

STILL ATTRACTING READERS THE WORLD OVER!

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**Popular**

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THE BEST HOLIDAY-COMPANION PAPER!



**THE ROAD-HOG! HARRY WHARTON'S NARROW ESCAPE!**

(See the Grand Complete Story of Greyfriars School entitled "CLEARING HIS NAME!" in this Issue.)



# Clearing His Name!

A Magnificent, Long, Complete Tale of Dennis Carr and the Chums of Greyfriars School.

By

FRANK RICHARDS.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Rough on Dennis.

**T**HE class will now dismiss!" It was Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, who made that welcome announcement.

For once in a way Harry Wharton & Co. did not make rapid tracks for the door of the Form-room—and freedom. They remained in their seats, and blinked at Mr. Quelch in amazement.

"Dismiss!" repeated the Form-master. The juniors continued to blink. And there was every reason for their stupefaction.

As a rule, the word of dismissal was given at twelve o'clock—sometimes later, but never earlier.

And the old clock in the tower was now booming eleven!

Mr. Quelch frowned at the class, which sat spellbound.

"Did you not hear me, my boys?" he exclaimed.

Bob Cherry rose to his feet. "Excuse me, sir—"

"Well, Cherry?"

"I—I'm afraid your watch must be an hour fast, sir."

"Nothing of the sort!" said Mr. Quelch. "I am quite aware of the correct time, Cherry. It is eleven o'clock."

"But—but we aren't usually dismissed until twelve, sir!"

Mr. Quelch smiled. "I am making an exception this morning," he explained. "Owing to your exemplary behaviour, my boys, I am dismissing you an hour earlier."

"Oh!"

It took the Remove a long time to grasp the joyous significance of Mr. Quelch's words. But when they did grasp it Bolsover major started to cheer, and the cheer echoed through the Form-room.

"Hurrah!"

"Thank you very much, sir!"

"You're a brick, sir!"

Mr. Quelch continued to smile.

"It is not often that you give me cause to act benevolently towards you, my boys," he said. "But I must say that your behaviour this morning has left nothing to be desired. I have not found it necessary to award a single imposition. And I am very gratified. So much so that I have decided to grant you an additional hour of freedom. There will be no more lessons to-day."

It was to be a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and the Remove, besides having the afternoon to themselves, were in possession of a

couple of hours' leisure before dinner. They recovered at length from the agreeable shock which Mr. Quelch had given them, and with smiling faces they stamped towards the door.

"This is ripping!" said Frank Nugent, when they were out in the passage.

"Simply stunning!" agreed Harry Wharton. "Quelch's turned up trumps, and no mistake!"

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull. "I've never known him to be so thoroughly decent."

"This is what comes of behaving ourselves like good little boys," said Vernon-Smith.

"We shall be able to put in some practice for the match at Courtfield this afternoon."

"Yes, rather!"

As the juniors dispersed in twos and threes into the sunny Close, or in the direction of their studies, they eagerly made plans for the afternoon and the tail-end of the morning.

King Cricket claimed the attention of most of the fellows; but others preferred to disport themselves either on the water, in the water, or beside the water; for it was an ideal day for boating and swimming.

Even Dennis Carr, the junior who had least cause to look happy, was smiling cheerfully.

Dennis had not been having a very smooth passage of late. There had been friction between him and Wharton, and only the night before the two had participated in a fierce dormitory fight.

The captain of the Remove had won, but the faces of both combatants were now looking the worse for wear.

But it was not of the dormitory fight that Dennis Carr was thinking now. He was mentally deciding upon a long ramble by the seashore.

Dennis was not taking part in the match against Dick Trumper & Co., owing to the fact that he had been showing very poor form of late. Incidentally, it was this which had started the trouble between Dennis and Wharton.

Having made up his mind that a ramble by the shore, coupled with the exploration of the old smugglers' caves, would be the very thing, Dennis Carr hurried along to Study No. 12, which he shared with Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian.

Both Mauly and Sir Jimmy were at home. They were seated astride the table, holding a friendly argument.

"Hallo, you chaps!" said Dennis Carr.

Lord Mauleverer looked up, frowned a little as his gaze rested upon Dennis, and

then continued his argument with Sir Jimmy.

Dennis flushed. "I've got a suggestion to make, you fellows," he said.

As a rule, Dennis, who was the leader of the study, could readily command a hearing. But on this occasion his very existence seemed to be ignored.

Lord Mauleverer went on talking—he was saying that the "l.b.w." rule in cricket ought to be abolished—and Sir Jimmy Vivian kept chiming in with "No!" and "Rats!" and "Nothin' of the sort!"

Clenching his hands, Dennis Carr advanced towards his study-mates.

"Do you fellows hear me?" he shouted.

Lord Mauleverer looked up. "We're not deaf, begad!" he murmured.

"Then why don't you answer me?"

"Well, the fact is, Carr—you don't mind a little plain-speakin', I hope?—we're fed up with you!"

"Ear, 'ear!" said Jimmy Vivian, who had not yet been able to conquer the habit of dropping his aspirates.

Dennis Carr glared at his study-mates.

"You—you're fed up with me?" he echoed.

Lord Mauleverer nodded. "Right up to the hilt!" he said.

"Would you mind telling me why?"

His lordship sighed. "That will entail quite a lot of talkin'," he said. "An' talkin's a fearful fag, you know!"

"Well, you've jolly well got to talk!" said Dennis Carr grimly. "I insist upon knowing why you're fed up with me!"

"Very well, dear boy—I mean, very well, Carr! We're fed up with you because of that low-down trick you played on Wharton."

"What low-down trick?" demanded Dennis, though he knew quite well what was coming.

"If you want me to go through all the beastly details," said Mauly, "I will! Owin' to the fact that you shaped rottenly the other day, Wharton left you out of the eleven—"

"That's so."

"An' in revenge for bein' left out, you followed Wharton down to the shore yesterday mornin', an' made off with his togs while he was bathin'!"

"That's a lie!"

Dennis Carr's voice rang angrily through the study.

"Pardon me," said Mauly, retaining his composure, "but it's the truth. You bagged Wharton's togs, so as to make him late for

lessons. 'An' it was a beastly, low-down trick!"

"It would have been a beastly, low-down trick if I had acted as you say, but I didn't!"

Lord Mauleverer sighed again.

"It's not a bit of use your keepin' up this denial," he said. "The evidence against you is overwhelmin'. In the first place, you were the only fellow absent from the school at the same time as Wharton. Secondly, Wharton found your handkerchief on the shore, close to where he had left his togs. An' thirdly—an' this is the most incriminatin' piece of evidence against you—the togs were discovered, tied up in brown paper, in your locker."

"An' how you've got the cheek to deny it on top of all this fairly beats me!" chimed in Jimmy Vivian.

"I do deny it—absolutely!" exclaimed Dennis Carr, with an earnestness which made no impression whatever upon his two study-mates. "I didn't follow Wharton yesterday morning, and I didn't take his togs."

"Then how did they come to be in your locker?" asked Lord Mauleverer coldly.

"They must have been planted there by some cad who wanted to get me into trouble."

"Oh, come off!"

"If you suppose we're goin' to swallow a yarn of that sort, Carr," said Jimmy Vivian, "there's somethin' wrong with your supposer!"

Dennis Carr was fast losing his temper. "For the last time," he said, "I tell you I had no hand in this business!"

"I don't believe you," said Mauly frankly. "Neither do I," said Sir Jimmy.

Dennis Carr's hands were still tightly clenched, and he looked as if he were about to commit assault and battery upon the fellows who doubted his word. But he restrained himself, and turned to the door.

"I thought I could rely upon the fellows in my own study to back me up," he said bitterly. "But evidently you prefer to go with the stream!"

"Look here, Carr," said Lord Mauleverer seriously, "why not own up? Why not admit that it was you who made off with Wharton's togs?"

Dennis laughed mirthlessly. "Yes, I'm likely to own up to something I never did!" he snapped.

And then, without another word to his accusers, he strode out of the study.

Dennis was not smiling now. The expression on his face was grim and set. Not for the first time in his school career was he "up against it." Everybody believed him guilty of having played that trick upon the captain of the Remove.

Everybody?

There was just one fellow who remained unconvinced of Dennis Carr's guilt.

Mark Linley still believed in his chum, still stood by him, despite the overwhelming evidence. Mark could not understand how Dennis' handkerchief had come to be lying on the shore; neither could he account for the bundle of clothes being found in Dennis' locker.

Amid much that was vague and uncertain one thing was sure—Dennis Carr was not the guilty party. He had given his word to Mark Linley that he knew nothing of the affair, and his word was quite good enough for the Lancashire lad.

"Hallo, Dennis!"

It was Mark Linley's voice which now hailed the condemned junior.

Dennis Carr halted in the passage. "I'm sick of this show!" he declared. "They're all against me, Marky—all except you. Even Mauly and Jimmy Vivian refuse to believe that I had no hand in the business. I'm fed up—right up to the hilt!"

"Pull yourself together, old man!"

Mark Linley's tone was cheering and reassuring. "It will all come right in the end."

"Yes. But how soon will that be?"

"Sooner than you imagine. I'm going to keep my eyes and ears open, and I mean to find out, if possible, who played that trick on Wharton."

"You'll never find out."

"We shall see."

There was a pause.

"Care to come for a ramble along the shore, Marky?" asked Dennis, at length.

"I'd love to," said the Lancashire lad. "But I'm playing for the Remove this afternoon—"

"Of course! I'd clean forgotten that."

"And I've got to pop over to Courtfield before dinner, to fetch my new bat."

"Then I suppose I must mope by myself," said Dennis.

"No need to mope. Why not go for a spin on your bike—or, better still, a motor-bike? Coker will lend you his if you ask him nicely."

"That's not a bad wheeze," said Dennis, his face brightening a little. "I shall be glad to get away from this place for a bit, anyway."

And Dennis nodded to his chum, and went off in search of Coker of the Fifth.

Despite the fact that he was inclined to be heavy-handed at times, Coker was a good-natured fellow. He knew nothing of Dennis Carr's present position in the Remove, or he might have hesitated before lending the junior his motor-bicycle. As it was he simply said:

"You can borrow it with pleasure, Carr. But mind you're back by three o'clock. I want to go for a joy-ride myself."

"Thanks, awfully!" said Dennis.

And a few moments later he was speeding along the country lanes, glad to escape for a spell from the place where he held in contempt by his Form-fellows—by the friends who had now turned to foes.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### A Fresh Outrage.

"**B**LOW this beastly 'phone!"

It was Harry Wharton who made the remark in tones of deep disgust.

The captain of the Remove had obtained permission from Wingate to use the telephone in the prefects' room. He wanted to get on to Dick Trumper, of Courtfield County Council School, and fix up the time of the match.

"No luck?" inquired Bob Cherry, as Wharton turned away from the telephone.

Wharton shook his head. "I can't get through to the Council School," he said. "I've been given the wrong number three times!"

"My hat!"

"Keep pegging away," said Frank Nugent. "You'll get on to Trumper sooner or later."

"More likely to be later than sooner!" grunted the captain of the Remove. "It's no use trying to 'phone. I shall be here all day. Think I'll bike over to Courtfield."

"All serene," said Johnny Bull. "And while you're gone we'll go and get some practice at the nets."

As Harry Wharton pushed his bicycle down to the school gates, Billy Bunter rolled up to him.

"I say, Wharton—"

"Stand aside, porpoise!"

"Oh, really—"

The fat junior stood in Wharton's path and blinked at him through his big spectacles.

"Now that you've dropped Carr from the team," he said, "I suppose there's a chance for me to come in as eleventh man?"

"Br-r-r!"

"I'm an accomplished cricketer," said Bunter. "A few weeks back, when I was at Jack Harper's training-centre for promising young players, I made a couple of centuries in one match!"

"And then woke up, I suppose?"

Billy Bunter glared.

"Look here," he said wrathfully, "are you going to play me or not?"

"Not!" said Wharton emphatically.

"Then I hope the Courtfielders will lick you to a frazzle. I— Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter broke off with a roar of anguish. Wharton had detached his bicycle-pump, and he brought it with a resounding thwack across the fat junior's tight-fitting trousers.

"Come and have some more!" he said invitingly.

But the aspirant for cricketing honours was already in full retreat. And he realised that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for William George Bunter to obtain a place in the Remove cricket eleven.

Harry Wharton mounted his machine and rode away in the direction of Courtfield. He arrived at the Council School just as the pupils were being dismissed from morning lessons.

"Welcome, little stranger!" said Dick Trumper. "Come to scratch the match?"

"No," said Wharton, in surprise. "Why should I?"

"Well, we thought you might have decided that we were too strong for you."

"Rats! I came to see you about the start. Shall we make it three o'clock?"

"That'll do nicely," said Trumper.

"We'll arrive at Greyfriars at three," said Grafame, "and we'll depart at four, having polished you off in an hour."

"Hear, hear!"

The Courtfielders seemed very confident of

victory. And, indeed, they had every reason to be, for they were taking a very strong side to Greyfriars.

Having arranged the time of the start, Harry Wharton rode away.

He had proceeded about a mile, and was passing along a particularly narrow stretch of roadway, when a motor-cycle dashed into view from the opposite direction. It was travelling at a distinctly dangerous speed, and Wharton promptly swerved to the extreme edge of the roadway in order to let the mad motor-cyclist pass him.

The oncoming machine was approaching so swiftly that Harry Wharton could not distinguish the rider. He could tell that it was a schoolboy, and that was all.

"The mad idiot!" muttered the captain of the Remove.

The motor-cycle came on apace. In a flash it was level with Wharton. It passed within a yard of him, and as it did so the rider's clenched fist shot out, and the captain of the Remove was knocked off his machine.

Crash!

The cycle collapsed in the roadway, and it did not escape damage.

Neither did Wharton.

The suddenness, the unexpectedness of it all, had dazed and bewildered him, and he had fallen heavily.

When he sat up, choking with rage—and dust—he found that he had injured his wrist so seriously that he would not be able to play cricket that day, nor for many days to come.

Glancing ahead of him, Wharton saw the cowardly motor-cyclist disappearing in the distance.

The junior realised that it would be futile to give chase. He could not hope to overtake a machine which was travelling far in excess of the speed-limit.

"The cad—the cowardly cad!" muttered Wharton.

He struggled to his feet, dazed and furious. And when he picked up his machine he found that it was not in a rideable condition.

The attack in the lane was a fresh outrage. It was bad enough, Wharton reflected, to have had his clothes taken whilst he was bathing. But this was a far more dastardly affair. That sudden blow from the unknown motor-cyclist might have resulted in more serious injury than a damaged wrist.

The captain of the Remove stooped to brush the dust from his trousers. And as he did so he noticed for the first time that a cap was lying in the roadway. It was a Greyfriars cap. Wharton picked it up and examined it. The initials of the owner were sewn on to the lining.

And those initials were "D. C."—Dennis Carr!

For a moment Wharton stood petrified.

So Carr was the motor-cyclist! Carr was the fellow who had wilfully bowled him over!

Wharton's face was pale and grim.

Carr should be made to suffer for this cowardly attack. For undoubtedly it was Carr who had launched it.

No cap had been lying in the roadway before the motor-cycle passed. And the cap which Wharton now held in his hand was unquestionably the property of Dennis Carr.

"Oh, the cad!" Wharton's voice quivered with rage. "To think that any Greyfriars fellow should sink so low as this! Why, not even Skinner would have done such a thing!"

That was true enough. Skinner was both cad and coward, but he would have drawn the line at an outrage of this sort.

Not often did Harry Wharton give way to feelings of hatred. But he hated Dennis Carr at that moment with a savage intensity.

"I can see what the rotter's game was," he muttered. "He wanted to crock me for the match this afternoon!"

That was the only explanation.

Furious at having been banished from the team, Dennis Carr had inflicted deliberate injury upon the skipper of the side.

Harry Wharton folded the incriminating cap, and tucked it into his pocket. Then he pushed his damaged bicycle in the direction of Greyfriars.

And the feelings he entertained towards Dennis Carr, the author of the outrage, were almost homicidal!

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Called to Account.

"**H**ALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry uttered his familiar ejaculation in tones of profound surprise.

Harry Wharton's chums were standing in the gateway of Greyfriars awaiting his

## 4 Read the Adventures of the Chums of St. Jim's in "Troubled Waters!"—

return. They wondered what had delayed him.

And now Bob Cherry had seen his chum approaching from the distance.

"There's something wrong," said Bob.

"Eh?"

"Harry's not riding. He's pushing his bike, and it seems to be badly buckled."

"My hat!"

"Looks as if there's been a smash-up on the road," said Johnny Bull.

With growing impatience the juniors waited for Harry Wharton to arrive. When he did arrive his pale face and gleaming eyes showed plainly that there was something wrong.

"Bob," said Wharton, as he wheeled his machine through the gateway, "I'm afraid I must ask you to skipper the team this afternoon in my absence."

"In—in your absence?" gasped Bob.

"Yes. I'm crooked."

"Where?"

"Gammy wrist."

The juniors then noticed that Wharton's left arm hung limply by his side.

"Rough—luck!" said Frank Nugent sympathetically. "How did it happen?"

"It was accidental, I suppose?" said Johnny Bull.

Wharton shook his head.

"It was deliberately done," he said.

"Great Scott!"

Bob Cherry clenched his big fists.

"Who was it, Harry?" he asked aggressively. "A Highlife rotter?"

"No; it was one of our own fellows."

"What?"

"It was Carr."

And then, whilst Wharton's chums stood thunderstruck, the captain of the Remove explained how it had happened.

"Did you observably recognise the motor-cyclist as Carr?" inquired Hurree Singh at length.

"No, but I found his cap lying in the roadway just afterwards. Here it is."

The juniors examined the cap, and nodded their heads grimly.

"This is Carr's property, right enough," said Bob Cherry.

"The awful cad!" exclaimed Nugent. "He might have caused you a serious injury, Harry!"

"It's quite serious enough as it is," said Johnny Bull. "Wharton won't be able to play this afternoon."

"Eh—what's that?" inquired Vernon-Smith, coming on the scene with Squiff and Peter Todd.

Bob Cherry described what had happened, and the juniors were furious.

"This is the last straw!" said Peter Todd. "That rouser Carr deserves to be fired out of Greyfriars!"

"Hear, hear!" said Squiff. "I don't hold with sneaking, as a rule, but in the circles I consider that Wharton would be quite justified in reporting this affair to the Head."

"We can leave the Head out of it," said Bob Cherry. "We'll deal with the rotter ourselves—or, rather, I'll deal with him!"

Never had the juniors seen Bob Cherry in such a towering rage. He was trembling from head to foot, and his eyes were blazing.

The dinner-bell sounded at this juncture, and the juniors adjourned to the dining-hall.

Only a few Removites turned up to dinner. The majority of those who were not in the cricket eleven had obtained supplies from the school tuckshop, and repaired to the river.

There was no sign of Dennis Carr.

"The cad won't show up yet awhile," said Bob Cherry. "But when he does he'll get the biggest licking he's ever had in his life!"

"I think he ought to be made to run the gauntlet," said Vernon-Smith.

"I'll lick him first!" said Bob. "You can do what you like with him afterwards."

Dinner over, Harry Wharton went to the sanatorium, and had his wrist bandaged. Then he rejoined his chums in the Close. They were in flannels ready for the Court-field match.

"Carr come in yet?" asked Wharton.

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"We'll wait here till he does!" he said grimly.

Half an hour elapsed, and then Coker of the Fifth came striding towards the school gates.

"Anybody seen Carr?" he asked.

The juniors replied in the negative.

"If he doesn't turn up by three," said Coker, "I'll never lend him my motor-bike again!"

Harry Wharton turned quickly to the Fifth-former.

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"You've lent Carr your motor-bike!" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Then that proves it, you fellows!"

"Absolutely!" said Johnny Bull.

