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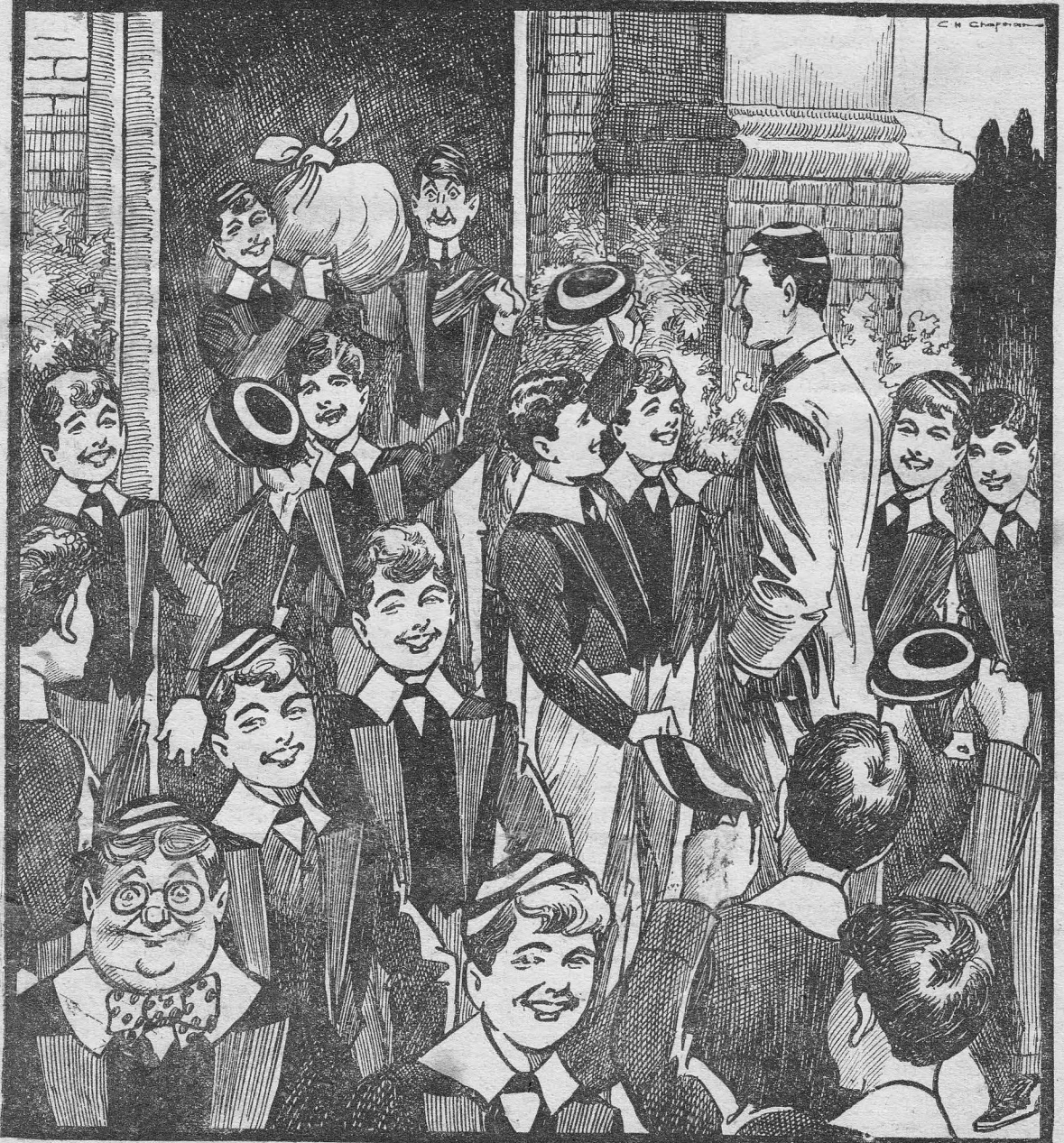
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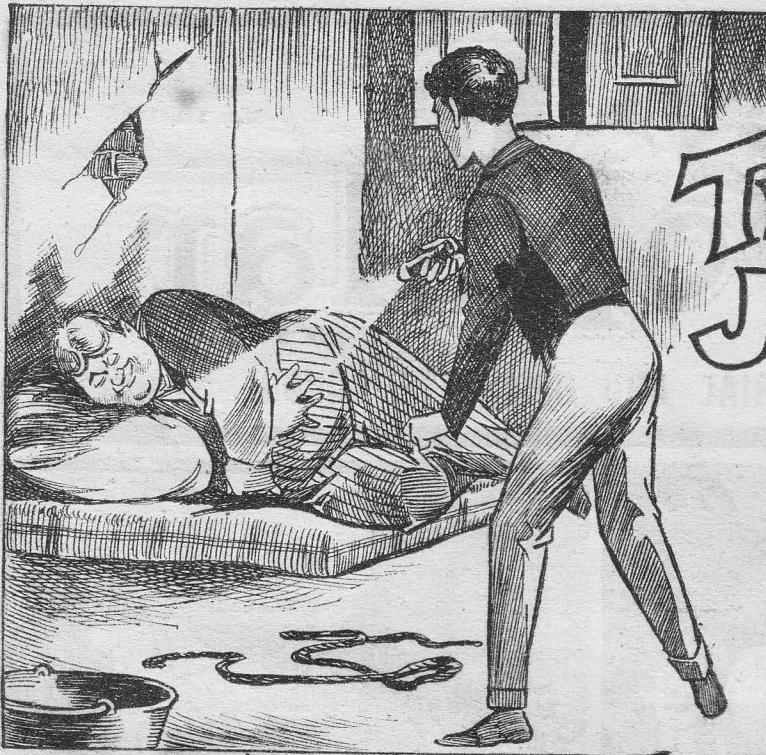
20 PAGES.

GRAND CINEMA SERIAL AND COMPLETE SCHOOL STORIES.



THE END OF THE GREAT REBELLION!

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



The Triumph of Justice!

A Magnificent Long
Complete Story of
HARRY WHARTON & CO.
of Greyfriars.

.. By ..

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Rebels of the Remove.

"Up you get, you lazy slackers!" It was Bob Cherry who thus admonished his schoolfellows. The scene was not the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars, but the old beacon tower on St. Giles' Hill, near Courtfield.

A great barring-out was in progress, and the rebels had selected the ancient weather-beaten tower as their stronghold.

Bob Cherry was standing by one of the upper windows, through which came a strong shaft of spring sunlight.

On the floor, curled up in their blankets, were a dozen of Bob's schoolfellows. Some were asleep, some were in a state of semi-wakefulness.

"Up you get!" repeated Bob Cherry. "It's a topping morning!"

With the exception of Billy Bunter, who lay snoring in the corner, the juniors sat up, and blinked drowsily at Bob.

Johnny Bull gazed round the room with a bewildered air.

"Where the merry dickens am I?" he murmured.

"In the tower, of course!" said Bob Cherry. "Pull yourself together, Johnny! In case you've forgotten, there's a rebellion in progress, and the sooner we're up and doing the better! We don't want to be caught napping by the enemy!"

"No, rather not!" said Harry Wharton, jumping up. "Any developments during the night, Bob?"

"Not during the two hours I was on guard," said Bob Cherry. "All was peaceful and serene."

"Have the other sentries anything to report?"

"Don't know. You'd better ask them."

The captain of the Remove, clad in his pyjamas, stepped into the adjoining room, over which Dennis Carr had control.

Dennis was awake. He was engaged in drawing up the routine orders for the day.

"Good-morning, general!" he said cheerfully.

Wharton smiled.

"Who was your sentry last night?" he asked.

"Dick Penfold. He was on duty from midnight till two o'clock. He relieved Bob Cherry. Don't disturb him; he's sleeping the sleep of the just."

"Did he have anything to report?"

"He said he heard a thudding noise down below, but he thought it was somebody

walking about downstairs. Nothing happened, anyway."

Wharton nodded. He descended the long, spiral staircase, and halted on the ground floor. The juniors stationed there were already up and dressed.

"Hail, mighty chief!" said Tom Redwing. "Anything to report?"

"That's just what I came down to ask you. Who were your sentries last night?"

"Wibley and Rake. Wibley was on guard from two till four, and Rake from four till six."

"Did they see anything unusual?"

"No."

"Thanks," said Wharton. "Everything's gone without a hitch so far. But I'm rather surprised that there wasn't a night attack."

"Same here," said Tom Redwing. "The masters couldn't make us budge in the daytime, and I thought they'd have a shot at breaking into the tower during the night."

"They evidently intend to leave us alone for a bit," said the captain of the Remove.

And he ascended the stairs to his own room.

"Nothing startling happened during the night, so far as I can gather, he said.

Bob Cherry picked up a screwdriver, and unscrewed one of the bars which protected the window. Then he thrust his head through the aperture, and looked down.

"Great pip!" he ejaculated.

"Anything wrong, Bob?" inquired half a dozen voices.

"I should jolly well say so! There's been a night attack on the tower, but it evidently came to nothing. Somebody's left a crow-bar lying on the ground."

"My hat!"

"They probably tried to force the door," said Harry Wharton. "That would account for the thudding noise that Dick Penfold heard."

The juniors were thrown into a state of excitement by Bob Cherry's discovery.

"Wonder who it was?" said Peter Todd.

"Prout, most likely," said Nugent.

"Or P.-e. Tozer," said Johnny Bull.

"Or it may have been the esteemed and ludicrous Gosling," suggested Hurree Singh.

"Well, whoever it was, they had no luck," said Wharton. "But we shall have to increase the number of sentries to-night. We can't afford to take risks."

"Curious that they should leave the crow-bar lying about," said Monty Newland.

"Evidently they mean to have another shot

during the day," said Harry Wharton. "Buck up and get washed and dressed, you fellows!"

The juniors had done their utmost to convert the old beacon tower into a home away from home.

There was an adequate food supply, there were blankets in abundance, and a spirit-stove had been purchased.

The water supply was obtained from a tank at the foot of the tower. In order that the rebels should not have to remove their barricades and go out every time they wanted water, buckets were lowered into the tank from one of the upper windows.

Harry Wharton lowered one of the buckets on this occasion. He heard it drop into the tank below—not with the usual splash, but with a curious metallic sound.

"Hallo! Wonder what's wrong?" muttered the captain of the Remove.

He hauled up the bucket by means of the rope, and he could tell at once that it was empty.

"Somebody's been tampering with the tanks!" he exclaimed.

Bob Cherry again poked his head through the window for the purpose of making observations.

"You're right, Harry!" he said. "The blessed tank's empty!"

The juniors looked alarmed, and with good reason.

The failure of their water supply was a great blow. Without water they would be helpless. They would be unable to make tea or coffee; they would have no water for drinking purposes, and they would not be able to wash.

The last-named contingency would not worry Billy Bunter, who had a hearty dislike for soap and water at all times; but to the rest of the juniors it was almost a tragedy.

"The same people who tried to force open the door must have emptied the water-tank," said Harry Wharton at length.

"How are we going to get the beastly thing filled again?" asked Johnny Bull.

"There isn't a stream for miles around."

"And even if there were, it would be too risky to venture out of the tower," said Nugent.

This was the first real blow that the rebels had received. For twenty-four hours they had successfully held the fort against all comers, and the opposition they had had to contend with had been very feeble.

Now that the water-tank had been emptied,

however, the juniors found themselves really "up against it."

"It's all up now!" whined Snoop.

Harry Wharton spun round sharply upon the speaker.

"You worm!" he said contemptuously.

"You were only too keen to take part in the rebellion as long as things went smoothly, but the moment we find ourselves in a difficulty you start whimpering."

"We can't stay here without drink," said Stott.

"You're another, are you?" snapped Wharton. "I've a jolly good mind to send the pair of you packing!"

Stott subsided at once. Better to remain in the tower, he reflected, than to return to Greyfriars with Sidney James Snoop and face the wrath of the Head.

Harry Wharton acquainted the occupants of the other rooms with the situation, and there were many glum faces to be seen amongst the rebels.

Bolsover major said that he had read in a book that it was impossible to live for more than two days without water, and this remark, whether it was true or not, did not tend to brighten the juniors' prospect.

Dennis Carr, however, took quite a sanguine view of the situation.

"Nothing to get alarmed about," he said. "We've several dozen bottles of mineral waters left, and we can make shift with those for a few days."

"But we can't wash in lime-juice and soda!" growled Bulstrode.

"It would be a change for you to wash in anything!" retorted Dennis sarcastically.

"True, the washing problem is a bit of a teaser, but I feel sure we shall get the merry old tank filled again before long."

"How?" asked Wharton.

"By enlisting the sympathy of the natives of Courtfield. The next time we see any country yokels coming along we'll hail them, and request them to fill our tank. They'll do it like a shot."

Dennis Carr's buoyant optimism relieved the situation considerably.

The weaklings, who had been on the verge of tears, now brightened up, and the faces of the others grew brighter also.

"Are we downhearted?" boomed the stentorian voice of Bob Cherry.

And from all the rebels—with the exception of Billy Bunter, who was still snoring—came the emphatic reply:

"No!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Distinguished Visitor!

PORPOISE, awake! Pollute the happy morn!"

Peter Todd accompanied his remark by inserting his boot in Billy Bunter's ribs.

The fat junior sat up with a yell.

"Yarooocoh! What are you kicking me for, Toddy? Rising-bell hasn't gone yet!"

"And it's not likely to go, either!" chuckled Peter. "This isn't Greyfriars, you fat duffer!"

"What is it, then?"

"Colney Hatch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rubbed his eyes and blinked around. By a prodigious mental effort he identified his surroundings, and a moment later the pleasant odour of frying bacon greeted his nostrils.

"Brekker!" ejaculated the fat junior, bounding to his feet.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sorry I sha'n't have the pleasure of scrubbing your neck this morning, Bunty!" said Bob Cherry. "Fact is, there's no water."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter.

"Why is Bunter's head like the tank?" queried Squiff.

"Because there's nothing in it!" said Ogilvy.

"Good, my Scottish chump! Go up one!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The rebels had quite recovered their high spirits by this time. They ate their breakfast with rare zest and enjoyment, and the absence of tea and coffee did not greatly distress them. Lemonade and ginger-beer did not mingle nicely with fried bacon, but nobody seemed to mind.

During breakfast Frank Nugent got up and crossed over to the window.

"Anybody approaching?" asked Wharton.

"Yes."

The juniors were on their feet in a twinkling.

"Who is it?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Looks like a party of prefects," said Nugent. "I can't be certain. They're too far off as yet."

As the party drew nearer, Nugent was able to identify them.

"There's Wingate and Gwynne, North and Faulkner, and Walker and Hammersley!" he announced.

"Are they armed?" asked Peter Todd.

"Not to the naked eye."

Harry Wharton hurriedly acquainted the fellows in the other rooms with the approach of the prefects.

"Clear the decks for action!" he exclaimed.

"This is sterner opposition than we had to face yesterday. I don't mind old Prout, he's perfectly harmless. But Wingate & Co. won't be so easily disposed of."

"I suppose they've been sent as emissaries of the Head," said Mark Linley.

"Well, that's a good word, Marky!" said Bob Cherry. "Have you been assisting Alonzo Todd in his great dictionary-swallowing feat?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Really, my dear Cherry!" protested the guileless Alonzo. "It is not habitual with me to masticate dictionaries."

"Dry up!" growled Johnny Bull. "The enemy has arrived!"

Wingate and his fellow-prefects had no ladders, neither did they appear to have any weapons of war in their possession. They halted at the foot of the tower, and Wingate hailed Frank Nugent.

"Is Wharton up there?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Tell him I want to speak to him."

A moment later Harry Wharton's face appeared at the window.

"Good-morning, Wingate!" he said cheerfully. "In order to save a lot of argument, let me say at once that we haven't the slightest intention of giving in!"

Wingate laughed.

"We haven't come here to try and force you to submit," he said.

"You haven't?" said Wharton incredulously.

"No. We were ordered yesterday by the Head to come and fetch you back, but we declined."

"Hurrah!"

A ringing cheer went up from the rebels.

"Mind you," said Wingate, "we consider you are a set of silly asses to shut yourselves up in this tower. Your grievances are quite genuine, but you're not likely to get them redressed by doing this sort of thing."

"We came along to give you a word of advice," said Gwynne. "Chuck this tomfoolery at once, and come back to the school. The longer you stay here, the worse it will be for you in the long run. The Head will expel the ringleaders—"

"It's a question of 'First catch your ringleaders, and then expel them!'" said Dennis Carr.

"Hear, hear!"

"Well, you'll gain nothing by staying where you are," said Wingate. "The Head will never give in to a party of juniors!"

"We're jolly well going to stay here until he does!" said Wharton grimly.

Wingate shrugged his shoulders.

"We're advising you for the best," he said. "And you'll have only yourselves to blame if you come a mighty cropper at the finish!"

"I say, Wingate," shouted Bob Cherry, "I want to ask you a question."

"Go ahead!"

"Do you approve of the new grub regulations?"

"No."

"Do you approve of Loder?"

"Hardly!"

"Then, why don't you come and throw in your lot with us?"

"Hear, hear!" said Vernon-Smith. "We've got bags of accommodation!"

