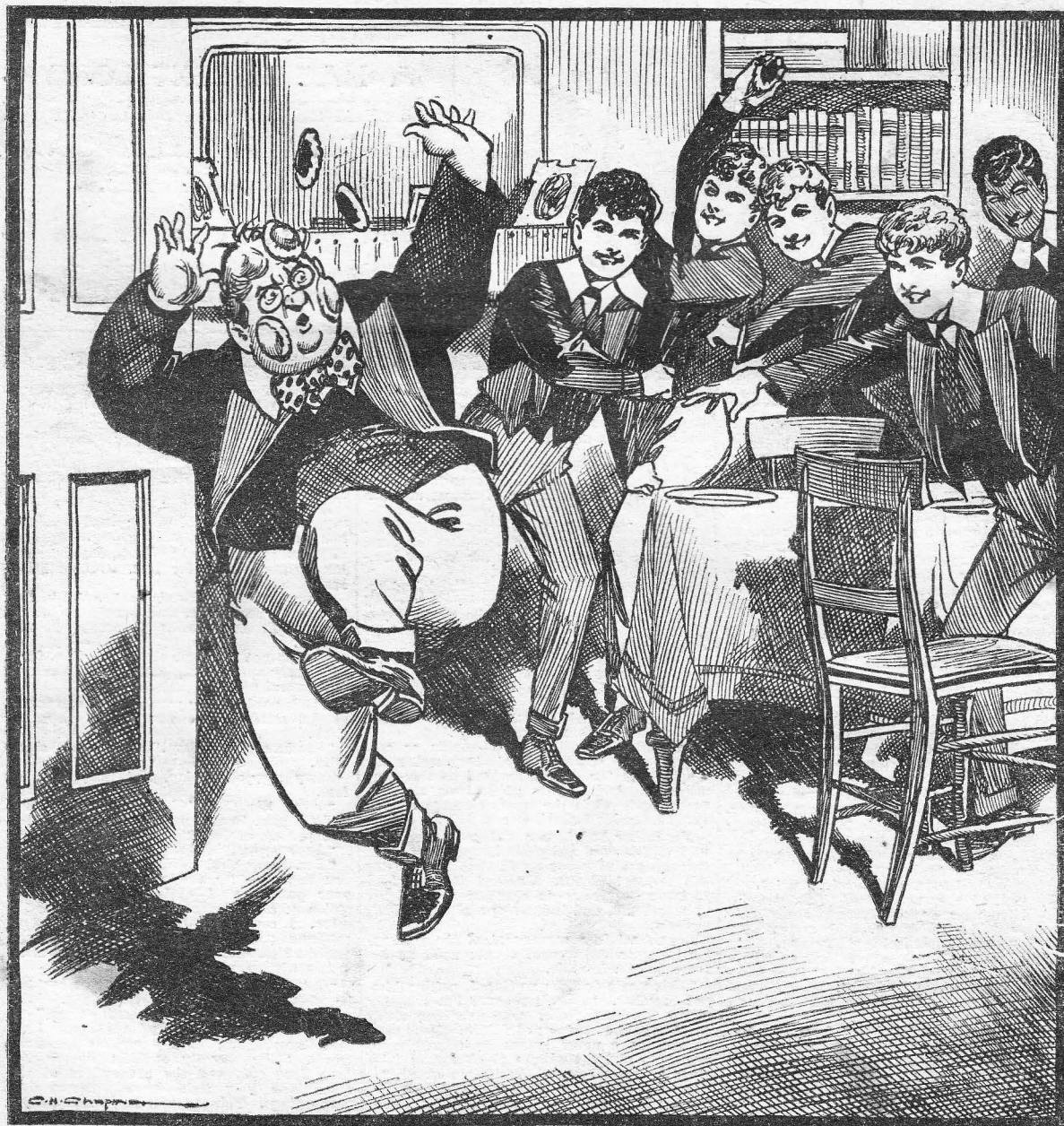
The Penny $1\frac{1}{2}$! Popular

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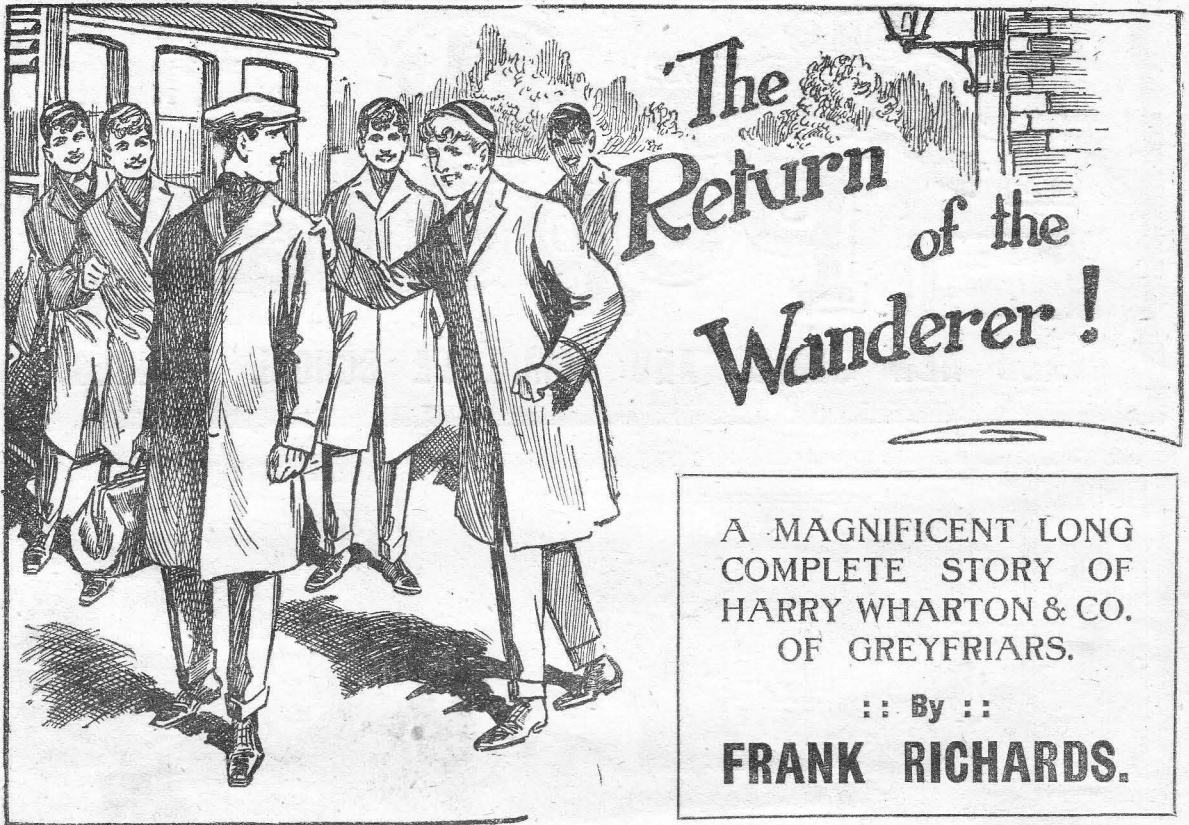
20 PAGES.

GRAND NEW SERIAL AND COMPLETE SCHOOL STORIES.



BILLY BUNTER'S SHARE OF THE FEED!

(An Amusing Incident in the Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)



A MAGNIFICENT LONG
COMPLETE STORY OF
HARRY WHARTON & CO.
OF GREYFRIARS.

:: By ::

FRANK RICHARDS.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
The Eleventh Man.**

"GOOD-BYE, Dennis, old man, and the best of luck!"

The parting words of his best chum—Mark Linley—rang in Dennis Carr's ears as he boarded the train at Friar-dale Station—the train that was to take him back to London.

Dennis had just paid a flying visit to Greyfriars, his old school, in order to communicate some good news to Harry Wharton & Co.

He had left Greyfriars some weeks before owing to his father's death.

Mr. Carr had died in poverty, and Dennis who, so far as he knew, possessed no living relative, had been compelled to go out into the world and earn his own living.

Dennis Carr was fifteen, and brimful of energy and enthusiasm.

Much of the enthusiasm had been damped when he first came to London, for he had tramped the streets of the great city in vain looking for employment.

At length, however, he had been granted a junior clerkship in the office of Sir Howard Prescott, a West End auctioneer, and a gentleman of high social standing.

It so happened that one of the other clerks—a weedy youth named Craven—was a cousin of Skinner, the cad of the Greyfriars Remove.

Craven had hated Dennis from the outset; and he and Skinner had hatched a precious plot between them whereby they hoped to bring about Carr's downfall.

The plot had succeeded—up to a point. Dennis had been accused of theft, and dismissed from Sir Howard Prescott's employ.

Harry Wharton & Co. had sympathised strongly with Dennis in his misfortune. They had flatly refused to believe that he was a thief; and their faith in him had been justified. For the facts had now come to light, and the dastardly plot of Skinner and his cousin had been exposed.

Craven had been "sacked" from his job, and Skinner had been flogged and very nearly expelled from Greyfriars. It was owing to Dennis Carr's timely intercession on his behalf that he had escaped the extreme penalty of expulsion.

As for Dennis himself, he had been asked by Sir Howard Prescott to resume his former job in the West End office. Moreover, Sir

Howard had agreed to pay him his full salary for the weeks he had been absent.

Dennis was now returning to London—not to a hard and bitter fight for existence, but to a fairly comfortable job, and to lodgings which, though not exactly comfortable, were not too bad.

And yet, as the train rushed on through the darkness of the winter evening, Dennis was conscious of a feeling of unrest and discontent.

A deep longing had taken root in his mind—an intense longing to be back at Greyfriars, living the happy, care-free life of a school-boy.

His recent visit to the old school had revived all his past affection for it. He wanted to be back again—back in the study which he had shared with Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian, good fellows both. He missed the games and the japes and the feuds. He even preferred a seat in the Remove Form-room, under the gimlet eyes of Mr. Quelch, to an office-stool.

His schooldays had come to a sudden end just when he was doing splendidly.

He had displaced Harry Wharton as captain of the Remove; he had gained many triumphs in the Form-room and on the playing-fields. And he was going from strength to strength when the tragic message arrived announcing his father's death.

His father had been a rich man once; but he had frittered away his money in reckless speculation, with the result that Dennis was left unprovided for. He had been obliged to leave Greyfriars—to abandon the delights of school life, and become one of the world's winners.

Dennis sat in a corner-seat of the railway-carriage, reviewing past events until he became quite miserable.

"This won't do!" he muttered, pulling himself together. "I don't suppose I'm the only fellow by long chalks who has been slung on the world at the age of fifteen. Some poor beggars have never known an education of any sort, and I ought to think myself jolly lucky to have been at Greyfriars at all!"

By the time the train rumbled into the London terminus Dennis was his old cheerful self once more.

He quitted the station and walked to his lodgings. He was agreeably surprised to find

that Mrs. Grubb, his landlady, had prepared him an excellent supper.

Mrs. Grubb seldom went out of her way to prepare anything for anybody—with the exception of the weekly bills—and Dennis could not understand this sudden reformation on her part. He did not know that Sir Howard Prescott had paid a personal visit to his lodgings, and instructed Mrs. Grubb to look after him well.

Dennis went to bed immediately after supper. The events of the day had exhausted him, and he was soon sound asleep.

He awoke early, feeling fresh, fit, and ready for anything—even for Mrs. Grubb's badly-cooked sausages.

After breakfast, Dennis took a brisk walk in one of the parks, and turned up at Sir Howard Prescott's office punctually at nine o'clock.

He was not the first clerk to arrive, for a typewriter was clicking merrily as he entered the general office.

A tall, good-looking young fellow was seated at the machine. He was Terry, the senior clerk.

"Good-morning, Terry!" said Dennis cheerfully.

Terry stopped typing, and jumped to his feet.

"Why, it's Carr!" he exclaimed. "I'm awfully glad to see you back again, kid! I owe you an apology!"

"An apology!" echoed Dennis, in wonder.

"Yes. Over that affair of the petty cash, you know. When the money was found in your possession I quite thought you had stolen it, and I helped to kick you out of the office. I can see now that I was a cad to condemn you. I might have known you weren't that sort of a rotter. Will you allow me to apologise—"

"Cut it short!" said Dennis. "You couldn't be blamed for thinking me guilty. The evidence against me was overwhelming."

"Well, it's a real treat to see you back in harness again," said Terry, as he shook hands. "That beastly outsider Craven has been fired out, and the atmosphere of the office is a jolly sight more wholesome in consequence. Things ought to go swimmingly in future."

"Is there much work these days?" asked Dennis.

"Work! Miles of it—piles of it! We're up to our-eyebrows, and then some! But we'll soon make up the arrears now that you're back."

And Terry resumed operations at the typewriter.

Shortly afterwards, Sir Howard Prescott arrived. He greeted Dennis Carr very cordially before commencing work.

Dennis had his hands full that morning. Sir Howard dictated letters galore. He appeared to be trying to emulate the brook, by going on for ever.

At last, however, came the welcome words: "I think that will be all for the present, Carr!"

For the next couple of hours, Dennis Carr's fingers raced over the keys of the typewriter. He succeeded in transcribing the whole of the letters correctly from his shorthand notebook; and then he took them in to Sir Howard for signature.

"You've done a rattling good morning's work!" said Terry, when Dennis emerged from his employer's office.

Dennis grinned. "If I'm as busy this afternoon as I've been this morning," he said, "I shall have to get you to telephone for a stretcher."

"This afternoon!" said Terry. "We don't work this afternoon."

"Eh?"

"To-day's Wednesday; and Sir Howard has agreed to make every Wednesday afternoon a half-holiday in future."

"Oh, good!" said Dennis.

And then his face fell.

What was the use of a half-holiday to him? This wasn't Greyfriars, where he could sojourn to the football-field. It was London; and Dennis hadn't enough money to go to a theatre matinee, or anything of that sort.

A visit to the cinema suggested itself to him, but he reflected that it would be rather a tame way of spending the afternoon.

Terry locked up his roll-top desk, put on his hat and coat, and picked up a small hand-bag.

"I'm off!" he said.

"What's your programme for this afternoon?" asked Dennis.

"Lunch first—just a light snack—and footer afterwards."

"Footer!" said Dennis, his eyes sparkling.

"Who do you play for?"

"The Red Crusaders. We're a London club, composed of amateurs. And we're playing the Surrey Rovers down at Richmond this afternoon."

"My hat!" said Dennis. "I'm coming along to see you play."

"Good!"

Terry and Dennis went to lunch together, after which they boarded a bus to Richmond.

Dennis was feeling quite elated. The problem of how to spend the afternoon had been solved; and he was looking forward to seeing a good game.

At the end of a long but not unpleasant journey on the top of the bus, Terry and his companion alighted and went on to the ground.

A small crowd of spectators, numbering about a hundred, had already assembled.

Terry nodded to Dennis Carr, and disappeared into the dressing-room with his bag.

When he emerged, shortly before the time fixed for the kick-off, he was in football garb, and there was a frown on his handsome face.

"What's up?" asked Dennis.

"The same old story," said Terry. "We're a man short."

"My hat!"

"Our outside-right hasn't turned up. He's sent a wire to Raleigh, our skipper, to say he's got mumps, or whooping-cough, or some idiotic thing. It's the limit!"

As Terry spoke the Surrey Rovers sprinted on to the field, in order to put in some preliminary practice.

Dennis Carr noticed that the majority of the players were mere boys, little older than himself.

His eyes followed them wistfully.

"Jove, I'd give anything for a game!" he murmured.

Terry gave a start.

"Are you a footballer, Carr?" he asked.

"Of course!"

"Well, why the thump didn't you say so before?"

"I didn't think there was any chance of a game."

"There's a gilt-edged chance!" said Terry. "Come along and see what the skipper has to say about it."

And Dennis was hurried away to the dressing-room.

Raleigh, of the Red Crusaders, was a fine, upstanding young fellow of eighteen or thereabouts. He eyed Dennis Carr with approval, and promptly engaged him to take the place of the absent player.

"Buck up!" he said, handing Dennis the necessary equipment.

Dennis effected a lightning transformation, and shortly afterwards he ran out on to the field with the Red Crusaders.

The crowd had increased considerably by this time, and Dennis estimated that over three hundred people were on the ground. Nearly all of them were partisans of the Surrey Rovers.

Dennis lined up at outside-right, his face flushed with eagerness and excitement.

This was his first football match since leaving Greyfriars, and he wondered how he would shape.

Then the whistle blew, and from the touch-line came a mighty roar:

"Rovers! Play up, the Rovers!"

"Go it, the Reds!" came a solitary shout.

For the first ten minutes of the game Dennis Carr had nothing to do, for the simple reason that the Rovers were attacking.

Terry, at back, had plenty of work to do, and he did it well. He cleared the ball successfully at length, and it came whizzing up to where Dennis was standing.

Away went the new outside-right in neck-or-nothing fashion. He evaded the burly back who loomed up to meet him, and swung the ball across to Raleigh, who scored with a grand first-time shot.

That was the only goal of the first half, though the Red Crusaders were perhaps a trifle lucky to be leading, as their opponents had had most of the play.

In the second half the Surrey Rovers equalised; but ten minutes from the end Dennis Carr again broke through, and this time he himself scored. It proved to be the winning goal, and the crowd, disappointed though they were to see the Rovers lose, gave Dennis a great ovation.

As for Terry, he was hugely delighted.

"You were great, kid!" he said, clapping Dennis on the back.

"Lucky!" corrected Dennis, with a smile.

"Rot! You played a topping game. Where did you learn your footer?"

"At Greyfriars."

"Seems to be a wonderful place, Greyfriars," said Terry reflectively. "We'd fix up a match with their First Eleven, only—"

"Only what?"

"We should be too much above their weight."

Dennis laughed.

"My dear chap," he said, "Greyfriars First would lick the Red Crusaders to a frazzle!"

"Is that your honest opinion?" said Terry.

"It is."

"Then I'll give your prophecy a chance to come true. What's the name of the Greyfriars skipper?"

"Wingate—George Wingate."

"Good!" said Terry. "I'll get our secretary to write to Wingate straight away, and see if a match can be fixed up for Saturday."

"Shall I be able to turn out for the Crusaders?" inquired Dennis.

"Certainly! On this afternoon's form you're quite equal to the fellow who didn't turn up."

Dennis Carr went back to his lodgings that evening in a happy frame of mind.

Life in London was not such a dreary affair, after all, when there was a possibility of playing in a match against his old school.

The afternoon's recreation had bucked Dennis up immensely. And he found himself eagerly looking forward to the Saturday, when he hoped to accompany the dashing Red Crusaders team to Greyfriars.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Surprising the School.