"Proves what?" asked Coker, in surprise.

But before the juniors could enlighten him there was the toot of a horn, and a motor-cycle swerved into the school gateway.

Dennis Carr was the rider. He was bare-headed, and his cheeks glowed with a healthy flush.

"Here you are, Coker!" he said, bringing the machine to a halt, and dismounting.

"Thanks awfully for the loan of your bike! It runs rippingly!"

"You've brought it back just in time!" growled Coker.

And he walked away, pushing the machine. Dennis Carr was about to follow, but an obstruction, in the form of seven or eight juniors, stood in his path.

The faces of the juniors were dark with anger, and Dennis vaguely wondered why.

He was soon to learn!

"Now, you cad!" said Bob Cherry, between his clenched teeth. "Put up your hands!"

"Eh?"

"Put 'em up!"

And Bob threw off his blazer, and advanced towards Dennis Carr.

"Half a jiffy, Bob!" said Harry Wharton.

"Tell the rotter why you're going to lick him."

Dennis Carr stood rooted to the ground in blank amazement.

"Hallo! What have I done now?" he exclaimed.

"You know jolly well what you've done, you cad!" said Bob Cherry passionately. "You passed Wharton on the road, and you shot out your fist and bowled him over! It was a beastly, low-down trick—about the worst that's ever been played!"

"And you deserve to be lynched!" chimed in Vernon-Smith. "If the Head gets to know of this, you'll go out of Greyfriars on your neck!"

Dennis Carr turned pale.

"Good heavens!" he ejaculated. "Do you fellows really think I'd be such a hooligan as to do that?"

"We don't think—we know!" said Nugent. Dennis turned to Harry Wharton.

"Where were you bowled over?" he asked.

"About a mile this side of Courtfield."

"In that case I can easily clear myself. I haven't been on the Courtfield road at all. If you fellows noticed, I came in from the opposite direction."

Wharton's lip curled contemptuously.

"Yes, you came back to the school by a roundabout route, hoping to avoid suspicion," he said. "But you seem to have overlooked just one thing. Do you recognise this?"

So saying, Wharton held out Dennis Carr's cap.

"Yes, it's mine," said Dennis. "Where did you find it?"

"On the Courtfield road. It came off your head as you leaned across to push me over!"

"You might as well own up now, Carr, and have done with it," said Peter Todd.

"Own up!" repeated Dennis wildly. "I've nothing to own up to! I've not been on the Courtfield road, I tell you! And I've not seen Wharton while I was out on the motor-bike!"

"But your cap—"

"Some other motor-cyclist must have been wearing it!"

"What rot!"

It was obvious that the juniors placed no faith in Dennis Carr's theory.

"I've not worn my cap all day," said Dennis. "It disappeared from my study during the night. When I started out for a spin on Coker's motor-bike I had no cap on. Coker will bear me out."

"The cap was probably tucked in your pocket," said Squiff scornfully.

"And you put it on directly you were out of sight of the school!" added Peter Todd.

"Look here—"

But the juniors were not disposed to listen to Dennis Carr's expostulations any longer.

"It's not a scrap of use your keeping up this denial!" said Bob Cherry. "Take off your coat!"

"Why should I?"

"Because I'm going to lick you, of course!"

"And if you refuse to fight," said Nugent, "we'll march you away to the Head's study."

"Oh, I'll fight!" said Dennis, in a blaze of anger. "I'll fight the whole lot of you! I'll make you feel sorry that you ever brought this caddish accusation against me! Come

on, you cowards! I'll take you on one at a time, or all together!"

Vernon-Smith laughed unpleasantly.

"By the time Bob Cherry's finished with you you won't feel like taking on anybody—not even a fag in the Second!" he said.

Dennis Carr whipped off his coat, and the fight would have started there and then had not Harry Wharton intervened.

"You can't scrap here," said the captain of the Remove. "The Head can see from his window."

"Let's go behind the chapel," said Squiff.

And the group of juniors moved away.

"See that Carr doesn't bolt," said Wharton. But the warning was superfluous. Dennis had no intention of bolting. His blood was up, and he meant to fight tooth and nail against his accusers, starting with Bob Cherry.

This was the second scrap which Dennis had had on his hands within the past twenty-four hours.

In the Remove dormitory overnight Harry Wharton had licked him. But Bob Cherry would find him a much tougher proposition.

For Dennis was roused as he had never been roused before. Fierce anger surged in his breast. He would show Bob Cherry, and Bob Cherry's chums, what he could do when he was in real fighting mood.

Behind the chapel, away from the intruding eyes of masters or prefects, the juniors formed a ring.

Dennis Carr removed his shirt as well as his coat, and only a thin vest remained to protect him against his opponent's blows.

As he stood there, with arms bared and with jaw firmly set, he looked a magnificent type of British boyhood. But his magnificence was not appreciated by the onlookers, who regarded him as the biggest cad who had ever disgraced the Greyfriars Remove.

For a moment Dennis Carr and Bob Cherry stood face to face in fighting attitudes. And then Harry Wharton rapped out a terse command.

"Pile in!"

Dennis Carr darted a quick glance round the human ring. He saw that everybody was glaring at him. There were none who took his part. And the familiar face of Mark Linley was absent. Dennis had to fight his battle alone, in every sense of the word!

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### The Fight—and the Sequel.

**B**OB CHERRY was a doughty fighting man—the best in the Remove—and it was generally considered that he would put Dennis Carr on his back inside a couple of minutes.

But the onlookers had quite a shock when the fight started.

For it was Dennis Carr, and not Bob Cherry, who was the chief aggressor.

Dennis was fighting with almost maniacal fury; but, although he was in a towering passion, he kept strictly within the rules. No unfair tactics were employed.

It was Dennis who struck the first blow—a swinging right, which Bob Cherry only partly parried.

Had Bob received the full force of that blow he would have gone down for the count. As it was, he retreated a couple of paces, and put himself on the defensive.

"Buck up, Bob!" exclaimed Frank Nugent anxiously.

"No need to get alarmed," said Vernon-Smith. "Carr will never keep that up for long. He'll jolly soon fight himself to a standstill at that rate!"

All the same, it was not pleasant to see Bob Cherry, usually such a sturdy smiter, on the defensive.

Bob was biding his time. He believed—as Vernon-Smith believed—that Dennis Carr would speedily exhaust himself.

But the minutes passed, and Dennis seemed inexhaustible. He was attacking as fiercely as ever, and it was fortunate that Bob Cherry was quick on his feet, or he would never have withstood that hurricane onslaught.

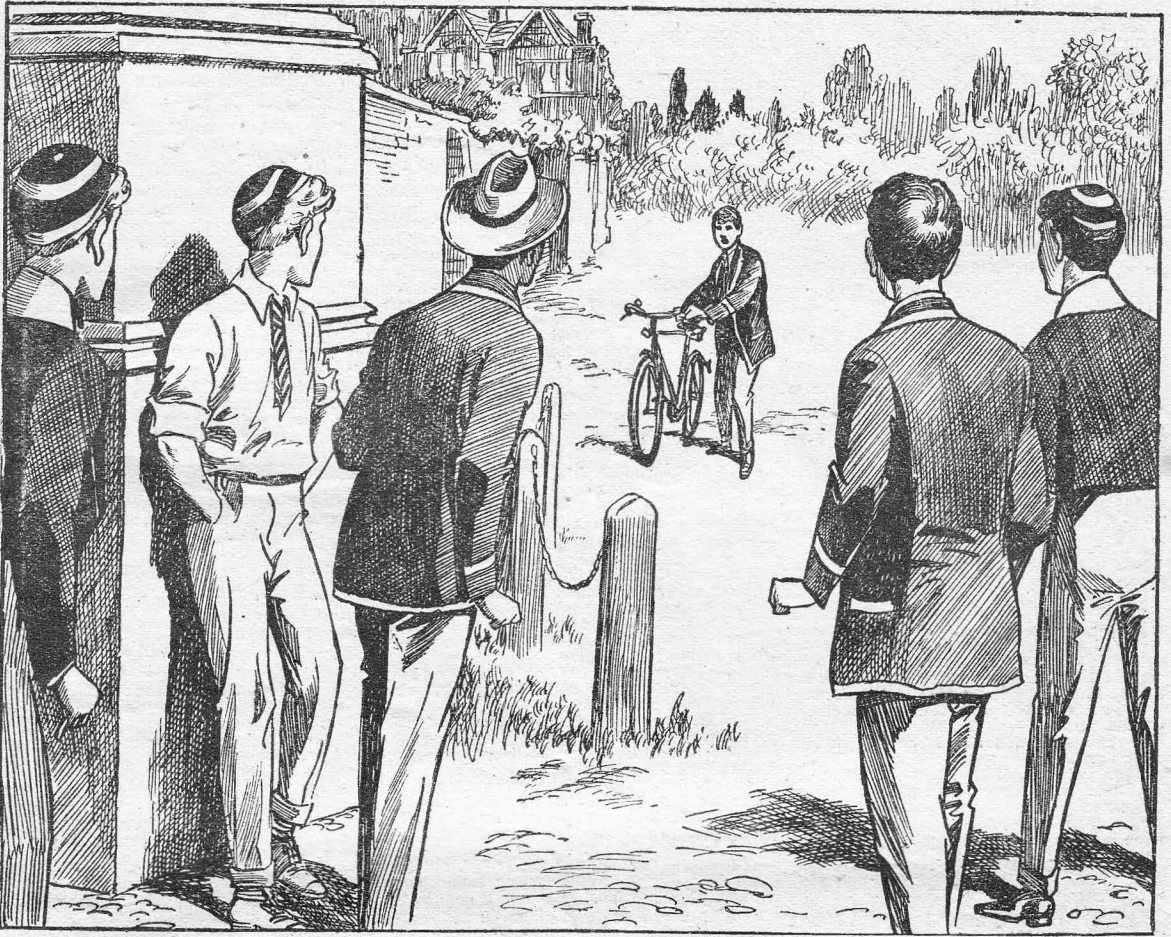
At the end of three minutes, when Dennis still attacked and Bob Cherry still defended, Harry Wharton called "Time!"

Dennis fought on. He meant to give his opponent no rest.

"We can do without the intervals!" he panted.

And Bob Cherry had no alternative but to carry on, for Dennis was attacking hotly.

So far Bob had not landed a single blow,



"Looks as if Harry has had a smash up on the road," said Johnny Bull. With growing impatience the juniors waited for Harry Wharton to arrive. When he did, his pale face and gleaming eyes showed plainly that there was something wrong. (See page 4.)

and his chums urged him to abandon his defensive tactics and to "go in and win."

Bob waited until he judged that his opponent was tiring. Then he suddenly rushed in, hitting out right and left.

But Dennis Carr was not "whacked" yet. He had expended heaps of energy, but he seemed to have heaps more in reserve.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!  
It was hammer-and-tongs now—a ding-dong struggle, in which no quarter was asked or given.

Bob Cherry was physically the stronger of the two, but fury seemed to lend zest to Dennis Carr's blows.

To the surprise of the spectators, Dennis had had much the better of the argument so far. Indeed, he appeared to be quite capable of knocking out his opponent.

The greatest anxiety was now manifested by Bob Cherry's supporters. Even Vernon-Smith looked concerned.  
"Carr's a hopeless outsider, but I must say I've never seen him show up better!" was Squiff's comment.

"He won't win—he can't win!" said Johnny Bull breathlessly. "Buck up, Bob! Let him have it hot and strong!"

Bob Cherry's face was a picture. One of his eyes was closed, and his lip was bleeding. His curly hair straggled and strayed over his forehead.

But he was gradually levelling things up. He sent in a smashing blow with his right which Dennis Carr failed to guard, and he followed up with a terrific uppercut, which bowled Dennis over in the grass like a skittle.

"Bravo!"  
"Carr's licked!"  
"And serve him jolly well right!"

But the onlookers were too premature. Dennis Carr was far from being licked yet. He allowed Wharton to count as far as eight, and then he bounded to his feet, seemingly as active and as agile as ever.

And now it was Bob Cherry's turn to be "grassed."

After feinting with his right, Dennis Carr shot out his left with startling suddenness. The blow took Bob Cherry full in the chest, and knocked him off his feet.

"Oh, crumbs!"  
"Bob's down!"  
"But he's not licked!" said Nugent wildly.

"Don't give in, Bob!"  
"Up, man—up!" panted Johnny Bull.

With a great effort Bob Cherry struggled to his feet. Out of his one sound eye he saw his opponent bearing down upon him, and he skipped promptly to one side.

Dennis Carr's fists sawed the air, and he overbalanced and pitched forward on his face in the grass.

But he was up again in a twinkling, and the fight raged as fiercely as ever.

It was doubtful if such a gruelling scrap had ever been witnessed on that historic stretch of green behind the chapel.

Slowly, but surely, Dennis Carr's attack was worn down.

Dennis was fighting a losing battle now, and he knew it. He was already defeated in everything but spirit. By sheer will-power he stuck to his task, and even his foes were moved to admiration at the sight. If they admired Dennis for nothing else, they admired him for his doggedness—for his resolute refusal to accept defeat.

But it was only a matter of time. Everybody knew that. And the audience waited for the end, knowing that when it came it would be in Bob Cherry's favour.

Dennis Carr's head was in a whirl. He was dizzy and spent—powerless to ward off Bob Cherry's relentless blows.

It was Bob who held the upper hand now, and only by a miracle could Dennis succeed in turning the tables.

Crash!  
Dennis was down again. A well-timed blow to the jaw had put him out of action. But

only temporarily. He scrambled to his feet whilst Wharton was counting.

"The mad fool!" muttered Vernon-Smith. "He's only prolonging the agony! Why doesn't he chuck it? He's whacked to the wide!"

Even as the Bounder spoke Dennis Carr went down for the third time, and on this occasion Bob Cherry had mustered every ounce of strength for a knock-out blow.

Dennis lay perfectly motionless in the grass, with his white face upturned to the sky. And once again Harry Wharton began to count.

"One—two—three—"

There was no movement on the part of the fallen junior.

"Three—four—five—"  
"He's shot his bolt!" muttered Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"  
"Six—seven—"

continued Wharton.  
Dennis Carr sat up in the grass. He passed his hand dazedly across his forehead, upon which a large bruise was forming.

"Eight," counted Wharton—"nine—"  
Dennis tottered to his feet. His head seemed to be on fire. He was totally unfit for a renewal of the combat.

Despite the hostility which he felt towards his opponent Bob Cherry could not bring himself to administer another blow.

"You're done, Carr!" he panted. "Better give in."

"I'm not licked yet!" muttered Dennis. And he lurched towards his opponent with upraised fists.

"You'll have to put him down again, Bob," said Harry Wharton.

Bob Cherry nodded. And he was about to strike what would have proved the finishing blow when a ringing voice exclaimed:

"Stop!"  
Instinctively Bob Cherry dropped his hands to his sides, and looked around him.

It was Mark Linley who had arrived so dramatically upon the scene. His clothing was rumpled and torn, his collar and tie were streaming loose, and his face bore the marks of recent combat.

"Marky!" ejaculated Bob Cherry in surprise. "What the thump—"

"Why were you fighting with Carr? Was it in connection with the motor-bike incident?" demanded the Lancashire lad breathlessly.

"Yes."

"Then allow me to tell you," said Mark Linley, going forward to support his chum, "that Carr is innocent!"

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

cleared.

"INNOCENT!"

"Impossible!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared blankly at Mark Linley.

"Carr is innocent," repeated the Lancashire lad. "It wasn't he who pushed Wharton off his bike!"

"Then who the dickens was it?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove incredulously.

"Ponsonby!"

"What!"

"Ponsonby of Highcliffe!"

Had Mark Linley exploded a bombshell on that patch of greensward behind the chapel the effect could not have been more startling.

Bob Cherry was the first to find his voice. "How on earth did you find that out, Marky?" he exclaimed.

"I saw the whole thing happen," was the reply. "I went over to Courtfield to fetch my cricket-bat, and on my way back I saw Wharton biking ahead of me. He was a good way in front, and I was wondering whether I should be able to catch him up, when I saw a motor-cyclist pass him and knock him off his machine. So I jumped off my own bike and waited for the beastly cad to come up."

"And you collared him?" gasped Nugent.

"I did!" said Mark Linley grimly. "And it proved to be Ponsonby."

"But how did you manage to catch Pon, when he was on a motor-bike?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith.

"Just as he was in the act of passing me one of his tyres burst—"

"Oh!"

"And the rest was easy. I dragged him off the saddle, and we had a terrific scrap in the roadway."

"And you knocked Ponsonby out?" said Wharton.

"Yes. And then I sat on his chest, and flatly refused to budge until he'd confessed everything. He wouldn't say a word for a long time, but at last I wrung the truth out of him. It appears he was up against Carr because Dennis licked him the other day, and he plotted to get his own back. It was Ponsonby who made off with your togs, Wharton, when you were bathing—"

"My hat!"

"And he left Carr's handkerchief on the shore, knowing that you would find it and suspect Dennis of having bagged your things."

"The cad!"

"And then he wrapped the togs up in a parcel, which he bribed Gosling to put in Carr's locker."

"Oh!"

"Of course, Gossy thought it was just a harmless jape, and he carried it through for half-a-crown, and promised to keep his mouth shut. Consequently, when the handkerchief and the parcel were found you fellows jumped to the conclusion that it was Carr who had played that trick on Wharton."

"And we were wrong!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Well, I'm jiggered!"

"Carr, old chap," said Frank Nugent remorsefully, "we apologise—"

"One moment!" Mark Linley's voice rang out sternly. "You've got much more than that to apologise for. This attack on Wharton was, as I've already said, not Carr's doing, but Ponsonby's. And I'll tell you how he wangled it. He broke into the school during the night, and took Carr's cap. And he deliberately dropped the cap in the road when he knocked Wharton off his bike."

"But how did he know that I should be passing along the road at that time?" asked Wharton.

"And how did he know that Carr would be out on a motor-bike?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith.

"I don't know," said Mark Linley. "He must have had inside information. It would be fairly easy for him to find out from one

of the fellows here that Wharton intended to go over to Courtfield, and that Carr had borrowed Coker's motor-bike. He could have made inquiries on the telephone, and somebody, not knowing that he wanted the information for any harmful purpose, told him of Wharton's and Carr's movements."

"That's so," said Peter Todd. "It would be quite simple for a cunning cad like Ponsonby to find out what was going on, and lay his plans accordingly."

Harry Wharton & Co. were dumbfounded at Mark Linley's explanation. But they knew that it was the correct one.

It was Ponsonby who had deprived Wharton of his clothes and caused him to be late for lessons. It was Ponsonby who had knocked Wharton off his bicycle in Courtfield Lane.

And it was Dennis Carr—an innocent fellow—who had been blamed for both these outrages.

The juniors saw now that they had jumped to a too hasty conclusion.

Instead of accepting Dennis Carr's word of honour they had doubted him. They had believed him to be a mean and despicable cad. Only Mark Linley had thought otherwise. And Mark had proved to be right, and the rest wrong.

Bob Cherry was at Dennis' side in an instant.

"Kick me, Carr!" he urged. "I've been lashing you with my fists and with my tongue, and all the time you were innocent! Kick me, for goodness' sake—as hard as you like!"

Dennis smiled. He could afford to smile now—now that his name had been cleared, now that he was vindicated in the eyes of his schoolfellows.

"The footer season's finished," he said. "Besides, I don't feel as if I've got a kick left in me!"

"We were a set of cads not to have accepted your word of honour, Carr," said Harry Wharton contritely.

"Well, you were certainly a set of silly duffers," said Dennis candidly. "You might have known me better. I'm not a plaster saint, by any means, but I'm not the sort of fellow to go about pinching another chap's togs and knocking him off his bike."

"I—I thought you were ratty at having been dropped from the eleven," said the captain of the Remove.