Wingate laughed.

"I'm not sickening for the sack!" he said. "Besides, I don't consider that a barring-out of this sort will help matters one jot."

"You kids will have to give in before long," said Hammersley. "I heard Loder say that he had cut off your water-supply."

"So it was Loder who came here during the night?" said Wharton.

"Yes, Loder and Prout."

"Would you fellows like to refill the tank?" asked Dennis Carr.

"Don't be absurd!" said Faulkner. "If you think we're going to turn ourselves into water-carriers for your benefit, you're jolly well mistaken!"

"You wouldn't have to go very far for the water," said Dennis.

"No. Only about four miles!" said Gwynne sarcastically.

"It's no use, you kids," said Wingate. "You might as well chuck up the sponge. You'll be kept without water, and your food supplies will run short, if they haven't already done so. Sooner or later, you'll have to acknowledge defeat."

"To which the Removites retorted in chorus:

"Never!"

The seniors saw that it was quite impossible to influence the rebels into submission. They remained in conversation with the Removites for a few moments, and then, realising that it was time for morning school, they hurried away to Greyfriars.

"It was jolly good of the prefects to come along and give us their advice!" said Harry Wharton. "But we can't possibly act on it! It's unthinkable to give in now that we've gone so far!"

"Absolutely!" said Frank Nugent. "We must stick it out at all costs!"

"But supposing we run short of grub?" said Billy Bunter.

"In that case," said Bob Cherry, "we'll turn cannibals, and have boiled porpoise and carrots!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

For the remainder of the morning the rebels were left in peace.

It was impossible for the juniors to take outdoor exercise, but there was plenty of indoor recreation.

A number of fellows were seated on the floor in Oriental fashion playing chess. Dick Penfold was compiling a poem for the "Greyfriars' Herald." And an eager band of amateur cooks were preparing the dinner.

Perched on the window-niche, Monty Newland was keeping guard. The window commanded an extensive view of the countryside. And at the opposite window another sentry had been posted.

Dinner was about to be served when Monty Newland gave a sudden shout.

"Somebody's coming, you fellows!"

"Is it the Head?" asked Bob Cherry.

"No. I believe it's your pater."

"My only aunt!"

"No. Your pater."

In the excitement of the past twenty-four hours, Bob Cherry had quite forgotten his father's existence.

It was not altogether surprising that Major Cherry should turn up at the rebels' stronghold, for he had been spending a couple of days in Courtfield on business.

Bob Cherry went to the window, and saw his father approaching with his military stride.

Although the hill on which the beacon tower stood was very steep, the major seemed to take it without exertion, as if it had been level ground.

"Hallo, pater!" sang out Bob cheerfully.

Major Cherry looked up.

"Things have come to a pretty pass," he observed. "But I don't blame you, my boy, for the action you have taken—I don't blame you in the least!"

"How did you know we were here, sir?" asked Wharton.

"I met some of the Sixth Form boys on the outskirts of Courtfield. They told me what had happened."

"There was no alternative but to have a barring-out, pater," said Bob Cherry. "We simply can't stick the new grub any longer—or Loder, either!"

The major nodded.

"I understand the position exactly, Robert," he said. "The fact that the whole of the Remove Form has rebelled against the existing state of affairs does not surprise me in the least. Only a couple of days ago I warned Dr. Locke that something of the sort would happen if the new food wasn't withdrawn, and Loder deprived of the captaincy."

"Then you are on our side, sir?" said Vernon-Smith.

"Absolutely! Mind you, I have no patience with schoolboy rebellions, as a rule, but on this occasion I consider you are justified—quite justified, begad! The wonder is that you did not take this step sooner. However, this state of affairs must not continue. You must go back to the school."

Bob Cherry's jaw dropped.

"We—we feel that we can't go back now, pater—he began.

"I am not suggesting that you return before your wrongs are righted," said the major. "But they will be righted soon, by George! I shall leave no stone unturned to

see that your grievances are redressed—even if I have to fight the whole of the Governors single-handed!"

"Bravo, sir!" exclaimed Dennis Carr. "Three cheers for Major Cherry!" roared Bolsover major.

And the cheers were given with right good will.

With the major on their side, the juniors felt confident of ultimate success. Their case was far from hopeless.

"My first step," said Major Cherry, "will be to go and see Dr. Locke. If I am able to persuade him to yield—and I shall use all the eloquence at my command—this rebellion should be over in a few hours. There is just a chance, however, that I may not obtain satisfaction at the outset, and in that event you will have to spend another day here—perhaps two. How are you situated with regard to food and drink?"

"Our food supplies won't be exhausted yet awhile, sir," said Wharton. "But we're without water. The tank close to where you are standing was emptied in the night by Loder."

"Then I will make arrangements for it to be replenished."

"Hurrah!"

"And now," said the major, consulting his watch, "I must be off! There is no time to be lost, if I am to achieve my object. I hope to report favourable developments within a few hours."

So saying, the major strode away. And as his tall military figure disappeared down the hill yet another volley of cheers rang out from the rebels in the old beacon tower.

"Methinks," said Frank Nugent, "the end is near!"

But he spoke too soon!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Major Does His Best.

"MORNIN', sir!" said Gosling, touching his forehead as Major Cherry passed through the school gateway. "Which these is nice goings on, sir, an' no mistake! 'Aye you 'eard about it, sir? Those young warmints—"

The major interrupted Gosling's flow of eloquence.

"Be silent, sir!" he barked. "It is not for you, a paid manservant of the school, to criticise the actions of the young gentlemen in the Remove Form!"

"My hey!" gasped Gosling, taken quite aback. "Ain't you goin' to 'orserwip that son of yours, sir? Which I'm sure 'e deserves it!"

The major gave a snort.

"If it wasn't for your age," he thundered, "I'd knock you down! Go about your business, sir!"

Gosling shuffled back into his lodge with a stupefied expression on his far from beautiful face. He had not anticipated that Major Cherry would be in sympathy with the rebels of the Remove.

The major stamped through the Close, and made his way to the Head's study. He found the apartment deserted, and on summoning Trotter the page, he was informed that Dr. Locke was at dinner in Hall.

Major Cherry's first impulse was to proceed to the dining-hall, and take it by storm, so to speak. But wiser counsels prevailed, and he waited—albeit impatiently—for the Head to arrive.

When the Head did arrive, after an interval of twenty minutes, the major flew at his throat—metaphorically, of course.

"This is a fine state of affairs, sir—a precious fine state of affairs, upon my soul! The school is at sixes and sevens, sir!"

"I cannot agree with you, Major Cherry," said the Head. "True, there has been a disturbance, but it affects only one section of the school. Will you sit down, and we will endeavour to discuss the matter calmly, and without loss of temper?"

"Temper, sir!" barked the major. "Do I look the sort of person who goes about losing his temper? I am indignant—I am shocked—but I have myself under perfect control! There can be no question of temper—unless you were referring to the possibility of losing your own!"

The Head placed a chair for his visitor, but the major kicked it aside impatiently.

"That which I foreshadowed has come to pass, sir!" he exclaimed. "When I saw you a couple of days ago I warned you of the probability of a revolt on the part of the boys!"

"My dear sir—"

"A prophet is without honour in his own country, Dr. Locke," said the major. "You

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must agree, nevertheless, that my predictions have come true. What with this new hygienic food, and the various other impositions the boys have had thrust upon them, it cannot be wondered at that they have broken out in rebellion!"

"They have behaved with unexampled folly, Major Cherry—"

"Pardon me, sir, but they have every justification for the step they have taken. As I told them a short while ago I have no patience with schoolboy rebellions, as a rule, but this is an exceptional case."

"I fail to see what grievances the boys have—"

"Then I will enlighten you on the subject, sir! In the first place, they are sick and tired of these hygienic concoctions which have been placed before them day by day!"

"The new food, Major Cherry, is of high nutritive value—"

"Bah, sir!" roared the major. "I have sampled some of it myself, sir, and I should hesitate to put it before my dogs! Sir Hilton Popper, who introduced this new measure, is a faddist, sir—a finnick faddist! Doubtless he suffers with dyspepsia, and, being compelled to eat such trash himself, he considers that everybody else should do the same. I have no patience with the new food, sir, and I have still less patience with Popper! His latest action is that of a doddering imbecile—"

"Excuse me, Major Cherry," interposed the Head, with some warmth, "but it is neither fair nor gentlemanly to speak of a Governor of the school in such terms!"

The major snorted.

"I am not given to mincing my words, Dr. Locke! If I have occasion to make an adverse comment concerning an individual, I do so frankly and without restraint. I am not afraid to repeat to Sir Hilton Popper what I have just said—indeed, I should welcome the opportunity!"

"Sir Hilton will be here to-morrow," said the Head. "There is to be a meeting of Governors in this study."

"Then I will seize the opportunity, sir, of telling Popper to his face what I think of him!"

There was a pause. The Head was fervently wishing that his fiery visitor would take his departure. These stormy interviews with Major Cherry were quite unnerveing.

But the major had no intention of emulating the Arabs, and silently stealing away. He had further observations to make.

"The boys have yet another grievance, sir," he said. "You have seen fit—goodness knows why—to appoint a boy named Loder to the captaincy of the school!"

"That is so," said the Head quietly.

"Why was Wingate turned out of office?" "He resented the new rules, and declined to give me his support in seeing that they were obeyed."

"I don't blame him, sir—I don't blame him in the least! He acted for the benefit of the school at large. To deprive him of the captaincy was a gross miscarriage of justice!"

"I think it is high time, Major Cherry," said the Head stiffly, "that this interview ceased. You have no right to tax me with injustice! I acted—as I always endeavour to act—for the welfare of the school!"

"Do you seriously mean to tell me, Dr. Locke, that the welfare of the school will be bettered by the appointment of Loder? Why, the fellow is an outsider, sir—a rank outsider! His past record will not bear investigation!"

"No doubt your son has been telling you some—"

"My son is not a tale-bearer, sir! He has told me nothing! My summing-up of the character of Loder is the result of my own investigations! I know him for what he is—a dissolute rascal!—There is no comparison between him and Wingate. Wingate is a high-minded, chivalrous fellow—"

"I am not prepared to enter into a discussion on the relative merits of two senior boys," said the Head. "I would suggest, Major Cherry, that you took your departure. This conversation can serve no useful purpose."

"I refuse to go, sir, until you have satisfied me on this point. Are you prepared to cancel the new food regulations, and to reinstate Wingate to the captaincy?"

"Most assuredly I am not!" said Dr. Locke.

"Then I warn you, sir, that this rebellion will continue, and what is more, it will grow to alarming proportions! The boys in the other Forms will throw in their lot with the rebels. And then you will have no alternative but to submit to the wishes of the school!"

The Head frowned.

"I am not likely to allow myself to be intimidated by a number of foolish law-breakers," he said. "Moreover, I am confident that the members of the Remove Form will soon come to their senses. At present the novelty of the situation appeals to them; but when they find themselves face to face with privation and discomfort, they will be only too glad to vacate their present quarters and return to the school."

"And what then, sir?" "The ring-leaders shall be expelled with ignominy, and the remainder severely flogged!"

"Would you account my son to be a ring-leader, sir?"

The Head nodded.

"Your son is certainly one of the prime movers in this rash escapade, Major Cherry. I have always entertained a high opinion of his character and capabilities; but I have my duty to perform, and I consider that his recent conduct merits expulsion."

The major stamped to and fro in the Head's study for some moments without speaking. Then he suddenly blared forth:

"My son shall not be expelled, sir—not while there is a law in the land and a public Press in which one may call attention to acts of injustice!"

The Head made no reply to this fierce tirade.

"You may take it from me, sir," continued the major, "that within the next twenty-four hours the new food regulations will be quashed. Wingate will be restored to the captaincy, the rebellion will be at an end, and those who participated in it will go unpunished!"

"I quite fail to see—" murmured the Head.

"Then to-morrow, sir, your vision shall be made clearer!"

So saying, Major Cherry gave his military moustache a vicious twirl, and stamped out of the study.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Desperate Situation.

MEANWHILE, what of the rebels? Things were not shaping altogether satisfactorily in the old beacon tower.

The Famous Five and their immediate chums were still full of ardour, and they had no thought of giving in.

Amongst the rest of the fellows, however, discontent was breeding.

As the Head had predicted, the novelty of the situation had worn off, and a good many of the juniors were tired of being cramped within the confines of the tower. They wanted to get out and exercise their limbs.

Shortly after Major Cherry's visit a dozen or so of the rebels mutually agreed to go for a walk in Courtfield. When Harry Wharton came to hear of this arrangement, however, he promptly put his foot down.

"No fellow is to leave the tower under any pretext whatever!" he said.

"Oh, stow it, Wharton!" growled Bolsover major, who was one of the malcontents. "You can't expect us to remain bottled up like sardines all the time."

"If it's fresh air you're wanting," said Bob Cherry, "we'll suspend you from the window by a rope!"

"Might as well hang him and be done with it!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It would be simply asking for trouble," said Frank Nugent, "to go into the town."

"Besides, it would mean removing all the barricades," said Mark Lintley; "and if we did that we might easily be caught napping."

"I don't see why we shouldn't be allowed to go out for half an hour," said Skinner. "It's just like Wharton to try and ride the high horse."

"Wish we'd never come to this beastly place!" whined Snop.

"Hear, hear!" said Billy Bunter. "There isn't a great deal of grub left, and I think it's time to pack up and quit."

"It's time to quit showing the white feather, if that's what you mean!" said Wharton. "You all undertook to see this thing through, and you're not going to back out now."

In spite of Wharton's orders that no one was to leave the tower, Bolsover and Skinner went downstairs after tea, and started to remove the barricade of lumber which was piled up against the door.

"Hallo!" ejaculated Tom Redwing, coming on the scene. "What's the little game, you fellows?"

"Wharton's given us permission to go out," said Skinner.

"I don't believe you!" said the sailorman's son curly. "Leave that barricade alone, and go upstairs!"

"Rats!" growled Bolsover. And he continued to remove the lumber. Tom Redwing stepped up to the bully of the Remove, seized him by the collar, and swung him back.

"Let go!" roared Bolsover. But Tom Redwing hung on like a leech. Bolsover struggled violently, and eventually he managed to free himself. When he did so he clenched his big fist and dashed it into Tom Redwing's face.

A fierce fight followed. Tom Redwing stood up to his powerfully-built adversary, and the two juniors swayed backwards and forwards, occasionally knocking over some of the lumber.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, coming down the steps three at a

The bully of the Remove was down at last. He landed fairly and squarely on a packing-case, the lid of which was smashed beneath his weight.

"Get up, man!" said Tom Redwing curly. "You're not whacked yet!"

But Bolsover was! All the fight was knocked out of him, and he did not budge from the packing case.

"Bring him up stairs!" said Wharton. The bully of the Remove was assisted up the spiral staircase.

"If you try to break out again," said Wharton sternly, "it will mean a Form licking!"

When the party arrived upstairs they found yet another disturbance in progress.

Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, was on the floor, and Peter Todd and Dick Russell were seated astride him.

"What's up?" asked Wharton.

"Then I must have had bats in my belfry at the time! Of all the harebrained schemes—"

"Let him get up!" said Wharton. Peter Todd and Dick Russell allowed the victim to rise.

"Now, Fish," said the captain of the Remove, "you'd better make up your mind to keep guard for a couple of hours. If you don't—"

"Waal?" "You'll be made to run the gauntlet!"

Fisher T. Fish gave a shudder. Running the gauntlet was, he knew, a very painful ordeal. He wisely decided to submit to Wharton's wishes.

"Guess I'll humour you this time," he said, planting himself by the window.

"A jolly lucky thing for you!" said Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter.



A number of fellows were seated on the floor in Oriental fashion, playing chess, whilst an eager band of amateur cooks were preparing dinner. Perched on the window-niche, Monty Newland was keeping guard. (See page 3.)

time, with the other members of the Famous Five hard on his heels. "A scrap, by Jove!"

"Go it, Redwing!" sang out Johnny Bull.

"Knock him into the middle portion of the ensuing weekfulness!" urged Hurree Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's it all about?" asked Wharton.

"Bolsover and Skinner were trying to get out—" began Tom Redwing.

Bolsover's fist found a billet on his opponent's nose.

"Biff!"

"Never talk while you're fighting, Tommy!" said Bob Cherry. "Follow the advice of an old veteran of the ring, and let your conversation take the form of punches!"

That blow on the nose seemed to rouse the sailorman's son to fury. He launched a hurricane attack, and Bolsover was driven back.

Crash!

"It's Fishy's turn to keep guard," explained Peter Todd, "and he refuses."

"So we're trying a little gentle persuasion," said Russell.

Harry Wharton turned to the squirming Yankee.

"Why do you refuse to do your duty, Fish?"

"I'm fed up with the whole business, and I sorter calculate it's time we clucked it."

"You jolly well keep guard for a couple of hours!" said Wharton grimly.

"I jolly well won't!"

"Oh, yes, you will! I'll soon see to that!"

"I guess you were a mugwump to organise this rebellion, Wharton!"

"Why, you silly duffer," roared Johnny Bull, "you were one of the first to agree to the idea!"

"Carr tells me that I've got to keep guard between ten and twelve to-night. Is that right?"

