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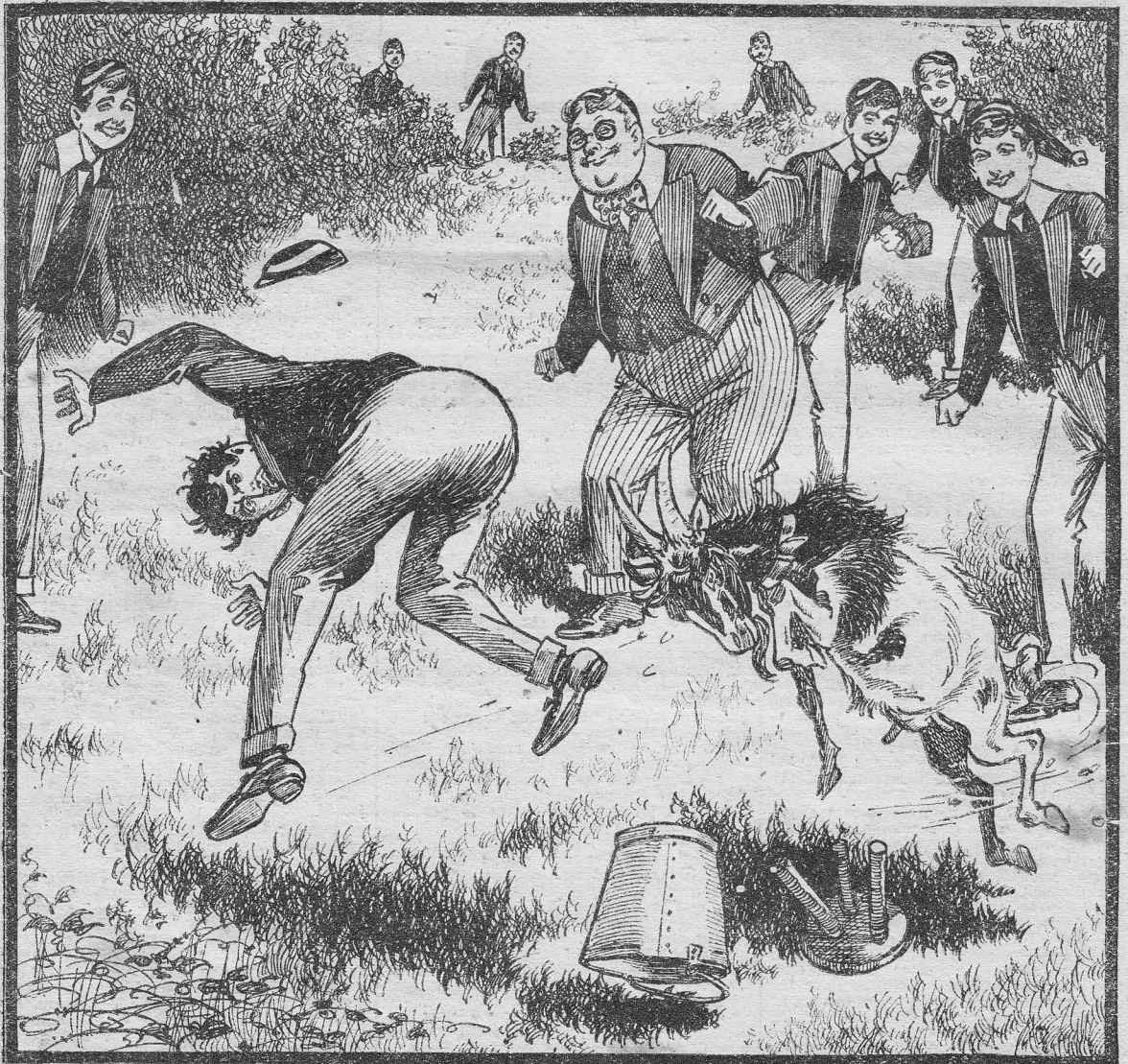
Week Ending  
March 13th, 1920.

NO. 60.  
New Series.

20 PAGES.

GRAND CINEMA SERIAL AND COMPLETE SCHOOL STORIES.

**A GOAT FOR SALE!**



**FISH COMES TO GRIEF WITH THE GOAT!**

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



# GOAT FOR SALE!

A MAGNIFICENT,  
NEW LONG COM-  
PLETE STORY OF  
HARRY  
WHARTON & CO.,  
OF GREYFRIARS.

.. BY ..  
FRANK RICHARDS.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Brilliant Idea!

"GEE WHIZ! I guess and calculate there's big money to be made!" Thus exclaimed Fisher Tarleton Fish, the American junior of the Remove at Greyfriars, as he contemplated a roughly-chalked notice-board.

The board was nailed to a tree by the roadside, a few yards from a farm. The notice, in badly-formed letters, read as follows:

"A GOAT FOR SALE!

Thirty Shillings.

Apply at the Farm."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" murmured Fish, and he continued to stare at the notice thoughtfully.

Fisher T. Fish considered himself a great business man, and he spent more than half of his life trying to think out schemes for making money.

Up to now he had done nothing much in that line, but as he surveyed the advertisement, fresh visions of wealth and prosperity floated before him.

"By gum! I guess I'll do it!" he exclaimed aloud; and he turned and walked briskly towards Greyfriars, smiling in a very self-satisfied manner as he went.

Fish's great idea had sprung from the fact that there was a great shortage of butter at Greyfriars; indeed, it was only very occasionally that real butter was provided. Margarine was usually the order of the day, and often that was not of the best.

Fellows had grumbled long and loud, but it was not the fault of the school authorities; butter was scarce everywhere.

Why not buy the goat which was advertised for sale, milk it regularly, and make butter of the milk?

That was the question which had flashed into the mind of the American junior as he read the notice on the board. And with every step he took towards Greyfriars the more eager he grew over the idea.

"I guess I'll teach those galoots how to run a business company!" muttered the American junior. "It'll have to be a company, because I don't happen to have the dollars on hand just now to buy the goat."

Fish was thinking of the rest of the juniors of the Remove, and by the time he reached the school he had decided on his plan of action.

He hastened up to Study No. 14, which he shared with Sampson Quincey Ifley Field, the Australian junior, and Johnny Bull.

The study was empty, and Fish at once got busy with a pen and a large sheet of paper.

Ten minutes later the following notice appeared upon the door of the study:

"THE GOAT-BUTTER CO., LTD.

Particulars of a great business scheme will be explained at a meeting in the Common-room at 7 o'clock prompt this evening. The biggest thing ever put up! Thousands of pounds to be made! Shareholders wanted!

ROLL UP IN YOUR THOUSANDS!  
MONEY FOR ALL!  
FISHER T. FISH.

"I guess that's going to bring 'em in!" said Fisher T. Fish to himself, as he returned to the study.

Ten minutes later Harry Wharton & Co., the Famous Five of the Remove, strolled along the passage and saw the notice.

"My hat! What's all this about?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Goat-Butter Co., Ltd.," read Bob Cherry. "That chump Fish has gone off his giddy rocker again!"

Johnny Bull opened the door of the study and walked in, followed by Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"What's all this rot about, Fishy?" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"What rot?" cried Fisher T. Fish sharply.

"That bizney about a Butter-Goat Company!" put in Bob Cherry.

"Goat-Butter Company!" corrected the American junior. "It's going to be the biggest thing ever put up!"

"So the notice says," remarked Frank Nugent. "But that doesn't explain much."

"I guess you'll hear all about it if you show up at the meeting," said Fish T. Fish.

"I'm just preparing my notes to put the thing before the galoots."

"But—"

"I calculate I'm not saying any more about it just now," went on Fish. "Turn up at the meeting, and whip up the other guys and you'll hear all about it!"

"You're potty, old son!" exclaimed Bob Cherry emphatically.

"The pottiffulness of the esteemed and ludicrous Fish-is terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh.

"Hear, hear!"

"I guess you've been talkin' out of the back o' your necks!" retorted the business man of the Remove, "If you don't want to make pots of money, don't come to the meeting."

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton. "We've got no time to waste over the fathead!"

"No fear!" And the Famous Five took their departure, leaving Fisher T. Fish poring over the details of his great scheme.

"I say, Fishy, old chap!" Billy Bunter, the fat junior of the Remove, was the next to look in at Study No. 14.

"Scat!"

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Git!" exclaimed the American junior. "But this Goat-Gutter—er—"

"Buzz off!" shouted Fish.

"I want to be a shareholder—"

"Shut the door and read the notice again!" yelled the business man.

"You might as well listen to a fellow—"

Billy Bunter broke off sharply, as Fisher T. Fish jumped up from his chair threateningly.

"Vamoose, you fat toad!" roared Fish, snatching up a cricket-stump from the side of the fireplace.

Billy Bunter thought it was time to vamoose, and he took his departure hurriedly, and commenced a tour of all the studies to inform the occupants that Fish had gone mad.

"Don't wonder at it, if you've been worrying him!" snapped Peter Todd.

"But Fish has gone mad, I tell you!" exclaimed Bunter.

Tom Dutton, the deaf junior, looked up from his book.

"Whose fish has gone bad?" he asked. "And what's it got to do with us?"

"I didn't say anybody's fish had gone bad!" cried Billy Bunter irritably. "I said that Fish had gone off his rocker!"

"I know you said somebody's fish had gone rotten!" retorted Tom Dutton. "But what's it got to do with you, anyway?"

Billy Bunter glared angrily at the deaf junior.

"I never said a word about rotten fish!" he yelled exasperatedly. "It's this business about goat-butter!"

"Whose coat-button?" asked Dutton, with a frown.

"Silly ass!" roared Billy Bunter at the top of his voice; and he stalked out of the study, muttering angrily.

The Owl of the Remove found nobody anxious to listen to his remarks about the American junior, but he discovered that practically every fellow in the Remove, besides many who were not in the Remove, intended being present at the meeting in the Common-room that evening.

For the rest of the day until after tea Fish's notice was the one topic of conversation, and by half-past six fellows were pouring into the Common-room, talking ex-



The next moment the crowd of juniors came panting and gasping up to the gate, and found that the animal was once more secured, and standing quiet and unconcerned as though nothing unusual had occurred.

"My hat! We've started off all right, and no mistake!" growled Johnny Bull, throwing himself on to the grass by the side of the farmyard.

"You're right, old top!" agreed Bob Cherry. "Strikes me we're going to have a lively time with this blessed goat!"

Fisher T. Fish was now practically his old self, though he still bore evidence of the ordeal through which he had passed a short time previously.

"You'll find her all right now, I think," said the farmer, patting the goat. "I'll come along to the school in the morning and milk her for you, and just give you a little instruction."

"I guess we'll want it, too," murmured Fisher T. Fish ruefully.

And then the whole cavalcade set off for Greyfriars, Fish walking in front with the goat, which walked along docilely like a regimental mascot at the head of the troops.

They reached the school without further mishap, and the goat was installed in an old shed belonging to a farm close to the school, the juniors having made arrangements with the tenants to allow the goat to occupy it, and graze in a corner of the field in which the shed was situated.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**  
**Billy Bunter's Share.**

FISH and Vernon-Smith were up before rising-bell the next morning, ready to receive the farmer when he came to milk the goat.

"I calculate the business starts right away to-day," remarked the business man of the Remove, as they hurried down to the shed. "We've got to get the company running on real tip-top American business lines as soon as poss."

"British lines'll do just as well so long as we get a start," declared Vernon-Smith somewhat curtly.

"You don't know anything about business in this island!" retorted Fisher T. Fish braggingly.

"Well, we ought to know something about it by now, considering you've been over here so long!" snapped Vernon-Smith sarcastically.

"Good-morning, young gents!"

The farmer appeared in the quad at that moment, and effectually stopped the argument.

"This way!" said the American junior. And he and Vernon-Smith led the way to the adjoining field where the goat was tethered outside the shed.

The farmer had brought with him the churn which the juniors had paid for the previous day, and ten minutes later he had milked the goat without the slightest protest on the animal's part, and Fish felt more than ever that the new company was going to be a great success. It only remained now to learn to milk the goat, and then make butter of the milk.

The two juniors carried the bowl of milk up to Fish's study after the farmer's departure, and put it in the cupboard to set, and then hurried down to breakfast.

Most of the Removites went along to Study No. 14 to have a look at the first bowl of milk before they went into class, and some of the most sceptical began to think that, after all, there might be something in Fish's latest stunt.

That evening he made his way down to the corner of the field where the goat was grazing for the purpose of making his first attempt at milking the animal. He had hoped to get-down there with only Vernon-Smith to accompany him, but the news went round that Fish was going to milk the goat, and the juniors swarmed after him in full force.

As he brought forth the little three-legged stool from the shed, the animal eyed him doubtfully, and Fish returned the glance with an equal measure of doubt.

"Now for it, Fishy!" laughed Bob Cherry. "You guys had better keep clear, I guess!" retorted Fisher T. Fish. "If it catches sight of all your ugly dials it'll shy!"

"You cheeky bouncer!"

"Go for him!"

"No; don't go and upset the blessed goat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "We'll pay the fathead out afterwards!"

"I reckon the goat'll pay him out!" declared Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!" The animal remained perfectly quiet until Fish had settled himself on the stool, and then it suddenly lowered its head and threw out its hind-legs with such force that the stool was overturned and the American junior with it.

"You slab-sided jay!" he yelled, glaring at the goat in his wrath.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have another try, Fishy!"

"I wish you chumps would clear off!" snapped the business man of the Remove testily. "It frightens the thing to see you all crowdin' round like this!"

"No fear! You're the one who frightens it!" exclaimed Dick Rake.

The American junior certainly showed no fear in the matter, for he picked himself up and made another attempt to settle himself for his task.

Again he was bowled over by the restless beast, to the great delight of the rest of the Removites.

The third time he proved more successful, and, after a great deal of trouble, he succeeded in milking the goat satisfactorily.

He felt more than repaid for all he had suffered when he made his way back to Study No. 14 with the bowl of milk, and his Form-fellows showered congratulations upon him.

The milk was poured into the larger basin in the study, which contained the morning's supply, and all was well.

Then Fish went along to Vernon-Smith's study to go into the business side of the affair, and Squiff and Johnny Bull being absent, Study No. 14 was left unoccupied.

Ten minutes later Billy Bunter strolled along, and as he was passing the study he suddenly thought of the bowl of milk.

"My hat! I feel awfully dry!" he muttered to himself. "A drop of that milk would buck me up no end!"

He opened the door and looked in. Had there been anyone inside he would have made some excuse for calling, but as the room was empty he advanced and darted across to the cupboard.

"After all," he argued to himself, "I'm a shareholder in the company, so there's no reason why I shouldn't have a drop of the milk."

The basin was there all right, and he lifted it carefully from the cupboard and raised it to his mouth to drink. He failed to hear Harry Wharton & Co. enter the study, and his back was towards the door.

The first he knew of their presence was when the basin seemed to suddenly leave his fingers and clap down on to his head.

"Gug-gug-gug-grooogh!"

The milk poured down him in a stream; in his eyes, in his ears, down his neck—in his face, all over him.

"Yarooogh! Gug-gug-grrrr!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's for sneaking the milk!"

Billy Bunter stood rubbing the milk out of his eyes, though the basin was still over the top of his head, and he presented an extraordinary sight.

At that moment Fisher T. Fish and Vernon-Smith entered the study, and they fell back with a gasp of astonishment and anger when they saw what had happened.

"We caught the fat beast drinking the milk!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "And—"

"Well, you lunatics!" cried the American junior. "You needn't have wasted all that was left by chucking it over him!"

"Who wanted it, anyway, after he had had his blessed mouth round the basin!" snapped Frank Nugent.

"That's the first lot of butter gone west!" said Vernon-Smith gloomily.

"Yes, and I guess that fat porpoise'll feel as if he's going west by the time I've done with him!" declared Fisher T. Fish, with a glance of fury at the Owl of the Remove.

was seized by about half a dozen pairs of hands and swung from his feet.

"If you dare to— Ow!"

Bump!

"Yow-ow-ow! Yarooogh!"

"Give him another!"

Bump!

"Rotters! Beasts! Yah-ooooo!"

Bump!

"That's one for luck!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, as the juniors released their hold on the Owl of the Remove. "Now, seat!"

"I'll tell old Quelechy—"

"Buzz off, quick!"

Billy Bunter realised that he was not yet out of danger, so he picked himself up, very much the worse for wear, and departed from Study No. 14 in a very different frame of mind from when he had entered.

When he was far enough from the study door to be in safety he turned and shook his fist at the laughing Removites.

"Yah! Fatheads!"

Harry Wharton made as though to rush at him, and he took to his heels and disappeared.

"Good riddance to bad rubbish!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"My hat! We've made a nice mess of him anyway!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Milk from head to foot!"

"Serves him right!" growled Vernon-Smith.

"Hear, hear!"

"We shall get into an awful row if Quelechy see him in that state," remarked Dennis Carr.

"Bust Quelechy!"

"I guess I'll pulverise the fat porpoise if I catch him crawlin' around here again!" declared Fisher T. Fish, with considerable heat.

"Oh, well, it's no use crying over spilt milk!" said Bob Cherry, with a grin.

"True, O king!" laughed Harry Wharton.

"We'll have to start all over again to-morrow," said Vernon-Smith.

"And better luck next time!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"The better luckfulness of the esteemed next time will be terrific!" put in Hurree Singh, with a smile.

"Hear, hear!"

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**  
**A Midnight Visitor.**

CRASH! Crash!

"My hat!"

Harry Wharton started up in his bed in the Remove dormitory at eleven o'clock that night, and made that exclamation.