"A NY luck?"

Dennis Carr asked that question of Terry on the Friday morning.

Work had slackened off somewhat in Sir Howard Prescott's office. Sir Howard himself was fixing up a golfing appointment on the telephone, and most of his clerks were discussing football.

Terry drew a letter from his pocket.

"It's all serene," he said. "Wingate seems quite a decent sort. Here's his letter."

The captain of Greyfriars had written to the secretary of the Red Crusaders as follows:

"Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter, our First Eleven has no fixture for Saturday afternoon, and we shall therefore be delighted to entertain, and, if possible, defeat, the Red Crusaders.

"If you will wire the time of your arrival I will arrange for a couple of prefects to meet you at Friardale Station.

Yours sincerely,
"GEORGE WINGATE."

"That's topping!" said Dennis. "Roll on, to-morrow!"

"We're catching the eleven-fifteen from Charing Cross," explained Terry. "Mind you turn up in time."

"Rely on me," said Dennis.

As a matter of fact, he was on the departure platform an hour before the train was due to leave.

The other members of the Red Crusaders team arrived in twos and threes, until at length Terry was able to report "All present!"

"Have you wired to Wingate?" asked Dennis.

Terry nodded.

"I told him what time we were arriving, but said that he needn't worry about sending anyone to meet us. You'll be able to show us the way."

The footballers boarded the train, which happened to be a non-stop to Courtfield Junction.

The whole of the eleven crowded into one carriage, and Dennis eyed his fellow-players rather doubtfully. They were very clever footballers, he knew, but the majority of them were mere boys, and Dennis began to wonder whether they would be up to the weight of the Greyfriars First.

The train sped on through the flying landscape, and at length came the welcome shout: "Courtfield Junction! Change here for Friardale and Greyfriars!"

As the footballers crossed over to the platform where the local train was waiting, a hand fell upon Dennis Carr's shoulder, and a voice exclaimed:

"Dennis! What the thump are you doing here?"

It was Bob Cherry who spoke, and the other members of the Famous Five were with him.

"I'm bound for Greyfriars," explained Dennis, as he shook hands cordially with Harry Wharton & Co. "We've got a match on this afternoon with your first eleven."

"Who's 'we'?" asked Nugent, in wonder.

"The Red Crusaders."

"But—"

"I'm a full-blown Crusader," said Dennis, with a smile. "I turned out for the team on Wednesday, against Surrey Rovers, and this will be my second appearance."

The Famous Five gasped.

"Do you seriously mean to say," ejaculated Harry Wharton, "that you're going to play against our first eleven?"

"Yes. Why not?"

"My hat! You'll be a lilliputian up against fellows like Wingate!"

"Size isn't everything in football," said Dennis. "A little fellow can often get the better of a hefty one."

"True; but—but it seems jolly queer that you should be playing for the Crusaders."

"Are you fellows coming to see the match?" asked Dennis.

"Of course!"

The Famous Five clambered into the local train, and Dennis Carr accompanied them.

Needless to state, there was terrific excitement at Greyfriars when it became known that Dennis was a Red Crusader.

There was a certain amount of amusement, too, for not many fellows imagined that Dennis would be able to hold his own against the giants of the Sixth.

After a light lunch, and a tour of the school buildings, the visiting eleven prepared for the fray.

A record crowd had gathered on Big Side, and when the rival teams took the field there was a storm of cheering, accompanied by shouts of laughter.

The Red Crusaders were pigmies by comparison with the Greyfriars First.

Terry was tall, and so were one or two others, but the majority were short and slim, in marked contrast to the hefty Greyfriars players.

Wingate did not know, as yet, that Dennis Carr was to be one of his opponents. He saw Dennis in football garb, and greeted him cordially.

"I suppose you're going to referee, kid?" he said.

"No."
 "You're one of the linesmen, then?"
 "Wrong again!" said Dennis, laughing.
 Wingate stared.
 "You don't mean to say—"
 "That I'm one of the players," said Dennis. "Precisely."
 "My hat!" gasped Wingate.
 And before he could recover from his astonishment Raleigh, the Crusaders' skipper, was tossing with him for choice of ends.

Wingate called "Heads!" and he proved to be correct.
 A strong wind from the sea blew lengthwise across the ground, and the captain of Greyfriars wisely elected to take advantage of it.

The players lined up, the whistle went, and the ball was set in motion.
 "Play up, Greyfriars!" shouted the crowd.
 "Look after your opponents!"
 "Mind they don't blow away!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

The Red Crusaders accepted this chaff quite good-naturedly, and they were engaged in battling gamely against the strong wind, which was fast developing into a gale.

The visitors soon proved that they were a very plucky and resourceful side. But their work in the first half was of a purely defensive nature, and not once did Dennis Carr—or any other forward, for that matter—come into the picture.

Aided by the terrific wind, the Greyfriars team indulged in shots at goal, and but for the resolute display of the Red Crusaders' backs and goalie, at least half a dozen goals would have been registered against them.

As it was, only two shots took effect—one from the foot of Wingate, the other from the head of Pat Gwynne.

Half-time arrived with Greyfriars leading by two goals to nil. This, bearing in mind that they had the advantage of their own ground and the powerful wind, was nothing to go into raptures over.

The Crusaders improved vastly after change of ends. Their forwards, who had hitherto been dormant, playing a strong game; and great was the surprise when Dennis Carr, surviving a collision with a burly prefect, raced through and scored.

"Goal!"
 "Bravo, Carr!"

Wingate rubbed his eyes, and asked Gwynne if it was all a dream. Gwynne had just been asking Faulkner the same question.

Dennis Carr had had the brazen audacity to score a goal against the Greyfriars First Eleven!

The game ruled fast and exciting after this, but the Friars were severely handicapped by the wind. They could seldom get within shooting distance, whereas the Reds were attacking almost continuously.

Twenty minutes from the end Dennis Carr put in a fast run and a clever centre, and Raleigh drove the ball into the net.

"Goal!"
 "Two all!"

"Strikes me," murmured Bob Cherry, "that the Crusaders are going to win!"

"And they deserve to, on the run of the play," said Johnny Bull. "Carr's absolutely great!"

Wingate rallied his men desperately, and the Friars attacked in the teeth of the gale.

A clever bout of passing between Wingate and Gwynne resulted in the latter scoring with a fast, low shot, which the Crusaders' goalie failed to stop.

"Hurrah!"
 "Good old Gwynne!"

It seemed that the Friars had won. But in the very last minute of the game Raleigh broke through for the Crusaders. His shot struck one of the uprights, and the ball rebounded at the feet of Dennis Carr.

Dennis promptly pounced upon it, and drove it into the net with terrific force, thus saving the game for his side.

"Three to three!" said Harry Wharton, as the final whistle sounded.

"And one of the best games we've seen this season!" said Bob Cherry.

The Red Crusaders in general, and Dennis Carr in particular, received quite an ovation as they came off.

Even Skinner of the Remove, who a short time before had done all in his power to ruin Dennis, joined in the applause.

"Jolly well played, Carr!" he said heartily. Dennis fairly glowed with satisfaction.

He had proved a valuable acquisition to

the Red Crusaders, and he had scored two goals against Greyfriars First, which was a triumph indeed!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
 A Race Against Time.

AFTER the match the visiting eleven—with one exception—were entertained to tea in the prefects' room.

The exception was Dennis Carr. Dennis was taken in tow by the Famous Five, and marched away to No. 1 Study.

Mark Linley and Squiff joined the party, and accommodation in the study was rather limited. But Squiff said he didn't mind sitting on the coal-scuttle if there weren't enough chairs to go round.

"Now, Bob," said Harry Wharton briskly, "what have we got in the way of grub?"

"There's a tin of sardines in the cupboard," said Bob Cherry.
 "The one we bought last Friday week?"

"Yes."
 "H'm! I think they're a bit too far gone for human consumption. They ought to be drawing their old-age pensions by now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "There's half a cake stowed away on the top shelf," said Nugent.

Wharton nodded.
 "Yes, I know all about that cake," he said. "It was left over from the Christmas festivities. We can't expect Carr to tackle it, especially as he hasn't brought his pickaxe!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 Harry Wharton slipped a pound note into Bob Cherry's hand.

"Cut along to the tuckshop, Bob, and see what you can get in the way of grub."

"Bring a cold rabbit-pie, if Mrs. Mimbble's got one," said Squiff. "Nothing like a rabbit-pie to make you feel frisky."

Bob Cherry departed on his errand, and when he returned to the study a few moments later he was laden with good things, like a juvenile edition of Father Christmas.

"Ripping!" said Wharton.
 And he proceeded to carve the pie.

Dennis Carr was the guest of honour, and he was waited on hand and foot by his chums. He strongly objected to being made a fuss of; but his objections were overruled.

"It isn't every day you're here to tea," said Johnny Bull. "And we mean to make the most of you while we can."

"Hear, hear!"
 "You played a stunning game this afternoon, Dennis," said Mark Linley.

Dennis laughed.
 "You're the ninety-ninth fellow to tell me that," he said.

"Well, it's a fact. How did you manage to become a Red Crusader?"

"There's a fellow named Terry working in the office—the chap who played back for us this afternoon. I went with him to Richmond the other day to see a match, and it turned out that the Crusaders were a man short, so I became a player instead of a spectator."

"Are you going to play for them all through the season?" asked Wharton.
 "That rests with the skipper."

"I should think he'd be only too glad to keep you in the eleven permanently," said Squiff. "More pie, please!"

"Nothing doing," said Wharton. "We don't allow second helpings, except to honoured guests."

Squiff rose up in wrath from the coal-scuttle.

"If you mean to imply that I'm not an honoured guest—" he began.

"I say, you fellows—"
 "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Here's Bunter!"

A fat face, adorned by a pair of spectacles, insinuated itself round the door of the study.

"Travel!" said Johnny Bull curtly.
 "Buzz off!" said Nugent.

"Removably take away your ludicrous and obnoxious presence!" added Hurree Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 Billy Bunter—upon whom words were wasted as a rule—stood his ground.

"Oh, really, you fellows—I've called to see my old pal Carr."

"Well, here I am," said Dennis. "Take a good look at me, and sling your hook. I can't cash a postal-order in advance, and I can't lend you five bob till to-morrow, because I'm going back to London to-night."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter blinked enviously at the Teasers through his big spectacles.

"Will you fellows stand me—" he began.
 "We can't stand you at any price!" said Bob Cherry.

"Will you stand me a feed? I wouldn't say no to half a dozen tarts."

"Very well," said Wharton, "you shall have 'em."

So saying, the captain of the Remove picked up a juicy jam-tart.

Five other juniors did likewise; and when Wharton rapped out the command "Fire!" the missiles whizzed through the air. Two of them missed their human target, but the other four smote Billy Bunter full in the face, and he travelled through the doorway at express speed.

"Varoooooh!"
 "Good-bye, Bluebell!" sang out Bob Cherry. "We've plenty more tarts here if you'd like them!"

But Bunter didn't come back for any more. He preferred to take his food internally rather than externally.

The feed continued without interruption; and when it was over the juniors drew their chairs up to the fire and chatted about old times.

Dennis Carr was very happy. But his happiness was tinged with regret when he reflected that the delights of Greyfriars were not for him. He must go back to the London office, and continue to earn his own living.

He was no longer a happy, care-free member of the Greyfriars Remove.

For quite a long time the juniors remained in conversation with their guest.

The winter dusk had fallen long since, and the wind blew up from the sea with a violence which made the study window rattle, and caused the leafless branches of the elms in the Close to creak and groan.

At length Dennis Carr sprang suddenly to his feet.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "I shall miss the train! I had no idea it was so late."

Harry Wharton & Co. were equally alarmed. They, too, had forgotten the flight of time.

"What time does your train go, Dennis?" asked Mark Linley.
 "Nine o'clock."

"Then you'll just do it by the skin of your teeth, if you put in a smart sprint!"

Dennis put on his hat, and placed his coat over his arm. Then, hurriedly shaking hands all round, he dashed out of the study and along the passage, nearly bowling over Loder of the Sixth as he went.

Without stopping to apologise to the prefect, Dennis sped on.

The luck was against him. The wind buffeted his face as he crossed the Close, and it impeded his progress. And then he found, to his annoyance, that the school gates were locked.

"I must shin over the wall, I suppose!" he panted. "It won't be the first time I've done it."

The wall was surmounted, and Dennis streaked along the road like a champion of the cinder-path.

He paused only once, to glance at his luminous watch.

"Five minutes!" he muttered. "If the train's late, I shall do it. If it happens to be punctual, I shall miss it!"

The remainder of the Red Crusaders were already on the station platform. They were wondering what had happened to Dennis.

They did not know that at that moment he was dashing along the deserted road as if his life depended upon it.

As he neared the station Dennis caught sight of the approaching train. It swung round a curve with a gleam of lights.

"I shall just about do it!" he reflected. But the luck was still against him.

The train halted barely a moment. Then it rumbled out of the little station just as Dennis reached the platform.

"Dash it!" panted Dennis. "Too late!"
 Then he turned to a grinning porter who stood near.

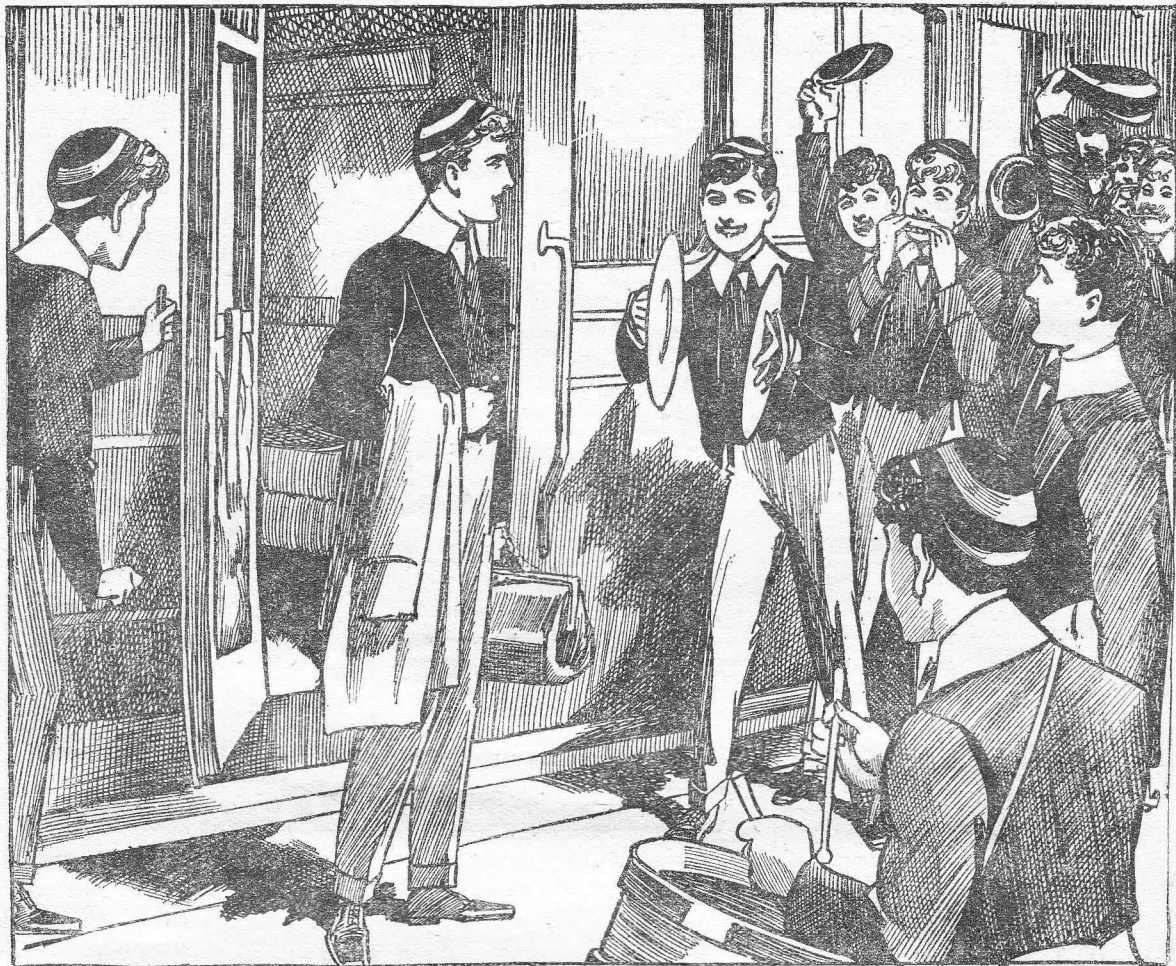
"Is that the last train to-night?" he inquired.
 "Yessir—except the mail-train."

"What time does that go out?"
 "One o'clock in the mornin', sir."

"Oh, help!"
 Dennis didn't relish the idea of waiting four hours in a cold and cheerless waiting-room.

He decided to go back to Greyfriars.
 "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, when Dennis reappeared in Study No. 1. "Missed the train?"

Dennis nodded.
 "It was a matter of seconds," he said.



The train rumbled to a standstill, and Dennis alighted from one of the carriages. He had discarded his ordinary civilian attire, and was wearing Etons. The amateur musicians lined up and their instruments combined in a most discordant din. (See page 7.)

"However, there's a mail-train at one o'clock. I must be thankful for small mercies!"

"Tell you what," said Wharton. "We'll stoke the fire, and you can stay in this study until it's time for you to go."

"Thanks awfully!"

"Make yourself comfy in the arm-chair and have a nap," said Mark Linley. "Otherwise you won't be fit for anything to-morrow."

Dennis availed himself of his chums' hospitality; and after they had been summoned to bed he amused himself by going through the back numbers of the "Greyfriars Herald." After which he endeavoured to go to sleep, but with no success. His mind was too much occupied to admit of slumber.

"By Jove! I'd give the world to be back at Greyfriars for good!" he exclaimed. "The more I visit the old place, the more I want to come back. If only the pater had lived!"

But Mr. Carr had died in penury, and Dennis Carr's schooldays had come to a sudden climax in consequence.

It was no use sighing for what could never come to pass, Dennis reflected. And he resigned himself to the new life in London, and resolved to do his utmost to forget the old.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Surprise for Dennis.

BOOM!
It was the first stroke of midnight sounding from the old clock-tower. Dennis Carr rose to his feet with a yawn.

It was early to think of starting for the station, but Dennis meant to leave nothing to chance this time. If he missed the mail-train he would be in a sorry plight.

He put on his coat and hat, took a last lingering look at Study No. 1, and then,

extinguishing the light, he stepped out into the dark passage.

