

THE STORY-PAPER FOR EASTER!

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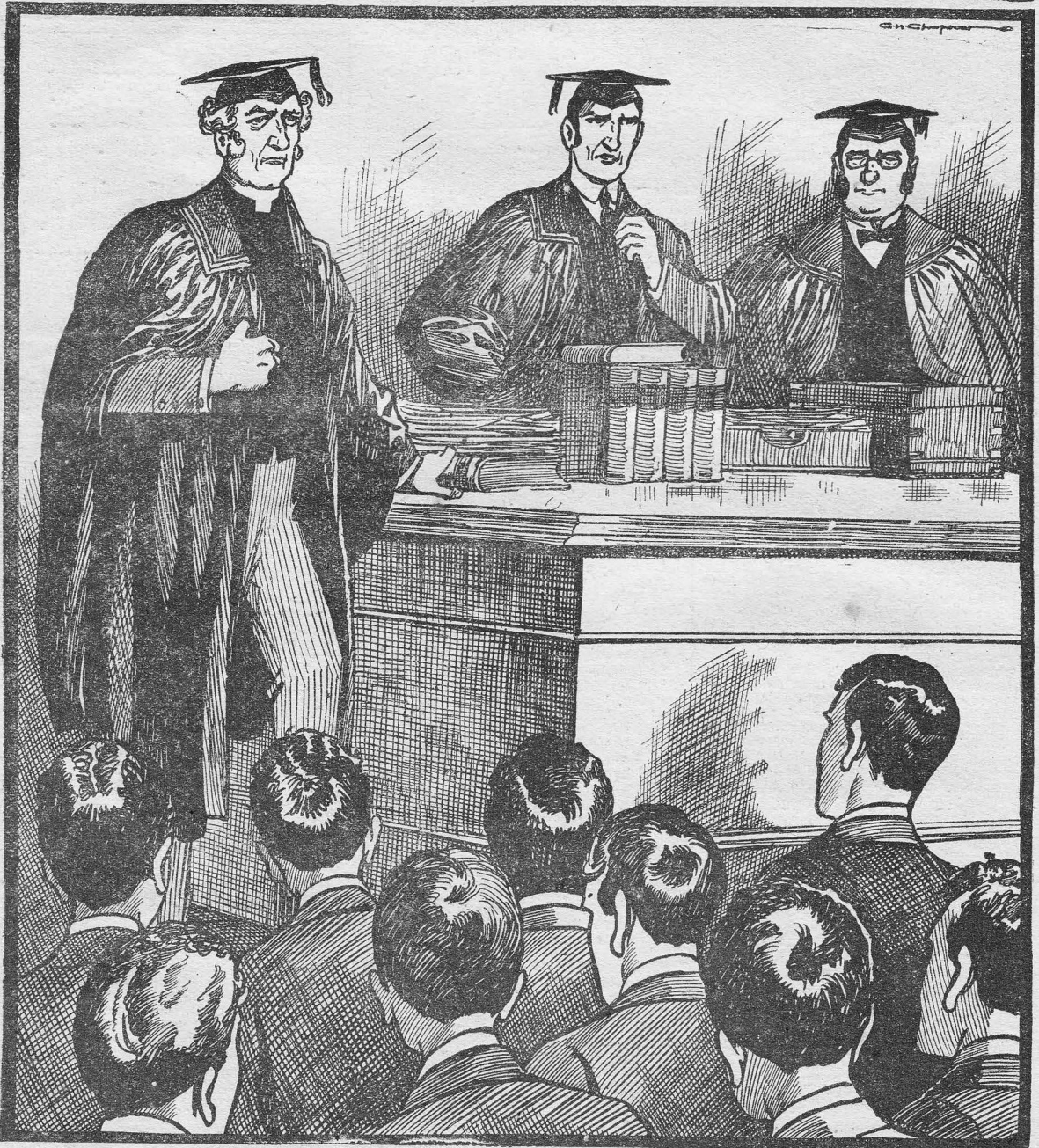
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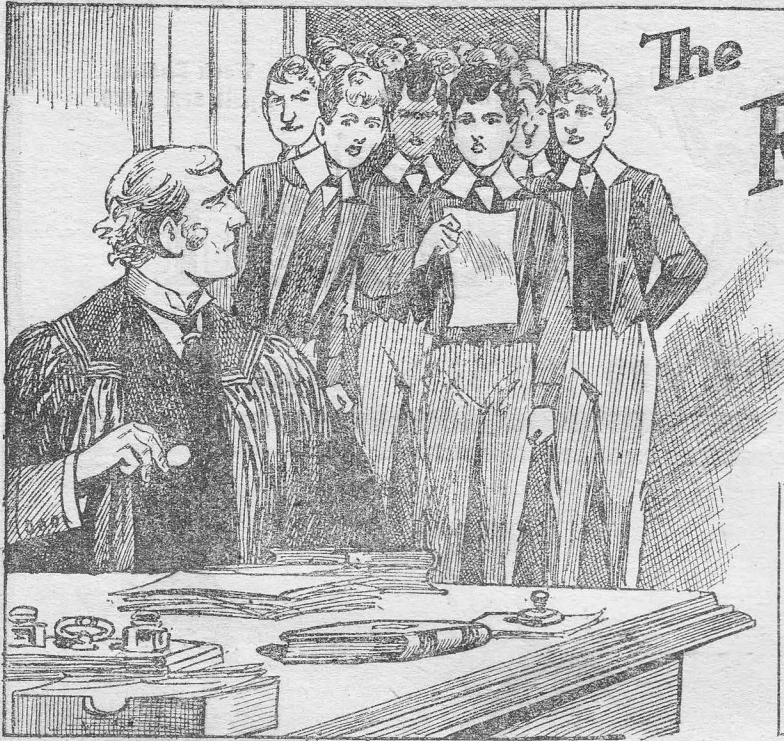
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GRAND CINEMA SERIAL AND COMPLETE SCHOOL STORIES.



**THE HEAD'S STERN DECREE!**

*(A Stirring Incident in the Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)*



# The Rebels of the Remove!

A Magnificent, Long,  
Complete Story of  
Harry Wharton & Co.  
of Greyfriars.

.. By ..

**FRANK RICHARDS.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Remove Take Action.

**G**ENTLEMEN!" Harry Wharton's voice rang through the junior Common-room at Greyfriars.

The captain of the Remove was mounted on the table, addressing a huge gathering of Removeites.

"Bravo!"

"Go it, Wharton!"

The speaker cleared his throat.

"Gentlemen," he repeated, "we are here for the purpose—"

"Well, you don't suppose we drifted in accidentally, do you?" said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton frowned the cad of the Remove into silence, and proceeded.

"We are here for the purpose of protesting against the new food regulations which the Governors have seen fit to impose upon us. For the past week or so we have been forced to eat so-called hygienic grub, which really isn't fit for cattle."

"Shame!"

A perfect howl of indignation arose.

The new food regulations, introduced by that very tyrannical person, Sir Hilton Popper, who was a member of the Board of Governors, had not been favourably received by anybody at Greyfriars, with the exception of the masters. And, although they would not have admitted it for worlds, the masters were beginning to grow tired of hygienic food.

"It's old Popper who is to blame!" continued Wharton. "It's he who drew up the new food regulations."

"He ought to be made to eat the beastly stuff himself!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Hear, hear!"

"I should like to see old Popper's face after he'd sampled a hygienic bun!" said Peter Todd. "It would be worth a guinea a box!"

"The burning question of the moment," said Harry Wharton, "is this. Are we going to take it lying down?"

And from a couple of score of juniors came the emphatic response:

"No!"

"Schoolboys never shall be slaves!" added Dennis Carr.

"Never!"

"It's really up to the Sixth to take action." Wharton went on. "But the Sixth are too chicken-hearted!"

"And the Fifth and the Upper Fourth and the Shell are just as bad," said Bob Cherry.

"It, therefore, devolves on the Remove to

get the present state of affairs remedied," said Wharton.

"Hear, hear!"

"I've got a suggestion up my sleeve," continued the captain of the Remove. "But before I put it forward I'll invite suggestions from you fellows."

There was a buzz of voices at once.

"I'm in favour of flaying Sir Hilton Popper alive!" said Peter Todd.

"First catch your Popper, and then flay him!" chuckled Dennis Carr. "Afraid your wheeze is too ambitious, Toddy. Of course, it would be ripping to make old Popper squirm; but we can't very well commit assault and battery on the sacred person of a Governor—even if we're lucky enough to get hold of him."

"Any more suggestions?" asked Wharton.

Bolsover major's jaw stuck out prominently.

"I vote we have a barring-out!" he exclaimed.

"Hear, hear!"

"That's just the thing!"

But Harry Wharton shook his head.

"A barring-out is a jolly serious step to take," he said. "We might do it as a last resource, but I think we ought to try other methods first."

"What's your suggestion, Harry?" asked Frank Nugent.

"I suggest that we draw up a petition, signed by the whole Form, protesting against the new grub."

"That's the idea!"

"We'll take the petition along to the Head, and persuade him to consider it," said the captain of the Remove.

"Good!" said Dennis Carr. "If the Head sees that the whole Form objects to the new grub, he'll get it cancelled."

"And he'll allow Mrs. Mumble to sell decent tuck, like she did before these new regulations came into force," said Dick Penfold.

"And study feeds will be permitted, as of yore," said Squiff.

"Yes, rather!"

"Those in favour of placing a petition before the Head show their hands!" exclaimed Wharton.

Quite a forest of hands went up. Everybody agreed that to petition the Head would be a very wise move. Even Bolsover major had to admit that it would be less drastic, and probably more effective, than a barring out.

"Very well, gentlemen," said Harry Wharton. "The petition shall be drawn up with-

out delay, and as soon as it's prepared I'll come round and get your signatures."

"Hurrah!"

Wharton stepped down from the table, and his four faithful henchmen—Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh—accompanied him to Study No. 1.

Taking a large sheet of drawing-paper from his desk, and a fountain-pen from his pocket, Wharton looked inquiringly at his chums.

"How do I begin?" he asked.

"My dear old bean—" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Don't be flippant, Robert! This is a serious matter. We are about to draw up a document which may become of considerable and permanent historical value."

"My hat!"

"Why not commencefully start, 'Most Worshipful and Esteemed Headmaster Sahib'?" suggested Hurree Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If we did that," said Bob Cherry, "I'm afraid the most worshipful and esteemed sahib would chuckfully sling us out on our unworthy necks!"

"I'm in favour of a simple beginning, such as 'Respectable Sir,'" said Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha! Johnny means 'Respectful'!" gurgled Nugent.

"Same thing!" growled Johnny.

"Well, if we go on at this rate," said Wharton, "we sha'n't get the dashed thing drawn up this term! I think we'll start like this: 'To the Headmaster of Greyfriars—Sir,

we, the undersigned, hereby desire to make a strong protest against the new food regulations which have been foisted upon us—"

"Sounds a bit harsh," said Nugent. "Can't you tone it down a bit, Harry?"

Bob Cherry uttered a sudden exclamation.

"I know! Let's have the petition written in verse!"

"In verse?" echoed the others blankly.

"Yes, I was reading in the paper the other day that verse had a soothing effect on the mind. If you have to approach anybody on a delicate matter, and you talk in prose, you're liable to give offence. But verse is different. It carries a sort of charm with it. And if this petition was written in rhyme, I'm sure the Head would be impressed."

Harry Wharton looked rather doubtful, but the others seemed to be struck by the wisdom of Bob Cherry's words.

"That's a ripping stunt!" said Johnny Bull, with enthusiasm.

"Personally," said Wharton, "I don't see why verse should have a soothing effect. It's more likely to ruffle the Head than to soothe him."

"You say that because you haven't a poetic soul," said Bob Cherry.

"And you're in the minority, anyway," added Nugent. "Four of us are in favour of the petition being written in verse."

Wharton shrugged his shoulders. "Who are you going to get to write it?" he asked.

"Dick Penfold, of course," said Bob Cherry. "Pen can write poetry on any subject under the sun. The other day he turned out an 'Ode to a Busted Bootlace,' and it was better than anything that Kipling ever wrote."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Bob Cherry went to the door and opened it, and his dulcet voice boomed along the Remove passage.

"Penfold!"  
"What's up?" asked Dick Russell, who was coming along. "School or fire?"

"Rats!" growled Bob. "Seen our tame poet?"

"Here I am," said Dick Penfold, coming on the scene. "What's wanted?"

"Step inside, old chap!" said Bob Cherry, giving Pen a none too gentle shove, which caused him to land on all fours in Study No. 1.

"Our airman poet," murmured Nugent, "appears to have had a forced landing. Let me assist you to rise, old sport!"

Nugent's assistance consisted of planting his knee in Dick Penfold's back.

The youthful poet rose suddenly, with a yelp of protest.

"Yow! Stoppit, you ass!"

"Look here, Pen," said Harry Wharton, "we've decided—at least, these silly duffers have decided—that the petition to the Head shall be written in verse. Think you could tackle the job?"

Pen grinned.

"I'll have a shot," he said.

"You could start off something like this," suggested Bob Cherry:

"Dear Sir,—This new hygienic grub  
Will drive us to the village pub!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Leave it to me," said Dick Penfold, seating himself at the table. "I promise you I shall deliver the goods all right."

For the next half-hour or so the Remove poet scribbled furiously. Then, after making a few corrections, he handed what he had written to the Famous Five.

"How's that, you fellows?"  
Even Wharton was impressed by the poetic petition.

The document had been worded very tactfully. There were several flattering allusions to the Head, and the whole thing was calculated to put Dr. Locke in a good humour.

"This is top-hole!" said Wharton. "I suppose I've got to read it aloud to the Head?"

"Of course!" said Nugent. "You're spokesman-in-chief. If necessary, we'll chime in now and again with a 'Hear, hear!' or a 'Bravo!'"

At that moment the tea-bell rang.

Study teas had been abolished, and the fellows now had the option of partaking of tea in Hall or going empty away.

"Come along!" said Wharton. "We'll go along and sample some hygienic cakes."

"Groo!"

"I'll leave this petition here for the present, and we'll take it along to the Head's study after tea."

"That's the ticket!"

And the Famous Five and Dick Penfold responded to the clanging of the tea-bell.

The juniors did not look back, which was rather a pity. Had they done so, they would have seen Skinner of the Remove pop stealthily into Study No. 1.

Skinner was a humorist of sorts, and he had hit upon a scheme whereby he hoped to cover Harry Wharton & Co. with ridicule.

The cad of the Remove was absent from the Remove table in Hall, but little did his schoolfellows guess where he was, or what he was doing.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### In the Lion's Den.

TEA over, the Removites streamed out into the Close.

"Now, Wharton!"

"What about that merry petition you were talking about?"

"Is it drawn up yet?"

Wharton nodded.

"I'll go along and get it," he said.

"Buck up!"

Wharton hurried along to Study No. 1 and collected the petition.

There was a big muster of Removites in the Close, and excitement was intense.

"Ready, you fellows?" asked Wharton.

"Ready—aye, ready!" said Peter Todd.

"Follow your leader, then!"

The captain of the Remove led the way to the Head's study. Taking his courage in both hands, he rapped on the door.

"Come in!" said Dr. Locke.

The door was thrown open, and at least a dozen juniors managed to squeeze themselves into the study. The remainder were compelled to watch the proceedings from the doorway and from the passage.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head, in astonishment. "What does this wholesale invasion mean?"

"We—we've come, sir—" faltered Wharton.

"I am already aware of that, Wharton! Pray come to the point!"

"We've brought you a petition, sir, and I believe I'm right in saying that it represents the feelings of the whole school."

"Indeed!" said the Head coldly. "Is it your intention to recite to me from the document you have in your hand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. You may proceed!"

Harry Wharton cleared his throat, and consulted the petition. Then he gave a convulsive start.

"My only aunt!"

"I do not wish to hear about your relatives, Wharton," said the Head. "I desire to hear the petition which you have been presumptuous enough to bring to me!"

The colour mounted to Wharton's cheeks, and he looked the picture of confusion. He tried to speak, but his tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of his mouth.

Bob Cherry nudged his chum in the ribs with his elbow.

"Pile in!" he muttered.

But Wharton remained silent.

"I am waiting, Wharton!" said the Head grimly. "Since you have been misguided enough to come to my study with a petition, I insist upon hearing it!"

The captain of the Remove spoke at last.

"I—I— There's been a mistake, sir!" he stammered.

"I am glad you realise, Wharton, that you have made a mistake in coming to me in this manner," said Dr. Locke, "but it is now too late to retract. I command you to read aloud, word for word, that which is written on the document you have in your hand!"

"Oh, crumbs! Do you really mean that, sir?"

"Most emphatically!"

Harry Wharton looked desperate, and his schoolfellows quite failed to understand his desperation. The only conclusion they could come to was that their leader had temporarily lost his nerve.

"Come, Wharton!" rapped out the Head.

The captain of the Remove pulled himself together, and took the plunge.

"Dear Sir,—We wish you'd put the stopper  
On that old tyrant, Hilton Popper—"

There was a gasp from the Head, and from the Removites, too!

"Wharton," thundered Dr. Locke, after an ominous pause, "how dare you! How dare you apply such disrespectful epithets to a Governor of this school!"

"I—I—" stuttered Wharton.

"Such conduct is unpardonable, and merits condign punishment! Pray proceed!"

And Wharton, colouring to the roots of his hair, proceeded:

"The beastly grub that's set before us  
Doth make us groan in dismal chorus.  
Hygienic cakes, hygienic toffee,  
And malted milk instead of coffee,  
Concoctions such as these, old bean,  
Don't make us fat—they make us lean!"

Harry Wharton paused. It was a terrible ordeal to have to read those verses aloud to the Head.

As for the other fellows, they gaped and blinked at the captain of the Remove with horrified expressions on their faces.

It was something quite new for the Head to be referred to, to his face, as an "old bean!"

Dr. Locke beckoned to Wharton to continue. The Head was not enjoying the recital, but he meant to hear it to the finish.

In a low tone, Wharton declaimed the remaining couplets:

"And so, with meekness and contrition,

We beg to hand you this petition.

Withdraw the new tuck right away:

Don't tell us that it's come to stay!

As for that beastly tyrant Popper,

Just hand him over to a "copper";

Or else consign him, with despatch,

To Bedlam or to Colney Hatch."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Dick Penfold.

"I didn't write that, or anything like it!"

The juniors realised the gravity of the situation, and some of them started edging towards the door; but the Head called them back.

"Is that the conclusion of the perpetration, Wharton?" he asked.

"Nunno, sir! There are four more lines!"

"Read them!"

"I—I— If you please, sir, I'd rather not!"

"Read them!" repeated the Head sternly.

And Wharton, in a scarcely audible voice, did so:

"Unless you grant us our request,

And give us grub we can digest,

We'll absolutely make things hum

At Greyfriars School! So come, sir—

come!"

For some moments after Wharton had finished there was silence in the Head's study—a silence which could be felt.

Dr. Locke spoke at last.

"In the whole course of my headmastership," he said, "I do not ever remember having been so flagrantly insulted as on this occasion!"

"Oh, crumbs! I—I can assure you, sir," stammered Wharton.

"Let me see that document which you have been reading, Wharton!"

The captain of the Remove handed over the petition.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head.

"There are upwards of forty signatures attached to this unseemly perpetration!"

"They are not ours, sir," said Bob Cherry promptly.

"Nonsense, Cherry! Your own name is second on the list."

Bob Cherry looked utterly bewildered.

"I certainly remember signing a petition, sir," he said, "but it wasn't that one."