"What was that?" cried Bob Cherry.

"What an awful row!"

"What ever is it?"

Nearly every junior in the dormitory had been awakened by the crash, which had occurred somewhere in the lower regions of the school.

"Sounded like half a dozen tea-spoons being smashed to atoms at the same moment," said Peter Todd.

"Oh dear! It must be burglars!" wailed Billy Bunter, trembling nervously.

"Not likely, fathead! D'you think burglars would kick up a shindy like that!" exclaimed Dick Russell.

Mr. Quelch, who had still been at work in his study, started up in alarm at the noise, and was about to rush from his study to investigate the cause of it when one of the servants dashed in.

"Oh, sir!" she cried, in a scared voice, "What ever is it?"

"Pray calm yourself!" exclaimed the master, who was feeling considerably agitated himself. "I have not the slightest idea what has happened!"

"It was down in the kitchen, sir!" gasped the frightened servant. "Oh dear me!"

At that moment Wingate dashed into the study.

"Did you hear—?" The captain of Greyfriars stopped short as he saw the trembling servant. "I beg your pardon, sir!" he added.

"Yes, Wingate, I heard that awful crash!" said Mr. Quelch. "What ever can have happened?"

"We must go down and see, sir!" answered Wingate promptly.

"Er—yes, Wingate; we'll go at once!" declared Mr. Quelch. And as he spoke he bent down to the fireplace and seized the poker.

Wingate suppressed a smile.

"I don't think we shall need that, sir," he remarked. "It is hardly likely that burglars would cause such a disturbance as that!"

"No; perhaps you are right, Wingate."



"After hor!" shouted Fish, scrambling to his feet. The goat was tearing across the field as fast as it could go, and a moment later the crowd of juniors were in full chase. (See page 7.)

The master of the Remove replaced the poker, and at the same moment Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form, appeared at the study door in a state of considerable perturbation.

"Ah, you heard the noise!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Indeed, I did!" answered Mr. Prout. "Do you think I had better fetch my Winchester repeater?"

"Excuse me, sir," put in Wingate hastily; "but I do not think it will be necessary, as it cannot be burglars."

"No, no," answered Mr. Prout. "Let us go and see!"

Mr. Quelch, Mr. Prout, and Wingate left the study, and commenced to descend the stairs. On the way they were joined by Courtney and Gwynne, two more Sixth-Formers.

When they drew near to the kitchen they could distinctly hear sounds of tapping on the hard floor.

"Dear me!" gasped Mr. Prout. "I fear I shall have to fetch my gun, after all!" "There is certainly someone in there!" declared Mr. Quelch uneasily.

Wingate quietly stepped past the masters and advanced towards the door, Courtney and Gwynne close behind him.

Mr. Quelch flashed his electric torch as the captain pushed open the door, and then masters and prefects fell back in amazement.

Staring straight at them from out of the darkness was a goat, surrounded by hundreds of pieces of broken basins, cups, and saucers, etc.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "Ha, ha, ha!"

The humorous side of the affair struck the three prefects at the same instant, and they burst into a roar of laughter.

"Where ever has it come from?" gasped Mr. Prout. "Really, it does not seem to me a matter for laughter!"

"Neither does it to me!" said Mr. Quelch, somewhat severely.

The goat—which, of course, was the property of the Goat-Butter Co.—after staring at the group by the door for a moment, opened its mouth, and let out a fearful bleat.

"Ma-a-a-ah!"

"Ahem! This is a most remarkable occurrence, my dear Quelch!" remarked Mr. Prout.

"Have you any idea where the animal has come from?" demanded the master of the Remove of Wingate.

"Er—well, sir, I rather fancy it is the property of some of your boys," replied the captain.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch sharply. "What makes you think that, Wingate?"

"I know that they have some extraordinary company in formation which is the result of an idea of Fish's," replied the prefect. "I understood that the goat was being kept in the corner of that field round the other side of the school; evidently it has broken loose and contrived to get in here."

"Really! I shall have to investigate the matter at once!" declared the master of the Remove. "Er—do you think you can secure the animal?"

The prefects smiled at one another, and Gwynne ran up to his study for a length of rope from the cupboard.

In a minute he returned, and the three Sixth-Formers soon succeeded in getting the goat in hand. Then it was discovered that the back door of the kitchen was open, the servants apparently having forgotten to fasten it for the night.

The animal was led round to an outhouse in the corner of the quad, and securely tethered. Then the Sixth-Formers, who could scarcely refrain from laughing outright, returned to Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout, and the party made its way upstairs again.

The Removites, who had slipped out of bed

immediately after hearing the noise, had heard the masters and prefects go down, and had remained in their own corridor, for fear of incurring their Form-master's wrath by going downstairs.

They were all on the landing as the five ascended the stairs once more, and the juniors at once scuttled back to the dormitory as they approached.

"Ah! Evidently those boys were out of their beds!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "I will go along and inquire into this extraordinary affair at once!"

"Now for it!" said Harry Wharton, in a stage whisper. "It's no use pretending we're asleep. He's heard us!"

"I've nothing to do with it, anyway!" piped Billy Bunter. "I'm not a member of the company now!"

The fat junior was quick to take advantage of the fact that he had been expelled from the concern, not that it seemed likely there would be trouble.

"Boys!"

Mr. Quelch fairly thundered the word as he stepped into the dormitory.

"Yes, sir?" answered Harry Wharton. "We heard the noise, sir!"

"Heard the noise!" repeated the master angrily. "I should think you did hear the noise! A huge pile of crockery has been broken into thousands of little pieces by a goat, which—"

"My hat! He, he, he!"

The interruption came from Billy Bunter's bed.

"Cease that ridiculous noise immediately, Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "This is no laughing matter!"

"Yes—er—no, sir!"

"I understand that you boys know something about the animal which has caused all this damage and alarm," went on the master of the Remove. "Fish!"

"Sir!"

"I believe you can explain the meaning of this extraordinary occurrence."

"I guess I—"

"I do not wish you to guess, Fish!" interrupted Mr. Quelch. "I want the facts of the case, please!"

"The goat belongs to the Goat-Butter Co., sir," explained Fisher T. Fish; "but I don't know—"

"The what, boy?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in puzzled tones.

"The Goat-Butter Co., sir," repeated the American junior. "Most of us are share-holders."

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch. And he turned to Mr. Frout, who was hovering in the background. "This is really the most remarkable affair I have ever heard of, Frout!"

"It is, indeed, my dear Quelch!" answered the master of the Fifth. "Boys in these days seem to get up to the most extraordinary pranks!"

"How do you account for the animal being in the kitchen, Fish?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"I guess—er—I mean, I don't know, sir!" replied Fish. "It must have broken away from its shed."

"If it did it was because you failed to secure it properly!" retorted Mr. Quelch. "I shall have to consider this matter, and you can come and see me in the morning."

"But we're all in it!" put in Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton together, feeling that it was only right to take a share of the blame. "Very well. I will go into the matter in the morning!"

Mr. Quelch departed, after warning the juniors that there was to be no further disturbance.

Directly he had descended the stairs a buzz of conversation broke out in the Remove dormitory.

"This is your fault, Fishy, you fathead!" exclaimed Peter Todd, sitting up in bed.

"Of course it is, you chump!"

"Why didn't you tie her up properly?"

"I guess I did tie her up properly!" retorted the American junior. "She must have gnawed the rope!"

"Rot! She wouldn't gnaw the rope; the blessed thing came undone, and, of course, she bunched!"

"There must have been a door open, though," declared Bob Cherry suddenly, "or she couldn't have got into the kitchen."

"My hat, yes! I never thought of that!" said Johnny Bull.

"Anyway, we shall hear all about it in the morning, with a vengeance!" said Harry Wharton. "And it'll be morning before we've had a wink of sleep if we're not sharp."

The discussion ended there, and a quarter of an hour later there was no sound to be heard in the Remove dormitory but the heavy breathing of the juniors and the unmusical snore of Billy Bunter.

After breakfast next morning Fisher T. Fish made his way to Mr. Quelch's study, not without considerable trepidation.

The Famous Five were near at hand when he entered, and they meant to be on the spot in case the master required their presence.

"Ah, Fish! I want an explanation from you as to the presence of the—er—animal which caused such a disturbance here last night," began Mr. Quelch.

"We bought her from a farmer, sir," explained Fisher T. Fish, encouraged somewhat by the fact that the master's tone was not so severe as he had expected it would be. "We formed a company to buy her, so as to make butter from the milk, because—er—some of us don't care much for margarine."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, and he could not suppress a smile at this extraordinary explanation. "I fear your hopes will be doomed to disappointment, as I never yet heard of such a scheme."

"Well, we hope to try, anyway, if you don't mind, sir," said Fish meekly.

"On condition that you give me an undertaking that the animal shall be securely fastened in future," said Mr. Quelch, "I will allow you to keep it, in consideration of the expense which has been incurred in its purchase."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" broke in Fish gratefully.

"One moment, my boy!" went on the master. "Unless you are prepared to collect fifteen shillings, which I understand is the value of the crockery which was broken last night, I shall have to report the matter to the Head, and it is quite likely that he will order the animal to be removed at once."

"Oh!"

This was a decided blow. Fish was not in

possession of fifteen shillings of his own at the moment, and he doubted what would be the attitude of the rest of the Removites on the subject.

"If you will allow me an hour to find the money, sir," said the American junior, "I will go and see about it right now."

"Very well, Fish!" answered Mr. Quelch. "But if it is not forthcoming in an hour I shall have to let Dr. Locke know the facts of the case."

Fish left the study and ran straight into the Famous Five, who were waiting to hear the result of the interview. And at that moment Vernon-Smith and several other shareholders in the Goat-Butter Co. appeared upon the scene.

Fisher T. Fish reported with great misgiving what had happened, and wound up by informing them that fifteen shillings had to be found.

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith emphatically. "Fifteen bob to pay because you didn't fasten the blessed animal up properly."

"I guess I'd pay it myself if I'd got it," said the American junior penitently. "But I haven't; so there you are!"

"It's jolly decent of old Quelch to give us the chance, though," remarked Bob Cherry. "And it's almost up to us to take advantage of his generosity in not reporting the bizney before."

"That's what I think," said Harry Wharton. "The only thing to do is to make a collection all round."

"That's all!" groaned Dick Russell. "What a fathead you are, Fishy!"

Vernon-Smith at once started the collection, and in less than half an hour the fifteen shillings was ready to be handed over to Mr. Quelch.

"It'll be a jolly long time before we can see any dividends out of the rotten company at this rate!" growled Morgan.

"You're right!" agreed Johnny Bull. "We shall have to keep a lead on this American jay in future."

"I guess it was an accident!" exclaimed Fish.

"I guess you're a fathead, too!" retorted Bull.

"For goodness' sake shut up about it now!" said Harry Wharton. "It's too late now to make a fuss. We must pay up the fifteen bob, and keep a sharp eye on the chump in future."

Fish was given the money, and he went to Mr. Quelch's study and delivered it up.

"Thank you, Fish!" said the master. "Remember what I said to you about that animal."

"Yes, sir!" answered the American junior, and he walked out and joined the Removites in the corridor.

"Was he all right about it?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Yep! Quite O.K."

"Good! That's done with, then," said Dennis Carr.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### The End of the Company.

"NOW I've got to go and milk the blessed goat!" said Fisher T. Fish. "Good job we've got a special holiday to-day, or the poor beast would have been badly neglected."

It was Saturday, and on rare occasions the juniors had the whole day to themselves. This happened to be one of them.

Fish went along to his study for the bowl, and then hurried down to the shed, where he found half the Remove juniors already gathered, for Vernon-Smith had just taken the goat from the outhouse in the quad, where Wingate had left it the night before.

"Now there's going to be some more fun!" remarked Bob Cherry to the rest of the Famous Five.

"The funfulness will be terrific!" grinned Hurree Singh.

"Hallo, Fishy! How's the business going now?"

"I calculate business ain't any too good!" replied the American junior.

"No, and isn't likely to be while we have to fork out fifteen bob through your blessed carelessness!" exclaimed Dick Rake, who had heard the remarks.

"I guess you may as well leave off harpin' on that string now," said Fish. "Anyway, I'm doing' most of the work in this all-fired company!"

"And a nice mess you're making of it!"

"Oh, shut your rat-traps, you two!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Clear the gangway!" exclaimed Bob

Cherry, as Fish advanced with the bowl and the milking-stool.

The Removites fell back and made way for the company promoter, and Fish made preparations.

"You might hold her head, Wharton," he said, as he put the stool in place. "She might be quieter like that!"

Harry Wharton patted the goat, who seemed quite docile this morning, and Fish commenced milking. Everything went satisfactorily this time, and the operation was performed without any startling happenings.

"Good!" said Fish.

Harry Wharton left the animal's head, and immediately it kicked out viciously with its hind legs, just as Fish was rising to his feet. He was sent flying by the sudden activity, and he fell right on the bowl of milk.

"Yaroooooh!"

The bowl tipped up and all the milk was spilt, the American junior rolling over in it.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat! This bizney will be the death of me!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to laugh at!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, the only fellow who appeared to take the matter seriously, with the exception of Fisher T. Fish. "We shall never get any butter at this rate!"

"Oh crumbs! It strikes me we're shareholders in a fun company!" shrieked Peter Todd.

"Why don't you help me up, you fat-heads!" yelled Fish, struggling to his feet.

"Look what a mess I'm in!"

"What a sight!" exclaimed Ogilvy. "Fishy, you're the funniest object that ever stepped into Greysfriars!"

"You're a lot of chumps!" yelled the American junior. "What did you want to let go of the beggar's head for, Wharton, you idiot?"

"Don't you call me an idiot!" retorted the leader of the Remove. "You should have been more careful!"

"Why, you ass—"

Words failed the business man of the Remove, and he kicked the empty bowl viciously in his fury.

Vernon-Smith stepped forward and began to wipe him down with his handkerchief.

"I guess these clothes are ruined!" wailed Fish. "I wish I'd never had anything to do with this business!"

"My hat! I like that!" exclaimed Squiff. "Why, it was your own idea in the first place, and we've subscribed towards it just to please you."

"Of course you didn't!" snapped Fisher T. Fish. "You came into it because you thought you were going to make money out of it!"

"Never mind, old son!" said Bob Cherry, who was almost doubled up with mirth.

"Better luck next time!" exclaimed Penfold.

"I don't know whether there'll be any next time," remarked the American junior. "I've pretty nearly had enough of this!"

"If at first you don't succeed—"

"Shut your mouth, Nugent!" cried Fish.

And with Vernon-Smith as his sole sympathiser, the American junior went into the school and up to the dormitory to change his clothes.

"My hat! If we don't get any more for our money we've had some fun out of it!" roared Mark Linley.

"Rather!" agreed Dennis Carr. "I've never laughed so much in all my giddy life!"

Later in the day Fish announced that he was going to milk the goat that evening for the last time, unless, of course, everything went off without any trouble.

Accordingly, the shareholders of the company turned up in full force to see what would happen.

"Now, for goodness' sake keep out of the way this time, you asses!" exclaimed the American junior, as he settled himself upon the little stool, with a wary eye for the goat.

"I'll hold his head this time," said Johnny Bull.

"All right! Don't move away until I tell you!" said Fish.

Not one of the juniors noticed Billy Bunter a few yards away. They were all intent upon watching the proceedings.

The Owl of the Remove was smarting under what he considered the injustice of having been so summarily turned out of the company, and he had been thinking of revenge ever since.

An idea occurred to him on the spur of the moment. He stooped down and picked up a huge clod of grass and earth. This he whirled over his head and then let fly.

Without waiting to see the result, he

turned and fled as fast as his fat little legs would carry him.

Whoosh!

The clod of earth whirled over the heads of the Removites, just missing Johnny Bull, and descended with a thud right on the goat's back.

The result was sudden and startling!

The animal lunged out with its hind legs and then dashed forward.

Fisher T. Fish went rolling over on his back, and Johnny Bull doubled up like a penknife as the goat butted into him.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Yaroooogh! Groogh!"

"Look out!"

The latter exclamation broke from the lips of half a dozen juniors at once, as the animal dashed forward again. There was a sharp twang, and the rope which had held him snapped, and away he went.

"Oh, my hat! That's done it!" cried Bob Cherry.

"After her!" shouted Fish, scrambling to his feet.

The goat was tearing across the field as fast as it could go, and a moment later the crowd of juniors were in full chase.

Fisher T. Fish was apparently none the worse for his spill, for was soon ahead of the rest in the chase.

"Try and head her off!" shouted Harry Wharton.

Fisher T. Fish had no breath to reply; he rushed wildly after the fleeing animal with all his strength.

The goat was in better form than the American junior, however. Over hedges it went, across fields, both cultivated and uncultivated.

Fish was almost dead beat, but he kept up the chase; and then suddenly he noticed with a thrill of alarm that the animal was heading straight towards Sir Hilton Popper's grounds.

"My hat!" he murmured to himself. "If she gets in there, there'll be the dickens to pay!"

Sure enough, the next moment the animal leapt the hedge which surrounded the grounds of Sir Hilton's house.

Fish had momentary thoughts of turning back and hiding, for he knew that the wrath of the choleric baronet would descend upon his head in all its bitterness.

He only hesitated for a moment, however, and then he jumped the hedge into the grounds. Then he nearly collapsed with fright and fatigue, for the goat was heading straight towards the French-windows of the drawing-room.

"Hi! Look out!"

The American junior yelled out in his alarm, though there was nobody in sight.