As Dennis emerged into the Close a tall form loomed up in the darkness, and there was a violent collision.

"Ow!"

"Yow!"

The victims of the collision uttered these exclamations simultaneously.

Then an electric torch flashed out, and a voice—the harsh voice of Loder of the Sixth—exclaimed:

"Got you, you young rascal!"

Loder was returning from a nocturnal jaunt to the Cross Keys. It was a little habit of Loder's to break bounds when the rest of Greyfriars slumbered.

Evidently the prefect imagined that he had captured some junior in the act of committing a similar offence.

Dennis Carr, after tenderly caressing his elbow, burst into a laugh.

"It's all right, Loder!" he said.

"All right, is it?" snarled the prefect. "I'll jolly soon show you whether it's all right or not! You will come with me to Mr. Quelch!"

"But I'm not a Greyfriars fellow," protested Dennis. "I'm Carr!"

"I'm well aware of that," said Loder. "You've no right to be on the school premises at midnight, and I'm going to report you! Come with me!"

The prefect enforced his command by gripping Dennis Carr's arm and marching him away.

"Let go, you idiot!" panted Dennis. "I've got a train to catch!"

Loder ignored the plea. He marched his captive along the corridors, and halted outside the door of Mr. Quelch's study.

A light gleamed underneath the door, and from within the study came the click-click

of a typewriter. The Remove-master was working late.

Loder rapped on the door, and Mr. Quelch's voice bade him enter.

Great was the Form-master's surprise when he saw who his late visitors were.

"Bless my soul! What does this mean, Loder?"

"It means, sir, that I've just caught Carr on the school premises at this time of night. His conduct strikes me as being very suspicious. Instead of returning to London with the rest of his team, he has remained here, possibly with the object of carrying out, or assisting to carry out, a burglary."

Dennis laughed aloud.

"Of all the absurd rot—" he began.

"Carr," said Mr. Quelch, "it is certainly singular that you should be found on the premises at so late an hour! I must ask you for an explanation."

"The fact is, sir," said Dennis, "I missed my train. I had tea with Wharton and the others, and didn't notice the time."

"A flimsy excuse, sir!" said Loder, with a sneer.

"Silence, Loder!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Proceed, Carr!"

"Having lost the train, there was nothing for it but to wait for the mail-train, sir," said Dennis. "I came back to Greyfriars to spend the evening in Study No. 1. And I was just starting out for the station when Loder collared me."

"He had been up to some shady game or other, sir!" interposed the prefect.

"Nonsense, Loder!"

"I—I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Such a suggestion is preposterous! I accept Carr's explanation without question. To accuse Carr of loitering on the school

premises with intent to commit a felony is not only absurd, but unjust!"

"But I caught him in the act, sir—" "You caught him in the act of doing nothing discreditable," said Mr. Quelch. "He was merely on his way to the railway-station. And now, Loder, I must ask you to explain what you yourself were doing outside the building at such an hour!"

Loder gave a start. He had not expected this. He had brought Dennis Carr up for judgment, only to find that he himself was being called over the coals.

"The—fact is, sir," he stammered. "I was very restless after I went to bed. I fancied I heard somebody moving about, and at last, unable to stand it any longer, I slipped on my things and came down to investigate."

Mr. Quelch frowned. "Your explanation is not entirely satisfactory, Loder," he said. "However, I will say no more about the matter. You will apologise to Carr—"

"Sir!" exclaimed Loder, flushing. "You will apologise to Carr," repeated the Remove-master, "and go back to bed."

Loder clenched his hands. It was most humiliating to have to apologise to his recent victim. But the rascally prefect knew that there would be trouble if he failed to comply with Mr. Quelch's orders.

"I—I'm sorry I made a mistake, Carr!" he stammered.

"That's all right," said Dennis cheerfully. "Try not to be such a silly ass in future."

Loder turned to Mr. Quelch. "You hear him, sir? The cheeky young cub—"

"That will do, Loder! Leave this study at once!"

The prefect staggered, rather than walked, from the room, acutely conscious of the fact that he had made a fool of himself. He had been compelled to apologise to the fellow whom he had hoped to get into trouble.

With a savage scowl on his face, Loder went along to his own quarters.

Dennis Carr, after a brief and pleasant conversation with Mr. Quelch, set out once more for the station.

It was pitch-dark, and blowing great guns, but Dennis had plenty of time to spare on this occasion.

He had his return ticket in his pocket, and he paced up and down the dark platform, waiting for the mail-train.

It was signalled at last, and a sleepy porter shuffled out on to the platform.

The train rumbled to a halt, and Dennis stepped into a second-class compartment.

There was only one other person in the carriage. He was a middle-aged, benevolent-looking gentleman, with a genial smile on his face and a travelling-rug on his knees.

"Good-morning!" he said to Dennis.

Dennis returned the salutation.

"I suppose it is morning by now!" he said, with a grin.

The benevolent-looking gentleman wagged an admonishing forefinger at his fellow-passenger.

"You've been keeping late hours!" he said sternly.

"Not from choice, sir, I assure you," replied Dennis.

And then he explained how he had missed the earlier train, and been compelled to spend the evening at Greyfriars.

"Greyfriars!" echoed the other. "Are you a Greyfriars' boy?"

"I was," said Dennis. "But I'm not now, worse luck!"

"You mean to say you've been expelled?" "Oh no!"

"Then what—?"

"It's a long story," said Dennis, "and if I started to explain everything you'd soon be bored stiff!"

The gentleman in the corner-seat did not press for further information. He opened his book, and started to read.

Dennis regarded him curiously the while.

There seemed something strangely familiar in the features of his travelling companion.

Had these two met before? And if so, when and where?

Dennis could not for the life of him find a solution to these questions, and he was still trying to puzzle things out when the train rumbled into the London terminus.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Dennis Carr's companion. "It's three o'clock! Porter! Find me a taxi, and put my luggage on board, and there's a handsome tip for you!"

The porter touched his hat and hurried away on his errand.

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Dennis Carr was about to bid farewell to the benevolent-looking gentleman, when the latter spoke.

"If your home is in the same direction as mine," he said, "you can avail yourself of my taxi with pleasure!"

"Thanks awfully, sir!" said Dennis. "If you'll tell me where you live—"

"Park Crescent—No. 4, Park Crescent."

Dennis Carr stood rooted to the platform, surveying the speaker in blank astonishment. For No. 4, Park Crescent had been his father's house!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Dream Comes True.

"YOU seem surprised, my boy!" remarked Dennis Carr's companion.

"I am!" said Dennis. "I'm knocked all of a heap. No. 4, Park Crescent is the house in which my pater lived."

It was the other's turn to look surprised.

Having recovered from his amazement, he darted a keen, searching look at Dennis.

"Your name?" he asked quickly.

"Carr—Dennis Carr. But why—?"

The benevolent-looking gentleman fairly beamed. He seized Dennis Carr's hand, and shook it as if it were a pump-handle.

"Dennis, my dear boy, don't you know me? Don't you recollect— But, of course, you wouldn't. You were a mischievous young imp in knickerbockers when I last saw you."

Dennis Carr was utterly bewildered.

"Who—what—?" he gasped.

"Dennis, I am your uncle—your Uncle Dick!"

"My hat!"

"You had doubtless forgotten my existence. I have been abroad for many years, and on receiving the sad news of your father's death, I hurried back to England, with the object of straightening out your father's affairs, which were left in rather a tangle, and also to make provision for your future. Your career at Greyfriars has terminated, I understand?"

"That's so, uncle!" said Dennis breathlessly.

"Then I will make immediate arrangements for your return to the school."

Dennis Carr's joy and delight knew no bounds.

Had Uncle Dick been a younger and less portly person, his nephew would have waltzed him along the platform.

At that moment the porter appeared.

"I've got you a taxi, sir!" he announced.

"Splendid! Come along, Dennis!"

As the vehicle rolled through the deserted streets, Uncle Dick explained that he was about to take possession of the house which had been occupied by Mr. Carr.

"You will come and live with me, my boy," he said, "until arrangements can be made for your return to Greyfriars. And now, tell me all that has happened to you since your father's death."

Dennis recounted the adventures which had befallen him in London, and his uncle listened with great interest.

"You have had some rather grim experiences, Dennis," he said, at length. "But your troubles are over now. I will telephone to the headmaster of Greyfriars, and I have no doubt that he will allow you to return at once."

"Thanks ever so much, Uncle Dick!"

"Tut, tut, boy; don't thank me! I am merely doing my duty by you. Henceforward, I am your guardian as well as your uncle."

"And the best guardian a fellow could have!" said Dennis warmly.

The taxi slowed up in Park Crescent and stopped outside No. 4.

The driver was lavishly tipped—Uncle Dick seemed to have a habit of lavishly tipping people—and uncle and nephew passed into the house.

Not a wink of sleep did Dennis Carr get that night. He was far too excited to sleep. He lay in a state of physical and mental wakefulness, blessing his good fortune.

He had often dreamed that he might one day return to Greyfriars, and now his dream was coming true!

Uncle Dick did not let the grass grow under his feet. He telephoned to Dr. Locke at the first opportunity, and the Head of Greyfriars readily consented to Dennis Carr's return.

"Everything is fixed up," Uncle Dick informed Dennis after breakfast on Monday morning. "You may return to Greyfriars—to-day, if you can so arrange matters with your employer."

"Oh, good!" murmured Dennis.

He went to the office as usual that morning,

and Sir Howard soon rang for him to go in and take down letters.

Dennis explained what had happened, and requested that he might be relieved of his duties as soon as possible.

Sir Howard warmly congratulated Dennis on his good fortune, and said that he might go as soon as he wished. Accordingly, Dennis arranged to return to his old school that day.

Terry pulled a long face when he heard the news.

"Well, it's a stroke of luck for you, Carr, and I'm jolly glad, for your sake," he said. "But I'm sorry you're leaving this office. We were getting along famously together. I suppose this means that you'll never be able to turn out for the Red Crusaders any more?"

"Afraid so," said Dennis. "My footer club in future will be the Greyfriars Remove."

Terry put out his hand.

"Good-bye, Carr, and the best of luck!" he said cordially.

"Good-bye, Terry!"

Dennis Carr quitted Sir Howard Prescott's office with few regrets.

Sir Howard had been very decent to him, and so had the others; but he felt that the life of a junior clerk was tame by comparison with that of a public schoolboy.

His next action was to despatch a wire from the nearest post-office.

The telegram was worded as follows:

"Linley, Greyfriars School, Friar-dale.—All serene. Wealthy uncle turned up. Returning Greyfriars this afternoon.—DENNIS."

Needless to say, that telegram made a profound sensation at the old school. It arrived just as the Remove streamed out of the Form-room after morning lessons; and Mark Linley, after whirling it round his head and dancing a hornpipe, showed the message to the Famous Five, who shared his delight.

The corridor rang with cheering.

"Hurrah!"

"Carr's coming back!"

"Good old Dennis!"

Harry Wharton was as cheerful as anybody; but there was a wistful expression on his face as he turned to his chums.

"It's good-bye to the captaincy of the Remove, you fellows," he said. "Carr's the proper captain, and I shall have to stand down in his favour."

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "I hadn't thought of that!"

"Harry's quite right," said Frank Nugent. "Carr was skipper of the Form when he left, and he's entitled to resume the position."

"All the same, it's rough luck on Harry," said Johnny Bull.

"Never mind," said Wharton. "I must grin and bear it. Besides, it's quite on the cards that I shall win back the captaincy later on."

"Yes, rather!"

"I say, you fellows," chimed in Billy Bunter, who had been listening to the conversation from the outset, "what about giving Carr a reception at the station, and carrying him back to the school—the conquering hero stunt, you know?"

"Good!" said Bob Cherry. "Bunter's made a rattling good suggestion for once! Bravo, Billy!"

And the humorous Bob clapped the fat junior on the back with such violence that Billy Bunter nearly curled up.

"Yow-ow-ow!" groaned the victim.

"You've punctured me, you ass!"

"Any more suggestions?" inquired Bob, with a grin.

But Billy Bunter, if he had any further ideas, discreetly kept them to himself.

"The puzzle is," said Mark Linley, "what train is Dennis coming by?"

"The one that gets in at five o'clock, I should say," said Johnny Bull. "It's a non-stop from London to Courtfield."

When afternoon lessons were over, Harry Wharton mustered the Removites together, and all sorts of musical instruments were begged, borrowed, or stolen.

Peter Todd had procured a flute—how or from whence nobody knew.

Bolsover major was in possession of a cornet; and here again the source of origin was a mystery.

Dick Russell had a kettle-drum which he had fashioned himself; and Ogilvy had a pair of cymbals.

At least a score of the company possessed mouth-organs, and they started giving a rehearsal in the Close.

"Stow it, you duffers!" shouted Harry

Wharton, stopping his ears. "Wait till we get to the station before you start kicking up a din! You'll have the Head and half a dozen prefects out here, at this rate!"

"When order had been restored, the procession marched off in a body, with the Famous Five leading.

Everyone was very excited; and everyone was resolved to give Dennis Carr the biggest and noisiest reception he had ever had in his life.

"Plenty of time," remarked Bob Cherry, when they reached the station. "Train isn't signalled yet."

The amateur musicians lined up on the platform, and when the signal dropped they started tuning their instruments.

The din was terrific; and the station-master and the porters protested in vain.

"Young gentlemen! Young gentlemen!" said the station-master reprovingly. "You forget yourselves!"

But the words were wasted on the high-spirited Removites.

There was a shout as the train came into sight round the bend.

"Pile in, you fellows!" shouted Wharton. And the flute, the cornet, the kettle-drum, the cymbals, and the mouth-organs combined in a most discordant din.

The train rumbled to a standstill, and Dennis Carr alighted from one of the carriages. He had discarded his ordinary civilian attire, and was wearing Etons. He was a junior clerk no longer, but a public schoolboy once again.

For a moment Dennis stood rooted to the platform in blank amazement.

Pom! Pom!
Boom! Boom!
Ta-ra—ta-ra—ta-ra!

The Remove Form had never made itself heard to such an extent in the whole course of its history.

The train went on its way, but the din still continued, until at length Harry Wharton raised his hand for silence.

Wharton intended to make a speech. In fact, he had mapped out in advance what he was going to say.

But he got no further than "Carr, old chap—"

A storm of cheering arose, and Bob Cherry and Mark Linley made a rush at Dennis Carr, and lifted him on to their shoulders.

Then the triumphal march back to Greyfriars began, and the "music" broke out afresh.

The cornet blared and the cymbals clashed, and it was a very joyous procession of juniors that marched along the country lanes.

Bob Cherry and Mark Linley were relieved at length by Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull.

Dennis Carr repeatedly appealed to be set down; but his appeals went unheeded.

The procession streamed through the old gateway of Greyfriars; and Gosling, the crusty old porter, dropped his bunch of keys in his amazement at the strange spectacle.

A halt was called in the junior common-room, and Dennis Carr, flushed and breathless, was at last set down.

But there was no peace for him. "Speech!" shouted Peter Todd.

And the cry was taken up on every side.

Dennis mounted a form, and addressed his schoolfellows.

He was not very coherent—coherency was impossible, with so many interruptions—but he said he was overjoyed to be back at Greyfriars, and that he had neither expected nor deserved such a tremendous reception.

And then Harry Wharton exclaimed in ringing tones:

"Three cheers for Dennis Carr, the captain of the Remove!"

"Excuse me," said Dennis, before the cheering could burst forth; "you've made a slight mistake. I'm captain of the Remove no longer."

"Eh? How's that?"

"You're the duly elected skipper," said Mark Linley.

"Quite so; but I've decided to hand the job over to Wharton."

"Why?" inquired a score of voices.

"It's like this," explained Dennis. "I've been away from Greyfriars over a month, and I've got a lot of leeway to make up in the way of lessons. If I drop the captaincy, it will give me a better chance."

And so Harry Wharton continued as captain, after all. And Dennis Carr resolved to "swot" hard for many weeks to come, in order to make up for lost time.

Dennis returned shortly afterwards to his own study—to the apartment he shared with Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian; and there was great rejoicing, not only in that study, but in every study in the Remove passage.

That same evening Dennis had an audience with the Head, to whom he handed a letter from his Uncle Dick. The letter contained a cheque for Dennis Carr's term fees.

"I am delighted, my boy," said Dr. Locke, "that you are back with us once more!"

The Head's delight was shared by practically everybody at Greyfriars.

Even cads of the Skinner type, who in the past had done a great deal to injure Dennis, now hailed with unconcealed pleasure the return of the wanderer!

THE END.

(Another grand long story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled "The Slacker of Greyfriars!" Order your copy EARLY!)

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Our Grand New Serial, dealing with the
Adventures of a Young Acrobat who Rose
to Fame and Fortune as a Cinema Star.

By STANTON HOPE.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Micky Denver, an orphan lad, is an acrobat in Beauman's Gigantic Circus. One night, in Liverpool, he is accused unjustly by Boris Beauman, the bullying proprietor, of having stolen a gold watch. The evidence is black against him, and Micky is arrested, but escapes to the river-front and stows away on a tramp-steamship called the Plunger. When the ship brings up in New York Harbour, Micky escapes through an open port and swims ashore. In New York Micky meets a slim, red-headed American,

Alec P. Figg, who is also anxious to get out West. With him Micky "jumps" the "Chicago Flyer," and by stages they beat their way to Kansas City. Figg, known as Smart Alec, is one of the most expert crackmen on the Continent, and he attempts to crack the hotel safe. Micky frustrates him, and makes the rest of his way to Los Angeles alone. In the city, he loses little time in visiting the offices of a cinema company, and coolly requests to see the great Charlie Chaplin on business.

(You read on.)

A Visit to the Cinema City!

THE cool request of Micky Denver to see the greatest star in the cinema world on business fairly took the wind from the sails of the young American in the inquiry bureau. He gazed up and down the English lad, pensively chewing on the pepsin cud, and wondering what queer animal he had to deal with.

Certainly Micky's appearance did not justify his bold-as-brass demand to see the great Charlie Chaplin, who was as difficult to interview by strangers as the Prime Minister of England. "Jumping" trains and travelling right across the United States between freight vans and inside of box cars had not improved the lad's attire, which, although carefully brushed, was showing marked signs of needing a bit of tailoring in places. Besides, Micky's clothes, made in England as they were, were quite enough in themselves to attract attention from anyone used to seeing the latest American-cut garments.

"Say, kid," said the smart American youth at length, "I'm curious to know this—how did you guess Mr. Chaplin was in to-day? Sometimes he doesn't come down here for days at a time."