"Quite right!" said Wharton.

"Ahem! I—I think I'd rather go to bed," faltered the fat junior. "I've got a splitting headache!"

"You'll carry out the duties of sentry," said the captain of the Remove, "or I'll put you on a bread-and-water diet for twenty-four hours!"

"Puzzle, find the water!" growled Bulstrode.

"Hasn't the tank been filled yet?" asked Nugent.

"No, and it's not likely to be."

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry. "My pater's a man of his word. He promised to make arrangements for the tank to be filled, and he won't let us down."

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 67.

A gloom seemed to hang over the old tower that evening.

The rebels were tired and dispirited, and the majority of them curled up in their blankets before nine o'clock.

Harry Wharton & Co. were determined to hold on and hold out, no matter what the consequences might be. But it could not be disguised that some of the rebels were on the verge of mutiny. Supplies of food were running short, and there was no water.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry remained awake, and after a time they had the satisfaction of seeing a dozen Courtfellers come toiling up the hill towards the tower.

Each man carried a couple of pails of water.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "The pater's turned up trumps!"

The water-carriers emptied the contents of their pails into the tank, and, after exchanging a few pleasantries with the Greyfriars juniors, they withdrew.

"This is topping!" said Wharton. "Shall we draw some water up now?"

"Leave it till the morning, Harry. We shan't need it until then. Shall we turn in now? It's ten o'clock."

Wharton nodded.

"Where's Bunter?" he asked.

"Here I am," said the fat junior, stepping to the window.

"Good! Mind you keep your peepers open until you're relieved at midnight!"

"Rely on me!" said Bunter.

"I don't like the idea of leaving that fat duffer on guard!" murmured Wharton, as he walked away with his chum.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Bob. "There will be a sentry in the next room, and another downstairs."

A moment later the two juniors were wrapped up snugly in their blankets.

Shortly before midnight Harry Wharton awoke.

The room was in total darkness, and, save for the deep breathing of the sleepers, all was still.

Wharton looked at the luminous watch on his wrist.

"Nearly twelve!" he murmured. "I'd better see about changing guard."

The captain of the Remove rose to his feet, and switched on his electric torch.

He expected to see the podgy form of William George Bunter stationed by the window, but he was disappointed.

"The fat worm!" muttered Wharton. "He's deserted his post! I'll make him sit up for this!"

Further investigation revealed Billy Bunter lying on the floor, sound asleep, with his arms crossed in the region of his waistcoat.

There was a contented smile on the fat junior's face, and Harry Wharton realised the cause of that smile only too well.

Bunter had been at the provisions!

With a muttered exclamation, Wharton crossed over to the alcove in which the food supplies were kept.

He found that Billy Bunter had done great execution. A dish which had contained a rabbit-pie was now empty. A biscuit-tin, in which a number of fancy cakes had been stored, was also empty. And four ginger-beer bottles had been drained.

"This is altogether too thick!" muttered the captain of the Remove.

He realised only too clearly the gravity of the situation.

There was very little food left, and only half a dozen bottles of ginger-beer, which would not go very far when divided between forty fellows.

Wharton's first impulse was to rouse the occupants of the room. And then he reflected that by so doing he would only cause a panic.

"I'll take no action till the morning," he murmured.

At that moment Bob Cherry stirred restlessly, and awoke.

"You awake, Harry?" he asked.

"Yes."

"I'm awfully thirsty!"

"So am I, and ratty into the bargain!"

"Anything wrong?"

"I should jolly well say so! That fat go-mandiser has wolfed nearly all the grub, plus four bottles of pinger-pop!"

"My hat!"

Bob Cherry was on his feet in a moment.

"Let's pulverise the fat villain!" he exclaimed.

"I think the pulverising had better stand over till the morning."

"Meanwhile," said Bob, "what about drawing up a pail of water? I'm absolutely parched!"

Wharton assented, and the two juniors lowered a pail into the tank.

Instead of a splash, a hollow metallic sound came to their ears.

"Empty, by Jove!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"But who—What—"

"It's pretty obvious what's happened," said Bob. "Loder or somebody has been here and emptied the tank again. Bunter must have been asleep at the time, and, therefore, no alarm was given."

Wharton hauled up the empty pail on the rope.

"The situation's jolly serious, Bob!" he remarked.

"I should prefer to call it desperate, myself!" said Bob Cherry.

"The shortage of food and drink will take the stuffing out of most of the fellows."

"I'm afraid so!"

"We shall have to put Bunter through the hoop in the morning."

"Yes, rather!"

"It's time to change the guard," said Wharton. "I think I'll keep watch myself for the remainder of the night. Dashed if I feel like sleep!"

"If you get drowsy, wake me, and I'll relieve you," said Bob Cherry.

And he went back to his improvised bed.

Bob was very thirsty, but he would not touch one of the remaining bottles of ginger-beer. He reflected that others would soon have greater need of it than he.

When the morning came Harry Wharton explained to his school-fellows which had taken place in the night.

There was fierce indignation against Billy Bunter. There was also a panic among the weaker spirits.

"We can't possibly stay here without food and drink," said Skinner. "We shall die of starvation!"

"That would be no loss, so far as you are concerned!" retorted Frank Nugent.

"The question of the moment is, what shall we do with Bunter?" said Johnny Bull.

There was no lack of suggestions.

"Bump him!"

"Slay him!"

"Sling him out of the window!"

"Send him back to the school on his own!"

The fat junior trembled beneath the blankets.

"Oh, really, you fellows!" he protested.

"What have I done?"

"You scoffed our supplies!" said Wharton sternly. "Then you went to sleep when you were supposed to be on guard, and, consequently the water-tank was emptied without our knowledge. We're in a jolly tight corner—thanks to you!"

"I—I—" stammered Bunter.

"Make him run the gauntlet!" said Peter Todd.

"Hear, hear!"

The rebels lined up in two rows, and armed themselves with various implements of punishment.

Billy Bunter was hurled to his feet, and was made to run between the two lines of avengers.

Whack, whack, whack!

Blows were rained upon the fat junior as he went, and his yells of anguish fairly awakened the echoes.

"Yah! Chuckit! Stoppit! Think of my delicate constitution—"

"Think of all the tuck you stowed away in the night!" roared Bolsover major, swinging a knotted towel through the air.

When the ordeal was over Billy Bunter collapsed like a pricked balloon. He lay, moaning and groaning, on the floor, and he assured his schoolfellows that he was dying. Whereupon Johnny Bull urged him to buck up and die.

"I suppose, Wharton," said Stott, "you're going to cave in now? It's no use carrying on without grub."

Wharton's jaw was squarely set.

"There's to be no surrender!" he said.

"We're going to stick it out!"

"I want to go back to the school!" wailed Snoop, who was actually on the verge of "blubbing."

"You're going to stay where you are!" retorted the captain of the Remove. "And I might mention that if there's anything in the nature of a mutiny, things will go hard with the mutineers!"

Nothing more was said just then, and the rebels were left face to face with a day of hardship and privation.

Harry Wharton had vowed that they would never yield; others had said they would have to.

Whether triumph or disaster awaited the rebels of Greyfriars, time alone would show.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The End of the Rebellion.

THAT same morning, at eleven o'clock, the Governors of Greyfriars assembled in the Head's study.

There were six gentlemen present; also Sir Hilton Popper, who did not come under the category of gentleman.

The Governors knew nothing, as yet, of the disturbance which had recently occurred at the school. Dr. Locke, however, speedily enlightened them.

When questioned by Sir Hilton Popper as to whether the boys had overcome their prejudice towards the new food, the Head remarked:

"I fear they have not, sir. Feeling runs so strongly against the new regulations that the members of the Remove Form have risen in revolt!"

There was a murmur of astonishment from the Governors.

"The boys in question," went on the Head, "have taken up a more or less impregnable position in the old beacon tower, which stands on the summit of St. Giles' Hill. They have been there two days, and all efforts to dislodge them have failed utterly."

"The young rascals!" snorted Sir Hilton Popper. "They shall pay dearly for this!"

"I have already considered the advisability of expelling the ringleaders," said the Head.

"What exactly are their grievances?" inquired one of the Governors—a brigadier-general.

"They object to the new hygienic food, sir," replied Dr. Locke, "and they bitterly resent the appointment of a boy named Loder to the captaincy of the school."

"They have no right to object to anything!" roared Sir Hilton Popper. "The new food regulations were introduced for their own good, and they haven't the sense to see it! As far as the appointment of a new captain is concerned, it is monstrous that they should criticise the action of their headmaster!"

"It is infamous!" muttered an aged patriarch in his flowing beard.

"What steps do you advise to take in the matter, gentlemen?" asked the Head.

"First of all," said the brigadier-general, "have you given full and just consideration to the boys' grievances?"

Sir Hilton Popper butted in before the Head could speak.

"They are deserving of no consideration whatever, sir! They have placed themselves quite outside the pale! They have set the school authorities at defiance, and we must see that they are adequately punished! The young rascals who organised this affair must be expelled forthwith!"

"There is such a thing as tempering justice with mercy," observed a mild-looking clergyman.

"Bah!" snorted Sir Hilton. "You may reserve that sort of gush for your pulpit, sir! We want none of it here! I propose, gentlemen, that we venture forth in a body, and compel the defiant young rascals to vacate the tower!"

The Head was about to remark that it would be too undignified for the members of the Board of Governors to parley with a number of rebellious schoolboys, when the door opened, and Trotter, the page, came in.

"What is it, Trotter?" asked the Head impatiently.

Trotter handed over a number of visiting-cards.

"There are eight gents waiting to see you, sir!" he said.

"Eight! Bless my soul!"

The Head glanced at the cards in astonishment. Major Cherry's name was on one of them, and the others bore the names of Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, Mr. Henry Nugent, Colonel James Wharton, Sir Reginald Brooke (Lord Mäuleverer's guardian), Mr. Bulstrode, Mr. Newland, and Mr. Hazeldene.

"A deputation—what?" murmured the brigadier-general.

Dr. Locke nodded.

"Ask these gentlemen if they will be good enough to wait, Trotter—" he began.

There was a tramping of feet, and in marched Major Cherry at the head of the procession.

"No, sir; we will not be good enough to wait!" he shouted. "Our business is of extreme urgency!"

"My dear major—"

"I am not your dear major, sir! I am a very incensed and indignant man! I have summoned these gentlemen, by telephone and telegraph, to come here on behalf of their sons and wards! We demand justice—"

"Then your demands shall be met, sir!" said Sir Hilton Popper. "Your son and his accomplices, Major Cherry, shall be expelled from the school in disgrace!"

There was a chorus of protest from the Head's visitors.

"You will not dare to take such a step, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon-Smith, his eyes flashing. "So far as I can ascertain, the members of the Remove Form have every right to rebel against the tyrannical measures which you have introduced!"

"That is so," said Colonel Wharton. "The boys complain bitterly of the new food, and their complaint is quite justified! The hygienic diet which they have had to endure is not fit for animals!"

"That is a very strong statement to make, colonel!" said the brigadier-general.

"It is true, nevertheless. I rather think, gentlemen, that you yourselves have no conception of what the new food is like. Major Cherry will now exhibit samples of it for your inspection!"

With the air of an expert conjurer, Bob Cherry's father drew from his pockets a number of paper bags, which he placed on the table.

The brigadier-general opened one of the bags, and took therefrom an article which, in shape and appearance, closely resembled a door-knob.

"What the thunder is this?" he ejaculated. "That, sir," said Sir Hilton Popper, "is a hygienic bun. Its nutritive qualities are of the highest repute."

The general grunted, and, after some hesitation, took a bite at the bun. The next moment he bitterly regretted his rash action.

"Is it not to your liking, sir?" queried Sir Hilton Popper.

The general choked and spluttered. When at last he became coherent, he said:

"No, sir; it is not to my liking! It is abominable! It bears out Colonel Wharton's statement to the letter!"

Meanwhile, the other bags were being explored by the Governors.

The mild-looking clergyman was indiscreet enough to bite off a huge portion of a hygienic scone, and he was compelled to mumble an apology to the company, and hastily retire from the study.

"I do not wonder at the school being plunged into disorder if this is the sort of stuff they have had to subsist upon!" said the brigadier-general. "You assured us, Sir Hilton, when you introduced this measure, that the new food was most enjoyable!"

"So it is, sir—so it is!" said the baronet.

"Then, in order to prove the truth of your assertion, would you be good enough to consume, in the presence of the company, one of these hygienic buns?"

"With the greatest of pleasure!" said the baronet.

And he started operations on one of the buns.

All eyes were fixed upon Sir Hilton Popper as he commenced his uncongenial task. He managed to devour a small portion of the bun; then a curious pallor came over his countenance, and he pushed the remainder of the bun away from him.

"I—I don't feel like eating just now!" he muttered. "I had a heavy lunch, begad!"

The brigadier-general was smiling grimly.

"Had you lunched off your own hygienic fare, Popper," he said, "I very much doubt if you would have survived!"

"Do you agree with me, general," said Major Cherry eagerly, "that the new food is unfit for human consumption?"

"I agree with you absolutely!"

And the rest of the Governors—with the exception of Sir Hilton Popper—nodded assent.

"The boys in the Remove Form are in no way to blame for showing their resentment at such abominable fare!" said Mr. Nugent. "In the circumstances, I consider that the new food regulations should be withdrawn!"

"If they are not withdrawn," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, "then we will withdraw our sons from a school whose pupils are so badly fed!"

"Hear, hear!" said Mr. Newland and Mr. Bulstrode together.

After a brief discussion the Governors—again with the exception of Sir Hilton Popper—agreed to the cancellation of the new food regulations.

"I also propose," said the brigadier-

general, "that no action be taken against the boys who organised the rebellion."

"One moment, sir!" said Sir Hilton Popper. "You appear to forget that the new food is not the only point at issue. The young rascals also took exception to the appointment of Loder to the captaincy. They have no right whatever to criticise Dr. Locke's selection—"

Major Cherry promptly intervened.

"I will prove to you, gentlemen," he said, "that Loder is a most undesirable person to hold such a responsible post as that of captain of Greyfriars. Before I produce my evidence, will you give me your assurance, Dr. Locke, that Loder shall not be punished beyond being deprived of the captaincy?"

"Very well," said the Head, in wonder.

Major Cherry then produced a grubby-looking document from his pocket, and laid it on the table.

"This, gentlemen," he said, "is a bill for five pounds, which Loder owed to the landlord of the Cross Keys in Friardale. He had been paying visits to that disreputable resort for the purpose of playing billiards. He contracted this debt over a month ago, but has never paid a penny. This morning, on my way to the post-office to dispatch some telegrams, I met the landlord of the Cross Keys, who informed me that he was on his way to Greyfriars to recover the money which Loder owed him. I sent the rascal about his business."

"Did you pay the bill, Major Cherry?" asked the Head.

"I gave the precious scoundrel two pounds, and told him he would have to be satisfied with that. I hope I have succeeded in convincing you, gentlemen, that Loder is totally unfitted for the position he holds?"

"Indeed, you have!" said the brigadier-general. "The young rascal deserves to be bundled out neck and crop! In view of these revelations, you will, of course, deprive him of the captaincy, Dr. Locke?"

"Most assuredly!" said the Head.

"And you will reinstate Wingate?" asked Major Cherry.

Dr. Locke nodded.

"Then, I think," said Sir Reginald Brooke, "that there is nothing more to be said. Now that their desires are gratified, I feel sure that the members of the Remove Form will return in an orderly manner to the school."

"And go unpunished?" hooted Sir Hilton Popper.

"Well," said the brigadier-general, with a twinkle in his eye, "I think they are deserving of—er—severe censure! Doubtless our friend the headmaster will give them a timely lecture!"

"I will, sir," promised the Head.

"It is pleasing to know," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, "that events have terminated so satisfactorily to all parties."

But had they?

Sir Hilton Popper was very far from being satisfied.

But the irate baronet was in a minority of one!

In the old beacon tower on St. Giles' Hill matters had reached a crisis.

The rebels had fasted all the morning, owing to the insufficiency of supplies, and there was a great deal of grumbling and discontent.

Harry Wharton's chums stood loyally by him. They resolutely refused to give in.

But the number of mutineers was rapidly increasing, until by mid-day at least twenty fellows expressed their intention of quitting the tower and going back to Greyfriars.

"We're fed up with this!" declared Bolsover major. "There's no sense in carrying on when we've nothing to eat or drink."

"Hear, hear!" said Skinner. "Don't be so beastly obstinate, Wharton! We shall have to give in sooner or later, and you might as well chuck up the sponge at once!"

"I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter faintly, "I'm in the throes of starvation! I've got fearful gnawing pains, and I'm certain to waste away to a shadow if we stay here much longer!"

"You cowardly worms!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in ringing tones. "You were only too keen on the rebellion at first, but the moment things begin to look black you want to slide out!"

"I vote we let them go," said Frank Nugent.

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull. "They're a set of white-livered funks, and they might as well be out of the way."

Harry Wharton called a special meeting of the Remove Emergency Committee, and it was decided that all who had no further

stomach for the rebellion should be allowed to take their departure.

The barricade was accordingly removed from the door, and Bolsover major, Skinner, Snoop, Stott, Trevor, Fish, Bunter, and several others staggered out into the spring sunshine.