"I was," assented Dennis. "But a fellow can be ratty without resorting to low-down tricks of that kind."

"Will you ever forgive us, Carr?" asked Johnny Bull.

"No, not if you keep harping on the subject," said Dennis, laughing. "Give it a rest, and let's jaw about something more pleasant. Cricket, for instance."

"Right!" said Wharton. "As I'm unable to turn out this afternoon I'm going to ask you to take my place."

"That's jolly decent of you!" said Dennis. "But this is rather sudden, isn't it, after dropping me from the team?"

Wharton flushed.

"I made a mistake in dropping you," he admitted. "You were below form the other day, and I hadn't the sense to see that you'd soon get back into your stride again. I've no doubt you'll show your true form this afternoon."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

Dennis ruefully caressed his nose, which had assumed a bulbous appearance, having come into violent contact with Cherry's fist. "I don't feel much like cricket at the moment," he said.

"Come and have your chivvy sponged," said Vernon-Smith, "and you'll feel tons better."

There were two other fellows who needed ministrations. One was Bob Cherry, and the other was Mark Linley, both of whom bore traces of their recent fights.

The news that Dennis Carr was innocent spread swiftly through the Remove, and quite a queue lined up outside the bath-room in which Dennis was having his face sponged.

When Dennis emerged he was greeted by a chorus of apology.

"Carr, dear boy," said Lord Mauleverer, "we're very sorry for doubtin' you—"

"Awfully, awfully sorry!" said Jimmy Vivian.

"And we want you to knock all our silly heads together!" chimed in Bolsover major.

"I will," said Dennis, "if you don't stop talking rot! You couldn't be blamed for thinking as you did. The evidence looked so jolly black against me. Ponsonby's a cunning cad, and if it hadn't been for Marky—"

Dennis paused. His gratitude towards the loyal Lancashire lad was so immense that he could not find words to express it.

"Talking of Ponsonby," said Bob Cherry,

"I vote we postpone the match for an hour, and go over to Highcliffe and pulverise the rotter!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll take cricket-stumps over," said Bolsover major, "and give him half a dozen apiece!"

"That's the idea!"

"No need to do that," interposed Mark Linley.

"Why not?"

"Ponsonby's already going through the mill. After I'd knocked him out, Courtenay and the Caterpillar came up. I told them what Pon had done, and they marched him back to Highcliffe, with the intention of making him run the gauntlet."

"Oh, good!" said Bob Cherry.

"It will be a long time before Ponsonby plays any more shady tricks of this sort!" said Nugent.

"Yes, rather!"

"Whilst the Highcliffe fellows are putting it across Pon," said Bob Cherry, "we'll adjourn to the cricket-field, and put it across Trumper & Co."

"Hear, hear!"

Dennis Carr felt much more fresh and fit now, and it was proof of his fitness that he ascended the stairs three at a time with the intention of changing into his flannels.

And when Dennis arrived on the cricket-ground ten minutes later, he was greeted by a ringing cheer.

His name had been cleared. His honour had been vindicated. He was restored to his old position in the Remove, and all the suffering and persecution which he had undergone during the past few days was over now—thanks to Mark Linley!

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

His True Form.

"WE arrived half an hour ago, and not a single, solitary soul has come to greet us!"

That was Dick Trumper's lament as the Remove eleven arrived.

"Sorry, old top!" said Bob Cherry. "But we were otherwise engaged!"

"Looks like it," said Grahame. "What have you been doing to your chivvy?"

"Better ask Carr."

"Why, his is worse than yours."

"There's been trouble in the family," said Dennis. "But it's all serene now, and we're ready to lick you into a cocked hat!"

"Rats!" said Dick Trumper. "Hallo, Wharton! Why aren't you in flannels?"

"I'm not playing," said Wharton briefly. "Gammy wrist. Bob Cherry's acting as skipper in my place."

Trumper grinned. He fondly imagined that with Wharton absent from the Remove team the Courtfielders would have an easy passage to victory. But he was destined to be disappointed!

Bob Cherry won the toss.

"We'll bat first," he said. "I'll put you in near the end, Carr, and that will give you a chance to rest."

"Good!" said Dennis.

And he made himself comfortable on one of the seats in front of the pavilion.

His study-mates, anxious to make amends for having doubted him, bustled about to make him even more comfortable.

Lord Mauleverer, who had seldom been known to make himself useful, hurried away to the study, and reappeared shortly afterwards with a pile of cushions.

"Rest your head on these, old scout!" he said.

"An' shift these before they melt away!" added Jimmy Vivian, arriving with a couple of huge strawberry ices.

"You silly duffers!" protested Dennis. "I shall never be able to play cricket if I'm moll-coddled like this!"

"My dear fellow," said Lord Mauleverer, "by the time it comes to your innin's you'll be like a giant refreshed!"

And so Dennis, propped up on the cushions, and sampling the strawberry ices, watched the opening of the game.

Vernon-Smith and Frank Nugent started for Greyfriars to the bowling of Dick Trumper and Solfy Lazarus.

It was good bowling, but the batsmen treated it with scant respect.

Vernon-Smith scored three boundaries off his first over; but he was over-ambitious. He ran out to meet one of Trumper's slow leg-breaks, but he missed the ball completely, and was smartly stumped by the Courtfield wicket-keeper.

And then came a startling collapse.

(Continued on page 10.)

YOU CAN START READING THIS GRAND CINEMA SERIAL TO-DAY.



### THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Dick Tulliver, to escape being apprenticed to Wibbleswick & Co., a firm of drapers, by his uncle, makes his way to the country town of Dorminster. There he comes across the Western Super-Film Company, who are located in a ruined manor house, known as Wildfell Grange, which is reputed to be haunted. By a piece of luck, Dick is able to be of service to Mr. Halbut, the producer. Through the good offices of a friend named Harry Trent, who is working for the company, Dick is taken on in place of Archie Deen, the star actor, who has mysteriously disappeared. He is introduced to an actor-friend of Trent's named Biglow. Later, Dick hears the misfortune to make a dangerous enemy of a hunchback dwarf, named Bernard Grimshaw. One day Dick finds a secret passage leading from Grimshaw's room to the lake in the grounds. He has reasons to suspect the dwarf of frequently using it. The two chums are out investigating another "mystery," when they are startled by the sound of terrible yells from the lower floor.

(Now read on.)

### A Threatened Strike.

WHAT was this extraordinary cry? It was evidently a cry of extreme anguish, and proceeded from the floor below.

Dick Tulliver looked at Harry Trent, Harry looked at Dick, and Biglow looked at both of them. He had got into the habit lately of glancing at these two gentlemen for guidance in the hour of peril.

"I thought there'd be some sort of disturbance to-night," muttered Harry, "and I expected it would be in this room. We'd better go and see who the latest victim is." "Y-y-you mean victims!" cut in Biglow, with chattering teeth. "There seems to be a dozen of them squawking!"

When they got to the floor below the noise grew louder, and they quickly traced the sound as coming from the room shared by Bobbin and Waddell. On the landing was gathered a motley collection of the company, including the dwarf and Martin, the photographer. They were all in various stages of undress, and were talking excitedly together in low whispers. Now and then they looked at the comedians' door, behind which the yells were proceeding with redoubled vigour, but no one so far seemed to have mustered up sufficient courage to enter.

Just then Mr. Halbut appeared. He was swathed to the eyebrows in rugs and blankets, with a red tam-o'-shanter cocked rakishly over one eye. He held a candle in one hand and a poker in the other. To give him credit, he did not appear to share in the general panic.

"Now, then, what is it this time?" he demanded.

"We don't know!" grunted the dwarf. "Do you mean to say you haven't been in to see?"

A low murmur went round, but no one moved an inch.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 77.

Dick and Harry Trent advanced on the door and turned the handle. It was locked.

"Locked!" echoed Mr. Halbut. He darted at the door, and vigorously plied his poker on the panels. The yells within grew louder in consequence, and the clamour became so deafening that the manager was forced to desist.

"Can't someone get a battering-ram?" he cried. "Get a move on! Please do get a move on! What do you mean by standing there like a lot of stuffed pigs?"

"Mr. Halbut," said the dwarf, stepping forward, "the company have decided that they cannot sleep another night in this house! It isn't right that we should be subjected to these continual terrors! Unless you promise to arrange sleeping quarters for us elsewhere, we wash our hands of the whole affair!"

"And it's high time we were able to wash our hands!" chimed in Mrs. Scotton, the wardrobe mistress. "You can't do it properly in this filthy, dirty place! I'd just as soon live in a pigsty!"

"It's like this, boss," cut in another voice, "Jack's as good as his master in these days, and, though the place may suit you, it don't suit us, so it's a case of quitting! Got me?"

It was the man named Quarry who gave vent to these sentiments—he whom, it will be remembered, figured with the lasso in the opening episode of Dick's association with the company. Dick had not met him since that afternoon, and his sudden appearance left him wondering where he had been all this time.

Mr. Halbut supplied the answer in his next remark.

"You haven't much cause to grumble, Quarry," he snapped, "considering you've spent the last fortnight in a joy-ride up and down the country at the company's expense!"

"See here," retorted Quarry, "I'm not speaking for myself, but for others! You've gotter find us somewhere else to sleep!"

"And your unfortunate comrades in there," asked Mr. Halbut, pointing to the room—"what of them? Will you desert them, and leave them weltering in their—"

"Gore—" Mr. Halbut was about to add, when suddenly there was a sound of the key turning in the lock, the door swung open, and out staggered Bobbin and Waddell.

They collapsed limply against the wall.

For some time nothing could be got out of them—that is to say, nothing coherent. Presently, however, Bobbin recovered sufficiently to gasp that a dark figure had appeared by his bedside. Having got this piece of information out, he relapsed once more into a state of semi-consciousness. Waddell then took up the tale. He had been awakened by Bobbin's cries of terror, and had observed the spectre vanishing into space. He had only caught a fleeting glance, but it was sufficient to take in such details as a white shroud.

"No, Waddell," whispered Bobbin. "The figure was as black as ink."

"I assure you, Bobbin, it was quite white. At any rate, the figure I saw was white."

"There may have been two of 'em," said Bobbin.

"If you ask my opinion, I believe the place

is swarming with the brutes!" announced Waddell.

"Yes, yes," interrupted Mr. Halbut. "But who locked your door? Did the spectre—or spectres, whichever it is—do that?"

"No-o!" returned Bobbin. "I locked the door before we went to bed, and—"

"He couldn't remember where he put the key," added Waddell.

"It was in my trousers-pocket all the time."

"You see, he'd put his trousers between the mattress," explained Waddell. "In the excitement we forgot that, and, as the trousers couldn't be found—"

"I'd like to knock your heads together," cried the much-harassed manager, "alarming us all like this! Most probably you dreamt the whole affair! Ladies and gentlemen, I propose we all get back to bed! To-morrow morning—"

"No, no!" cried the majority of the company. "We won't sleep here any more! Find us other quarters!"

"But, my dear people," pleaded Mr. Halbut, "do be reasonable! How can I find you other quarters at two o'clock in the morning? You must see how impossible it is!"

At first the company refused to see any such thing, especially as Bobbin and Waddell started to give further and more gruesome details of their experience. But at length the disadvantages of a moonlight flight were gradually realised. They eventually agreed to return to their beds, on the distinct understanding that Mr. Halbut would start off at earliest dawn to get fresh billets.

"Trent and young Tulliver—oh, and you, too, Biglow, please step up to my room!" said Mr. Halbut in an agitated whisper, as the others moved off. "You three, at any rate, seem to keep your heads. I'd like to have a word with you."

They trooped into the manager's room.

"This is the last straw!" began Mr. Halbut.

"I ask you, Trent, how am I to find accommodation for over fifty people at a moment's notice?" Without giving Harry Trent time to reply, he continued: "And, even if I could, what will it cost? Where's the money coming from, that's what I want to know? Colonel Allingham will never sanction the extra expense!"

"But if the company go on strike, he'll have to!" said Harry.

Mr. Halbut suddenly went off at a tangent.

"I believe Bobbin and Waddell did see a ghost!" he muttered. "There's something queer about this house—something decidedly queer. I own myself that I've fancied at times— Oh, well, perhaps it was only a fancy! Hope so, at any rate. Grimshaw has had experiences, too. Anyway, things have come to a crisis. I must get in touch with Colonel Allingham at once—at once!" he repeated.

"Where is Colonel Allingham to be found?" asked Trent.

"At Nodstead, twenty miles from here. Grandcourt Lodge. It's on the main road to London. I dare say you could motor there in an hour."

"No possibility of ringing him up?" asked Biglow.

"Not at this hour—" Mr. Halibut paused. "I don't like to leave the place myself," he went on, "otherwise I'd motor over right away."

"If you like, Tulliver and I will run over in the car?" suggested Harry.

"My dear fellow, I'd be tremendously obliged if you would!" cried Mr. Halibut eagerly. "Tell the colonel exactly what has happened— Wait! It would be better if I wrote a note. The colonel's a bit peppery at the best of times, and he might read when he wouldn't be inclined to listen, especially at this hour of the night. You chaps run off and get the car out. By the time you've done that I'll have the letter ready, and Biglow will bring it to you."

So Dick and Harry proceeded downstairs, went out to the temporary garage set up in one of the old stables, and ran the car out in front of the main entrance.

"Do you think we ought to have told Mr. Halibut about that secret passage?" said Dick.

"It was on the tip of my tongue," answered Harry. "Then I thought that the old chap has enough troubles without adding to them. No, Dick; it will be better to keep it to ourselves at present. Oh, here comes Biglow!"

Biglow was yawning all over his face. "Here's the letter," he said. "Hope you have a pleasant ride. I'm going to shake down in old Halibut's room. I don't fancy being alone, and I guess he doesn't, either."

Dick and Harry got into the car. "Don't forget we've left the lantern in Halibut's old room," Harry reminded Biglow. "You'd better collar it as soon as possible, or it may lead to awkward questions if anyone finds it."

"I'll go and get it at once," returned Biglow promptly—so promptly that Dick and Harry knew that he wouldn't do anything of the kind.

They were right. "Go up there alone," muttered Biglow. "Not likely! I'll fetch it in the morning. That'll do just as well."

#### Rousing up the Colonel.

**I**N the meanwhile, Dick and Harry Trent were gliding along the road at a good speed. There was naturally no traffic about at this hour, so there was nothing to impede their progress.

"Colonel Allingham's the man who's put the money into the concern," Harry told Dick. "I've never met him, but from all accounts he's a bit of a tartar. I bet he'll kick up a shindy over the company wanting to change their sleeping quarters."

The milestones flew by, and they passed little hamlets and villages, up hill and down dale, and just as the distant clock chimed the hour of three, they drove into the outskirts of Nodstead.

The answer of a sleepy constable elicited the whereabouts of Grandcourt Lodge, and in a few moments they pulled up outside the main entrance to the grounds which surrounded the colonel's house.

The house itself lay some distance back from the road. They could just make out its chimneys and gabled roofs peeping out amongst the trees.

"I'll wait here in the car while you deliver the letter," said Harry. "Tell the colonel that the car is here if he wants to come over to Wildfell Grange at once."

Dick hopped out, and, opening the swing gate, proceeded up the carriage drive. He soon got a clear view of the house, and saw it was a spacious old place with many gables, enormous chimney stacks, and a noble porch. Half the building was covered with ivy, and it looked very picturesque in the moonlight.

Dick noticed that there were three electric bell nobs, besides the knocker, and so as to make sure of rousing up someone, he rang all the bells in addition to vigorously plying the knocker.

For some little while this appeared to have no effect. He pressed the nobs again, and heard the electric bells faintly ringing inside. It was funny no one came. There was not even a window raised or a glimmer of light appearing anywhere.

Dick caught hold of the knocker once more, and was about to bring it down with a thunderous crash, when he heard a faint rustle among the clumps of bushes that grew at one side of the house. It was as if some large animal was scrapping about in them.

He looked round and fancied he saw the vague outline of three shadowy forms fit in and out of the trees, and disappear in the

direction of the swing gates. However, for the minute he dismissed the incident from his mind, for at that moment there was the sound of bolts being withdrawn, and the front door opened a couple of inches.

"Who's there?" breathed a voice. There was alarm expressed in every note. Faintly from the interior there came a curious muffled sound, and doors could be heard opening and shutting.

Dick put all this down to the effect of his unexpected visit. Doubtless the household thought it was an alarm of fire, or something of that sort.

"I've brought an urgent letter for Colonel Allingham," he explained. "It's from Mr. Halibut, of the Western Super-Film Company. I want an answer at once."

"I'll see if the colonel is awake," replied the person from the other side of the door in agitated tones. "All right, sir; I'm coming—coming at once, sir!" This was in

"Nonsense. Whipples!" snorted the colonel. "A boy could hardly get through there."

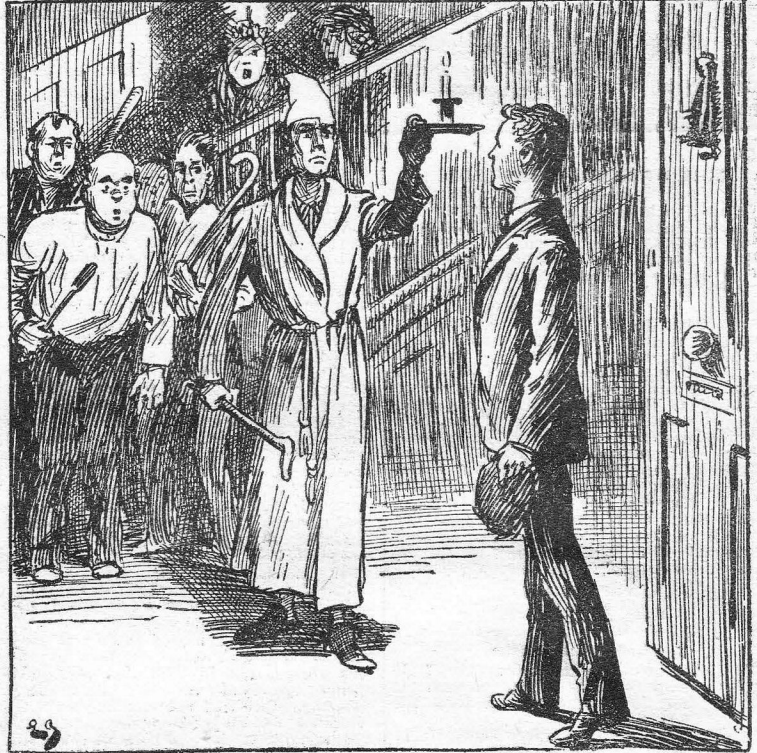
He pushed Dick on one side, and peered out into the grounds.

"A minute earlier and I should have caught them red-handed," he muttered. He suddenly glared at Dick. "What's this about you bringing a letter?" he asked. "A nice time to knock people up. Scandalous, sir! Who's the letter from? Wait a minute, I've got it." He thrust a hand into one of the pockets of his dressing-gown. "No, I haven't. Whipples, what did I do with that letter? I distinctly remember you giving it to me. Ah, here it is!"

The colonel jerked it out of the envelope, and rapidly scanned the contents.

"Absurd!" he burst out when he had read it. "Tell Mr. Halibut that I forbid the company to leave the Grange. You hear me! I refuse to advance a single penny—"

At that moment the group by the staircase



There arose a clatter of footsteps and the murmur of voices, and the front door flew open, revealing to Dick's astonished eyes a group of half a dozen people clustered round the end of the staircase. In the foreground was a thin, military looking gentleman in a long dressing-gown. Dick guessed this was Colonel Allingham. (See this page.)

reply to a loud request from a voice upstairs for someone of the name of Whipples. "Give me the letter!"

Dick thrust the letter through the opening. A hand grabbed it, and immediately the front door closed with a bang.

Five minutes went by.