As a matter of fact, when Micky had called at the office of the cinema company his only reason for supposing that the great film star would be there was that the name, "Chaplin," was blazing in letters of gold outside the premises. But he suddenly remembered the beautiful limousine that he had seen throbbing softly by the side-walk.

"I saw a car," began Micky, "and—"
A low grunt on a motor-horn and the whir of an engine caused the lad to swing round. A little cloud of yellow dust was all he could see in the roadway beyond the polished swing-doors—the limousine had gone.

"Well, kid," said the American youth, "I guess you've missed him now. Didn't you see him slip out half a minute ago while we were pow-wowing here?"

A sickening wave of disappointment swept through Micky. He had been within an ace of seeing in the flesh the man whose name was a household word in every civilised country in the globe—the man whose antics had afforded him so many pleasant hours in the Old Country, and who might have set him on the path to cinema success himself. A rather unreasonable flood of anger against the well-dressed young American clerk intermingled with his chagrin.

"Why on earth didn't you tell me?" he cried. "I particularly wanted to see Mr. Charlie Chaplin!"

"The American bridled up.

"Now, see here," he said. "What's phazing you? Had you an appointment with Mr. Chaplin?"

"No," answered Micky, reddening a little; "but I had an important business matter to see him about."

The clerk thrust a printed form through the wicket in a very businesslike manner.

"Fill that up," he said abruptly. "If your business is important Mr. Chaplin shall see
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the slip, and I guess he'll grant you an appointment."

Micky took the form into his hand. In block print letters against blank spaces it demanded curtly, "Name—Address—Business—To see whom?" and other similar information, and Micky realised that he had no chance of seeing the great man by that means.

"It—it doesn't matter," said Micky, with a catch in his voice. "I'll—I'll try some other time."

Chappie, always sensitive to any trace of disappointment in his young master's tones, reached up and thrust his cold little nose into Micky's hand. The young American, who was quite a good-natured youth at heart, regarded the English lad with more sympathy, and also not without a trace of curiosity in his look.

"I'm afraid calling again wouldn't be any use, kid," he said, quite kindly. "However, if you care to put me wise to any proposition you have in mind that you think will interest Mr. Chaplin, I'll give you my opinion of your chances of seeing him."

Micky hesitated, and then decided to lay his case before the clerk. Perhaps, after all, he might be able to give some useful information as to the best way of going to work to secure a position in some film company in Los Angeles.

"Well, it's like this," explained Micky. "I've beat it all the way from England to land a job in a cinema studio, and I thought Mr. Charlie Chaplin, whom I've seen a good many times in the picture-palaces at home, might have a vacancy. See?"

"I see," said the young American, smiling broadly. "As an actor, I suppose?"

"I want to be a star later on," said Micky; "but, of course, I don't mind starting at the bottom and taking any job."

"You're modest," murmured the clerk. "Most of 'em want to be a Douglas Fairbanks or a Mary Pickford right off the reel—or, rather, I should say, right on the reel. But, say, talking seriously, do you know how many applications for cinema jobs Mr. Chaplin gets a day?"

"No."
"Well, I guess it's something like five thousand."

Micky clasped the polished counter to steady himself. But quickly a look of incredulity appeared on his face.

"I reckon you're pulling my leg," he said. "You Yanks can stretch things, you know."

"I guess I'm not," averred the American. "I don't want to hoof you into the slough of despond or anything of that sort, but let me tell you something right here to save you needless disappointment in future. You haven't the chance of a snowball in the Sahara of getting a show in any film company in Los Angeles. Folk wait in queues for the chance of getting taken on by the directors, and still the reubs flock in from every one-horse town on the map between Pasadena and Pittsburgh on the hope of one day seeing their faces on the silver screen!"

Micky gave a low whistle, and seeing he had created a profound effect the young American, who liked to hear the sound of his own voice, continued his theme.

"Yep," he went on; "I suppose you aren't wise to the fact that there are seven thousand three hundred and eighty-five cinema schools in the United States, and it is estimated that they turn out, cut, dried, and polished, two hundred and ninety thousand potential cinema stars a week?"

Notwithstanding his optimistic nature, Micky's spirits sank somewhat under these glibly-tongued statistics, especially as the American youth seemed quite serious. It is likely, indeed, that this true son of Uncle Sam was really under the impression that he was speaking the truth, basing his calculations on his own experience with applicants for cinema honours at the inquiry bureau of the film company.

"Then, according to you," said Micky, "it doesn't look as though I'd got a dog's chance of landing a job. However, I'm going to have a few more shots first, for I don't intend to throw up the sponge yet. It's jolly good of you to give me so much information, but I'm afraid I've taken up a tidy bit of your time."

"That's all right," said the American; "but I guess you'll soon be up against it if you're going to rely on cinema work for your oats. Still, you can try the studios if you like out at Cinema City. Go and call at the Filmart Company's studio, and ask for Peter Steel; he's my uncle, and an assistant director of the company. But I guess there'll be nothing doing."

The clerk then directed Micky to Cinema City, where many of the greatest film companies in the world have their studios, and the English lad thanked him for taking so much trouble.

As he was about to leave the office Micky turned to fire off one last question.

"By the way, can you tell me when Mr. Charlie Chaplin will be here again? I'd like to know, so's I could wait outside. I'd like to see him off the screen, though I suppose he looks about the same as his photographs. I reckon you get a free laugh every time he comes in those swing-doors!"

The young American looked as though he was about to have an apoplectic fit, but by an effort he controlled himself.

"Mr. Chaplin may not call here again for two or three weeks," he said, "so I shouldn't hang around if I were you. Good-morning!"

Micky revolved himself out of the swing-doors and set off on his journey to Cinema City. The beautiful Californian sunshine was bathing the street with golden light and with warmth, but the outlook to Micky seemed hazy and chill. He had expected to face difficulties and rebuffs, but the leaden picture drawn for his benefit by the young cinema company clerk surpassed his worst anticipations.

He would have taken the trolley-car part of the way but for the objection on the part of a conductor to Chappie, so Micky and his dog had to walk the whole distance.



Chappie gave a resounding bark in answer to the cry of the cinema star, dashed helter-skelter across the rocks, and leaped into the raging sea; while Micky, discarding his coat as he ran, hastily followed him. (See page 11.)

From the business section of the city he passed on through the streets of beautiful houses chiefly built of wood, lying back from well-kept lawns and gardens, until at last he arrived on the outskirts of Los Angeles, where was situated his objective—Cinema City.

Without having formed any very definite idea in his mind as to what Cinema City should look like, Micky had had a notion that it was a very wonderful and extraordinary place he was going to see. That some industry was going on in the enclosed spaces and low, bungalow-like buildings that came to his view was obvious, but that he was in the centre of the world's cinema industry he could hardly credit.

But as he proceeded down a sidewalk a number of automobiles flashed past him, each containing about half a dozen Turks in flowing robes and armed with scimitars. Turning a corner, he almost ran into a couple of Crusaders in shining armour, with white cloth and bright-red crosses over their breasts.

Micky gazed after these two with something akin to awe in his look, for were not these two real live cinema actors whose pictures would be projected on screens all over the world shortly?

Meeting an American lad of about his own age, Micky inquired the way to the Filmart

studios, and, having got his bearings, set off briskly with the definite object in view of first interviewing Mr. Peter Steel, the uncle of the clerk in Los Angeles. The sun had long passed its zenith when the lad reached a wide gateway in the high wooden fence which bordered the company's location. On an office building just inside the gateway was the name, "Filmart Cinema Company, Ltd.," and lower down was a notice-board bearing the single word, "Enquiries."

Micky entered, and addressed himself to a man at a desk behind the barrier.

"Could I see Mr. Peter Steel?" he inquired politely.

"What for?"

"I—I've just come up from the city from his nephew on a matter of business."

The man scrutinised Micky with no very favourable eye.

"Mister Steel's very busy, I guess!" he snapped. "And if it's anything you kin write, you'd better jot it down on that pad and I'll see he gets it later."

"The matter's important," said Micky firmly, "and so I must see him personally."

The man behind the barrier addressed a boy who was sitting at a nearby table sorting some letters.

"Here, take this young fellow down the lot

and see if you kin find Mister Steel, Artie!" he said. "Don't take him near, though, if they're 'shooting' those dance-hall sets!"

Micky did not get the full purport of this last somewhat cryptical remark, and did not give the matter much thought, as he had gained more success than he had expected from his application to see the assistant-director.

Without a word the boy led him from the office, and Micky quickly became absorbed in the surroundings of a cinema studio. It reminded him of nothing so much as Beauman's Gigantic Circus in which he had worked as an acrobat at home. Many people of both sexes were about, some of whom were dressed in fancy costumes as though taking part in a festival, and in certain parts of the lot piles of sawdust were laid to fill up holes in the ground. Especially was Micky reminded of the circus by the bouquet which was wafted over every now and again from the animal cages at the far end of the lot.

The boy led the way past a restaurant and a small kiosk in which was displayed chocolates and chewing-gum, and came to a part of the lot on which were set several scenes. By one of these sets, built of wood and painted in tints of grey, representing the entrance

to a dance-hall, were a number of people working.

"Mister Steel's over there," said the boy, "but they haven't finished 'shootin' that set yet. I'd get fired from my job if I took you near till after they've finished. I opine you'd better come back later in the afternoon."

"All right," said Micky; "I'll see Mr. Steel later. But I'd like to mooch about this place for a while if it's all the same to you."

"You can't stay on the lot," said the boy; "they don't allow nobody out on business to mike around hyer. You kin come back later."

Before he left the Filmart premises, Micky ascertained the whereabouts of several other great cinema companies, and he determined to visit one or two of these before returning to see Mr. Peter Steel. He called at two, and at each place was told curtly, "No vacancies." And finally, tired, dusty, and hungry—for he had had no lunch—he wandered back to the Filmart studio. This time he had an exceptional bit of luck, inasmuch as when he applied at the office again, a short, stocky individual entered and heard his request to see Mr. Steel.

"I am Mr. Steel," said the man. "What do you want?"

"A job, sir," said Micky.

"There's nothing doing here," said the assistant-director abruptly, turning away.

"Good-day!"

For a moment Micky was nonplussed by the sharp reply, but he had no intention of throwing up the sponge so soon.

"A nephew of yours in Los Angeles sent me up to see you, sir," he insisted. "I used to work as an acrobat in a circus at home, and I can do all kinds of stunts. I'm willing to tackle anything, however, and you bet I'll do my level best to prove I'm worth my salt."

"Huh! Young Floyd ought to have known better than to have sent you up here!" snapped Peter Steel. "I suppose you called in at the Chaplin place—eh? Well, as that idiot nephew o' mine sent you here, and you look down on rock-bottom, I'll help you to a billet."

The assistant-director drew a notebook from his pocket and scrawled down something with a fountain-pen, while Micky waited with spirits soaring high at the prospect of getting a foot on the long ladder to cinema success at last. When he had finished writing, the assistant-director folded the note and handed it to Micky.

"Take this down to the Kinema de Luxe on Orange Avenue and ask for Mr. Amis B. Clarke; he's the manager, and he'll fix you with a job selling chocolates, chewing-gum, and salted peanuts in his kinema—that is, of course, if he hasn't already filled it."

With a mumbled word of thanks, Micky accepted the note and turned away. His hopes had been rudely shattered, and the sudden reversal in his expectations left him more cast down than he would have been had he received no encouragement at all.

He would have been content to have swept the floors in a film-studio; but such a menial position in a cinema-studio could lead him nowhere, he thought, even if it provided him with a sufficient income to keep body and soul together.

For the first time since leaving Liverpool, he forgot the continuous ill-treatment of Boris Beauman, the proprietor of the Gigantic Circus, and reflected longingly on the flare of the naphthaline-lamps over the ring and the loud plaudits of the crowds as they sat thrilled by his feats on the flying-trapeze with his late partner, Mike Megan.

Tired though he was, he selected a street corner, and attempted to give an acrobatic show, but he and Chappie had to take to their heels before they had performed a couple of stunts, owing to the appearance of a policeman on the scene. At two other spots Micky also tried to give a show, but with like unsatisfactory results.

Finally, tired and dispirited, and suffering all the loneliness of the unknown stranger in a big city, he wandered back to the unenticing lodging-house, with Chappie trotting wearily at his heels.

In the Surf of Santa Monica!

LIVING from hand to mouth, Micky, for two days, made a tour of the offices and studios of cinema companies great and small. The deadly barrage, "No vacancies!" then had its effect, and, down-and-out Micky and little Chappie,

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 53.

with his stumpy tail drooping pathetically, meandered to other fields of endeavour.

Thrice the young acrobat was warned by the police while attempting to give street-performances, and once he was taken to the courthouse for causing an obstruction.

He was fortunate enough to be discharged with a caution, after Chappie had given a great deal of evidence in a very determined and loud manner; but the experience decided Micky to try to find some other employment more favourably regarded by the Los Angeles authorities.

He had not a dime to his name now, and the only prospect he had of a job was the recommendation that Mr. Peter Steel, the assistant-director of the Filmart Company, had given him.

In spite of the opportunity the position afforded of seeing the pictures, Micky had a hard job to persuade himself to call at the Kinema de Luxe, in Orange Street. But he did so, and the manager put him to work.

Micky's voice shouting "Chocolates, chiclets, and salted-peanuts!" created quite an amusing diversion among the audiences used to hearing the well-known call pronounced in vibrating nasal twang by a real live little nephew of Uncle Sam.

"Say, Jeff, that guy sure has a powerful English accent!" Micky heard one Westerner remark to another.

In his capacity of chocolate-seller in the cinema-theatre, the English lad actually managed to save a little by being very careful with his money; but, in spite of some advantages, he was far from satisfied with his post.

In his leisure time he still ardently sought for some work which might afford him an opportunity of, later, becoming a cinema-actor; but repeated rebuffs or vague replies to the effect his application "would be borne in mind," were his daily portion.

One Thursday, after Micky had been there for two or three weeks, the Kinema de Luxe remained closed for the day for alterations, and the lad determined to give Chappie and himself a holiday by the sea.

He learned from the keeper of the cheap lodging-house in which he was staying, that a branch-line of the Southern Pacific connected the city with Santa Monica on the coast, seventeen miles distant.

To this place, therefore, Micky invested his savings in a return ticket, and boarded the train, with Chappie lying smuggled up beneath his coat.

A white-haired old gentleman was sitting opposite Micky in the carriage, and in the free-and-easy manner of the country, he soon opened a conversation.

"Not long out from the Old Country, are you, lad?" he asked.

"No, sir—only a few weeks."

"H'm; I guessed so. I'm English-born, too, though I've lived out here for many years. How d'you like California?"

"Fine!" said Micky. "And I'm looking forward to seeing the coast. I haven't been there yet."

"There's sure some grand country between here and the coast," said the old man; "and the climate's dandy for oranges and grapes. I'm an orange-grower myself."

"Los Angeles is a Spanish name, isn't it, sir?" asked Micky, who was curious to obtain all the information he could about that great hub of the cinema-world.

"That's right; it is," answered the man opposite. "It's a contraction of the original name given to it by the Spaniards in seventeen hundred and eighty-one, 'Pueblo de la Reina de los Angeles,' which means, 'Town of the Queen of the Angels,' and was intended as a tribute to the beauty of the spot."

From the orange-grower Micky obtained much more interesting and instructive information about the country in which he was making his home, and, in return, he narrated some of his struggles to obtain employment in the cinema business.

The old gentleman was as good a listener as he was a conversationalist, and let the lad unburden himself without comment.

Just before leaving the train at a wayside station near his plantation, he handed Micky his card.

"If ever you get up against it, lad," he said, "just call at this address. I employ a number of Englishmen, and I'll find you a job orange-picking, or doing chores of some kind. Good-bye!"

When Micky, with Chappie at his heels, walked from Santa Monica Station to the beach, it was as though a new world had burst open before his eyes.

The delicious, salt-spiced breeze, wafting from the limitless ocean, fanned his cheeks and sent the blood racing through his veins, and the sight of the great, white-capped rollers of the blue Pacific, piling themselves with roars of exultation on the beach, set his spirits soaring sky-high.

People stopped and looked at Chappie in alarm. It was as though the little mongrel had gone mad in his delight. Hither and thither he rushed barking with the full power of his strong little lungs, now and again chasing the back-wash, and being tumbled over and over by an incoming wave before he could escape.

Never did Micky and Chappie have such fine times together as pelting along the Santa Monica seashore in the genial Californian sunshine.

At last they clambered up the rocks of the headland to the north of the beautiful bay, and Micky drew from his pocket the package of bread-and-meat sandwiches he had come prepared with.

Immediately Chappie sat up and begged, with one eye cocked, saying as plainly as possible, "Look here, young master, I don't want to wait till you've finished to-day. The sea-air has given me such an appetite, I could tackle the bone of an elephant's hind leg!"

With a laugh, Micky gave the little dog a couple of sandwiches to be going on with, and then set himself to take a hearty meal.

The sandwiches disposed of, Micky stretched out at full-length on a flat surface of rock, and revelled in the luxury of a nap, while Chappie, seeing there was nothing doing in the way of a romp along the seashore for the time being, quickly curled up and followed suit.

It was about half an hour later when the lad was roused by the sound of gruff shouts proceeding from the beach below the rocks. He sat up erect, with every fibre of his being tingling with excitement at the sight which met his eyes.

A few hundred yards from him, in the direction of Santa Monica, he could discern a number of people, one of whom held a large megaphone in his hand, and another a big oblong camera of polished wood.

In a flash he had realised they were members of a cinema-company about to "shoot" a scene in a photo-play!

Micky had an excellent view from where he was sitting, and he followed with intense interest the preparations which were being made. Out at sea just beyond the surf a large steam launch was hoisted to; and the lad rightly guessed that this was in some way connected with the cinema folk on the beach.

Through his megaphone the director—a tall, broad-shouldered American, in a slouch-hat and shirtsleeves—roared orders in stentorian tones, and the crew of the launch lowered what appeared to be a broken spar of a ship into the water. Directly afterwards a slim girl, clad in a white evening-dress, appeared at the side of the launch, gave a jump into the sea, and hastily scrambled on to the floating spar. The launch then steamed away down the coast for a short distance to be clear of the camera focus, while the girl on the spar was slowly borne by the tide towards the shore.

The camera man moved along the beach, and placed his tripod in a good position for filming the actress as she came hurtling through the surf clinging to the broken spar. Obviously the subject was a scene for a film dealing with a shipwreck, and was to show the sole survivor being cast on "the uninhabited island."

The spar with the girl clinging to it was caught by the first great curler, and shot forward a short distance with a rush, and Micky rose to his feet in his excitement to witness this very thrilling incident which would soon be seen by hundreds of thousands of pairs of eyes all over the world on the cinema-screens.