"Good riddance to bad rubbish!" said Dennis Carr.

"They'll meet with a warm reception from the Head when they get back to Greyfriars," said Peter Todd.

"Serve 'em jolly well right!" growled Squiff.

The party of funks descended the hill, and were soon lost to sight.

"We're going to stick it out, aren't we, you fellows?" said Harry Wharton.

"Of course!"

"I'm pretty certain that my paper will come to the rescue before long," said Bob Cherry.

Half an hour passed; and then Dick Russell, who was gazing out of one of the upper windows, uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Here comes old Wingate!"

"He looks very chirpy about something, too!" said Ogilvy, looking over his chum's shoulder. "Wonder what's in the wind?"

Wingate came on with his athletic stride. He greeted the rebels with a cheery smile.

"I see you haven't put out the white flag yet," he remarked.

"No, and we don't intend to, Wingate," said Dennis Carr. "I won't pretend that we're enjoying ourselves; we're not. But we mean to stick out until we've won the day!"

"Hear, hear!"

"You've won it already," said Wingate.

"What!"

There was a great shout from the rebels—a shout of wonder and joy.

"The Governors have given in," said Wingate. "They've had a deputation of parents to see them, and they've agreed to cancel the new grub regulations, and to give me back the captaincy."

For a moment the juniors could only gasp. Wingate's news seemed altogether too good to be true.

"Is this a leg-pulling stunt, Wingate?" gasped Harry Wharton at length.

"I'm not in the habit of playing the giddy ox," was the reply. "It's a fact that your grievances have been redressed; and, what's more, you're not going to be punished!"

"Hurrah!"

"Hip, hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!"

Cheer after cheer rang out from the old beacon tower.

"You kids can come back to the school as soon as you like," said Wingate, when he was able to make himself heard.

"Good! We'll come alobg at once," said Bob Cherry. "I say, kiddlets, isn't this simply great?"

The rebels collected their belongings, and clattered down the stone staircase. A moment later they emerged into the glorious May sunshine.

The great rebellion was over, and it had ended in a victory for the Remove!

The weaklings were feeling pretty sick with themselves; but those who had been loyal to Harry Wharton rejoiced with exceeding joy.

Tea in Hall that afternoon was not a hygienic affair. It was a bumper repast, such as the juniors had been accustomed to of yore.

And there were many distinguished guests present, including Colonel Wharton and Major Cherry.

Everyone was in high good-humour, and the faces of the feasters glowed with delight.

But Harry Wharton & Co. had to admit that, but for the energetic intervention of Major Cherry, the great rebellion might have ended very differently!

THE END.

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

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THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Micky Denver, an orphan lad, is an acrobat in Beaman'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-steam. In New York he meets a slim, red-headed American, Alec P. Figg, and together they "jump" the "Chicago Flyer," and by staves 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. The film company goes on

location, where Floyd Unwin, the Broadworth star, is to perform a death-defying feat before the cameras, but the opium habit, to which the star is addicted, has undetermined his nerve that 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 the motor-cycle, and performs the stunt himself by dashing over the edge of the cliff into the sea. Later he is given a contract by Mr. Broadworth to appear in one production. Unwin joins forces with Alec P. Figg, and learning that Micky is to perform a daring film stunt on some wires strung at a height of three hundred feet among the Los Angeles' sky-scrapers, the two conceive a dastardly plot for his downfall. On the day of the stunt, in a room at the top of the great Liberty building, is Smart Alec in hiding, with an oxy-acetylene generator capable of projecting a flame which can snap the wires like threads!

(Now read on.)

Between Earth and Sky!

THE appearance of Micky from the window at the top of the giant skyscraper was the signal for the cameramen on the wooden stagings to commence their work of "shooting" the big scene.

For a couple of seconds the young film star stood erect on the window-sill grasping the wires, which ran in six strands right across the width of the street. Then, with a mighty effort, he hauled himself up, and commenced his perilous journey.

Resting his feet on two of the lower wires, and holding one of the upper ones, he swiftly made his way in the direction of the great Liberty building.

Glancing down, he saw Court Street, three hundred feet below, with its pedestrians looking like crawling insects on the face of the earth. It was lucky indeed that height did not affect Micky's nerve or head, for the slightest slip might have precipitated him from his precarious position between earth and sky.

One thing his glance downwards told him, and that was that the stoical residents of Los Angeles had been startled out of their habitual calm for once in a way.

Used as the people were of seeing the filming of cinema scenes in their city, it was not often they had the opportunity of witnessing a star stunt actor risking his life and limb three hundred feet in the air for the sake of the movies.

The roadway directly below him was almost clear of traffic, but in other parts of the street Micky discerned clusters of people like masses of ants—clusters which continually grew in size as more tiny, ant-like beings started up for a closer view of the exciting film scene.

When the lad reached about the centre of the black wires, the other actor, who was playing the part of pursuer crawled out of the window and stood, shaking his fist in pretended rage and baffled wrath in not being able to follow his quarry farther.

Jeffery J. Romery, the chief director, and K. N. Broadworth, the famous producer, stood together near the window out of which the cinema actors had climbed, and watched the progress of the stunt.

"Gee!" muttered Jeff. "The kid is getting along dandy! He seems to have nerves as tough as those steel wires he's crawling along!"

"By gosh, he has!" cried the producer. "And I think he'll turn out even better than Unwin when he becomes more experienced in ordinary acting. He's got a likeable face and screen personality, and that's what counts with the movie 'fans' as much as daring in performing desperate stunts. By the way, I wonder where Floyd Unwin is nowadays? You've seen nothing of him lately, have you, Jeff?"

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 27.

"Not during the last two or three days, sir," returned Jeff.

After that the two big cinema men relapsed into silence to watch, with breathless interest, Micky's last portion of the journey on the few strands of wire across that terrible chasm between the two great skyscrapers.

But among all the people who watched with fascinated eyes the feat of the young film star none gazed upwards with such breathless interest as the very man whose name Mr. Broadworth had mentioned—Floyd Unwin.

On the edge of one of the groups of excited onlookers who thronged Court Street, all unheeding of the warning of the hefty policeman to "Move on!" was the ex-star of the Broadworth company.

The guilty knowledge he had in his heart of the pending doom of the English lad swaying at that dizzy height far above him aroused no remorse nor compassion. His only feeling was one of exultation that the youngster who had stepped into his shoes would soon be out of his path for ever, mingled with a fear that Figg's nerve might fail at the crucial moment.

His plot, with the crook as his accomplice, had been perfected in every mechanical detail, and it was only the human element which he knew could interfere with the scheme.

Behind the window just under the spot where the six wire strands were fastened beneath the parapet of the towering Liberty building he knew that Alec P. Figg was waiting—waiting with that terrible invention, the oxy-acetylene generator.

That generator, borrowed from Red Herman, which was capable of projecting a flame of a temperature of 3,700 degrees centigrade, had been tested, and reported as being in perfect order by Figg himself. The plans for the crook's get-away had been neatly laid, and a high-power motor-cycle was waiting at that very moment in a street at the back of the Liberty block. Altogether, Unwin had every reason for confidence in the success of his dastardly plot.

As Micky worked his way along the strands of wire, which were almost invisible from where Unwin was standing, a terrible nervousness seized the ex-star.

Little by little the young actor drew nearer to the Liberty building, and yet Figg did not appear and project that deadly flame which would snap the lad's frail supports and send him hurtling three hundred feet down to the roadway below.

The hands of the ex-star clenched and unclenched as he gazed aloft with eyes almost starting from his head.

Had Figg's nerve failed him, after all? Was anything else wrong?

The avaricious crook had another four thousand dollars to gain by his one second's work, and he hated Micky as much as Unwin did himself.

The suspense to the ex-star was awful, and

it was with difficulty that he was able to conceal his excessive inward emotion.

But even as he was about to turn, disappointed, away, seeing that Micky had almost finished his perilous journey across the wires, a loud grunt of satisfaction escaped his lips simultaneously with a gasp of horror that left every other lip in that vast crowd.

What exactly was the cause of what occurred nobody quite knew, with, perhaps, the exception of Micky himself. The lad had got within a couple of yards of the parapet of the mighty Liberty building, when out of a window leaned a masked man, bearing a curious-looking appliance in his hands.

Next moment a hissing oxy-acetylene flame shot out, and the steel wires burst asunder like snapped threads. A low cry escaped from the lips of the lad as he heeled over, clawing wildly in the air with his hands.

While every witness of this extraordinary incident gasped with horror, Micky dropped downwards a matter of but four feet, when his hands met a strand of wire, the only one remaining of those on which he had rested his feet during his passage between the skyscrapers.

The impact of his weight twanged the wire like the string of a violin, and almost cut his fingers to the bone. He was almost shaken from his precarious hold with the intense vibrations set up; but, realising that nothing could save him from a terrible death if he failed to maintain his position, he held on with the grimness of despair.

Directly he recovered from his shock, Micky looked towards the window from which there had emerged the masked man who had so nearly sent him to his death. There was nobody in sight, and it was obvious that the man had been in such nervous haste to get clear of the scene of the intended tragedy that he had not properly completed his task.

But matters were bad enough as they were. Between the young film star and destruction was but one thin steel wire. To it he clung with all his strength like a drowning man to a straw. The whole weight of his body was supported from the palms of his hands, and he bit his lips from the excruciating pain he experienced as the steel wire cut into his flesh.

He dare not make any decided movement, but, inch by inch, he began to work his way along the remaining dozen feet between himself and the Liberty building. It was uphill work with a vengeance, for the wire was the lowest of the strands run across by the Broadworth mechanics, and it was clear he would be unable to reach the parapet, as he could have done had the other supports not been cut.

His one hope was to get to the sill of the window out of which his would-be destroyer had appeared, and it was to this objective that he directed every effort.

Slowly but surely he covered the intervening space, each foot of wire providing greater

difficultly owing to the increasing slope. As in a dream he heard an encouraging shout from across the width of the road from the great K. N. Broadworth.

His head was beginning to swim dizzily, and a red mist seemed to obscure his vision when he felt his knee strike against the wall of the Liberty building.

With one last desperate effort he got his feet on to the sill of the window, and steadied himself against the wall. Then, releasing his left hand from the wire, he inserted it beneath the open sash.

Waited up to him came the sound of frantic cheering from the street far below. Thanks to good fortune and his own well-trained muscles, he was saved!

Micky crawled into the room and looked about him. The place was barren and deserted, but there was one curious thing that he noticed immediately. This was an open trap-door in the centre of the floor. It was by this means, he reasoned, that the man—whichever he was—who had sought his life had made good his escape.

Before investigating further, however, he tried the door of the office, but it was locked, and there was no key as far as he could discover. Micky hesitated no longer, but wormed his way through the trap-door, and dropped into the room below.

The office in which he now found himself was as deserted as the one above. The door, however, was not fastened, and this he threw open, and stepped into the corridor.

As he did so he saw one of the elevators shoot past, crowded with people on their way up to render any service they could to the young star.

Micky quickly realised the hopelessness of attempting to follow the track of the would-be assassin, for the man might have taken any one of several ways for making his escape from the great building. Instead, he called up the elevator-shaft to the men he had seen going up to the top storey, telling that he was quite safe and sound.

His voice was heard, and there followed a scrambling of feet in the elevator as they re-entered it to come down to the floor below.

With a whir the lift descended, the doors flew open, and out piled the occupants, led by Reginald Clarence Eton.

The dude gave a glad cry as he saw Micky, and he grasped the lad's hand in a hearty grip.

"Congratulations, deah boy!" he cried. "You've had a twuly wemarkable escape! Why, good gwacious, your hands are bleeding! I'm awfully sorry—weally, I am!"

Reggie had noticed the look of pain on Micky's face, and released his friendly grip at once. With a rueful smile, the lad upturned the palms of his hands. Immediately sympathetic murmurs arose from the little knot of men gathered round the two cinema actors.

A stout individual with a kindly face pushed himself forward.

"I am a doctor, young sir," he said to Micky; "maybe, I can be of some slight service to you."

It took the doctor but a few seconds to discover that there was nothing wrong with the youngster with the exception of the nasty cuts the palms of his hands had sustained on the steel wire. From his pocket the doctor drew a small packet of surgical dressings, which, he explained, he always carried in case of emergency, and in less than a couple of minutes Micky's hands were swathed in white bandages.

"By Jove, Micky," cried Reggie, "you look a pwopah wounded hewo now, y'know! I shuddah to think what your fwient, Maww Maidstone, will say when she sees you. I had the greatest difficulty in persuading the deah girl to stay on the two-seatah while I came up heah to look after you!"

While Micky's hands were being dressed the men standing by had all been questioning each other as to the exact nature of the event which had been the cause of five out of the six strands of wires being severed in such an astounding fashion.

Two of them thought they saw a man appear at one of the windows, but the others had had their eyes so glued on the young actor that they had seen nothing of this, and were inclined to charge the others with having imagined the assassin.

As Micky thanked the doctor, following the dressing of his injuries, a volley of questions was fired at him.

"Say, bo, what's your version o' this affair?"

"Was there anything phoney about it?"

"Is it right that some guy tried to put the kibosh on ye?"



A hissing oxy-acetylene flame burst from the tube; it caught the wires and snapped them like threads. A low cry escaped from the lips of the lad as he reeled over, clawing wildly in the air with his hands.

But before Micky had time to explain exactly what he had seen as he neared the Liberty building during the performance of his stunt the elevator again shot into view, and out of it stepped Mr. Broadworth, Jeff Romery, and a couple of sheriff's officers.

"Gee! You're hurt, sonny!" That was the producer's first remark, exclaimed in a tone of great concern. But Micky only smiled cheerfully.

"It's nothing, sir," he replied; "when I fell to the lower wire I cut my hands, that's all."

"Phew!" said the great producer. "You take it calmly enough, anyway! Your stumble seems to have given your friends a greater shock than you have sustained yourself apparently. Did you see the scoundrel who tried to 'get' you?"

"I saw somebody," said Micky, amid a breathless silence, "but I did not see his face; he was wearing a mask."

"Say, do you suspect anyone, kid?" It was the senior of the two sheriff's officers who eagerly put the question.

Micky hesitated a moment. To his definite knowledge he had two enemies, either of whom would be glad to see him out of the way.

He had a strong feeling that the man of whom he had caught a momentary glimpse was not Floyd Unwig. Therefore, his full suspicions centred themselves on Alec P. Figg.

In his statement before the sheriff's officers and the others standing by, Micky was careful to admit right from the start that nothing he had seen of the man at the window would be of the slightest assistance.

in identifying him. But he related his past experiences with Smart Alec, and told how only a short time previously he had thrashed the crook, who had slunk off breathing threats of a vengeance.

After saying that much Micky hesitated in obvious confusion.

The sheriff's officer who had put the question to him jotted down a few notes in a pocket-book and gazed searchingly at the lad.

"What was the direct cause o' that rough house you had with the cracksman?" he asked.

It was the question that Micky had feared. Already he felt he had said too much, for if he mentioned that Figg had been attempting to blackmail him he could not escape informing the police of the hold which the unscrupulous crook had upon him.

Micky had not overcome his fear of the long arm of the law, and he had no wish to make public the story of a crime he had never committed. He had every inducement for staying in the United States, and every reason for keeping out of Great Britain. Why, then, he reasoned, should he say anything about the theft of which he had been accused at Beauman's circus in Liverpool, and suffer the risk of being deported to take his stand at the bar of justice.

It was several seconds before he replied to the officer's question, and then he did so in so lame a fashion that all present knew he was concealing something.

"You—you see, it was like this," he stammered confusedly. "Figg came one night to the house where I'm staying, and made a

proposition which made me ratty, and so I slogged him and—"

Micky's voice trailed off feebly, and the officer shut his pocket-book with a snap.

"Waal, the questioning will keep till later," he said. "Meanwhile, we'll see if the guy who tried to send you to Kingdom Come has left any clues behind him."

Before entering the office from which Micky had emerged, the sheriff's man dismissed the group of onlookers, who were being added to by folk from the neighbouring offices. After that he sent his fellow-member of the force to telephone to headquarters the suspicion that Smart Alec had had a hand in the attempted crime.

"We'll soon hev that crook behind iron bars," he said cheerfully; "and it wouldn't surprise me to discover that he's had a hand in this business. I hope we can saddle him with it, for he's a wily bird, and has given us a powerful amount o' trouble for nothing during the last few years."

Then, with Micky, Mr. Broadworth, Jeff Romery, Reggie Eton, and the doctor who had dressed Micky's hands, he entered the office.

At once Micky pointed out the trap-door, and, by climbing on the shoulders of Jeff Romery, the sheriff's man swarmed through into the office above.

In less than five minutes he reappeared through the trapdoor, and dropped down among the rest of the party.

"I've had a dekho at those wires," he said, "by leaning out of the window, and I guess the job could only have been done by an oxy-acetylene flame. Cracksmen use a certain type o' generator for cracking cribs, and so I guess, if I'm right in my surmise, that kinder points in the direction of Mister Smart Alec."

The officer rubbed his hands together, as though highly pleased with his short investigation of the room above and his own intelligence at formulating so clever a theory.