"Oh crumbs!"

Crash!

The animal had dashed straight through the windows into the drawing-room.

The next instant Sir Hilton Popper himself appeared, waving his arms in excitement and anger, and a couple of gardeners rushed upon the scene to see what had happened.

Fish crawled rather than walked towards the smashed windows, and Sir Hilton rushed out and seized him by the collar.

"You young hound!" he roared, almost beside himself with rage. "I'll make you suffer for this!"

"I guess I couldn't help it, sir!" groaned Fish, who was thoroughly scared by the baronet's wrath.

He tried to explain what had happened, but Sir Hilton was too enraged to listen. He shook the unfortunate Fish until his teeth rattled.

Meanwhile, one of the gardeners ran and fetched a length of rope, which he succeeded in fastening round the neck of the frightened animal, who now half-crouched in a corner of the drawing-room, panting for breath.

"Take the thing outside!" yelled the baronet; and in his anger he bestowed a kick upon the scared beast.

"I shall send a bill to your headmaster for this damage!" roared Sir Hilton. "And a request that you may get the thrashing of your life!"

The gardener led the goat over to the quaking junior, and handed him the rope.

"Come on!" he said, in a low voice. "The sooner you're out of here the better!"

He led the way to the gates, and Fish followed, the goat trotting along at the end of the rope.

"Thanks!" murmured Fish, when he was out in the road; and he bestowed his last shilling upon the gardener.

When he was about half-way back to the school, he met a crowd of Removites, who commenced to run at sight of him.

"What happened, Fishy?"

"How did you catch it?"

"In the neck!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

"My hat! You don't mean to say that it ran right into old Popper's grounds!" cried Bob Cherry.

"Right into his giddy drawing-room!" answered Fish, with a face as long as a fiddle.

"Gee whiz!"

"My hat!"

"I reckon that's about done it, then!" groaned Vernon-Smith.

"You've reckoned right," declared the American junior. "The old bouncer's sending a bill for his blessed French-windows, and a request for a good hiding for me!"

"His French-windows!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Why, what's up with his French-windows?"

"This rotten goat dashed right through 'em!" cried Fish irritably.

The Removites stared, speechless.

"Oh crumbs! What a go!"

"What a goat, you mean!" said Bob Cherry, and he tried to laugh; but it was a poor attempt, and the rest felt nothing like laughter, especially Fisher T. Fish.

The goat was taken back to its shed in the corner of the field and securely tied up. Then the Removites went in to wait for the bursting of the storm.

They had not long to wait, for a servant arrived at Greyfriars from Sir Hilton Popper's house almost as soon as they got in.

"Fish, you're wanted."

The page-boy put his head inside Study No. 14 and made the announcement. There was no need for the American junior to ask who wanted him. He knew that.

"Now for it!" he groaned, as he went along to the Head's study.

"Come in!"

Dr. Locke's voice was harsh and stern as Fish knocked upon the door.

The trembling junior entered, and the Head's eyes fastened upon him with a glare of intense anger.

"I have just received a most extraordinary complaint from Sir Hilton Popper!" he barked out. "What have you to say, Fish?"

Fisher T. Fish blurted out the whole story of the Goat-Butter Co., and the Head frequently gasped with amazement.

"Do you mean to say there are others in this besides yourself?" he exclaimed at last.

"Yes, sir; most of the fellows are in it," answered Fish.

The Head rang the bell, and ordered Harry Wharton to be sent for immediately.

"You must all have taken leave of your senses!" declared Dr. Locke. "This is the most foolhardy scheme I have ever heard of in my life! Come in!"

Harry Wharton entered the study, and stood waiting for the Head to speak.

"Wharton, I am amazed by what I have just heard from Fish!" began Dr. Locke. "I understand that most of the Remove Form are in this ridiculous and preposterous business?"

"Yes, sir," answered Wharton. And then he proceeded to corroborate Fish's story.

"Very well," said the Head, when he had finished. "The whole Form will remain within the precincts of this school on the next half-holiday. The goat is to be disposed of immediately, and a letter of apology must be sent to Sir Hilton Popper, together with two pounds, which he says will be the cost of replacing the glass which has been broken in his windows."

"Yes, sir," said Harry Wharton and Fisher T. Fish together.

Wharton almost felt like collapsing under the severity of the sentence, but the American junior felt a great sense of relief when he found that he was going to escape the thrashing which Sir Hilton Popper had asked that he should receive.

There was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth when the rest of the juniors heard what had happened, and they at once set out with the goat on a lead to the farm where they had bought the animal to request the farmer to buy it back again.

"My only aunt!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as they hurried along. "This rotten company business has landed us in a fine mess!"

"You're right, old top!" agreed Dennis Carr. "At the same time you must admit that we walked right into it."

"That's what makes me so jolly wild!" put in Johnny Bull. "We ought to have known that that idiot Fish would land us right in the cart. He's done it before!"

"It's not a bit of use kicking up a fuss about it now," said Harry Wharton, trying to pour oil on the troubled waters. "After all said and done, it wasn't Fish's fault that the blessed goat bunked like it did."

"No; it was that rotter Bunter!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "We'll settle with him."

"The settlefulness with the ludicrous Bunter will be terrific," remarked Hurree Singh.

"You're right, old son; it will!" laughed Dennis Carr.

"The Head's come down on us all alike!" said Peter Todd. "That what puzzles me. Evidently he doesn't consider that Fishy is any worse than us."

"No; he reckons we're all asses," said Harry Wharton; "he as good as said so."

"He's not far wrong, either!" grunted Bob Cherry. "No more Fish for me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And so say all of us!" declared Johnny Bull.

"Fancy being gated!" murmured Frank Nugent thoughtfully. "The Head must have been jolly ratty to come down on us as bad as that."

"Of course he was ratty!" responded Harry Wharton. "You wouldn't expect him to be anything else, would you?"

"It might have been worse, anyway," remarked Mark Linley. "If we'd happened to have had a match with Rookwood or St. Jim's, the position would have been decidedly awkward."

"My hat, yes!" said Harry Wharton. "It's jolly lucky we haven't got anything particular on!"

"What did Fishy say when the Head passed the sentence?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I think he said 'Thank you,'" answered Harry Wharton, with a smile; "at any rate, he looked jolly relieved when he found he wasn't going to get the licking of his life. And that's what he would have got if old Popper had had his way."

"Grumpy old beast!" said Bob Cherry.

At that moment they reached the farm, which had now been closed up for the day. The farmer stared in surprise when he saw the crowd of juniors at his door, and he looked more than surprised when they acquainted him with the object of their visit.

"Well, I really don't want her back again, you know," he said perplexedly. "I'd been trying to sell her for weeks before you came along."

Harry Wharton explained the whole situation, and described what had happened as Fish and Vernon-Smith had both refused to accompany the juniors.

"It's very unfortunate," said the farmer, "and I'm very sorry for you young gents. All things considered, I'll buy the goat back!"

"Oh, thanks!" exclaimed several of the juniors together, as the farmer generously gave them the price they had paid—thirty shillings.

With real gratitude the juniors received the money, and then returned to Greyfriars to collect the balance to make up the two pounds which Sir Hilton Popper demanded.

That done, they wrote the letter of apology, enclosed the money, and despatched it to the baronet.

"Now for that fat beast, Bunter!" muttered Fisher T. Fish.

The Removites went in a body in search of the fat junior, and there was more weeping and wailing when he was found.

"I think that winds up the Goat-Butter Company," remarked Harry Wharton, as the Famous Five were seated in Study No. 1 again.

"I should say so!" chorused the others. "The windupfulness of the ludicrous company is terrific!" said Hurree Singh.

"You're right, old top!"

The next day a notice appeared outside the farm once more:

"A GOAT FOR SALE!"

But no prospective purchasers appeared from Greyfriars.

THE END.

(Another grand long story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled: "Billy Bunter's Prize!") Order your copy of the PENNY POPULAR early.)



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 the bullying proprietor of having stolen a gold watch. Micky is arrested, but escapes to the river-front and stows away on a tramp-steamer. In New York Harbour Micky gets through an open port and swims ashore. There he 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 cracksmen 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. Once in the city he loses no time in trying to get taken on at the cinema studios, but without success. One

day he visits Santa Monica, on the coast, and there he rescues Mary Maidstone from the surf. In consequence, Micky is given a job as assistant to Buddy Gaylord, the property-man, in the great K. N. Broadworth's Cinema Company. One day the company goes "on location" in the San Gabriel foothills, and during the filming of a big fight scene a super called Monkey White is shot. Micky suspects another "extra"—a bearded individual named Jed Tomson—who disappears, is none other than Alec P. Figg, the crook, whom he knew had a grudge against Monkey White. That evening the lad learns that Smart Alec has been arrested in an opium den run by a Chinaman, Li Chang Foo, in Los Angeles, and Micky and Jeff Romery, the chief director, are requested to attend the courthouse on the following morning.

(Now read on.)

#### The Great New Production.

WHEN Micky heard that Alec P. Figg, the cracksmen, had been arrested, he was not in the least surprised. He was positive in his own mind that Smart Alec and none other had fired the shot which had so seriously wounded the super, Monkey White, during the filming of the fight scene in the San Gabriel foothills.

Figg, Micky knew, was firmly of the opinion that White had double-crossed him and got away with the spoils of the New York robbery. Therefore the crook had ample motive for revenge on his former accomplice.

But what was surprising to Micky was the fact that Smart Alec had been captured in the opium den of the Chinaman, Li Chang Foo, in Los Angeles.

How had Figg managed to return to the city and escape the posse of trackers who had so quickly got on his trail?

Despite the difficulty of answering that question, Micky was positive that the super with the rough growth of beard, Jed Tomson, who had disappeared after the filming of the scene, was none other than Figg himself.

When, therefore, Micky went down to the courthouse in Los Angeles in the company of Jeffery J. Romery, the chief director of the Broadworth Cinema Company, he was quite of the opinion that he would be able to identify the cracksmen, Smart Alec, and the super, Jed Tomson, as one and the same person.

But several surprises lay in store for him. The first was when Figg made his appearance in court in the charge of two officers. Anyone less like the bent and limping Jed Tomson in appearance it would have been hard to imagine.

The cracksmen was clean-shaven, and dressed in a smart, grey lounge-suit, starched collar, and patent-leather shoes. He looked a typical keen and respectable business man, and no one unaware of his identity would ever have credited him with being one of the most dangerous criminals in the United States.

Micky was dumbfounded by the crook's appearance, and neither he nor Jeff Romery could possibly swear that Figg was the same Jed Tomson who had joined the cinema company as a super and who had disappeared after the shooting of Monkey White.

Moreover, two or three witnesses were brought forward to prove an alibi for Figg. All were Chinamen, and chief among them was Li Chang Foo, the keeper of the opium den, who was himself in custody.

"Mister Figgce heap good man," he said. "Time shootee take place Mister Figgce take velly nice smokee in Foo's house."

The evidence of the wily Chinese did not count so much with the authorities as the lack of evidence that Figg was near the

scene of the outrage. Nevertheless, they did not discharge the cracksmen right away, probably in the hope that fresh evidence might shortly be forthcoming.

To Micky's surprise, although the crook shot him many a sneering look and angry glance, Figg made absolutely no mention of his knowledge of the lad's reason for leaving England. That Smart Alec did not denounce him as a thief Micky was sure did not result from any generosity on the part of his erstwhile travelling companion, but from some other deeper and more sinister motive. This motive the English lad was to learn before many more suns had set in that Western land.

As Micky and Jeff Romery drove back to Cinema City in the latter's beautiful car they discussed the events of the morning and the mystery of the shooting affair which had occurred while the cinema company were "on location."

"You take it from me, Micky," said Jeff, "Figg wasn't the guy who lay daylight into Monkey White. O' course, I'll own, he could have squared those goldrained Chinks to say anything, but I guess he couldn't have got back to Los Angeles and shaved and changed in the short time before he was caught."

But Micky was far from being convinced. He was inclined to give the astute crook credit for any feat. The very fact that Smart Alec's cleverness had kept him out of gaol when lesser known criminals had been apprehended time and again by the police, was proof of the man's extraordinary powers.

However, once back at the Broadworth studios, Micky was kept too busy to brood over the unpleasant affair. Perhaps, indeed, it was to keep the lad's thoughts occupied with other matters that Buddy Gaylord, the genial property-man, found him as much to do as he possibly could.

The "shooting" of some of the scenes of the new, great Broadworth production, "The Mysterious Pearl," was to take place right away, and the whole staff were enthusiastically engaged in preparation.

As Micky had heard, the new production was to afford Floyd Unwin, the daredevil film star, ample opportunities for new and more thrilling stunts, and also that some of the famous wild animals from the menagerie at the far end of the company's lot were to take part.

"The Mysterious Pearl," like all the scenarios used by Broadworth's, had been specially written by one of the company's expert scenario writers. What little plot there was in it was only there to afford greater opportunities for film thrills.

The scenes were laid in Persia and America, and the photo-play, like all the former Broadworth thrillers, was a wildly improbable affair from beginning to end. The latter fact, however, seemed to suit the taste of movie-lovers the world over, who flocked in their thousands to the

cinemas whenever a new Broadworth production was released.

Four days after his appearance at the Los Angeles courthouse with Jeff Romery, Micky went to his work at the cinema studio with even greater alacrity than usual. The reason was that one of the big animal scenes of "The Mysterious Pearl" was to be filmed.

Brought up in a circus, the lad was fond of all animals, and he looked forward to seeing some of them act for the pictures with more zest even than many picture-goers would anticipate seeing them at the cinema when the picture was screened.

As Micky and Buddy Gaylord reached the lot the first thing noticeable was the great number of stalwart negroes waiting about.

There were always long queues of would-be cinema actors and actresses each morning at the studios seeking the chance of an engagement, but Micky had never noticed the negro element in such force before.

He shot Buddy a querulous look, and the little Props explained matters.

"Those darkies you see, Micky," he said, "are up here looking for work in the big scene this morning. The way some guys get to know what's doing gets me beat. We don't advertise, and nothing much is said, but you kin bet if half a dozen negroes, Chinks, Japs, greasers, or Dutchmen are required, scores o' the particular type appear like magic at the psychological moment, so to speak."

Micky was eager to ask several questions about the work of the morning, but the soft purring of a motor-car caused him and Buddy to swing round.

It was Romery's beautiful automobile which had entered the lot, and Jeff himself was loling in the seat behind his liveried chauffeur, with one of his most vicious-looking cigars stuck at a rakish angle in his mouth.

"Mornin', Buddy!" called the film director. "How're you stackin' it, Micky? Fine and dandy, eh? That's the goods! I see we've got plenty o' the chocolate-coloured coons on the lot this morning."

The car came to a halt, and Jeff alighted. Each day since the shooting affair in the foothills Micky had approached the director with the same question.

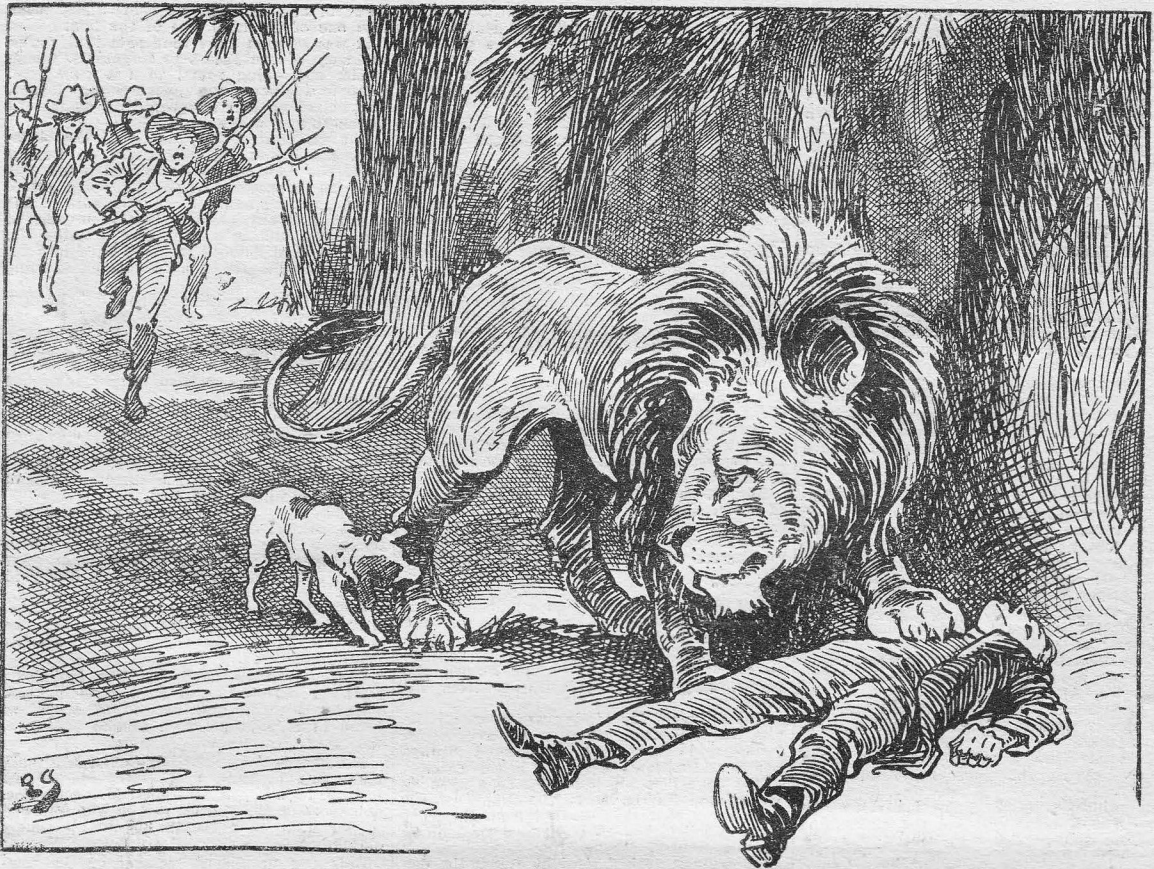
"How's Monkey White, sir?"