"None of us, in fact, signed our names to that, sir," said Wharton.

The Head made an impatient gesture.

"How can you possibly deny it, Wharton, when I have the evidence here in black and white?"

"I don't know how those signatures came to be there, sir," said Wharton doggedly, "but I give you my word of honour that they are not ours."

"Same here, sir," echoed a score of voices.

The Head was impressed by the earnestness of the juniors. He knew that they would not deliberately lie to him.

"Who is responsible for this doggerel?" he asked.

Dick Penfold pushed his way forward. "Was it you, Penfold?"

"No, sir. I certainly drew up a petition in rhyme, asking you to cancel the new food regulations. But that's not the petition."

"You are sure, Penfold?"

"Quite sure, sir. I didn't mention Sir Hilton Popper in my verses, and I should never have dreamed of alluding to you as 'old bean, sir.'"

The Head looked quite bewildered.

"The only conclusion I can come to," he said at length, "is that some boy has been guilty of playing a malicious practical joke. This boy, whoever he was, must have drawn up this insulting document and forged all your signatures. He would then have substituted this petition for the genuine one."

"My hat!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"That's exactly what must have happened, sir! Before we went into tea I put the genuine petition on the table in my study. The rotter who played this trick on us probably did it while we were in Hall."

"He must be a very cunning craftsman to be able to forge all your signatures," said the Head.

Frank Nugent gave a violent start. He remembered that Skinner of the Remove was an expert at the dangerous art of forgery, and he mentally resolved to make inquiries afterwards.

Dr. Locke turned to Harry Wharton.

"I accept your assurance, Wharton, that neither you nor your companions took any part in framing this insulting document. At the same time, I cannot overlook the fact that you drew up a written protest in connection with the new food. Every boy who affixed his signature to that protest—the Head

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raised his voice so that the crowd in the passage might hear—"will write a thousand lines."

"Oh crumbs!"

"In future, if you have any complaints to make you will make them through the proper channels."

"What are the proper channels, sir?" asked Peter Todd meekly.

"You should approach the captain of the school, who, if he thinks fit, will pass the complaint on to your Form-master. He, in turn, will refer the matter to me. You have no right to resort to a wholesale invasion of my study. That is all!"

"Are the new food regulations to remain in force, sir?" inquired Dennis Carr, pausing in the doorway.

"Most certainly, Carr!" snapped the Head. And the baffled Removites, each the richer by a thousand lines, retired to their own quarters.

The Famous Five went along to Study No. 1 to discuss the situation.

"We've been fairly spoofed this journey!" said Bob Cherry. "By Jove! I'd give anything to have five minutes with the cad who forged our signatures!"

"I've more than a suspicion," said Frank Nugent, "that it was Skinner."

"Skinner!" echoed the others. Nugent nodded.

"What makes you think that, Franky?" asked Wharton.

"I've three reasons for thinking so. In the first place, Skinner's several times been found guilty of forging other fellows' signatures; secondly, he can write doggerel; and thirdly, he was the only fellow absent from the deputation which went to the Head's study."

"My hat!" gasped Wharton, impressed by his chum's line of reasoning.

"I believe Franky's hit the nail on the head!" said Johnny Bull.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry. "Let's go and have a few words with Skinner."

The Famous Five ran the cad of the Remove to earth in his study. Skinner looked uneasy as they came in.

"What do you want?" he growled.

"You!" said Wharton. "We have reason to believe that you played a low-down practical joke on us this afternoon while we were at tea."

"Right off the wicket!" said Skinner, vainly endeavouring to appear unconcerned.

"Do you deny," said Wharton quietly, "that you made out a petition, forged our signatures to it, and swopped it for one that was on the table in Study No. 1?"

"Of course! I deny it!" said Skinner sullenly. "Why should I want to do a thing like that?"

"Because it's just the sort of caddish trick that you revel in," said Johnny Bull.

Skinner was pale, but he had evidently resolved to brazen it out.

"I assure you, on my word of honour—" he began.

"Honour!" echoed Wharton contemptuously. "Why, you don't know the meaning of the word!"

Skinner was standing with his back to the window. He had not budged from that position during the conversation, and he appeared to be endeavouring to screen from view something that was on the window-sill.

Bob Cherry strode up to the cad of the Remove.

"Stand aside!" he exclaimed.

Skinner began to bluster.

"I don't see why I should be ordered about by you!" he said.

For answer, Bob Cherry gave Skinner a shove which sent him sprawling. Then he indicated to his chums a pile of copybooks which stood on the window-sill.

"What the thump—" began Nugent.

"We needn't look for any further evidence," said Bob Cherry. "There are over forty copybooks here. Skinner bagged them from the Form-room, so that he could crib our signatures."

"Phew!"

Skinner was white to the lips now.

"That's a lie—" he began.

But he got no further, for the hands of the Famous Five were upon him.

"Bring him along to the Rag!" said Wharton grimly.

And Skinner was frog-marched out of the study and along the passage.

What followed was decidedly painful for the practical joker.

Harry Wharton called an emergency meeting of the entire Form, and it was unanimously decided that the cad of the Remove should be made to undergo a Form licking.

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The sentence was duly carried out, and afterwards it almost became necessary to carry out Skinner.

That unpleasant youth had been made to realise—not for the first time in his school career—that the way of the transgressor is hard.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Young Visitors.

GREYFRIARS continued to writhe and chafe under the new food regulations which had been introduced by Sir Hilton Popper.

A few of the fellows had overcome their dislike for the hygienic fare, but the majority loathed it, and Billy Bunter was heard to declare that he was wasting away to a shadow.

Bunter's alleged loss of weight was not visible to the naked eye. But there was no doubt that the new food didn't agree with him. He preferred something more substantial.

A gloom seemed to have settled over the school, and over the Remove Form in particular. The fellows found that both their Form work and their games suffered as a result of the new conditions.

When the next half-holiday came the Remove was plunged still deeper in despondency. "We're playing Highcliffe to-day," remarked Wharton.

"Oh, help!"

"I don't suppose any of us feel like footer," added the captain of the Remove; "but we must go through with it."

"I expect half of us will faint in the middle of the game owing to lack of nourishment," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to cackle at," said Bob. "Personally, I could shed enough tears to fill all the fire-buckets at Greyfriars!"

"Cheer up!" said Nugent. "Pr'aps they'll give us something decent for dinner—something that will set us on our feet."

But Nugent's prophecy was not fulfilled. Dinner in Hall consisted of thin soup, which was supposed to contain numerous hygienic properties.

The soup was followed by a vegetable-pie, which was all right as to quality, but was sadly lacking in quantity.

To wind up with there was a semi-liquid concoction which went by the flattering name of "Greyfriars Pudding."

"If we touch any of this horrible stuff," said Johnny Bull, "we shall lose the match by about ten goals to nil."

"I should feel a bit happier if I knew what it was made of," grunted Wharton.

"Don't eat it!" almost screamed Bob Cherry, for Wharton was in the act of raising a spoonful of Greyfriars pudding to his lips.

"We don't want you to be lying ill in the sanny on the afternoon of an important match."

Wharton lowered his spoon and left the pudding severely alone. The rest of the footballers did likewise.

Harry Wharton & Co. rose from the table, feeling anything but giants refreshed. They strolled up and down in the Close, protesting vehemently against the new food, and bitterly slanging Sir Hilton Popper and all his works.

Shortly afterwards Frank Courtenay & Co. arrived from Highcliffe.

The members of the visiting team were looking very pleased with themselves; and they had no reason to look otherwise. They were fit and well fed, and were looking forward eagerly to the match.

"All hail!" said the Caterpillar, as he shook hands with Harry Wharton. "You don't look very chirpy to-day, old scout. I trust there's no illness in the family?"

"We're fed up with not being fed up," said Bob Cherry.

"Is that a conundrum, dear boy?"

"No; it's a statement of fact."

"Aren't you getting enough nourishment?" inquired Frank Courtenay.

"Not enough to satisfy a small sparrow," grunted Bob.

The Highcliffe juniors looked surprised. They knew nothing as yet of the new food regulations at Greyfriars, and they concluded that Bob Cherry was referring to a shortage of provisions in the Remove studies.

The two elevens adjourned to Little Side, where Wingate of the Sixth, who was to referee the match, was awaiting them.

A fairly large crowd had formed up on the touch-line, and Harry Wharton & Co. bucked up a little. They were glad to see

that the enthusiasm of their supporters had not completely waned.

Wharton won the toss, and he set the Highcliffans to face a stiff breeze from the sea.

Phoop!

The whistle sounded, and the ball was set in motion.

"Play up, 'Friars!"

"Pile up the merry goals!"

There was little to choose between the two sides in the first half. If anything, the Remove were a trifle more aggressive than their opponents, but they were unlucky in the matter of goal-scoring. On one occasion a shot from Harry Wharton struck the cross-bar, and a long-distance drive by Bob Cherry crashed against one of the uprights.

The teams crossed over with the score-sheet blank.

"So far, so good," murmured the Caterpillar. "We're on level terms, an' we can't grumble. All the same, I think we'll pull up our socks an' do somethin' in the way of goal-gettin'."

Frank Courtenay nodded.

The second half was barely five minutes old when the Caterpillar swung across a splendid pass.

Courtenay met the leather fairly and squarely with his right foot, and Bulstrode, in the Remove goal, was powerless to save.

"Goal!"

The Highcliffe fellows were grinning, and they returned to the attack with renewed vigour.

As the game wore on the Greyfriars' team seemed to lose energy, and after a time they went all to pieces.

The unsatisfying dinner was largely responsible for this state of affairs, and the prospect of a miserable tea in Hall did not improve Harry Wharton & Co.'s display.

During the closing stages of the game Highcliffe completely overwhelmed their opponents. They added three goals without response, thus winning by the comfortable margin of four to nil.

Frank Courtenay & Co. were hugely elated. "Not for many moons," murmured the Caterpillar, "have we so completely outplayed our Greyfriars friends. Four to nil, by gad! It's a victory to be proud of. Sixty years hence Franky, I shall thrill my grandchildren with an account of this match."

"Well, it was a walk-over for us, and no mistake!" said Courtenay.

Harry Wharton approached the Highcliffe skipper as the teams came off.

"Sorry we can't invite you to tea in the study," he said.

"That's all right," said Courtenay. "Sorry to hear that funds are low."

"It isn't that. It's these beastly new restrictions. Study feeds aren't permitted these days."

Frank Courtenay opened his eyes wide. "Do you mean to say that you're not allowed to keep grub in the studies?"

"Not a crumb!"

"Ye gods and little fishes!" gasped the Caterpillar. "Is this really a public school, or a private prison for juvenile offenders?"

"The new grub rules have upset everything," said the captain of the Remove. "That's why we played so wretchedly this afternoon. It's an awful shame that we can't invite you fellows to a study spread."

"Oh, never mind!" said Courtenay cheerfully. "It can't be helped. We'll have tea with you in Hall, if we may."

"Hear, hear!" said Flip Derwent, who had scored a couple of Highcliffe's goals, and was feeling very bucked with life in consequence. "I'm simply famished!"

"Same here," said the Caterpillar. "I've got a shockin' thirst, too. I'm simply longin' for a cup of that stimulin' an' refreshin' beverage known as tea."

But the Caterpillar's longing remained un-satisfied.

When the Highcliffe guests arrived in Hall they were each provided with a cup of Mildew's Malted Milk.

The Caterpillar took a sip from his cup; then he gulped hard, and made a wry face.

"Anything wrong?" asked Bob Cherry. "Groo! No, dear boy—nothin' at all."

"Is the milk to your liking?"

"It's top-hole!" said the Caterpillar.

But he was careful not to take another sip.

"Bread-and-butter this way!" said Johnny Bull, who was assisting to wait upon the Highcliffe juniors.

Frank Courtenay & Co. consoled themselves with the reflection that there could be nothing wrong with the bread-and-butter.



Wingate stood watching the feasters with a peculiar smile. "Carry on!" he said. There was a buzz of amazement from the juniors. "Do you really mean that, Wingate?" gasped Harry Wharton. (See page 6.)

But when they tasted it they experienced a rude shock.

"Geroooooh!" spluttered Frank Courtenay. The hygienic bread and the hygienic margarine did not appeal to his palate.

"File in!" said Dennis Carr. "There's plenty more where that came from. You've only to say the word, and we'll slice up another loaf."

"Ahem! I—I don't think I'll have any bread-and-butter, after all!" stammered Frank Courtenay.

"Neither will I, thanks," said Flip Derwent.

"But I heard you say just now that you were famished!" said Harry Wharton.

"So I was. But the feeling seems to have worn off."

"I'll have some cake, if you fellows don't mind," said the Caterpillar.

"Do!" said Frank Nugent. "Pass the cake along, Toddy!"

Peter Todd was only too thankful to get the hygienic cake out of his way. The mere sight of it made him shudder.

The Caterpillar helped himself to a slice of cake, and started operations on it. But he never finished it. On the contrary, it very nearly finished him!

"What do you think of the cake, Caterpillar?" inquired Dennis Carr.

"I've never tasted anything quite like it before," answered the Caterpillar evasively.

The rest of the Highcliffians manfully endeavoured to masticate their cake, but the struggle proved too much for them. Flip Derwent contrived to slip his portion into his pocket unobserved, and Frank Courtenay replaced his slice on the dish when nobody was looking.

Presently the Caterpillar jumped to his feet with a startled exclamation.

"My hat! I've just remembered that I've got an impot to do for Mobby, our worthy Form-master. I've got to get it finished by six o'clock. 'Scuse me, you fellows!"

And the Caterpillar nodded to Harry Wharton & Co., and hurried out of Hall.

Frank Courtenay jumped up a moment later.

"Have you got an impot to do as well?" inquired Wharton.

"Yes I clean forgot all about it until this minute."

And Courtenay hurried after his chum.

Simultaneously the remainder of the Highcliff fellows rose.

"Have you all got impots to write?" asked Bob Cherry.

There was a general nodding of heads.

"We're awfully sorry to have to tear ourselves away like this," said Flip Derwent.

"Don't mention it," said Bob politely.

A moment later the whole of the Highcliff eleven had made themselves scarce.

Frank Courtenay & Co. could stand a good deal, but the new food at Greyfriars was altogether too much for them.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### The Midnight Feast!

**W**HICH there's a trunk arrived for Master Vernon-Smith!

Gosling, the school porter, delivered that ultimatum in the Junior Common-room.

"Oh, good!" said Vernon-Smith. "Where is it, Gossy?"

"Jest outside, sir."

"Right!" We'll cart it up to the Remove dormitory.

"Want any help, Smithy?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"Yes; I shall be obliged if you fellows will give me a hand."

The Famous Five assisted Vernon-Smith and Gosling to convey the heavy trunk up to the dormitory.

The Bounder "tipped" Gosling substantially, and the porter, as he shuffled away, fervently wished that Vernon-Smith was in the habit of having a dozen trunks a day.

Harry Wharton & Co. glanced curiously at the huge trunk. It was addressed to Vernon-Smith, and it bore the label of Messrs. Steep & Costley, the celebrated Bond Street tailors.

"Having a new rig-out, Smithy?" inquired Bob Cherry.

The Bounder chuckled.

"Guess again!" he said.

"I should say you had a couple of suits of Etons and a few toppers in that trunk," said Johnny Bull.

"Well, you're wrong. That trunk contains nothing that I can wear."

"Eut it's from your tailor's!" protested Wharton.

"The label tells us that much," said Nugent.

The Bounder chuckled again.

"That's merely a piece of camouflage," he remarked. "That trunk, my sons, is full of tempting tuck!"

"My hat!"

The trunk was locked, but Vernon-Smith possessed a key that fitted it. He unlocked

it and threw back the lid, and a wonderful assortment of tuck met the astonished gaze of the juniors.

"I'm defying the new food regulations, you see," said the Bounder. "And the only way to wangle it was to arrange with my pater's butler to stow the grub in a trunk and stick my tailor's label on it, thus throwing the beaks off the scent. If the masters knew it was grub they'd either confiscate the trunk or return it to my pater."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"It was an awfully cute wheeze of yours, Smitty!" he said.

"But it'll take you weeks to get through that little lot," said Bob Cherry, indicating the contents of the hamper.

"Fathead!" said Vernon-Smith. "I'm not going to scoff it all myself. I'm going to give a big feed to-night to the whole Form!"

"Oh good!"

There was great excitement in the Remove when Vernon-Smith's generous intention became known.

The juniors had almost forgotten what jam-tarts and cream-buns tasted like. They were no longer on sale at the school tuckshop, and the various refreshment-houses in the district had been placed out of bounds.

Bed-time came at length, and in the seclusion of their dormitory the Removites expressed their gratitude in glowing terms to Vernon-Smith.

"You're a first-rate brick, Smitty!" said Dennis Carr. "It's simply ripping of you to stand a feed to the whole Form."

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows. I think we ought to erect a monument to Smitty in the Close!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My mouth's watering already at the prospect of sampling decent tuck again," said Peter Todd.

"Same here!"

"We shan't be able to start operations until midnight," said Vernon-Smith, "in case Quelchy's on the prowl!"

The juniors realised only too well what it would mean if they were discovered by their Form-master in the act of holding a midnight repast.

The Head had clearly laid it down that foodstuffs were not to be smuggled into the school, and he had intimated that severe action would be taken against any boy or boys who disregarded that order.

It seemed a far cry to midnight, and the majority of the juniors were so hungry that they would have given anything to be able to start on the good things at once.

Wingate of the Sixth came into the dormitory shortly afterwards to extinguish the lights. The captain of Greyfriars glanced at Vernon-Smith's trunk, and smiled.

"You seem to be going strong in the matter of togs, Smith," he observed. "This is about the tenth rig-out you've had this term, isn't it?"

Vernon-Smith laughed, but made no answer. "Only wish my pater was a millionaire!" said Wingate, with a sigh.

And he put out the lights, sang out a cheery good-night, and took his departure.

The time passed with painful slowness. It seemed an age before the school clock commenced to chime.

Boom!

Billy Bunter scrambled out of bed and groped for a candle.

"Buck up, you fellows!" he exclaimed.

"Get back to bed, ass!" growled Harry Wharton. "That's eleven o'clock striking—not twelve!"

"Oh crumbs!"

The disappointed Owl of the Remove got back into bed, and prepared for another hour's vigil.

A good many of the fellows had dropped off to sleep long before the midnight chimes sounded. But Harry Wharton & Co. were awake, and they turned out with alacrity, and roused their slumbering schoolfellows.

The next moment the Remove dormitory presented an animated scene.

Candle-ends were lighted up and down the room, blankets were spread out on the floor, and a party of amateur weight-lifters heaved Vernon-Smith's trunk into the middle of the open space which had been prepared.

"I rather think," said Dennis Carr, "that somebody had better be stationed on the landing, to give warning in case old Quelchy's on the prowl."

This task was allotted to Tom Dutton, and the juniors could hardly have chosen a person less suited for the duties of a scout.

There was nothing the matter with Tom Dutton's eyesight, but he had the misfortune to be very deaf, and he was not likely to hear

an enemy approaching—especially if that enemy wore slippers.

However, the juniors overlooked Dutton's deafness on this occasion. He was handed his share of the feed, and he betook himself to the landing.

The deaf junior soon became engrossed in a veal-and-ham pie. He was about half-way through it when Wingate of the Sixth came up the stairs.

Tom Dutton neither saw nor heard the captain of Greyfriars, until a heavy hand fell upon his shoulder. He then realised, with a start, that he was fairly caught.