In the trough between two waves the broken spar with its human freight was borne again slowly towards the waiting group of film men. Then a giant roller rushed forward and lifted the girl and spar high on its glistening white crest. Immediately the director gave an order, and the camera man began to revolve the handle of his machine.

The plucky actress was still clinging to the spar when the great curler had passed on its mad race to the beach. For a few seconds she was in comparatively smooth water in another long valley of blue-green sea, and the film director took the opportunity of roaring a few words of encouragement and commendation through his megaphone.

Then another monster roller took possession

of the broken spar and its fragile burden. This time there was no gainsaying the impact of the tons of rushing water which had gathered force and impetus over leagues of open, wind-swept ocean. The spar was shot almost perpendicularly in the air, and the young cinema actress was torn roughly from it, and shot forward in a seething mass of sparkling white foam at the speed of an express train!

By this time Micky was dancing about, and clapping his hands in his excitement, but the sophisticated camera man calmly went on turning his handle in the most cold-blooded fashion imaginable. However, a young man, wearing a thick, woollen, surfing costume, who was among the group, prepared to help the girl out of the water just as soon as the scene had been "shot." With the help of two others he uncoiled a rope from a large iron reel on a stand, and slipped the loop in the end of it under his armpits.

Directly the director gave the order to "cut," he dashed down the beach, and rushed into the foaming surf where the young actress was being battered about in evident distress. He had almost reached her when the spar, swirling in from the side, caught him a glancing blow on the legs, and sent him headlong under water. Thinking he had been badly injured, the men on the beach hastily wound in the rope over the reel, and dragged him, choking and tuming, from the water. In those few seconds the strong undertow had caught the actress and swept her out to sea again.

By the time her would-be rescuer was ready to make another attempt the girl was nowhere to be seen by the people on the beach. Even the sophisticated camera man left his machine, and, with the others, rushed along the shore in the rippling foam to seek the unfortunate actress.

But, although the people on the beach could not glimpse her, the girl had not remained beneath the surface long. The powerful current drew her swiftly along the coast in the direction of the rocks on which Micky and his little dog were standing; and as she came up in a sweeping valley between two wave-crests she saw the lad, and gave a shrill cry for help. Micky's eyes followed the direction of the cry, and saw the face of the girl looking beseechingly towards him. In a flash he recognised it for one he had seen many times on the screens in the picture-theatres at home—the face of Mary Maidstone, star actress of the great Broadway Film Company!

But swift as Micky could act, Chappie was quicker. The little dog gave a resounding bark in answer to the cry of the cinema star, dashed helter-skelter across the rocks, and leaped into the raging sea; while Micky, discarding his coat as he ran, hastily followed him.

Whether the little mongrel knew by instinct that something was amiss or whether he merely thought the human being in the water an excellent excuse for another bath, it is, of course, impossible to say. Whatever his motive, when he actually reached the water he had no very clear idea whither to swim, and narrowly escaped being dashed to pieces by the first mountainous wave that rushed in and burst itself into thousands of particles of glittering spray against the rocks.

But Micky had well gauged his direction, and, with a powerful crawl-stroke, made quickly towards the drowning actress. Chappie, seeing his master swimming away from the treacherous rocks, followed suit, and his little feet paddled swiftly in a heroic effort to keep near him. A wave that lifted the cinema star high on its crest gave the young athlete his exact bearings, and a few powerful strokes enabled him to clutch the arm of the drowning girl.

By this time Mary Maidstone was unconscious, and Micky, taking good care to keep her face well above water, had no difficulty in swimming with her beyond the surf area. To have swum inshore opposite those grim rocks would have been suicidal.

Several times Micky caught the booming voice of the cinema director giving orders through the megaphone to the steam launch farther down the coast, and the lad hoped confidently that a rescue would be effected by the ship. Chappie was keeping well alongside, and, despite the roughness of the sea, appeared to be suffering no distress.

The sea was so buoyant that it was no effort to keep afloat; but Micky noted with anxiety that the powerful current was taking them quickly in a northerly direction round the headland. To attempt to battle with this current with his unconscious burden would

soon have spelt exhaustion, so he confined his efforts to keeping as far out from the rocks as possible. Once or twice he called out at the top of his voice; but he came to the conclusion that either the steam launch had failed to grasp the situation, or else had realised the futility of standing in so close to the rocky headland.

The situation speedily became desperate. Chappie once or twice spluttered and gasped with mouthfuls of salt water, and Micky began to watch his four-footed little friend with as much concern as the slim form of the girl he was trying to rescue. As they were lifted high on one mountainous billow, the lad glanced back towards the rocks from which he and Chappie had dived, and there saw several members of the cinema company frantically clambering to the highest points of vantage.

Now Micky was fast becoming exhausted himself, and was beginning to debate seriously the desperate measure of swimming nearer in, and risking the rocks in an attempt to land.

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But the decision was taken from him by that erratic rascal Boreas, the Old Man of the Sea.

Micky turned just in time to see a prince among waves, born perhaps of the Storm King in some distant part of the ocean off the China coast, bearing down upon him. The mighty billow already had started to curl, and it reared its white, foaming crest against the hapless lad and his burden with a driving force equal to the horse-power of ten locomotives. Only just in time Micky slipped the fingers of his left hand tightly through Chappie's leather collar and tightened the grip of his right arm round the unconscious girl.

What happened after that he had but the faintest recollection, for he and his charges were hurled pell-mell towards the shore at headlong speed. It was as though he were in the midst of a seething cauldron, and, gasping and choking, he felt himself being tossed like a cork onwards and upwards. For one awful moment he caught a glimpse of

a looming black rock ahead, and he nerved himself for the crash which would reduce his body to a mass of broken bones.

But that shattering crash never came. His body shot like a bullet from a gun above the rock, and gradually came to rest on something hard and smooth. With a thrill of joy he realised he still had the cinema star locked in his arms, and Chappie, who was very still, gripped by the collar.

Next moment Micky felt himself receding to the sea again in a swirling, hissing torrent of backwash, and he frantically sought some foothold to save himself and his charges from this fresh danger. Fortune again favoured the plucky lad, and he brought up against a raised portion of the rock's surface, but his arms were almost dragged from their sockets by the pull of the water exerted on his unconscious burden, but he set his teeth and held grimly on. Those wiry muscles, toughened by years of training on the flying trapeze, proved equal to the severe test, and with a sigh of relief Micky found himself, the girl, and Chappie, high and safe for the time being on the polished surface of rock.

His first idea was to try and get the cinema actress and his little terrier away from the reach of any other giant wave that might come surging over the rock, but his left arm gave such a twinge as he made the effort that he sank down again with a groan. Then the sound of voices dimmed into his ears, and he caught a glimpse of men rushing towards him.

"I say, you fellows!" called Micky, in a very weak, quavering voice. "You look after the girl and this little dog here; I'll manage to get along somehow."

One burly individual, wearing a huge pair of tortoiseshell spectacles, whipped the young cinema actress into his arms and carried her shorewards, while a plump, ruddy-faced little man, with a laughable, turned-up nose, picked up little Chappie. Despite his protests, Micky was carried off willy-nilly by the tall, clean-shaven director whom he had seen on the beach using the megaphone so lustily during the filming of the scene.

Micky had not a very clear idea of that journey from the rocks, but he remembered being set down in a sandy cove and seeing the big man with the curious spectacles applying first-aid to the young actress and the red-faced man restoring Chappie to an active interest in life by a series of hearty pats on the back.

"Say, you've hurt yourself some, kid," said the tall director. "You've sure got a nasty gash in your left arm."

But before Micky would allow the director to dress the long cut and bruise he had sustained on the rock, he staggered over to see how his little four-footed friend was getting on. Chappie, who had partially recovered as the result of the stout man's vigorous efforts, quickly found a place in Micky's arms with a little whine of delight.

Several members of the cinema company and others who had seen the lad dive from the rock came running from the direction of Santa Monica, and soon quite a little crowd collected. As Micky turned to have his arm attended to, a slim, handsome man, with clean-shaven face, and wearing a bow-tie and a straw hat, came up.

"Miss Maidstone is safe, sir," announced the film director. Then he pushed Micky forward. "And here's the lad who saved our Mary for us," he said. "The way he and this little dog of his went in from that rock was worth featuring in a special production."

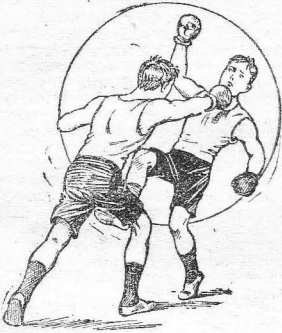
The stranger shook Micky by the hand. "Miss Maidstone is a great friend of ours—that is, my wife and myself," he said, "and I should like to add my thanks to those of her friends of the Broadway Company." Then, turning to the film director, he said: "My car is at your disposal if you need it, Romery."

"The company came down from Cinema City in automobiles," said the director, "so I guess we can look after Miss Maidstone and this lad all right, thanks all the same, Mr. Chaplin!"

**ANOTHER LONG INSTALMENT
OF THIS MAGNIFICENT SERIAL
STORY OF THE CINEMA WILL
APPEAR IN NEXT FRIDAY'S
PENNY POPULAR.**

.. THE .. NEW CHAMPION!

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



SECONDS out of the ring!"

"Time!"
Percy Mellish, the black sheep of St. Jim's, swaggered towards the centre of the ring in the gym, with a confident grin on his face.

To see Mellish in fighting attitude at all was a tremendous surprise to all the juniors, but with Tom Merry as his adversary it fairly took their breath away. Not only that, but Mellish had actually gone out of his way to pick a quarrel with the even-tempered junior captain, and had himself suggested a scrap with the gloves.

Of course, the gym was crowded. From New House and School House alike, the juniors had poured in to prove the truth or otherwise of Baggy Trimble's statement that there was a fight on between Tom Merry and Mellish.

Tom Merry was looking very grim as he faced Mellish, but the latter thought he detected a slight wavering on the part of his opponent, at which his confident grin expanded.

"Biff!"
To the amazement of the spectators, Tom Merry was seen to stagger under a powerful drive from Mellish's left, and, before he could regain his balance, a second blow reached him full between the eyes.

"Crash!"
Tom Merry fell to the ground in a dazed heap, while Mellish regarded him with a mocking grin.

Monty Lowther, his face full of concern for his fallen leader, was counting away the seconds. At the count of seven the junior captain staggered to his feet, and the following two seconds seemed like a nightmare to him, with Mellish dancing in and out like a pastmaster at the art, and getting home with several beautifully-placed blows.

"Time!"
That call saved Tom Merry from certain defeat, amazing as it was; and Percy Mellish strolled over to his corner conscious of having surprised the juniors. Racke patted him on the back quite affectionately. "My hat, you've fairly got him beat!" he remarked.

"Oh, I shall lick him all right!" answered Mellish modestly.

In Tom Merry's corner all was confusion. Manners, D'Arcy, and Herries were doing their best to bring their champion up to scratch, but he was looking very fagged and battered about. His left eye was half-closed and his nose was streaming red.

"Buck up, Tommy," ventured Manners, looking very crestfallen.

"Grooough!"
"You mustn't let Mellish whack you, deah boy!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Think of youah position."

"Yow-ow!"
"Time!"

Tom Merry, blinking out of his half-closed eyes, fell into fighting attitude.

"Thud!"
Mellish's left shot out with lightning rapidity, and the junior captain received the full force of that blow on his nose.

"Smack!"
A heavy right-hander followed, which caught him in that vital spot, the solar

plexus, and for the second time he sank to the ground.

This time, however, he remained deaf to the timekeeper's count. Although the juniors were shouting wildly to him to get up, he merely groaned and turned over.

Tom Merry, the best fighting-man of the School House juniors, had lowered his colours to the weedy and much-despised Mellish in two rounds.

No burst of applause greeted the victor. Instead, he was the recipient of incredulous stares.

Racke and his cronies were hugging themselves silently with delight. Their champion had won! It was amazing, nevertheless it was true.

Racke turned to Mellish with a grin, and clapped him heartily on the back. "Ow-yaroooh!"

"Give him another dose of the sponge," grinned Tom Merry.

"Yow—stoppit!"
Percy Mellish glared up at his interrupters with no friendly eye, and, as he did so, a sponge, liberally soaked with water, was jammed into his mouth.

"Tumble out, you slacker!"
"Grooough!"

Mellish's fear and respect of the junior captain returned to him in a flash.

Tom Merry had not been knocked out, after all, and the black sheep of St. Jim's realised that he had been dreaming.

Most of the juniors were dressing, and he appeared to be the only one in bed, but he wasn't there long. Tom Merry saw to that.

With a dissatisfied grunt, Mellish turned out, and it was soon borne in upon his mind that he was the same old Mellish, and not Tom Merry's victor at fisticuffs.

SKIMPOLE'S RAT-TRAP!

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

GRRRR-R-R-R! Yap, yap! Grrrr!
"What the merry dickens is all that row?"

Jack Blake of the Fourth at St. Jim's, looked up impatiently as he made that exclamation.

"How are we to know?" snapped George Herries. "Sounds like a dog, doesn't it?"

"Yes, and like that beast Pongo of your young brother's!" said Digby, looking sternly at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Bai Jove!" cried the Honourable Gussy, screwing his monocle into his eye. "Young Wally has no weight up heah with his dog; but, of course, deah boy, I cannot keep him away."

"Anyway, you'd better go out and tell him to buzz off now!" growled Herries.

Gussy rose from the table with a war-like gleam in his eye, and opened the study door. As he did so his minor, Wally D'Arcy, with Curly Gibson, Joe Frayne, and half a dozen more of his chums dashed into the corridor.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Gussy.

"Hi, Gus! What are you doin' to my Pongo?" shouted Wally.

"What do you mean by dashin' into this cowwidor in that wough mannah?" demanded Gussy wrathfully.

"Bust the corridor! Where's my dog?" shouted Wally.

At that moment a fresh outburst of growling and yapping rang out from the opposite end of the corridor. Immediately Wally D'Arcy turned his back upon his illustrious brother, and rushed towards the door of a study from which the noise was proceeding. It was Skimpole's.

Thump, thump, thump!
"Open this door!" yelled Wally D'Arcy.

"What's my dog in there for?"

"I'm afraid I cannot open it just now!" replied the anxious voice of Skimpole.

"Can't you, by Jove!" shouted Wally. "If you don't, I'll bust it in! I want my dog!"

"Your dog is quite all right!" cried Skimpole.

"I know he is, fathead!" retorted Wally.

"It's you that's all wrong! Open the door, quick!"

Wally's remarks were punctuated by violent thuds on the door, and Skimpole, fearing that damage would be done, suddenly flung it open.

"You silly idiot—" burst out Wally.

But his remark was cut short at that stage by Pongo dashing wildly past him. He had a momentary glimpse of what looked like a large bird-cage fastened to the animal's nose. "You rotter!" shouted Wally at Skimpole.

Then he turned with his band of followers, and ran wildly after the fleeing Pongo.

Down the stairs ran the juniors, followed by Skimpole.

It was not until they reached the quad that they caught sight of Pongo, who was flying round like a whirlwind. Then suddenly there was an astonished yell from the fags as the dog ran nearer to them, for they discovered that the contrivance which was dangling at Pongo's nose, was a large rat-trap, containing a live rat!

"My hat!" shouted Wally. "Catch him!"

Wildly the juniors raced round the quad after the dog, Skimpole bringing up the rear.

"Oh, my rat-trap!" he wailed, as he ran.

"Hang your rat-trap!" howled Wally.

"Got him!"

Pongo turned suddenly, and ran straight towards his master, almost overthrowing him.

Wally clutched at Pongo's body, and as he did so the rat-trap dropped loose to the ground.

"It's all right, old boy!" said Wally, patting Pongo soothingly.

"Oh dear me!"

Skimpole, gasping and dishevelled, stood by surveying Pongo and his master.

"You've nearly frightened the poor little beast to death!" exclaimed Wally, glaring furiously at Skimpole.

"B-but I thought he would like the rat!" faltered the genius of the Shell. "He was d-delighted when he saw it in the trap!"

"Of course he was, fathead! He didn't want the blessed trap fastened to his nose, though!" retorted Wally.

"It was quite an accident," wailed Skimpole, "and now my great invention is destroyed!"

"Good old boy!" murmured Wally, patting Pongo's back.

The other Third-Formers were clustered round the rat-trap, watching the antics of the rat inside.

Curly Gibson picked it up and looked for the opening. While he was fumbling with it it suddenly flew open, apparently of its own accord. Like a shot from a gun the rat leapt out.

With a sharp yap Pongo broke loose from his master's grasp, and was upon the rat before it had run many yards. Fortunately, Pongo's muzzle was hanging loose from his nose or he would have lost it.

"Oh dear! My rat-trap's destroyed!" moaned Skimpole, almost tearfully.

"You can go and make another!" exclaimed Joe Frayne.

"I can't!" wailed Skimpole. "It was a great invention, and it was going to do away with rats in a week, and I—I've forgotten how I made it!"

"Fancy a fellow inventing anything, and then when it gets busted up not being able to make another model!" said Joe Frayne witheringly.

"All the inventors I've heard anything about keep plans of their giddy inventions!" chimed in Curly Gibson.

"Fancy keeping a plan of a rat-trap!" grinned Frayne.

"Old Pongo looks as though he's busy with his own rat-trap now!" exclaimed Wally, as he watched his dog.

"Ha, ha, ha! Rather!"

"It's the best kind of rat-trap, too!" declared Curly Gibson. "It's not likely to get out of order!"

With the broken and bent rat Skimpole walked slowly back to the school door.

"Where did you get the rat?" demanded Wally, running after him and standing in his path.

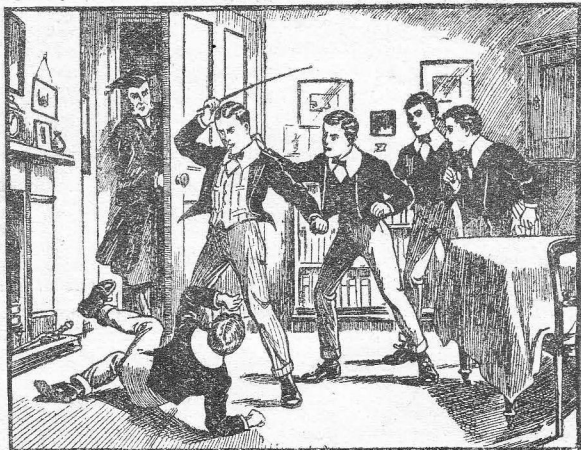
"I got the rat with my trap!" explained Skimpole mournfully, "and borrowed Pongo to catch it when I opened it. While I was undoing it the beast dashed in and caught the trap on his muzzle, and I couldn't get it away from him!"