Then arose the clatter of footsteps and the murmur of voices, and the front door once more opened, only this time it opened to its fullest extent. It disclosed to Dick's astonished eyes a group of half a dozen people clustered round the end of the staircase. One or two female heads were poking over the banisters. In the foreground was a thin, middle-aged, military-looking gentleman in a long dressing-gown, a tall nightcap on his head, a candle in one hand, and a heavy hunting-crop in the other. Dick guessed this was Colonel Allingham.

He eyed Dick fiercely.

"Have you seen anything of the scoundrels?" he rapped out.

"No, sir," replied Dick, not having the faintest notion to whom the Colonel referred.

"They got in by the scullery window," broke out a voice from the group at the end of the stairs.

was violently agitated, and a small boy burst his way through, and darted up to the colonel.

"They've collared the plate, sir! Collared the whole blessed lot!" he shouted.

Colonel Allingham gasped at this startling information. In a second, however, he recovered himself. Wellington on the field of Waterloo could not have been calmer, or issued his orders with greater precision.

"Let two parties be formed," he said. "I, at the head of one will search the grounds in the front. Whipples, at the head of the other, will proceed to the orchard at the back. Meanwhile, the police must be informed. Here, you"—turning to Dick—"run off to the police-station at once!"

"There's a friend of mine in a motor outside," replied Dick. "He may have seen something of these men. Now I come to think of it, I did catch sight of some figures while I was knocking at the door."

"And you've been here all this time and never mentioned this important piece of evidence!" thundered the colonel.

"I'm sorry," said Dick. "But it's only this last minute or so that I've realised you had burglars here. You never told me so. All I



was concerned about was that letter I brought you."

The colonel grunted something of a not very complimentary nature, but having at that moment caught sight of himself in the glass of the hall-stand, he hastily retired upstairs, bidding everybody "stand by" till he had donned more suitable clothes for the work in hand.

Dick quickly realised that Colonel Allingham was not in a mood to discuss anything but the burgling of his house, and therefore he made hasty tracks back to the road to acquaint Harry with what had happened.

He darted down the carriage-drive and through the swing gates. He pulled up with a jerk.

There was not a single sign of the car to be seen anywhere!

**Missing!**

**D**ICK looked to the right and looked to the left. The road extended for nearly a mile in either direction in a perfectly straight line. Not a sign of the car at all!

"Where—where can Harry have driven it to?" muttered Dick, utterly at a loss to think of an explanation. He could only stare about him in bewilderment.

But all at once his brain began to work. In a flash it occurred to him that perhaps the men who had been burgling Grandcourt Lodge were at the bottom of the mystery. It was just possible that, seeing the car there, they had suddenly closed in on Harry Trent, overpowered him, and, leaping on board, had driven off.

Unfortunately the road was hard, and would show very little impression of the tyres. Even if this had not been so, it was too dark for him to see any tracks. He struck a match and feverishly searched the road. Which way had they gone? Probably straight on—that is, towards the left, in the direction he and Harry had been going when they pulled up. It was unlikely that they would take the trouble to turn round.

Dick was in the midst of these investigations when Colonel Allingham and three of his retainers came on the scene.

"Hallo!" boomed the colonel. "I thought you said you had a car outside. I see no car!"

"It's gone," said Dick shortly.

"Gone!" echoed Colonel Allingham.

"Where has it gone to?"

Dick shrugged his shoulders.

"If I only knew!" he muttered, half beside himself with anxiety concerning the fate of his friend. He struck more matches in his endeavours to elucidate the problem as to which direction the car had taken.

The colonel watched him for a moment, and then, with a grunt, ordered his party to march off. He didn't care twopence about the disappearance of the car. All he cared about was the disappearance of his plate. It would have been better for him if he had shown a little more curiosity. He would have heard then Dick's theory as to the burglars having made off with it, and consequently would have been saved much fruitless searching.

Dick had half a mind to run after him and tell him, but on second thoughts he decided he wouldn't.

"Grumpy old beast!" he thought. "Let him find his property himself."

But in the meanwhile how to trace the car? It must be miles away by this time. And then he had to get back to the Grange. Oh, well, he reflected, Mr. Halbut would have to wait. The whereabouts of Harry Trent must come first.

"If I only had a bike!" groaned Dick.

However, he hadn't, and it would be hours before he could hire one, even if he found a shop that they took them out. No, it was a case of "shanks' pony."

Having made up his mind that the car had not turned round, Dick unhesitatingly "left turned" and plodded up the road. He was all right so long as there were no branch roads to puzzle him, but, of course, he couldn't hope there would be none of these.

For about a mile and a half it was fairly plain sailing—or, rather, walking. Then he saw a signpost ahead. To the left and right of this the road forked. Which road had the car taken?

He pulled up and tried to read the inscriptions on the arms. As far as he could see one place was twelve miles, and the other seven and a half.

While he was endeavouring to make up his mind whether he should choose the twelve-mile route or the one of seven and a half, his ears caught the sound of footsteps coming towards him.

Dick awaited the approach of the stranger with some eagerness.

Presently a long, lean, bent-backed patriarch with a white stubby chin came into view and hobbled towards Dick, followed by a dog as lean, as hungry-looking, and as grizzled as his master.

"Good-morning!" said Dick, on the strength of a thin streak of yellow in the east, which betokened the break of day.

"Mornin' young master!" returned the patriarch.

"I suppose a big grey motor hasn't passed you on your way here?" asked Dick.

The patriarch pondered a while.

"A big grey motor?" he repeated. "Noa, I can't say as I see'd one."

"Did you see a motor of any kind?" persisted Dick.

The patriarch looked at his dog thoughtfully.

"Did we see a motor, Snap?" he muttered. "Well, there certainly were a motor."

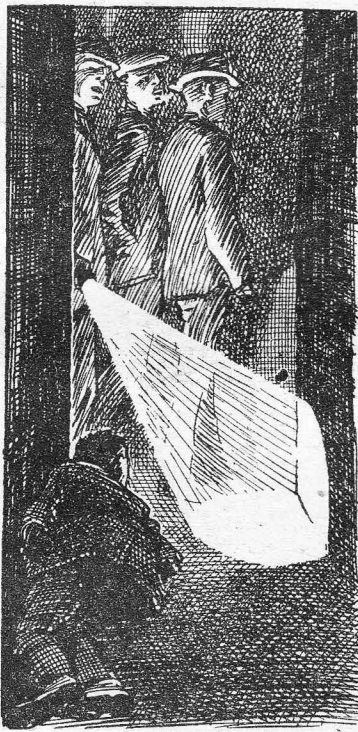
"Where?" cried Dick excitedly.

"It weren't going along," said the patriarch.

"I don't care what it was doing. I want to know where you saw it. Was it far from here?"

"Ay. Ward's farm would be nigh on three mile."

"Ward's farm!" repeated Dick. "You saw it at Ward's farm? Then this is the way to



Dick gave himself up for lost, as the rays of the electric torch darted hither and thither, but luckily the figures passed his hiding-place without the slightest notion that they were under observation (See page 10).

Ward's farm, of course. Thanks! I'll cut along there."

The information didn't amount to much, Dick reflected, as he meditated. Still it was better than nothing. He could not afford to neglect the slightest clue. The old chap was evidently not a very keen observer, and he probably wouldn't pay much attention to the colour of the motor he declared he had seen. It might very well be Mr. Halbut's car after all.

The patriarch had said three miles, but it was nearer four before Ward's farm was reached. A tumble-down-looking show it was, too. Indeed, Dick would not have known it was the place he was seeking if he had not chanced to meet a labourer going off to work in the fields.

"Yes, that be Ward's farm right enough," said the man, in answer to Dick's inquiry.

"Anyone live there?" asked Dick.

"Not a soul. No one ain't lived there for twenty years."

This didn't sound very hopeful, and more particularly so as there was no sign of a motor to be seen anywhere.

"I'm on the wrong track," thought Dick.

However, now he was here he thought he might as well have a look round. He reflected that if these men had gone off in the car they would not be able to hold on to it for long. At the first convenient opportunity they would have to dump it somewhere. It would be an incriminating piece of evidence. But how would they get rid of Harry Trent? Dick shuddered as various possibilities occurred to him.

He worked his way across the fields until he reached the back of the farm. There were various broken-down outhouses dotted about the place. A fence connected each one, but as this fence was only a fence in name, being full of gaps where the woodwork had rotted, Dick had no difficulty in getting through.

He came to a roughly-paved yard which ran up to the back entrance, and there, standing inside the ruins of the barn, was Mr. Halbut's car!

**A Risky Venture.**

**D**ICK'S first thought after seeing the car was to wonder if the men who had brought it here were still at the farm.

If so, they had probably spotted him entering the yard.

But, on the other hand, they might have gone off after depositing the motor in the barn. In that case, would they take Harry Trent with them? Dick thought it unlikely. What he knew of Harry Trent told him that his friend was not one to tamely submit to be carted off against his will. More likely they had shut him up in the farm—perhaps bound and gagged him—and left him there while they made good their escape.

All this flashed through Dick's brain as he crouched beside the motor.

From here he had a complete view of the back of the farm, and he anxiously peered up at the broken windows to see if there were any signs of people being about.

For some minutes he remained in this position.

The place certainly seemed deserted. Dare he venture to make a closer observation? The risks were tremendous; but then this inaction was terrible. Dick felt he must do something, be the consequences what they might.

He crept out for a couple of feet, keeping well under the shadow of the wall. Just at the side of the barn he noted a place that had evidently once been a stable. The doors were invitingly open; indeed, they hung so loosely on the hinges that they appeared to be on the point of falling. To reach this doorway he would have to cross the yard in full view of the windows of the farm. If anyone were watching he would be certain to be spotted.

With a certain amount of trepidation, Dick embarked on the attempt. How did he know he was not about to walk into an ambush?

On tiptoe he darted across the yard. The stable was deserted. Dick breathed a sigh of relief.

Then he made a discovery.

In the floor was a big trap-door similar to a cellar-flap in front of a public-house.

There was probably no mystery about this. The trap-door was simply an entrance to the cellars below the house.

Dick saw that the bolts which had formerly secured it had long since fallen away, and it would be quite easy to raise it. Before he did so he listened. Everything still remained perfectly quiet. He slowly lifted the trap-door, and a flight of brick steps were disclosed to view.

Down these he went, an earthy, mouldy smell saluting him.

Arriving at the bottom, he was confronted by a wide passage with recesses, doubtless used at one time for storing things. At the end of this passage was a massive oak door. Towards this Dick crept, but immediately halted on observing a faint gleam of light shining from the keyhole.

What had he run to earth?

Someone was behind that door—that was evident. Apart from the light, a slight sound of whispering reached his ears.

Dick cast about in his mind what would be the best thing to do. Suddenly the recesses occurred to him. He ought to be able to escape observation in one of these. If he lay at full length on the floor, he could peep round the corner and watch the door

with very little risk of being seen if anyone came out.

He chose the recess nearest the door. The minutes went by. The whispering had stopped now, but the light was still there. He never took his eyes off that light. He knew well enough that directly it shifted it would be the signal for action.

It may have been a quarter of an hour, or it may have been only ten minutes—Dick lost all sense of time—but all at once there was a grating sound, and the door swung back.

Dick saw three figures come forth, one bearing an electric-torch, which he flashed on the ground. Dick gave himself up for lost as the rays darted hither and thither; but luckily the wall behind which he lay was an effective screen, and the figures passed his hiding-place without the slightest notion they were under observation. He heard their footsteps echoing along the passage, one by one they mounted the flight of steps, the trapdoor was raised, and then it fell back in its place.

All was silent once more. Dick let a couple of minutes go by before he ventured forth.

He felt fairly safe now, but he wasn't going to be any the less cautious. Three men had gone out, and that was the number Colonel Allingham had mentioned. But there might very well be others. Still, there was no longer a light, and if anyone had been left behind he would hardly remain in the dark.

Dick groped about and found the oak door. He leant against it with his shoulder and gave a gentle push. It responded to this pressure, and when it had swung back sufficiently to admit his body he glided inside.

He listened. Something was moving inside here. There was a faint shuffling on the floor at the far end, and a sort of gurgling noise broke out now and again. What could it be? Some animal?

Dick took his courage in both hands. He struck a match.

For a brief instant the light illuminated the apartment. Dick saw it was a big cellar, unfurnished, bare in every detail. He took a step forward, on the alert for any sudden and unexpected attack. His gaze was directed in the direction from whence the strange noise proceeded. Just before the match spluttered and went out he saw a vaguely defined form lying in the far corner. Could this be Harry Trent?

Throwing all caution to the winds, Dick strode across the floor and struck another match. Holding it aloft, he bent down and discovered someone sprawled on the ground bound hand and foot and a roughly-improvised gag thrust in his mouth.

One glance was sufficient to show him that it was his friend!

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

## CLEARING HIS NAME!

(Continued from page 6.)

Johnny Bull and Squiff and Peter Todd were clean bowled before another run had been added to the score, and Nugent lost his wicket shortly afterwards in an attempt to lift the ball on to the roof of the pavilion.

The tiles on the roof remained intact, and the ball was lifted, not on to its objective, but into the waiting hands of the fellow who was fielding on the boundary-line.

"Five wickets down," growled Bob Cherry, "and only 20 runs scored! I must see if I can alter the complexion of things!"

But Bob was the victim of misfortune. He played back at a swift ball from Solly Lazarus, and knocked his own wicket down.

"Six wickets down!" grunted Harry Wharton, who was itching to take a part in the proceedings.

"Seven," amended Bolsover major, a moment later, for Hurree Singh had been unable to stop the rot.

The situation was serious—serious for the Remove, at any rate. But the Courtfielders were all smiles.

"Wickets are cheap to-day!" chortled Dick Trumper. "Who is this coming forth now? Penfold, or my aged eyes deceive me! Settle his hash, Solly!"

Solly Lazarus grinned, and he sent down a ball which had the batsman beaten all the way.

Dick Penfold walked sorrowfully back to the pavilion, after watching his middle stump perform several revolutions in mid-air.

There now remained only two more wickets to fall. But at this stage Dennis Carr and Mark Linley came together, and their partnership was a merry one.

At first it was Mark Linley who did all the hitting, Dennis Carr being content to play himself in, and give no chances. But after a time Dennis began to hit as hard as his chum, and even harder, with the result that the scorers were kept busy, and the spectators roused to a high pitch of enthusiasm.

Thirty went up on the board, swiftly followed by forty and fifty, and then Dick Trumper deemed it prudent to change the bowlers.

But this change only served to increase the rate of scoring.

Dennis Carr was right on the top of his form. He had struck a bad patch a few days before, but he had come into his own again now. He opened his shoulders to the bowling, and boundaries came thick and fast.

Bob Cherry was executing a sort of jorjance in front of the pavilion. He was shouting "Good old Dennis!" and "Good old Marky!" alternately, until he became quite husky.

"Seventy up!" chortled Frank Nugent at length.

"That's the stuff to presentfully give 'em!" said Hurree Singh.

"Ha. ha. ha!"

The Remove were jubilant now, and their jubilation grew and grew, until eventually Mark Linley was out to a clever catch. And shortly afterwards the last wicket fell.

"Ninety-five," said Bob Cherry, glancing at the scoring-board. "Pity they couldn't have got the hundred. Still, they've done jolly well, and we mustn't be greedy! Trumper & Co. won't get within a mile of that total!"

Dennis Carr and Mark Linley received quite an ovation as they came off. Considering that each of them an hour before had had a big fight on his hands, they had performed remarkably well. Not many fellows could have taken part in a strenuous fistic encounter, and then proceeded to do themselves justice on the cricket-field.

There was an interval—a very welcome interval—for tea. And then the Courtfielders started on their big task.

"We want ninety-six to win," remarked Dick Trumper, as he walked out to the wickets with Grahame.

"That's nothing," said Grahame sippantly. "We'll get that little lot between us."

He spoke jestingly; but many a true word is spoken in jest. And Grahame's remark came very near to being the truth.

Dick Trumper, the popular skipper of the Council School team, was in one of his best run-getting moods. He played a game worthy of his namesake who had once figured in the Australian eleven. He hit hard and often, and he kept the ball low. The bowlers—

Vernon-Smith and Dick Penfold—could do nothing with him.

And whilst Trumper slogged, Grahame kept his end up in a steady, confident manner.

With a big hitter and a stonewaller both defying their best efforts, the bowlers became somewhat exasperated, with the result that several loose balls were sent down. These were punished unmercifully.

Bob Cherry's expression was decidedly rueful.

"I thought Courtfield wouldn't have a ghost of a chance," he said, "but they're piling up the runs ad lib., ad infinitum!"

"Try a change of bowlers, Bob," suggested Nugent.

"Thanks!" said Bob. "I don't need to be instructed in the duties of a skipper, Franky. I had already decided on a change. Carr and Linley bagged the batting honours. Let's see what they can do in the way of bowling."

The Courtfield score stood at seventy, without the loss of a single wicket.

But when Dennis Carr and Mark Linley went on to bowl, a different tale had to be told.

Dennis was nearing the verge of exhaustion. The strenuous events of the afternoon had sapped a good deal of his vitality. But he still had enough "go" in him to bowl a deadly ball. He sent Dick Trumper back to the pavilion, and a moment later Mark Linley wrecked Grahame's wicket.

"That's the style!" said Bob Cherry, still nursing a faint hope that the game might yet be saved. "Keep it up, you two!"

Dennis Carr and Mark Linley continued to bowl with such good effect that when the last Courtfield man came in the score was still five runs short of the Remove's total.

But the last man in was not a bit nervous, and he despatched Dennis Carr's next ball to the boundary for 4.

One to tie—two to win! And excitement ran riot in and around the pavilion.

Dennis Carr pulled himself together for the final effort, and he sent down the best ball he knew.

There was dismay on the faces of the Removees as the batsman, running forward, drove the ball with tremendous force—force enough to send it to the boundary.

But it never got there. It stopped short in Dennis Carr's right hand, which closed over the sphere in a tight grip.

"Hurrah!"

"Caught, sir!"

It was miraculous—it was incredible—that Dennis Carr should have stopped that terrific drive. But he had! And the air was rent with cheering—loud and prolonged cheering on behalf of the fellow who had found his true form, and won the match for his side.

"Bravo, Carr!"

"Good old Dennis!"

"Carry him off!"

An excited throng of Removees surged on to the playing-pitch with the object of seizing Dennis Carr and bearing him shoulder-high to the pavilion.

But before his schoolfellows reached him Dennis collapsed.

Mark Linley dropped on one knee beside his chum.

"He's fainted," he said quietly.

"The marvel is," said Vernon-Smith, "that he stuck it out so long!"

For some moments Dennis Carr lay white and still, but he revived at length. Water was dashed into his face, and he opened his eyes, without comprehending at first where he was.

But he was soon enlightened by the fresh storm of cheering which burst forth. And he rose to his feet with a happy smile, and allowed Bob Cherry and Mark Linley to escort him to the pavilion.

It had been a great day for Dennis—a day he would never forget. The strenuous part of it was over, and now came the restful climax.

In Study No. 1 that evening Dennis was the guest of honour. And Harry Wharton & Co. showed him in every way possible that they were proud of his friendship, and that they would not readily doubt him again.

Dennis assured them, one and all, that he bore no malice, and at the conclusion of the feast six ringing cheers were given—three for Dennis Carr, and three for loyal Mark Linley—the fellow who had been instrumental in clearing his name!

THE END.

(Another grand long story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled "The Silent Schoolboy!" by Frank Richards. Order your copy EARLY!)

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A SPECIAL COMPLETE STORY OF ST. JIM'S!

# NOT GUILTY!



**INTO THE DUCK POND!** As he approached the group of juniors, Arthur Augustus gracefully swept off his shining topper. "How do you do, deah boys!" There was a yell from the juniors. "Look out, Gussy! Mind where you're going, you ass!" (See page 12.)