"Not conscious yet, kid," replied Jeff. "I phoned to the hospital first thing this morning, and one of the docs told me he guessed he'd pull round, though, in time. Meanwhile, the authorities are keeping a tight hold on Figg, as it's possible White may be able to throw some light on the matter in a day or two."

With that Jeff Romery strode away, and soon he was engaged in the exacting task of selecting a dozen "Nubian slaves" for the big animal scene.

It was often said at the studio that three-quarters of Jeff's ten-thousand-dollar





The awful danger pending to his young master relaxed all Chappie's tense muscles and nerves. He gave a sharp bark, sprang forward, and fastened his sharp little teeth into one of the hind legs of the lion. (See page 10.)

a-year salary was earned by his keen knowledge of human character, and his tact in selecting and handling extras in "mob stuff."

It took him little time, then, to select the dozen or so negroes who best suited the requirements of the production in hand, and when he had dismissed the remainder, he secured his megaphone and went off, followed by the supers, to rehearse the scene.

Meanwhile, Buddy Gaylord and Micky Denver went across to the stores where the property-man superintended the getting ready of the costumes, spears, shields, and other "props."

With another assistant, Micky hauled several bundles into the sunlight outside and got his book ready to obtain receipts from the negroes and other supers for the articles supplied.

As he stepped from the stores a joyous bark sounded, and next moment Chappie sprang up at him.

"Hallo! What are you doing here, old fellow?" exclaimed Micky, staring at him. "Didn't I tell you to stay at home with Ah Mee?"

Chappie knew well enough he should have stayed with the old Chinese servant of the Gaylords, and he hung his head and dropped his tail in a shamed way. Then he turned round and slowly took his departure for home again.

But Micky had not the heart to allow his four-footed little friend to spend a day in moping over his rebuke, as he knew Chappie assuredly would have done, so he gave a low whistle.

Immediately Chappie's ears flew up, and he scampered back in a frenzy of delight.

"You can stay," said Micky, as he set down his load and patted the little mongrel's head, "on condition you behave yourself and don't get in anyone's way. D'you hear?"

Chappie gave a sharp yap in response, and began contentedly to follow his young master as Micky went about his duties.

When Jeff had given the negroes a good insight of what was required of them during the

big animal scene, they all came trooping across to the stores.

Under the supervision of Buddy, the lad handed out the "props," and then the supers departed to rig themselves out as Nubian slaves.

"I say, Buddy," said Micky, as he gathered up his receipts, "where is this animal scene being taken?"

"On the south side o' the lot, kid," said the property man. "There's a pit beneath those palms you kin jest see, and some o' our best forest-bred lions are going to be transferred from the cages into it."

"And what's the big stunt going to be?"

"Waal, those guys o' Nubians throw Miss Maidstone into the pit with the lions—"

"What?"

"That is, I mean, they get her to the very edge o' the pit and then the cameras quit business while a dummy's substituted. See?"

"Oh, she's not really thrown in, then?"

"I guess not," said Buddy, with a smile; "but Unwin will actually descend into the pit to rescue the dummy."

"That's a pretty dangerous job, isn't it?"

"I should say so. I wouldn't do it for a wad o' greenbacks as thick as your head—I mean, as big as your head. However, Unwin's paid to take chances, and the movie fans everywhere demand sensational stuff!"

"What price the camera men?" said Micky. "Don't they come in for a share of the risk?"

"Not in this act," answered Props, unwrapping a wafer of pepsin chewing-gum. "Jeff and the camera men will be up on that staging you kin see through the palms. There are times, though, when there's plenty o' excitement for the whole bunch o' them."

Micky thought seriously for a moment, and then he summoned up courage to ask the property man a favour.

"Say, Buddy," he said, "d'you think you could spare me for a while? I'd like to see the filming of this animal scene."

"Sure thing, kid!" responded the genial "props." "But mind you don't get in anybody's way, or Jeff will talk to you like a

Dutch uncle for ten minutes without repeating himself!"

Delighted at the opportunity to witness the making of the thrilling wild animal scene for the pictures, Micky hastened off, with Chappie at his heels, to find himself a position of vantage.

He kept as much out of view as possible, for he knew that Jeff did not like onlookers, and assuredly if Floyd Unwin saw him he would have to clear out.

Unwin, the daredevil cinema star, was obstreperous as a matter of habit, and it needed all of Jeff's vast store of tact to deal with him at any time.

Micky knew that many cinema stars, like stage actors and musicians, suffered from "the artistic temperament," and that many put down Unwin's behaviour to that cause.

But the fact of the matter was that Floyd Unwin suffered from an inbred bad temper, and also from the nerve-racking effects of smoking opium—or "hitting the pipe," as Buddy Gaylord called it.

However, Micky managed to find a corner among the palms, whence he could obtain a good view of the filming of the scene with little chance of being detected.

Chappie remained quietly by his side for a few minutes, but soon got fed up, and curled up and went to sleep.

Jeffrey J. Romery had one final rehearsal of his Nubian slaves, with Mary Maidstone and Floyd Unwin acting their parts as well. Even the dummy which Buddy had had made was thrown into the empty pit and rescued. This dummy was of the exact height and form, and dressed in every detail the same as Mary Maidstone, so that not even the cutest picture-goer would be able to discern the substitution when the scene was screened eventually.

While this was going on some of the menagerie men wheeled up two cages containing four magnificent forest-bred lions. The doors of these cages were placed towards a slope bordered by high iron rails leading down to the pit.

When the rehearsal was finished the principal animal trainer shot the bolts of the cage door back, threw these open, and made a hasty departure round the back of the cages.

One after another the Kings of the Forest gingerly left the cages and went sniffing down the slope. When the last was in the pit, an iron gate was lowered behind them, and they were trapped, ready for the filming of the scene.

### The Big Animal Scene.

**J**EFF ROMERY stood on a raised platform at the side of the pit, megaphone in hand, surveying the scene below him. He gave the signal to Mary Maidstone and to the actor who was taking the part of a Persian prince, to take up their positions. When they were ready he gave the order for action.

As the actress and actor began slowly gesticulating and speaking—for Jeff insisted that proper words and sentences bearing on the play should be used during a supposed conversation for the films—the director turned to the camera men.

"Shoot!"

Slowly the handles were revolved. The filming of the great scene had begun.

The Persian prince pointed to the lions with a look of malice on his face. The girl shrank away, and shook her head, refusing to tell the whereabouts of the mysterious pearl. The prince clapped his hands. The Nubian slaves, waiting just out of the set, or range focus of the cameras, came rushing to the scene and grasped the girl.

Micky, watching with starting eyes, could not help a thrill passing through him, although he knew it was all pretence, and he could see Floyd Unwin just outside the set area calmly smoking a cigarette and wearing a bored look.

Again the Persian prince gave the girl a chance. Again she shook her head determinedly.

The prince pointed dramatically to the lions. The Nubians clutched the girl, raised her from the ground, approached the pit, and—

"Cut!"

It was Jeff Romery's sharp order to the camera men. Immediately the filming ceased.

"Keep perfectly still, boys!" roared Jeff to the Nubian slaves. "If any one of you moves so much as a finger until I tell him, I'll fire him on the spot!"

Buddy Gaylord and an assistant who had been waiting on one side, ran up with the dummy female figure, and set it on the ground. Then they gently lifted Mary Maidstone from the hands of the negroes without disturbing their pose, and substituted the dummy in place of the girl.

When Miss Maidstone, Buddy, and the assistant had got clear, Jeff Romery turned to the camera men again.

"Shoot!"

Again the filming started.

"Action, boys!" roared the director to the motionless group of Nubian slaves bearing the dummy. "Put some life into it! Heave the girl into the lions' den! That's the stuff!"

As the figure crashed into the pit the lions sprang hastily out of the way, and a loud roar went up. Then the Kings of the Forest began to sniff at the object which had been hurled so precipitously among them.

Again Jeff gave the order to cease filming. The camera men had been placed so as best to secure the pictures of the action at the edge of the pit. Now they were moved to another staging for the purpose of filming the great stunt scene—Unwin descending into the lions' den and rescuing the "girl."

Whatever excitement the Broadworth star may have felt prior to his dangerous feat, he certainly did not show any. He calmly watched the shifting of the cameras, leaning against a palm-tree and smoking a gold-tipped cigarette.

Micky wondered greatly whether his air of boredom was merely a cloak to disguise his real feelings. He remembered the remark that Buddy had made about Unwin "hitting the pipe," being addicted to the opium-smoking habit.

Floyd Unwin needed the best of nerves for his dangerous career. Would his nerves, indeed, give out on some critical occasion as the property-man feared?

As soon as the cameras were in their fresh position, Unwin threw away his cigarette and strolled across to Romery. For a few seconds

the two men engaged in conversation, and then Jeff arranged his "Nubian slaves" in fresh attitudes at the edge of the pit containing the lions.

The film star took up his place some distance away out of the set, and waited for the filming to recommence.

When all was prepared Jeff issued his curt order to the camera men, and the filming was continued.

The Nubians gave a glance at the pit and moved out of the picture. As they did so Floyd Unwin appeared among some palm-trees. Gliding along stealthily, he reached the edge of the pit.

Next moment he vaulted over and dropped among the lions.

With low snarl the beasts darted in all directions to the furthestmost parts of the pit.

Unwin hesitated not a second. He grasped the dummy in his arms and dashed to some narrow steps hewn in one of the walls.

The cinema people standing on the ground and stagings above remained breathlessly silent, and only the steady clicking of the cameras broke the stillness.

Suddenly a full-throated roar rang out as the biggest lion made a savage rush at the daring film star.

But Unwin drew his leg up in the nick of time, and the lion's giant paw crashed against the stone wall just below him.

Next moment Unwin had raised himself and his burden over the projecting ledge of the pit.

"Cut!"

Jeff Romery's voice thus announced that the filming of the great animal scene for "The Mysterious Pearl" was over.

Micky, standing in his position of vantage on the raised piece of ground among the palms, mopped the perspiration from his brow.

But although the filming was over, all the excitement did not end there by any means. It is said that "the unexpected always happens," and it certainly did in this case.

The huge lion which had made a dash at the cinema star had been thoroughly roused. Roar after roar reverberated from its great jaws, and it lashed its tail and dashed round the pit in fury.

Suddenly it rushed straight across the den and leaped into the air.

The man who had been responsible for the construction of the pit had claimed that it was impossible for any beast to escape from it, but had he been present he would have seen his words falsified.

The gigantic spring landed the lion's head and front legs right over the edge of the pit, and, digging its great white claws into the ground, it scrambled over the top.

The actors and supers standing a few yards away let out wild yells, and scattered like chaff before a breeze.

Jeff Romery, on the staging well out of danger, roared through his megaphone to the menagerie men who were waiting near the cages.

"Bring your pitchforks, boys! There's a lion loose!"

The men grasped the pitchforks with which they always came armed to the filming of animal scenes, and ran across to head the lion off.

The great beast saw them and bounded away, straight for the clump of palms where Micky was standing.

The lad's immediate thought was on the advisability of shinning up a tree with all possible speed, but there was no time for that.

To the loud roar that was emitted from the throat of the King of the Forest Chappie awoke with a violent start, and when he saw the great beast bounding forward he seemed frozen to the spot, his ears standing upright, and every hair of his wiry coat bristling with fear.

The lion took no notice of the little dog, but made for the palm behind which Micky was endeavouring to conceal himself.

Then the King of the Forest, with flying mane and gleaming teeth, shot into the air. Micky tried to dodge, but as the lion shot past the trunk of the palm-tree a giant paw caught his shoulder and bore him to the ground.

For a fraction of time the lion stood over the fallen lad, lashing his tail. Micky could feel its hot breath fanning his cheek. Then it raised a huge paw.

Micky would probably have ended his cinema career then and there but for an unexpected intervention.

The awful danger pending to his young master relaxed all Chappie's tense muscles and nerves. He gave a sharp bark, sprang

forward, and fastened his sharp little teeth into one of the hind legs of the lion.

It was surprise more than pain that caused the King of the Forest to forget his human victim and swing round with a wild yelp. Chappie was not brave enough to stay longer, and he let go and scampered off as fast as his short legs would carry him.

But his cute action had saved the situation, for before the lion could do further harm the menagerie men had surrounded it with an impassible barrier of sharp pitchforks. Willing hands among the rest of the cinema company present wheeled up one of the cages, and in a couple of minutes Mr. Leo had been induced to skulk back into his cage, where he sat on his haunches, snarling viciously.

While this was being done, Jeff Romery rushed across to Micky and helped the lad to his feet.

"Are you hurt, kid?" he asked anxiously. Micky felt a dull pain in his shoulder, where the lion's paw had caught him, but he made little of it.

"It's nothing much, sir, thanks!" he said. "I got a knock on the shoulder and was bowled over, that was all."

But Jeff insisted that the lad should remove his coat, and the director made a careful examination of him.

"The skin isn't broken, nor are any bones, Micky," he said. "Say, you are real lucky to have got off with only a bruise. That little dog o' yours has sure got some pluck, and I guess it's to him you owe your life."

If Chappie had plenty of pluck in his lithe, wiry-coated body for use on occasions, he certainly did not possess that other desirable quality—modesty.

Chappie waited until the lion had been rendered harmless, and then trotted back, wagging his tail and looking at Micky as much as to say: "I soon settled that lion, didn't I? Eh, what!"

Needless to say, the little terrier was made more fuss of than ever. Mary Maidstone insisted on carrying him back to the studios, and most of the cinema people who followed in her wake sang the praises of his timely action.

Only one prominent member of the company kept aloof. Floyd Unwin looked on from afar with a sneer curling his lips.

As he moved off towards his dressing-room he muttered his thoughts to himself.

"I wish the blamed lion had done for that English brat and his beastly mongrel pup, too!"

Which merely goes to show that Floyd Unwin, clever actor and daredevil though he was, was not by any means a pleasant individual.

### The Mysterious Missive.

**A** FEW days after the filming of the big animal scene in the Broadworth lot, Mr. and Mrs. Gaylord and Micky were reclining in easy wicker chairs in the lovely garden behind their home.

The conversation dealt with Chappie, who was sitting near Micky with a large, gold-centred medal hanging from his collar.

Every now and then the little dog looked up pathetically, and shook himself violently in an effort to dislodge his medal. He was wondering what he had done to deserve the affliction.

Many members of the Broadworth Cinema Company had subscribed to this token of appreciation of the little mongrel's pluck, and the great K. N. Broadworth himself had fastened on the medal, much to Chappie's disgust.

It was a regular thing now for Chappie to accompany his master to the studios, and what the little terrier appreciated a thousand times more than the medal, were the pieces of biscuit and sugar that members of the company brought along for him. Indeed, Chappie was in serious danger of being completely spoiled.

As the last gleams of the sun still rested on the highest points of the foothills, Ah Mee, the old Chinese servant, announced Reginald Clarence Eton.

Never before had the dude of the films honoured the Gaylords' neat little home with a visit, and Buddy and his buxom spouse rose hastily to greet their guest.

"Good-evening, my dear Mrs. Gaylord!" drawled Reggie, extending a well-manicured hand to the good lady. "Pway pardon this intwusion, but Jeffy Womery asked me to

drop in with a little news as I was passing this way."

Reggie accepted a seat, and Buddy despatched Ah Mee for a tray of home-made lemonade and some biscuits.

Buddy, his wife, and Micky were all curious to know what tidings the cinema-actor had brought, but it was not the way of Reginald C. Eton to hurry.

He carefully selected a cigarette, with his own family crest stamped upon it, from his gold case, and lighted it.

Then he came to the point of his visit. "It's about that wottab Figg," he said, "who was awwested after the shooting of—ah—"

"Monkey White!" put in Micky eagerly. "Ah, I wemebah now—that was the boundah's name. Well, Womery received a 'phone message from the hospital a few minutes ago to the effect that White came wound late this afternoon and made a statement about the shooting affair."

"Did he recognise his assailant?" asked Micky.

"No, deah boy," replied Reggie. "But you are wather wushing me—what! Howevah, to wesume. Monkey White says he did not see the wottah who fired the shot, but he is certain it wasn't this fellow, Smart Alec."

"Well, I'm blessed!" "And what has happened, Mr. Eton?" asked Mrs. Gaylord. "Have they released this man Figg?"

"Yes, the wottah was weseled shortly after White's statement was taken down. You see, the police had no other course."

"I suppose they hadn't," said Micky. "Nevertheless, I still hold that Figg knows more about the affair than appears on the surface. Perhaps Monkey White is seared to give him away in case his former pard turns States' evidence, and can bring up proof that White got away with the swag of that New York robbery."

As they sipped their lemonade and chatted on various topics, Ah Mee approached with a silver salver, on which was lying a rather dirty-looking letter.

"Small boy bling nootee for Mister Denver," he announced. "Me tellee him, 'You waitee two, tee minute,' but he no wanchee stoppee. Velly quick beatee it." All eyes were upon Micky as he took the note.