"Of course, you couldn't get it away from him!" said Wally. "He's too quick for you any day of the week!"

"If I hadn't opened the door it would have been all right!" groaned Skimpole.

"Sorry, old scout, but you shouldn't have borrowed Pongo without asking!" replied Pongo. "Anyway, he's got the rat now!"

Pongo was shaking it violently, and enjoying himself to his heart's content. But Skimpole had lost interest in the business, and he continued on his way up to the study again, disappointed and sad.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Raiders!

WAKE up, you slackers!"

"Yaw-aw-aw!"

"Out you get!"

"Yaw-aw!"

"Slackers!" rapped out Jimmy Silver.

Slackers really was not the word, for it was past eleven o'clock, and at that hour all Rookwood was supposed to be fast asleep.

Jimmy Silver had jumped actively out of bed in the dormitory of the Classical Fourth.

Jimmy was captain of the Fourth, and his word was law; but the Classical juniors seemed more inclined to yawn than to follow his active example.

There was quite a portentous chorus of yawns.

"I—I say—yaw-aw!" yawned Arthur Edward Lovell. "On second thoughts, Jimmy, it's rather a rotten idea to raid the Modern cads to-night."

"Just what I was thinking," said Raby. "I think very likely another night we should—ahem!—be more likely to catch them napping."

"Yes; let's chuck it!" said Newcome.

"Good idea," said Oswald. "Tumble in, Jimmy."

Jimmy Silver did not tumble in. He went to his washstand, and dipped a sponge in the water-jug.

That evening, in the end study, a raid had been planned, and at the time it had seemed a ripping idea. The Classics were quite keen on the scheme of raiding the dormitory of the Modern Fourth, and "mopping-up" Tommy Dodd & Co. with pillows.

Somehow or other the scheme seemed less enticing at a quarter-past eleven.

With singular unanimity, the Classical juniors were prepared to leave Tommy Dodd & Co. to sleep the sleep of the just, and to do the same themselves.

But for the energy of Jimmy Silver the raid would certainly have been postponed indefinitely.

But Jimmy was already out of bed, and Jimmy was full of energy.

Instead of arguing the matter, he squeezed the wet sponge over Arthur Edward Lovell's face, just as Arthur Edward was closing his eyes again for another nap.

There was a loud yell from Lovell.

"Yah! Oh! Groogh! You silly ass!"

"Turn out!" said Jimmy Silver severely. "The end study never slacks! Out you get!"

"Look here——"

"Do you want some more? Remember, you're making me waste cold water," said Jimmy. "Still, if you're keen on it, here goes!"

Lovell rolled hastily out of the other side of the bed.

"You silly ass—gerroff!"

"Raby, old man——"

"Keep that sponge away!" said Raby, in sulphurous tones. "I'll dot you in the eye—Gerroff! I'm getting out, ain't I, you silly fathead? Gerroff!"

"Are you getting up, Newcome?"

"Yes, you chump!" gasped Newcome.

"Any more slackers want some cold water?" asked Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "There's lots here."

The slackers decided to turn out. The Fistful Four were already out, and Oswald and Rawson and Flynn and Hooker followed their example. Once out, they joined cheerily in turning the others out. Naturally, they were indignant at fellows slacking in bed when it was time to go on the war-path.

"Look here, I ain't in this!" snapped Townsend, the champion slacker of the Fourth, eyeing Jimmy Silver apprehensively.

"I don't believe in this rot!"

"Same here!" said Topham. "You can leave me out, Jimmy Silver!"

"And me!" growled Peele and Gower together.

Jimmy Silver sniffed.

"Rotten funks! Are you afraid of Manders dropping on you? Turn out!"

"We won't!"

"And I won't, either!" exclaimed Mornington, sitting up in bed. "You can leave us out!"

"All hands on deck!" exclaimed Lovell. "I've heard you saying, Mornington, that compulsion is a jolly good thing for shirkers. Well, you can't grumble at having some of your own medicine."

"Ha, ha!"

"Roll him out!"

Mornington grasped his pillow as several fellows started for his bed.

"Keep off, you rotters!"

"Are you turning out?" demanded Raby.

"No, I'm not!"

"You want to slack in bed while we're raiding the Moderns!"

"Go an' eat coke!"

"Have him out!"

Mornington swiped out with the pillow, and Raby staggered back. But Newcome and Rawson grasped him, and the dandy of the Fourth bumped on the floor, tangled in his bedclothes.

He struggled furiously to his feet, and hit out with clenched fists.

"Yoop!" yelled Rawson, as he caught Mornington's knuckles with his nose. "Why, you rotter——"

"Yow-ow!" yelled Newcome.

"Back me up, Towny, and the rest of you!" shouted Mornington.

Townsend & Co. did not move. They were not looking for a scrap with Jimmy Silver & Co.

Three or four Classics rushed on Mornington, and the dandy of the Fourth went down again with a bump.

"Bump him!" gasped Rawson.

"Squash him!"

Bump, bump!

"Yow! Help! Yah!" yelled Mornington.

"Shut up, for goodness' sake!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Do you want the prefects here? Shurrup!"

"Let me alone!" yelled Mornington. "I'll wake the whole House!"

Jimmy set his teeth.

"Let the cad alone!" he said. "We don't want the slacking rotter, anyway. Let him skulk here if he wants to!"

"He's jolly well punched my nose!" howled Newcome. "I'm jolly well going to punch his!"

"Shush!"

Newcome refused to "shush." He was hurt, and he was angry. He rushed at Mornington

THE OUTSIDER

.. OF ..

THE FOURTH!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

A MAGNIFICENT LONG COMPLETE STORY OF JIMMY SILVER & CO., THE CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD.

again, and in a moment they were fighting hammer and tongs. Jimmy Silver and Lovell dragged them apart.

"Will you be quiet?" panted Jimmy. "We shall have Bootles here with a cane soon!"

"Let me get at him!" shrieked Mornington.

"Shove that cad on his bed!"

Bump!

Mornington landed on his bed, and lay there, gasping.

"Look here! Are those rotten slackers going to stay here?" demanded Newcome.

"Well, we don't want slackers; they're no good in a raid!" said Jimmy. "We're better without the rotten funks! Let 'em slack!"

"Br-r-r!"

Townsend & Co. were glad enough to be allowed to slack. It was quite possible that the raid on the Modern dormitory would lead to a "row," and that masters or prefects might be awakened. The Nuts of the Fourth preferred to give Mr. Manders, the Modern master, a wide berth. Jimmy Silver & Co. half dressed themselves, and took their pillows.

Townsend and Topham, Gower and Peele and Mornington, remained in bed. Mornington, as a matter of fact, had plenty of pluck, and did not shrink from the risk; but nothing would have induced him to follow Jimmy Silver's lead. Mornington's idea was that he ought to be monarch of all he surveyed, and that his right there should be none to dispute. He was not likely, however, to get the captain of the Fourth to agree with that view.

Tubby Muffin remained in bed, too, snoring loudly. His snore was so loud that it might have been suspected that Tubby was putting it on. But the raiders did not want Tubby in their ranks. The fat Classical was not much use in a scrap with the Moderns.

"Kim on!" said Jimmy Silver.

He opened the dormitory door quietly.

The raiders fled out into the passage, their socked feet making no sound. Jimmy closed the door, and they headed for the Modern quarters.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Pillow Fight!

ALL was silent in the great building of Rookwood.

The long passages were dark and shadow.

Jimmy Silver led the way, his followers pressing on behind him.

There was no sound in the House; the voices in the Classical dormitory had not been heard.

There were several passages to traverse to reach the Modern quarters, but the raiders arrived at last.

Jimmy Silver turned the handle of the door of the Modern Fourth dormitory.

All was dark and silent within, save for the steady breathing of the Modern juniors, and the snore of Leggett of the Fourth.

"Caught napping, by gum!" grinned Lovell.

As their eyes got used to the dimness, the Classics could make out the beds in the dim starlight from the high windows.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 56.

They crowded, grinning, into the dormitory.

Jimmy closed the door.

Then he jerked the bedclothes from Tommy Dodd's bed, and Tommy sat up and rubbed his eyes.

"What's the thunder—"

"Good-evening, dear boy!" said Jimmy Silver affably.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tommy Dodd jumped.

"Classical cad, by gum! Wake up, you fellows!"

"Give 'em socks!" shouted Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Modern dormitory had awakened at Tommy Dodd's voice, and the Moderns were turning out of bed on all sides, realising that it was a Classical raid.

But in a few seconds the Classics were among them with swiping pillows.

Swish, swish, swish! Swipe!

Loud yells and howls rose among the Moderns as they were swiped right and left.

"Buck up!" yelled Tommy Dodd.

"Give 'em socks!"

"Go for the cads!"

Swipe, swipe! Bump!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tommy Dodd seized his pillow and rushed into the fray. The Moderns followed his example as well as they could.

But they had been taken by surprise, and the advantage was with the raiders.

The Moderns were swiped right and left. They rolled on the floor, or retreated into corners. Leggett dived under a bed. Tommy Dodd and Cook and Doyle put up a great fight, till they were overwhelmed by Classical pillows, and went down, yelling and gasping.

The triumphant Classics paraded the dormitory, swiping at the Moderns when they jumped up, and pillowing them down again.

Some of them yanked the mattresses off the beds, and hurled the bedclothes far and wide among the sprawling Moderns.

In a few minutes the Modern dormitory looked as if a cyclone had looked in.

Tommy Dodd struggled to his feet and strove to rally the Moderns, but he went down again under half a dozen Classical pillows, with a bump that almost shook the floor.

"Better clear, I think!" gasped Lovell.

"We shall be heard if there's much more of this. We don't want Manders here!"

"Ha, ha, No!"

"Retreat!" ordered Jimmy Silver.

The chucking Classics headed for the door. The Moderns had been defeated, the dormitory was a wreck, and they were satisfied.

They swarmed out into the passage to retreat to their own quarters. Jimmy Silver shut the door just in time to stop a bolster hurled after him by Tommy Dodd.

"Home!" chuckled Jimmy. "I think we've made the Moderns sit up this time!"

"Ha, ha!"

The victorious Classics marched to their own quarters.

Suddenly, there was a loud cry in the darkness; it came from the direction of Mr. Manders' room.

Jimmy Silver halted, startled.

"What the thunder! Did you hear that?"

"Oh, help! Good heavens!" It was the voice of Mr. Manders, the senior master.

"Who—who is it? What—?"

"Some silly idiot japing old Manders!" panted Lovell. "What thumping ass—"

"Cut off!" gasped Jimmy. "We shall have to prove a jolly strong alibi if somebody has been japing Manders!"

There was a patter of soft footfalls in the darkness of the passage from the direction of Mr. Manders' room.

Somebody was fleeing.

"Who's that?" called out Jimmy Silver, in a suppressed voice. "Who's been silly idiot enough to—"

"Come on!" muttered Lovell. "Manders will be out in a minute!"

"There's a light!" said Oswald.

"Buck up!"

The Classics fairly ran for their dormitory. Being caught by Mr. Manders, the most severe and unpopular master at Rookwood, would have been an unfortunate ending to the raid.

They bolted into the Classical dormitory like rabbits into a burrow, and Jimmy Silver closed the door.

"Hallo!" came a drawing voice, that of Mornington. "Had a good time?"

"We've licked the Moderns!" said Jimmy Silver. "No thanks to you, you slacker!"

"And some silly ass went for Manders and

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 56.

woke him up!" gasped Rawson. "Which of you thumping dullers was it?"

But there was no answer to that. Not a member of the raiding party seemed eager to own up to having "gone for" Manders.

"Look here, it was one of you!" said Jimmy Silver. "Which was it?"

"The silly idiot had better own up!" growled Lovell.

"Better turn in!" said Oswald. "Old Manders may come along here."

"By Jove, yes!"

The Classics bolted into bed.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Mystery.

MR. MANDERS swept out of his room in dressing-gown and slippers, with a lamp in his hand.

His hard, severe face was pale with anger.

The Modern master had had a most unpleasant shock, and it was enough to make a better-tempered man angry. It was no joke for a gentleman of middle age to be awakened from his sleep by a pillow descending upon him from the darkness. It was, indeed, a dangerous trick, and might have had very serious results if Mr. Manders had been troubled with a weak heart.

As a matter of fact, however, Mr. Manders' heart was a very hard one, and no damage had been done save to his temper. But his temper was in a shocking state as he swept out of his room in search of the culprit.

There were sounds in the Modern Fourth Form dormitory, where Tommy Dodd & Co. were putting their beds to rights. Mr. Manders strode to that room, and hurled open the door.

The lamplight streamed in upon a dismayed crowd.

Every fellow there was out of bed, and they all spun round and blinked at the Modern master in the sudden light.

Mr. Manders' eyes swept over them glittering.

The juniors blinked at him without replying. There was really no need to explain what it meant—the meaning was plain enough. Anybody could have seen at half a glance that the dormitory had been raided.

"So you are out of bed!" said Mr. Manders. The juniors still blinked in silence. Really, Mr. Manders seemed to have a perfect genius for asking superfluous questions.

"Dodd!"

"Yessir?" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"Which of you came to my room?" Tommy Dodd started.

"To—to your room, sir?" he stammered.

"Yes. Was it you?"

"Nunno, sir!"

"I order the boy to stand forth at once!"

"But—but we haven't, sir!" gasped Tommy Cook. "Nobody here has been outside the dormitory, sir!"

"Sure, we haven't been a step outside, soor!" said Tommy Doyle. "We've had a bit of a scrap here, soor, that's all!"

"Do not tell me falsehoods!" thundered Mr. Manders.

"Oh!"

"Someone entered my room, and struck me with a pillow!" exclaimed the Modern master. "I find you all out of bed. Doubtless you are all in the plot!"

"Oh, by gum!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

The three Tommies blinked at one another in consternation. Evidently one of the Classical raiders had been guilty of the astounding act of folly. But the Modern heroes did not feel inclined to say so.

"We haven't been out, sir!" howled Leggett. "It must have been one of the Classics, sir!"

"Shut up, you sneakin' cad!" whispered Doyle fiercely.

"I'm not going to shut up! They're not going to put it on us!"

A light seemed to dawn upon Mr. Manders. "So the Classical juniors have been here, is that it?" he exclaimed.

The Moderns were silent.

"I understand," said Mr. Manders. "This is what, I presume, you call a dormitory raid."

"Ye-es, sir," mumbled Tommy Dodd.

"You have been pillow-fighting with Classical boys."

"Ye-es, sir."

"Then, doubtless the young reprobate who attacked me is not here," said Mr. Manders. "I was not aware that Classical boys had been out of their beds. Dodd, you assure me that no boy here has left the dormitory?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you all say the same?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very good! You may go to bed, and I shall speak to you about this matter in the morning. I shall look elsewhere for the reprobate!" said Mr. Manders majestically.

The master strode away to the dormitory of the Classical Fourth. He was not in any doubt as to where to look for the raiders.

He opened the door, and the light streamed in upon quiet beds and peacefully-sleeping juniors. At all events, they looked as if they were sleeping peacefully. Mr. Manders snorted. That peaceful slumber did not make much impression upon him.

"Boys!" he snapped.

"I am quite aware that you are awake!" said Mr. Manders, his voice trembling with anger. "Silver, I command you to answer me!"

Jimmy Silver yawned and rubbed his eyes. He sat up in bed and blinked at the Modern master.

"Hallo! Ahem! I mean, is it you, sir?"

"Yes, it is I!" said Mr. Manders. "There has been an outrageous disturbance in the Modern Fourth-Form dormitory. You have shared in it."

"Ahem!"

"Do you deny it, Silver?"

"H'm! No, sir."

"Some boy here entered my room, and struck me with a pillow," said Mr. Manders. "So far as the pillow-fighting is concerned, I shall report the matter to your Form-master, and leave it in his hands. But I demand to know the name at once of the boy who attacked me!"

"I don't know, sir," said Jimmy Silver frankly. "If I'd known who it was I'd have punched his silly head!"

"I am glad to see, Silver, that you realise the enormity of the offence!" said Mr. Manders satirically. "It was not, then, yourself?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"Very well. The boy is here, and I must know who it was. You were all concerned in this lawless raid, I presume."

"Not all, sir," said Mornington. "Some of us stayed in bed. I did, for one."

"And I, sir!" chimed in Topsy and Peele and Gower.

"Me, too, sir!" squeaked Tubby Muffin in great alarm.

"Is that statement correct, Silver?"

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy quietly. "Muffin was asleep, or pretending, and the others funked it."

"Then the culprit is among the rest. I call upon him to give his name."

Silence.

"You refuse to answer?"

The Classical juniors looked at Mr. Manders, and at one another, but no one spoke.

"Very well," said Mr. Manders, in a grinding voice. "I shall report the matter to the Head in the morning, and there will be a searching inquiry."

And he left the dormitory.

"My hat! There's a pretty kettle of fish!" said Lovell. "It's up to the silly idiot to own up!"

"But who was it?" exclaimed Higgs. "I know I wasn't the chap."

"Doesn't anybody know?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

Apparently no one did, and the culprit himself was discreetly silent. It was impossible to guess, for in the darkness any member of the party might have stolen away to Mr. Manders' room without being seen by the others.

"The chap ought to be scragged, whoever he is!" growled Lovell. "It was a silly trick. But who the dickens was it?"

"Own up, you rotter, whoever you are!"

But no one owned up, and the Classical juniors settled down to sleep at last, with very painful anticipations of the morning.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Down on Their Luck.

HERE were gloomy faces among the Classical Fourth on the following morning.

After breakfast orders were given for them to march into Hall, where they were to see the Head.

Mr. Manders had laid his complaint before Dr. Chisholm, and the Head himself was to inquire into the matter.

The Fourth marched into Hall at the appointed time with glum faces. The matter was a serious one, and they knew that the Head would take a stern view of it. To



The Moderns were swiped right and left. They rolled on the floor, or retreated into corners. Leggett dived under a bed. Tommy Dodd and Cook and Doyle put up a great fight, till they were overwhelmed by Classical pillows, and went down, yelling and gasping. (See page 14.)

pillow a master could scarcely be regarded as a joke. And the young rascal who had done it was evidently depending upon the fact that he could not be discovered, and had no intention of taking the blame on his own shoulders.

"Blest if I see what we're called in for," Mornington remarked to his chums, as the Nuts sauntered towards Hall. "We've nothin' to do with it."

"Ahem! Nothing!" said Townsend.