"Dutton!" exclaimed Wingate. "How long have you been out of bed?"

"I'm not!" said Dutton sullenly.

"Eh?"

"I'm not wrong in the head! And if anybody but you suggested it, Wingate, I'd dot him one!"

"You—you—what are you doing on the landing?"

"It's a rotten shame!" said Dutton warmly.

"What's a rotten shame?"

"First you say I'm wrong in the head, and now you tell me I'm dull of understanding! It's a bit thick!"

Wingate grasped the deaf junior by the collar and shook him.

"I didn't say anything about your head, or your understanding, you silly young dunder! I want to know what you're doing here at this time of night!"

"There you go again!" said Tom Dutton. "You're saying that I'm not quite right—"

"Oh, help!" gasped Wingate. "I think I'll get a megaphone before I speak to you again!"

"Insane, am I?" shouted Dutton.

But Wingate did not heed. He released the deaf junior, and strode into the Remove dormitory.

The revellers had been too absorbed in the feed to hear the conversation on the landing. Consequently, they received a rude shock when the captain of Greyfriars came in.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bob Cherry, who had been in the act of raising a jam-tart to his mouth. "We're fairly caught this time, you fellows!"

Wingate stood watching the feasters with a peculiar smile.

"Carry on!" he said.

There was a buzz of amazement from the juniors.

"Do you really mean that, Wingate?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Of course!"

"You—you're not going to report us?"

"No. I don't hold with midnight orgies, as a rule, but in this case I consider you're not to be blamed. The meals served in Hall to-day weren't worth eating."

"Then we can go ahead, Wingate?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith eagerly.

"Yes; but don't kick up too much row, or you'll have Mr. Quelch dropping in, and I'm afraid he wouldn't take quite such a lenient view of the matter."

"Will you have a veal-and-ham pie, Wingate?" asked Squiff.

"No, thanks!"

"Try a chocolate éclair!" urged Johnny Bull.

But Wingate again declined.

"I think I'll make myself scarce," he said. "Don't keep it up too late, you kids, and for goodness' sake don't make too much of a shindy!"

And with this admonition Wingate withdrew.

"Well, that's jolly sporting of old Wingate!" said Bob Cherry. "Instead of coming down on us like a thousand of bricks, he practically gave us permission to carry on!"

"He knows how jolly ravenous we were," said Dennis Carr. "Wingate's no more in love with the new grub than we are!"

The midnight feast proceeded merrily. The juniors were thoroughly enjoying themselves, and Billy Bunter, in particular, was having the time of his life.

"Wonder why Dutton didn't give the alarm when Wingate came?" said Nugent suddenly.

"He was asleep, I expect!" growled Peter Todd. "I'll go out and have a few words with him!"

And Peter did so. He accosted Tom Dutton on the landing, and warned him that if he was again guilty of neglect of duty he would be liable to a Form licking. Peter's warning, however, was wasted on the desert air, so to speak, for Tom Dutton failed to comprehend a single word.

Ten minutes later, when the feast was drawing to a close, the Remove's sentry was again caught napping.

On this occasion the nocturnal prowler was Loder of the Sixth.

Loder had more than a suspicion that there was something going on in the Remove dormitory, and the sight of Tom Dutton, blissfully munching jam-tarts on the landing, confirmed the prefect's belief.

Ignoring the deaf junior, Loder stepped into the dormitory. His eyes glittered as they lighted upon the feast and the feasters. "I thought as much!" he said grimly. "You young rascals have deliberately broken the Head's latest order! You have smuggled food and drink into the school!"

"Bow-wow!" said Bob Cherry.

Loder scowled.

"Get back to bed at once, all of you!" he rapped out.

The feasters, taking their cue from Harry Wharton, did not stir. They continued to squat on the floor in Red Indian fashion, and they carried on as if they were quite oblivious to Loder's presence.

"Do you hear me?" snarled Loder.

"Wish they'd put more jam in these doughnuts!" murmured Vernon-Smith. "I've been dissecting this one for five minutes, and there isn't so much as a splash!"

"Try one of these maids-of-honour," said Dick Penfold. "They're ripping!"

Loder glared at the apparently unconcerned juniors; then he stole towards Harry Wharton, and jerked him to his feet.

"Get to bed at once!" he said angrily. And he gave the captain of the Remove a savage push in the direction of his bed.

Harry Wharton realised that further resistance would only mean serious trouble, so he reluctantly obeyed the prefect's command, and the rest of the juniors did the same.

"You'll hear more of this in the morning!" said Loder, as he turned to go.

"I say, Loder," said Billy Bunter, "don't be a beast, you know! We had Wingate's permission to carry on with the feast!"

"What?"

"That's so, Loder," said Bolsover major. "Wingate was here himself ten minutes ago, and he said we weren't to blame for smuggling stuff into the school. He agreed with us that the new food was rotten!"

"Oh, he did, did he?" said Loder. "I'll see about that!"

And the rascally prefect, after confiscating the remnants of the feed and ordering all the candles to be extinguished, strode out of the dormitory.

One thought was uppermost in Loder's mind.

He would make things unpleasant for Wingate. So unpleasant, in fact, that the captain of Greyfriars would be in danger of losing his job.

Wingate had aided and abetted the law-breakers of the Remove, and Loder saw a splendid chance of getting his old enemy into serious trouble. He had been looking for this chance for months past, and now it had come!

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER. A Stern Sentence.

NEXT morning, during the interval between breakfast and morning school, the Head summoned a general assembly in Big Hall.

Loder of the Sixth had not allowed the grass to grow under his feet. He had given the Head a full account—with embellishments—of the events of the previous night, and he had made matters as black as possible for Wingate.

"There's going to be trouble!" remarked Dennis Carr, as the Removites filed into their places in Big Hall.

"All I hope is that poor old Wingate doesn't get it in the neck," said Bob Cherry. "If he does, we'll make things warm for Loder!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

As the unpopular prefect took his place in the ranks of the Sixth somebody in the Remove started to hiss.

Others joined in, and Loder looked—and felt—very uncomfortable. But he tried to console himself with the reflection that he had done his duty.

As for Wingate, he guessed that trouble was brewing, but he awaited events with his usual calmness.

No sooner had the hissing ceased than the Head came in.

Dr. Locke was looking unusually stern as he made his way to the raised dais at the end of the hall.

"My boys," he began, without beating about the bush, "I regret to say that my

recent order, namely, no foodstuffs were to be smuggled into the school, has already been set at defiance. I am informed by one of the prefects—the whole school seemed to be glaring at Loder—that a disgraced organ took place last night in the Remove dormitory."

Silence followed the Head's remarks. Nobody seemed to have anything to say.

After an ominous pause Dr. Locke continued:

"I have many times remarked that the Remove is the most unruly Form at Greyfriars, and recent events have not caused me to change my opinion. Only the other day I had occasion to award impositions to practically the entire Form; and I now find that the entire Form has again transgressed. For disobeying my express commands, the Remove will forfeit the next half-holiday!"

Bob Cherry gave a sepulchral groan. "I'd rather have had a licking any day!" he murmured.

"Same here!" muttered Nugent. "The Head's come down heavy, and no mistake."

"Unfortunately," continued Dr. Locke, "the matter does not end there. I have been informed, Wingate, that you went into the Remove dormitory whilst this orgy was in progress, and that you made no effort to check it. Indeed, you are alleged to have openly encouraged the members of the Remove Form. Is that correct?"

"Quite correct, sir," answered Wingate quietly.

The Head looked very distressed.

"I am very disappointed in you, Wingate," he said. "I was counting upon your whole-hearted support in the matter of the new regulations."

"I'm sorry to have to say so, sir, but I regard the new food regulations as a scandal!"

"Wingate!"

"I was quite prepared to back them up in the first place, and give them a fair trial," Wingate went on. "But they've proved a ghastly failure! It's horribly unfair to foist all this hygienic stuff on to us! I'm not saying that you're to blame, sir. It was one of the Governors, I believe, who introduced this new system. And all I can say is that he ought to be made to live on the new food himself!"

"Hear, hear!"

A great shout of approval followed Wingate's speech.

The Head raised his hand, enjoining silence. "Enough!" he said sternly. "I am sorry to see you adopting this rebellious attitude, Wingate. It is not in keeping with your position as captain of the school. Are you prepared to retract what you have said?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"Then I have no alternative but to deprive you of the captaincy."

"Very well, sir!"

There was a buzz from end to end of Big Hall.

"Wingate sacked!" gasped Dennis Carr.

"We live in stirring times!" murmured Peter Todd.

"Wonder what's going to happen next?"

Once again the Head raised his hand for silence.

"A new captain will be elected in the course of the next few days!" he announced. "Meanwhile, let me warn you all that if there is any further breach of the new food regulations I shall take very strong measures against the offenders. The school will now dismiss!"

Harry Wharton & Co. streamed out of the Hall in a far from chastened mood. They were feeling ripe for revolt. The Head had referred to the Remove as the most unruly Form at Greyfriars; and the Removites meant to live up to their reputation.

"There's Loder!" said Squiff suddenly, as the lanky form of the prefect emerged into the Close.

"Mob him!" shouted Bob Cherry.

Forgetful of the fact that Loder was a prefect—forgetting everything save that he had been guilty of a despicable act of sneaking—the juniors made a combined rush towards the cad of the Sixth.

Loder saw them coming, and he saw, too, that they meant business.

"Keep off, you cheeky young cubs—" he began.

But Harry Wharton & Co. were out for scalps. They closed in upon the unpopular prefect, and Loder would undoubtedly have received a very rough handling had not Wingate intervened.

The ex-captain of Greyfriars thrust his way through the throng of excited juniors.

"Stand back, you kids!" he exclaimed.

"You can't lay hands on a prefect, you know!"

"But he deserves to be lynched, Wingate!" protested Dennis Carr.

"No doubt he'll get his deserts one of these days!" said Wingate grimly. "But you must draw the line at mobbing a prefect in the Close! Stand clear, all of you!"

The Removites obeyed. They liked and respected Wingate, and they liked and respected him still more because of the fearless stand he had made in the matter of the new food regulations.

Loder was not at all grateful to his benefactor. Instead, he turned upon Wingate with a snarl.

"Keep your distance!" he exclaimed.

"Nobody asked you to interfere, you cad!"

"Be careful!" said Wingate, the colour mounting to his cheeks. "If you call me a cad again—"

"The cap fits, and you can jolly well wear it!" said Loder. "You're a cad and a rank outsider!"

Smack!

Wingate's open palm smote his enemy on the cheek with a report like a pistol-shot.

The juniors waited breathlessly for Loder to retaliate, but the cad of the Sixth evidently realised that he was no match for Wingate, for he turned on his heel and walked away.

Shouts of derision followed Loder as he went.

"Yah!"

"FUNK!"

"Come back and take your licking!"

But from that time onwards Loder was very careful to keep out of Wingate's way. He had too much respect for Wingate's hitting powers to wish to come to blows with him.

There was great excitement at Greyfriars that day, and the fellows found it extremely difficult to give their minds to lessons.

George Wingate had fallen from his high estate, and the burning question of the hour was:

Who would be Wingate's successor?

Needless to state, the Removites fervently hoped that it wouldn't be Gerald Loder!

THE END.

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

## CATCHING THE TRAIN!

A SHORT STORY OF ST. JIM'S.

"COME on, Gussy, you fathead! We shall lose the train if you're not pretty quick!"

Jack Blake of the Fourth Form shouted the warning to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy as the swell of St. Jim's was putting the finishing touches to his toilet.

"Weally, deah boy, a fellah must make himself presentable for an occasion like this afternoon's!"

"You'll do!" snapped Digby. "You don't want to spend all—"

"Come on, you chumps! It's time we were off!" cried Tom Merry, looking into the study at that moment.

Tom Merry & Co. and Jack Blake & Co. were going into Wayland that Saturday afternoon to see a special performance of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Wayland Theatre, and there was only one train from Rylcombe which would land them there in time.

"Kildare and the others will be waiting for us at the station!" said Manners. "Buck up!"

"I'm quite weady!" declared D'Arcy.

"Thank goodness for that! Come on!"

The Fourth-Formers left the study, and the whole party hurried down to the quad. They had been ordered to meet Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, and two or three other prefects who were going to the theatre, at Rylcombe Station, the Sixth-Formers being responsible for the juniors.

They were just about to emerge into the road when a small Second-Former ran up to them, and said that he had a message from the captain.

"Out with it, kid!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"We're in a hurry!"

"Kildare said he was going to look over that empty house, the Gables, for a friend

on his way to the station," said the Second-Former; "and if he is still there when you get there you are to wait."

"All right!" said Tom Merry.

The juniors hurried along to the Gables, a large house in its own grounds, which had stood empty for some time. They hurried up the path, and saw that the front door was slightly open.

"Evidently he's still here!" said Jack Blake.

"Let's go in and hurry him up!"

Tom Merry & Co. and the Fourth-Formers pushed open the door and entered the empty house.

"Kildare!"

The name echoed through the empty place in a curious manner, but there was no answer.

"Kildare!"

Two or three of the chums shouted together as they entered a big, lofty room on the second floor. Suddenly there was a bump against the door, and Blake swung round just in time to see the door being closed upon them.

In a flash he darted at the knob and pulled, his chums rushing to his assistance. They were just in time to prevent the key being turned in the lock.

"Figgins!" roared Monty Lowther, as the door was wrenched open again, and the long-legged leader of the New House chums stood before them, with Kerr, Fatty Wynn, and a number of their supporters.

"You rotters!" shouted Tom Merry.

"Into 'em, chaps!"

The chums of the School House dashed at the New House fellows, and in a moment a wild and whirling battle was in progress.

"Yarooogh!"

"Yooooo-ooop!"

The echoing shouts and the scuffling feet on the bare boards of the empty house seemed to fill the place with noise.

"Shove 'em into the room, and lock 'em in!" cried Monty Lowther.

Most of the School House fellows had pretty well mastered a New House fellow by this time, and one by one they were hurled into the empty room in which Tom Merry & Co. had so nearly been imprisoned.

"Turn the key—quick!" cried Jack Blake.

Click!

The door was locked, and Figgins & Co. were prisoners in the empty house.

"Now we shall have to run like the wind!" exclaimed Manners. "We shall hardly catch the train as it is!"

The juniors set off down the road at their best pace, the shouts of the New House fellows following them.

The School House fellows were in a terrible state. They had had no time to straighten themselves up; their ties were flowing in the breeze, collars were torn, and Gussy's silk hat looked the worse for wear.

Kildare and the rest of the Sixth-Formers were standing at the entrance to the station when the juniors dashed up, and they gasped in astonishment.

"You young bounders!" cried the captain.

"What the dickens— Come on—quick! The train's in!"

The whole crowd rushed on to the platform and bundled into the first carriages they saw. The last of the juniors were only just in when the train moved off.

"We've caught it, deah boys!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Yes; right in the neck!" groaned Monty Lowther, fingering one of the broken button-holes of his collar.

The journey was spent in brushing each other down, and repairing damages as far as possible.

As for Figgins & Co., they spent nearly two hours in captivity in the empty house, and their remarks about the School House chums were decidedly uncomplimentary.

"Better luck next time!" said Kerr, when they were at last released.

"Brrrr!" was Figgins' comment.

THE END.



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, in response to an anonymous letter, he visits an opium-den run by a Chinaman, Li Chang Foo, and meets Alec P. Figg, who attempts to blackmail him, but without success. The film company goes on location, where Floyd Unwin, the Broadworth star, is to perform a death-defying feat before the cameras. He is to ride a motor-cycle over a high cliff into the sea, but the opium habit, to which the star is addicted, has undermined his nerve, and he is unable to do the stunt. He insults Mr. Broadworth, and is ignominiously fired out of the company. Seizing his opportunity, Micky leaps on to the motor-cycle, and, shouting to the camera-men, shoots over the cliff to the sea below!

(Now read on.)

#### Micky's Cool Cheek.

THE members of the Broadworth Film Company had stood by in surprise and consternation watching Micky as he creered down the grassy slope to the cliff edge on the motor-cycle.

But directly the lad had leaped into the air and had gone hurtling down towards the sea a hundred feet below, they rushed, with exclamations of apprehension, to the spot where their cameras were stationed, and whence a good view of the water could be obtained.

Partly through luck, and partly through good judgment in heeling the motor-cycle over as he made his daring leap, Micky kept clear of the heavy machine during his fall.

The bike was smashed into a mass of twisted old iron on a jutting rock, and it was by sheer good fortune that Micky shot into deep water.

He hit the surface of the sea headforemost and at a slight angle, shooting a column of spray high into the air. He had the good sense to keep his head well down and his chin tucked in, otherwise he would have broken his neck, in all probability, with the force of his fall.

As it was, he shot to the surface again like a cork, and a great cheer arose from the cinema people as they saw the plucky lad striking out strongly from the rocks towards a strip of sandy beach farther down the coast.

Heavy clothes have the tendency of keeping the wearer up for a short time before they become too sodden, and the motor-coat lent buoyancy to Micky at first.

He shot towards the shore, riding the crest of one of the huge Pacific rollers, and willing hands quickly dragged him from the water. Mr. Broadworth, Jeff Romery, and Buddy Gaylord were the first to greet him, running into the waves up to their knees to haul him out.

No sooner had Micky's feet touched the dry sand of the beach than Mary Maidstone and other members of the company flocked round to congratulate him on the fortunate outcome of his daring feat.

But Mr. Broadworth soon dispersed the knot of cinema workers.

"Stand aside," he cried, "and let the lad go and get a change of clothing. You, Buddy, lend him a rig from the props you brought down, then get the hood up on the automobile, so as he can change in comfort inside the car."

When these arrangements had been carried out, and Micky had changed into a dry suit of an advanced American cut, the film-producer sent for him again.

The company by this time were trekking back to the railway station, so the only two others present at the interview besides the principals were Buddy Gaylord and Jeff Romery. Both they and Mr. Broadworth

wore serious expressions on their faces, though Buddy seemed to be keeping the twinkles from his eyes with the greatest difficulty.

Micky quailed as he met the searching eyes of the great K. N., peering through those bizarre tortoiseshell spectacles, without which the producer had never been seen by the members of his company.

"Now, young Denver," said Mr. Broadworth, in deep, solemn tones, "how dare you smash my splendid old motor-bike!"

Micky had guessed he was in for a flating of some kind, but he had expected nothing like this. He was completely nonplussed, and all the carefully thought-out reasons he had intended to give the producer vanished clean out of his head.

"I—I didn't think, sir," he began, stammering—"er—that is to say, I'm very sorry about the bike and all that, but—"

"A splendid motor-bike smashed to smithereens!" mused the film-producer, interrupting him. "Now, tell me, kid, what made you do such a goddamned crazy thing as to ride the thing over the cliffs?"

Micky's eyes scanned the producer's face. He had an inkling that the boss of the studios was gently pulling his leg, while anxious, nevertheless, to discover the real motives which led to the daredevil ride.

Micky suddenly felt a great sense of confidence in himself. After all he had done well, for he had heard Jeff Romery, the chief director, remark as he was pulled from the water that the cameras had recorded the scene "in dandy fashion."

"See here, Mr. Broadworth," he said, "I did that dive on the motor-bike because I'm after the job of stunt actor to the company."

"What?"

It was Mr. Broadworth's turn to be surprised now. His eyes seemed to be starting through his spectacles, while Jeff and Buddy concealed huge smiles with the palms of their hands.