"I haven't the foggist notion from whom it can be," he said. "Still, I suppose it is for me as Ah Mee says so, so I'll just trot along in doors and read it."

"I think we'll all adjourn inside," said Mrs. Gaylord. "It will be more comfortable behind mosquito-screens now."

In the house Micky opened the grubby envelope and extracted the note it contained. The message ran as follows:

"To Mr. Denver.—Serious trouble threatens you. If, however, you will call at No. 13, West Canton Street, Los Angeles, on Thursday next between the hours of eight and eleven p. m., the writer of this will show you how the trouble can be avoided."

There was no date and no signature to the note.

Micky re-read the words, his brow puckered in a frown. Was it a ruse of Figg's, or had he really some unknown friend who, having heard of some plot to injure him, was able to give warning?

Micky looked up with a start to see the eyes of Buddy and the others regarding him curiously. He had no desire to worry the kind little property-man and his genial spouse—for he knew they would be upset by the strange communication—so he laughed the matter off.

"Just a little invitation!" he cried merrily. "I must tell you all about it some other time."

But if the Gaylords had been deceived by Micky's manner, Reggie Eton had not. Despite his fastidiousness with clothes, his drawing speech, and partiality to a rimless monocle, the English dude had brains as clever as any of the hard-headed, hustling yankees with whom he came into contact.

He extended his hand daintily to Mrs. Gaylord.

"I must weally be going now," he said.

"Thanks awfully for the wipping evening you have given me."

Buddy vehemently protested that the night was still young; but Reggie secured his immaculate hat and gold-nobbed walking-stick, and would not be pressed.

As he left he turned to Micky. "Why not walk a little way with me, deah boy?" he suggested. "It's weally a pwopah evening—lots of air, and stars, and what-not—eh?"

Micky was only too glad to stroll a little way with the famous dude of the films, and, with a cheery word to his friends the Gaylords, and a sharp whistle for Chapple, he obtained his cap and accompanied Reggie.

"Pardon me for mentioning the mattah, deah, boy," said Reggie, as they walked along; "but it stwuck me you looked in twouble when you weceived that note. If I can be of any assistance, pway command me."

Micky had intended saying nothing to anybody about the strange missive, but he trusted the English dude and decided to let him see it.

Reggie stopped on the side-walk, and read the note carefully under a cluster of street-lights. Then he re-read it two or three times in silence, as though committing it to memory.

"Don't you go, Micky—thirteen's an unlucky number," was his only comment.

Despite the advice of Reggie Eton, Micky debated the matter again and again in his own mind.

Curiosity and the spirit of adventure said, "Go!" Prudence said, "Don't be a silly ass!"

The former combination prevailed in the end, and Thursday evening found Micky waiting to embark on his visit to No. 13, West Canton Street, the address given in the mysterious missive.

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



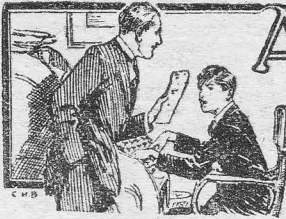
This is a small line drawing of the Plate to be Given Free. Actual size of Plate with engraving is 7½ inches by 10 inches. The title of the picture is "Boy, 1st Class, JOHN TRAVERS CORNWELL, V.C. The Battle of Jutland, May 31st—June 1st, 1916. From the Picture by F. O. Salisbury, painted for the Admiralty on board H.M.S. Chester." The closing date of this offer will be published in this paper in a week or so. No application will be accepted after that date.

# MAGNIFICENT COLOURED PICTURE TO BE GIVEN FREE

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO  
TO SECURE A BEAUTIFUL  
ART PLATE :: :: ::

We reproduce here a small line drawing of a magnificent coloured plate which every reader of THE PENNY POPULAR has an equal chance of securing. All you have to do is to secure the names and addresses of SIX of your friends who are non-readers of THE PENNY POPULAR. When you have done this, write them down on a postcard and post them to the Editor of THE PENNY POPULAR, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4. All postcards should be marked "Free Plate" in the top left-hand corner. Names and addresses of regular or occasional readers must on no account be sent, otherwise your application for a Plate may be rejected. Before sending in your list, make sure that the names are of non-readers.

*Only one plate will be sent to any one reader.*



# A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "PENNY POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4.

## GOSSIP FROM SPRINGS.

B. Gough, of Geduld Township, Springs, South Africa, sends me word that, in his opinion, the Companion Papers are just exactly right. They always cheer him up. And he wants cheering up, for Springs is a very dull place; no trams or rickshaws, and two miles to walk if you want a swim.

There is nothing to see, except big, white dumps in place of the pretty Natalian hills, or you can look at the veldt, which rolls away, flat and uninteresting. The only excitements are storms and going down four thousand feet into the earth to watch the workings of the mines.

My chum got caught in a duststorm, and the fluty, white grit of the dumps doesn't hurt! The lightning looks like fireworks or blue flames running all over the earth, and the wind nearly knocks you down.

I am much indebted to my correspondent for his excellent bit of word-painting.

## PETER OR AUBREY?

Racke, as we all know, is much given to swank. It is partly his father's fault. Racke's original name was Peter, and he changed it to the high-sounding Aubrey at his father's instigation. Of course, he does not like to be called by his proper name in these days, and he often wishes Baggy Trimble did not know so much of his early days—as evidenced in the long-ago story called "Moneybags Minor."

By the way, Racke has a sister, but we hear very little of the young lady, though we can sympathise with her at possessing a brother like—Peter!

## AN INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE.

This is a first-rate idea, and is brought forward by Mr. J. Arthur Phillips, of 10, West Terrace, Boldon Colliery, co. Durham, who writes to say that, as President of the British and International Correspondence League, he is out to encourage closer union between Companion Paper readers all over the world.

He will be glad to hear from all who are interested in the matter, but a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed.

## THE OLD HOME.

There is always the feeling of affection for the old days. They may not have been good old days in a material sense, but they mean so much.

"I want to see the Old Country again," writes a correspondent in New South Wales. He is doing well, but the old memory of things he used to know clings fast. It all makes one think of the song which used to be so popular:

"Way down in Pimlico  
In the home I used to know,  
With Auntie Flo and Jack  
In our old two-pair back;  
The yard we had behind  
Was of a most romantic kind,  
Gay with banana-skins,  
Old boots, and lobster tins.  
Our old geranium plant  
Made me adore my aunt,  
The broken window-pane  
Makes me long for home again.  
The number on the door  
Makes my heart so sore,  
That's why I long to go  
To see the dear old show  
In Pim-li-co."

## RATHER PREVIOUS.

A friend writes and asks me to find him a place in the film of Greyfriars or St. Jim's! As these productions are still a matter of the future, I am quite unable to do anything in the matter.

What this correspondent must do if he wants to throw in his lot with the movies—and the business has a perilous uncertainty about it, notwithstanding the big prizes attached—is to watch for a chance and keep in touch, as far as possible, with the world of pictures.

He is a smart enough fellow, as I can see by the letter he writes and the photographs he encloses.

## PICKING UP KNOWLEDGE.

It is amusing to hear people say sometimes that they have "done" this or that branch of study. You hear folks say they know a foreign language or a subject in science. Of course, it is all nonsense! There is no end to learning. You only get a glimmering of anything, however hard you sweat at it. It was this consideration made me appreciate what "Britannia," of Camberwell, says. She is corresponding with a friend in Belgium, and is sending out the Companion Papers to that heroic and much-trampled-on little country. She tells me she has gleaned a lot of education from the stories.

I am not thinking of introducing characters from every part of the world just to show the manners and customs of all the countries on the map! That is too big an order. The story must come first. Where useful information comes in, it must do so accidentally, as it were.

## WELL DONE, ERIN!

T. Ffrench, 6, Castlewood Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin, is starting a correspondence club which should have a big appeal to all readers of the Companion Papers—that is to say, his association is rather more than a correspondence club. He wants readers and contributors for his amateur newspaper. The price, postage paid, is 2s. 6d., and the promoter is assured of a good circulation. He is doing all he can on behalf of the Companion Papers, and his scheme is worthy of Ireland—that is, very good indeed.

## WHERE THE KANGAROO LIVES.

J. G. Oldham, of Northcote, South Melbourne, wants to know whether there cannot be a cricket tour to Australia. He says many readers would be gained that way.

"I remember," he writes, "Harry Wharton & Co. visiting America. Well, could not Mr. Richards arrange to take them to Australia and South Africa?"

There is the question of time, but I am not turning down the project. Anything I can do to oblige Australian readers I always try to do, for those Australian chums of mine are always ready to oblige me.

Your Editor

## GUSSY'S TENOR SOLO!

A Short Tale of St. Jim's.

"HOW extremely unfortunate!"

Herbert Skimpole, in the Shell Form at St. Jim's, who was engaged in rewriting the works of Professor Balmcrumpet, gave vent to that ejaculation.

Skimpole was a student of the most hair-raising volumes on impossible subjects, and so deeply was he engrossed in his work that not until the last drop of ink ran dry on his pen did he notice that the bottle was empty. He also knew there was no more ink in the study.

Hence his remark.

"Let me think! Where can I get some more?" Skimmy held his penholder against his high forehead and began thinking.

After ten minutes of solemn thought he decided to try Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage.

Blake, who shared No. 6 with his three chums, often said his study was taken to be a universal supply depot.

With several sighs Skimpole pushed back his chair and ambled out of the room.

As he neared Study No. 6 he paused and listened. Coming to a halt he heard some most peculiar little yelps coming from the apartment.

Immediately after that came a voice—very like Blake's—saying plaintively:

"Oh, Gussy, don't! For goodness' sake, don't!"

THE PENNY POPULAR—No. 60.

Skimpole hopped clear of the floor. What dark deed was about to take place? To his further horror a terrific screech followed the imploration.

Skimmy quaked. What should he do—rush in and thwart the crime, or go and seek aid?

He thought the latter best, and rushed away in the direction of the Head's study.

Had there been a real tragedy in No. 6, what might happen while he went to fetch the Head did not strike Skimmy.

Perhaps he expected the calamity to postpone itself until he came back.

After absent-mindedly taking two wrong turnings, he arrived at his destination. Skimpole tore into the usually dreaded apartment, kicked the wastepaper-basket across the room, and almost fell on to the Head's desk.

Dr. Holmes, who had been spending half an hour with Horace, the poet, surveyed the junior's actions with amazement.

"Boy, how dare you! What does this mean?"

Skimpole did not even notice the Head's anger, but began gasping out what he had seen and heard.

"You ridiculous boy!" exclaimed the doctor, when Skimpole had finished. "I will come and see what this disturbance is, but in such a case you should always go to Mr. Railton, not to me!"

"We had better proceed quickly, sir!" gasped Skimmy, as he toddled off in the direction of the Fourth Form passage. The Head followed behind him down the passage, looking very grim and exasperated.

On reaching No. 6 again Skimpole halted. The doctor did likewise, and both listened.

Three hollow groans came to the pair after a short silence.

"Weally"—then came the voice of the fourth occupant—"I must say I wegard you as a set of sillay, cwass asses!"

The Head's lips contracted; he grimly pushed past the palpitating Skimpole, and entered the study.

There was not much of a tragedy to be seen.

The Head looked at the occupants with a set grinness.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was roaming about the room waving a sheet of music paper in the air.

His three chums were seated in various positions in the study, groaning.

It was evident that D'Arcy was determined to spring a tenor solo upon them, and the chums of the study were equally determined not to have any tenor solos sprung upon them.

As a matter of fact, D'Arcy had only succeeded in getting out the first top-note—which Skimpole had heard—and had then subsided owing to the sudden application of a cushion to his features.

Since then all his further attempts had been completely drowned by the "groaning" of his chums.

The Head did not even trouble to question the startled juniors, but turned on his heel and left without saying a word.

Outside he grasped hold of Skimpole's collar and marched him along to his sanctuary, in-grave silence.

What happened to the unfortunate genius can easily be guessed, but whether Skimpole will rush along and tell the Head the next time he hears Gussy singing a tenor solo is open to question.

THE END.



### THE FIRST CHAPTER. Uncle James to the Rescue.

**A**RTHUR EDWARD LOVELL of the Classical Fourth came into the end study rubbing his hands, and with a gleam in his eyes.

The expression on Lovell's usually good-natured face at that moment would have done credit to a Prussian or a cannibal.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome looked at him inquiringly. It was evident that something was very wrong with Arthur Edward.

His first remark was expressive, but not explanatory. It was:

"Yow-wow-wow-wow!"

"Hallo! Been up against it?" asked Raby.

"Yow-wow!"

"Never mind; keep smiling!" advised Jimmy Silver.

"You silly ass!" was Lovell's grateful acknowledgment of that good advice.

"But what's the row?"

"Yow-wow! My hands! Ow! Manders! Wow!"

"Manders?"

"That Modern beast!" groaned Lovell. "Like his cheek to cane a Classical! Why can't he cane the Moderns if he wants to cane somebody? Yow-wow! The more they're canded the better—wow! I've a jolly good mind to complain to the Head. Wow-wow!"

"Do you mean to say that a Modern master has canded you for nothing?" exclaimed Newcome indignantly.

"Wow-wow! Yes! Three on each hand. Grooh! Practically for nothing. That ass Tommy Dodd brought his footer out, and I kicked it away from him—wow!—and it happened to catch old Manders on the chest—ow! How was I to know he was sneaking round Little Quad just at that minute? Oh, my hands!"

"Quite an accident, of course?" grinned Raby.

"Yes, you ass!" roared Lovell. "I'd like to biff him with a steam-hammer, let alone a footer, but I wouldn't be ass enough to do it, only it couldn't be helped. I told him it was an accident, and he told me not to tell falsehoods. Me! Falsehoods, you know! That means lies! The old huunks!"

"Like his cheek!" said Jimmy Silver. "Old Manders ought to know that the end study never Prussianises."

"I'm going for him!" growled Lovell. "Three on each paw for an accident; and he's no right to cane a Classical at all! I'm going to get even somehow! I've got a good mind to wait for him in the quad with a cricket-stump! Wow-wow!"

"Better let him rip," said Raby. "Old Manders is dangerous."

"He called me a liar!"

"That's only his bad manners. What can you expect of a rotten Modern?" said Raby disparagingly. "Better let him rip."

"I'm not going to let him rip!" howled Lovell. "Look here, Jimmy Silver, if you're head of this study, you can think of something. Manders is going to be made to sit up!"

Jimmy Silver looked deeply reflective.

"He ought to have reported you to Bootles," he said. "Like his cheek to lay his Modern paws on a Classical! And calling you a liar was the limit—quite the limit! Suppose you call him one?"

"Eh?"

"What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, you know!" said Jimmy Silver. "Don't call him a liar; on second thoughts, that's no class. Call him a rotter and a Modern worm!"

"You thumping ass!" bellowed Lovell. "Do you think I can march up to a master and call him a rotter and a worm?"

Jimmy Silver gave him a pitying smile. "You can call him that, and a lot more, without marching up to him," he said.

"Howl it across the quad—what?" asked Lovell sarcastically.

"Not at all. Haven't you ever heard of a useful modern invention called the telephone?"

"The telephone!"

"Yes. There's a 'phone in Manders' study on the Modern side. There's a 'phone in Bootles' study on our side. We've used it sometimes—when Bootles was out. He's out now. I saw him trotting down to Coombe. Call Manders up on the 'phone, and tell him what you think of him. Better disguise your voice a bit, though. If he recognised it, he would jib."

"My hat!" said Lovell.

"You can slang him to any extent for a penny on the 'phone," said Jimmy, "and the penny goes down to Bootles' bill, too. Still, you can leave a penny in Bootles' study, and he'll find it and think he dropped it. That'll pay for the 'phone."

Lovell burst into a chuckle.

"My word! What a ripping joke to slang old Manders, without letting him know who slanged him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Raby and Newcome, greatly tickled by the idea.

"I'll jolly well do it!" said Lovell. "I'll call him some names, too! I'll pile it on till he rings off! Ha, ha!"

"Always come to your Uncle James for advice!" said Jimmy Silver complacently. "You can rely on Uncle James!"

"Jolly good wheetee! Sure Bootles is out?"

"Yes; I spotted him ambling."

"Then, come on! You fellows can keep watch in the passage."

"Any old thing!" said Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four quitted the end study. Lovell seemed almost to have forgotten the smart in his hands in the happy anticipation of making the obnoxious Modern master "sit up"—by telephone. It was just one of Jimmy Silver's bright ideas, and, so far as the juniors could see, there was no risk attached. To "slang" the awe-inspiring Mr. Manders would be a unique experience.

The Classical chums scouted along the passage cautiously. Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, was out, and his telephone was at the mercy of the enterprising juniors.

Lovell entered the Form-master's study, and Raby and Newcome remained on the watch at the end of the passage, and Jimmy Silver just inside the study doorway.

# JIMMY SILVER HITS BACK!

A Long, Complete Story of  
JIMMY SILVER & Co. at  
Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

Lovell drew a deep breath, and took the receiver off the hook.

"What's the beast's number?" he asked. "Rookham double-two," said Jimmy. "Mind you don't speak in your own toot. Manders is awfully sharp!"

"You bet!"

"Number, please?" came over the wire. "Rookham double-two," said Lovell, in a deep, base voice.

And he waited, grinning.

### THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Talk on the Telephone.

**H**ALLO!" It was a thin, sharp voice on the telephone—the well-known voice of Mr. Manders, the senior Modern master of Rookwood School. Everything about Mr. Manders was thin and sharp and acid. He was not an agreeable gentleman.

"Are you there?" said Lovell, in the deep, base voice.