"Moreover," he went on, "I've found another clue. In the fine dust on the bare floor I've spotted a couple o' footmarks. Take it from me, gen'l'men, if Mister Smart Alec has had a finger in the attempt on the life o' our young friend hyer, we'll lay him by the heels before you all sit down to dinner to-night!"

"Well," said Mr. Broadworth, "it seems certain that the scoundrel, whoever he is, did his work by leaning out of the window of the room above, and then dropped through the trap-door into this office, and departed by that door. It might be advisable to question as soon as possible some of the other people who work on this storey on the chance that someone may have seen the man making his get-away."

The sheriff's officer drew himself up stiffly. It was evident he wanted no amateur's advice in his professional capacity.

"We don't leave stones unturned, you kin take it from me, sir!" he said confidently. "By the way, hev any o' you gen'l'men ever heard o' the Mexican Silver Mines and Land Development Company?"

All were surprised at the question of the sheriff's man, but no one was able to give any information about the concern in question.

"Why, what has that company got to do with the case in hand?" demanded Jeff.

"I don't know yet," said the officer sagely, "but that was the name I read on the door o' the room above this."

He drew out his notebook from his pocket, and proudly showed the letters printed unevenly across one of its pages.

"The name was painted on the outside o' the door on the frosted glass," he explained, "so, o' course, it looked wrong way round to me. But I copied each letter down separately, and this was the result."

He tapped his book with great satisfaction, and tucked it away in his breast-pocket again. "I see we can safely leave the case in your hands," said Mr. Broadworth, with a twinkle in his eye, "so I guess we may as well be getting along home."

The sheriff's officer seemed rather disappointed at the thought of losing his appreciative audience, but only detained them long enough to take the names and addresses of each person present. He advised them—Mr. Broadworth and Micky—to lay their information before the chief sheriff at his office without delay, and promised that they would be communicated with if anything fresh transpired in the investigations which would be undertaken.

He then turned back to make a more careful examination of the rooms connected by the mysterious trap-door, while Mr. Broad-

worth led the way into the corridor and rang the electric bell for the elevator.

Upon stepping from the lift at the bottom of the great building they could see several policemen endeavouring to disperse the crowds which had collected, and which were stopping all traffic in the busy street.

They managed, by great good fortune, to slip out almost unnoticed, and set about the task of finding the automobiles. The doctor was lost in the crush, but Mr. Broadworth, Jeff, Reggie Eton, and Micky, managed to keep together, and finally came across the Dude's two-seater, in which Mary Maidstone was waiting anxiously.

The young actress manifested great relief at finding Micky so little the worse for his adventure, but her eyes flashed with indignation and anger as she heard the lad's version of the attempt which had been made on his life.

But it was advisable to get away from the crowd, who were beginning to surge round, and so Mr. Broadworth drew Jeff Romery and Micky after him in search of the automobile in which they had journeyed from Cinema City. Reggie Eton joined Mary Maidstone in his two-seater for the run home.

With great difficulty the three cinema men found the motor-car, which had been forced to proceed farther down the road, and soon they were whirling away from the throng of curious spectators.

Their first halt was for the purpose of giving an account of the extraordinary incident to the chief sheriff himself, and when this had been done they proceeded with all speed back to the studios.

"All's well that ends well," Micky!" murmured Mr. Broadworth comfortably, as the car gathered speed. "No harm has come to you, sonny, and I guess we have secured some dandy lengths of film, with a special thrill thrown in! We must see that our Press agent makes the most of the occurrence."

Charlie Chaplin's Offer!

DEVELOPMENTS in the situation were not long in forthcoming.

During the day about a dozen smart reporters waited on Micky and other members of the company to get full details of the exciting incident, which had occurred during the filming of the big skyscraper scene.

On the advice of Mr. Broadworth, Micky and the others afforded as much news as they could, for it was good business from the producer's point of view to have the story as widely circulated as possible. Such publicity increased interest in a new photo-play production, and was in every way a fine advertisement to be made the most of.

That evening, while Micky was going over the details of the affair for about the fortieth time, for the benefit of Buddy and Mrs. Gaylord, a phone message informed him that his old enemy, Alec P. Figg, had been arrested on suspicion, and was being held, pending the result of the police inquiries.

The lad received the news with mixed feelings, for he felt convinced that this time the cracksmen would denounce him publicly as a thief who had escaped from British justice.

However, after the excitement of the day he was too tired to worry about the matter, and early sought his bed.

On the following morning Micky awoke, to find himself famous indeed!

Every newspaper on the Pacific Coast was featuring on the front page the extraordinary attempt on his life during the skyscraper scene.

The Broadworth Press agent was in clover. Never by his own most arduous efforts had he succeeded in securing such write-ups in the Press.

He circulated paragraphs and articles about the skyscraper stunt in every direction, until almost every journal in the United States and Canada and Great Britain had published something about the thrill sustained by "Dareall Denver," in the great skyscraper act in the super-production, "The Mysterious Pearl."

But if the affair afforded intense gratification to the business heads of the Broadworth company, Micky himself received no such comfort. To him it merely proved that he had one dangerous enemy, at least, who would stop at nothing, and he mentally determined to keep a sharper eye open in future for any further squalls.

The arrest of Alec P. Figg had been accomplished successfully enough in an eating-house

a few miles from the outskirts of Los Angeles. But after that the police were "up against it."

Not a thread of evidence could they discover against the astute crook, and neither could they trace the mysterious individual who had taken the option on the offices in the Liberty building, and who, presumably, had the name of the mining company painted on the doors.

The footprints in the dust of the floor of the top room, upon which the sheriff's officer had set such store, were proved to be two sizes larger than any boots or shoes Figg had in his possession. Not a finger-print was discoverable anywhere.

In the end Smart Alec had to be released, and, baffled and filled with chagrin at their lack of success in tracing the criminal, the police started to pursue the investigation along other lines, which merely led them farther and farther away from an elucidation of the mystery.

To Micky's surprise the crook made no mention of the theft of which the lad had been accused in the Old Country, and as the days flew by he began to feel quite his old self again in body and in spirit.

One afternoon, as he was leaving the lot with Buddy after the filming of some interior scenes, he saw a beautiful limousine draw up outside the company's offices.

With a start the lad recognised the car, for he had seen it on the very first day of his arrival in Los Angeles, when he had so confidently applied for a job at the Chaplin offices in the heart of the city.

And had he had any doubt about the identity of the magnificent car, it would have been rapidly dispelled by the appearance of the great Charles himself.

The world-famous cinema star stepped from the limousine, and his eyes immediately lighted upon Micky.

For some moments Charlie Chaplin stood chatting with Micky and Buddy about the skyscraper mystery, and then he mentioned his reason for his visit to the studios.

"I am anxious to give your terrier a try-out in a two-reel photo-play which is being produced by the Smiles Comedy Company, in which I am greatly interested, Micky," he said; "but I don't suppose Chappie will perform his stunts properly for anyone but you. Now, I take it for granted you wouldn't mind taking a part in the production?"

"I'd jump at the chance, sir," said Micky, "but for the fact that I have a contract with Mr. Broadworth, which prevents me from giving, my services to any other film company."

"I know that, Micky," said Chaplin, "but I guess I can fix that up all right. I was on my way to see my good friend, Broadworth, about the matter. Why, here he is!"

The world-famous producer of six-reel and serial cinema thrillers stepped from the main office and gazed about him through his bizarre tortoiseshell spectacles. His recognition of the great comedy star was instantaneous, and he approached him with outstretched hand and a pleasant smile of welcome.

"Why, hallo, Chaplin!" he cried. "To what am I indebted for this visit so late in the day?"

"A little matter of business, Broadworth," said the star, showing an even set of white teeth in a pleasant smile. "I want your permission for young Denver to appear in a two-reel comedy production."

The producer's face took on a more serious aspect, and Chaplin hastened to offer his explanations.

"Really, it is his dog, Chappie, that will do the acting," he said. "But having talked the matter over with my staff, I think Denver's personal presence would be advisable; so I propose, with your consent, to allot him a small part. He shall play it as a comedy character under an assumed name, so no one will be any the wiser that it is Dareall Denver, of the Broadworth Company, who is appearing."

The producer stroked his clean-shaven cheek thoughtfully with his hand, and the smile again lighted up his features.

He turned to Micky. "What do you say, sonny?" he asked. "Would you like to work for Mr. Chaplin in your spare time?"

Micky's eyes sparkled with eagerness. "You bet I would, sir!" he cried.

"Then I sha'n't stand in your way, sonny," said the great producer. "You have been working splendidly here, and I won't prevent you from adding to your bank-roll."

But it was not his bank-book that Micky was thinking about so much as the honour

for Chappie and himself of being associated with the one and only Charlie Chaplin.

The lad was not mercenary, but he lived cleanly and thriftily with the kindly Buddy and Mrs. Gaylord, and the consequence was that he was putting sums into the bank, each of which would have seemed to him a whole fortune a few weeks before. Already his account stood well over four figures, and he was adding to it at the rate of over a hundred dollars a week.

"Then the matter's settled," said Charlie Chaplin, "and there are only the details of salary, times for attendance at the studios, and so forth, to be attended to."

"Just so," said Mr. Broadworth. "If you and Micky care to step into my private office right now we can draw out drafts of the necessary agreements ready for the attention of the company's lawyers in the morning."

"That would be satisfactory to me," said Chaplin. "I should like to get everything definitely settled to-night, as I am anxious to proceed with the filming at the earliest opportunity."

Micky turned to his friend Buddy. "You won't mind if I follow you home later, Buddy?" he said. "There's plenty of time before dinner."

"Sure, I don't mind, kid," cried the genial little Props. "I'm only too proud to see you getting such fine chances."

"By the way, Micky," put in Charlie Chaplin, "where is your little dog this afternoon? I heard he was in the habit of accompanying you to the studios each day."

"So he is, sir," said Micky, "but I regret to say he's being spoiled. Everyone feeds him and pets him, and really I shouldn't allow him up here at all. But he's so miserable if he's left in the charge of old Ah Mee at home that it's a case of the lesser of the two evils. He came up with me after lunch to-day, but he suddenly disappeared just before I left the studio, and I've no idea where he is now."

"Well, I saw the young rascal not much more than ten minutes ago," said Buddy. "Some of the hands were setting him after rats round by the storehouses. Gosh, you should just see him, sir! He's a fair terror for killin' the varmints! One snap and it's all over!"

Buddy's round, jovial face was red with excitement as he related the story of Chappie's prowess. If truth be told, Buddy was one of the worst offenders as far as the spoiling of Chappie was concerned. The genial little Props was a great lover of animals, and he was almost as friendly with Chappie as Micky was himself. Many a time had Buddy found time to stop in his work with the properties to move some heavy boxes or bags to give the little terrier a chance to get at some lurking rodent.

But hardly had Buddy finished speaking than the subject of the conversation appeared in person, running as fast as his short legs would carry him to the spot where the four men were standing. In his mouth he bore something large and almost black in hue.

The little Props thumped his knee with his hand in great glee, and turned to Mr. Chaplin.

"There, what did I tell you, sir?" he cried. "Just look at it! It's almost as big as the dog himself!"

And the rat which Chappie had slain was certainly a prince of its species. It was a monster, and Chappie laid it on the ground at Micky's feet, fully conscious of his achievement in having disposed of such a formidable antagonist. Then the little mongrel stood back and cocked his eye up at his young master, saying, as plainly as possible: "Well, what do you think of that for a bag, eh? I brought it along to show you 'cause I knew you wouldn't believe what a whopper he was if you didn't see him with your own eyes."

"By gum!" cried Mr. Broadworth. "I didn't know we had such rodents on the premises! It's lucky we've got a dog up here to dispose of a few of them, I'm thinking!"

"Good lad, Chappie!" murmured the great Charles, patting the little terrier on the head. "Why, what's this you've got?"

Charlie Chaplin examined the medal dangling from Chappie's neck with great interest.

"That medal," explained Mr. Broadworth, "was subscribed for by members of my company. It is in recognition of Chappie's pluck in leaping into the surf at Santa Monica beach to help Miss Maldstone, who was in danger of being drowned. Didn't you notice it when young Denver took his dog along to your studios last time?"

"No, I don't think—" Mr. Chaplin noticed a rather guilty look on Micky's face, and, although unaware of the reason for it, decided that a non-committal answer would be most diplomatic. "I don't think I noticed him very much," he finished.

As a matter of fact, Micky only required Chappie to wear the cumbersome medal at the studios, and this was only because he did not wish to offend the good friends who had subscribed to the token of gallantry.

Chappie had never liked his medal, and it was as well that the donors could not see the look of disgust on his sharp little face when the award was hung round his neck each morning. In a way, however, the medal brought Chappie a great number of goodies in the shape of cakes and candies, but he never associated the overwhelming attention of strangers with that shiny yellow disc of metal which jingled so annoyingly under his chin.

Before entering the office Micky ordered his four-footed friend to return home with Buddy, and so Chappie followed the kindly little "props," not, however, without looking round appealingly to his young master at every few steps.

Then Micky turned and followed Mr. Broadworth and Charlie Chaplin into the former's private office—that same office in which he had once been fired for supposed carelessness.

The arrangements made between the producer and the world-famous star were highly satisfactory to Micky from the financial standpoint, and Mr. Broadworth agreed to allow him to attend the Smiles Comedy studios at certain specified times until the filming of the first two-reel photo-play was concluded.

From the time of the signing of the contracts with Charlie Chaplin until the afternoon for his first appointment at the comedy company's studios Micky lived in a state of lively expectation and good spirits.

He devoted practically the whole of his spare time to practising Chappie in all his tricks, including the waggle-walk, and doubtless the little dog began to wonder what on earth he'd done to deserve so much attention over things he had mostly learned during his puppyhood. Little did Chappie imagine that he was destined to become almost as familiar to the world's movie-lovers as was his young master himself.

Having no work to perform before the cameras on the afternoon of Micky's first visit with Chappie to the Smiles Comedy studios, Reggie Eton offered to drive them over in his ripping little two-seater.

On the way, however, he thought of something suddenly, and partially repented of his offer.

"By jingo, Micky!" exclaimed the dude, as he swerved the car round a corner and nearly executed a brace of chickens. "I've just remembered that that beastly monk, Congo, lives on the Smiles' lot. The last time I was there to see a friend of mine the mischievous creature purloined my best wireless monocle, which was specially made for me in Bond Street, and wore it in his wascally eye. Of course, I couldn't wear the wretched thing again, and so I had to be measured for one of an inferior American variety."

"Do you mean Congo the Chimpanzee, Reggie?" asked Micky eagerly.

"Of course, dear boy. But I hope he isn't woaming at large when we get there this time."

Micky's interest was not unnatural. He had heard of Congo the chimpanzee. Who had not? But until Reggie had mentioned the name he had forgotten that the famous ape was owned by the Smiles Comedy Company.

Many a time at the cinema theatres at home had he and old Clancy the Clown nearly split their sides with laughter at the antics of the monkey who was as near human as any creature which had ever lived. Now the lad looked forward to his visit to the Smiles' studio with even greater interest than before, for, despite Reggie's mournful account of the monk's mischievous propensities, he hoped to make the acquaintance of the famous simian film-actor.

"D'you remember that two-reel comedy, 'Organs to Grind,' Reggie?" said Micky. "The way that Congo helped himself to the money from the pockets of the people when they weren't looking was enough to make you

die with laughing! Ha, ha, ha! I think that was the best thing I ever saw him in."

"He's a vicious brute!" said the dude. "I've nevah seen him on the scween, but I'd soonah see him there than woaming at large on the Smiles' lot!"

"You must admit he's jolly intelligent, though!"

"Wathah, dear boy! I'm not saying he's not intelligent. He has quite as many brains as some of the wottahs who draw their pay as 'extwahs' for the films. He lives like a gentleman, he likes a good dinner, and he sits in a chair at a table to eat it. Before prohibition was intwduced into this swange country he used to dwink regularly his bottle of wine. He appreciates a good cigah, and I will add, to his cwedit, that he takes his bath like a Chwistian."

Arriving on the company's lot, the visitors were met by the director of the company who had charge of the filming arrangements. Although the chief financial interest in the Smiles' concern were in the hands of Charlie Chaplin, the great film-star himself took little part in the actual producing.

"Is Mr. Chaplin coming up to-day?" asked Micky, as they walked across to some "sets" built on the lot.

"I'm not sure," replied the director. "He is very busy with a new production in which he himself is appearing at present, but he may drop in later if he gets the day's filming through in time."

"Is Congo the Chimpanzee on the lot?"

The director smiled.

"He lives here, if that's what you mean," he replied. "At present he's out having an auto ride with his keeper. Congo's very keen on motoring, and I guess you've seen him around in Los Angeles at times. He's a well-known character, as you kin imagine."

"I haven't seen him yet," said Micky regretfully—"that is, except on the cinema-screens in the Old Country."

"Waal, I dessay you'll hev a chance some other time when you come along hyer. This afternoon I jest want to try-out your dog and 'shoot' a few lengths of film to piece into our new two-reeler, 'The Egg Poacher.'"

Then Micky and Reggie were introduced to a couple of camera-men who were setting up their machine in readiness for the work of the afternoon.