"Nothin' at all," grinned Peele.

"I don't see what you're grinnin' at," growled Mornington. "If the Head comes down on the lot of us, I shall protest."

"You!" ejaculated Topham.

"Yes, certainly! I'm not standin' it!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"You, by gum!" chimed in Tubby Muffin.

"Oh, Morny!"

Mornington gave the fat Classical a supercilious stare.

"What the dickens do you mean by callin' me Morny?" he demanded. "Do you want your car pulled?"

"Better not," said Tubby, with a fat chuckle. "I might tell the fellows that I wasn't asleep last night when they left the dorm."

Mornington started.

"You—you—" he began.

"Better keep civil—what!" grinned Muffin.

Mornington gave him a dark look, and went into Hall with his chums. Tubby Muffin grinned as he rolled in after them.

The Classical Fourth waited there for the Head to arrive.

Dr. Chisholm came in by the upper door, with Mr. Manders and Mr. Booties, the master of the Fourth.

The Head was looking very stern.

His eyes swept over the juniors, and they waited uneasily for him to speak.

"Boys"—the Head's voice was very deep—"last night there was an unseemly disturbance. Of the foolish scuffling between you and the Modern juniors I should take no notice, leaving it to your Form-master to deal with. But a much more serious thing has occurred. Mr. Manders was attacked in his room by some reckless boy with a pillow. That boy will be severely flogged—indeed, I may consider it my duty to expel him from

Rookwood. I order that boy to come forward."

There was no movement.

The prospect of being flogged, and perhaps expelled, did not somehow seem to entice the unknown culprit.

The doctor's brow grew stern as he waited in vain.

"You have heard me," he said. "If the boy does not come forward, I call upon the others to give his name."

The Classics looked grim at that.

If they had known who the culprit was, they would not have been inclined to give his name. But, as a matter of fact, they did not know.

Stern and sterner grew the Head's brow.

"Silver, as head boy in the Form, I ask you—who was the boy who attacked Mr. Manders in his room?"

"I don't know, sir," said Jimmy.

"He left the dormitory with you?"

"Yes, sir, I suppose he did."

"You did not see him leave the rest of the party to go to Mr. Manders' room?"

"No, sir. It was very dark. We had no light."

"Does anyone else know who it was?"

Silence.

"I give the boy in question one more opportunity to come forward."

No reply.

"Very well," said the Head, compressing his lips. "The delinquent is somewhere in the Classical Fourth Form. It is scarcely possible that his identity is totally unknown to the others. Unless he is immediately given up, punishment will fall upon the whole Form."

The Classical juniors were grimly silent. They had expected as much. The pillowing of Mr. Manders could not possibly be passed over unpunished.

"No one has anything to say?" rapped out the Head.

Mornington stood forward.

"May I speak, sir?"

"You have information to give me?" asked Dr. Chisholm.

"No, sir. But I protest against the whole Form being punished."

"What!" thundered the Head.

"Mr. Manders knows that some of us never left the dormitory at all, sir," said Morning-

ton calmly. "It was one of those who went out who pillowed Mr. Manders."

"Indeed!"

"Mr. Manders will tell you so, sir."

Dr. Chisholm glanced at the Modern master. "That is so, sir!" said Mr. Manders. "It appears that half a dozen boys did not leave the dormitory."

"They may stand aside," said the Head.

Mornington & Co. walked out of the ranks of the Classical Fourth, followed by Tubby Muffin.

A hiss from the rest of the fellows followed them.

It was true that they had not taken part in the raid, but it would have been only playing the game to stand by the Form at this pinch.

"Silence!" exclaimed Dr. Chisholm, frowning. "Silence, I say! Those boys who were not concerned in this lawless affair will not be punished. That is only just. The rest will be severely punished, unless Mr. Manders' assailant immediately comes forward."

The Classics looked at one another.

But no one came forward.

"Very well," said the Head quietly. "All holidays are stopped until the culprit is discovered. Dismiss!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Lovell.

The Head rustled away.

With gloomy looks the Classical Fourth filed out of Hall.

They went into the Form-room that morning in the lowest of spirits.

All holidays stopped meant havoc with the games. It meant lines in the Form-room while the rest of Rookwood enjoyed Wednesday and Saturday afternoons in freedom.

It was a crushing sentence.

The juniors did not blame the Head much; he was bound to take severe measures in the case of an assault upon a master.

But they were bitterly angry with the unknown raider who had been duffer enough to pillow Mr. Manders, and rotter enough to keep silent and allow the whole Form to be punished.

And they could not even guess who it was.

As it happened, that day was a half-holiday, and that afternoon Jimmy Silver & Co. sat in the Form-room and wrote out Virgil.

It was a heavy infliction. The Classics jawed Jimmy Silver for ever thinking of a pillow raid on the Moderns; that was one of the pleasures of being leader.

But, above all things, they promised terrific things to the unknown cad who refused to own up and save the whole Form from detention.

Mornington & Co. enjoyed themselves that afternoon. The detention of Jimmy Silver & Co. added zest to their own freedom.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Horn of Plenty.

MORNY!" Mornington & Co. were coming in to tea when Tubby Muffin met them in the passage.

Mornington gave the fat Classical a haughty glance.

"Get aside!" he snapped.

"Roll away, sausage!" said Townsend.

"I want to speak to Morny," said Tubby obstinately.

"Well, the want's all on your side," said Mornington. "I don't want to speak to you. Are you waiting to be kicked?"

"You'd better not kick me, Morny," said Tubby significantly. "I dare say Jimmy Silver would kick you if he knew what I could tell him."

Mornington gritted his teeth.

"You fat scoundrel!" he muttered.

Townsend & Co. exchanged glances, and went on to Study No. 4; Mornington remained with Tubby Muffin.

"Now, what do you want?" asked the dandy of the Fourth, between his teeth, his eyes glittering at the fat Classical.

"Well, I'd like to come in to tea, if you want to be friendly," said Tubby calmly.

"I'm quite willing to be friendly."

"You were awake last night?" muttered Mornington.

Muffin grinned and nodded.

"I thought you were sound asleep, you fat rotter!"

"Well, I didn't want to go raiding the Moderns," grinned Tubby. "Tain't in my line, you know. I wasn't asleep, only snoring. And after Jimmy Silver went, I saw somebody else follow. He, he, he!"

"Suppose you did?" muttered Mornington.

"Suppose I went out to see how they were getting on?"

"Suppose anything you like," said Tubby affably. "Jimmy Silver might suppose something, too, if he knew you'd left the dormitory after him."

"I was there when he came back."

"Yes, you'd been in bed about two seconds when they came back," chuckled Tubby. "If they knew you'd been outside the dorm while they were away, they'd rather smell a mouse—what!"

Mornington clenched his hands. He looked as if he would hurl himself upon the fat Classical.

Tubby backed away in alarm.

"No larks!" he said.

"Tell me what you want, you fat oyster!" snarled Mornington.

"Well, if you like to ask me to tea, I'll come. Bless you, I don't bear any malice!"

"If you put your foot inside my study, I'll throw you out on your fat neck!" said Mornington savagely.

"If you're not going to be civil, Morny—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"All right!" said Muffin. "I'll speak to Jimmy Silver. He'll be out of the Form-room soon. I dare say he'll be glad to hear what I have to say."

"I'll give you five shillings to hold your sneaking tongue!" muttered Mornington at last.

"Make it half-a-quad."

"You greedy little scoundrel—"

"If you call me names, Mornington, I shall refuse to have anything to do with you," said Muffin calmly. "As it is, I don't know whether I ought to keep your shady secret. Jimmy Silver says a chap shouldn't sneak, and so I can't give you away; but I don't know whether I ought to tell the fellows—"

Mornington slid his hand into his pocket, and a ten-shilling note was placed in Tubby's fat fingers.

"Now hold your tongue, you fat brute!" he snapped.

And the dandy of the Fourth walked away to his study with contracted brows.

His secret was not very safe in the hands of the chatterbox of Rookwood, and he realised that very clearly.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 56.

Tubby Muffin chuckled, and ambled away, and met the detained juniors as they came pouring out of the Fourth-Form room.

"Had a rotten time, you chaps?" asked Tubby sympathetically.

"Oh, no; first rate!" groaned Lovell.

"Faith, we've been enjoying ourselves!" grunted Flynn. "Sure, I wish I knew the thafe of the worruld who pillowed old Manders! The ould baste deserved it, but it's nothing to what I'd give the silly spalpeen if I could find him intorely!"

"Seems to be no chance of that," said Jimmy Silver. "But how long is this blessed detention going on, I wonder?"

Tubby Muffin trotted after the Fistical Four as they walked away.

"Come to the tuckshop, you fellows," he said.

"Eh! What for?"

"My treat, you know."

"Your treat!" growled Lovell. "Gammon! You mean you want us to pay for a feed for you. I've had some! Go and eat cokes!"

"Look here!" said Tubby loftily; and he held up a ten-shilling note for inspection.

"My hat! Been robbing a bank?" exclaimed Raby.

"Come and have a feed," said Tubby.

"It's my treat."

"Shouldn't wonder if he's boned that note somewhere," said Higgs.

The sight of the impecunious Tubby in funds was surprising enough. But his hospitable offer was accepted. Tubby was generally hard-up, and seeking loans; but when he happened to have any money, he spent it royally. He liked seeing other fellows eat almost as much as he liked eating himself—though not quite.

Mornington's ten-shilling note passed over the counter, and old Sergeant Kettle handed out tuck to its exact value; it would not have been like Tubby to put by even a threepenny piece for a rainy day.

Besides, Tubby knew where he could get a further supply.

If anyone had known of Tubby's little game, and had called him a blackmailer, Tubby would have been very much surprised and pained. Tubby was not blessed with very keen perceptions.

His idea was that Mornington ought to be punished for the trick he had played. And how could he punish him better than by making him shell out? It was, as it were, a system of imposing fines upon him. That was how the worthy Tubby looked at it.

Jimmy Silver had said that he wouldn't give the culprit away, even if he knew him; so Tubby considered it useless to tell Jimmy who the culprit was.

As for owning up, Mornington was too much of a cad to own up, in any case, whatever pressure was brought to bear on him, so as far as that went, there was no use in acquainting the Form with the facts.

And Tubby, in the generosity of his heart, intended to stand a series of whacking feeds for his Form-fellows as a compensation for detention.

Therefore, everything in the garden, really, was lovely from Tubby Muffin's peculiar point of view. Tubby would have submitted to detention cheerfully at any time for the sake of a feed to follow. As for the football-matches that had to be postponed, Tubby did not think much of them at all. Games were not much in his line.

After the feed in the tuckshop, Tubby Muffin rolled away, feeling very satisfied with himself and things generally.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

On the Track.

I'VE got it!" Jimmy Silver uttered that exclamation suddenly.

It was after lessons on the following day, and the Fistical Four were sauntering in the quadrangle.

They were discussing the mysterious affair of the attack on Mr. Manders, and surmising whom the unknown assailant could possibly be.

"Well, if you've got it, trot it out!" said Lovell. "It beats me hollow!"

"Blessed duffers we all were!" exclaimed Jimmy. "We took it for granted that it was one of our party who mizzled off and pillowed Manders."

"Well, so it was, wasn't it?"

"How do we know it was?" demanded Jimmy excitedly. "The cads of the Form were all behind in the dorm. I can't think of any chap in our party who'd be mean

(Continued on next page.)

THE MONSTER!

A Short Complete Story of St. Jim's.

TAP! After a moment's hesitation, Mr. Lathom, master of the Fourth at St. Jim's, entered the study. There was no one there.

"Dear me! How vexing!"

The Form-master had come to see Jack Blake of the Fourth, who inhabited Study No. 6 with his three chums, D'Arcy, Digby, and Herries, on some matter connected with the Form football-team.

However, as Mr. Lathom had nothing particular to do for ten minutes, he closed the study door, and seated himself in the well-worn armchair to wait.

Mellish of the Fourth, with his crony, George Gore, turned the corner of the passage just in time to see the little Form-master step into the study.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, halting. "What does Lathom want in there? Blake & Co. are on the footer-field."

"Have a squirt," suggested Gore.

Mellish tiptoed to the door of Study No. 6, and applied his eye to the keyhole.

"Old Lathom's sitting in the chair, waiting for 'em," he reported.

"I wonder what—Hallo!" Gore broke off as the elegant figure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in immaculate football-gear, love in sight down the passage, evidently making for his study. "Buck up!" exclaimed Gore, with a hurried grin. "I've got a weeze!"

He dashed down the passage towards D'Arcy, Mellish following, mystified.

"Look out, D'Arcy!" he exclaimed, in a restrained voice, his face apparently convulsed with alarm. "You're not going to your study, are you?"

Arthur Augustus surveyed Gore in astonishment through his famous eyeglass.

"Yaas, wathah! Pway why not, Goah?"

"Don't! Don't! Look out! Take care!" Gore gasped out the warning in an agonised voice.

"Why—what—"

"The monster! Oh, for goodness' sake, take care!"

"W-what monstah?"

"Awful—ferocious—in your study!" choked Gore. "Go back—quick!"

"Fly!" chimed in Mellish, in thrilling tones.

And the two young rascals bolted off down the passage, apparently panic-stricken.

But Gore and Mellish knew their D'Arcy, and they did not bolt far.

Arthur Augustus, a little pale, but looking very determined, screwed his eyeglass more firmly into his eye.

He paused a moment, and disappeared into an adjacent study, to reappear a moment later armed with a heavy poker, and with a tablecloth wrapped round his left arm. Gore and Mellish nudged one another in high glee.

D'Arcy had his hand on the door of Study No. 6 now, and stood listening a moment. He braced himself for the effort, and, with a yell like a wild Indian, suddenly hurled himself into the room, with the poker uplifted in his hand.

The master, tired of waiting, was just about to open the study door from the inside when it flew open, and D'Arcy dashed in.

The concussion was terrific. Each staggered back and sat down hard!

"Boy!" gasped Mr. Lathom. "What—what! D'Arcy—"

"M-mum—Mr. Lathom!" stuttered D'Arcy.

"Wretched boy! This assault upon your Form-master—"

"Oh, s-sir, I—I thought you were the monster!" gasped D'Arcy feebly.

Gore and Mellish, unable any longer to contain their mirth, left at this juncture, leaving the unfortunate Gussy the hard task of convincing little Mr. Lathom that he was not guilty of intentional assault and battery. It is true that the outraged Swell of St. Jim's visited them subsequently, and thumped them both soundly. But the two jaspers always maintained that it was worth a few thumps to see Arthur Augustus, poker in hand, tackle the monster!

The Outsider of the Fourth!

(Continued from previous page.)

enough to let us all be detained to get off a licking. But there were plenty of fellows left in the dorm who are mean enough for that or anything else."

"My hat!" said Raby. "I never thought of that."
 "But they stayed in the dorm," said Lovell. "They couldn't have pillowed Manders if they stayed in the dorm, you know."

Jimmy Silver looked at his chum admiringly.

"Did you work that out in your head?" he asked. "My hat! What a brain!"

"Look here, you silly chump—"

"My idea is that they didn't all stay in the dorm," said Jimmy.
 "Oh, I see!"
 "Time you did," agreed Jimmy Silver. "Suppose one of those cads sneaked out after us, and pillowed Manders just to get us into a row?"

"Phew!"
 "They wouldn't have had the nerve," said Newcome, with a shake of the head.

"Well, that's true of most of 'em," admitted Jimmy. "Towny and Topy and Peele and Gower wouldn't have pillowed Manders at any price. But that rotter Mornington has nerve enough for anything."

"Well, that's so."
 "And he was wild, because we were down on him for slacking," said Jimmy. "It's just one of his dirty tricks; killing two birds with one stone, you know. He pillowed Manders, and got us all into a frightful row."

"Yes, I know he doesn't like Manders. Manders reported him to Bootles for smoking the other day."

"And he doesn't like us!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "I've got rather an impression that he doesn't."

Lovell drew a deep breath.
 "The cad! Very likely it was Mornington. Just one of his tricks. But if he went out of the dorm, the others must know—Towny and the rest."

"They'd keep it dark, of course."
 "And Muffin—"

"Oh, Muffin was sleeping like a fat pig! But Towny & Co. know all about it, and they're keeping it dark."
 "If—if it's the case!" said Raby doubtfully.

"Let's go and hammer 'em and make 'em own up," suggested Lovell.

"But perhaps they didn't do it."
 "Well, they're cads, anyway; hammering will do them good."

"Something in that," agreed Jimmy Silver. "Anyway, we'll go and ask them some questions. No harm in that."

The Fistical Four proceeded in search of Mornington.

The Nuts of the Fourth were found in No. 4 Study. There was a haze of cigarette-smoke in the study when the Co. went in. Mornington & Co. were amusing themselves in their own peculiar fashion.

Mornington gave the visitors an insolent look.
 "I don't remember askin' you to call," he remarked.

"You'll excuse me," observed Townsend.

"But your room's preferable to your company, dear boys; absolutely, you know."

"We've come to ask you a question, Mornington," said Jimmy Silver.

"You can save your breath. I'm not answerin' any of your questions."
 "Did you leave the dorm on Tuesday night?"

"Nice weather we're havin', ain't we?" said Mornington calmly.

"I've got an idea that you sneaked out quietly after us, and pillowed old Manders to get us into a row," said Jimmy Silver.

Townsend & Co. exchanged startled glances. But the dandy of the Fourth did not turn a hair.

"Is that the yarn you're goin' to spread in the Fourth?" he asked, with a sneer. "I don't think you'll get anybody to believe it."

"Then you didn't leave the dorm?"
 "Find out!"

"That's what I'm trying to do," said Jimmy calmly; "and if I have any more of your cheek, Mornington, you'll get a thick ear! I'm pretty well fed-up with you as it is. Do you deny leaving the dorm after we went out?"

"Yes, I do!" snarled Mornington.

"You fellows were awake," said Jimmy, turning to Townsend & Co. "You know whether Mornington went out or not."

"Can't you take Morny's word?" demanded Townsend.

"No fear."
 "He was in the dorm when you got back," said Peele.

"He could easily have got back before us," said Jimmy. "I want to know whether you fellows know he went out."

"Nothin' of the sort," said Townsend.

"He was stickin' in bed, like the rest of us," said Topham.

"You'll have to make up a better yarn than that, you know," sniggered Peele.

"As a matter of fact, it's pretty clear to my mind who did it," remarked Mornington coolly.

"Who, then?" exclaimed Jimmy.
 "You!"

The captain of the Fourth started.
 "I!" he exclaimed.

"Yaas, you! An' I think you ought to own up, and get the Form off detention," said Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Nuts in chorus. The expression on Jimmy Silver's face tickled them immensely.