"Yes, yes! What is it?"

"Is that Rookham double-two?"

"Yes, yes! Mr. Manders is speaking."

"Old Manders?" asked Lovell.

"Eh?"

"Skinny old Manders?"

"What?"

"That dashed old rascal, Manders?" pursued Lovell, with great enjoyment. "Yah! Where did you dig up your face, old duffer?" Jimmy Silver chuckled. Lovell was not erring on the side of over-politeness.

"What?" came Mr. Manders' voice on the wires, in tones of fury. "Who is speaking? What insolent rascal is addressing me?"

"Insolent rascal yourself! I go and eat coke!"

"What?"

"He's rung off!" grinned Lovell, looking round from the telephone. "Seems to have touched him on the raw! Ha, ha!"

"Ring him up again!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "Ha, ha!"

Lovell rang up again. It was another "call" to go down on Mr. Bootles' bill, but that could not be helped. Jimmy Silver considerably dropped a second penny on the study carpet, for Mr. Bootles to "field" later. "Hallo!" came an acid voice on the wires again.

"Is that Mr. Manders?" asked Lovell, adopting a high treble voice this time.

"Yes."

"Have you paid the washerwoman yet?"

"What?"

"Unless you pay the washerwoman without any further delay, legal proceedings will be instituted!" said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver chortled. Lovell was really exhibiting a brilliance of imagination his chum had never suspected him of.

"What? I do not understand. Probably you have the wrong number!" rasped Mr. Manders.

"I don't think so. You're Manders?"

"I am Mr. Manders."

"You're the old sneak who teaches 'stinks' in the lab at Rookwood?"

"I am the science master at Rookwood School. How dare you! Who are you?"

"Well, cody—"

"What?"

"If you make any further attempt to birk your washerwoman, you'll find yourself in Queer Street!"

"Who is speaking?" shrieked Mr. Manders. "And I advise you to give up being such a mean old sneak!" went on Lovell. "You're a disgrace to Rookwood, you know! Your proper place is among the Huns."

"He's rung off again," said Lovell. "He doesn't seem to enjoy this conversation."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver shed another penny on the carpet, and it rolled under the table.

"Have another penn'orth," he said.

Lovell chortled, and rang up again. For some minutes there was no answer, but Mr. Manders came to the telephone at last.

"What is wanted? Who is it?" came his bitter tones.

"Is that old Manders? This is the police-station. You have forgotten to report yourself."

"What?"

"Unless you report at once, your ticket-of-leave will be rescinded."

"T-t-ticket-of-leave!" stuttered Mr. Manders.

"Yes. Then you'll go back to choky!"

Lovell put the receiver on the hook.

"Old Manders don't seem to like being taken for a ticket-of-leave man," he remarked. "I fancy he won't come to the phone again. Still, we've had threepenn'orth!"

"Ha, ha! Yes, rather!" chortled Jimmy Silver. "I can just picture him now ramping round his study!"

There was a cautious whistle from the passage.

It was a warning from the juniors on the watch.

"Buzz off!" said Jimmy hurriedly. "That must be Bootles!"

The two juniors bolted out of the study. They disappeared by one end of the passage as the master of the Fourth appeared at the other.

Mr. Bootles went into his study quite unsuspecting.

The Fistical Four gathered in the end study again in great spirits. They roared with laughter. It was easy to imagine the fury of Mr. Manders wasting itself on the desert air.

"It's the first time he's had any plain English like that!" chuckled Lovell. "I say, we'll play this game again when he cuts up rusty. We'll make him dance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chums of the Fourth roared again. Rawson of the Fourth looked into the study.

"Hallo! You seem to be enjoying yourselves," he remarked.

"We are—we is!" grinned Jimmy Silver. And he explained the tremendous joke on the Modern master.

Rawson chuckled.

"Ripping!" he said. "I hope there won't be trouble—"

"Oh, that's all right!" said Lovell confidently. "I disguised my voice, you know. Manders couldn't smell a rat."

"I hope so. I suppose it isn't about you that old Manders has come over?"

The Fistical Four sat up suddenly.

"Has Manders come over?"

"Yes; he's in Bootles' study now—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And Bootles has just sent me for you, Lovell. That's what I came for. He wants you in his study."

"He wants me?" said Lovell faintly.

"Yes. You're to go to his study at once."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Must be something else," said Jimmy Silver uneasily. "Manders simply can't have spotted you!"

"Better go," said Raby.

"I—I suppose I must!"

Arthur Edward Lovell was not laughing now. His face was very, very serious as he made his way to his Form-master's study.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. Called Over the Coals.

**M**R. BOOTLES was changing his boots for his slippers when there was a loud rap at his door, and it flew open, and Mr. Manders of the Modern side stalked in.

The Fourth Form master rose, with one boot on and one slipper.

Mr. Manders' excited look surprised him.

"Bless my soul! Is anything the matter?" he ejaculated.

"Yes, sir!" Mr. Manders' voice was thunderous. "I have been insulted, sir!"

"Bless my soul!"

"It was not you, I presume, who rang me up on this telephone and applied insulting and obnoxious expressions to me, Mr. Bootles?"

"Sir!"

"It was therefore some boy on the Classical side who used your telephone, Mr. Bootles."

"I—I—I do not quite grasp—"

"I should imagine, sir, that I had made myself clear. I have been rung up on the telephone, and opprobrious expressions have been applied to me."

"Dear me!"

"I was rung up three separate times and insulted, sir," roared Mr. Manders. "I was surprised—I may say astounded. But I am not a man, sir, who can be insulted with impunity! It occurred to me, sir, to ring up the Exchange and ask them to give me the number—the number, sir, of my interlocutor! Imagine my astonishment, sir, when I was informed that the number was Rookham two-three—the number, sir, of your telephone here!"

"Bless my soul!"

"It was upon this instrument, sir"—Mr. Manders waved a skinny hand at the telephone in the corner of the study—"upon this instrument—your instrument, sir—that I was rung up three times in succession not a quarter of an hour ago! You, I presume, were not in the room?"

"I have but just returned from a walk," said Mr. Bootles, greatly flurried. "There was certainly no one here when I came in. I can hardly believe that any person has had the audacity to use my telephone!"

"I repeat, sir, that the number I obtained from the Exchange was two-three Rookham. Is not that your number?"

"Yes, yes—certainly. But—"

"During your absence, sir, some boy here used your telephone for the especial purpose of hurling insults at me. I think I can guess the young rascal's name also. It was Lovell of the Fourth Form."

"But—"

"A short time since that boy had the insolence to hurl a football at me, and I caned him. I demand that Lovell be questioned."

"There is no need to demand, sir," said Mr. Bootles, nettled. "If a boy in my Form has been guilty of impertinence to a master, I shall naturally look into the matter. I will send for Lovell."

The Form-master stepped to the door and called to Rawson, and sent the junior on his errand.

Then he sat down again, and proceeded to put on his other slipper.

Mr. Manders fumed while he waited. "The boy is not coming!" he snorted. "A guilty conscience, sir, is keeping him away!"

"He will come," said Mr. Bootles—"indeed, he is here!"

Lovell entered the study.

"Lovell," said the master of the Fourth. "Mr. Manders makes a very serious complaint concerning you."

"Yes, sir," said Lovell, his heart sinking. "During my absence someone used my telephone and spoke rudely to Mr. Manders. The Exchange have given him this number."

Lovell's face fell. He had not thought of that possibility.

"Mr. Manders thinks you were the person who used the telephone," said Mr. Bootles.

"Is that correct, Lovell?"

Lovell hesitated.

There was nothing for it now but an admission of the lie direct. Mr. Manders had called him a liar, and the remembrance of it tempted Lovell strongly to justify the word. There was no proof against him, but he put the temptation aside.

"Yes, sir," he said at last.

Mr. Manders snorted.

"I knew it!"

"You used my telephone, Lovell?" said Mr. Bootles mildly.

"Yes, sir."

"You insulted Mr. Manders?" exclaimed the Form-master, greatly shocked.

The junior looked sullen.

"Mr. Manders called me a liar, sir," he replied. "He had no right to do that. I told him what I thought of him because of that."

"Ahem!"

"I ordered the boy not to tell falsehoods," said Mr. Manders between his teeth. "He was lying."

"I was not lying!" said Lovell with spirit.

"If I were a liar, I could tell lies now to

Mr. Bootles, and say I never used the telephone."

"That is true," said Mr. Bootles. "I am sorry, Mr. Manders, that you applied such an expression to a lad whom I know to be truthful and honourable."

"Thank you, sir!" said Lovell.

Mr. Manders fumed.

"I presume that does not mean, sir, that this boy is to be allowed to go unpunished for his insolence?" he exclaimed. "I warn you that, in that case, I shall carry the matter before the Head."

Mr. Bootles' eyes gleamed. He was a mild little gentleman, but was not to be bullied in his own study.

"I shall be obliged to you if you will moderate your tone!" he said snappishly. "I am quite aware of my duty, and have no desire to be instructed."

"That boy has insulted me—he has applied outrageous epithets to me!"

"Lovell, you must be aware that you did very wrong. I sympathise with you in your indignation at having your word doubted by Mr. Manders. At the same time, nothing can excuse impertinence to one in authority. I shall punish you severely, Lovell."

"Very well, sir," said Lovell quietly.

He expected it; in fact, he knew that Mr. Bootles had no choice in the matter now that the facts were known.

The Fourth Form master picked up his cane.

"Hold out your hand, Lovell!"

Swish, swish!

"Again!" said Mr. Bootles.

"Mr. Manders has already caned me, only half an hour ago, sir," said Lovell. "He gave me six cuts."

Mr. Bootles laid down the cane.

"You may go!" he said.

"Mr. Bootles, I protest against this!" exclaimed the Modern master. "The boy has not been sufficiently punished!"

"Eight strokes of the cane within an hour are quite sufficient, in my opinion," said Mr. Bootles drily. "You may go, Lovell."

Lovell left the study.

"Now the boy is gone," added Mr. Bootles, "I must point out that, in caning him, you were exceeding your authority, Mr. Manders."

"What?"

"Your duty was to report his conduct to me. I object to your taking the law into your own hands in this manner. I can make allowance for your annoyance, but I cannot have my own authority disregarded!"

Mr. Manders spluttered.

"It was also very injudicious to cast doubt upon the boy's word," said Mr. Bootles calmly. "Nothing is more likely to make a lad untruthful. Yet that he is truthful you have seen for yourself. He could have denied the whole transaction, and he could not have been punished on suspicion. I trust, Mr. Manders, that you will upon a future occasion act with more circumspection."

Mr. Manders left the study without replying; he could not trust himself to speak.

Lovell was rubbing his hands at the end of the passage, and the angry master, as he passed him, gave him a box on the ear.

Lovell staggered to the wall, with a howl of surprise and wrath, and Mr. Manders rustled on.

"My hat!" gasped Lovell.

He rubbed his ear.

"Rotter!" said Oswald, who was in the passage. "Bootles wouldn't let him do that. Serve him right to tell Bootles!"

Lovell shook his head, and made his way to the end study.

"Bowled out?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Look at my hands!" growled Lovell. "Manders got the number of the phone from the Exchange."

"Oh, my sainted aunt! Never thought of that."

"Of course you didn't!" snorted Lovell. "That's what comes of relying on Uncle James—what! You silly ass! I've had two from Bootles and a punch from Manders as he went out. Funched my ear!"

"The cheeky rotter!" said Raby warmly. "And now we're going to bump Uncle James for his wonderful wheeze!" said Lovell wrathfully.

Jimmy Silver jumped up.

"Here, hold on, you ungrateful bouncer! It was a jolly good wheeze—"

"Collar him!"

"It's only fair," said Newcome. "When Uncle James plays the giddy ox, Uncle James wants bumping."

"Gerroff, you silly asses! Look here, I'll think of another wheeze—"

"Blow your wheezes!" growled Lovell.



"Do you wish to see anyone here?" Mr. Manders asked brusquely. "Sir, you have hit it," said the seedy gentleman in a rich, rolling voice. "I have called to see that benefactor of his species, Mr. Manders." (see page 17.)

"My hands are raw, and I'm fed up with your wheezes."

"We'll make Manders sit up——"  
"Manders has made me sit up; that's how your blessed wheezes turn out. You're going to be bumped!"

Jimmy Silver picked up the poker.  
"Cheese it, you dufters! Look here, I'm going to have a big think——"

"What with?" grunted Lovell.  
"Fathead! I'm going to have a big think, and if I don't make Manders sit up before the end of the week, you can bump me as hard as you like."

And the Co. agreed to that, on reflection—especially as the poker looked dangerous.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Uncle James' Great Wheeze!**

**J**IMMY SILVER'S "big think" was not a rapid process. The next day he was still thinking.

For the honour of the Classical side Mr. Manders had to be made to feel sorry for himself.

The Classical chums agreed on this, and they agreed that it was up to Uncle James.

Classical ears could not be boxed with impunity, especially by a Modern hand. The insult had to be wiped out.

And unless Jimmy Silver thought of a scheme for putting salt on the tail of the Manders-bird, as Lovell elegantly expressed it, Jimmy Silver was going through a study ragging, administered by his faithful chums. If Uncle James was going to be leader, Uncle James had to learn not to land his devoted

followers into scrapes; the Co. agreed on that most heartily.

The difficulty was, that the Manders-bird was a very wary old bird, and was not to be caught with chaff. Japing Mr. Manders was a very risky undertaking—as the affair of the telephone had proved. As Jimmy indignantly remarked, nobody but Manders would have thought of spying out a telephone number in that way. It really wasn't playing the game. And Lovell and Raby and Newcome were of opinion that the wheeze, when Jimmy Silver pronounced it, would end in a "muck-up," in just the same way—in which case, they were prepared to bump Uncle James for his own good.

Another day came, but the wheeze, apparently, had not come; at all events, Jimmy Silver had said nothing on the subject. It was a half-holiday that day, and the Fistical Four had intended to walk to Rookham, with Oswald and Flynn and some more of the juniors. But after dinner that Wednesday afternoon, when the fellows started for Rookham, Jimmy Silver announced that they were not going with the rest.

"Look here, ain't we going to Rookham?" demanded Lovell.

Jimmy Silver shook his head.  
"Your uncle wants you, my boy," he replied. "We're going on the war-path this afternoon."

"Oh! Manders?"  
"Yes, Manders."

"What's the game?" asked Raby.

"The game is to follow your uncle without asking questions," said the captain of the Fourth calmly.

Lovell sniffed.

"Well, we'll give you your head," he remarked. "But if you muck it up, and there's a row, remember what you're going to get."

"Oh, scat!"  
"What's the marching orders?" asked Raby, with a yawn.

"We're going down to Coombe."  
"What on earth for?"

"For about an hour."  
"I don't mean that, fathead! I mean, what are we going to do there?"

"You're going to follow your leader."  
Whereat the Co. grunted in chorus; but they followed their leader, and the four juniors sauntered down the leafy lane to the village.

It pleased Jimmy Silver to adopt a lofty attitude, which was justified by the circumstances that a study ragging awaited him in the event of failure.

Jimmy's first call in the village was at the newsagent's, where he purchased the latest number of the "Coombe Recorder." His chums viewed this proceeding with amazement, and they were still more amazed when Jimmy sat down on the bench outside Mrs. Wicks' and began to peruse the advertisement columns. They comforted themselves with ices while they waited.

"Got it!" said Jimmy at last.  
"What have you got, fathead? Sudden insanity?"

"No. Listen!"  
Jimmy read out an advertisement.

"Typing, copying, etc. Authors' manuscripts, etc.—Miss Peckes, Willow Cottage, Coombe."

Lovell and Raby and Newcome blinked at him.

"What the thunder does that mean?" demanded Lovell.

"That means that Miss Peekes does typing for a living."

"I know it does, ass! But you don't want any typing done. Are you starting as an author?" hooted Lovell.

"No; but I want some typing done. Come on!"

"Where are we going now?"

"Willow Cottage."

"What for?"

"To see Miss Peekes."

"What the merry thunder——"

"You talk too much, Lovell, old chap. Come on!"

Jimmy Silver led the way, and the Fistical Four arrived at Willow Cottage. They were received very politely by Miss Peekes, who rose from a typewriter in her little parlour.

"Good-afternoon!" said Jimmy Silver, while his astonished chums stood, cap in hand. "I want something typed, please."

"Certainly! I charge one shilling per thousand words," said Miss Peekes.

"Oh, my hat! I—I mean, this won't be more than a dozen words or so. But I suppose I needn't have the full thousand for the bob?"

"No," said the typist, smiling.

"Well, here it is."

Jimmy Silver laid a paper on the table. Miss Peekes glanced at it.

"Can I have it now?" asked Jimmy.

"Yes; it will not take me two or three minutes."

"Thank you very much. We'll wait."

Click, click, click! went the typewriter under Miss Peekes's fair hands.

In a few minutes she handed the typed sheets to Jimmy Silver. Jimmy laid down a shilling, and Miss Peekes insisted upon giving him sixpence change, and the juniors left the cottage.

"Now, what the dickens does that mean?" exclaimed Lovell.

"Bow-wow!" said Jimmy calmly.

"Where are we going now?" howled Lovell. Jimmy looked at the "Coombe Recorder" again.

"F. Haines, 6, Long Lane," he said.

"Who the thump is F. Haines?"

"A chap who does typewriting."

"Haven't you finished?"

"No."

"Why couldn't you let Miss Peekes do the lot, then?"

"Because I'm blessed with rather more brains than they handed out to you, Lovell, old chap."