## A Grand, Complete Story of the Chums of St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

#### A Bargain for D'Arcy.

**B** Al Jove! It's vevy hot!" Thus Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, as he wended his way along the road leading from the famous school to the village of Rylcombe on a warm July afternoon.

It was a half-holiday at St. Jim's, and Arthur Augustus, strange to say, was alone. There was no cricket match that afternoon, but D'Arcy and his study-mates, Blake, Herries, and Digby, together with Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther, had put in a couple of hours' strenuous practice at the nets.

Then, by common consent, it was voted a good idea to change and stroll down to the village to get some ices at the bunshop there, an establishment famous for its ices. In a quarter of an hour everyone was ready except D'Arcy. He was not nearly ready! The making of his toilet, even for a visit to the village, was a long and complicated process with Arthur Augustus, who was a great dandy. It was ten minutes, at least, before he could make up his mind whether to don a pale yellow or a pink fancy waistcoat. As he explained to his impatient chums, it all depended whether he was going to eat vanilla ices or strawberry ones!

By the time the dandy of the Fourth had decided that a yellow waistcoat embroidered with pink silk flowers would be the most appropriate wear, all things considered, his chums' patience was quite exhausted. Calling out to him that he would find them all in the bunshop when, if ever, he got to Rylcombe, they had walked off in a body, leaving him to finish dressing alone. This he did at leisure, and he finished at last. Now,

attired in spotless Etons, with gleaming boots, a gleaming topper on his head, and a gleaming monocle in his eye, he was en route. And he found it hot!

He was just considering whether to sit down and rest awhile when his ear caught the sound of a sharp, chugging noise, and round the corner of the road, from the direction of the village, came a man on a motor-scooter.

He buzzed towards Arthur Augustus, and then the note of his little machine faltered.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "He's stoppin'!"

The man on the scooter was certainly stopping. The machine came to rest by the side of the road, and its rider bent down and fiddled with it for a moment. Then he looked up and gazed in the direction of Arthur Augustus.

The swell of St. Jim's hurried up, and raised his shining topper politely to the man on the scooter.

"Can I be of any assistance to you, sir?" he inquired.

The man on the scooter looked D'Arcy up and down rather suspiciously. He was a sharp-faced young fellow, rather shabbily dressed, and was not in any way attired for motoring.

"What's your little game—eh?" he remarked.

Arthur Augustus was somewhat taken aback.

"Weally, sir, I—I fail to undahstand you!" he exclaimed. "I was just askin' if I could help you in any way."

"Oh, I see!"

The stranger grinned as he looked at D'Arcy. Suspicious as he was, he appeared to be reassured now.

"Has anythin' gone w'ong?" ventured Arthur Augustus.

"Blessed if I know! I don't understand these things. She was buzzin' along all right, when she suddenly stopped. Do you know anything about motors, young 'un?"

"Ahem! Not vevy much, I am afwaid," admitted D'Arcy. "It is not punctuahed, is it?"

"Punctured! No! That wouldn't make the engine stop, would it, stupid!"

"Bai Jove, no! I suppose not."

"Blessed if I know what to do. I'm in a hurry, too." The stranger looked quickly up and down the road, but there was no one in sight. "I guess I'll try pushin' her off again."

"Yaas, wathah!" The stranger ran along, pushing the motor-scooter.

It whirred along by his side, but the little engine did not start. A hundred yards down the road the man turned, and ran back with the machine, but without result.

"Bust the thing! It won't start! What rotten luck!"

"Wotten!" said Arthur Augustus sympathetically.

"Just as I was getting clean away, too!"

"Weally!"

"I—I mean," the man hastily corrected himself, and darted a quick, suspicious look at D'Arcy—"that is, she was getting along so well, you know, just before she stopped!"

Arthur Augustus nodded unsuspectingly. "Yaas, she seemed to be. I saw you buzzin' w'ound the corrah like anythin'."

"Look here!" The man leaned the scooter against the hedge, and took a step nearer to D'Arcy. "I'm in a hurry, and must get on.

D'Arcy. "I'm in a hurry, and must get on. Would you like to buy the jigger, young 'un?"

The man shot the question out so suddenly that Arthur Augustus simply jumped.

"Bai Jove! Me buy it!"

"Yes. How much will you give me for it?" Arthur Augustus fairly gasped.

"I—I'm afraid I haven't got enough money on me to buy it, my dear sir!" he gasped.

"How much have you got?" persisted the man.

"Well, weally, you have thwown me into quite a fluttah!"

The man clicked his tongue impatiently.

"Will you tell me what you can give me for it, cash down?"

Arthur Augustus strove to recover himself.

"I have a fivah that my patah sent me this mornin', but—"

"That'll do," said the man, almost eagerly.

"Give me the fiver, and you can have the jigger now. I'm sick of it!"

"But, my dear sir," protested D'Arcy, "the jiggah must be worth fortay or fiftay pounds!"

"Forty, at least!" said the man succinctly. "It's nearly new."

"Then if I help you to whcel it to the garage at Wylcombe—"

"No fear! I mean, I simply haven't got time or patience, either! I must get on."

"But—"

"I tell you I'm sick of it! Give me that fiver, and I'll leave the machine with you."

"This is a most amazin'—"

"Give me the money, you young duffer, or—"

D'Arcy hurriedly pulled out his notebook. The shabby young man's tone was almost threatening now. And, after all, thought the junior, if this eccentric stranger was ready to almost give the machine away, in a fit of pique, why should not he, D'Arcy, buy it as well as another? He could foresee endless fun with it if he could get it to go.

He pulled out the fiver, and handed it over.

"Heah you are, sir— Bai Jove, are you off alweady?"

The stranger almost snatched at the fiver, and turned on his heel at once, walking off down the road towards St. Jim's with rapid strides.

"Can't wait any longer, young 'un!" he called out over his shoulder. "Ta, ta! Wish you luck with the jigger!"

He laughed, and plunged off the road through an open gate into a field, and was lost to sight.

"Bai Jove! What a cuwious chawactah!" said Arthur Augustus, staring after him in surprise. "He seems in a feahful huwwy, too. Howevah, he left me with the jiggah. I wendah what is the mattah with it?"

He gazed at the smart little motor scooter through his monocle somewhat doubtfully.

It was nice to be the proud possessor of a new-looking motor-scooter, especially on a hot day, when you are fed up with walking. But D'Arcy could not help reflecting how much nicer it would be if the motor-scooter would go!

Parp, parp!

A car came buzzing along the road towards Rylcombe, in a cloud of dust. As it came towards D'Arcy it slowed up, and finally stopped.

A pleasant-faced young man, who was alone in the car, called out to D'Arcy:

"In trouble, kid? Can I help you?"

"Thank you vewy much, my dear sir!" said D'Arcy, politely raising his hat. "Pewwaps you could tell me what is the mattah with this scootah? It won't go!"

The young man grinned and jumped out of the car. In a moment he was examining the scooter with an expert eye.

"Looks all right, but these toys are funny things. I— Hallo! Bless my soul!"

"What is it, sir?"

"Why—ha, ha, ha!—you've got no petrol in her!"

"Bai Jove!"

"I can give you a drop out of my spare can—here you are!" said the young man, grinning. "Guess you haven't had this gadget long, youngster, have you?"

"No, sir; I—"

"Thought so!" grinned the motorist. "There you are! There's a good half-gallon in your tank now. Let's try her."

He pushed the scooter a yard or two, moved a lever, and instantly there was a purr from the engine. He stepped on to the low platform and buzzed a few yards down the lane.

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"All O. K. now, kid!" he said, handing the little machine back to its new owner. "Wonderfully simple these little things are—practically all controlled by this one lever. Well, I must be off!"

"Good-bye, sir, and thank you vewy much!"

"Not at all! Ta-ta!"

And the young man jumped into his car, and went buzzing off down the road.

"Bai Jove! Now for it!" murmured D'Arcy.

Jamming his eyeglass tightly into his eye, he grasped the little motor-scooter just as he had seen his friend the motorist do. He gave it a push, and moved the lever.

There was a low purr from the machine, and Arthur Augustus hastily stepped aboard.

The scooter gathered speed. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stood up upon the platform, grasping the handle-bars, and buzzed off down the road towards Rylcombe in fine style.

He gave a cheer of sheer delight.

"Huwwah! This is simply wippin'! Now for the Wylcombe bunshop!"

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Arthur Augustus Takes the Plunge!

**T**OM MERRY and his chums filled the little bunshop in the village, and overflowed on to the pavement outside. A number of ices had been consumed, and the juniors were now lounging in the doorway, on the look-out for Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"What on earth is the silly chump doing?" growled Jack Blake, pulling out his watch.

"Blest if I ever knew such a chap for being late!"

"You should have brought him up better, Blake," said Tom Merry, with a shake of the head. "We manage things better in our study."

"Hear, hear!" said Manners and Lowther.

"Rats! It's his blessed fancy waistcoat!" said Digby. "He can never decide what waistcoat to wear under half an hour!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blake snorted.

"Well, I vote we don't wait any longer for the chump. Let's— Hallo! My only sainted aunt! Look there!"

"Jumping Jupiter!"

"It's Gussy!"

Well might the juniors be surprised! The sight of Arthur Augustus, buzzing down Rylcombe High Street on a smart motor-scooter was quite a shock to them. They gazed at the unexpected apparition open-mouthed.

As he buzzed up the street on the scooter, Arthur Augustus looked the picture of elegance in his Etons and topper and eyeglass, and, needless to say, he attracted a good deal of attention.

He was wearing a beaming smile, and he waved his hand cheerily to the group of juniors as he buzzed up to them.

"Heah we are, dear boys!"

The little machine buzzed to a standstill, and the machine and rider were instantly surrounded by a curious and admiring crowd.

"Where on earth did you get it from, Gussy?" demanded Jack Blake.

"How does it work?"

"What make is it?"

"Are you going to keep it?"

Questions were fired at Arthur Augustus in dozens.

As well as he could, amid frequent interruption, the swell of St. Jim's told the story of his chance purchase of the scooter for five pounds, and of how the passing motorist had providentially been able to tell him that lack of petrol was all that was wrong with it.

There were exclamations of amazement as he finished his story. Tom Merry, especially, wore a puzzled look.

"It seems to me jolly fishy, Gussy—a man selling you a machine for five pounds when it's worth about forty."

"Hear, hear!"

"Wats!" responded Arthur Augustus warmly. "The fellah was fed up with it, that's all!"

"I wonder!"

"Yaas, weally, Tom Mewwy! You see, he couldn't make the jiggah go! When I got hold of it I jollay soon saw that it was weally all wright, of course!"

"Yes, ass—after the motorist johinnie had pointed it out to you!" grinned Tom Merry.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy! I should vewy soon have spotted it, anyhow!"

"Yes—I don't think!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Show us how it works, Gussy," said Manners. "I should like to have a go on it."

"Certainlay, deah boy! This is all you have to do." And by way of demonstration, Arthur Augustus took a little run, pushed off the machine, and stepped gracefully aboard.

Buzz, buzz!

The scooter buzzed off down the road, the crowd of admiring juniors watching it enviously.

Arthur Augustus gracefully circled the village-green, to the great admiration of a small crowd of errand-boys and school children. Then he buzzed back towards Tom Merry & Co.

He was in high feather. Now that he had mastered it, he felt quite at home on the little machine.

"It's quite easay, deah boys!" he called out proudly. "Just you watch me!"

As he approached the group of juniors, he let go of the handle-bars with one hand, and gracefully swept off his shining-topper, at the same time making quite a low bow, just to show how easy it was.

"How do you do, deah boys?"

There was a yell from the juniors.

"Look out, Gussy!"

"Mind where you're going, you ass!"

Opposite the bunshop was the village duck-pond, and as Gussy bowed the scooter gave a dangerous swerve towards it. It was then that the juniors shouted.

Arthur Augustus, thus brought down to earth, as it were, gave a violent start, thus upsetting the balance of the little machine still further, naturally.

"Bai Jove!" he gasped.

He gave a violent wrench at the handle-bars—and the scooter shot forward with increasing speed.

Splash!

Arthur Augustus rode fairly into the duck-pond.

"Gewoooh!"

There was a roar from juniors, errand-boys, and school children alike, as the elegant Arthur Augustus took a header into the slimy pond. Scooter and rider disappeared together, beneath the oily surface.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Gussy's done it now!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus struggled to his feet. The pond was only about three feet deep, but it was very, very muddy, and the erstwhile swell of St. Jim's presented an awful spectacle as he stood in the pond, dripping with mud and slime from head to foot. Of the scooter there was no sign.

"Gwooooh! Ugh! Gug-gug-gug!"

He choked and spluttered and gasped as if for a wager. The juniors ran down to the edge of the pond, almost doubled up with laughter.

"Oh, lor, you'll be the death of me one day, Gussy. I know you will!" gasped Jack Blake, holding his aching sides. "Come on out of that, for goodness' sake!"

"Bathing's not allowed in the village pond, Gussy," said Lowther. "Better come out before Crump runs you in!"

P.-C. Crump, the village policeman, had just emerged from his cottage, and was walking slowly and with ponderous steps towards the duck-pond, feeling in his tunic for his notebook as he came. A gentleman in a tweed knickerbocker suit of a somewhat loud check pattern was walking with him, talking volubly. He seemed to be in a state of considerable excitement about something.

Arthur Augustus slowly dragged himself from the clinging mud of the duck-pond.

"Bai Jove! This is simply feahful!" he groaned. "Help me out, deah boys!"

But the "deah boys" were not having any! Arthur Augustus was much too muddy to be touched just at present.

"Gwooh! I wegard motah-scootahs as wotten things!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better bring yours out of the pond with you, Gus," said Jack Blake. "If you leave it there long it'll never scoot again!"

"Wats! I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort!"

"But you can't leave it there, dummy!"

"Yaas, I can. That's just what I am goin' to do!"

And Arthur Augustus squelched out on to dry land at last, quite determined to leave

The swell of St. Jim's was quite fed up with his latest purchase.

P.-c. Crump approached majestically, accompanied by the voluble stranger. "Wot's all this 'ere?" demanded Mr. Crump sternly, bringing out his notebook. "Wot are you doin' in that 'ere pond, Master D'Arcy?"

"Weally, Cwump—" "You ain't allowed in the duck-pond that I knows on," continued P.-c. Crump heavily. "I ain't at all sure that I sha'n't 'ave to charge you with causin' a disturbance."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Do you think I went into the pond on purpose, you cwass fellow?" shrieked the unfortunate Arthur Augustus.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Eh? Well, wot did you go in for, Master D'Arcy? Tell me that!"

"You—you—" Arthur Augustus simply spluttered. Words failed him. It was bad enough to get a ducking in the muddy pond, without being accused of creating a disturbance into the bargain! He gouged the mud and slime from his mouth and eyes furiously.

"All right, Gussy! I'll—ha, ha!—explain to Crump," said Jack Blake, stifling his laughter to take up the cudgels for his unfortunate chum. "It's like this, Crump. My friend, Gussy—ahem!—Master D'Arcy here, was riding one of those motor-scooter things—" "Wot!"

"And not being used to it—it was the first time he had been on one—he drove it into the duck-pond by mistake. Now you know the whole story!"

"My heye!" Mr. Crump looked at the juniors with eyes that positively bulged from his head. "A motey-scooter! Do you 'ear that, sir?"

He turned to the stranger in the check suit, who seemed to become more excited still.

"Why, you told me you had never seen or heard of a motor-scooter—that no one round these parts had one!" he almost shouted.

"What do you mean by it, constable?" "Wot I said, sir!" said P.-c. Crump stoutly.

"I ain't never seen nor heard of one of them things round 'ere, and, wot's more, I ain't seen one yet."

"It's in the pond, old bean!" said Monty Lowther.

"How long has this scooter been in your possession, young man?" demanded the stranger excitedly, addressing Arthur Augustus. "I demand to know that!"

"Weally, sir, pway do not get excited!" rejoined D'Arcy. "I have onlay had the wotten thing about an hour!"

"Do you hear that, constable?" shouted the excitable gentleman in tweeds.

"Yes, I hear wot Master D'Arcy says," said P.-c. Crump stolidly.

"Very well. I demand to see this scooter!" said the stranger vehemently. "I must ask you boys—and also you, constable—not to go away until it is retrieved from the pond."

"My dear sir, we sha'n't go away," said Monty Lowther soothingly. "We're enjoying this much too much."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

After much persuasion the stranger prevailed upon two errand-boys from the crowd that now surrounded the party to go into the pond after the scooter for the sum of one shilling each.

The two volunteers soon lugged the once-smart little machine from its muddy bed. The stranger simply danced with excitement when he saw the state it was in.

As soon as it was safely on dry land he examined it carefully for a moment.

Then he turned to P.-c. Crump. "Constable, arrest that boy!" he exclaimed, pointing dramatically at the astounded Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I charge him with stealing my motor-scooter!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. Not Guilty.

IT is safe to say that if a German bomb had suddenly dropped into the duck-pond, the juniors, and P.-c. Crump as well, could not have been more startled. All except Tom Merry, that is.

Tom Merry was thinking rapidly. He was beginning to see the true explanation of many things that had been puzzling him for the last half-hour or so.

But not so P.-c. Crump.

"Wot, 'im?" he exclaimed ungrammatically, jerking his thumb at the soaked and sorry figure of Arthur Augustus. "Why, that's the Honourable Master D'Arcy, son of Lord Eastwood!"

"I don't care who or what he is!" shouted the stranger furiously. "He's the thief who stole my scooter! Arrest him at once, constable, or I shall report you for neglect of duty!"

"Ho, will yer!" P.-c. Crump, though doubtful what to do, was considerably nettled by the stranger's tone. He did not feel inclined to arrest Lord Eastwood's son, whom he knew well, to oblige the rough-tongued stranger, without some further inquiry into the peculiar circumstances of the case. He wetted the tip of his pencil, and pushed his helmet on to the back of his head, and looked very businesslike.

"Let's 'ave a few partic'lers of the case fust, if you please!" he said, looking very wise.

"You fool, man, it's as clear as daylight!" cried the stranger. "I go to you and complain that my scooter was stolen half an hour ago from outside an inn up the road. As we leave your cottage we see this young scoundrel crawling out of the pond, at the bottom of which we find the missing scooter! What more evidence do you want, I should like to know?"

"Weally, sir—" began D'Arcy feebly. His brain was beginning to reel. He was very wet, and he wanted to change his soaked clothing, which was beginning to chill him. And now he found himself charged with a serious theft! It was unthinkable!

It was then that Tom Merry, who had been doing some rapid thinking, took charge of the matter.

"Blake, take Gussy home, or he'll catch his death of cold," he said decisively. "Run all the way to St. Jim's. I'll fix things with this gentleman."

"That you won't!" said the stranger, with emphasis. "That young scoundrel does not stir from here until the constable takes him to the lock-up!"

"Your mistake, sir!" said Tom Merry calmly. "Close round, chaps! Off you go, Blake!"

"Come on, Gussy!" said Jack Blake, catching his chum by the arm. "Double march!"

"But, look heah, Blake—" "March!" said Blake.

And Arthur Augustus, with his head in a whirl, and nothing loth to leave the scene of his misfortunes, gave it up. He marched. There was a roar from the stranger.

"Stop him! Constable, you fool, I'll have you dismissed for this!"

He made a rush, but found himself in the centre of a circle of juniors, who surrounded him and P.-c. Crump, and entirely blocked any attempt to pursue D'Arcy and Blake.

"Hold on, sir!" said Tom Merry soothingly. "There's no need to get excited. D'Arcy is going back to St. Jim's school, to which he belongs. Crump knows him, and can go and arrest him any time if it proves to be necessary, can't you, Crump?"

"That I can, Master Merry! And if it turns out—" "Exactly! But it won't!"

"You young scoundrel! Look at my scooter!" hooted the angry stranger.