Having taken the initial plunge, Micky did not hesitate

"I heard you tell Unwin, sir," he went on, "that the abandonment of the filming for the day would cost you a whole heap of money, and so, as the cameras and everything else were ready, I decided to do the stunt myself. You've fired Unwin, so you'll want someone to take his place. Why not let me have a shot at the job, sir?"

"But, my dear boy," cried Mr. Broadworth, "I can get scores of experienced cinema stunt actors in Los Angeles! And what experience have you had of film work?"

Micky's face fell a little, but he held doggedly on.

"Not much, certainly, sir," he admitted, "though I've practised facial expressions before the glass at home for months. But, then, I've been a circus acrobat for years, and I'll do any old neck-breaking stunt you

set me if only you'll let me act for the films."

Mr. Broadworth could restrain himself no longer, but joined Buddy and Jeff in a series of loud chuckles. Then he laid his hand affectionately on the shoulder of the young English lad.

"I'll bear your application in mind, Micky," he said. "As a matter of fact, you did me a good turn in doing that dive to-day, and saved the company a tidy wad of greenbacks in the process. Floyd Unwin himself couldn't have done the stunt better, and he was one of the best men in the profession until he started ruining his nerves with the dope habit. However, we must talk it over properly later. It's time we were getting back to Cinema City."

Mr. Broadworth and Jeff Romery were going back to town in the motor-car, so Micky and Buddy Gaylord took their departure for the railway station to look after their properties.

As they strode briskly along Buddy chuckled audibly several times. Finally, in response to a question from Micky, he gave the reason for his mirth.

"Waal, if you don't take the whole biscuit factory, kid!" he cried. "Fancy tapping K. N. for the billet o' stunt star to the great Broadworth company. Ha, ha, ha! Why, that job's worth a thousand bucks a week, and is one o' the biggest plums o' the whole cinema profession! By gum, if cool cheek was money, Rockyfeller wouldn't be in it alongside o' you!"

#### The Three Letters.

THAT evening, as Buddy had some business to attend to in the office of the film company, Micky set off home from the studios alone.

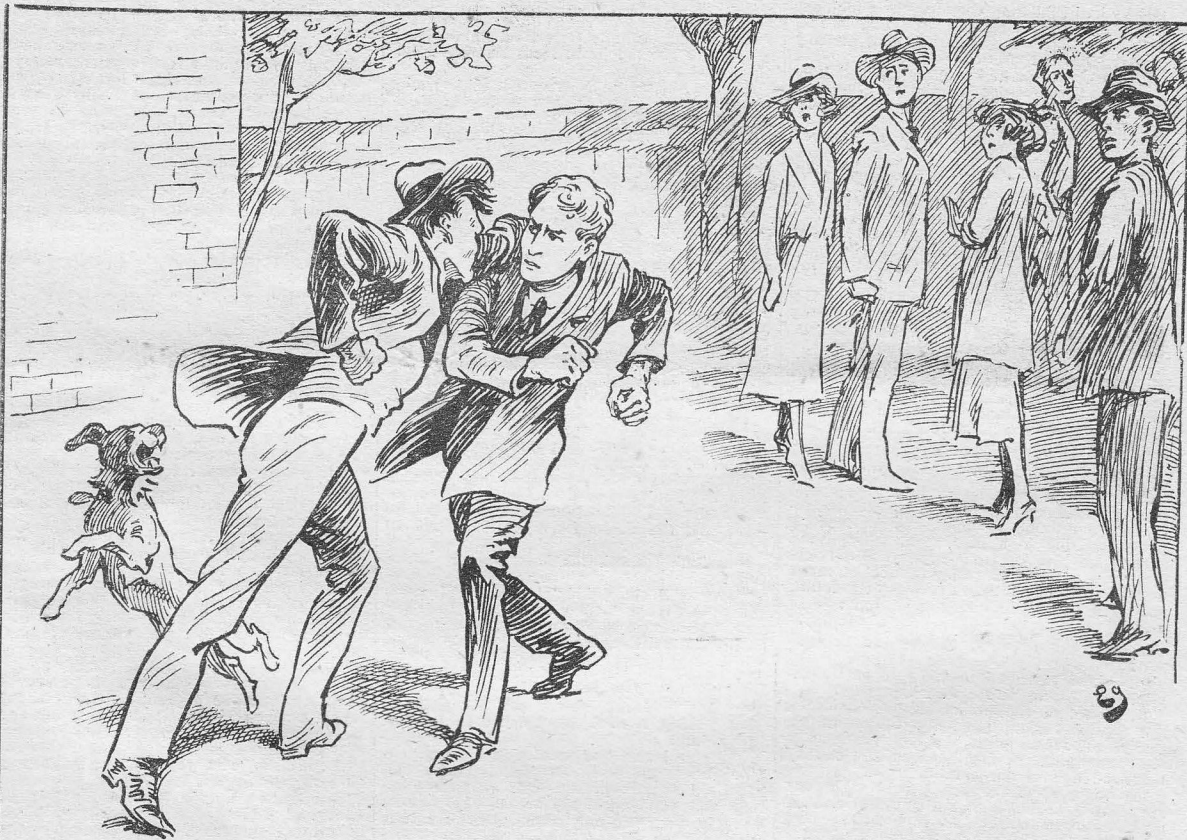
As usual, Chappie came dashing out of the house to greet him, and Micky went round to the pleasant garden to find Mrs. Gaylord. The good housewife, who also held the position of "studio mother" to the Broadworth company, was engaged in the task of picking the oranges and other fruit for the salad which always appeared on the menu of the evening meal.

Beyond informing her that Buddy would be along soon, and that they had had a pleasant day on location, Micky told her nothing, and it was only when the genial little property-man himself appeared ten minutes later that she learned of Micky's wild ride over the cliff on the motor-cycle.

The good woman by this time regarded Micky almost as her own son, and it was with wet eyes that she upbraided the lad on his foolhardiness. Nevertheless, both Mr. and Mrs. Gaylord secretly experienced no little pride on account of the death-defying feat of their young protege, which was fast becoming the talk of all Cinema City.

After the fruit had been plucked, and whilst Ah Mee, the old Chinese servant, was





Unwin lashed out with all his force. Micky ducked, and the blow passed the side of his head. Next moment he caught the ex-film star round the knees, and shot him clean over his shoulder. (See page 11.)

preparing the meal, Mr. and Mrs. Gaylord and Micky sought their favourite wicker chairs in the beautiful garden behind the house.

Chappie sat in his usual place beside Micky, resting his head on the lad's knee and gazing up with affection in his brown, expressive eyes.

The scent of flowers hung in the warm air, and the setting sun was gilding the San Gabriels with living purple fire.

It was during this restful period before dinner that the cinema workers discussed the trials and triumphs of the day, and Micky learned many an interesting fact and wrinkle about the film business.

After Buddy had twice recounted the thrilling events of the day on location, and had nearly laughed himself hoarse over Micky's "all-fired cheek" in applying for the job of star stunt actor to the company, Mrs. Gaylord launched into a description of how she had refused over thirty applications for "vamp" jobs at the studio during the morning.

A vamp, according to the language of the studios, is a villainess, and Mrs. Gaylord's pet aversion was the type of female who appeared on the lot with pallid, painted cheeks and blackened eyelashes, looking as "vampirish" as possible whilst seeking employment.

But the motherly woman's indignation melted away suddenly as another matter occurred to her.

"Good gracious!" she cried. "I did not tell you about the letters that arrived for you this morning, Micky!"

"Letters?"

"Yes, two of them! Run in and get them from the hall. Ah Mee is busy!"

Micky hastened indoors, wondering greatly from whom the letters might be. Since taking up his residence at the home of the genial property-man, he had only received one letter before—the anonymous note warning him of impending danger.

Not having any friends who were likely to write to him, it was with a certain amount of apprehension mingled with his excitement that he secured the two missives.

The address on the first envelope was in

the bold, round handwriting of a woman; the address on the other was typewritten.

As Micky entered the dining-room Buddy and Mrs. Gaylord came into the house.

"Here, Micky," said Buddy, skimming a blue envelope across to the lad, "I was told to give you this, but I was going to save it until after dinner for you."

Micky began to feel a very important person indeed. Three letters in one day was a mail if you like!

He examined the letter Buddy had thrown to him first. Embossed on the envelope was the name of the Broadworth Film Company.

Could this be the great film-producer's reply to his application of the afternoon? He hardly dared open the missive to see.

As his fingers tore the flap Ah Mee entered the room bearing a dish of "clam chowder," steaming hot and cooked to a turn. Micky thrust all three letters into his jacket-pocket. "I'll read 'em after dinner!" he announced.

"Don't mind us; there may be something important," said Mrs. Gaylord, who was considerably more curious to know what was in the three letters than Micky himself. "You'll only have them on your mind all through dinner."

Buddy laughed cheerily. "I should have dinner first," he said; "then the news, whatever it is, won't spoil your appetite!"

"Don't be so foolish, Buddy," said Mrs. Gaylord, "trying to frighten the boy like that! Micky, I insist that you open those letters so as you can get your dinner in peace!"

Buddy watched his opportunity, and closed one eye in the direction of Micky. With a smile the lad drew the first letter from his pocket, opened it, and read it quietly to himself.

A flush of delight crept into his face.

Mrs. Gaylord watched him in silence, though hardly able to contain her feminine curiosity. When Micky began to read the note for the second time she could restrain herself no longer.

"Is the news good, Micky?"

"I reckon so," said the lad. "Guess who the note is from?"

"Don't be so tantalising, you young scamp! Give it up!"

"Mrs. Charlie Chaplin!"

"Bless my soul!" cried Mrs. Gaylord. "Now I can guess the rest. The Chaplins have returned from Boston, and they want you to go to tea at their studios again!"

"Right!" cried Micky.

"When are you to go, kid?" asked Buddy, as delighted as his good spouse at the news.

"To-morrow afternoon!"

"Then I guess I must give you a holiday for the occasion," said Buddy. "Now, mind, you must take Chappie along with you this time, and put him through his tricks."

"I'll take him, never fear!" said Micky. "Mr. Charlie Chaplin shall see his famous waggie-walk performed by his namesake, sha'n't he, Chappie?"

Chappie looked up from the cushion on which he had settled himself, gave a short bark of assent, and curled up again.

Hardly had Micky finished the first course of his dinner than Mrs. Gaylord suggested that he should read his other two letters.

Micky tackled the typewritten one first, saving the communication from the film company until the last.

Inside the envelope was a dirty half-sheet of coarse notepaper. Typed on it in bold capital letters were the words:

**"ONE THOUSAND BUCKS.—THURSDAY."**

No name was appended, but there was no need for one. Well did Micky know from whose hand the missive had emanated.

For some seconds he stared at the note in silence, lost in thought. His buoyant spirits seemed to be oozing from his very finger-tips.

His visit to Li Chang Foo's opium den, and his meeting with Alec P. Figg, the crook, had seemed only a particularly unpleasant dream. Now again he was thoroughly awakened to his precarious position, and to the danger that overshadowed him.

Unless he paid a thousand dollars to Smart Alec on Thursday evening the crook would inform the sheriff of the robbery which had been committed in the circus in Liverpool, and how Micky had evaded the British police.

Micky had told Figg the story in a moment of confidence when he had been unaware of the nature of the man, and he had bitterly regretted his indiscretion ever since.

Almost he wished he had a thousand dollars to pay as hush-money to the unscrupulous crook, now that he had fresh hopes and prospects of success on the films.

However, he could not raise a hundred dollars, leave alone a thousand, so matters, however unpleasant, would have to take their natural course.

Micky was flushed and confused when he raised his head to face his guardians.

Both Buddy and Mrs. Gaylord noticed how troubled he was, but despite their curiosity, they were too considerate to embarrass the lad further by questioning him.

Not wishing to divulge the contents of the missive he had received, and thus needlessly worry the good-natured couple, Micky sought refuge by opening the third of his letters.

A low cry of astonishment escaped his lips, for, as he did so, out fluttered a banknote for one thousand dollars!

He retrieved the money from the floor, and with trembling fingers unfolded the accompanying letter.

"Dear Mr. Denver," it read,—"Enclosed please find an appreciation in a substantial form of the service you rendered the Broadworth Film Company to-day by performing a most daring high dive on a motor-cycle. I shall be pleased to engage your services for six weeks for one film production at a remuneration of one hundred and fifty dollars per week on the following conditions:

"A.—That you shall perform any acting or athletic feats required of you during that period.

"B.—That you shall confine your entire services to the Broadworth Film Company.

"C.—That at the end of the period stated the company shall have the option of re-engaging your services for five years at a minimum salary of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars per annum.

"If this proposition should meet with your approval, I shall be glad if you will call at my office at ten-thirty a.m. to-morrow.

"(Signed) KENNEDY N. BROADWORTH,  
"Managing Director."

Micky stared at the letter, then at the banknote again, hardly able to believe his eyes.

Then a wild whoop left his lips. He leaped to his feet, snatched up Chappie from the cushion, and waving a thousand-dollar bill in the air, began a wild dance of delight.

Buddy and Mrs. Gaylord looked at the lad in amazement.

"A thousand dollars!" cried Micky, waving the note aloft and spinning round on one foot.

Unfortunately, old Ah Mee had just come into the room bearing a dish containing a lobster. The old Chinaman went flying one way, to sit down with a resounding thump; the lobster went sliding in the opposite direction across the polished wooden flooring.

Micky stopped suddenly in his gyrations to help the unfortunate Chink to his feet.

"That's all right," said Ah Mee, rubbing himself with one hand and retrieving the lobster with the other. "I don't care velly much me—lobster no hurtee!"

"Really, Micky, I think it is quite time you explained your extraordinary conduct!" cried Mrs. Gaylord reprovingly. "You've had some good news, I suppose?"

"Good news!" echoed Micky. "I should say so! Read this!"

He handed Mrs. Gaylord the letter from the great film-producer, and the good dame adjusted her glasses and slowly read the communication aloud.

As the reading of the note proceeded the round faces of Buddy and his genial spouse were comical to watch.

At the conclusion, Mrs. Gaylord rose from the table, and before Micky could divine her intention she had enfolded him in a strong, motherly embrace.

When Micky, with ruffled hair, finally escaped, he noticed that the eyes of the good dame were wet with tears, but they were tears of joy at the good fortune of the lad whom she had come to regard almost as her own son.

Buddy, meanwhile, remained seated at the table, first examining the letter bearing the signature of the great "K. N." and then scrutinising the thousand-dollar banknote.

That anything much would arise from Micky's bold application to the producer

after the feat of the afternoon he had not believed for one moment; and even when the producer had casually requested him to hand a letter to the lad he had not thought much of the matter.

He had hoped and expected that Micky would get a rise of a few dollars a week for his pluck and initiative, but the idea that the unknown English lad might leap to fame in the cinema-world practically in a day just through the seizing of one fleeting opportunity had never so much as entered his head.

"By gum!" he muttered. "It's a fair knock-out! It sartly looks as though you were going to fill Unwin's shoes for a time at least, Micky—unless, o' course, K. N. had a bad touch o' the sun when he wrote this."

"Anyway," said Micky, "you can bet I'm going to keep that appointment at the office to-morrow morning."

"Of course you are, kid, and I wish you success from the bottom o' my heart! I opine now you've got a proper start you'll go ahead like a prairie-fire. Still, it's a bit o' a shock to find we've a real live film star in the home. I hope you won't outgrow the old place too soon, though, my boy."

"Why, what difference will it make?" cried Micky. "You've both been so jolly decent to me, I'm sure I shall never want to leave here—that is, not as long as you want me to stop!"

But Buddy shook his head rather doubtfully.

"Time will show, kid," he said. "I guess you've got your head screwed on the right way, but success sure plays some queer japes on her favourites at times!"

#### The Big Four!

EXCITEMENT drove all thoughts of sleep from Micky's head that evening.

Instead of turning in at a reasonable hour, as was his usual habit, he practised facial expression and film-acting before the full-length mirror in his room, Chappie being the only witness, and a rather bored one at that.

The lad had no doubt about his ability to hold down his new exalted position. He was a clever acrobat, and he hardly knew the meaning of physical fear.

Moreover, he had clear-cut features and wavy hair, which reproduced well on the cinema-screen. This he knew, although he had never seen projected a picture of the "mob stuff" in which he had appeared, for Jeff Romery had told him that he registered well.

During his service with the Broadworth Film Company he had kept his ears and eyes wide open, and had made friends in all the various departments connected with the studios.

He had thrown himself heart and soul into his work, and when the opportunity for advancement had come he had made the most of it.

The Goddess of Luck had played her part in associating the lad with such a man as Kennedy N. Broadworth, who was as broad-minded as any film-producer in California, always ready to adopt the most startling innovations in his business if they promised a goodly measure of success.

It was, of course, sheer generosity and a desire to encourage the plucky English youngster that had induced him to send the banknote for a thousand dollars. Most film-producers having to pay for such a feat would have considered a tenth of that sum an ample reward.

With his banknote snugly tucked under his pillow, Micky at last fell into a sleep in which he dreamed he was leaping from an aeroplane to another in mid-air in an attempt to escape from Smart Alec, Monkey White, and Li Chang Foo, who were all after his thousand-dollar bill!

On the following morning, in the presence of Kennedy N. Broadworth, Buddy Gaylord, Jeff Romery, and the company's solicitor, Micky signed an agreement to act for the films for a period of six weeks, at a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars a week.

The news had spread like wildfire throughout the studios, and the members of the company flocked to offer their congratulations.

Mary Maidstone, the Broadworth star, whom Micky had saved from the surf at Santa Monica, was among the number, and the youngster had to pinch himself to make sure he was really awake as he realised

that he would soon be appearing on the films with this charming young actress whose name was a household word the world over.

Of course, there were one or two people who felt jealous and sore at the success of the unknown English lad, but they were people of no account, and Micky took no notice of their sour looks nor of their churlish remarks that it was "sheer gold-durned luck" which had helped him into the shoes of Floyd Unwin.

Reginald Clarence Eton, late in coming on the lot as usual, strolled up in immaculate apparel and wearing a wonderful orchid in the lapel of his coat, to have a few words with the new Broadworth star.

"Heartiest congratulations, dear boy!" he cried. "This is a pwopah wise in the world—eh, what? Have you seen the papahs this morning?"

"No. Why?"

For answer, the famous dude of Film-land drew from his hip-pocket a roll of morning newspapers which he had brought up with him from Los Angeles.

Micky gasped with amazement, for in each of them was a large headline and a paragraph about his dive on the motor-cycle into the sea on the previous day.

The astute reporters had heard the story of Unwin's dismissal, and of the daring feat of the English lad, and, being short of other copy, had featured the subject.

"Jumping mackinaws! You won't know us soon, Micky!" exclaimed Buddy Gaylord, his round face beaming as he peered over Reggie's shoulder and read the glowing accounts of his young protegee.

Then, having finished reading the notices, he took hold of Micky's arm affectionately and led him away.

"Now, you toddle right off home, kid," he said. "You're no longer a property-man's assistant, and Jeff says there will be nothing doing for you in the filming line until to-morrow. And, don't forget, when you go to the Chaplins this afternoon to take little Chappie along with you and put him through all those dandy tricks o' his."

"All right, I'll take him, Buddy!" laughed Micky. He glanced round. "Why, where's he got to?" he cried. "He came up with us this morning!"

Micky had quite forgotten his four-footed little friend in the excitement, but he had not far to seek him.

Chappie was in the middle of a little group of the studio people, sitting up begging for his usual rations of sugar and biscuit which Mary Maidstone, Reggie Eton, and others brought up for him.