And Jimmy walked on cheerily, and his mystified chums followed to 6, Long Lane, where a bald old gentleman received them, and typed an envelope from a paper handed him by Jimmy Silver for the small charge of twopence.

Jimmy was smiling with satisfaction as he left Long Lane.

The Co. were in a state of considerable exasperation by this time.

"You howling ass!" said Lovell, in measured tones. "We might have been at Rookham this afternoon with the chaps, and you're mooching about a dashed village getting typewriting done on the instalment system. What do you call this game?"

"I call it covering up our tracks."

"Our—our tracks?"

"Yes; I suppose you don't want Manders to bowl us out again, do you?" said Jimmy severely.

"Suppose he makes inquiries—you know what an inquisitive old bird he is. Well, he can't track us out by the hand-writing when a letter's typed, and two different typists makes it all safe. Miss Peekes doesn't know where the letter's going, and Mr. Haines doesn't know what's in the letter. See?"

"But what's it all about?" shrieked Lovell.

"It's about time we posted the letter," said Jimmy thoughtfully.

"You funny ass!"

"Still, I'll let you chaps see the letter," said Jimmy considerably. "You don't deserve it, but I will. We're going to worry Manders."

"How?"

"Think a minute," urged Jimmy. "Now, is old Manders a generous, warm-hearted sort of chap—the kind of old bird to help a lame dog over a stile, and to feel a deep sympathy for people down on their luck?"

"You know he isn't, fathead!"

"Exactly! Suppose a lot of people got the impression that he was that kind of old bird, and came to him for money and assistance—lots of them?"

THE PENNY POPULAR—No. 60.

"But—but they won't!" ejaculated Raby.

"Why should they?"

"Are you quite off your rocker?" asked Newcome, in wonder.

"Look at this!" said Jimmy.

His chums looked.

The typed envelope was addressed:

"'Coombe Recorder,' Market Street, Coombe."

"You're not sending that to the local rag?" asked Newcome.

"Exactly! With the letter in it. Look at the letter."

The three juniors read the typed letter, and stared blankly. It ran:

"Sir,—Please insert the enclosed advt. in this week's 'Recorder.' P.O. is enclosed. —Yours truly, A. KIDD.

"Advertisement:

"Wealthy gentleman is anxious to relieve distress. Ring up Rookham two-two."

Lovell & Co. read that precious advertisement, and blinked at it, and blinked at Jimmy Silver.

"You're sending that to the local paper!" ejaculated Lovell.

"Certainly!"

"That's Manders' telephone number?"

"Of course it is!"

"But—but——"

"I've signed the letter 'A. Kidd,'" said Jimmy Silver complacently. "I think that's rather good. I couldn't very well put my own name, and I had to put some name. And I am a kid, ain't I?"

"Ha, ha!"

"Manders is a wealthy gentleman, and if he isn't anxious to relieve distress, he ought to be. We ought to do him the justice of believing that he's anxious to relieve distress, as he's got plenty of oof."

"Catch him!" said Newcome. "More likely to give a beggar in charge than to hand him a tanner."

"But—but—if that comes out in the local paper," gasped Lovell, "every cadger for ten miles round will pile on Manders."

"That's what I want."

"And if he won't answer 'em on the 'phone, they'll look out his address in the telephone directory," said Lovell, chuckling.

"Naturally!"

"And they'll call!"

"Of course they will!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell. "Fancy a procession of seedy cadgers calling on old Manders for financial assistance!"

The juniors yelled at the bare thought. Mr. Manders was supposed to have a good deal of money, but he was never supposed to be willing to part with any of it. For a crowd of hard-up cadgers to visit the meanest man in the county in search of financial assistance was a screaming joke—from the junior point of view. Mr. Manders was not likely to see the humour of it. But that was only a detail that did not matter.

"They'll get him on the telephone first," said Jimmy cheerfully. "He'll be rung up by everybody who can get to a call-office."

When he's fed-up with that, and stops answering the 'phone, they'll look his address out in the directory and call. I shouldn't wonder if he has hundreds of them."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, to get the postal-order," said Jimmy. "This letter's got to be posted this afternoon, and it will come out in the 'Recorder' this week."

The Fistical Four hurried to the village post-office where the postal-order was duly purchased, placed in the letter, and the letter posted.

There was no doubt that that advertisement would appear in the "Recorder" on Thursday afternoon.

On Friday, probably, the results would begin to appear.

Exactly what the results would be the juniors could not say; but it appeared certain that Mr. Manders would have a very exciting time.

Jimmy Silver & Co. strolled back to Rookham in great spirits.

The precautions Jimmy had taken covered up the tracks of the practical joker. Even if Mr. Manders made stringent inquiries at the office of the local paper, he would learn nothing. The printer could only tell him that the advertisement came by post in the usual way. The letter itself, being typed, would betray nothing.

The Fistical Four felt that they were about to score at last, and Jimmy's chums agreed that Uncle James had deserved well of the study.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Financial Assistance Required! UZZ!

**B** Mr. Manders gave an irritable grunt. He was seated in his study after lessons on Friday, engaged in the perusal of a ponderous volume on chemistry, when the telephone-bell rang.

He laid down his book, and took up the receiver.

"Hallo!"

"That Rookham double-two?"

"Yes."

"Very good. My name is Jacob Jawkins."

"I do not know anyone of that name!" snapped Mr. Manders. "Will you kindly state your business with me?"

"Certainly, my dear sir. I am in need of financial assistance."

"What?"

"Having been for some time confined in prison, owing to a misunderstanding on the part of the police, I am now in acute distress. Your wealth, my dear sir, will enable you to relieve a very genuine case. If you could advance me twenty pounds——"

Mr. Manders almost dropped the receiver. "Do you take this for a charitable institution?" he gasped.

"Certainly!"

"Then you are mistaken—entirely mistaken. Good-afternoon!"

"But, my dear sir——"

Mr. Manders rang off.

He returned to his book with a grunt of annoyance. The conduct of the unknown Mr. Jawkins in ringing him up to ask for financial assistance was inexplicable. Mr. Manders was about the last man in the country to render anybody financial assistance.

Mr. Manders enjoyed a short rest; Mr. Jawkins was apparently done with. But a quarter of an hour later the telephone-bell rang again.

"Hallo!" said Mr. Manders into the transmitter.

"Rookham double-two?"

"Yes, yes!"

"My dear, kind friend——"

"What!"

"Although a stranger to you, I venture to address you as a dear, kind friend. Truly, your kindness and generosity are unparalleled. My dear, kind, though unknown benefactor is——"

"Some lunatic!" murmured Mr. Manders.

"My admired and esteemed benefactor, I am in pressing need of some monetary assistance. My name is——"

Mr. Manders did not wait for the name. He jammed the receiver down.

"This is some trick!" he muttered. "Bless my soul! I—— Confound it! There is the telephone again! Hallo, hallo!"

"We seem to have been cut off," went on the voice on the wires. "I was about to tell you that the sum of fifteen pounds would be a great blessing——"

The unknown interlocutor was cut off again quite sharply. Mr. Manders jammed down the receiver with a force that nearly knocked over the instrument.

The telephone-bell rang again and again, but the Modern master did not heed it. He sat tight, frowning, and the bell ceased to ring at last.

About half an hour later, when Mr. Manders had recovered his equanimity a little, there was a fresh buzz. He took up the receiver wearily.

"Yes! Hallo!"

"Is that Rookham double-two?" It was a fresh voice this time, and the surprised master recognised feminine tones.

"Yes. Who is speaking?"

"Sempronia Squigg. You are the good, kind gentleman who is anxious to relieve distress?"

"Eh?"

"Noble, generous man! How can I thank you?"

"Madam——"

"Will you call upon me, or would you prefer me to call and explain? I am in urgent need of the sum of seventy-five pounds——"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Seventy-five pounds."

"Madam, are you insane?" Mr. Manders shrieked into the transmitter. "Do you imagine for one moment that I intend to give a large sum of money to a stranger—in-deed, to anybody? What do you mean?"

"But if you are anxious to relieve distress you——"

"I am not in the least anxious to relieve distress. Nonsense!"

"Then why, sir, have you announced that you are anxious to do so? Are you some swindler and charlatan?"



Mr. Manders rang off hastily. He wiped his perspiring forehead. Those repeated calls on the telephone, all for financial assistance, astounded him. Had every hard-up individual in the county gone suddenly mad?

But a sudden, illuminating suspicion darted into Mr. Manders' mind. He remembered Lovell's trick on Mr. Bootles' telephone.

"Fool that I am!" he exclaimed savagely. "Of course, it is that boy again! I did not know his voice; but he disguised his voice last time. I will wait till the bell rings again, and then rush across and catch the young scoundrel in the act."

Buzzzz!

The bell rang again as he was speaking. He rushed from the study with a grim face. The bell was still buzzing as he rushed down the passage.

Fellows in the quadrangle stared as they beheld Mr. Manders fairly sprinting across, with his gown flying in the breeze.

"My hat!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "What's the matter with Manders? Looks as if he's on the warpath."

Mr. Manders was indeed on the warpath. He rushed into the School House, and dashed on without a pause to Mr. Bootles' study. He had not the slightest doubt that he would catch the impertinent junior at the telephone. He hurled the door wide open without stopping to knock.

"Bless my soul!"

There were two persons in the study—Mr. Bootles and Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, who had dropped in for a chat with the Form-master. They gazed blankly at Mr. Manders as he came flying in.

The Head rose majestically. "Really, Mr. Manders—"

Mr. Manders stopped, as if struck by a bullet. Suspicious as he was, he could not suspect the reverend Head of Rookwood of playing tricks on the telephone. The culprit, evidently, was not there.

"I—I—I— Excuse me!" stuttered Mr. Manders.

"Really—"

"I—I beg your pardon, sir! I—I am somewhat hurried!"

"Yes, sir, so I should judge," said the Head majestically. "So I should judge, Mr. Manders."

"I—I—I really beg your pardon!" gasped Mr. Manders, and he retreated incontinently from the study.

He went down the passage like a man in a dream. It was clear that he had not been rung up, after all, from Mr. Bootles' study. Had the young rascal he suspected rung him up from the call-office in the village? But even as the thought came into his mind he observed Jimmy Silver & Co. in the passage. They were smiling.

Mr. Manders halted and glared at them.

"Lovell!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir."

"Someone has telephoned to me—some insolent practical joker—"

"Indeed, sir!"

"Was it you, Lovell?"

"Not at all, sir."

Mr. Manders glared at him. But the juniors had no access to any telephone but Mr. Bootles', and the Head was in Mr. Bootles' study. He had to admit that he was on the wrong track. He turned away with a snort, and returned across the quad.

The Fistical Four grinned at one another ecstatically.

"It's working!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Working like a charm!" chortled Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Classical chums roared.

Mr. Manders reached his house, and Knowles of the Sixth met him as he came in.

"The telephone-bell's ringing in your study, sir!"

"Confound the telephone!" thundered Mr. Manders.

"Wha-a-at!" gasped Knowles.

"Hang the telephone!"

Mr. Manders whisked on, leaving Knowles of the Sixth rooted to the floor with astonishment.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Nice for Manders!

MR. MANDERS did not spend an enjoyable afternoon.

Every quarter of an hour or so the telephone-bell rang.

He was tempted to cut off permanently, but that would not have done. Any message might have been one of importance, especially as Mr. Manders dabbled in stocks and shares, and was accustomed to being rung up by his stockbroker at odd times to be apprised of the state of the "market."

There were, in fact, a couple of business calls dealing with the question of financial assistance which he was supposed to be prepared to render to perfect strangers.

Mr. Manders was astounded as well as enraged.

When he left his study he met smiling faces among the juniors, though he did not guess the cause of the smiles.

Jimmy Silver had cycled down to Coombe for a copy of the local paper, and that copy had passed from hand to hand in the school. Jimmy did not relate how the advertisement came to be in the paper; but most of the fellows guessed easily enough that Mr. Manders had not inserted it.

It was a joke of some "person or persons unknown," and the juniors chortled over it joyously. And whenever the telephone-bell was heard to ring in Mr. Manders' study there was an outburst of chortling among the Modern juniors.

The Fistical Four, sauntering lazily in the quad—within easy distance of Mr. Manders' study window—heard the incessant buzzing of the bell, and caught glimpses of the Modern master whisking across to the telephone.

But towards evening there was a blessed silence.

Mr. Manders had disconnected the bell.

He had to risk anyone who really had business with him calling him up and failing to get through. He simply could not stand the buzzing bell and the demands for financial assistance any longer.

That evening Mr. Manders was in a temper which made him really dangerous to approach.

"Seems to be fed up," Jimmy Silver remarked, when the bell had not been heard for some time. "The show's over for to-night. But to-morrow—"

"If they can't get through on the 'phone, they'll begin calling," grinned Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors looked forward to the morrow with keen anticipation. They only regretted the necessity of lessons in the morning. Lessons were really a worry on such an occasion.

Indeed, morning lessons had never seemed so long to the Fistical Four as they did that Saturday morning. When Mr. Bootles dismissed his class at last, Jimmy Silver & Co. hurried out, and sought Tommy Dodd. The Modern junior was chuckling.

"Manders had any callers?" asked Jimmy. "Yes, rather!" chortled Tommy Dodd. "He was called out to see a seedy chap who waited in the passage, and there was quite a row. Seedy chap was fair shouting."

"Ha, ha! What did he want?"

"Cash!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Jolly queer about that advertisement in the local rag," said Tommy Dodd, eyeing the Classical chums. "Manders couldn't have put it in."

"Hardly," agreed Jimmy Silver gravely. "Yet it's his telephone number that's given. Queer, isn't it?"

"Jolly queer!" said Tommy. "And the chap who did it will find himself in Queer Street if Manders gets on his track."

"You think it was a practical joke of somebody?" asked Jimmy innocently, while his chums gurgled.

"I rather fancy it was," grinned Tommy Dodd, "and when Mandy sees it he will hustle down to the newspaper office, and if the printer remembers who handed it in—"

"Might have been sent in by the post?" suggested Jimmy.

"Ha, ha! It might! But if the printers kept the letter and Manders sees it and recognises the handwriting—"

"The practical joker—if there was one—might have got the letter typed by somebody on a machine," said Jimmy thoughtfully.

Tommy Dodd yelled.

"Oh, you deep boulder! Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver looked surprised.

"Of course, I'm only suggesting that," he remarked.

"Of course," assented Tommy Dodd. "You don't know anything about it—that isn't why you didn't come over to Rookham on Wednesday! Hallo, who the dickens is this?"

A thin gentleman in a very seedy coat came in at the gates. He stopped to speak to the juniors.

"Can you tell me where to find Mr. Manders?" he asked.

"Certainly, sir," said Jimmy Silver. "He's a master here."

The stranger followed him in.

He looked like an actor who had had bad luck, and he also looked as if he had been refreshing himself during his walk to Rookwood with something more potent than water from the pump.

The juniors grinned at one another.

"We must see this!" murmured Lovell.

And they cautiously "stalked" the stranger.

Mr. Manders was going in to lunch when the seedy gentleman entered the house. He glanced at him sourly. The sight of anyone who was down on his luck was an offence to Mr. Manders' uncharitable eyes.

"Do you wish to see anyone here?" he asked brusquely.

"Sir, you have hit it," said the seedy gentleman, in a rich, rolling voice. "I have called to see that benefactor of his species, Mr. Manders."

"I am Mr. Manders."

"Sir, it does me proud to behold you," said the visitor. "My name is Curll—Horatio



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The Great Cinema Adventure Paper.

Curl. At one time, sir, I trod the histrionic boards—

"Kindly state your business!"

"But misfortune dogged my steps, sir," said Mr. Curl sadly. "Like the raven's unhappy master, I found unmerciful disaster follow fast and follow faster—"

"Sir—"

"Until, sir, I came down on the halls," said Mr. Curl mournfully. "I, who sang Tannhauser and Lohengrin and Alfredo in the grand old days of the Roser-Moser Company, sir—I came down on the halls! And even the halls, sir, have ungratefully declined my further services."

"I am not in the slightest degree interested—"

"Until at last, sir, I am reduced to asking financial assistance of a generous benefactor who has made known the noble impulses of his heart through the medium of an advertisement," said Mr. Curl. "Sir, I blush to say that I am in immediate need of the ridiculous sum of five pounds—"

"You will get no money from me, sir," shouted Mr. Manders angrily. "Kindly leave this building at once!"

"In case, sir, there have already been heavy drafts on your generosity, I could contrive to rub along with the more moderate sum of one quid—"

"Will you go?" roared Mr. Manders.

"Five shillings even would be a boon," sighed Mr. Curl. "After raising my hopes as you have done, sir, you cannot refuse me so small a sum."

"I will have you thrown from the door if you do not instantly depart!" shouted Mr. Manders. "How dare you come here, you beggar?"

Mr. Curl's manner changed.

"I came as an artist in distress, in reply to what I regarded as the invitation of a generous gent!" he exclaimed indignantly. "I find a prevaricator—a—a hard-hearted hunk—a skinkint—"

"Go!" shrieked Mr. Manders.

"I will shake the dust of these inhospitable halls from my feet," said Mr. Curl disdainfully. "I spit upon you, sir! I loathe you! You are a crawling Hun, sir! Away!"

And Mr. Curl turned majestically on his heel and strode out. He left the Rookwood master rooted to the floor.

"How dare you laugh!" he shrieked, as a giggle fell upon his ears. "Silence! Disperse at once! Go in to dinner! How dare you!"

And Mr. Manders stamped into the dining room in a boiling fury.