"Steady on, sir!" said Tom Merry, with invincible politeness. "If you let me explain the—" "How can you explain anything? It's as clear as daylight!"

"Exactly, sir! It's perfectly clear, as soon as you see it. D'Arcy is no more a thief than you are!"

"Hear, hear!" "What—what! How dare you—" "What would you say," pursued Tom Merry coolly, "if I told you that D'Arcy met a man between St. Jim's and the village with a motor-scooter that wouldn't motor-scoot!"

"What—what!" "And that the man said that he was fed up with it, as it was broken down, and offered to sell it for five pounds?"

"Eh?" "And that D'Arcy, seeing at once that the scooter must have been stolen, paid five pounds for it out of his own money?"

"Good gracious me!" "And then, finding that it was only short of petrol, got some, and came on down to the village to find the owner?"

"Is it possible?" "But, unfortunately, not being able to manage it properly, ran it into the pond by mistake?"

"Why—why, this is extraordinary!" The juniors had fallen back now, grinning broadly at the ingenious way in which Tom Merry was putting Arthur Augustus' case.

The stranger pushed back his cap and

scratched his head dubiously. P.-c. Crump was scratching his head, too.

"Is that the way to treat the fellow who has recovered your property at the cost of five pounds to himself—to turn round and accuse him of stealing it?"—went on Tom Merry warmly. "It's a jolly shame, I think!"

"Hear, hear!"—from the juniors. And from the interested crowd of villagers came a sympathetic "Ear, ear!"

"Yah! Oughter be ashamed of yerself!" came from the back of the crowd.

The stranger turned pink. He began to feel that he had been a little hasty. Then his eye caught the derelict scooter, and he groaned.

"The thing's in an awful state, but of course—" "It'll be all right if it is thoroughly dried and cleaned up," said Tom Merry, pursuing his advantage. "They'll do that for you at the garage here. Gussy couldn't help running it into the pond!"

"He was risking his life in riding the machine for you at all!" put in Monty Lowther solemnly.

"Exactly! And now it seems to me that the only question is about the reward!" said Tom Merry, with the utmost calmness.

"What!" almost shouted the stranger. "I suppose you were offering a reward for the recovery of the machine?"

"Which the gentleman did tell me as 'ow he would give five pounds to recover it," said P.-c. Crump.

"Five pounds! Just the sum D'Arcy paid to get it back for the gentleman!" said Tom Merry.

The stranger looked hard at Tom Merry, who returned his gaze openly.

"Do you mean to say that your friend actually gave the thief five pounds for the machine, young man?" he asked.

"Yes. Gussy told us all so, didn't he, chaps? And if Crump will go up and see him at the school presently, he'll be able to give a description of the man he bought the scooter off. He said he was a young chap with sharp features and rather shabby clothes."

"The man I saw leave the bar of the inn as I went in!" exclaimed the stranger excitedly. "By Jove, I believe you're telling the truth, after all!"

"We're not in the habit of telling whoppers!" said Tom Merry quietly.

The stranger took a deep breath. Then he took out his pocket-book and handed Tom Merry a couple of notes.

"Here's two fivers for your friend, the Honourable Whatsname! One to repay him for the five pounds he gave for my scooter, and one as the reward for returning it. Give 'em to him with my apologies for calling him a thief!"

There was a murmur of applause from the crowd at this handsome reparation on the part of the stranger.

Tom Merry took the notes and looked at them. Yes, they were for five pounds each. He handed one back to the stranger.

"I am sure D'Arcy would not take the reward. I'll give him this fiver to replace his own, and thanks very much!"

"Well, I'm sure that you young fellows between you—" Tom Merry smiled, and shook his head.

"No, thanks! We aren't wanting money. Much obliged, all the same!"

The stranger smiled.

"Well, that's handsomely said, sonny! Shake hands! I guess that fiver will come in handy, anyhow!" And he winked in the direction of the portly figure of P.-c. Crump.

"Ahem!" Mr. Crump coughed discreetly. "Stand back there, you boys!"

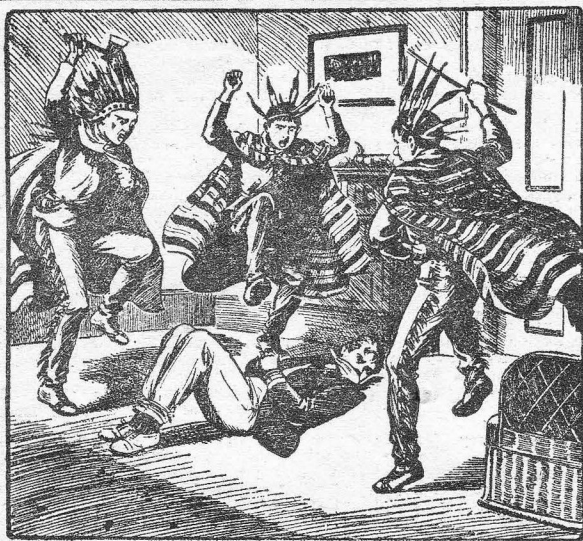
The stranger shook hands with each junior in turn, before wheeling the forlorn-looking scooter away to the garage, accompanied by P.-c. Crump, and followed by the still-interested crowd.

In high spirits the juniors set off back to St. Jim's, to convey to the unlucky D'Arcy the cheery news that, thanks to Tom Merry, his fiver had been recovered, and he had been found Not Guilty!

THE END.

*(Another splendid complete tale of St. Jim's next Friday, entitled: "Long Odds" by Martin Clifford. Order your PENNY POPULAR in advance.)*

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 71.



IN THE HANDS OF THE REDSKINS.

# THE SCHOOLBOY REDSKINS!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

A SPLENDID, LONG, COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY, DEALING WITH THE ADVENTURES OF JIMMY SILVER & CO., AT ROOKWOOD.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Scalped!

"UGH!"

Jimmy Silver jumped as he heard those three remarkable ejaculations from Tommy Dodd's study.

The Classical junior had come over to Mr. Manders' House to interview Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Side on the subject of cricket.

He was about to tap at Tommy Dodd's door, when those three deep and expressive grunts came from within the study.

Jimmy paused in astonishment.

Why Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle should be ejaculating "Ugh!" in chorus was a great mystery, unless the three Tommies had suddenly gone off their "rockers."

"Ugh!" came Tommy Dodd's voice again.

"Ugh!" replied Tommy Cook.

"Sure, ye can't hold a whole conversation on 'Ugh!'" said Tommy Doyle. "Don't ye know any more Comanche, Tommy Dodd?"

"Comanche!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Mad as hatters, by Jove!"

"Ugh! I have spoken!" came Tommy Dodd's voice. "The tommyhock of the Comanches is ready to—"

"Tomahawk," said Cook.

"Tommyhock, you ass!"

"Tomahawk, I tell you."

"Tommyrot, more likely!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Look here, Cook, who's the chief of the giddy Comanches?" demanded Tommy Dodd warily.

Jimmy Silver thumped at the door and sent it open. He stared into the study, and gave another jump.

He had expected to see three Modern juniors of Rookwood clothed, if not in their right minds.

What he did see was startling.

Three Red Indians stood in the study, in blankets, war-paint, and feathers complete.

Jimmy Silver stared at them blankly.

"What the merry dickens—" he began.

There was a yell from the three Tommies at once.

"Seize the paleface!"

"Scalp him!"

"Tommyhock him!"

Before Jimmy Silver could retreat, the three Redskins had collared him, and yanked him into the study. Two Redskins plumped him down in the armchair, and the third flourished a tomahawk over his head. Jimmy Silver simply gasped.

"You dotty asses! What's the little game?"

Tommy Dodd chuckled.

"Redskins!" he said proudly. "Something a bit above the weight of you Classical duffers! We're the giddy warriors of the Comanche

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tribe, and we're on the warpath, and you're the first victim!"

"Leggo, you chumps!"

"Scalp him!" said Tommy Doyle. "Where's my carving-knife—I mean scalping-knife?"

"Scalp the giddy paleface!"

"Look here— Oh!"

Jimmy Silver began to struggle. But Cook and Doyle had his arms in a tight grip, and he was pinned down in the chair. Tommy Dodd bent his head forward forcibly, with a grasp on his thick hair.

"How do you scalp a chap?" said Tommy Dodd thoughtfully. "Do you mind where it comes off, Silver?"

"Groogh! Leggo!"

"If you wriggle you may get it in the neck instead of the napper. I wonder if my pocket-knife's sharp enough?"

"Thry it," said Tommy Doyle. "You never know til you thry."

"Don't spill his gore over my sleeve!" said Cook anxiously.

"That's all right! It will run down the back of his neck!" said Tommy Dodd.

"Look here," roared Jimmy Silver, "don't play the giddy ox! I know you're spoofing, but you'll do some damage with that knife!"

"Your fault, if you wriggle!"

"Yaroooh!" yelled the Classical junior, as a sharp edge came into contact with his neck.

"Keep off!"

"Keep still, then! I don't want to take your head off by mistake! Of course, it wouldn't really matter. There's nothing in it!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Jimmy Silver did not cease to wriggle. A sharp edge was sawing at the back of his head; and if it was a Modern joke, it felt as if the joke were going too far. He wriggled desperately in the clutch of the Moderns. But the Redskins of Rookwood held him fast, and Tommy Dodd continued to saw.

"It's coming!" announced Tommy Dodd triumphantly.

"Yarooooh!"

It really felt as if Jimmy's scalp was coming off. He made a tremendous effort, and hurled Cook and Doyle away, and leaped to his feet. He crashed into Tommy Dodd, and Tommy staggered back.

Jimmy's hand went up to his head. He more than half-expected to find it come away covered with blood.

But there was no blood. And the next moment he observed that the instrument in Tommy Dodd's hand was not a pocket-knife, but a paper-knife.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the three Tommies in chorus.

Jimmy Silver glared at the three merry Moderns. The humorous chief of the Rookwood Comanche had been pulling his leg. As the three Tommies doubled up in merriment, the incensed Classical made a sudden charge at them. Three merry youths ceased laughing all of a sudden and roared instead, as they

were hurled to the floor. Blankets and feathers and Moderns were mixed up on the hearthrug.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jimmy Silver in his turn.

Then he tore open the study door and fled.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Knocked on the Head.

"AFTER him!"

"Collar him!"

"Slaughter him!"

The three Redskins of Rookwood scrambled to their feet. The tumble had sadly disarranged their warlike head-dresses, and Tommy Dodd's wampum belt had burst, and Doyle had sat violently on his tomahawk—fortunately, a wooden one.

The enraged Redskins dashed after Jimmy Silver, quite forgetting in the excitement of the moment that their attire was not exactly suitable for appearing in public.

They sped along the passage, and rushed down the staircase in hot pursuit of the fleeing Classical.

Meanwhile Jimmy Silver was going down the stairs three at a time. It was sheer ill-luck that Knowles of the Sixth should have been coming up the stairs at the same moment.

The Modern prefect had no time to get out of the way, and Jimmy Silver did not even see him before he crashed into him.

It was a terrific crash.

Jimmy was going at full speed.

Knowles gave a yelp, spun round, clutching at the banisters to save himself. Jimmy sat down hard on the stairs.

"Oh!" he gasped.

But he did not pause. It was not safe to remain near the bully of the Sixth at that moment. He was on his feet again in a twinkling, and he vanished out of Mr. Manders' House at lightning speed.

Knowles clung to the banisters and gasped.

He had just released his hold of the banisters to follow the fleeing junior, when three rushing Redskins came pelting down the stairs.

Knowles was right in the way.

This time he hadn't time to clutch at the banisters. He was knocked spinning. Down the stairs he rolled, with the three Redskins rolling and sprawling over him. They arrived on the mat in a heap.

There was a chorus of howls and groans.

Tommy Dodd sat up dazedly.

He was sitting on something. He did not notice what for the moment. As a matter of fact, it was Knowles' face.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"Wh-what was that? We—we ran into something, I think!"

"Faith, we did!" gasped Tommy Doyle.

"And, by the same token, it was that baste Knowles! Yaroooh!"

"Gerroff me neck!" mumbled Cook.

"Gerrooogh!" came in stifled accents from the Sixth Form prefect.

"Woooooop! Gerroff! Wow-ow-ow!"

"My hat! What— Oh, great pip! I'm sitting on Knowles!"

Tommy Dodd jumped up as if he had been sitting on a red-hot iron.

The three dishevelled Redskins stared at Knowles in dismay.

Knowles sat up.

"I—I say, we're awfully sorry, Knowles!" stammered Tommy Dodd.

The prefect gasped for breath. He was winded.

"Sure, we're sorry intoirly, Knowles darling! We didn't see ye coming!" said Doyle.

"You young scoundrels!"

The breathless prefect glared at them.

"Ahem!"

"Grooh! I'll teach you to bump a prefect downstairs!" spluttered Knowles. "Oh, my head! Ow, my leg! Yow, my back! Oh, oh, oh!"

"Are you hurt, Knowles?" asked Tommy Dodd meekly.

It was really a superfluous question. Knowles of the Sixth looked as if he were hurt, and his temper, never good, had suffered more severely than his limbs.

He staggered to his feet, gasping for breath and crimson with rage.

"You young rascals! You did that on purpose!"

"Oh, no, Knowles!"

"Sure, we—"

"What are you got up like that for?" roared Knowles.

"We—we—we're Red Indians!" stammered Tommy Dodd. "It's our play, you know—the 'Lily of the Prairie.'"

"You silly young idiots! I'll teach you to play Red Indians on the staircase!" hooted Knowles.

"We—we weren't really—"

"Come to my study!"

Knowles strode away savagely, and the three hapless Comanches followed him, rubbing their hands in glum anticipation.

In his study the prefect selected a cane.

"Now, you silly young dummies!"

"I—I say, Knowles—"

"Hold out your hand, Dodd!"

Swish! Swish!

"Yaroooh!" roared Tommy Dodd, in really a lifelike manner as a Red Indian.

"Now, Doyle! Now Cook!"

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

There was a chorus of groans in Knowles' study. The three Comanches were almost doubled up.

"And now," said Knowles savagely, "you can go and take that foolery off! You were going to play a Red Indian play—what?"

"Ow! Yes! Wow!"

"Well, you're forbidden to do anything of the sort! You'll put that rubbish away, and if ever you put it on again I'll warm you!"

"Oh, dear!"

"Now, get out!"

"I—I say, Knowles, we—we want to do our play, you know," said Tommy Dodd, in dismay. "We—we've spent a good bit of tin on the costumes—"

"Get out!"

"But—but can't we go ahead with the play?" demanded Tommy Dodd. "You've licked us, haven't you? Isn't that enough?"

Knowles did not reply in words. He lashed out with the cane, and the three Red Indians beat a hasty retreat, with the cane stinging behind. The Comanche warriors stood not upon the order of their going, but went at once, and they did not stop till they were safe in their own study.

"Oh crumbs!" said Tommy Dodd dismally, as he sank into a chair. "What a go! The play's knocked on the head, after all our trouble!"

"Oh, rotten! All through that Classical baste coming here and getting scalped!"

"I'd like to scalp Knowles!"

"Oh, what rotten luck!"

And the three Tommies rubbed their hands and bemoaned their misfortunes. They knew that there was no appeal from the prefect's sentence. After all their preparations, and after all their rehearsals, the "Lily of the Prairie" was destined never to appear.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**  
**Jimmy, Too!**

**J**IMMY SILVER came rather breathlessly into the end study on the Classical side of Rookwood. Lovell and Raby and Newcome stared at him. Jimmy looked a little untidy, and there were smears of Red Indian war-paint upon him—rubbed off the Comanches in the tussle.

"Hallo! You look a merry picture!" said

Lovell. "Have you been rowing with the Moderns, instead of fixing up about the cricket on Saturday?"

"Yes. The asses!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "They're getting up a Red Indian play, the duffers! They're going to cut out the Classical players, you know."

"Silly chumps!" said Raby. "They can't touch us in that line! Rather a good idea, though—Red Indians!"

"But that isn't all. I bumped Knowles over coming away."

"My hat! Didn't he skin you?"

"I didn't give him time," grinned Jimmy Silver, "and I left him mixed up with the Redskins on the floor."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, the worry is, will he be satisfied with taking it out of Tommy Dodd, or will he come over heré grouching?" said Jimmy.

"You know what a beast Knowles is, and he's down on this study, too."

"Looks to me as if you're in for it," said Newcome comfortingly. "Prefects don't like being bumped over by chaps in the Fourth."

"He'll come over and jaw Bulkeley," said Raby.

Jimmy Silver was of the same opinion. Even a good-tempered prefect might have been annoyed by being floored on the stairs, and Knowles was not in the least good-tempered. Moreover, he had old scores against the end study. That celebrated study never would be hectored or ragged by a prefect of the Modern side, and when Knowles overstepped his authority in that direction he found the Fistical Four a hard nut to crack. So it was not likely that Knowles would lose this chance.

About a quarter of an hour later Rawson of the Fourth looked into the end study. He gave Jimmy Silver a sympathetic look.

"Bulkeley's sent me for you, Jimmy," he said.

Jimmy groaned.

"Now I've got to go through it, all through those howling asses playing silly Red Indians!" growled Jimmy Silver. "Blow them, and blow Knowles, and blow Bulkeley, and blow everybody!"

And with that comprehensive remark, Jimmy Silver left the end study and took his way dismally to the Sixth Form quarters.

He found Bulkeley, the head prefect of the Classical side, in his study, and Knowles with him.

"Here I am, Bulkeley," said Jimmy Silver meekly.

The captain of Rookwood looked at him frowningly.

"Knowles tells me that you bumped him over on the Modern side, Silver."

"Yes; awfully sorry. It was an accident, of course," said Jimmy.

"Knowles thinks you did it on purpose."

"I know he did!" said Knowles savagely. Jimmy looked steadily at the Modern prefect.

"You don't know anything of the sort, Knowles," he said, "and I don't believe you think so, either. I didn't see you when I rushed into you."

"Silver!" rapped out Bulkeley.

"Well, Knowles is calling me a liar!" said Jimmy resentfully. "I say it was an accident!"

"And I say you are lying!" snapped Knowles.

"Oh, cheese it!" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily. "Look here, Silver, I believe it was an accident, as you say so, but you've no business to be racing downstairs on the Modern side, and you know it."

"All right, Bulkeley!"

"As Knowles complains, I shall lick you. Hold out your hand!"

Jimmy held out his hand, with a grimace.

Swish!

"Oh crumbs!"

"Now the other!"

"I—I say, Bulkeley, ain't one enough?" ventured Jimmy.

"Hold out your hand!" thundered Bulkeley.

Swish!

"Groooh!"

"Now you can clear out!" said Bulkeley, throwing the cane on the table.

Jimmy Silver willingly made for the door. He had had quite enough. Cecil Knowles uttered an angry exclamation.

"Is that all he's going to get, Bulkeley?"

"Isn't that enough?" growled Bulkeley.

"No, I don't think so."

"Well, I do think so, considering it was an accident!"

"I tell you he did it on purpose!"

"I've told you I don't believe anything of the kind. Cut off, Silver! The matter's ended, Knowles!"

Jimmy Silver scuttled out of the study. Knowles strode away with a frowning brow. Jimmy returned to the end study, rubbing his hands dolorously.

"That beast Knowles wants slaughtering," he confided to his chums. "He wants boiling in oil. He wants garotting! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Had it bad?" asked Lovell sympathetically.

"Yow! Yes. And that isn't all. Knowles called me a liar!" said Jimmy Silver sulphurously. "And—and I couldn't very well punch a prefect, could I, with old Bulkeley looking on?"

"Ha, ha, No!"

"But I'll make him sit up somehow!" said Jimmy savagely. "Tain't the licking so much. I did bump the beast over, after all. But for the cad to call me a liar, just because he's in the Sixth, and I can't lick him—"

"Just like Knowles!"