That the intelligent little dog had not been completely spoiled since he had been in the habit of accompanying Micky to the studios was a wonder! On several occasions, however, he had crept away surreptitiously, lured by sugar in the office, and Micky had had to reprove him for disobedience to orders.

The lad gave a shrill whistle, and, catching a last piece of sugar with a dexterous snap Chappie gave a rueful glance round at the cinema people and bounded across to his young master.

With the little dog at his heels Micky turned to leave the lot, and as he did so a man came walking swiftly through the gateway.

It was Floyd Unwin, late stunt star of the Broadworth company. He had come to see Mr. Broadworth as arranged, and had just met one of the workers of the outfit, who had told him the latest developments as far as Micky was concerned.

He recognised the lad at the same moment that Micky recognised him.

With a snarl Unwin darted forward and grasped the youngster's arm. He released it with an oath a moment later, though, as Chappie, baring his teeth and emitting a savage growl, leaped forward.

Directly Unwin stepped hurriedly back Chappie took up a position between Micky's feet. His wiry coat was bristling and his head was cocked on one side. His whole attitude seemed to say, "I'm watching you, me fine fellow, so be careful what you're up to!"

Floyd Unwin's lips curled into a sneer as he faced the English lad. His cheeks were sallow and his eyes, despite their flash of scorn, were dark and hollow, telling only too plainly that he had been seeking solace in the nerve-wracking opium-pellets.

"So you've wormed yourself into my shoes, you British whelp?" he snarled. "I guessed you were loafing to K. N. all along!"

"You know that's not true, Unwin," replied

Micky calmly; "and had you not been—er—relieved of your job I shouldn't have dreamt of trying to do you out of it."

Unwin ignored the remark altogether, and his hands clenched and unclenched as though he were experiencing the greatest difficulty in keeping them off the lad.

"I thought K. N. had more horse-sense than to cotton on to a pup like you!" he went on. "If I hadn't I'd have slaughtered you long ago!"

Micky flushed hotly, but he had no desire to row with the ex-film star. The man had had a serious set-back in his career, and was out of temper in consequence. Therefore, Micky had no desire to rub the misfortune in.

"I'll wish you good-morning, Unwin!" he said quietly. "Come on, Chappie!"

"Say, I guess I'm not letting you beat it quite so easily, young Johnny Bull!"

Unwin threw out his hand, and pushed Micky back violently.

At once Chappie snapped at the irate ex-cinema star, and his sharp teeth fastened on the foot of Unwin's trousers.

"Get out of it, you all-fired mongrel!" yelled Unwin.

With that he swung his other leg round and caught the dog a heavy blow in the ribs.

Boris Beauman, the circus proprietor, had once done a similar thing in Liverpool with unfortunate consequences to himself.

Chappie, whose ideas of fair play differed somewhat to those of his young master, immediately took a fresh hold on Unwin's leg, but Micky ordered him away.

Letting out a roar like a wounded lion, the ex-film star jumped to his feet.

Mary Maidstone, Reggie Eton, and several others who were walking across to the studio, turned round sharply at the sound.

But they only caught a confused glimpse of what happened next, for the whole fracas was over in a couple of seconds.

Unwin lashed out with all his force. Micky ducked, and the blow passed the side of his head. Next moment he caught the ex-film star round the knees, and shot him clean over his shoulder.

Unwin hit the ground with a heavy bump, and sat up dazed, and with all desire to fight knocked out of him. Perhaps he realised that after his bouts with the opium-pipe he was no match for the clean-living English lad, and meditated revenge in some other way at a later date.

For a few moments Micky stood regarding the fallen star, with his arms folded across his chest. Then, seeing that Unwin had no intention of mixing things again for the time being, he turned on his heel, and left the company's lot.

Micky was genuinely sorry to feel that he had an enemy in Floyd Unwin.

He had seen the late star of the Broadworth outfit in several photo-plays at the picture-palaces in the Old Country, and had conceived a strong admiration for the man. Therefore, it had been a bit of a shock to him when he had met the actor in real life, to find all his best endeavours treated either with open hostility or silent scorn.

Unwin's continual enmity had not been aroused by any fault on Micky's part; but the lad, who was friendly and open-hearted by nature, felt the situation none the less keenly.

But the day was too sunny and bright to allow unpleasant thoughts to hold sway for long, so Micky resolutely put Unwin out of his mind.

Instead, he called to mind a pleasanter topic. He had never forgotten the seaman, Dicky Riecky, of the tramp steamer Plunger, and now he was in the position of being able to repay in a measure the kindness of the man.

Riecky, it will be remembered, had given Micky a sealed envelope when the lad had announced his intention of escaping from the ship in New York harbour. That envelope had contained twenty dollars—a good send to the lad in those days—and Micky had vowed then that he would repay the good-natured seaman the money with interest at the first opportunity. Now was his chance.

Only Ah Mee was at home when Micky arrived at the house, and the lad went at once to the writing-bureau and penned a letter to his former friend and shipmate, stating that he was enclosing a hundred-dollar money-order.

The Plunger, he knew, would put into San Francisco sooner or later after knocking about the ports of South America, so he addressed the letter to that city, with a request

that it should be held pending the arrival of the ship.

Then off he went down town to change his thousand-dollar bill and despatch the letter.

How Micky lived through the remainder of that day he never really knew. He was seething with suppressed excitement, and as the time drew on for him to present himself at the Chaplin studios his impatience could not be contained.

He gave Chappie a splendid hot bath, made a careful toilet himself, and prepared to take his departure.

Both Buddy and Mrs. Gaylord were still at the studios, and so only Ah Mee was present to see him on his way. The old Chinaman entered into the lad's festive spirit, brushed his hat for him, and offered him Buddy's best Sunday go-to-meeting gold-handled walking-stick.

Ah Mee was convinced that Micky was going to meet a "velly nice lil' gal," and, remembering his own youthful days amid the lotus-flowers and pagodas of his native land, he was duly sympathetic.

Very spic and span indeed then did Micky and Chappie look as they set off to keep their appointment.

No one seeing the lad as he entered Los Angeles two or three months before as a down-and-out hobo, would have recognised him now! As for Chappie, he would have taken the shine out of many a pedigree dog in appearance, even if he wouldn't have gained much commendation from the judges at a dog-show!

The lad was expected at the Chaplin studios, and conducted at once to the pleasant, well-kept lawn near the dressing-rooms, where tea was being served.

Mrs. Chaplin was officiating at a white-spread table, at which four other persons were also sitting. One of these Micky recognised at once, for it was none other than the one-and-only Charlie Chaplin himself.

Charlie had just been appearing in a scene, and was wearing the famous clothes, boots, and little black monstache associated with his name the world over.

"I'm real pleased to see you, Mr. Denver!" said Mrs. Chaplin, rising and extending a hand in greeting. "You know my husband, don't you? My other guests you haven't met before, I believe, but I guess you've heard of them!"

Micky greeted Mr. and Mrs. Chaplin and looked at the others, who had also risen to their feet.

Then Micky almost collapsed with embarrassment and delight.

Two of the guests he recognised at once; they were Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. The fourth was introduced to him as D. W. Griffith.

He was in the distinguished company of the Big Four of Filmland.

When Micky got over his initial shock at meeting the galaxy of world-famous film stars he sank into the seat which Charlie Chaplin offered him, feeling a sense of delight and importance such as he had never experienced in his life before.

It was Mrs. Chaplin—better known to movie lovers as Mildred Harris—who first took notice of Chappie.

Micky himself had intended to introduce the little terrier to Charlie in correct style on his arrival, but he had been too overwhelmed by the presence of the remainder of the Big Four to remember his four-footed friend.

"I'm so glad you brought your dog, Mr. Denver!" cried Mrs. Chaplin, patting little Chappie's head. "I suppose he's fond of sweet biscuits?"

"I should just say he is, Mrs. Chaplin!" said Micky, glad to have such a topic to chat upon whilst he regained his composure. "And sugar, too! But please don't give him anything yet. He never used to have food at all during meal times, but he's being spoilt now. When we go out on location everybody feeds him, and he's getting very badly behaved in consequence."

"Oh, I'm sure he's not!" exclaimed Mary Pickford. "He's as good as gold!"

"By the way, Mr. Denver," said Mr. D. W. Griffith, the great film-producer, "I met my friend Broadworth at luncheon to-day, and he told me he is starring you in his new production. Say, you've climbed to the top of the tree wonderfully fast, my boy, and you're to be congratulated heartily on your success. A splendid achievement—eh, Duggie?"

"I should say so!" responded Fairbanks. "And I, for one, shall attend the trade show of the first screen production in which Denver appears."

"And I, too!" affirmed Mary Pickford.

"And I!" said Mrs. Chaplin.

Whilst Charlie held up his right hand and looked appealingly at the charming actress who was his wife.

"Please take little me, too!" he piped.

Micky flushed with pleasure. That Douglas Fairbanks, the film star whose wonderful stunts had thrilled picture-goers in every part of the globe in which the cinema had penetrated, and these other famous folk of Film-land, should signify their intention of attending the first screening of the film in which he was to make his debut was an honour indeed!

This graceful tribute to the newest star in their constellation made the lad mentally resolve that, come what might, he would throw his whole soul into the work before him to make the new Broadworth production a credit to himself, the company, and the whole cinema profession.

Naturally, it was very difficult for Micky to get anything like a correct perspective of his change of fortune. To him it all seemed like some very pleasant dream from which he might awaken at any moment to find himself back among the tinsel and sawdust of Beauman's Gigantic Circus instead of in sunny California.

Many a time in the Old Country had Micky seen winsome Mary Pickford and the daring Douglas Fairbanks on the screen, but little did he imagine in those days that he would ever be seated at the same tea-table with them as an equal and fellow film star and the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Chaplin!

The conversation, as might be expected, was chiefly "shop," but Micky delighted to listen to these famous stars discussing their film experiences. Not in the least was he disappointed in them as he had been in Floyd Unwin; but as his eyes wandered ever and anon to the dainty Mary Pickford sitting opposite him, he could scarcely credit that this pretty fair-haired woman was at the head of a big film company, and earning approximately an income equivalent to £300,000 a year.

He had seen her many a time on the silver screen in such charming photo-plays as "Daddy Long-Legs," when she had, with consummate skill, played the part of a young girl of fifteen or sixteen. Yet had Micky noticed very closely, he would have caught the thoughtful shades which rested at times upon her face, telling of all the hard work and responsibility of which the general public had no conception.

Micky was anxious to hear some details of the thrilling life of Douglas Fairbanks, but the great stunt actor was as close as a clam about his own work.

Mr. Griffith, however, told of one little incident relating to the visit of Fairbanks to a small western town in the shadow of the Rockies, when a local "badman" was terrorising the place.

Duggie set out to scotch the nuisance, and by a clever ruse disarmed him. Then the film star placed his own six-shooter against his badman's vest button, and told him to say his prayers. Although the man knew it not, the pistol was not loaded; but Fairbanks had another charged with blank, which he kept concealed behind him.

When the few minutes of grace allotted to the badman had elapsed, Duggie fired his concealed revolver with a deafening report, at the same time giving the rogue a playful jab with the other six-shooter.

A loud yelp left the throat of the man, who was convinced he had been mortally piped. When he discovered that no harm had come to him his surprise and relief was comical to see. But he never forgot the lesson he had received, and from that date he became quite a respectable citizen.

All present were greatly amused when Micky told them how he had first got a footing in the cinema industry in Los Angeles.

As tea was being finished a suppressed excitement took possession of Micky. He glanced every now and again at Chappie sitting quietly at his feet, and then at the illustrious company surrounding him. He was anxious to put the little dog through the tricks he had been taught.

Micky wanted to see the astonishment of the Big Four, including the great Charlie himself, when Chappie rose on his hind legs and gave his exhibition of the well-known Chaplin waddle-walk.

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

## Unmuzzling Towser.

A SHORT STORY OF ST. JIM'S.

"HURRAH!" George Herries, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, suddenly jumped from the chair in which he had been sitting, and commenced a wild dance round the study.

Blake, Digby, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy were busy at prep, and they looked up angrily as their chum disturbed them.

Herries was waving a newspaper round his head, and his eyes were gleaming excitedly. "Hurrah!"

Blake snorted.

"I'll hurrah you!" he said sharply. "Sit down, you giddy ass, and let a chap do his prep!"

"Rats!" shouted Herries excitedly. "Greatest news of the year! Hurrah! Oh, my hat! Ripping!"

Blake & Co. grew interested. There must be something exceptionally interesting in the newspaper for George Herries to get so excited. The local paper, as a rule, contained little of interest to the juniors of St. Jim's.

"What's the giddy news?" asked Blake. "Has the pvice of clobber come down?" queried Arthur Augustus D'Arcy eagerly. "That M.P.——"

"No, by Jove! Talk about clobber, you ass, when the greatest news of the year is here—in black and white!" almost shouted Herries.

Blake did not make any further verbal effort to ascertain the reason for Herries' excitement. He snatched the paper from his chum's hand, and peered eagerly at the print. D'Arcy and Digby looked over his shoulder.

Their eyes opened wide as they scanned the paper, for they could see nothing of untoward interest. But Herries suddenly thrust an inky finger between their heads, and jabbed excitedly at a small paragraph.

"Muzzles can be taken off dogs in Sussex!" he shouted.

Blake crumpled the paper in his hands, and threw it at his joyful chum.

"You silly ass!" he said witheringly. "Eat lot there is in that!"

"I veward that as anothah mistake of the Government!" observed D'Arcy, in disgust. "Dogs like Towzah should always be muzzled, in my opinion!"

"And, in my opinion, dummies like you should be slain and stuffed!" snorted Herries. "I'm going to take Towser's muzzle off right away!"

And George Herries left the study and hurried away to the kennels.

Blake looked at his chums when he had gone, and winked one eye.

"Do you chaps remember what happened when Towser was muzzled?" he asked.

"Yas, wathah, deah boy!" said Gussy. "Towzah led us a feahful chase——"

"And perhaps there'll be another little show when he's unmuzzled!" said Blake, with a chuckle. "Come on! Lets gather up Tom Merry & Co., and go down to the kennels!"

"About prep——"

"Blow prep!" growled Blake. "That can wait!"

Three minutes later Jack Blake & Co. and Tom Merry & Co., the leaders of the Shell, were on their way down to the kennels, where all the canine pets of the fellows at St. Jim's were kept.

They had anticipated fun, and they were not disappointed.

Towser had not taken kindly to the muzzle which the law had forced Herries to put on him. And, not unnaturally, Towser's temper had suffered. He crawled out of his kennel as he heard his master's footsteps, and growled.

"All right, old chappie!" said Herries soothingly. "I've come to take your muzzle off for good!"

Towser did not understand that. But he licked his master's hand in gratitude when the muzzle was removed from his head. Then he waited for Herries to fix the chain to his collar.

But Herries did not have a chain in his hand. He dropped the muzzle, and caught it beautifully with his right foot as it

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descended, sending it soaring through the air—to land at the feet of the juniors who had come to watch.

Towser stood quite still. He could not as yet understand. But it seemed to dawn upon him very suddenly that the hated muzzle was gone for good when Herries, with his hands thrust deep in his pockets, walked off, whistling him to follow.

For a moment Towser stood still—but only for a moment. Then, realising that he was free, he emitted a deep growl, and rushed for his master.

Herries grinned as he saw his pet's excitement.

"That's the first decent thing the Government's done since the giddy war ended, isn't it, old chap!" he said complacently. "All right, Towzy— Get off, you beast— Ow!"

Towser leapt for Herries, probably with the intention of licking his face. But Towser was a heavy dog, and his newly-gained freedom seemed to give him added strength, for his leap took him to Herries' chest.

Down went Herries to the ground with a bump.

"Ow! Yow-ow-ow!" roared Herries.

"You——" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. "That's for being kind to Towzy!"

Towser snatched Herries' cap from his head, and raced off, worrying it as a terrier worries a rat. The juniors stood and roared at the fallen Herries, which only added to the junior's wrath.

"I'll muzzle the beggar again!" roared Herries. "The beast! Here, Towzy!"

But Towzy refused to hear. He dropped the cap at last, and raced back towards the juniors. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who disliked Towser, muzzled or unmuzzled, took cover behind Blake.

"The beast! He'll teah our bags!" said D'Arcy, in alarm. "Hewwies, deah boy— Look out, Blake!"

Blake looked out—and so did Tom Merry & Co. Towser seemed to have gone mad. His teeth were showing, and his eyes were glinting.

The juniors ran towards the School House as if their lives depended upon their getting inside the building before Towser reached them.

Figgins & Co., coming out of the New House at the moment, saw the muzzleless bulldog racing after the running juniors, and promptly gave the alarm that Towser was mad.

"Mad dog!" roared Figgins. "Shut the doors!"

"He isn't mad!" shouted Herries, frantically running after his pet. "Here, Towser! Towzy! Good dog! Beast!"

But Towser was too fat to keep up the pace very long. In a few minutes he was "blown," and as the juniors arrived at the steps of the School House he lay down in the quadrangle.

It needed quite a lot of persuasion on Herries' part, however, to convince the juniors that Towser's excitement was purely joy.

"Of course, Towser, being an intelligent dog, understands that he'll no longer need a muzzle!" he wound up loftily. "Towzy has brains!"

"Then it's a good job for Towser's brains that nobody with a gun saw him so joyful!" said Tom Merry warmly. "I'm sorry for Gussy's bags now Towser's unmuzzled!" And so was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy!

THE END.

READ

THE BOY KING OF ROATURA!

BY

MAURICE EVERARD.

JUST STARTING

IN

THE BOYS' FRIEND.

## "Stop, Thief!"

A SHORT STORY OF ST. JIM'S.

"WILL you have ze bill, sir?"

A foreign-looking waiter asked that question of Baggy Trimble, who was seated at a table in the Cafe Royal at Rylcombe.

It was a half-holiday at St. Jim's, and the fat junior, hearing of the new teashop which had opened in the village, had determined to pay it a visit. He was in that uncomfortable state commonly known as "stony"; but that little fact did not deter him. Quite a quantity of tuck had found its way into his capacious mouth, and he was leaning back comfortably in his chair when the waiter's question roused him with a start. "Oh—ahem—certainly!" replied Baggy, with an inward tremor.

The waiter made a swift calculation, and handed the junior a bill.

"Eight shillings, sir!" he said, with a gracious smile.

The egregious Baggy fumbled in his pockets, knowing full well that he did not possess the price of one jam-tart, but his luck seemed to be in. An elderly stranger walked into the shop, and the waiter hurriedly made over to him. That was Baggy's chance! Grabbing his cap, he boited for the door, and rushed out. As he did so the waiter chanced to turn round, and nearly jumped clear of the floor when he saw his late customer disappearing.

"Stop, thief!" he yelled excitedly. "You have not payed ze bill!"

But Baggy, if he heard those exclamations, heeded not. He was bolting as fast as his legs would carry him.

The waiter, muttering under his breath, clutched at a carving-knife from the counter, and gave chase.

"Stop, thief!" he roared, red with fury. "Stop him—ze fat boy!"

A crowd had collected, and the waiter's cries spurred them to action.

Baggy Trimble nearly dropped dead in his tracks when he saw the number of people after him. He ran as he had never run before; his breath came in spasmodic gasps. "Stop him!"

"Oh dear!" gasped the junior. "This is awful!"

He cast a wild and despairing glance round. To his relief he could see the figures of three juniors wearing the school colours; but they were some distance away, and a thick and sluggish stream divided them from the fat junior. The crowd were closing in when Baggy threw a hasty backward glance over his shoulder. He decided to chance the stream.