Jimmy Silver & Co., on the point of suffocation, followed the indignant Mr. Curl down to the gates. Jimmy tapped him on the arm.

"Five bob really any good?" he asked.

Mr. Curl's clouded brow cleared at once. "Young sir, you are a nobleman!" he said enthusiastically. "You would hardly believe that Horatio Curl, once the shining light of the Roser-Moser Company, is down on his uppers. Yet such is the ghastly fact. Once, sir, the delight of the brave and the fair—once the spoiled darling of the fashionable crowd. Behold me now!"

Jimmy Silver slipped five shillings into the somewhat grubby hand of the gentleman who dreamt that he had dwelt in marble halls. And Mr. Curl walked away quite jauntily.

The Fistical Four went in to dinner in great spirits. After dinner they walked in the quad, waiting. The advertisement in the "Coombe Recorder" was panning out remarkably well, and they were keen to see fresh developments.

Early in the afternoon a black and sooty figure came in at the open gates, and blinked round the quadrangle.

Jimmy hurried up to him. The man looked like a chimney-sweep out of a job, and he had evidently been drowning his troubles at the Red Cow or the Bird-in-Hand. He rolled in his gait as he came in.

"Called to see somebody?" asked Jimmy politely.

"That I 'ave," said the sooty gentleman. "Mister Manders 'ere—wot? That the name, I reckon. My missus looked out the number in the dreckitory, and she said it was Manders—wot? Where is that kind gent?"

"Just coming out of his house," said Jimmy. "There he is."

"Thanky kindly."

The sooty gentleman started across the quad. Mr. Manders had just come out, to sit under the beeches to read. He halted as the visitor bore down on him.

"Mr. Manders?" asked the sooty gentleman.

The PENNY POPULAR—No. 66.

"Yes. If you have come about the chimneys, kindly go to the back door!" snapped Mr. Manders.

"I ain't come about no chimneys. I'm Bill 'Arris. I got the push."

"I fail to understand you!" snapped Mr. Manders. "Have you anything to say to me?"

"Yes. I'm 'ard up!"

"That is no business of mine!" shouted Mr. Manders, realising that this was another of the mysterious demanders of financial assistance.

"But you're the wealthy gent—"

"I do not waste my wealth on vagrants."

"I got the push!" reiterated Mr. 'Arris. "I'm 'ard up! You advertise that you want to relieve distress—that means 'elping a bloke wot's 'ard up, in Henglish. Well, I'm 'ard up, and 'ere I am!"

"Silver!" shouted Mr. Manders. "Call Mack here, and tell him he is to eject this person!"

Mr. Harris glared.

"Eject me!" he ejaculated. "Don't I keep on tellin' you I'm 'ard up? Ain't you goin' to 'elp a bloke wot's 'ard up?"

"No, I am not!" roared Mr. Manders. "Not a stiver, you drunken rascal!"

"My heye! You talk to me, arter fetchin' me 'ere!" exclaimed Mr. Harris indignantly.

"By gosh, I ain't the man to be treated like that there—you ask any feller at the Bird-in-Hand if I am! Why, for two pins I'd knock yer face through the back of your 'ead, you old bag o' bones!"

"Ruffian! Silver, send Mack here—"

"I'm going!" roared Mr. Harris. "I don't want no puttin' hout. But afore I goes I'll teach yer to call an honest man names!"

"Help!" shrieked Mr. Manders wildly, as the indignant sweep rushed on him.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

The juniors yelled. They were not inclined to chip in. Mr. Harris had apparently not cleaned off the stains of his last job, since he had got the push, and nobody wanted to touch him.

Justly indignant at being played with, as he supposed, Mr. Harris was after vengeance, and the angular Rookwood master fairly crumpled up in his powerful grasp.

Mr. Manders' head was in chancery, and Mr. Harris was pounding at his features, and the yells of the unhappy Modern master rang across the quadrangle.

"Yow-ow-ow! Help! Police! Help! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There!" roared Mr. Harris, hurling the battered Modern master to the ground, where he sprawled, gasping and smothered with soot. "That'll teach yer! Yah!"

And Mr. Harris strode indignantly away, and old Mack came cautiously out of his lodge and fastened the gates after him.

Mr. Manders sat up.

"Groogh!" he gasped. "Has—has that ruffan gone? Good heavens! The—the man must be mad! I—I am considerably hurt! Ow, wow! I—I am dirty—dreadfully dirty! Groogh! Tell Mack to lock the gates at once—ow!—and tell him to refuse to admit anyone who calls to see me—yow!—no matter who it is! Groogh!"

Mr. Manders limped away to his house. Jimmy Silver & Co. limped away, too, quite overcome. They retreated into Little Quad, where they threw themselves on the grass, and kicked up their heels and roared.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Jimmy, almost weeping. "They won't let in any more, but that one was worth a guinea a box! Oh, dear! Manders will have a coloured eye—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you fatheads, what do you think of your Uncle James now?"

"Topping!" roared Lovell. "We'll let you off that ragging! Ha, ha, ha! He had Mandy's head in chancery! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Fistical Four went off into a fresh explosion.

When Mr. Manders was seen in public again, he had a dark shade round one eye, and his nose was considerably enlarged. He wore those adornments for quite a long time, much to the hilarity of the Rookwood juniors. And, although later on the notice in the "Recorder" was brought to his attention, he never knew who had inserted it. But a great part of Rookwood knew, or guessed, and it was agreed on all hands that Jimmy Silver had deserved well of Rookwood.

THE END.

(Another grand long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next week.)

## Mr. Ratcliff's Car!

### A Short Story of St. Jim's

"EXCUSE me, young gents!" Tom Merry & Co. were about to enter the gates of St. Jim's when that remark fell upon their ears.

A burly man smiled at them genially as he climbed down from his seat on a closed van which had pulled to the side of the road.

"Mr. Ratcliff 'ang out 'ere?" asked the carter, jerking his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the school.

"He does," replied Tom Merry. "I—"

There was a rustling sound, and Mr. Ratcliff himself pushed past the St. Jim's juniors and confronted the carter.

"You want me, my good man?" he asked. "I want a Mr. Ratcliff, master of the Fifth Form, New House, St. Jim's," said the "good man." "Are you 'im?"

"I am!" snapped Mr. Ratcliff.

"Which as 'ow I've got a car 'ere for you, Mister Ratcliff," went on the carter. "And may I take the liberty of congratulatin' you on your success, sir? 'Tain't every man that can enter for a football forecast competition and get heighten out of heighten!"

"Thank you, my good man!" beamed the master of the New House. "I should like to see the car."

"C-car!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Ratty with a car! Oh, my hat!"

And the Terrible Three had the greatest difficulty in suppressing their merriment.

"Fancy old Ratty being the lucky winner out of about umpteen thousand entries! It beats me altogether!" confessed Tom Merry.

"The old ass doesn't know the difference between a football and a tank!" grinned Monty Lowther. "Blessed if I know how he did it!"

"Same here!"

"Jolly fine little car!" exclaimed Manners, as a small two-seater car was lowered to the ground from the van.

"I guess it won't last long!" remarked Monty Lowther wisely. "Old Ratty can't drive—couldn't drive a hoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I thought old Baggy's yarn about Ratcliff winning a car in the 'Weekly Football' was all gas; but it seems that he was right, after all," said Tom Merry.

The juniors walked over to the two-seater and witnessed the master of the New House sign the receipt, which he handed to the carter, with twopence for a tip.

"My eye," muttered the carter. "ain't he generous? 'Er, sir, I shouldn't like to 'rob yer!"

And, before the astonished Mr. Ratcliff could grasp the situation the indignant carter pushed the twopence back into his palm, snorted, and climbed back to his seat on the van.

"My g-good man, I—" began Mr. Ratcliff. But the good man had gone.

The New House master pocketed the twopence, and turned his attention to the car. What Mr. Ratcliff didn't know about cars would have filled volumes. Nevertheless, after consulting a handbook and putting some petrol in the tank, he tried to start the engine running. Five minutes later, dusty and perspiring freely, he had the satisfaction of hearing the pleasant hum of the engine.

"Would you like to come for a run, Merry?" asked the New Housemaster, taking his seat beside the wheel.

"N-unno, sir!" faltered the junior captain. "T-thank you very much, sir! I've got rather an important engagement this afternoon!"

Mr. Ratcliff eyed the junior captain suspiciously, but made no reply. Manners and Lowther were fast disappearing in at the gates. They did not relish the prospect of a joy-ride with the New House master. Tom Merry followed closely on their heels, breathing a sigh of relief. Motoring with a man who knew nothing about driving was rather a risky procedure.

"Whiz! Bang! Whiz!"

"Hallo, he's off!" exclaimed Tom Merry, as the car shot past the gates.

"My giddy aunt!" ejaculated Monty Lowther. "The old idiot will kill himself! Look!"

The Terrible Three rushed into the roadway and gazed after the retreating car, which

was zig-zagging from one side of the road to the other at an alarming pace.

"There'll be a crash!" said Manners, shaking his head.

Around the bend of the road was slowly advancing a market-cart, and it seemed to the eyes of the juniors that Mr. Ratcliff was certain to collide with it. The same thought was in the mind of the New House master who began to sound the horn desperately. More by luck than judgment the car missed the market-cart by a hairsbreadth.

But worse was to follow. Behind the market-cart was a flock of sheep, and Mr. Ratcliff, now thoroughly frightened, knew that it was impossible for him to pass through the flock without any casualties.

"Hi! Look out!" yelled the lad in charge of the sheep, waving his stick.

"G-g-g-good heavens! What shall I do?" gasped the unfortunate master.

Tom Merry & Co., panting in the wake of the car and the cloud of dust it raised, took in the situation at a glance.

"Why doesn't the blessed chump jam on his brake?" gasped Monty Lowther, labouring for breath.

"Ass!" was Tom Merry's retort. "He doesn't know where the brake is! The car's out of control!"

"My hat!" exclaimed Manners. "He'll have to run up the bank!"

"Put a spurt on!" ejaculated the leader of the Terrible Three. "We might be able to do something."

"Look!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "He's taking the bank!"

It was true. Mr. Ratcliff swiftly made up his mind to take the nearest bank rather than dash through the flock of sheep, and the car, entering into the spirit of the thing, so to speak, took the bank at a bound.

Crash!

A tall elm stopped its mad career with disastrous results to the car and its driver. The two-seater seemed to fold up like a cheap concertina, and Mr. Ratcliff, describing a perfect somersault, shot out from his seat and landed amongst the branches of the old elm face downwards. A forked branch had caught his flowing gown, and but for that the New House master would have sustained a severe fall. As it was, his position was extremely uncomfortable and precarious at that. His gown might not stand the strain it was being put to. But help was at hand in the form of Tom Merry & Co., and the lad in charge of the sheep.

"We're coming, sir!" panted Tom Merry. "Don't struggle!"

"Help!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff. "Oh dear!"

The St. Jim's juniors came running to the spot, and halted beneath the tree. The master was suspended in the air just out of the reach of the juniors, but the lad in charge of the sheep was coming towards the group with a ladder.

"Good chap!" exclaimed the leader of the Terrible Three, taking the ladder and placing it against the tree. "We'll soon have you down now, sir!"

"Quick, my boy!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff. "My gown is tearing! I shall drop in another minute or two!"

Tom Merry mounted the ladder, and, climbing carefully, scrambled out on the branch bearing the master. It was a ticklish job, but the junior captain did not hesitate, and two minutes later Mr. Ratcliff was standing safely on the ground, little the worse for his adventure.

"Thank you, my boy!" gasped the master, quite graciously for once. "You have undoubtedly saved me from a nasty injury!"

"T-that's all right, sir," mumbled Tom Merry confusedly. "I hope you are not hurt?"

"Fortunately I am not," said Mr. Ratcliff. "But I'm afraid my car is ruined."

Monty Lowther was tempted to say, "And a jolly good job, too!" but he refrained from that indiscretion.

"I think we had better go back to the school," said the New House master. "I will send a man down for the car later on."

And the juniors, in company with Mr. Ratcliff, sauntered back to the gates, where they parted.

The next day Baggy Trimble brought the news that Mr. Ratcliff had sold the remains of his car at a very low price to a scrap-iron dealer, and Baggy's news proved to be correct. And although the New House master entered for the "Weekly Football" competition for several weeks after, success did not crown his efforts. Suffice it to say, his ardour for motor-driving had received a severe shock, which, as Monty Lowther expressed it, was "A jolly good job!"

THE END.

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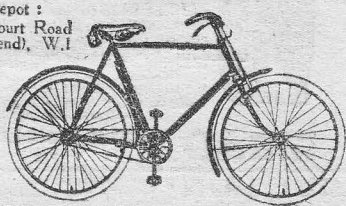
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No man or woman to-day can afford to neglect his or her hair. Thick, lustrous and beautiful hair has a definite cash value to everyone. It adds to your personal appearance, and a good appearance opens all doors to you. A woman has no charms to equal long, silken and radiant tresses of beautiful hair the



It costs you nothing to acquire a full Seven Days' Trial Outfit of the universally popular "Harlene Hair-Drill." You will be pleasantly surprised with the results of even a short course of this delightful "two minutes a day" toilet exercise. (Send the Free Coupon to-day.)

inspiration of a thousand poems. To a man healthy and well-conditioned hair gives dignity and crispness.

**ENRICH YOUR HAIR TO-DAY.**

There is no excuse to-day for any man or woman having thin, brittle, weak, or falling hair. "Harlene Hair-Drill" overcomes every kind of hair trouble, no matter from what cause it springs. It preserves the hair in health and it restores sickly hair back to health and beauty once more. Let "Harlene Hair-Drill" enrich your hair and increase its value to you. Simply send 4d. stamps for postage, and a Free Harlene Outfit will be sent to your address.

After a Free Trial you will be able to obtain further supplies of "Harlene" at 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 9d. per bottle; "Uzon" Brilliantine at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per bottle; and "Cremex" Shampoo Powders at 1s. 1½d. per box of seven shampoos (single packets 2d. each), from all Chemists and Stores, or direct from Edwards' Harlene, Ltd., 20, 22, 24, and 26, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C. 1.

**"HARLENE HAIR-DRILL" GIFT OUTFIT COUPON.**

Detach and post to EDWARDS' HARLENE Ltd. 20, 22, 24, and 26, Lamb's Conduit St. London, W.C. 1.

Dear Sirs,—Please send me your Free "Harlene" Four-Fold Hair-Creeping Outfit as described, 7/2—two 4d. in stamps for postage and packing of parcel to my address.

PENNY POPULAR 193-20.

**NOTE TO READER.**

Write your full name and address clearly on a plain piece of paper, pin this coupon to it, and post as directed above. (Mark envelope "Sample Dept.")

**NERVOUSNESS** is the greatest drawback in life to any man or woman. If you are nervous, timid, low-spirited, lack self-confidence, bluish, or feel awkward in the presence of others, send 3 penny stamps for particulars of the Mento Nerve Strengthening Treatment, used in the Navy, from Vice Admiral to Seaman, and in the Army from Colonel to Private, B.S.G.'s, M.C.'s, M.M.'s, and D.O.M.'s.—GODFREY ELLIOTT SMITH, Ltd., 287, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C. 4.

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If so, let the Girvan System help you to increase your height. Mr. Briggs reports an increase of 5 inches; Driver H. F. 3 inches; Mr. Ratcliffe 4 inches; Miss Davies 2½ inches; Mr. Lindon 4 inches; Mr. Kettle 4 inches; Miss Ledell 4 inches. This system requires only ten minutes morning and evening, and greatly improves the health, physique, and carriage. No appliance or drugs. Send 2 penny stamps for further particulars and 2100 Guarantee to Enquiry Dept., A.M.P., 17, Strand Green Road, London, N. 1.



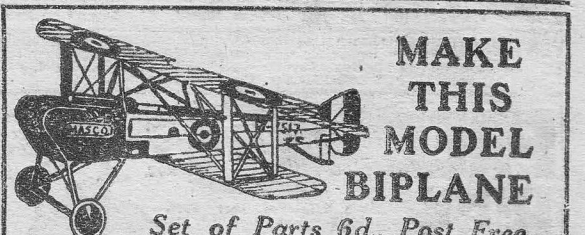
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All the latest tunes can be played on the Chella-Phone. The only Pocket Instrument on which tunes can be correctly played in any key. Soldiers and sailors love it. "Knocks the German mouth organ into a cocked hat." Post free, 1/6 each; better quality, with Silver fittings, 2/6, from the maker.

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Set of Parts 6d., Post Free.

Set of parts and instructions to make this paper model biplane, which is guaranteed to perform all the evolutions of its original, including looping, banking, and spiral nose dive. Scientifically strengthened with ribs and bracing as in actual practice. Complete with machine-gun, instrument-board, windscreen, and all movable controls. Thousands sold. Hundreds of testimonials received. Length, 12 ins.; span, 12 ins.—**THE MODEL AIRCRAFT SUPPLY CO.** (Dept. M.), Thornleigh Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

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Send this coupon with P.O. for only 5/- direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 219, Fleet St., London, E.C. 4. In return you will receive (post free) a splendid British Made 4-ct. Gold Nibbed Fleet Fountain Pen, value 10/6. If you save 12 further coupons, each will count as 2d. off the price; so you may send 12 coupons and only 5/-. Say whether you want a fine, medium, or broad nib. This great offer is made to introduce the famous Fleet Pen to the PENNY POPULAR readers. (Foreign postage extra.) Satisfaction guaranteed or cash returned. **Special Safety Model, 2/- extra.**