"This study is going to make him sit up!" said Jimmy resolutely.

"Ahem!" said Raby doubtfully. "It's rather—ahem!—risky, bucking up against a prefect—especially Knowles!"

"Especially Knowles," agreed Newcome.

Jimmy Silver sniffed.

"He's not going to insult this study. I tell you he's going to sit up. He's only a Modern cad, anyway. Yow-ow-ow!"

And as Jimmy Silver was quite determined on that point, the Co. loyally assented, and agreed to back him up. But it was not quite clear how a prefect of the Sixth was to be made to "sit up," and even Jimmy Silver had to confess that, so far, he did not see exactly how it was to be done.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Tommy Dodd is Equal to the Occasion.**

**T**HE three Tommies were looking lugubrious when Jimmy Silver encountered them the next day. He found Tommy Dodd sparring in the air, in the quadrangle, at an imaginary face.

Jimmy had quite forgiven the "scalping" of the previous day, and he asked the Modern trio amicably what was the matter.

"If I could only give him one in the eye!" said Tommy Dodd, with another energetic drive into space.

"Who? Not Bootles?"

"No, ass—Knowles!"

"Licked?" asked Jimmy. "The beast came over yesterday, and got me a licking!"

"Oh, we got that, of course," said Tommy Dodd. "But that isn't it. The utter cad has stopped our play!"

"The giddy 'Lily of the Prairie'?" grinned Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, the rotter! It was a splendid play. We wrote it ourselves—"

"Then it must have been a regular corker!" chuckled Jimmy.

"Oh, don't cackle, you ass! We'd got the costumes all ready," sighed Tommy Dodd.

"I was going to ask Miss Dolly to take the part of the 'Lily of the Prairie.' She'd have done it like a shot. Lots of us have been rehearsing. It was coming off next week, and now that awful beast has put his foot down on it!"

Jimmy Silver whistled.

"Dash it all, that's rather thick even for Knowles!" he said. "He hasn't any right to do that!"

"Of course he hasn't, the rotter! But he's done it!"

"You could appeal—"

"Oh, old Manders always backs up Knowles. That's no good!"

"Best if I wouldn't go to the Head!" said Jimmy.

"What's the good? The Head would only refer us back to Manders."

"H'm! I suppose he would."

"It's knocked on the head," said Tommy Dodd savagely. "All our trouble for nothing, and a ripping play wasted! Costumes and war-paint all wasted, too. Isn't it simply sickening?"

"Horrid!" agreed Jimmy Silver. "I'll tell you what could be done, though. Suppose you hand the play and the costumes over to us—"

"Eh?"

"We'll give the play instead. Knowles can't interfere with Classical chaps. The Classical players, of course, would turn the thing out ever so much better."

"You silly ass!"  
 "You could form the audience, instead of the actors. See? Then it would be a success, I should say. The acting would be good."

"You thumping idiot!"  
 "Of course, I should rewrite the play."  
 "What!"

"It would want improving, of course. But you could leave that to me."

The three Moderns simply glared at Jimmy Silver. The kind and generous Jimmy was helping them out of a fix, but the Modern trio did not look very grateful for his suggestion.

"Oh, bump him!" said Tommy Dodd. "Collar the silly Classical ass!"

"Hallo! Hands off!" roared Jimmy. "I'm only trying to help you out of a difficulty, you asses—Oh!"

Bump!  
 The three Tommies stalked away, leaving the captain of the Fourth sitting on the ground. They were fed up with Jimmy's kind suggestions.

"Look here," said Tommy Dodd, as the three hapless amateur dramatists halted in Little Quad—"look here, you chaps, we're not going to stand it!"

"Don't see phwat's to be done, intoirly," said Doyle. "We can't play the play with Knowles against it."

"We're going to play it all the same."

"Oh, bedad!"  
 "Without his knowing, of course," said Tommy Dodd hastily. "Of course, we can't exactly back up against Knowles—the beast! Look here, we can do the rehearsals in the wood-shed; Knowles won't know anything about that."

"He's a spying baste," said Doyle doubtfully.

"We shall have to chance that. I suppose you're game?" growled Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, we're game!" said Cook. "But—but what about the performance. We can't perform the play in the wood-shed and get an audience."

"Nunno! What price making it a pastoral play?"

"What!"  
 "Perform it in the open air, you know," said Tommy Dodd. "The weather looks like keeping fine; we could choose a fine evening, anyway. The fellows would all come. We could perform it in the field, and use the old barn as a dressing-room. Better than a stuffy Form-room, these warm evenings, come to think of it."

"Faith, it's a jewel of an idea!" exclaimed Tommy Doyle enthusiastically. "The Classics have never had a pastoral play."

"It will rather take the wind out of their sails," remarked Tommy Cook thoughtfully. "Of course, we can pile it on a bit about the advantages of a pastoral play—alfresco bizney, and all that—much better than sticking indoors. No need to explain that it's because we can't perform it indoors. Only—only if Knowles gets to know—"

"He won't."  
 "He's jolly sharp, and the fellows may talk afterwards—"

"Well, if he finds it out afterwards it can't be helped—it will only mean a licking. If he doesn't find it out before, that's all right."

"Good!"  
 "Only we can't ask Miss Dolly to take a part, under the circs. But young Lacy can do the 'Lily of the Prairie.' He's got a soft-soapy chivvy."  
 "Right—ho!"

Much comforted by this really ripping scheme, the three Tommies proceeded to inform the rest of the Modern dramatists of the new "wheeze." And that evening there was a full-dress rehearsal of the "Lily of the Prairie," in the wood-shed—quite unknown to Knowles of the Sixth.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### An Interrupted Performance.

As Shakespeare says—

"Oh, bother Shakespeare!"

"As Shakespeare says," repeated Jimmy Silver serenely, "to rag or not to rag, that is the question."

"Did Shakespeare say that, you ass?"

"Well, something like it. That's the question, anyway. It's a glorious opportunity of ragging those Modern bounders. But there's a but—"

It was Saturday afternoon. There was no match that afternoon, and Tommy Dodd & Co. had devoted the half-holiday to a matinee

performance of that great Red Indian play, the "Lily of the Prairie."

The matter was being kept very dark from Knowles. Rehearsals had been gone through successfully, and all was ready. The idea of an open-air performance had caught on, and the Comanches of Rookwood were certain of a good audience, both Modern and Classical.

The Fistical Four were going; but then Jimmy Silver propounded the query, in semi-Shakespearean language—to rag or not to rag.

"It won't be much of a success, anyway, the way those Modern duffers act," objected Newcome.

"Not likely. But we'll help all we can," said Jimmy Silver generously. "We haven't made Knowles sit up yet, you know. This is up against Knowles, so we're backing them up."

"Oh, all right!"  
 The Fistical Four started for the rendezvous, therefore, in peaceable mood.

Quite a little army arrived in the field where the Modern players were making their preparations.

The "stage" had been chalked off on the greensward, and the cast were in the barn making up. Crowds of juniors sprawled or sat in the grass, and there was a cheer when three Comanche warriors came out of the barn and the play began.

The "Lily of the Prairie" had been specially written by Tommy Dodd, with the aid of his two chums, and they were satisfied that it was a first-rate play. It seemed to consist chiefly of rushing, charging, yelling, and brandishing tomahawks. There was not much dialogue, but there was plenty of action.

"Awful rot, begad!" Townsend of the Fourth remarked to Peele with a yawn.

"Rotten!" agreed Peele.

"Bravo!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

Tommy Dodd was holding the stage, and his voice boomed out in a telling speech.

"Bind the trembling paleface to the torture-stake! Let him die the death of a dog! Ugh! I have spoken!"

"Bravo!"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Lovell suddenly, as he glanced round. "Knowles!"

"What?"

"Look!"

Jimmy Silver looked round.  
 Knowles of the Sixth, with Catesby, was crossing the field by a footpath in the distance. Jimmy Silver saw the bully of the Sixth glance round towards the crowd gathered about the barn.

"What rotten luck for Tommy!" murmured Jimmy. "The beast has spotted them."

"He's coming!" said Oswald.

Knowles was striding towards the scene. He had a walking-cane under his arm, and he let it slip into his hand. Catesby followed him, grinning.

The Redskins sighted him suddenly, and the ferocious Comanches, who were binding Towle of the Fourth to the torture-stake, ceased and stared at him in dismay.

"Knowles!" stuttered Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, crumbs!"

Knowles shoved his way roughly through the audience, and came on the greensward stage, his brows contracted and his eyes glittering.

There was a buzz of indignation from the audience.

"Get off the stage, Knowles!"

"Clear off, you beastly bully!"

"Kick him out!"

Knowles took no notice of those remarks. He fixed his eyes upon the dismayed Comanches.

"So you're playing the fool, after what I told you?" he rapped out.

"Look here, Knowles, you've no right to interfere with our play!" mumbled the chief of the Comanches.

"Which are you—Dodd, I suppose?" said Knowles.

The juniors were quite unrecognisable in their war-paint and feathers.

"I—I—I'm Thundering Bull, the chief of the Comanches!"

"I'll give you Thundering Bull, you young idiot! I distinctly told you you were not to play this nonsense!"

"Mind your own business, Knowles!" yelled Sitting Tiger, otherwise Tommy Cook.

"Turn the baste out, prefect or no prefect!" howled Black Buffalo, alias Tommy Doyle.

Knowles scowled.

"Stop this at once!" he said. "All of you clear off immediately! I'll help you to start!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Yarooooh!"

Knowles brought his cane into action. Lash, lash, lash!

The Redskins dodged wildly. Never had a war-party of Comanches been put to such sudden and ignominious rout.

There were indignant hoots, mingled with yells of laughter, from the audience. Redskins were fleeing in all directions, and Knowles of the Sixth was left master of the field.

"Now, clear off, you young rascals!" exclaimed Knowles, waving his cane at the audience.

"We'll suit ourselves about that!" said Jimmy Silver independently. "We're not under your rotten orders, you Prussian!"

Knowles gritted his teeth, and looked inclined to begin on the Fistical Four. But he refrained. They were quite ready for trouble. The Modern part of the audience cleared off at his order; they had no choice. The Classics stood their ground to show their independence. There was nothing else to stand their ground for, for the play was at an end.

The "Lily of the Prairie" had come to a sudden and unexpected conclusion. There was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth among the braves of the Comanche tribe.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Jimmy Silver's Great Wheeze.

"ROTTER!"

"Better luck next time!"

"Can't be helped!"

Thus said Jimmy Silver & Co. comfortingly.

The Fistical Four were entertaining Tommy Dodd & Co. to tea in the end study, after that ignominious conclusion of the great Redskin drama. The three Tommies were in a state of fury and exasperation that could hardly be expressed in words. Their feelings towards Knowles of the Sixth were simply Hunnish.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were comforting them with saveloys and ham and tongue, and jam and cake. They were deeply sympathetic, and they agreed that Knowles of the Sixth ought to be hanged, drawn, quartered, boiled in oil, and scragged and bumped. The unfortunate thing was that none of these richly-merited punishments could be bestowed on the iniquitous Knowles.

"The beast was actually laughing over it!" said Tommy Dodd, with breathless wrath and indignation. "I heard him, laughing over it with Catesby and Frampton! Laughing, the beast!"

"We'll give him something else to laugh about if—if we get a chance!" mumbled Tommy Cook.

"I feel jolly well inclined to go for him, and chance it!" growled Doyle.

Jimmy Silver was thinking deeply. It was clear that the bully of the Sixth had fairly overstepped the line, and that his latest tyranny was not to be stood. True, it was the Modern juniors who were his victims. But Jimmy was deeply indignant on their account, and he had still his own score against Knowles unpaid. Jimmy was thinking hard.

"What price giving him a jolly good hiding?" he asked at last.

"Nothing I'd like better!" snapped Dodd.

"But I don't want to be expelled from Rookwood, thanks all the same!"

"Suppose he didn't know who did it?"

"Eh? Hasn't he eyes, fathead?"

"I've got an idea!"

"Oh, your Classical ideas!" said Tommy Dodd disparagingly.

"Faith, and let's hear it intoirly!" said Doyle. "Sure, I'd do anything" to get even with the baste! Go ahead, Jimmy darling!"

"It came into my head," said Jimmy modestly. "Knowles didn't know which was when he tackled you to-day in your war-paint and stuff, and if you hadn't spoken he couldn't have told. Well, of course, it wouldn't do for three chaps to go for Knowles and wallop him, as he's a prefect. But suppose Thundering Bull and Sitting Tiger and Black Buffalo dropped into his study—"

"Eh?"

"And larruped him."

"Great Scott!"

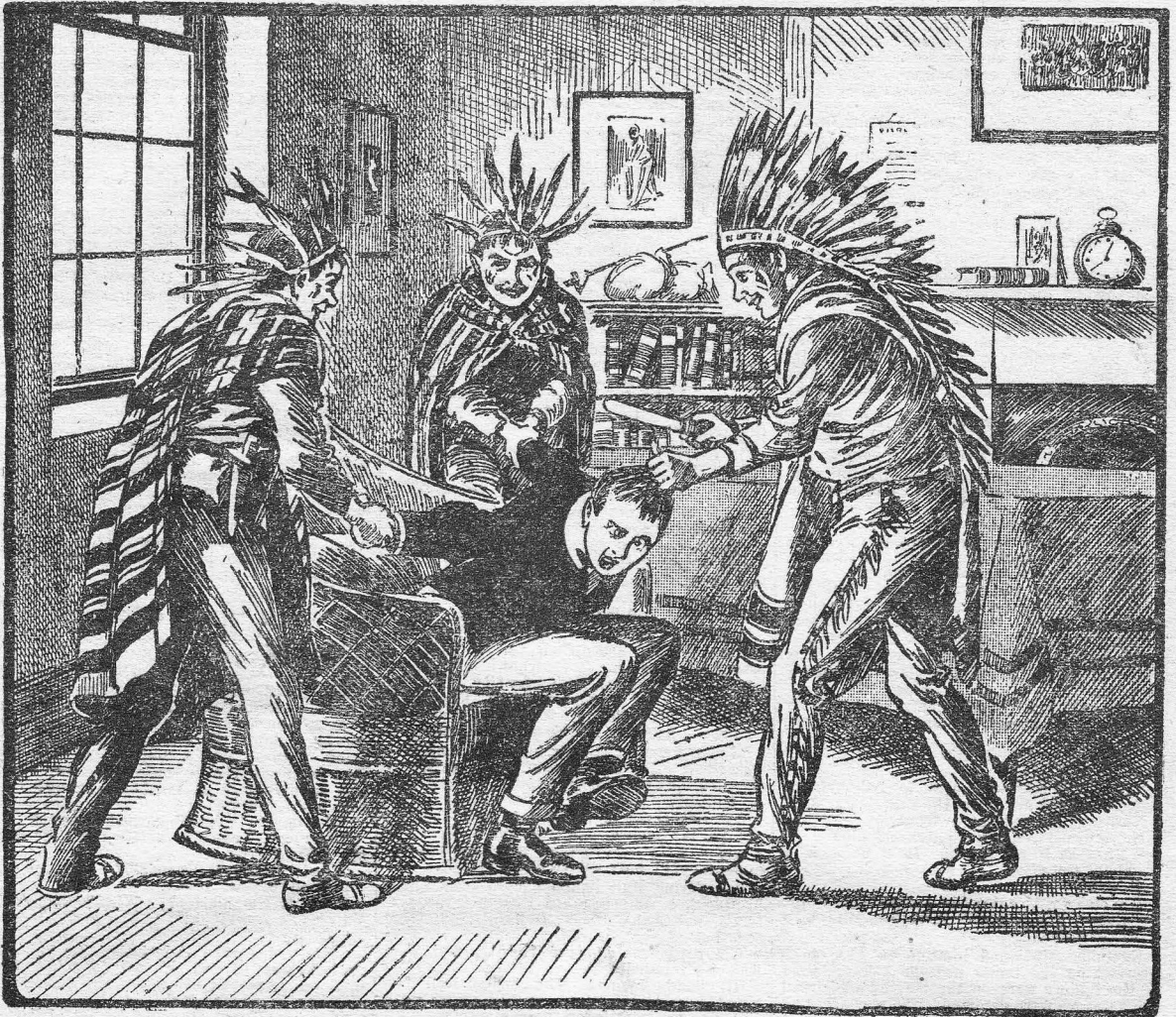
"Then he wouldn't know who'd done it, and everything in the garden would be lovely," concluded Jimmy Silver.

Tommy Dodd gave him a withering look.

"You howling ass! You crass Classical duffer! Wouldn't he know it was us at once from the costumes? Do you think he'd fancy that Rookwood had been invaded by real Comanches?"

"That's the idea," said Jimmy Silver. "Of





With a grasp on his thick hair, Tommy Dodd bent Jimmy Silver's head forward forcibly. "How do you scalp a chap?" he said thoughtfully. "Do you mind where it comes off, Silver?" (See page 14.)

course, Knowles would know at once that it was you three."

"Well, you howlin' ass," said Doyle, "if he'd know at once it was us three, what's the good of puttin' on the war-paint to disguise us?"

"But suppose you three were detained by Mr. Manders at the same time—"

"Eh?"

"Then you could prove an alibi."

"Wha-a-at?"

"You could prove that you were under detention, doing maths, or some rot. That would see you through."

"You cackling duffer! How could we raid Knowles in his study if we were doing mathematics in the Form-room?" shrieked Tommy Dodd.

"Your poor old Modern brain can't work it out," said Jimmy Silver compassionately. "Can't any other chap put on war-paint?"

"Oh!"

"That's the wheeze. When three Red Indians collar him in his study and mop him up, Knowles will know it's you three. But if you prove you were under detention at the time it will be all right for you. And as for the chaps it really was, Knowles won't know them from Adam."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You leave the Redskin rig in your study. Some young rascals sneak in and collar it and put it on. You can't possibly prevent that if you're under detention in the Form-room at the time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lovell rubbed his hands.

"What a thumping wheeze! Why, it's as safe as houses! I'm going to be one of the party. I'll take a cricket-stump!"

"Better make it a tomahawk," grinned.

Tommy Dodd. "You can lick a fellow with a tomahawk."

"Well, what do you think of the idea?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Ripping!"

"Topping!"

"Sure, it's a broth av a boy ye are, Jimmy darling!"

There was a howl of merriment in the end study. Oswald and Rawson looked in to inquire what was the matter. They joined in the howl when they were told.

"Better not let it go any further, though," said Oswald. "You don't want it to leak out. It means a flogging at least."

"Mum's the word," agreed Jimmy Silver.

Amid many chuckles the juniors proceeded to discuss the plan. And when the three Tommies left the end study after tea they departed in great spirits and on the best of terms with their old rivals, the Classics.

### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

#### On the Warpath.

**O**N Monday afternoon, in the Fourth Form-room, Tommy Dodd & Co. succeeded in surprising most of the Form.

The second lesson that afternoon was French, which the Moderns shared with the Classics. Monsieur Monceau was very popular at Rookwood, but that afternoon the three Tommies amused themselves by pulling his leg in the most exasperating manner.

Mossoo was a patient gentleman, but his patience had limits. When an ink-ball caught him behind the ear Mossoo's anger boiled.

"Dodd, Doyle, Cook!" he snapped.

"Yes, Mossoo!"

"You throw zem sings about, isn't it?"

"Ahem! Sorry, sir!"

"I zink zat you sall learn to keep ze ordair in ze class, isn't it?" said Monsieur Monceau. "You are zthree bad boys. You will stay in for two hours aftair ze class, and write out French verbs vizar you."

"Oh, sir!"

"I speaks to your Form-master, and he see zat you sall be detained, n'est-ce-pas? Perhaps zat lesson will be good for you."

The three Tommies looked submissively sorrowful.

They were not specially keen on French verbs; but if Mossoo had only known it, they had been planning to get detained that afternoon.