Splash! The slimy, green waters closed over his head, and he blindly struck out for the opposite bank. His pursuers halted on the other bank, gesticulating wildly. Foremost amongst them was the waiter brandishing the carving-knife.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther, who had witnessed the chase, rushed forward, and helped the dripping junior up the bank.

"Save me!" wailed Baggy. "Don't let him kill me!"

"What's the trouble?" asked Tom Merry. Baggy hastily explained, and the Terrible Three laughed heartily.

"Serves you jolly well right!" said Tom Merry. "It was a rotten thing to do! I suppose we had better square the foreign bouncer. See, here he comes!" The waiter was coming towards the group at a run; he had made a circuitous route by way of the bridge. As he drew nearer Baggy Trimble, squelching mud and water at every step, boited once again.

Tom Merry soon restored the waiter to a normal state, and appeased his wrath when he offered to pay the bill.

With a bow and a burst of foreign jargon the waiter withdrew.

The juniors soon got to know of Baggy's latest escapade, and he was chipped unmercifully.

It was with a feeling of relief that he heard, a fortnight later, the new shop had closed down as a non-paying concern. But his dreams were for some time troubled by the excited face of the foreign waiter as he brandished the carving-knife!

THE END.



# THE SIEGE OF THE END STUDY!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

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

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Under the Shadow.

**"THIEF!"** The hideous word was howled in at the keyhole of the end study. Jimmy Silver started violently. A rapid patter of footsteps in the passage followed. Whoever had yelled that taunt at Jimmy Silver had beaten a prompt retreat. But Jimmy did not rise. He was seated in the study armchair, his elbows on his knees, his chin in his hands in an attitude of utter dejection. Lovell and Raby and Newcome, his chums, were in the study. They were silent. Their faces were pale and troubled. For some time there had not been a word uttered in the study. The taunt howled in at the door broke a grim, oppressive silence. Only Lovell made a movement towards the door, but he paused. Jimmy Silver looked up at his chums at last. His face was deadly white. "You believe it?" he asked, in a strange, dry, husky voice. Lovell groaned. "Oh, Jimmy!" There was a tap at the door, and it opened. Rawson of the Fourth looked in hesitatingly. Jimmy Silver smiled bitterly. He had always been friendly with the scholarship junior, and had stood by Rawson against the snobs of Rookwood—Morrington, Townsend Topham, and the rest. Had Rawson come to taunt him now? "Jimmy!" said Rawson. "Go it!" said Jimmy Silver, with a curling lip. "I didn't expect it from you, Rawson; but go it!" Lovell clenched his hands. "Better not!" he muttered. "You don't seem to catch on," said Rawson quietly. "I haven't come here to go for you, Jimmy. I just caught Gower in the passage; he had been yelling in your study. I heard what he said." "What all Rookwood will be saying soon!" muttered Jimmy Silver. "I banged his head against the wall," said Rawson. "Gower's nursing his head now. Surely you don't think I believe it, Jimmy?" The captain of the Fourth looked at him curiously. "You don't?" he asked. "No." "You haven't heard the evidence, then?" "Hang the evidence!" said Rawson stoutly. "I don't believe a word of it!" "My pals do!" said Jimmy bitterly. "I—I don't!" muttered Lovell. "I—I can't! But—but—" "But—" stammered Raby. "How did the note get there?" muttered Newcome. "Oh, Jimmy!" "I saw Mr. Bootles come away from here,

with Bulkeley and Neville and Beaumont," said Rawson. "I think he's gone to the Head. The fellows are saying—" He hesitated. "Look here, Jimmy, it's all rot, and you've got your pals to stand by you. I don't know just what's happened. Tell me. Morny & Co. are chirruping over it; they seem to have got it all from Beaumont of the Sixth. I've heard it from them. They say Beaumont missed a banknote from his study—" "That's it," said Jimmy. "It was missed about the time you went to his study to fetch his footer for him—" "So he says." "And it was found on you," said Rawson. "Yes." "Well, I don't believe it, for one—" "That par's true," said Jimmy Silver. "The banknote was found on me right enough." Rawson started. "Found on you! Oh, Jimmy!" Jimmy smiled—a bitter smile. "Now you agree with the rest!" he remarked. Tom Rawson drew a deep breath. The information was staggering; but his loyal faith in Jimmy Silver did not waver. More than any other fellow at Rookwood, probably, the scholarship boy had learned to know Jimmy Silver's sterling qualities. The fellow who had stood by him generously and helped him in his uphill fight at Rookwood, was not the kind of fellow to steal. "I don't agree with anybody, Jimmy, who thinks you took Beaumont's banknote," he said quietly. "I'd believe it if you told me yourself, not otherwise." "But—but—" said Lovell. "The five-pound note was found in my jacket," said Jimmy. "It had been slipped in through the lining from the pocket—there's a hole in the lining." "How did it come in your pocket?" "I don't know." "You didn't put it there, of course?" "No." Lovell and Raby and Newcome exchanged haggard looks. Their faith in their study-leader was founded as upon a rock. But Jimmy's statement was staggering. How had Beaumont's banknote come into his pocket if he had not put it there? "Don't give in, Jimmy," said Rawson. "I believe you, anyway! So do these chaps!" "Do they?" muttered Jimmy. "Yes," said Lovell. "I—I do! But—but how did the banknote come there, Jimmy? Tell me that. It was found there." "Somebody put it there, as I didn't." "But who?" "Beaumont, I suppose. It was his." "Beaumont—a prefect of the Sixth! Oh, Jimmy!" "Hold on!" said Rawson. "Look here,

Beaumont is a prefect; but we all know the kind of fellow he is. He's a rotter all through, and he has always been down on Jimmy for not standing his bullying. If Beaumont searched Jimmy, he might have slipped the note into his jacket, and pretended to find it there." "He didn't search Jimmy. He refused to." "Who did, then?" "Bulkeley." "Oh, Bulkeley!" said Rawson, discouraged again. "Bulkeley's all right." "The note was in my pocket before I was searched," said Jimmy Silver. "That's clear enough. Somebody put it there. It was Beaumont's note, and he dislikes me—he always has. I suppose he managed it somehow." "But he couldn't!" muttered Lovell. "He couldn't get at it while you're wearing it." "I know he couldn't." "Then it must have been put in in the dorm," said Rawson. Lovell shook his head hopelessly. "Beaumont don't know his way about our dorm well enough to find Jimmy's jacket in the dark and put a banknote into it," he said. "Somebody would have woke up. He wouldn't have risked it—he couldn't." "I know it sounds steep," said Jimmy Silver miserably. "I don't say that's the explanation. I only say I never saw the note in my life till Bulkeley pulled it out of my jacket half an hour ago." The door opened, and Bulkeley of the Sixth looked in. His face was very grave. "You're wanted, Silver!" he said. Jimmy rose. "Follow me to the Head's study," said Bulkeley, and he strode away. His usually kind voice was as hard as iron. It was easy to see what Bulkeley believed. Jimmy Silver, without a word, followed him from the study. Lovell made a restless gesture. "It can't be true!" he muttered. "Jimmy must have been mad if he did it!" "He didn't do it!" said Rawson. "But how did the note get there? You know as well as we do that Beaumont couldn't have come to our dorm last night and found Jimmy's jacket in the dark—" "It doesn't seem possible," admitted Rawson. "Then how—" "I don't know. But I know Jimmy Silver's innocent, and I'm standing by him," said Rawson quietly, "and I think you, as pals, will stand by him, too." "We shall stand by him," said Raby. "But—but—" Topham of the Fourth looked in, grinning. "I hear there's goin' to be a sackin'," he remarked. "Quite a ceremony, by gad, for gettin' rid of a thief—Yaroooh!"

As if moved by the same spring, Lovell and Raby and Newcome jumped at Top-ham. The Nut of the Fourth went reeling into the passage under a shower of fierce blows, and he fled, yelling, along the passage. There was no doubt that the Co. would stand by Jimmy Silver. But it was with heavy hearts.

### THE SECOND CHAPTER. Expelled from Rookwood.

**J**IMMY SILVER followed the captain of Rookwood with a firm step. The discovery of the stolen note, and the condemnation that followed, had almost stunned Jimmy Silver; but he was recovering himself now.

He was innocent, though the toils were about him. He knew that he was innocent, and that therefore he was the victim of a cunning plot, which he could not yet fathom.

He had been found guilty, and he was to be expelled from the school; he knew that. But the consciousness of innocence upheld him even in that extremity.

He did not look like a culprit as he followed Bulkeley to the Head's study.

In the lower passage Mornington & Co. were gathered, apparently in high feather. The news was all over the school now, and Jimmy Silver was being discussed by all Rookwood.

His old enemies were rejoicing in it. Mornington burst into a sneering laugh as he came by, and Townsend and Peete and Gower and Smythe of the Shell smiled with lofty scorn.

"Here comes the thief!" said Townsend. "Mind your pockets!" chortled Smythe. Jimmy Silver clenched his hands hard. "Enough of that!" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily. "Hold your tongues!"

"Well, the rotter's a thief, isn't he?" sneered Mornington.

"Hold your tongue, I tell you!" Bulkeley strode on with Jimmy Silver, and they entered the Head's study.

"That's the finish of Jimmy Silver here," remarked Mornington. "I fancy we shall see the last of him this evening."

"No doubt about that," said Townsend. "We don't want a thief at Rookwood. The Head can't do anything! but sack him."

"No, by gad! It's time that cheeky young cad was sacked, anyway," agreed Smythe. "Some of his betters may have a chance in the footer when he's gone."

"Hear, hear!" grinned Howard.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver had entered the Head's study at the heels of the Rookwood captain. Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, and Beaumont, the prefect, were there with Dr. Chisholm.

The Head's face was grim and set. One glance at that hard, severe face was enough to tell Jimmy Silver that he had no mercy to expect.

"Silver," said the Head, as the junior entered, "come here!"

Jimmy advanced with a firm step. "You have been guilty of theft. You have disgraced yourself and the school you belong to. You are expelled from Rookwood!"

"I—"

"You need not speak. Mr. Bootles will take you to the station, and you will take the next train home. I shall send with you a letter of explanation to your father. That is all. Take him away, Bulkeley."

Jimmy Silver's eyes flashed.

"You won't listen to me, sir?" he exclaimed. Dr. Chisholm regarded him coldly.

"You can have nothing to say," he replied. "I presume you have no intention of denying your guilt in the face of the clearest proof?"

"I do deny it!"

"You will serve no purpose, Silver, by adding falsehood to theft."

"I shall tell you the truth, sir!"

"You had better go. Follow Bulkeley!"

"Come, Silver," said the Rookwood captain gently enough.

Jimmy Silver did not move. In the presence of the Head, and with grim condemnation in every face round him, many fellows would have submitted hopelessly to fate. But Jimmy Silver was made of sterner stuff. All his courage was needed now, and it did not fail him.

"I demand to be heard, sir," he said calmly. The Head made an impatient gesture.

"If you intend to utter a series of absurd falsehoods, Silver—"

"I do not."

"Then what can you have to say? You know that I desire to do strict justice. If

you have anything to say, I will hear it. But be brief."

"It's worth a few minutes, sir," said Jimmy bitterly, "when a chap's in danger of being disgraced for life!"

"That is true, Silver," said the Head more gently. "If there were a possible shadow of doubt I should not spare my time or my trouble. I did not think that you would venture to deny what is clear as the sun at noonday. But if you choose to give me your version of the matter I will hear you patiently."

"Thank you, sir!"

"Well, what have you to say?"

"Bulkeley found Beaumont's banknote in my pocket. I don't know how it got there."

"Come, come!"

"I never saw it till Bulkeley pulled it out, sir," said Jimmy steadily. "I never touched it. I never knew it was missing till Beaumont said so."

"Silver!"

"It was in my pocket. I can't deny that. But I did not know it was there."

"Do you expect me, boy, to place the slightest reliance on such an absurd statement?" exclaimed the Head sharply.

"It's true, sir!"

"Nonsense!"

"I tell you, sir, it is true. Somebody put that banknote into my pocket to make me out a thief!"

"Utter nonsense!" said the Head. "Whom do you accuse?"

"I don't know whom to accuse. It's possible, I suppose, that somebody took the banknote from Beaumont's study and planted it on me. I don't know."

"Who? Who? Answer that question."

"I can't! I don't even know anybody did so. It's quite as likely that Beaumont did it himself."

Beaumont of the Sixth started.

"Silver!" The Head's voice was hard and grinding. "You have the impudence, the effrontery, to bring such a wicked accusation against a prefect of the Sixth Form?"

"I only say it's very likely, sir. All I know for certain is that I don't know who the note came to be in my jacket. Beaumont has always been down on me."

"Nonsense!"

"I suppose I need not deny such nonsense, sir?" said Beaumont.

"You need not, Beaumont. The wretched boy's wicked slander only adds to the contempt with which I regard him. He does not seem to be aware that what he suggests was impossible as well as unimaginable. Silver, if you have nothing more to say—"

"I am innocent, sir!"

"That will do!" said the Head curtly.

"You may go! Remain in your study till Mr. Bootles is ready to take you to the station. You are expelled from Rookwood! Go!"

"I am expelled from Rookwood, and I've done nothing!" he exclaimed.

"Silence! Take him away, Bulkeley," said the Head, frowning.

"I—I tell you—"

Bulkeley's hand fell heavily on the junior's shoulder.

"Come!" he said.

Jimmy shook himself loose, and faced the Head, his eyes blazing, his whole form trembling with anger and excitement.

"Well, I won't go!" he shouted. "I won't be expelled when I've done nothing! I won't!"

"Take him away, Bulkeley!" thundered the Head.

The captain of Rookwood grasped Jimmy Silver again by the shoulder, and drew him forcibly from the study.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. Jimmy Silver's Resolve.

**S**ACKED!

Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth Form, was sacked from the school!

The news spread over Rookwood, and was discussed far and wide, in every tone of amazement and consternation.

Jimmy Silver sacked—for theft!

It was incredible.

But it was true!

Tommy Dodd & Co., on the Modern side, heard it with amazement and dismay. They were Jimmy Silver's old rivals, but they were cast down by the news. They could scarcely believe it at first.

But the whole story was soon told—the finding of Beaumont's banknote hidden in the lining of Jimmy's jacket, and the sentence of the Head—expulsion from the school!

"How on earth did he come to do it?" said

Tommy Dodd, in wonder. "He must have been mad!"

And Tommy Doyle and Tommy Cook agreed that that was the only possible explanation. Jimmy Silver a thief—Jimmy Silver condemned for theft! Unless Jimmy had taken leave of his senses, there was no explanation of it.

That Jimmy was innocent could scarcely be believed. The evidence was too strong for that. And it could not be believed that the Head of Rookwood had condemned him on insufficient proof.

But what he had done was totally at variance with his character as the Rookwood fellows knew him, and they charitably opined that he must have been out of his senses when he did the wretched thing.

It came as a surprise to the fellows who had heard the evidence that Jimmy Silver was maintaining his innocence.

To most minds, in the face of the proofs, Jimmy's denial seemed, as it seemed to the Head, mere effrontery.

But the fellows who knew him best did not think so.

Rawson of the Fourth did not waver for a moment. Even the Head's sentence, made no difference.

And Rawson's loyal faith braced Lovell & Co. Their own horrid doubts were driven manfully from their minds. They determined to believe Jimmy Silver, in spite of everything.

And they were not alone.

Jimmy Silver returned to the end study after the interview with the Head, and Oswald and Flynn and Van Ryn of the Fourth joined him there.

They came to tell him that they believed in him still.

Tommy Dodd came over from the Modern side, and found the end study quite crowded with Jimmy's sympathisers.

There was a general clenching of fists at the sight of the Modern junior. The impression was that the Modern had come to "crow" over the expelled Classical. But that was an injustice to Tommy.

"I say, Silver, old man," began Tommy Dodd, "is it true that you're denying having had Beaumont's banknote?"

"Yes," said Jimmy quietly.

"Well, if you give your word on the subject I take your word," said Tommy Dodd manfully. "It looks like a clear case, but I take your word, Jimmy."

"Thanks!" said Jimmy Silver, much moved by that testimony from his old rival. "You're a good sort, Tommy."

"But how did the banknote get there, Jimmy?"

"I don't know."

"I—I say, that sounds awfully steep," said Tommy Dodd uneasily. "I believe you, all the same. But—but you can't expect the Head to."

"He doesn't, anyway," said Jimmy Silver grimly.

"And—and you're sacked?"

"Yes."

"It's rotten!" said Tommy Dodd, in great distress. "When are you going?"

Jimmy Silver's face set hard.

"I'm not going!" he said.

Tommy Dodd stared, as well he might.

"Not going!" he echoed.

"No."

"But—but you're sacked!"

"I'm sacked for nothing, and I'm not going to be turned out of Rookwood as a thief."

"But—but you can't stay if the Head says you're to go!"

"I shall stay!"

"But they'll shift you out if you don't go!" said Tommy Dodd, blinking at him in blank astonishment.

"They've got to get hold of me first," said Jimmy Silver coolly. "I'm not going to take this lying down. I am going to stay at Rookwood."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'd better not tell you chaps any more, though. I don't want to drag you into trouble," said Jimmy Silver. "I'm glad you believe in me, Tommy. And you can tell the chaps on your side that it's all a rotten lie, and I never had anything to do with Beaumont's rotten banknote."

"I will," said Tommy Dodd. "And—and I wish you luck, Silver! If there's anything I can do, old scout—"

"There isn't, thanks, excepting to believe that I'm not a rotten thief!"

"You can rely on that," said Tommy.

And he took his leave, leaving Jimmy Silver alone with the Classical juniors. They were staring at Jimmy, not knowing in the least what to make of his startling announcement.



The glowing end of the poker came forward, straight at the sergeant's plump nose. Sergeant Kettle wriggled out of the opening in a terrific hurry. (See page 17.)

"How the dickens are you going to stay, if the Head won't let you, Silver?" asked Van Ryn.

"I'm going to stay. But I don't want you fellows dragged into it. Thank you for standing by me. But you'd better clear off. I've got to get ready before Bootles comes to take me to the station."

"Then you are not going?" asked Oswald.

"No; I'm not going!"

"I'm going to stand by you, Jimmy, whatever you do," said Oswald. "You stood by me once when I was in a bad scrape."

Jimmy shook his head.

"You can't help me, old chap, and I'm not going to get you sacked, too. You'd better all clear off."

"But can't we help ye intoirely?" asked Flynn.

"No; there's nothing you can do."

"Sure, I can punch the head of any spalpeen who calls ye a thief," said Flynn. "I'll go an' see Mornry now. I'll stop his grinning, anyway."

Flynn and Oswald and Van Ryn left the study. But the Co. remained. Jimmy Silver looked at them.

"Better go," he said.

"I'm not going," said Lovell stubbornly.

"What are you thinking of doing, Jimmy?"

"I'm going to lock myself in this study, and refuse to clear," said Jimmy quietly.

"I'm not going to leave Rookwood unless I'm dragged out. And they won't drag me out without some trouble."

Lovell whistled.

"A barring-out?" he said.

"Something of the sort."

"We'll stay and help you, Jimmy," said Raby.

"No; better not. You can help me get ready, if you like," said Jimmy Silver. "But I'm doing this alone. You would be sacked for resisting the Head's order, and you've got your people to think of."

"But—" began Newcome.

"I'm settled on that," said Jimmy quietly. "I'm going to resist because I'm sacked unjustly; but you fellows can't share in it. The truth may come out about that bank-note—lies generally are found out in the long run. Anyway, I'm going to stick it out as long as I can."