All the studio hands gazed with interest at little Chappie, who was toddling closely at his young master's heels, quite unaware that he was the central cause in all the preparations which were going on.

Chappie was looking very spic-and-span indeed; for he had been brushed and groomed until his wiry coat was as clean and sleek as any expensive fur just returned from the renovators.

Micky left the little terrier in charge of Reggie while he went to the dressing-room provided for his use to make-up for the part he was to act in the comedy—that of a tramp, or "hobo," as the Americans say.

In less than fifteen minutes the lad emerged wearing a scraggy beard, an old shirt, loose check trousers, and the brim of a straw hat. His face was smothered with the usual yellow and plum-coloured grease-paint.

Chappie recognised his master at once, in spite of the disguise, but he gave him a look which plainly said, "Well, you do look a silly ass! You're not fit company for a stray cat, let alone a smart little mongrel terrier!"

But even as the film-director was giving Micky a few tips about the requirements of the scenario before rehearsing one of the scenes, Charlie Chaplin's magnificent limousine car rolled into the lot.

Next moment another automobile drew up outside the gateway. From it a man dismounted, and immediately after him there stepped out a strange, dwarf-like figure, wearing a Homburg hat with a feather stuck in it, a blue coat with gold buttons, and smoking a fat cigar.

Reginald Clarence gave a low moan, but Micky let out an exclamation of delight, for the strange newcomer was none other than Congo the Chimpanzee, the famous animal film-actor!

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



THE FIRST CHAPTER. Tubby Comes to Grief.

COME on!" Jimmy Silver called in at the door of Study No. 3.

There were three juniors in the study—Van Ryn, the South African, Higgs, and Tubby Muffin.

Van Ryn and Higgs were working at their prep; Tubby Muffin was sprawled gracefully in the armchair, reading a newspaper.

Tubby blinked up as Jimmy Silver looked in. "I say, this is jolly interesting!" he exclaimed.

"Bow-wow!" said Jimmy Silver. "Come on, you chaps! Banister-race!"

Van Ryn and Higgs jumped up at once. Prep could wait when a banister race was on. "I say, just listen to this!" said Tubby.

"Eh! What is it?" asked Jimmy, pausing. "About a chap who got shell-shock," said the fat classical. "He lost his speech from the shock, and couldn't speak—dumb, you know."

"Poor chap!" "My hat! I wish you could get shell-shock, Tubby!" remarked Higgs. "It would be a blessing to this study!"

"Hard lines on the chap!" said Jimmy. "I dare say he'll recover, though. They often do."

"I don't know about its being hard lines," said Tubby Muffin. "Suppose it happened to a chap at school? No lessons, and a jolly easy time, you know, while it lasted—they couldn't make a chap work in that state. Seems to me that some fellows have all the luck."

"You fat duffer!" said Jimmy Silver. "Come on, you chaps! Bootles has gone to see the Head, and the prefects have a meeting in their august quarters, and the coast is quite clear!"

"Ripping!" said Van Ryn. Tubby Muffin followed the juniors from the study. There was a peculiar gleam in Tubby's eyes. If Jimmy Silver had paid any attention to the fat Classical, he might have guessed that deep thoughts were working in Tubby's fat brain. But the captain of the Fourth did not even look at Tubby.

A crowd of Classical juniors had gathered on the middle landing. There were some Modern fellows, too, from Mr. Manders' House. It was a glorious opportunity for a banister-race—an opportunity that did not often occur. From the middle landing, the old massive banisters ran curling down to the lower passage—great banisters of ancient polished oak, which had been one of the sights of Rookwood for hundreds of years.

To sit on the broad top, and slide down, round the curve, and shoot off into the lower passage was a delightful feat—a little risky for fellows who hadn't a good nerve, perhaps. That amusement, naturally, was frowned upon by masters and prefects, who did not see any great amusement in the risk of a reckless junior breaking a leg. But just now masters and prefects were off the scene, and the opportunity was not to be missed.

The Fourth-Formers were gathered from near and far.

"Ready, Jimmy?" called out Lovell. "Ready!" said Jimmy. "Now, then, Tommy Dodd, keep back! Moderns don't go first!"

"Rats!" said Tommy Dodd. "Better let me show you Classical duffers how to do it!"

"Fathead!" "Shove that Modern ass back!"

"And mind how you go!" said Jimmy Silver. "It's rather a tricky turn at the bottom! Bootles will be raty if any chap breaks his neck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Form up and take your turns! Get out of the way, Tubby!"

"I'm going, too," said Tubby Muffin. "Fathead! Buzz off!"

"I'm going, I tell you!" said the fat Classical indignantly.

Jimmy shook his head decidedly. "You can't, you fat duffer! It's too risky for you!"

"What the dickens is the matter with you, Tubby?" exclaimed Raby. "You don't like sliding banisters?"

"I'm going!" "You've always funk'd it before," said Flynn.

"I tell you I'm going!" "You can't!" said Jimmy Silver. "It's not safe for a clumsy fat duffer! Keep back, Tubby. Now, then, you chaps, follow your leader!"

Jimmy Silver threw his leg over the broad banister.

In a sitting position, he shot down the slope, sailing away in great style. He turned the lower curve, reached the bottom, and shot off into the hall, landing on his feet with the activity of a cat. Lovell came next, and then Raby, and then Newcome. Then Tommy Dodd had his turn, and Flynn and Tommy Cook, and Tommy Doyle and Oswald, and Higgs and Van Ryn.

The broad banister had half a dozen juniors on it at once, sailing down at whizzing speed. If any fellow had lost his nerve and tumbled off, there was a deep fall below the staircase, which would certainly have resulted in broken bones. But the Rookwood juniors had plenty of nerve. But it assuredly was not safe for a fat and unwieldy fellow like Tubby Muffin, whose nerve was decidedly not good.

But Tubby, for reasons best known to himself, was bent upon taking his turn.

He waited till the rest of the crowd had gone, and then rushed to the banister.

Jimmy Silver, who was coming upstairs for another flight, shouted to him in alarm. "Get off, you young ass!"

But he was too far away to intervene.

Tubby Muffin did not sit on the banister as the rest had done, however. He rested his fat chest on it, and clutched at it with his fat hands, and went whizzing down with his legs flying over the stairs.

Jimmy Silver burst into a chuckle. Sliding down in that way obviated the danger of a fall, and Tubby Muffin was safe enough.

TUBBY'S TRIAL!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

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

The juniors in the lower hall howled with laughter as he came sprawling down, with his fat legs flying wildly.

But the laughter ceased suddenly as Tubby reached the end of the banister.

It ended with a curl, in a heavy oaken pillar, with a height of six feet from the floor. For an active junior to slide off and land on his feet was easy. But Tubby was not active, and he was not in a position to slide off freely. He plumped off, and landed on the floor with a bump.

"You sily ass!" ejaculated Lovell.

"Crawl away, you duffer, or you'll have somebody land on you!" said Tommy Dodd.

Tubby Muffin did not reply. He did not move.

He lay stretched on the floor, and his eyes were closed.

Lovell ran towards him. "Tubby, you fathead—"

"What's the matter with him?" "Tubby, you fathead—"

"Oh, the duffer! He's hurt!"

The banister-race was at an end. Jimmy Silver hurried down the stairs again. The juniors gathered round Tubby Muffin with looks of alarm. In the midst of the startled crowd the fat Classical lay sprawled on the floor, his eyes closed, his lips tight shut, voiceless and motionless.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Startling Catastrophe.

WHAT IS this? What—?" It was the voice of Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth.

The Form-master had come into the House, and he came quite suddenly upon the crowd of alarmed juniors.

The Rookwood fellows exchanged looks of dismay.

Mr. Bootles was not to have known anything about the banister-race; but it was pretty clear that he would have to know about it now.

The master pushed his way through the juniors, and blinked over his glasses at the still form of Tubby Muffin.

Mr. Bootles' ruddy face grew quite pale. "What is the matter with Muffin?" he exclaimed.

"He—he's had a fall, sir!" stammered Jimmy Silver.

"A fall! From where?" "The—the banisters, sir!"

Mr. Bootles frowned grimly. "Then you have been sliding down the banisters?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"A very foolish and reckless proceeding!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "Surely, Silver, as head boy of your Form, you should have known better than to allow a clumsy lad like Muffin to participate in such a perilous game?"

"I—I tried to stop him, sir."

"Jimmy told the young ass to keep out of it, sir," said Lovell.

"None of you should have done anything of

the sort, as you know very well!" snapped Mr. Bootles. "I have spoken to you before on this subject. Now, Muffin is hurt, perhaps seriously. I trust this will be a lesson to you!"

The juniors looked very sheepish. They were concerned for the unfortunate Tubby, but they were angry with him, too. Why couldn't the duffer keep out of a game he was not fit for? And now there was going to be trouble.

Mr. Bootles knelt beside Tubby Muffin. Tubby's eyes opened, and he blinked at the Form-master.

"Are you hurt, Muffin?" asked Mr. Bootles. Tubby's lips moved, but he did not reply.

"Muffin!"

No answer.

"Do you hear me, Muffin?"

Tubby seemed to make an effort to speak, but no words came.

"Bless my soul, what is the matter with the boy?" exclaimed the surprised Form-master. "He does not seem to be bruised or hurt."

"It wasn't much of a fall, sir," said Jimmy Silver. "He only tumbled off the end of the banisters."

"Enough to give him a shock!" snapped Mr. Bootles. "You should have prevented him from taking part in such a reckless game, Silver! I am very angry with you! Every boy present will take a hundred lines; and you, Silver, will take five hundred, as I regard you as responsible!"

"Oh!"

"Muffin, if you are hurt, please tell me so," added Mr. Bootles irritably. Muffin did not speak.

"What on earth's the matter with him?" muttered Lovell. "Has the fat ass gone off his rocker? Why doesn't he answer?"

"Tubby!" said Jimmy.

Mr. Bootles raised Tubby from the floor. His expression was very anxious now. There seemed to be something very wrong with the fat Classical, though it was difficult to tell what it was.

"Muffin, cannot you speak? Tell me what is the matter with you!" said Mr. Bootles. Tubby Muffin gave a queer gurgle. Then he put his hand to his mouth.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the alarmed Form-master. "Do you mean to say that you cannot speak?"

Tubby Muffin certainly did not mean to say so; but he intimated as much. He dabbed his mouth with his fat hand, and blinked and gurgled.

The juniors regarded him with horror and dismay.

"He—he can't speak!" mumbled Raby. "Oh, my hat! The shock, I suppose!"

"Dumb! Good heavens!"

"Dumb!" repeated Mr. Bootles. "It cannot have been sufficient to cause such a catastrophe. Muffin, I command you to speak to me at once!"

Gurgle!

"Muffin! My dear boy—"

Gurgle!

"Goodness gracious! This is terribly serious!" ejaculated Mr. Bootles. "Silver, you see what you are responsible for, you utterly reckless boy!"

Jimmy Silver was crimson. It was rather hard on Jimmy, who certainly had done his best to keep Tubby Muffin out of the banister-race. But the Fourth Form master had evidently decided that Jimmy was to blame.

"Jimmy wasn't to blame, sir," said Lovell loyally. "Tubby would do it, after Jimmy had warned him—"

"Silence, Lovell! I regard Silver as responsible for this dreadful catastrophe, and I hope he will take it as a warning. Lovell, Raby, take Muffin to the dormitory and put him in his bed, while I telephone for the doctor."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Bootles hurried into his study in a very perturbed frame of mind, while the juniors conveyed Tubby Muffin to the dormitory.

The crowd broke up with alarmed and worried faces.

There was no great harm in a banister-race, though it was a little risky, and somewhat against the orderly rules of the House. He accident to Tubby could not have been foreseen; and it would have been difficult to prevent him from sharing in the race if he had made up his mind. But the Rookwood fellows sincerely wished that they had not taken advantage of that glorious opportunity after all.

"It's only because the fat bomber's so rottenly unfit," said Newcome. He gorges

too much pastry, and never takes any exercise if he can help it. It wouldn't have happened to anybody else."

"And it wasn't much of a fall," said Higgs. "Anyway, we shan't have so much of his blessed jaw in the study."

"Oh, shut up, Higgs!" said several voices in disgust.

"Poor old Tubby!"

"I wish I hadn't punched him now for pinching my cake, head!" said Flynn, with great feeling.

And the juniors dispersed to their studies, to get on with their neglected prep, in quite a troubled frame of mind.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Sufferer!

JIMMY SILVER & CO. had taken Tubby Muffin to the Fourth Form dormitory. The fat Classical had not uttered a sound.

They helped him to undress, and put him to bed, and the fat junior looked at them very pathetically from the pillow.

"I say, Tubby, I'm sorry for this," said Jimmy Silver. "You ought to have kept out of it, you know. I told you to."

Tubby nodded.

"All your own fault, you know," said Lovell.

Tubby nodded again. He was prepared, apparently, to acknowledge that the catastrophe was his own fault.

"Blessed if I see what Bootles wanted to go for you for, Jimmy," said Newcome. "You couldn't help it."

"I suppose somebody's got to be blamed," said Jimmy philosophically. "It is rather rotten, though. And who on earth would have thought of a thing like this happening? Blessed if I should!"

"Tubby, old man," said Raby. "make an effort! See if you can't speak."

Tubby shook his head mournfully.

"Can't you get just a word out?" said Raby encouragingly.

Another shake of the head.

Mr. Bootles came busting into the dormitory.

"Do not worry Muffin with talk," he said sharply. "You should really be more judicious. You may go. I will remain with Muffin until the doctor comes."

The Fistical Four left the dormitory. About half an hour later the buzz of the medical gentleman's car was heard in the quadrangle.

Mr. Bootles met Dr. Twist, and took him up to the Fourth Form dormitory.

Many glances followed them.

Some of the juniors waited in the passage outside to hear the doctor's verdict when he came out.

Dr. Twist was a considerable time in the dormitory.

When he came out his fat face was very grave in expression.

"Excuse me, sir," Jimmy Silver came forward. "May we know about Tubby—I mean Muffin?"

"Certainly, my little man," said the doctor affably. Jimmy Silver writhed inwardly at being called a little man. Really, the medico did not seem to understand that chaps in the Fourth were practically grown-up chaps. "I am afraid Muffin's state is somewhat serious. Doubtless he will recover his speech in time; in fact, I can almost say he will do so. A very remarkable and interesting case; not at all uncommon in these days, as it happens. Sudden shock may produce deafness, or loss of memory, or loss of speech. There have been many such cases in the Army."

"But it wasn't much of a shock, sir; only a tumble off the banisters."

Dr. Twist nodded.

"Quite so; that makes it more extraordinary. The unfortunate boy is very much out of condition physically, which may have had something to do with it. At present he cannot utter a syllable. But I have hopes—every hope—that he will recover, my little man."

"Is he going into sanatorium, sir?"

"That will not be necessary. Apart from the loss of speech, he does not seem to be injured in any way. It is not at all necessary to isolate him. In fact, the company of his schoolfellows may assist his recovery. Of course, it must be understood that there is no rough horseplay; and so on."

"Oh, yes; of course, sir! We'll look after him."

The medical gentleman returned to his car, and buzzed away.

The Classical Fourth did not see Tubby Muffin again till they went up to bed. They

found him fast asleep and snoring. Townsend remarked that he had not lost his snore as well as his speech, which was a pity. But Townsend was frowned down. It was not a subject for jokes.

The Fourth-Form dormitory was unusually quiet that evening. Even Higgs, the bully of the Fourth, was careful not to disturb Tubby.

Some of the fellows discussed him in whispers. Suppose he never recovered his speech—what a prospect for poor old Tubby! More especially, as Townsend observed, because he was a terrific talker, and generally ran on inexhaustibly so long as he could get a victim to listen to him.

When the rising-bell clanged out in the morning, and the Fourth Form turned out, Tubby remained in bed.

Lessons, in his present state, were out of the question.

Although not removed to the school sanatorium, Tubby had all the privileges of an invalid.

Tubby Muffin was still warm and comfortable in bed when the rest of the Classical Fourth went down. Some of the juniors saw his breakfast being taken up, and they noted that it was a more savoury breakfast than fell to the rest of the Rookwood juniors. Tubby was a privileged person now.

The fat Classical was absent from his place in the Form-room. There were no lessons for Tubby that day.

As Tubby was a champion slacker and the biggest dunce in the Fourth, he detested lessons almost as much as he detested the rising-bell. Upon the whole, Tubby was not much in need of sympathy. His catastrophe did not cause him any suffering save the painful ordeal of silence, and he was getting out of everything he did not like. After lessons the juniors found him sunning himself on an oaken bench in the quadrangle.

They surrounded the sufferer at once.

"Talking yet, Tubby?" asked Tommy Dodd. Tubby shook his head.

"Had a pleasant morning?" asked Jimmy Silver.

Tubby nodded.

"Better than lessons?" grinned Rawson.

Nod.

"Think you'll recover soon?"

Shake.

"Appetite still good?"

Nod.

"Come and have a snack at the tuckshop before dinner?"

Tubby jumped up with alacrity.

In the tuckshop Tubby Muffin distinguished himself as usual. The catastrophe had evidently not affected his appetite in the least. The juniors were glad to see that he was quite his old self, with that one queer exception that he could not speak. But they were puzzled, too.