"As it happens," said Jimmy, very quietly, "I can prove I wasn't the chap. Some of the fellows were quite close to me all the time."

"You mean your pals stick to whatever yarn you tell?" sneered Mornington.

"It looks to me as if you did it," said Jimmy, "and your precious pals are lying about it to screen you."

"Go hon!" yawned Townsend.

"But I'll jolly well find out somehow!" said Jimmy savagely.

"Oh, make up a better yarn!" urged Mornington. "Make out that it was Smythe of the Shell, or Beaumont of the Sixth, or any fellow you don't like, you know."

Jimmy clenched his hands hard. At that moment the study door opened, and Tubby Muffin came in.

"I say, Morny, old chap, can you lend me five bob?" he asked, before he noticed that the Fistical Four were in the study.

Mornington gritted his teeth.
 "Oh, you fat rotter!" he snapped.
 "Oh, I—I didn't see you fellows!" stam-

pered Tubby. "I—I say, will you come to the tuckshop with me?"

"Not with Mornington's money!" growled Jimmy Silver; and the Fistical Four left the study, Tubby Muffin following a minute later with five shillings in his podgy hand.

The fat Classical was making for the stairs, en route for the tuckshop, when Jimmy Silver's hand fell on his shoulder.

"Come into my study, Tubby," said Jimmy Silver grimly. "I've got something to say to you."

"I—I'm in rather a hurry."
 "What is Mornington giving you money for?"

"Only—only making me a little loan, because—because we're pals, you know," stammered Tubby.

Jimmy looked at him searchingly.
 "Were you awake on Tuesday night, Tubby?" he asked.

"Oh, no; sleeping like a top."
 "You don't know whether Mornington left the dorm after we did?"

"How could I when I was asleep, you know!" protested Tubby, in great alarm. The horn of plenty was in danger.

"I can't understand Mornington giving you money."

"It's only a loan, you know," said Tubby feebly.

"You never pay, and Mornington knows it."

"Oh, I say, you know—"

Tubby Muffin twisted himself away, and ran down the stairs. Jimmy Silver looked at his chums.

"It looks to me as if Mornington did the trick, and Muffin knows," he said. "But there's no getting the truth out of that fat bounder. But we'll find out somehow."

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Brought to Book.

WHAT do you want?"
 Mornington of the Fourth snapped out that question savagely.

It was the next day, and Mornington was alone in his study after lessons, with a wrinkled brow and a savage expression. He was conning over a little book which contained the records of Morny's sporting transactions. Luck had been going against the dandy of the Fourth, and ample as his funds were, he had been cleaned out in his latest speculation.

The geegee that Morny fancied had had the bad taste to come in seventh instead of first, and Morny's cash had taken unto itself wings and flown away.

The dandy of the Fourth was in a savage temper. It was not the loss of the money—that meant only a couple of days' inconvenience till he obtained a fresh supply. But he had a sense of defeat and bitter irritation, and he was in no mood to be worried by Tubby Muffin and his incessant demands.

The look he turned on the fat Classical alarmed Tubby a little. But he stuck to his guns.

"If you're not going to be civil, Morny—he began.

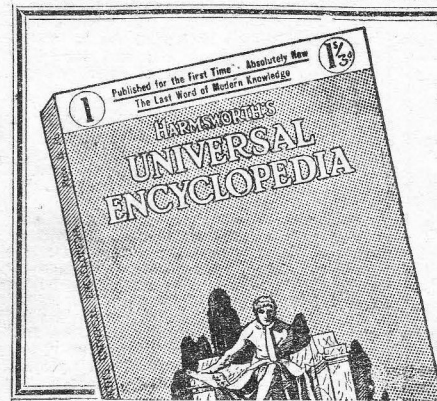
"Get out of my study!"

"Ahem! Can you lend me ten bob?"

"No, I can't!"

"Well, I'll make it five," said Tubby generously. "I'll make five do until tomorrow. There!"

"I'm stony!" growled Mornington, "I've had bad luck. Get out!"
 Tubby grinned.



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"Oh, don't be funny, you know," he remarked. "I wondered how long it would be before you started that yarn. It won't do for me, I can tell you."

"It's the truth, you fat cad!"

Tubby chuckled.

"You started telling the truth?" he grinned. "My hat! Who was it said the age of miracles was past?"

"Will you get out of my study?" said Mornington, with a dangerous glitter in his eyes. "I tell you I've got no money for you!"

"Upon the whole, Mornington, I'm afraid I can't keep your shady secret any longer," said Tubby. "The fellows are all going to be detained again to-morrow afternoon, and it's really too bad! I really think I'd better speak to Jimmy Silver."

"I shall have some more money on Monday," muttered Mornington.

"Oh, don't gammon, you know! Can you lend me ten bob, or can't you lend me ten bob?" said Muffin peevishly.

"And how long is this going on?" said Mornington through his set teeth. "You've had about three pounds out of me so far."

"If you put it like that, Morny, I sha'n't accept another loan from you!" said Tubby, with an assumption of dignity. "I'm willing to treat you as a pal, but I don't want any caddish remarks, I can tell you!"

"You blackmailing young hound!" hissed Mornington. "I won't give you another penny! But I'll tell you what I will give you—I'll give you a thumping hiding, and if you say a word about me I'll give you another!"

"Here, I say—yah!—hands off!" yelled Tubby, in alarm.

Mornington was upon him with the spring of a tiger.

He grasped the fat Classical, and hurled him on the rug. Then he snatched up a walking-cane.

Whack, whack, whack!

The cane came down on Tubby Muffin's plump person with all the force of Mornington's arm. Morny appeared to be under the impression that he was beating a carpet. Tubby Muffin roared and yelled.

Lash, lash, lash, lash!

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Tubby. "Help! Yooop! Rescue, Jimmy Silver! Help! Yooop!"

Lash, lash, lash!

Mornington's savage, uncontrolled temper had full rein now. He lashed at the wriggling, writhing, fat junior with savage energy.

A flogging by the Head would have been mild to that terrific thrashing.

Tubby's yells rang the length of the Fourth Form passage as he writhed under the savage lashes of the cane.

The door opened, and Townsend came in hurriedly.

"What the thunder!" he exclaimed. "Morny! Stop it! Are you mad?"

Lash, lash, lash!

"The cad's come here to blackmail me again!" hissed Mornington. "I'll teach him that it doesn't pay!"

"Yaroooh! Help! Yah! Rescue!" screamed Tubby.

"You brute!" roared Jimmy Silver, rushing into the study. "What are you doing? Let Muffin alone—at once!"

"Keep off!" shouted Mornington savagely. "You'll get some if you chip in here, Jimmy Silver!"

Jimmy rushed at him, without replying. Mornington lashed at him with the cane, and Jimmy caught the blow on his left arm. The next moment Mornington was in his grasp.

"Now, you cad—"

Jimmy pommelled and punched, and punched and pommelled with hearty good will.

Mornington's yells were almost as loud as Tubby's.

"Go it, Jimmy" sang out Lovell, in great delight.

"Give the cad beans!"

"Cave!" yelled Rawson from the passage.

"Here comes Bootles!"

"Look out, Jimmy!"

But Jimmy Silver and Mornington were fighting fiercely, and neither of them heeded the warning.

Mr. Bootles came whisking along the passage with rustling gown and frowning brows. He stared into Study No. 4 in majestic wrath.

"What—what?" he ejaculated. "Silver! Mornington! Cease this at once!"

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 53.

The combatants separated, flushed and panting.

"What does this mean?" thundered Mr. Bootles.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" roared Tubby Muffin. "Help! Ow! Yow! I'm killed! Look at me! Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"What is the matter with you, Muffin? Has anyone been ill-using you?"

"Yow-ow-ow!" That beast Mornington!" wailed Tubby. "He was larruping me with a stick, and Silver stopped him! Yow-ow! Woop!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "Mornington, I have spoken to you several times about your temper. You have been ill-using a smaller boy. I could hear Muffin's cries from my study—"

"Because I knew he pillowed Manders!" yelled Tubby Muffin. "I told him I'd tell Jimmy Silver, and so I will!"

"What—what?"

"Oh, by gad!" murmured Townsend.

Mornington looked savage and sullen. It was but now, but the hardened young rascal of Rookwood was prepared to face the music.

"Mornington! Is it possible—"

"He sneaked out of the dorm and pillowed Manders!" yelled Tubby Muffin. "Townsend knew. They were cackling over it when Morny came back. Towny knows, and Top-lam and Peele—they all knew! Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Mornington, is this true?"

Mornington gritted his teeth instead of replying.

"Townsend! Answer me at once! Were you aware that Mornington was guilty of that outrage, as Muffin states?"

Townsend stammered.

"I—I couldn't give a chap away, sir," he mumbled.

"Possibly so. But I demand to know the truth now. Answer me!"

Townsend looked at Mornington.

"It's all up, Morny!" he muttered. "It's your own fault! Why couldn't you let Muffin alone, you fool?"

Mornington burst into a savage laugh.

"It's true!" he said. "Those weak-kneed cads would give me away now that Muffin has told tales! Bah! I don't care!"

"I think you will be made to care, Mornington," said Mr. Bootles drily. "You will follow me to the Head now! You also, Townsend and Muffin."

And Mr. Bootles marched away majestically, with the three juniors at his heels.

Jimmy Silver whistled.

"Well, the game's up now," he remarked. "That fat rascal knew all the time, and he was getting money out of the other cad."

"Rather a dangerous game to play with a fellow like Mornington," grinned Lovell.

"Tubby doesn't seem to have made it pay, in the long run."

"He's got a little more than he bargained for!" chuckled Raby. "Serve him jolly well right!"

The juniors agreed that Tubby Muffin had got very little more than he deserved. Mornington was also getting what he deserved now. The culprit having been discovered, the Head proceeded to administer severe justice.

The flogging Mornington received in the Head's study was a record. Even the tough and hardened Mornington was squirming painfully as he crawled away after it, and that evening his temper was so savage that his study-mates were driven from his study.

But, with the exception of Mornington, the Classical Fourth rejoiced. The sentence of detention was withdrawn, and on Saturday afternoon Rookwood Juniors played football once again. So all was well that ended well.

THE END.

Looking for Trouble!

A Complete Tale of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's.

ERE's the toff!" That remark fell upon the ears of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the Swell of St. Jim's, as he halted outside the village tuckshop at Rylcombe. A group of urchins, with a thick-set youth at their head, surveyed him with derisive grins and loud guffaws.

"Baf Jove!" murmured Gussy.

"Baf Jove!" mimicked the crowd.

"Don't 'e look the part!"

"Not 'alf!"

Arthur Augustus elevated his chin a trifle, and sauntered elegantly off in the direction of St. Jim's.

As he did so, one youth more daring than his fellows, swept his shining silk topper off his head, and before Gussy could grasp the situation, his topper—the pride of his eye—was doing duty as a football!

"You young wascals!" he exclaimed angrily. "I'll—"

Words failed the Swell of St. Jim's. It was a time for action. And, with a rush, he dashed into the thick of the laughing group to rescue his topper.

"Give me my toppah! Yow-ow!"

The urchins had taken the St. Jim's junior at his word, and the topper, which by this time was looking decidedly the worse for wear, was jammed on to his head like a cheap concertina. It had collected quite a quantity of mud in its short life as a football, and that mud began to stream down Gussy's aristocratic features.

Arthur Augustus' noble blood was up, and when the blood of a Vere de Vere is stirred, things begin to happen. His left fist swept out, and one of the urchins reeled back, clapping his nose tenderly.

The remainder of the youthful jokers, not liking the new aspect of affairs, backed away hastily, with the exception of their leader.

The bullying instinct was predominant in Jim Bosworth, and he thought the opportunity a favourable one for establishing himself in the good graces of his following.

He was a new arrival at the village, and had announced his intention of carrying out an open warfare with the St. Jim's juniors.

"Look 'ere, you guy," he began, "I don't allow any of you college dummies to lay 'ands on any of my friends; so take that!"

"That" was a vicious right-hander, which, if it had landed, would have laid Gussy low. But Arthur Augustus stepped away to safety, and before Bosworth could regain his balance a straight left caught him full between the eyes.

The village bully, with a snort of rage, hurled himself on the Swell of St. Jim's, and the two, locked in a close embrace, pummelled each other unmercifully.

When they parted, however, it was Bosworth's eye that had suddenly assumed a shady colour approaching black, and it was his nose that seemed flattened to his face.

"Knock 'im out!" howled his following.

But that was easier said than done.

The St. Jim's junior met all his wild rushes with a coolness that was astounding, and Bosworth was already beginning to repent of his hastiness.

Thud!

Bosworth went down to a beautifully-placed right, which caught him on the point of the jaw.

Arthur Augustus stepped back, waiting for his opponent to rise; and the bully, urged on by the jeers of the villagers, scrambled to his feet.

Thud!

He was the recipient of a straight left which shook every bone in his body, and, with a grunt, he sank to the ground again.

This time even the caustic remarks of his friends failed to bring him to his feet.

"Had enough?" asked Gussy.

"Grough! Yes!" muttered Bosworth.

And with a parting stare at the villagers grouped round their fallen champion, Arthur Augustus dusted himself down, and sauntered back to St. Jim's, convinced that he had served out a severe rebuff to the bully.

The lesson had the desired effect, for from that day the St. Jim's juniors were never molested, and some time later, news reached the school that Bosworth had left Rylcombe.

THE END.

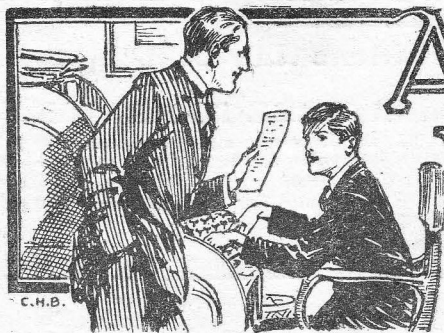
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YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASSED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "PENNY POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4.

OF INTEREST TO EVERYBODY.

There is a new and very special feature in the "Greyfriars Herald," which I hope all my chums will duly note. This consists of the Greyfriars Cartoons, drawn by Frank Nugent. There will be three sketches each week, and among the celebrities to be dealt with are Billy Bunter, Sammy Bunter, Dutton, Inky, Peter and Alonzo Todd, Wun Lung, and a crowd of Third Form fags.

I am pretty sure there will be an extra rush for the "Greyfriars Herald" as a result of this new attraction, so make sure of your copies. Frank Nugent has done this work right well. Of course, that goes without saying, for if he had failed in this respect he would never be allowed to introduce his cartoons.

I expect many cartoonists would be glad of the chance of depicting Billy Bunter. He lends himself to the business of amiable caricature, and is really a sort of plum for a comic artist. Just see the new treatment of the porpoise by Frank Nugent, R.A.—Regular Artist!

JACK CORNWELL, V.C.

Well, if you think we can hear too much of the boy hero of the Battle of Jutland, you are mistaken; but you could not possibly suggest such a thing. I want to draw the attention of all my chums to the splendid opportunity afforded them of obtaining the great work of art which depicts the brave action of Cornwell. The picture is one to give pleasure for a lifetime.

I have received one or two letters from readers who told me they did not understand the competition! I cannot credit that! All that is needed is to send in six names of non-readers of the Companion Papers. It is the simplest thing in the world, and you receive a picture which should occupy a place in every home.

SHIPS, SHOES, AND SEALING-WAX.

These are just a few of the subjects which are dealt with in my letters. There is plenty about ships, as so many of my chums get bitten by the thought of the rolling main. They see the romantic side, but once aboard the lugger the romance slips back into its right proportions. I have been giving advice about going to sea for long years past. It is a business to be talked over with friends,

for there is the question of fitness, etc., and it is often a pity for a fellow to down tools when he is in a good berth, and hie for the main just because of a sort of fancy that way, or a quarrel, or something else trivial.

There is another point my attention is drawn to by a disgruntled correspondent. Please note this. He was only chagrined for one thing. He popped his head into the PENNY POP. What, no Chat? That was why he felt angry. Could I have a double dose of Chat once a fortnight? That's what he asks. I like the notion that he likes Chat; but except on special occasions—say, when the serialist feels so strong that he overwrites—Chat will appear regularly. I am much obliged to my chum in Bilston.

KEEPING PETS.

Can we have articles in the Companion Papers about pets? I am afraid not. There is no room. If I once started such a feature there would be an endless procession of pets. Fellows who have taken up with hippopotami, and other cheery little animals, would be asking for information as to what to feed their favorites on. I mentioned the port-manteau-like beast because I happened upon the neat little rhyme concerning him the other day:

"He thought he saw a bank clerk descending from a bus;
He looked again, and saw it was a hippopotamus.
'If this should stay to dine,' he said,
'there won't be much for us!'"

But I would like to give little items about Nature now and then, even if regular articles are ruled out—as they are, for lack of room. The fellow who likes animals is kind to them, and has solved one of the riddles of life. I am glad my chums feel that way as regards all things great and small. They are on the right road there.

A CAPITAL IDEA.

A correspondent who lives up in the Madame Tussaud region has hit on a good notion—namely, turning the pictures in the Companion Papers into a jigsaw puzzle by means of her brother's fretsaw.

Many thanks to Miss Germaine for her letter and the suggestion. She is advertising the papers and providing much fun at the

same time. You know how some cynical folks speak of jigsaws—they hate them, etc., and then next moment they lean forward, making suggestions, and get engrossed in the business. There are far worse things than a jigsaw. It is a first-rate amusement.

THE PORTSMOUTH TOUCH.

An enthusiast at Pompey asks me what I think of the play of Portsmouth. Well, I think it is admirable. The plain fact is the Portsmouth team is just what might be expected from the great town which is the headquarters of the British Navy. My correspondent will forgive me if I say no more. Comparisons are bad, but we all know what the men of Portsmouth can do.

"For Portsmouth always played the game,
And every footballer will tell you the same."

GOOD NEWS FROM KENTISH TOWN.

A loyal and valued correspondent in North London speaks of the grand stories in the PENNY POP. I am much obliged to her.

"The flowers that bloom in the spring, tra la!
May have nothing to do with the case;
But each week the yarns in the 'Popular'
Most certainly win in the race!"

FRENCH, GERMAN, AND RUSSIAN SPOKEN.

Mr. John W. Fergusson writes from 26, Bank Street, Cambuslang, Scotland, to say that he has a working acquaintance with French, German, and Russian, and will be pleased to give lessons in same, the money to go to the funds of the Discharged and Demobilised Soldiers' Association.

Mr. Fergusson is a valued correspondent of mine, and I wish him all success.

Your Editor

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