"Good for you!" said Rawson. "And I dare say we can help you more outside the study than inside it. We've got to find the rotter who planted that note on you."

Jimmy brightened a little.

"You might," he said. "If you could do that—"

"We'll try," said Lovell, not very hopefully.

"There's one thing," said Jimmy. "I believe Mornington had a hand in it. Keep an eye on him."

"Mornington?"

"Yes. You know how thick he's been with Beaumont, and it's jolly odd for a Fourth-Former to be thick with a Sixth Form prefect. They're both down on me—they've always been. And they're both rotters through and through. Mornington knows something about it, I'm certain of that."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Lovell between his teeth.

"He's cad enough. Beaumont couldn't have planted that note on you, but Mornington could, as he's in our dormitory."

"Mornington's our game," said Rawson, with a nod. "And we sha'n't be idle, Jimmy?"

The truth has a way of getting out; lies can't be kept up for ever."

"But—but about sticking here, Jimmy?" said Raby hesitatingly.

"That's settled."

"They'll force the door."

"Not so jolly easily, I think."

"But—but you'll be starved out, anyway."

"Not if I get a supply of grub in," said Jimmy Silver calmly.

"That's where you fellows can help. You can get in some grub from the tuckshop for me, if you don't mind lending me your money."

"Good egg!"

The four juniors left the study at once on that errand.

Jimmy Silver's plan seemed wild and reckless to them; but they were prepared to back him up to the full extent of their power.

What would happen when the Head of Rookwood learned that the expelled junior refused to leave the school they could hardly imagine.

But one thing was certain—that Jimmy was in deadly earnest, and that only force would move him from the school.

Jimmy, left alone, began to make his preparations.

His heart was beating faster than usual, and he was labouring under suppressed excitement. But, his head was cool.

He had mapped out the course he intended to take, and nothing would have induced him to swerve from it.

If he had been guilty, he would have been glad to flee from Rookwood, and hide his shame from the eyes of all who knew him. But he was innocent, and that made all the difference.

To go home, to tell his father that he had

been expelled as a thief, unresistingly—he refused to think of that for a moment.

The news would be a terrible shock to his father, in any case. But surely he would not be displeased to know that his son was making a fight for his honour.

Lovell & Co. returned laden with parcels. There was little time to lose. Then Lovell cut off to the dormitory with Raby, and they came back with a couple of blankets and a pillow. There were tears in the eyes of Jimmy Silver's faithful chums as they helped him make his final preparations.

Oswald looked into the study hurriedly. "Bootles is coming, Jimmy," he breathed. Jimmy drew a deep breath.

"Right! Clear off, you chaps; I've got to lock the door!"

"Oh, Jimmy!" groaned Lovell. With miserable, dejected faces Jimmy Silver's chums left the study. Jimmy closed the door after them, and the key turned in the lock.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Jimmy Declines to Go.

**M**R. BOOTLES' kind-face was deeply distressed as he made his way to the end study.

The disgrace of Jimmy Silver had come as a heavy blow to the master of the Fourth, and he felt it keenly.

He had always liked the cheery, frank junior, as most Rookwooders—masters and boys—did.

That Jimmy should have turned out so badly, as he regarded it, was a blow to Mr. Bootles. Had there been room for a doubt on the subject the Form-master would have doubted. But there seemed no room for doubt.

He tapped at the study door and turned the handle. To his surprise the door did not open.

He knocked again, more loudly.

"Silver!"  
"Yes, sir!" came Jimmy's voice from within. "Open the door, please! It is time to go to the station. You have packed your box, I suppose?"

"No, sir!"  
"Dear me! You should have done so. However, it is too late now; your box shall be sent after you. Open the door!"

"I can't, sir."  
"What—what! Why can't you open the door, Silver?"

"I am not going to leave Rookwood, sir." Mr. Bootles jumped.

"What—what!" he ejaculated. Jimmy Silver's voice came steadily and clearly through the locked door.

"I am innocent, sir! I refuse to be expelled for something I have not done! I am staying here!"

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Bootles. Some of the Fourth were gathering in the passage, and they listened in amazement. Mornington's face was very dark.

"By gad, the cad's stickin' it out!" he remarked to Townsend. "But he'll have to go all the same. We don't want a thief here."

Biff!  
Mornington gave a howl as Patrick O'Donovan Flynn's clenched fist was planted full in his face, and he went flying backwards.

Crash!  
"Yoop!" gasped Mornington. "Flynn! How dare you!"

"He called Jimmy Silver a thafe, sorr!"  
"Bless my soul!" It was news to Mr. Bootles that anybody at Rookwood believed that Jimmy Silver was innocent. "Flynn, control yourself, sir! Mornington, you will kindly refrain from making unpleasant references to Silver in the presence of his friends. It is, at the least, very bad taste."

"Yow-ow-ow!" groaned Mornington. "Let there be no more of this!" said Mr. Bootles sternly. "Silver has been punished for his action, and if his friends still have some faith in him, it is not for you to attempt to shake it, Mornington. It is mean and cowardly to triumph over a person who is unfortunate, even when his misfortune is his own fault."

Mornington only groaned. He was not feeling equal to any more triumphing just then, at all events.

Mr. Bootles returned to the door of the end study, and rapped sharply.

"Silver!"  
"Yes, sir."

"Kindly open the door at once!"  
"Sorry, sir!"

"Will you open this door, Silver?"  
"Will the Head let me remain at Rookwood, sir?"

"Certainly not! You know that is impossible!"

"Then it is impossible for me to open the door, sir!"

There was a pause. In these extraordinary circumstances Mr. Bootles did not know what to do. Certainly he could not pass through a locked door.

The juniors in the passage waited in breathless expectation—excepting Mornington, who had gone away to bathe his nose.

Mr. Bootles was at a loss.  
"Silver," he said at last, "what do you intend by this—this extraordinary conduct?"  
"I intend to remain at Rookwood, sir."  
"You are expelled—"  
"Unjustly, sir."  
"Silver!"

Another pause. Mr. Bootles coughed, and blew his nose.

"Silver, unless you open the door at once I shall have no alternative but to call in the Head."

"Very well, sir."

"This disrespectful conduct will not benefit you in any way, Silver," said Mr. Bootles, his temper rising a little.

"I don't mean to be disrespectful, sir. But I can't leave Rookwood in disgrace when I've done nothing to deserve it."

"That matter is settled, Silver. There is no purpose to be served by making a disgraceful disturbance. You must be aware that if you do not go quietly you will be removed from the school by force!"

"I shall resist, sir!"  
"Bless my soul! Very well, Silver, as you are determined, apparently, to cause as much unpleasantness as possible, I shall call Dr. Chisholm."

Mr. Bootles rustled away, very much disturbed. As the Form-master went, a cheer rang out—a cheer for Jimmy Silver—a cheer for the junior who was under sentence of expulsion—and it rang very strangely in the Form-master's ears.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.  
No Surrender!

**D**R. CHISHOLM looked disturbed and irritated as Mr. Bootles entered his study. The whole affair was very disturbing to the Head, who had the honour of the old school very much at heart.

The discovery of a thief in Rookwood was a bitter blow to him. He was only anxious to get the matter finished with as quickly as possible, and forgotten as soon as might be.

"Silver, sir—" began Mr. Bootles, hardly knowing how to acquaint the Head with the latest extraordinary development.

"I understood that you had already taken him to the station, Mr. Bootles!" said the Head, with asperity.

"He refuses to go with me, sir!"  
"What?"

"He will not come to the station!"  
"Really, Mr. Bootles, I am surprised at you! Surely you can deal with a junior boy in your own Form! If he has the astounding audacity to refuse to go, take him by force! If you need assistance, call upon one of the prefects to assist you."

"He has locked himself in his study, sir, and refuses to admit me!"  
"Good heavens!" exclaimed the Head.

"It is a very distressing matter, sir," said Mr. Bootles. "He maintains that he is innocent—"  
"Absurd!"

"It is very odd, too, that a number of boys in his Form appear to believe in his innocence, in spite of the evidence to the contrary."

The Head made an irritable gesture. "Their foolishness makes no difference, Mr. Bootles. Silver must go—and at once. We will see whether he refuses to open his door at my command!" rumbled the Head, and he stalked majestically from the study.

Mr. Bootles followed him. He did not doubt that a command from the Head himself would bring the recalcitrant junior to reason.

The Fourth-Formers in the passage made way respectfully for the Head as he came striding upon the scene. The frown on Dr. Chisholm's severe face was thunderous.

"Now look out for fireworks!" murmured Oswald.

Dr. Chisholm reached the end study, and struck sharply on the door.

"Silver!" he rapped out.  
"Yes, sir?" came from within.

"Open this door immediately!"  
"Am I to remain at Rookwood, sir?"

"What? Certainly not! You are to proceed to Coombe with Mr. Bootles at once, to take the train for your home."

"My home is at Rookwood till the end of the term, sir."

"You are expelled from Rookwood, Silver!" thundered the Head.

"Unjustly, sir!"  
"What? What?"

"I can't go home and tell my people I'm expelled, sir! I am not a thief, and if I gave in it would look as if I were one!"

"How dare you bandy words with me, Silver! I command you to open this door this instant!"

No reply.  
"You hear me, Silver?"  
"Yes, sir."

"Will you open this door?"  
"No, sir!"

"If you do not obey me immediately, Silver, I shall have the door forced."

"I shall resist, sir."

"Enough!" thundered the Head. "I am sorry to see, Silver, that you are lost to all sense of shame as well as to all sense of honesty! The door will be forced, and you will be removed!"

And the Head, greatly perturbed and extremely angry, strode away.

There was a low, steady sound continuously from the end study, and the juniors in the passage knew what it was. Jimmy Silver was screwing up the door!

Bulkeley of the Sixth came along the passage, with a grave face.

"Clear off, you fags!" he called out. And the passage cleared. The captain of Rookwood knocked at the door.

"You'd better chuck this, Silver!" he said. "Sorry, Bulkeley, I can't."

"What's the good of making a fuss, Silver? It's only disgracing the school. You know you've got to go," said Bulkeley.

"I'm not going, if I can help it."  
"You young ass, do you think you can stay here after what you've done!" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily.

"I've done nothing."  
"If you're going to keep up that yarn you—"

"I'm going to keep up the truth, Bulkeley. And it won't finish here, either. My father won't take this quietly!" flashed out Jimmy Silver. "There's still some law left in England, and my father will see that the truth is brought out."

"Your father will know that you are guilty, Silver!"  
"He won't believe anything of the kind. You wouldn't either, Bulkeley, if you weren't an ass!"

"What?"  
"You ought to know me better. You know Beaumont's a liar and a cad! He planted his rotten banknote on me somehow!"

"Rot!" said Bulkeley.  
"It's the truth!"

"Look here, Silver, the Head's sent for Sergeant Kettle to force the door. You will be taken away by force. Won't you go quietly?"

"Never!"  
"It will be all the worse for you."  
"I'll chance that."

Bulkeley shrugged his shoulders and retired. The Rookwood captain was feeling uneasy in his mind, too. Was it possible that a guilty fellow could have had the hardihood and effrontery to make a resistance like this against a just sentence? Was it possible that there was some fearful mistake—that the hapless junior was, after all, the victim of a treacherous plot? It was hard to believe—and yet—

Bulkeley went to Beaumont's study. Beaumont was not looking happy. He had been successful; but the new development of the situation troubled him greatly. He had never expected this. Beaumont's desire was for Jimmy Silver to go—and go quickly. The more fuss there was made about the matter the more chance there was of something happening to bring the truth to light.

"Has the young cad gone?" asked the prefect, as Bulkeley came in.

"No. He's locked himself in his study, and refuses to come out. Look here, Beaumont—the Rookwood captain looked hard at the pale and troubled prefect—"Silver says that banknote was planted on him—"

Beaumont sneered.

"Have you come to ask me whether that's true?" he said sarcastically. "Do you think I should plant a banknote on a kid in the Fourth, and call him a thief?"

"I know you always disliked Silver. I've heard all about your being kicked out of



his study when you went there to bully one of them," said Bulkeley abruptly. "The juniors made no end of a song about it." Beaumont shrugged his shoulders. But a chill of fear crept into his heart as he saw the doubt that was creeping into Bulkeley's mind.

"Suppose I were rotter enough to do such a thing, do you think I could?" he sneered. "Well, no, it doesn't seem possible." "If it seemed possible, you'd rather believe Jimmy Silver than me," said Beaumont, with a bitter sneer.

"Yes, I would," said Bulkeley at once. "Silver was always as straight as a die. I can't understand how he came to do this thing—unless he's deceived everybody all along the line!"

"Well, he has."

"If he's guilty, it's jolly queer that he's got the nerve to kick up a shiner like this, and no mistake!"

"Oh, he's got plenty of nerve—a hardened young scoundrel!"

"If he's guilty, he's a hardened young scoundrel right enough," agreed Bulkeley. "But he never gave any sign before of being a hardened young scoundrel, or anything like it. I'm not generally a fool, and I always had a high opinion of the kid. I—I wonder if it's possible that some other kid sneaked that note, and shoved it on him? Do you know any kid in the Fourth who's got a bitter grudge against him?"

"I don't know much about the Fourth and their precious feuds!" said Beaumont. "I don't care twopence, either!"

"It's barely possible that it happened that way, though."

"You're making out that there's a kid in the Fourth who's ten times worse than Silver's supposed to be!"

"Well, ye-e-e-s; I suppose that's hardly fair, either. But it's a puzzling business. Silver's acting as if he's innocent, not as if he's guilty!"

"He wants to give that impression, of course, and he's taken you in to begin with!" said Beaumont scornfully.

"I—I suppose that's possible. It's a jolly queer bizney, anyway!"

Bulkeley quitted the prefect's study with knitted brows. In spite of himself, in spite of the clearest proof, a doubt was in his mind, and would not be dismissed.

When he was gone Beaumont paced the study with uneasy steps, his heart throbbing, and beads of perspiration on his brow.

There was at least one fellow at Rookwood that day who was more downhearted than Jimmy Silver of the Fourth, and that was Beaumont the prefect.

**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.**  
**Jimmy Holds the Fort.**

**C**RASH! Crash! The heavy blows rang and echoed through the Fourth-Form passage.

At the end of the passage a crowd of juniors looked on with breathless interest. Sergeant Kettle was wielding a heavy axe, and the blows crashed and crashed on the door of the end study.

Mr. Bootles stood looking on. The Head had retired to his study, like Achilles to his tent, with great dignity.

Crash, crash!

The door was of stout oak, but it yielded at last under the terrific blows rained upon it by the sergeant.

The head of the axe went through at last. It disappeared through the wood, and the sergeant dragged on in vain.

"By gum, the beastly thing's jammed!" he muttered.

"Go it, sergeant!" called out Jimmy Silver.

"Hang you!" "I've got a cord round your axe, old chap, and I'm holding it! Pull as hard as you like!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Bootles. The sergeant, crimson with exertion, tugged at the handle of the axe; but it was held by the cord looped over the head within the split door.

"I—I can't get it out!" gasped the sergeant.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Bootles.

"Master Silver, let go that axe!"

"Bow-wow!"

"You young raskil—"

"Go and eat coke, old scout!"

The sergeant growled under his breath some expressive words he had learned in the Army.

"Pray proceed, sergeant," said Mr. Bootles mildly.

Sergeant Kettle snorted.

"I'll 'ave to use the 'ammer!" he said. He took up a heavy coke-hammer, and proceeded to hammer on the door. The lock was already smashed, but the stout screws held the door fast. Under the crashing blows the already split panels flew in splinters. A huge gash appeared down the middle of the door, and the sergeant could see into the study.

His eyes met Jimmy Silver's, and the besieged junior nodded to him.

"Oh, lor!" gasped the sergeant.

"Go it!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily.

"You young rip!" panted the sergeant.

"Silver, let me make one more appeal to you!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "This disgraceful scene should go no further!"

"I can't give in, sir!"

"In a few minutes more, Silver, the door will be forced!"

"Some hours' work yet, I think, sir, and I'm not going to let the sergeant do it if I can help it. I've got a poker in the fire!"

"What?"

"And I think the sergeant will get fed-up with it, sir, before he gets through!"

"Oh, my hey!" said the sergeant.

"Pray proceed, sergeant!" said Mr. Bootles, frowning.

"Which I'm jolly near wore out, sir!" growled Sergeant Kettle sulkily. "This 'ere ain't work for a school sergeant, that I knows on!"

"Ahem! Some recompense will be made for your trouble, sergeant," said Mr. Bootles.

"Pray proceed as quickly as possible. Otherwise, the last train will be gone, and it will be impossible to remove that wretched boy from the school to-night!"

"I rather think that train will go, sir," said Jimmy Silver; "and I rather think I sha'n't be in it!"

"Silence, Silver!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Crash, crash, crash!

The heavy hammer splintered the upper panels of the door. The opening in the

jagged wood grew larger. The sergeant panted over his job. He was still a hale old fellow, but the hard labour told on him.

As soon as the opening was large enough for his head and shoulders to pass through, the sergeant threw down the hammer.

He put his head through the opening, and his shoulders and arms followed. Lovell, at the end of the passage, gave his chums a hopeless look.

"Poor old Jimmy!" he said. "The game's up now!"

But the game was not up yet. Jimmy Silver had said that he would resist to the finish, and he meant it.

As the burly sergeant strove to drag himself through the opening in the smashed door, Jimmy Silver jerked the poker from the fire.

The end was glowing red.

Sergeant Kettle blinked at him as Jimmy advanced, poker in hand.

"Master Silver, don't you dare—"

"Get out!" said Jimmy.

"I'm coming in, hang you!" bellowed the sergeant.

"I give you two seconds," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I don't want to hurt you, sergeant, but you are not coming into my study!"

"It's Ead's orders, Master Silver!"

"I can't help that. I'm holding the fort, same as you did when you were shut up in Ladysmith," said Jimmy. "Only following your own example, sergeant. You can't grumble at that!"

The sergeant grinned for a moment.

"Look 'ere, Master Silver, I've got to come in! Don't you touch me with that there poker!"

"Are you going?"

"No, I ain't!" roared the sergeant angrily.

"Then here goes!"

The glowing end of the poker came forward, straight at the sergeant's plump nose.

Human flesh and blood could not stand that.

Sergeant Kettle jerked back his head, and gave a wild howl as the back of it knocked on the door. He wriggled out of the opening in a terrific hurry.

"Sergeant—sergeant!" Mr. Bootles was very annoyed. "Why do you not enter the room, sergeant? Pray enter the room at once!"

Sergeant Kettle rubbed the back of his head, and gave Mr. Bootles a glare like a Hun.

"Which I ain't ramming my nose on to no red-ot pokers—not if I knows it!" he roared. "Pr'aps you'd like to ram your own nose on to a red-ot poker, sir! You're welcome!"

"Bless my soul! Silver, put down that poker at once!"

"Sorry, sir! Can't be done!"

"You—you wretched boy! I will enter myself!" shouted Mr. Bootles. "I presume, Silver, that you will not touch your Form-master with that poker?"

"If I'm expelled from Rookwood, sir, you're not my Form-master any longer," said Jimmy Silver. "You can't come in, sir!"

"I shall come in immediately!"

Mr. Bootles put head and shoulders through the gap in the door, his eyes gleaming with anger over his spectacles.

Jimmy made a pass with the poker, and the glowing top glowed within an inch of the Form-master's nose.



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**GREYFRIARS  
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Mr. Bootles felt the glow of heat on his nose. He did not wait to feel the poker itself. He squirmed back in breathless haste. "Good heavens!" he gasped. "Silver! You utter young ruffian!"