The "snack" did not in any way detract from Tubby's prowess at the dinner-table a little later. And when the bell rang for afternoon classes, and the Fourth went to their Form-room, Tubby Muffin rolled out equally into the sunny quad with the latest number of "Chuckles" in his podgy hand. And some of the Fourth Form began to wish that they'd had a shock and gone dumb, too!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Pig in Clover.

COME in, Tubby!"

The Fistical Four were at tea in the end study, when the fat Classical appeared in the doorway.

Tubby Muffin was not always a very welcome visitor at tea-time. But in view of his affliction there was a hearty welcome for him now.

"Trot in!" said Lovell cordially. The fat junior trotted in.

Jimmy Silver handed him a chair, Raby selected a clean tea-cup, Lovell handed him the ham and tongue, and Newcome strolled out of the study to visit the tuckshop. When Tubby came to tea extra supplies were needed.

Tubby's fat face-beamed over the festive board.

He could not speak. And that no doubt was a serious deprivation to a fellow who had a remarkable fondness for the sound of his own voice. But in everything else Tubby was certainly in clover.

A fellow who was suffering under such a misfortune was deserving of any kind of consolation that could be offered. The juniors agreed on that. And the welcome consolation to Tubby was something in the eatable line.

Fortunately the study was in funds, and Newcome's addition to the festive board made

Tubby's little round eyes glimmer with satisfaction.

He sat and ate with the voracity of a Hun, and the Fistical Four kept him well supplied, until even Tubby had to call a halt.

Then he sipped a cake and a handful of biscuits and a couple of oranges into his pockets—a proceeding which the chums of the Fourth politely affected not to see.

Tubby gave a grunt of satisfaction as he rolled out of the study.

"He's bearing it jolly well!" remarked Raby. "Some fellows would be awfully down in the mouth over a thing like that!"

"And it's specially hard on a champion jawbones like Tubby," said Lovell. "He's standing it splendidly!"

"Queer that the shock didn't affect his health in any other way," remarked Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "Just dumbered him, and nothing more."

"Yes, it's queer."

The Fistical Four left the study. They met Van Ryn in the passage. He was talking to Flynn.

"It's jolly odd about Tubby," said Van Ryn. "His appetite seems not to have been affected in the least. Flynn says he's had him to tea."

"Has he?" ejaculated Jimmy.

"Yes; and he had tea in our study," said Van Ryn. "He did himself pretty well. And then he seems to have gone and had tea with Flynn. I wouldn't grudge poor old Tubby anything, but I hope he won't make himself ill with it!"

"But he's had tea with us, too!" exclaimed Love.

"My inter."

"Sure, he'll burst a boiler if he goes on loike this!" grinned Flynn.

In the dormitory that night Tubby Muffin was looking a little queer, which was not surprising under the circumstances.

His motions were slow and heavy, and his complexion had assumed a peculiar greenish tint.

Perhaps the sausages and chips did not agree with the ham and tongue or the baked chestnuts, or perhaps the oranges were on bad terms with the bananas and tomatoes.

At all events, Tubby certainly was queer. He groaned as he crawled into bed.

Bulkeley of the Sixth was seeing lights out for the Fourth, and he heard Tubby's groan, and came to his bedside.

"Anything wrong, Tubby?" asked the captain of Rookwood very kindly.

"Groan!"

"He seems to be worse," said Bulkeley. "Have you got a pain, Muffin?"

Tubby nodded dismally.

"Where?"

Tubby tapped the place where his lowest waistcoat button would have been if he had had his waistcoat on.

Bulkeley looked perplexed.

"That's jolly odd!" he remarked. "It seems to be affecting his stomach! The doctor had better come."

There was a chuckle from some of the Classical Fourth, and the Sixth-Former looked round sharply.

"This isn't a laughing matter," he said. "It's no joke to be struck dumb. You might feel a little sympathy!"

"So we do," said Jimmy Silver at once. "We're awfully sympathetic. But it isn't that shock that's the matter with Tubby now."

"What is it, then?"

"Ahem! I think Tubby has made rather too good a supper!"

"Oh!" said Bulkeley.

"Sure, I warned him that the potted rabbit mightn't agree with the tomatoes and the cheese," said Flynn.

"And lemonade and ginger-pop and currant wine might disagree with any of them," suggested Townsend.

"Not to mention the bloater-paste and the sausages," said Topham.

"And the figs and bananas," said Jones minor.

"And the tomatoes—"

"And the ham—"

"And the tongue—"

"And the sugary biscuits—"

"And the toffee—"

"And the doughnuts—"

"And the cream-cheese—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby groaned dismally.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Bulkeley. "You young asses, you'd better show Tubby your sympathy in some other way. If he's got all these things inside him, the wonder is that he isn't seriously ill. Muffin, you young duffer, I shall speak to the doctor about this, and he will give you some instructions about diet."



Tubby Muffin came sprawling down the banisters with his fat legs flying widely. Not being able to slide off freely, he plumped and landed on the floor with a bump. (See page 13.)

Whereat Tuby Muffin groaned more deeply than before.

Tubby's groans were heard for some time before the Classical Fourth went to sleep. His dumbness did not seem to have affected his groaning powers. But when Higgs threatened to throw a pillow at him if he didn't shut up there was a howl of wrath directed against Higgs, and the bully of the Fourth did not throw the pillow. Tubby was a privileged person, and he was at liberty to groan as much as he liked.

The next morning Dr. Twist saw Tubby again, and he looked very serious. He left written instructions as to Tubby's diet, and Mr. Bootles spoke to the sympathetic Juniors on the subject.

That day Tubby was still free from lessons, but he did not look so cheerful as before.

Open-handed fellows were quite ready to stand treat at the tuckshop, but the doctor's instructions had to be obeyed.

And Tubby's glorious feeds had come to a sudden end.

Even the pleasure of slacking about the quadrangle while the other fellows were at work did not quite compensate Tubby for that, and during the day he looked dismal and mournful.

At teatime it was in vain that he presented himself at study after study with appealing looks.

"It won't do, Tubby," said Jimmy Silver kindly. "You know what the doctor says. It may be serious if you touch pastry while you're ill."

Tubby's lips opened and closed, again. Then he shook his head vigorously to intimate that he wasn't ill.

But Jimmy was firm.

"Can't be helped, Tubby. Dr. Twist says you're to have your tea in Hall, where Bootles can keep an eye on you. Feeding in the studies is strictly forbidden."

"You must stand it, old chap," said Lovell sympathetically.

Tubby grunted dismally. He took a chunk of chalk from his pocket and scrawled on the table:

"I'm starving!"

"But you've had tea in Hall," said Raby. Tubby snorted. Tea in Hall wasn't much to Tubby.

"Well, there's nothing doing," said Jimmy firmly. "Can't disobey medical orders."

Tubby snorted again, and rolled out of the end study. He tried study after study in vain. The Classical Fourth were sympathetic, but the doctor's instructions could not be disregarded. The pig was no longer in clover.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver Smells a Rat.

"WHO'S been in my study?" Jones minor asked that question in the Fourth Form passage at the top of his voice.

Jones of the Fourth was looking wrathful. "Hallo! What's biting you?" asked Jimmy Silver, looking out of the end study.

"Who's been at my cupboard?" roared Jones.

"Ha, ha!"

"You cackling ass!" shouted Jones indignantly. "Somebody's cleared out my cupboard! My cake's gone—and the toffee—and the ginger-beer!"

The Fistical Four proceeded to Study No. 3. It was evening, and the Classical Fourth were mostly at prep. Van Ryn and Higgs were working, but Tubby Muffin reposed more or less gracefully in the armchair. Prep was over for Tubby—ill lessons started again.

Jimmy Silver entered the study, and as he stood within it he put his hand behind him and extracted the key from the lock on the door.

"You two chaps are wanted, he said. 'Come on! It's rather important! You'll be interested!'"

Van Ryn and Higgs, somewhat puzzled, followed Jimmy from the study.

They were still more surprised when Jimmy silently inserted the key in the outside of the lock, and turned it.

"What the thunder are you up to?" demanded Higgs.

"Carrying out your idea, Higgy," said Jimmy Silver airily. "We've good reason to feel sure that Tubby can be cured of his dumbness by getting a bit of shock."

"Well, that was my idea all along!" said Higgs, more amicably. "All the fellows were down on it, though. You were!"

"But we've tumbled to something since," explained Jimmy. "Tubby's kind of dumbness can be cured quite easily, as it happens."

"How do you know?" asked Dick Van Ryn. "Watch your uncle!" said Jimmy.

Jimmy Silver fetched the ashpans out of the end study, and proceeded to tear up an old exercise-book into it. Then he struck a match, and lighted the fragments of paper, and there was a flare and a smell of smoke.

"What the dickens—?" said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver did not reply. He placed the ashpans close to the door of Study No. 3, and blew the smoke through the keyhole. And then he roared, in stentorian tones:

"Fire!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Wonderful Cure!

"FIRE!"

Tubby Muffin generally extracted himself from an armchair with slow and leisurely motions and a deep grunt of annoyance.

On this occasion, however, Tubby rose from the armchair in a way that was a close imitation of the motion of a jack-in-a-box.

He fairly bounded up with a gasp.

"Fire!" Tubby's podgy face turned pale, and he made a wild rush at the door. Smoke was pouring through the keyhole in thin spirals.

Tubby Muffin grasped the handle of the door, and dragged at it.

To his surprise and horror the door did not open.

He dragged and dragged, grasping and grunting, but the door did not budge. It was fast.

"Help, help, help!"

Tubby Muffin's voice rang through the study and the whole length of the Fourth Form passage.

There was a gasp from the juniors outside.

"Speaking, by gum!"

"The spooter!"

"It's the shock, bedad!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help! Help!" yelled Tubby from within. "Let me out! Open the door! Yarooop! Help! Help! Help! Help! Lemme out! Help! Help! Help! Help!"

Jimmy Silver grinned and laid down the ashpans, and Lovell, chuckling, took it back to the end study.

Jimmy tapped on the door.

"Hallo! Is that you, Tubby?"

"Yes. Let me out!"

"Why can't you come out?"

"The door's jammed!" shrieked Tubby.

"Don't go away, Silver! Help!"

"No danger, dear boy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let me out!" yelled Tubby.

"But what's the matter?"

"Matter!" Tubby bellowed. "The school's on fire, you silly ass! Lemme out! Smash in the door! Yarooop!"

"All serene!" said Jimmy Silver. "Keep smiling! The school isn't on fire, and there's nothing the matter."

"Wha-a-at!"

"Only some old papers being burned, Tubby! No'ing to be alarmed about!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"But I'll let you out, you fat fraud, and jolly well bump you, too!" said Jimmy Silver, inserting the key in the lock and turning it back.

The study door opened, and Tubby Muffin rolled out into the corridor, gasping.

"I—I thought the school was on fire!" he spluttered. "There—there was smoke, and—and somebody was yelling 'Fire!'"

"Yes, I was yelling 'Fire!'"

"You silly ass!" hooted Tubby. "What were you yelling 'Fire!' for if there wasn't any fire?"

"To cure you of your giddy dumbness, dear boy!"

Tubby's jaw dropped. The expression on his fat face made the Classical juniors shriek.

In his alarm and funk, the fat Classical had forgotten all about his dumbness. He remembered it now, rather too late.

"Oh!" gasped Tubby. "Oh, dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Bootles came hurrying up the passage. He had heard Tubby's wild yells from afar, and, in utter amazement, had recognised the voice of the dumb junior.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "Has Muffin recovered?"

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy Silver demurely. "He can talk as easily as anything now, sir!"

"Ripping, ain't it?" grinned Lovell.

"Muffin! My dear boy—"

"Oh, lor!" groaned Tubby.

Tubby Muffin was not a bright youth, but he could see that the game was up now.

All the Classical knew was that he had been spoofing, and certainly he would not be allowed to keep on his trickery. If he had attempted to deceive his Form-master farther Jimmy Silver & Co. would have deceived him promptly enough, though they had no intention of betraying Tubby otherwise. The fat rascal deserved to be punished, but they did not want to "give him away."

Tubby's fat face was dismayed. He was "bowled out" with a vengeance, and he realised that deception had come to an end.

"You can speak, Muffin?" asked Mr. Bootles.

"Yes, sir," mumbled Tubby.

"Extraordinary!"

"Amazing, by gad!" murmured Lovell, with a chuckle.

"A most extraordinary and interesting case!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "How did you first feel your speech returning, Muffin?"

"I—I—I—" stammered Tubby.

"Dear me, what a smell of smoke!" said Mr. Bootles, sniffing. "Is anything on fire anywhere?"

"I think not," said Jimmy Silver. "I've been burning some old papers, but it's out now!"

"You should be more careful, Silver. The passage is quite smoky!" said Mr. Bootles. "I thought I heard someone calling 'Fire!'"

"Only a false alarm, sir."

"You are a very careless boy, Silver!"

"Ahem! Yes, sir."

"I should certainly give you an imposition for your carelessness, Silver, but in this happy moment I will not inflict a punishment," said Mr. Bootles.

"T-t-thank you, sir!"

"Muffin, I am delighted to see that you have recovered your speech. It will not be necessary to have the specialist down now. I will inform Dr. Twist at once. Did your speech return suddenly, Muffin?"

"Q-quitte suddenly, sir."

"Have you received a shock of any kind?" asked Mr. Bootles, with great interest.

"I—I—I—"

"I think Muffin fancied the school was on fire, sir," said Jimmy Silver, with great calmness.

"Ah, I understand! Silver, your carelessness has, after all, served a good purpose," said Mr. Bootles. "It was due to your carelessness in the first place, Silver, that Muffin became dumb. Your carelessness has been the cause of his recovery. It is a very remarkable coincidence!"

"Extraordinary, sir, isn't it?" said Jimmy Silver, with the gravity of a Chinese mandarin, while Lovell gurgled helplessly.

"Very extraordinary! And you feel that you can speak quite freely now, Muffin?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Excellent—excellent! I will inform Dr. Twist at once, and ask him to come. You feel quite well, Muffin?"

"Yes, sir. Only—only—"

"Only what, Muffin?"

"Only hungry, sir," said Tubby.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fourth-Formers. Mr. Bootles smiled.

"I see that you are quite your old self, Muffin. I will go and telephone to Dr. Twist at once."

Mr. Bootles rustled away.

Tubby, not quite liking the looks of the Classical juniors, retreated into his study. The juniors followed him in.

"You spoofing oyster!" said Lovell.

"You thafe of the worruld!"

"You fat rotter!"

Tubby Muffin grinned feebly.

"I—I say, I—I was dumb, you know," he stammered. "It was the shock, you know. It restored my speech—like the soldiers you read about, you know!"

"Bump him!"

"Own up, you fat rotter!"

"Leggo!" howled Tubby, as the Classical's grasped him. Certainly there was no sign of dumbness about Tubby now; his voice was in full vigour. "Yarooop!"

Bump—bump—bump!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

The juniors streamed out of the study, leaving Tubby Muffin gasping on the floor.

And the wild howls that followed bore eloquent testimony to the fact that Tubby Muffin was no longer dumb.

(Another grand long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next week, entitled: "TRICKING THE TRICKSTERS." Order your copy in advance.)



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BUT the Grand New Serial, entitled, "MONEY," the first instalment of which appears in TO-DAY'S issue of the "Butterfly," IS EVERYTHING a lover of good fiction can desire. DO NOT MISS IT in

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Rallying Round Railton!

(Continued from page 12.)

"It's for you, sir," said Gussy.

"For me?"

The Swell of St. Jim's nodded.

Mr. Railton was completely taken aback.

"Am I to understand, D'Arcy, that it was your intention to leave all this money in my desk?"

"Yaas, sir. We were hopin' to make it an anonymous presentation."

"Whom do you mean by 'we'?"

"All the fellahs in the School House, sir. We knew that you were hard up—"

"What!" shouted Mr. Railton.

"So we—we thought it only right to get up a subscription on your behalf, to relieve your financial embarrassment."

"D'Arcy!"

"It is a great pity that you came into the studay when you did, sir. But I trust you will not refuse to accept this money, f'rom a foolish sense of p'widge."

Mr. Railton scarcely knew whether to be angry or amused.

"Really, D'Arcy," he exclaimed, "this is a most absurd mistake! Did you seriously imagine that I stood in need of financial assistance?"

"Of course, sir."

"Whatever caused you to come to that conclusion?"

Gussy explained that he had seen Mr. Railton feast off a bun and a glass of milk in the Wayland restaurant. He explained, also, that he had seen the Housemaster decline to purchase a box of cigars.

"An', in addition to these things, sir," said Gussy, "you did not subswibe to the senior cricket club."

Mr. Railton listened patiently to Gussy's recital; then he threw back his head, and laughed heartily.

"Your observations, D'Arcy," he said, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered to speak, "have led you to form a too hasty conclusion. Whilst I deeply appreciate the generous motive which prompted you to do me this kindness, I can assure you that your action was totally unnecessary. This money will have to be refunded to the various donors."

"But I—I don't undahstand, sir—" D'Arcy faltered.