When the Fourth Form marched out after lessons, the three Tommies remained behind, with lugubrious looks, to grind at French verbs. Mr. Bootles came in and spoke to them seriously.

"Monsieur Monceau complains of your conduct very seriously," said Mr. Bootles, with a frown. "I am surprised at you!"

"Oh, sir!" murmured the three.

"You are detained for two hours. I shall expect you to write out the whole of the four conjugations in every mood and tense."

"Tare an' touns!" murmured Tommy Doyle. "Don't utter ridiculous ejaculations, Doyle! And if you quit this room before your detention expires, I shall punish you severely."

"Oh, sir, we wouldn't!" said Tommy Dodd meekly. "Certainly the three young rascals had no intention of doing that."

"Mind you do not!" said Mr. Bootles severely. "I shall, in fact, keep an eye on the Form-room, and if I find that you have broken detention—"

Mr. Bootles did not finish. He left it to the imagination of the detained juniors what awful things would happen in that case.

The Form-master went out, and closed the door hard, and the three Moderns grinned at one another.

"Not a giddy suspish!" said Tommy Dodd. "I wonder what Bootles would think if he knew he's helping us to prove an alibi?"

"Ha, ha! Poor old Mossoo! It was rather a shame to worry him!" grinned Cook.

"Never mind. We'll please him with the way we do these rotten verbs, and butter him up afterwards," said Tommy Dodd.

And the detained juniors started industriously upon the four conjugations.

Meanwhile Jimmy Silver & Co. were not idle.

Having seen Knowles of the Sixth on the cricket-field, they strolled over to the Modern side, and slipped into Tommy Dodd's study. Knowles was pretty certain to remain half an hour at the cricket, so they had plenty of time.

The costumes of Thundering Bull, Sitting Tiger, and Black Buffalo were ready in the study, with the necessary grease-paints.

Jimmy Silver locked the door. Then Jimmy, Lovell, and Raby proceeded to don the Redskin costumes.

Newcome helped them to make up.

It was not so necessary to look like Redskins as to conceal every trace of their own identity, and Newcome laid the paint on thick.

With coppery complexions, and darkened eyebrows, and war-paint of red and yellow in bars across their faces, the merry Classics were not likely to be recognised.

When the transformation was complete, they surveyed themselves in the glass with many chuckles.

"My only hat!" said Jimmy Silver. "My only Aunt Sempronia wouldn't know me now, I fancy!"

"Knowles won't, that's a cert!" grinned Lovell.

"About time Knowles came in. I should say. Cut off and get an eye on the cad, Newcome!"

Newcome hurried out to scout.

He returned in a few minutes, grinning.

"Knowles is coming in. He'll be in a couple of ticks."

"Good!"

"We've got to catch him alone," said Raby.

"Keep an eye open, Newcome, and let's have the news."

Newcome stationed himself on the stairs overlooking the senior passage below. Most of the fellows were on the playing-fields, and the passages were deserted. The avengers had chosen their time well.

Knowles of the Sixth came in, stopped a few minutes chatting with Catesby in the passage, and then went to his study.

As soon as the door had closed on him Newcome hurried back to Tommy Dodd's quarters with the news.

"Good egg!" said Jimmy Silver. "Now get down to the lower stairs, and whistle when the coast's quite clear. We're ready!"

Jimmy and Lovell and Raby waited anxiously for Newcome's whistle. It was heard in a few minutes.

"Come on!" said Thundering Bull breathlessly.

The three amateur Redskins hurried out of the study, and scuttled down the stairs to the senior passage. In a few seconds they were at Knowles' door.

Jimmy did not pause to knock.

He hurled the door open, and with a rush the three Redskins entered the study, Jimmy slamming the door behind him.

Newcome grinned, and strolled away to the cricket-field. He was finished on the Modern side. The rest remained in the hands of Jimmy Silver & Co.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In the Hands of the Redskins.

CECIL KNOWLES was seated in his armchair, smoking a cigarette after his cricket practice—one of the pleasant little customs of the Sixth.

He started to his feet as his door was hurled open, hastily concealing the cigarette in the palm of his hand.

He stared blankly as three raging Redskins bundled in, and one of them slammed the door and locked it.

The bully of the Sixth could scarcely believe his eyes.

He had licked Tommy Dodd & Co., and sternly forbidden any more Redskin business, and here were the Redskins invading his own

study as truculently as real Comanches on the warpath!

"You cheeky young sweeps!" roared Knowles, greatly incensed. "What the thunder do you mean?"

"Ugh!" grunted the three Comanche braves.

"Dodd, you young scoundrel! My hat—Hands off! Are you mad? Why—what—Yah! Oh!" stuttered Knowles, as the three Redskins simply hurled themselves upon him.

The astounded prefect went to the floor with a crash.

He gave a wild howl as the cigarette slipped up his sleeve. It was painful. But the Redskins did not even notice it. They sprawled over Knowles, pinning him down on his back on the study carpet.

Knowles was too astounded to struggle for a moment. Then he began to resist violently. "You young hounds!" he panted. "You'll be flogged for this—sacked, you young villains! Dodd, Doyle, Cook—Groogh! Gerroff! Will you get off, you young demons? I'll report this to the Head! Yaroooh! Gurrurrrh!"

Knowles' voice died away, as a rag was shoved into his mouth, choking his utterance.

He struggled furiously, but the three sturdy juniors were too much even for the big Sixth-Former—much too much.

Thundering Bull had a knee planted on his chest, Black Buffalo was grasping his wrists and holding them together, and Sitting Tiger was trampling recklessly on his legs.

The three Redskins did not speak.

They did not intend to give the prefect a chance of recognising their voices. But the astounded and enraged Knowles had no doubt at all about their identity. He did not doubt for a moment that the three Tommies were taking vengeance for the "mucked-up" play in this reckless manner.

"Ugh!" grunted Thundering Bull. And that was all he said. The three Comanches wisely confined their remarks to that guttural ejaculation.

Knowles resisted, striving to spit the gag out of his mouth and yell for help. But a coppery fist drove the gag further in, and he could only splutter and gurgle.

Thundering Bull jerked a cord from under his blanket, and fastened it round the prefect's wrists as Black Buffalo held them together.

The cord was knotted tightly, and then Knowles was helpless.

His hands secured, Thundering Bull fastened a second cord round his ankles with deft fingers, knotting it very securely.

Then the three Redskins rose, panting a little, and executed a war-dance of triumph round the prefect as he lay gurgling on his back.

Knowles' face was black with fury.

That any juniors should venture to handle a prefect of the Sixth in this outrageous manner was astounding! Knowles could hardly believe that it was not a fearsome nightmare.

But he soon had painful proof that it was real.

The war-dance over, the Redskins collared him and turned him over on his face. Then Sitting Tiger sat on his head, and Black Buffalo on his legs, and Thundering Bull picked up a cane from the table.

Knowles heard the swish of the cane in the air, and thrilled and shuddered with apprehension.

Often enough he had bestowed that cane upon hapless juniors. Knowles was much given to the use of the cane, stretching his authority as a prefect to its utmost limits in that direction. Now his own turn had come, though he could scarcely believe that the juniors would have the audacity to thrash him. But he soon discovered that they had.

The cane rose in the air, and came down with a tremendous cut.

Lash!

Knowles wriggled and gurgled. But he could do nothing more. Gurgling, and wriggling, and writhing were all he had a chance to do.

Swish, swish, swish, swish!

Thundering Bull was evidently a vengeful Redskin. He laid on the lashes as if he were beating carpet.

Swish, swish, swish!

The struggling, wriggling, writhing, gurgling prefect had to take his medicine—and he took it.

Twenty times the cane descended, with all the force of Thundering Bull's strong arm,

and by that time Knowles, Sixth-Former as he was, was almost reduced to tears.

Then the Redskin broke the cane into halves, and tossed them into the fender. That cane, at all events, was to administer no further castigation to hapless Modern fags. Knowles, white with pain and rage, wriggled over and glared at the avengers. But the Comanches were not finished yet.

Knowles tried to dodge as Thundering Bull picked up the inkpot from the table. But he could not escape. The ink swamped down over his head and face, and ran down inside his collar. Knowles' white, furious face was suddenly transformed into Central African blackness.

Then Thundering Bull opened the study cupboard, and took out a pot of jam and a dish of butter.

Butter and jam were mixed with a merciless hand.

Knowles gurgled faintly under the infliction.

The three Redskins exchanged grins as they looked at the bound Sixth-Former, writhing in ink and butter and jam.

Thundering Bull unlocked the door, and opened it a few inches, and peered into the passage. Then he made a sign to his braves, and the three of them slipped from the study, closing the door behind them.

Knowles remained on the floor of his study, wriggling, unable to speak or call out, and with feelings too deep for utterance, even if he could have spoken.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER. Not Guilty!

GREAT pip!" Catesby of the Sixth uttered that astounded exclamation as he looked into Knowles' study about twenty minutes later. Catesby had been expecting Knowles to tea, and as he had not come, Catesby had come to look for him. He stared at the wriggling, buttery, inky, and jammy figure on the floor in amazement and consternation.

"M-m-my only hat!" gasped Catesby. "Gerroooh!" came in a faint mumble from the fearsome form.

"Is—is that you, Knowles?"

"Grooh!"

"What's the matter?—What's happened? Why don't you speak?"

"Gr-r-r-r-r!"

Catesby discerned at last that the unhappy prefect was gagged, and he stooped over him, and removed the rag from his mouth. Knowles gasped and choked.

"Cut me loose! Cut me loose! I'll half kill them! I'll—I'll— Don't stand staring there, you dummy! Get me loose!" Knowles' voice rose to a shriek. "Will you get these cords off, you fool?"

"Who did this?" gasped Catesby.

"Dodd and Doyle and Cook. I'll make them pay for it. Get me loose!"

"Oh, great Scott!"

Catesby found a knife, and cut the cords. Knowles staggered to his feet. He made a rush to the door.

"I—I say, are you going out like that?" stuttered Catesby. "I shouldn't."

Knowles paused. He made for his wash-stand instead. Certainly he was in no state to appear in public.

With savage haste, he swamped water into the basin, and began to wash away the ink, the butter, and the jam. Catesby watched him with a lurking grin. From his point of view, the matter had its humorous side.

Knowles towelled away savagely, when most of the mixture was off. He did not stay to get it all off. His hair was still very greasy and inky. But he could not wait for vengeance.

"Well, this takes the cake!" said Catesby. "Do you mean to say that three kids in the Fourth handled you like that?"

"I'll make them suffer for it!"

"Blest if I can understand it! It means a flogging for them if you go to the Head."

"They may have thought I shouldn't know them, as they were in that Red Indian foolery. But, of course, I knew them."

"Silly young asses! It wasn't hard to guess, as that rubbish belongs to them," said Catesby. "Better go to the Head—"

Knowles paused a moment. He was longing to thrash the three delinquents with a cricket-stump. But Catesby's advice was good. A public flogging for the offenders was more severe; indeed, it was possible that

(Continued on page 20.)



# A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

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

## FOR NEXT FRIDAY.

Our splendid programme for next week includes three very fine complete school stories, in addition to a magnificent instalment of our great cinema serial,

### "THE MYSTERY MAKERS!"

By Nat Fairbanks,

in which take place some remarkable developments in the mystery of Wildfell Grange.

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The theme of this splendid yarn is quite an original one, and provides many curious and exciting incidents. In

### "JIMMY SILVER'S TRIUMPH!"

By OWEN CONQUEST,

the bullying Fourth-Former, Higgs, at last receives his due from the capable hands of Jimmy Silver. As Form-captain, Jimmy feels that it is up to him to do something, and he does it!

The special complete story of the chums of St. Jim's, by popular Martin Clifford, is entitled:

### "LONG ODDS!"

It is splendidly written, and will make a special appeal to the thousands of my reader-chums who have learned to love Martin Clifford's work in the pages of our companion paper, the "Gem" Library.

## NATURE FASHIONS.

We do not hear half enough about the fashions in the summer world of Dame Nature. One would like to read in the papers that the Wall Butterfly, dressed in exquisite brown and russet, was seen fitting round, and that the Skipper Butterflies, with their quaint, crisp effect, were noted airing themselves on the sheltered common amidst the

heather and the gorse. Until you look into the matter, you would never guess at the myriad styles of costume sported by the moths, for instance. Just now the Black Footman Moth is starting business. His kinsman, the Speckled Footman, is also seen, likewise the Crimson Speckled Footman. These are among myriads, of course. They all have grand Latin names, but I shall not bother about them.

## THE CINNABAR MOTH.

This specimen is one of the handsomest fellows you could imagine. He has the peculiarity of sporting the same college colours both sides of his wings—namely, black and scarlet, and very bold and original the effect is. The Cinnabar Moth is one of the aristocrats of the world of moths. He affects the ragwort, that fine, upstanding, hardy and most decorative flower which springs up in unlikely spots, just where man has ruined the landscape with his buildings and railways.

## VERY BLACK INDEED.

Perhaps, the black-hued moths get less attention than others. There are one or two so very dark that they resemble the Nubian footman in the house of a millionaire. This funkey was so black that when he showed visitors upstairs to the grand drawing-room the guests had to strike a match, or turn on their pocket electric-torches, so as to see where they were going. Well, if you do not credit this story I cannot help it. It was told me, that's all. Anyhow, if you are entomologically minded, just look out for the Black Footman Moth.

## A BUSY LIFE.

We all know the fussy individual who says he never has time for anything. He has always so much to do, and he never seems to get through anything at all. He is like the canary which was in a tearing hurry all the time, and never had anything to show for

it. One prefers the busy folks who seem to have plenty of spare time. I met a man the other night who has lived a fairly rushed sort of life. He is what is called leisured these days, but he is continually occupied doing good turns for others. He is just a quiet, matter-of-fact person, and if you told him he was doing a lot of fine things he would laugh at you. Yet, all the same, he is hardly ever to be met, except when he is finding some chap a job, or giving another a leg up through a difficult time. He just helps—that's all.

## LONG LIVE BOKSBURG!

J. Swanepoel writes from 2, Pretoria Street, Boksburg. He would like to have a talk with me, but, anyhow, his letters are good chats in themselves. I can tell him that I admire his way of putting things. I ring off there. We all do our best.—Best thanks to Miss Charmian Hewat, 7 and 8, York Chambers, Market Street, Sydney, for her literary and splendid letter. She says Chat is most effective. So is her note. I shall try and have Cardew yarns.—Marthinus Martin, Collegiate School, Colesberg, South Africa, is a progressive journalist, and wants correspondence, but is not aware that the column has been discontinued.

## CONCEIT.

There are few things worse. Whether it is silent or vocal, it is pretty much the same. It only annoys the world, and justifiably, to have affair with the fellow who lets it be seen that he thinks he knows best all the time. Even if he does know things—just a few—his vanity nullifies the possession. The man who knows he has got any amount to learn—as every man has—is in a safer position, for he is receptive to new influences, and is, in fact, picking up knowledge all the while. "Too conceited to learn" is a common failing. It is the old story of the chap who

Had a queer conception that  
There was a brain beneath his hat.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

I have had a splendid letter from Fred G. Harrold, who tells me that his National Union of Amalgamated Amateurs is going ahead. The headquarters is 7, Grosvenor Mansions, Coldharbour Lane, Brixton, S.W. 9, and those interested should apply there to Mr. Harrold, who wants to recruit a strong local staff. Members receive help in every way from those who are qualified to give it. The committee has at its disposal many thousands of reference-books.

## THE HUMAN CHARACTER.

There is nothing really so interesting and important. Everybody is more or less responsible for the character of the next fellow. If you meet a mean man, or a stupidly unwise one, it is up to you to show him where he is going off the track by assuming that he is not mean and unwise. By-and-by the likelihood is that he will be simply shunted out of his crass folly, and start playing the game. Condemn him, and he will grow obstinate and worse than ever.

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Your Editor

**THE SCHOOLBOY REDSKINS!**

(Continued from page 18.)

Dr. Chisholm would expel them for such an attack on a prefect. He nodded.

"I'll go to the Head!" he said. "I'll take the young scoundrels with me."

He ran out of the study, and up to Tommy Dodd's room. In the armchair in Tommy Dodd's study lay the Redskins costumes, and a large tin basin showed where the juniors had washed off their complexions. But there was no one in the study. Knowles left it again, and ran downstairs and out of the house. He caught Leggett by the ear in the quad.

"Have you seen Dodd and Cook and Doyle?" he panted.

"Ow! They're detained in the Form-room."

Knowles dashed away into the School House. Evidently the young rascals had broken detention to play that trick on him. He reached the Fourth Form room, and glared in. The three Tommies were seated at their desks, assiduously writing out French verbs. They looked up at Knowles.

"Come with me!" shouted the prefect. Tommy Dodd shook his head.

"Sorry, Knowles—can't! We're detained."

"Follow me to the Head at once!"

"Well, if you make a point of it," yawned Tommy Dodd, "you'll have to explain to Mr. Bootles."

Knowles, trembling with rage, led the way. The three Tommies followed him calmly. Knowles tapped at the Head's door, and entered, followed by the trio. Dr. Chisholm glanced with strong disapproval at the prefect's red and excited face.

"What is the matter, Knowles?" he asked icily.

"I have to report these juniors, sir. They attacked me in my study, bound me hand and foot, lashed me with a cane, and smothered me with ink and butter!" panted Knowles.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head. He fixed his eyes on the three juniors. "Have you anything to say?" he demanded sternly.

"Only that we didn't do it, sir," said Tommy Dodd meekly. "We've been detained ever since lessons, sir, and haven't left the Form-room."

"He is lying, sir!" howled Knowles. "They came into my study disguised as Red Indians—"

"What!" ejaculated the Head.

"Theatrical costumes, sir, that they have used in a play."

"Oh, I understand!"

"These costumes belong to them. I knew them at once, however. I had occasion to punish them last week, and they have done this out of revenge."

"Whoever has done it, Knowles, shall be severely punished. These juniors, however, declare that they had been under detention since lessons."

"Certainly, sir!" said the three Tommies in chorus.

"Somebody may have sneaked into my study, and borrowed the theatrical costumes, sir," said Tommy Dodd demurely. "Of course, we couldn't keep an eye on our property while we were detained."

"Naturally you could not," assented the Head. "I presume you have proof that you were in the Form-room at the time?"

"Mr. Bootles knows, sir."

"Go and request Mr. Bootles to step here, Dodd."

Tommy Dodd left the study, and returned with the Fourth-Form master.

"Mr. Bootles, Knowles accuses these juniors of assaulting him. When was it, Knowles?"

"A quarter of an hour ago, sir."

"They declare that they were under detention in the Form-room."

"Knowles is making a mistake," said Mr. Bootles drily. "The boys have not left the Form-room since lessons. I have been keeping them under observation."

"You are sure of that, Mr. Bootles?"

"Absolutely certain, sir!"

Dr. Chisholm turned to the prefect.

"That settles the matter, Knowles, so far as these juniors are concerned. You may go, my boys. Apparently, Knowles, some other boys borrowed the theatrical costumes belonging to Dodd. You have made a very hasty accusation, Knowles; and but for the mere accident that those three juniors happened to be under detention, a very serious injustice might have been done. If you discover the real culprits, you may report them to me."

Knowles did not speak; he could not. He almost staggered from the study. Even Knowles had to admit that the three Tommies were innocent; and as to who the culprits were, that was a mystery. It might have been any three juniors at Rookwood; Knowles was not popular. He left the School House with a face white with fury; and three cheery juniors watched him go from the window of the Form-room, and clucked in merry chorus.

Knowles did not let the matter rest. But he had to drop it at last. The three Comanches who had gone on the warpath so effectively remained unknown. All Knowles knew was that they were not the three Tommies. Knowles had to swallow his wrath the best he could. But for a long time afterwards Jimmy Silver & Co. chortled gleefully over the adventure of the Rookwood Redskins.

THE END.

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