"Sorry, sir!"  
"Sergeant, on second thoughts, perhaps you had better proceed to demolish the door entirely!" gasped Mr. Bootles.

The sergeant grunted.  
"You don't like red-'ot' poker at close quarters, sir—wot?" he remarked, with heavy sarcasm.

"Ahem! Pray proceed, sergeant, and do not pass remarks," said Mr. Bootles hastily. Sergeant Kettle took up the big hammer again, and the crashing of his blows resounded along the passage.

But at the third or fourth crash there was a sudden fearful yell from the sergeant. The hammer dropped to the floor with a crash, and the sergeant hopped and skipped wildly, roaring.

"Yow-ow-ow! Wow-wow-wow!"  
"Bless my soul!"  
"Yaroooh! I'm burnt! Yoop! Oh, oh!"  
"Sergeant, what is the matter?"

"Grooh! Yoop! I'm burnt!" howled the sergeant.

"Pooh! Only a tap on the wrist!" said Jimmy Silver. "Suppose I'd tapped you on the nose, sergeant? I'd have done it, only I don't want to spoil your beauty!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"  
"Sergeant!" urged Mr. Bootles.  
"Look at that red-'ot' poker!" bellowed the sergeant furiously. "I ain't going to be burnt hall hover—not if I knows it!" He hurled the hammer to the door with a final terrific crash. "I'm done! I can't get at that there door while that there young demon have got that there red-'ot' poker! I'm ho!"

"Sergeant" gasped Mr. Bootles. But the sergeant strode away down the passage, growling and grunting.

Breaking into a study to collar a rebellious junior was not really a part of his duties; and it was only too clear that every crash on the door would be followed by a thrust of the red-hot poker. It was not good enough.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, in dismay.

The Fourth Form-master ambled away to the Head's study again. He could think of nothing but to bring the Head upon the scene once more.

There was a sound of knocking in the study. Jimmy Silver was nailing the table to the door, to block up the openings Sergeant Kettle had made with his axe.

The knocking was still proceeding merrily when the Head came striding up the passage with a black brow.

He glared through the split door at the junior in the study.

"Silver!" he rasped.

"Yes, sir!" said Jimmy, quite respectfully.  
"You young rascal! Will you cease this disgraceful scene?" shouted the Head. "Will you give yourself up at once?"

"No, sir!"  
The Head appeared to choke for a moment. Never had Jimmy Silver seen him so furious. But the junior did not falter. He had everything to lose and nothing to gain by surrender. And he did not even think of surrender. Surrender was not a word in Jimmy Silver's vocabulary.

"Silver if you persist in this I shall send for your father!" gasped the Head at last. "This—this utter ruffianism—"

"I am sorry, sir! But I am not a thief, and I cannot be expelled from Rookwood for what I have not done!"

"Enough! Since you persist in this ruffianly resistance, I shall request your father to come here and remove you! Enough!"

The Head strode away.  
Jimmy Silver let the poker fall into the fender. It was not needed now. The siege of the end study was over, and Jimmy Silver had won.

Jimmy Silver slept in his blankets in the end study that night. But it was long before anyone slept at Rookwood. The old school buzzed with excitement, and all were wondering how the amazing state of affairs would end.

(Another grand long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next week, entitled: "The Tables Turned!" Order your PENNY POPULAR at once.)  
THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 63.

## GOOD STORIES!

### ALL CHANGE!

The whole population of a small provincial town had turned out in force to see a special new film which was being shown at the cinema. The place was packed, and some of the members of the audience appeared to experience some difficulty in getting a view of the screen. One young fellow, growing very angry, at last tapped the shoulder of the occupant of the seat in front of him, and said:

"Get your head out of the light! I can't see through wood!"

The lad immediately rose from his seat.  
"I can," he answered. "We'll change places!"

### BOTH EXPERIMENTING.

The old lady had never had a ride in a taxicab, but one day decided to try the experiment. The vehicle rushed madly along, narrowly missing trams, lamp-posts, policemen, etc., and she became extremely nervous. She vowed she would never step inside a taxi again, and, at last becoming almost frantic, cried out to the driver:

"Please be careful! This is the first time I have ever ridden in a taxi!"

"That's quite all right, madam!" the man shouted cheerily. "This is the first time I've ever driven one!"

### CHEER UP!

'Tain't no use to borrow trouble when you've got a stock on hand.

Take the tail o' the procession if you can't git near the band.

Lunge ahead, don't never weaken; keep a stiffish upper lip.

An' if care and trouble crowd you, squeeze the harder on your grip.

Face the world with resolution o' the proper "git-there" kind.

When the clouds are rolling blackest, don't forget they're silver lined.

Keep a pushing, for the sunshine's lying just behind the fog.

An' yer bound to git there as easy as rollin' off a log.

### WHY THEY SMILED.

In a certain town in the Midlands a grocer, who was a great believer in the display of catchy notices, one day inserted in his window a card bearing an announcement which he considered likely to prove very successful in attracting the attention of passers-by. It did so to such an extent that he was quite at a loss to understand why everybody who read it went on with broad grins on their faces. He rushed out to read the notice again: "Don't go elsewhere to be swindled—walk right in here!"

### REMARKABLE.

Bridget had been laboriously reading the paper for some time, when she suddenly looked up, and asked her husband:

"Have you seen this, Pat? It says here that whin a mon loses wan of his senses, his other senses get more developed. For instance, a blind mon gets more sense of hearing and touch, and—"

"Sure, and it's quite true!" replied Pat.

"O'iv'e noticed it meself. Whin a mon had wan leg shorter than the other, begorra, the other leg's longer, isn't it, now?"

### HAD TON-SOV IMPUDENCE.

Biffins: "Say, old chap, don't I owe you half-a-sov?"

Tiffins: "So you do, now you come to mention it!"

Biffins: "Got change for a sovereign?"

Tiffins: "Yes."

Biffins: "Then lend me another five bob, will you?"

Brown: "I say, old man, can you tell me which is more obedient—a church bell or a church organ?"

Jones: "Give it up!"

Brown: "Why, the church bell, because it rings when it is tolled; but the organ says: 'I'll be blown first!'"

Passer-by: "How many have you caught, old chap?"

Angler: "When I've caught this one and two others, I shall have three!"

## LOWTHER'S LITTLE JOKE!

A Short Tale of St. Jim's.

"HALLO! 'What have you got there?"  
George Figgins, of the New House, with his chums Kerr and Fatty Wynn, strolled up to a little crowd of juniors who were pressing round Monty Lowther, of the School House Shell.

"You wouldn't think that had come all the way from Mount Vesuvius, would you?" said Lowther, exhibiting a small box containing a quantity of dirty-white powder.

"No, I shouldn't!" replied Figgins promptly.  
"Well, it has!" declared George Alfred Grundy sharply. "Lowther's uncle sent it to him this morning, and—"

"My hat!" interposed Fatty Wynn. "It's jolly well worth having if it's come out of a volcano. Give us some, Lowther, old man!"  
"Sorry, old top, but I couldn't part with it, you know," said Monty Lowther. "In fact, I wouldn't let it go for anything!"

Racke and Crooke, the rotters of the Shell, were passing at that moment, and they heard the latter part of Lowther's remark, as the humorist of the Shell had intended they should. At the same time he gave a sly wink to Tom Merry, which the other fellows did not notice.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Racke to Crooke, when the two had moved on a little farther. "If we could get hold of that stuff that he's making such a shindy about we should just be about quits with the boulder over that other business."

Racke and Crooke had a grudge against Lowther at the moment, and were on the look-out for some means of getting level with him.

"It ought to be easy enough to sneak that box from his study when he's out," remarked Crooke, though not at all anxious to attempt the deed himself.

"Yes; I'm blessed if I won't do it!" declared Racke.

His opportunity came much sooner than he had expected. He was entering the Shell passage after tea when he saw Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther just leaving their study. They passed him, and hurried downstairs.

Racke immediately darted along to the study, and, to his surprise, saw the little box on the table. He picked it up, and was out in the passage again in a moment.

Crooke emerged from a study close by just as the cad was examining the box, and the pair of them bent over it intently.

As they were doing so Tom Merry dashed round the corner of the corridor at the top of the stairs, and before they had time to move he had cannoned violently into them, contriving as he did so to knock the powder from the box up into their faces.

"Sorry!" he exclaimed, and rushed on.

"Grrr! A-a-a-tishoo-oo!"

"A-atish-ooo! P-pepper!" shrieked Crooke.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Manners and Lowther appeared at that moment, and, with roars of laughter, hurried along to the study after Tom Merry.

"It worked like a charm!" cried the leader of the Shell. "And— Listen!"

"Linton!" exclaimed Manners, after the three had listened for a moment.

"What is the meaning of this disgraceful disturbance in the corridor?" he was demanding in angry tones. "And this pepper all over the floor? Oh—er—a-tishoo!"

"My hat! Those two beauties will get it in the neck!" exclaimed Manners.

"Go to my study at once!" roared the master of the Shell. "I will deal with you shortly."

"Serve 'em jolly well right!" declared Tom Merry.

"You spoofing boulder, Monty!" grinned Manners.

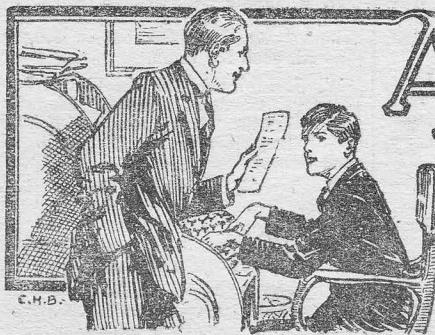
"Not at all, old son!" said Lowther. "I didn't say the powder came from Vesuvius. Grundy did, though, and all the silly asses caught on to it at once!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a case of the biters bit!" laughed Tom Merry.

"Rather! Ha, ha, ha!"

THE END.



# A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

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

## MANY PROFESSIONS.

This has no reference to the myriad professions of loyalty to the Companion Papers which pour in on me. I have of late been receiving communications from friends who are not satisfied, or who have not been satisfied, with their prospects in life.

One note was from a fellow who had started life as a barber's assistant. It was not the trade he objected to so much as the fact that his employer, like the celebrated William in history, was silent.

"Lives there a man with soul so dead,  
As he who caters for the head?"

Rather severe that on the part of my correspondent. I am glad to know he is now settled in work that appeals to him, and that there will not be any more growls. The barber is a much tried man. Small wonder if he has his moods. We can forgive him if he splits hairs.

There are barbers and barbers. Some have not the least right to consider themselves first chop, though they do let the razor slip from time to time. But the barber hears many things. He keeps his temper, which is harder than taking cities often enough. He has a lofty view, and can take a survey of the world from China to Peru over the heads of all his customers.

And then, just watch his dexterity with conversational matters! There is nobody in the world equal to him. He takes hold of the weather from an entirely new viewpoint each time he flicks out his apron. He knows all about politics, astronomy, sport, school, history, and what not—especially what not.

While congratulating my correspondent, I am not disposed to agree with him in his remarks about barbers. Life would be the poorer without these versatile gentlemen.

One more word—as the lecturers say when they mean about a thousand words—and I have done. The barber is a mighty man, and keen as his razors ought to be. We can let it go at that. Few cheerier sights on a bright sunshiny morning than a barber's saloon—the yellow canary singing in the window, the clients sitting round waiting, the easy flow of talk, the papers to be read. The only thing I could suggest to give the picture just that touch which crowns the work is that a copy of the "Penny Popular" should be found in every establishment of the kind along with the other papers. Verb sap—and a barber is very wise. Long life to him and success in his very sound crusade against whiskerage!

## WORK.

Talking about wise people, I am always prepared to give best to the schoolmaster. When he is the real sort—the kind of schoolmaster who is remembered long years after as a kindly teacher who had the best interests of his pupils at heart—then he is certainly one of the best types of men who walk this way. I wrote these lines with the notion of the rumpus about home lessons. Home lessons are bad if they are overdone. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, likewise Tom and Bill. But the right sort of schoolmaster takes an individual interest in his boys. He does not want them to get their brains heavy with too much learning.

We know that some fellows require less bookwork, more outdoor business. He is a discerning personage this schoolmaster, take it from me. It is his work, also his pleasure, to get fellows on.

I have talked with many men who followed the grand calling. It was not because of the grand emoluments that they had adopted the profession. The reason for this is simple. The material rewards are not grand. But the biggest rewards have no more to do with pounds, shillings, and pence than green cheese has to do with the theory of general taxation.

If some of the mighty victories scored by the armies of Britain in the dim old days, and the new ones, were won on the playing-fields, there was also the contributory fact that great men and wise occupied the positions of masters in the schools of this old country. Fellows look back to their school-days just as Tom Brown did, with love and respect because of the friendship of a master who took a real interest in them, as well as because they made chums under the trees in the school grounds and the class-room.

I am not in the least inclined to think that school authorities have any desire to worry the coming generation. Take these home lessons! Scrap them if you like, but if you did you would find any number of brainy chaps insisting upon carrying on with some of the work at home. That is human nature. Swotting after school hours will not do for scores, but it suits some. They have their breaks in school. They are keen. And above and beyond all this web of consideration, we have the cardinal fact that the master is out to do the utmost he can for the fine fellows who are preparing to take their places in the front rank of the world.

Now, this is not a quarrel, merely a harmless argument. True, a few bitter things have been said—mistaken things, as I view it. In a quarrel, as we know,

"Twice blessed is he who has his quarrel just,  
But thrice is he who gets his blow in  
'tust'!"

But it is no case for blows, just reasonableness, easing off in the individual instance where pressure is harmful, downright encouragement elsewhere.

## BEING CAST DOWN.

Not a cheery subject this. You are right. It is not. But the trouble comes to everybody, no matter who or what he is. There is no escape. The old joke was that some of the very smartest officers were always in the Blues, but that was a joke, and there is no joke at all about the other kind of blues which do not need a capital "B."

A correspondent tells me that the world is treating him no end badly. He would like to go to sea, or to Kamchatka, or any old place, so long as he could feel himself free of his present worries. He is fed-up with his job, and so on. You notice he has a job. That is something. Moreover, he can write a fine, slashing letter against things in general. As you and I know, it is only a mood. We all understand that mood. I suppose the men who seem to be having the best of everything experience the same dull time.

It is not heaps of possessions or the lack of them which make for contentment. We all know that, too. Sometimes you can tell a fellow why he is taking the wrong view, and he turns up next day all smiles. Not but what a chap who thinks at all must get cast down now and again. It is reaction. He sees things at a curious angle. But after a walk or a spell with a favourite book he finds his mind shaking down into the normal, and all is well.

## GOING TO SEA.

A certain envy may be felt—a decent, respectable sort of envy, which is half-brother to congratulations—for a chum at Portsmouth who has secured a good berth and is off to sea. This has been his heart's desire, and he writes as if he were in for a wonderful spell of romance such as Robert Louis Stevenson wrote about.

There is something in it. There is something about the sea which fascinates. You know there is, even if you cannot really enjoy a choppy few hours over to France or Ireland or to Selly. The sea remains a bit mysterious.

Just take a stroll down a steamer's deck when the dawn is coming and you see something dim ahead which a fellow-passenger says is Normandy. There is the crispness of sensation. The scent of tar is pleasant. You like the touch of the life.

And, of course, to a fellow who signs on for one of these long voyages aboard a casual sort of a cargo-boat which makes nothing of plunging into the Pacific en route to the lands which lie beyond many sunsets, there is any amount more which appeals so strongly to the imagination that the ups and downs—sometimes one gets too many of these!—of the life, the roughness, the unceasing chancelessness of it all are forgotten.

He was a true sailor who told his mate that he pitied the folks in danger on the land that night when the green rollers topped the masts—for ashore in the tempest chimney-pots were flying round and making it dangerous to be safe.

## BAD FOR BAGGY TRIMBLE!

A correspondent, who writes in the most friendly way of St. Jim's, and merely complains because there is not more of it, makes use of some severe remarks concerning Baggy Trimble. He thinks—my correspondent thinks, that is, not Baggy Trimble, so please don't make any mistake!—that the fat personage has far too great an innings.

According to my critic, Baggy should be suppressed. He is too fat, for one thing. He is not invariably an earnest follower of George Washington. He fails in deportment and that nice note of dignity which is said to be necessary for everybody.

But in this world if we cannot make anything else, such as money, for instance, we ought surely to make allowances. If Baggy were held up as a pattern, there might be something in the grumble; but we all know what B. Trimble is. He does not exactly pretend to be perfect, or other than he is; at least, if he ever tries pretence it is so thin that you see through the business at once.

I cannot, for my part, see a reformed Baggy. Nobody would believe in him, and St. Jim's would be minus a very amusing personality.

What do you think?

Your Editor

## READERS' NOTICES.

Back Numbers Wanted.

S. Lainchbury, 1382, Cannon Street, East Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, wants "Gem" Nos. 569, 572, 574, 575, 579, 580, 586, 589. 2d. each offered. Write first.

W. Callon, 69, Well Street, Hackney, E. 9, wants red-covered "Magnets."

Miss Doris May, c.o. Post Office, 161, Hampstead Road, N.W. 1, wants "The Boy Without a Name," "Bob Cherry in Search of His Father," "Chums Afloat," "A Race Against Time," "Bob Cherry's Barring Out," and "Bravo! the Bouncer." 3d. each offered.

P. Clark, 5, Chivalry Road, Battersea Rise, S.W., wants "Gems" entitled, "The Toff," "Hero and Rascal," "The Parting of the Ways," "The King's Pardon," "The Call of the Past," "Cast Out from School," "Loyal to the Last," and "For Another's Sake." 3d. each offered.

B. Stronyon, 76, Solent Road, West Hampstead, wants "Penny Populars," Nos. 1-36, 38, 39, 46, and 47. Write first, stating price.

F. J. White, 46, Black Lion Lane, Hammersmith, wants "Gems" from Nos. 1-100.

H. Boyes, 11, Library Place, Jersey, wants "Magnets," Nos. 108, 119, 120, 149, 167, 171, 172, and 179. 6d. each offered.

Miss E. Pentney, 46, Dennis Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, wants "A Very Gallant Gentleman," and "Bol-sover Minor's Last Sacrifice."

E. Moody, Ford Cottages, Victoria Avenue, Didsbury, near Manchester, Christmas double numbers of the Companion Papers before 1915. 4d. each offered.

F. Etchells, 44, Blakeney Road, Crookes, Sheffield, wants "A Boy Without a Name," "Figgins' Fig Pudding," "Schoolboys Never Shall be Slaves," "Bunter the Postman," and "Bunter the Boxer." 6d. each offered.

H. R. Homer, 45, Crabbe Street, Lye, Stourbridge, Worcs, wants "Boys' Friend" 3d. Libraries before 300, will give 3d. each for them.

W. J. Ludford, 116, Lockhurst Lane, Foleshill, Coventry, wants "Magnets," Nos. 547, 548; "Boys' Realm," No. 727; and "Greyfriars Herald," No. 8. 2d. each offered.

M. Lovell, Fernhill, Tetlow Lane, Higher Broughton, Manchester, wants "Bob Cherry's Barring Out," "Figgins' Fig Pudding," and "Gems" containing the first series of "The Toff."

E. Sams, 5, Agnes Maria Street, Cox-ledge, Newcastle-on-Tyne, has a number of the Companion Papers for sale.

E. May, 33, Westfield Road, Western Park, Leicester, wants "Magnets" containing galleries Nos. 1-4 and 41. Must be clean. 3d. each offered.

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