"I will enlighten you, my boy," said Mr. Railton, with a smile. "I have had digestive trouble of late, and the doctor has ordered me to eat sparingly of a plain diet, and to give up smoking for a month. That being so, I was unable to partake of a hearty meal at the restaurant, and I was also unable—much to my regret—to purchase the box of excellent cigars offered me by the tobacconist. With regard to the cricket subscription, the reason why I did not hand it to Kildare was that I had already given it to Darrel."

"Oh!"

"I hope I have made matters clear," added Mr. Railton. "I shall be obliged, D'Arcy, if you will see that this money is refunded without delay."

"Very good, sir," said Gussy dolefully. And he emerged from Railton's study a moment later carrying the canvas bag.

Tom Merry & Co. Were waiting in the passage, and they fired a volley of questions at the swell of St. Jim's.

"What's happened, Gussy?"

"Did Railton spot you?"

"Won't he accept the cash?"

"It's like this, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus. "Wailton isn't hard up, aftah all!"

"My hat!"

And Gussy repeated the Housemaster's explanation.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" exclaimed Manners. "We look a priceless set of asses, and no mistake!"

"And it's all Gussy's fault!" snapped Blake. "Oh, bump him!" growled Herries.

Many hands were laid upon the swell of St. Jim's, and he was bumped without ceremony on the floor of the passage.

Gussy was quite limp by the time the ordeal was over, and for the next hour or so he was busily engaged in returning the unwanted subscriptions.

And it is likely to be a long time before Arthur Augustus again suggests the advisability of rallying round Railton.

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.C.4.

Next week's story of Harry Wharton & Co. is one of the finest Mr. Frank Richards has given us for many a long week. It is full of interest from beginning to end. I should strongly advise all my readers to make absolutely certain of ordering their copies of the "Penny Popular" to-day. There is sure to be a great rush for this grand number.

"MICK O' THE MOVIES."

By Stanton Hope.

There will also be another long instalment of this wonderful serial wherein the great actor, Charlie Chaplin, shows himself again.

Floyd Unwin reappears to make trouble for the daring young English actor, Micky Denver, and just how he tries to get even and what results to his evil planning, I have no hesitation in saying it will make real good reading.

"TRICKING THE TRICKSTERS!"

By Owen Conquest.

In the next magnificent long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood, Smythe, the ead of the Shell, disgusted at being left out of the team, decides to form one of his own, with which he can beat the Fourth Form Eleven. He is allowed, in an agreement he makes with Silver, to select an outside man to play for him.

This story is full of humour and excitement, and you should really enjoy it.

SIGHTS WORTH SEEING.

The shipping in the harbours in this part of the world is interesting. There are former German ships which did a lot of mischief in the war, and which are now employed in useful work, such as taking cargoes of china-clay and coal for the islands and London. A Londoner is apt to think some of the villages fairly steep. Polruan, for example, or cheery little Bodinnick, have High Streets which resemble the side of a house. I saw a yellow duck busy washing its feet in a stream, when, to its astonishment, it suddenly went tobogganing down the slope, unable to stop itself. The cottages are built up on the staircase fashion. Where things are altogether too precipitous the inhabitants put a flight of steps to help matters.

You can hardly beat Cornwall for scenery. You get scenery for breakfast—to say nothing of fried cod-steak, porridge, and ling. There are coves where the sea washes the gold-and-green rocks; and inland, amidst the narrow lanes and in the woods, the world jogs along as peacefully as the sleepy-looking red cattle, which come ambling along, and are ready enough to make friends. There is a lot to be said for living in the hills, though you cannot imagine Londoners living in a city where the houses are all highlegged-piggledy, with the next-door neighbour's cellar on a level with your attic, and with sheep strolling across the roofs. The famous author, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, lives in these parts, and the windows of his beautiful house overlook the wide arm of the sea.

THE PYRAMIDS.

There was a paragraph from a reader in one of the Companion Papers the other day, and it appears the writer was all wrong. A. W. Hodgson, of Burnley, writes to tell me that the Great Pyramid was not built by King Cheops, but was the work of King Melchisedec, one of the Shepherd Kings. Whoever performed the real hard work—you can picture old Melchisedec, shouldering the stones into their positions!—achieved something which remains a wonder of the world. Apparently the writer of the paragraph had

been entirely misinformed on the subject, which is a pity. There are only seven chambers—not a labyrinth. The work did not occupy the time of a hundred thousand men—nothing near so many. The Pyramid is situated under the centre of the group of stars called Pleiades. So that's that!

A GREAT MISUNDERSTANDING.

A perfectly fair, but at the same time a perfectly mistaken, letter comes to me from "Enquirer." It is about Bunter. Of course, it is about the porpoise. You would not expect anything else. This is the complaint: "The yarns are far too Bunterish. Why can't we have something else? And just because Billy is fat and ugly he is always being a rotter, and is always beaten in games, or anything." But this correspondent is really looking at things through the wrong end of the telescope. Bunter is what he is just because he is Bunter, and the stories would not be half so interesting if the Owl were taken out. Besides, Bunter sometimes—not often—does good by accident, and very proud he is of it. We had better leave the funny fellow alone. He raises a laugh, and the cheery man who makes others smile is better worth meeting than a five-pound note, as Robert Louis Stevenson pointed out a long time ago.

GOSSIP FROM THE SOUTH.

A staunch supporter writes to me from "Australia." That is the address he puts at the top, and it is good enough. My chum writes as interesting a letter as anybody could wish. He says he lives in a dinky little suburb of Adelaide, South Australia, the mappie state. He never gets tired of reading the stories, and he appreciates pretty nearly all the characters. He got wild, and started fighting a chum of his, who criticised the yarns, and he wants more of the Gallery. It is no good telling an enthusiast like this that the Gallery ceased because all the chief characters have been given. He just wants more, and won't be happy till he gets it. I expect I shall have to start a sort of permanent Gallery for all the tales, giving week by week the information which he asked for about the principal figures. My correspondent is a Scout, and he may come to London to represent his comrades at what he calls the great International Jamboree. If he does he is coming to see me. "Don't be surprised," he says, "if I should drop in upon you while you are writing your Chat." He will be welcome, but if he drops in through the roof I hope he will mind the inkpot and the office cat. The latter is a nervous animal.

THE GALLERY AGAIN.

It is regrettable to learn from a loyal reader that his father disapproves of his reading the Companion Papers. My friend is very keen on the stories, and he asks for a book containing biographies of the characters. It is a good notion, but not very easy to adopt just now. The forthcoming volume of the "Holiday Annual" will contain a good deal of the information required—as with the first volume—but a separate book wants thinking about. What struck me specially about this letter was the cheery, straightforward way in which the writer put things. He has no wish to go against the wishes of his father, but he hates the notion of giving up his favourite reading. What is he to do? Well, it seems to me the only way is to bring his father round to his manner of thinking. Very likely my chum's father has never yet had time to look into the matter. Perhaps my correspondent will ask his father to read a story. I should not be a bit surprised if the result is satisfactory. There are myriads of seniors who look forward every week to the tales.

TATTOO MARKS.

Over and over again I receive requests for a remedy for tattoo marks. These marks are interesting enough—when seen on other people. We all know the look of a sailor's arm, with the pictures of anchors and ships, etc., but the majority of fellows get tired of such decorations in their own case. "Sheffield" wants to know how his tattoo marks can be made paler. But these ink designs have, as a rule, come to stay. If he seriously means to shift them, or, at least, make the artistic designs less obvious, he must act as follows: First wash the part with warm water, then take a bunch of six to eight fine cambrie needles, bound together tightly with silk thread. The needle-points must be dipped in a preparation known as glycerole of papoid, and pricked evenly into the marks. This process will tend to mollify the Indian-ink stains. The preparation can be obtained from any chemist. Of course, it saves a whole lot of trouble not to get tattooed. Many fellows I know have had their arms painted in this style, thinking it was all very amusing, as maybe it is at the time, but the majority of us do not want to go round the world like a small picture-show.

GOOD OLD DUBLIN.

A particularly well informed correspondent in Dublin thinks there has been a mistake concerning Tom Dutton, whose deafness is more accentuated in some yarns than in others. Of course, it must be so. I feel that in the case of Dutton the fun is quite harmless. Tom is such a good fellow, and he contributes plenty to the attractiveness of the tales. I own I heartily appreciate such a letter as the one in question. Some people might deem it captious—the points about the visits to Mr. Quelch, when the latter has to administer punishment for some fault, or the manner in which a fellow falls to the ground from a blow. Yet a story series, of course, deals with the exceptional incidents which explains most things. Again, as regards the Irish characters, there is a growl about the brogue, but we all know that a rich brogue is something which is often fastened on to an Irish fellow in fiction, simply to emphasise his nationality.

A BOTANIST.

It is pretty certain that there are numerous readers of the Companion Papers who are interested in flowers. Those of my friends who are this way inclined should write to J. C. Hemingway, jun., Ferndale Road, Glen Iris, Melbourne, Australia. This correspondent tells me he wants to get in touch with fellow-readers who are interested in the same subject as the one that engrosses him. He will exchange Australian pressed flowers with readers in other countries. I hope others who are keen on this study will take due note.

Most likely my chum of Ferndale will be hearing from correspondents in Cornwall, among other places. The Companion Papers are read to any extent in that distant part of the United Kingdom. The famous weeklies were well in evidence in Fowey and other towns through which I passed a few days since. And Cornwall is a land of flowers, as well as of attractive old legends, and other legends which are not so attractive. The seamen of Fowey have always been famous for bravery and love of adventure. When King Edward the Fourth was sitting on the Throne these gallant sailors fell foul of his Majesty, and some of them were hanged by the King's pursuivants, at Lostwithiel, for daring to disobey the Royal commands.

Fowey has figured in all the wars. But that was not what I was thinking about at the moment. The whole countryside is about as beautiful a bit of England as could be imagined. The lanes are yellow with primroses and blue with violets and bluebells. The streams come tumbling in musical cascades down the sides of the steep hills. There is plenty of climbing for those who like the sport.

READERS' NOTICES.

- W. Allen, Summer Cove, Kinsale, Co. Cork, with readers interested in boxing.
- J. L. Webbe, 135, Marlborough Road, Cheetham, Manchester, with readers overseas.
- L. Shingle, 80, New Street, Boothem, Stoke-on-Trent, North Staffs, with readers anywhere, age 20.
- S. G. Kitchell, East Lavant, near Chichester, Sussex, wants readers for his amateur magazine, price 2d.
- F. Knott, 29, Rushton Street, New North Road, Hoxton, N. 1., wants members to form a cycling club for week-end runs.
- Miss Olga Gray, Post Office, St. Arnaud, Victoria, Australia, with readers anywhere.
- L. Dunderdale, 16, Carlisle Street, Gainsborough, would like to join a correspondence club.
- J. H. Aird, 18, Ravensworth Terrace, Bedlington Street, Northumberland, with readers anywhere, age 16-18.
- I. Green, 278, Mile End Road, London, E. 1., with a Jewish reader living in Mile End or Aldgate, age 16-17.
- W. J. Devins, 247, Scoten Avenue, Detroit, Mich., U.S.A., would like to hear from his old friend, James Brogan, late of 99, Middleton Street, Ibroth, Scotland.
- G. L. Sage, 55, Quantock Road, Bedminster, Bristol, with readers anywhere, age 15-16. All letters answered.
- C. Mitchell, 35a, Tyne Road, Hessele Road, Hull, with readers anywhere, age 15-16.
- A. Huitson, 53, Princes Street, North Shields, with readers living in New Zealand or India.

- A. Griffin, Depew, New York, U.S.A., with readers anywhere.
- W. H. Abercrombie, 112, Vallance Road, Whitechapel, London, E. 1., with readers interested in postcard collecting.
- Miss M. W. Parkes, 35, Long Street, Walsall, Staffs, with readers anywhere, age 15-17.
- G. Duckett, 35a, Edgwick Road, Foleshill, Coventry, with readers anywhere.
- J. McMullen, 41, Robert Street, Ynysybwl, South Wales, would like to hear from his old pal, Frank Corney, late of the British Trolley Track Co.
- W. Heaton, 19, Lydia Street, Burnley, Lancs, with Californian readers.
- L. P. Doran, co. H. A. Spence, Commercial Buildings, Foyle Street, Londonderry, wants members for the Londonderry Branch of the Jesmonds Sports Club.
- M. Grobman, 65, Oosthuizen Street, Germiston, Transvaal, South Africa, with readers interested in stamp collecting.
- R. Jamieson, 56, Devon Street, Woodstock, South Africa, with readers living in England interested in postcards.
- H. H. Evans, 144, Turf Lane, Higginshaw, Oldham, Lancs—with readers anywhere.
- W. H. Rudkin, 3, Joan Street, Wallsend-on-Tyne—with readers anywhere.
- W. H. Brown, c.o. The Oxeroff Colliery Co., Ltd., near Chesterfield, Derby—with readers anywhere, age 17-18.
- H. B. Reed, 22, Lisford Street, Peckham, S.E. 15, wants members for his Scouts Correspondence Club.
- C. Oxley, 10, Ash Row, Hoyle Mill, Barnsley—with readers living in the British Isles.
- J. Tuft, 25, Adelphi Street, Sheffield—with readers living in South Africa, age 17-20.
- H. R., c.o. 251, Lyham Road, Brixton Hill, S.W. 2—with readers anywhere.

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READERS' NOTICES.

Back Numbers Wanted, etc.

R. H. Hay, Ruddington House, Skegby Forest, near Mansfield, Notts, wants "Magnets" Nos. 618 and 619; also "Gems," same numbers. 2d. each offered.

William Tickner, 119, Percy Road, Canning Town, E., has a number of the Companion papers for sale at 10d. per dozen.

E. F. Rooney, 13, St. Paul's Road, Rock Ferry, Cheshire, has for sale "Gems" Nos. 518 to 630; also a number of "Penny Populars" (new series). Will sell lot for 6s.

F. Morris, 25, Preston Place, Ryde, Isle of Wight, wants to exchange Nos. 1-20 of the "Greyfriars' Herald" (new series) for "Boys' Friend" 3d. Libraries, or will buy same at 3d. each.

P. Edwards, 8, St. Saviour's Road, Saitley, Birmingham, has for sale one hundred Companion papers. What offers?

F. Watson, 23, Sloane Square, London, S.W., offers 6d. each for "Gems" Nos. 1-449. Double numbers 1s. each.

Miss E. Makepeace, 31, Holland Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, has for sale "Boys' Friends" Nos. 801-897, and "Gems" Nos. 432 to 580.

E. Davray, 109, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, W. 8, wants "Nelson Lee's" Nos. 1-224. Write stating price.

James Robertson, 2, Haldane Street, Downfield, Dundee, Scotland, has for sale "Gems" Nos. 511-578; Christmas Number for 1917.

T. B. Murland, Carlton Hall, Carlton, near Wakefield, Yorks, wants "Greyfriars' Herald" Nos. 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 19. 1½d. each offered. Write first.

Fred Harat, Beaulah Lodge, Palatine Road, Wittington, has for sale "Penny Populars" Nos. 222-270. Will sell lot for 5s.

E. Yates, 38, Alexander Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, has for sale "Penny Populars" (new series) Nos. 1-45; twenty-five "Nelson Lee's"; fifteen "Boys' Friends"; ten "Greyfriars' Herald" (new series); and twenty "Gems." Will sell lot for 4s. 6d.

W. Burnett, 41, Hargrave Park, Highgate, N. 19, has for sale "Magnets" and "Gems" from No. 525; also "Penny Populars" Nos. 1-61.

M. Summerson, Dene Hall, Bishop Auckland, has for sale "Boys' Friends," Nos. 551-581; "Magnets," Nos. 604-633; "Gems," Nos. 603-633; "Greyfriars' Herald," Nos. 1-22 (new edition); and "Penny Populars," Nos. 31-62. Will sell at 1½d. each.

T. Delaney, 17, High Street, Rhyl, wants "The Taming of Harry Wharton" and "Bob Cherry's Barring-Out." Good prices offered.

C. Smith, 100, St. George's Road, Leyton, E. 10, has for sale Magnets, Nos. 335, 614, 629, 631-634; "Gems," Nos. 410 and 560; "Penny Populars," Nos. 58, 61, 97, 98, 167, 168, and 185; "Greyfriars' Herald," Nos. 1-24; and "Boys' Friends" for 1916.

F. Nutt, 72a, Caulfield Road, East Ham, E. 6, has for sale 50 "Gems." Will take 3s. for lot, or will exchange for "Holiday Annual."

F. Walker, 9, Lucknow Drive, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts, has for sale "Gems," Nos. 591-641.

G. Gordon, 119, Venmore Street, Anfield, Liverpool, has for sale "Magnets," Nos. 330, 332, 333-376, 377, 400-402; and "Gems," Nos. 323, 326, 349, and 377. Apply or write.

M. Thomas, 80, Saltown Road, Brixton, S.W., has for sale 43 "Magnets" and "Gems," between Nos. 503 and 610. Will sell lot for 4s.

J. Shannon, 79, Minto Street, Holt Road, Liverpool, has for sale a large number of Companion Papers.

C. A. Benham, Winchester Hill, Sutton Scotney, Hants, has for sale "Gems" and "Magnets," 30 for 2s. 6d.



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