

SPLENDID SCHOOLBOY AND SCOUT STORY IN THIS ISSUE.

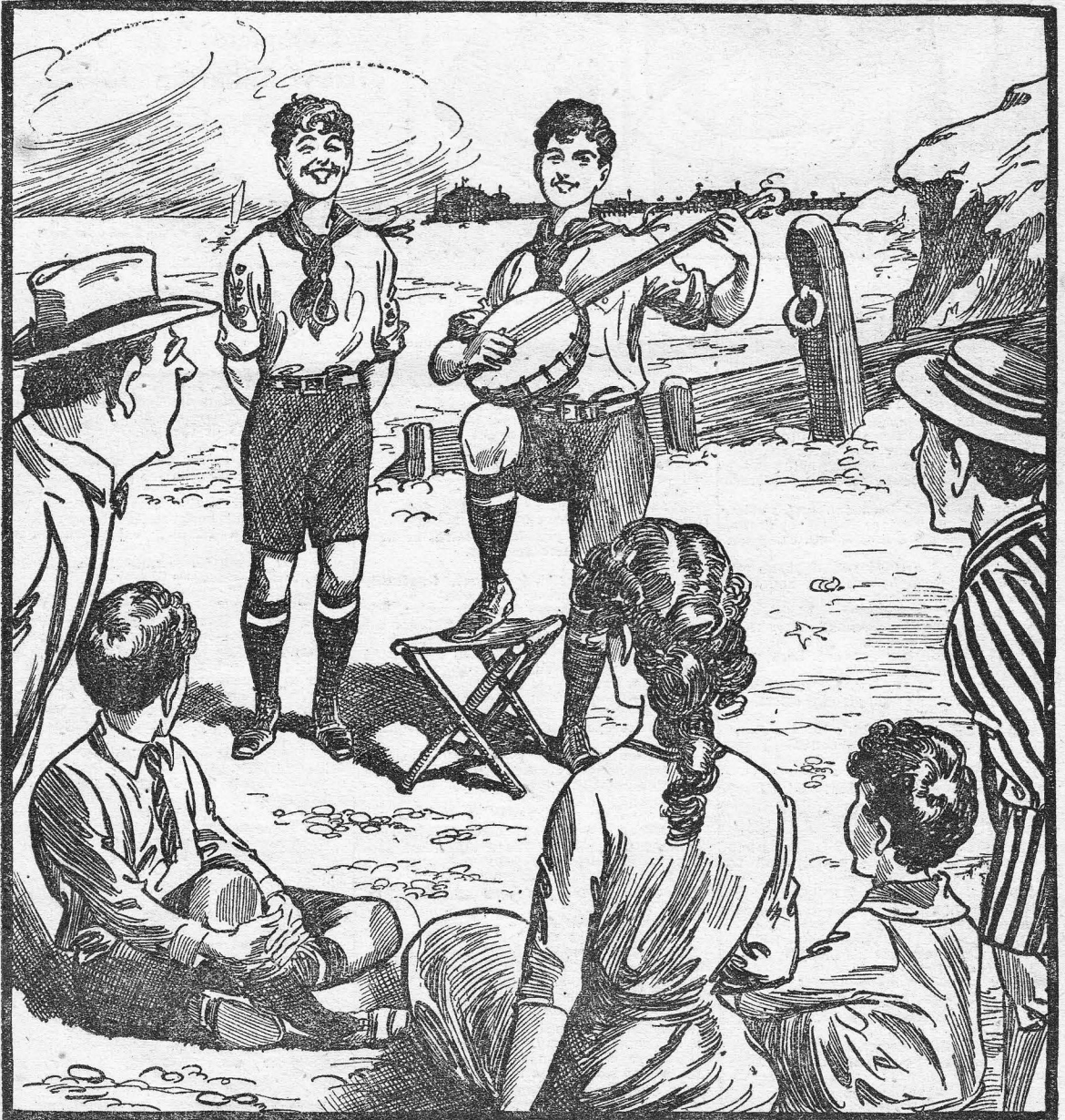
The Penny **1½**
Popular

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THE BEST SCHOOL AND ADVENTURE STORIES ON THE MARKET!



THE RIVAL CONCERT PARTY ARE FIRST ON THE PITCH!

(An Incident from Our Grand School Story Inside.)



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Fresh Fields and Pastures New!

YAW-AW-AW!" Harry Wharton, of the Greyfriars Remove, yawned portentously, and awoke.

For a full minute he blinked around him in stupefaction, trying to recall where he was. And then he remembered everything. He was not in bed in the Remove dormitory. He was in camp at Woody Bay, with the rest of the Greyfriars fellows—barring half a dozen fags who had been foolish enough to contract German measles.

Bolsover minor had been the first victim. And the Head, fearing a general epidemic, had decided that the school should camp out for a fortnight.

The fellows had arrived overnight at the pleasant encampment by the sea, and they had gone to bed dog-tired.

And now it was morning. Birds were carolling joyously, and a pleasant breeze from the sea rustled the canvas.

In No. 1 tent in the Remove lines were Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent.

The latter still slept, but his chum soon aroused him by the simple expedient of hurling a boot at him.

Nugent fielded the boot kith his nose, and sat up with a yell which echoed along the lines.

"Yarooooooh!" "Tumble out, you lazy slacker!" said Harry Wharton.

"Ow! Rising-bell hasn't gone yet!" "And it's not likely to go!" chuckled the captain of the Remove, "unless Gosling's had the foresight to bring the beastly bell to camp with him!"

"Camp?" echoed Nugent dazedly.

And it took him quite a long time to get his bearings. But presently he realised that he was no longer at Greyfriars, and with a whoop of delight he threw his blankets aside, and stood up in his pyjamas.

"Topping morning!" he remarked, peering through the flap of the tent.

"We're the first fellows awake, I believe," said Wharton.

"Don't you believe it, my son! Listen!" From the tents close at hand the following remarks became audible:

"Where's my bags?"
"Bunter's using 'em for a pillow."
"My hat! I'll jolly well pulverise him!"
"Anybody seen my boots?"
"My collar-studs vanished through a crack in the tent-board!"

"Wish the maid would buck up and bring my shaving-water!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Practically the whole of the Remove was astir.

"Let's buck up, Franky, and have a stroll round the camp," said Harry Wharton.

Nugent donned his flannel trousers, socks, and cricket-shoes. Then he paused.

"Wonder where we can get a wash?" he said.

"There's a tub outside each tent, I believe!"

"Oh, good!"
Frank Nugent pushed aside the flap, and stepped through the aperture. He stumbled as he did so, and, pitching forward, he went into the tub of water headfirst.

Splash!
"Gug-gug!" spluttered Nugent, frantically endeavouring to sort himself out.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover major, who was washing at the next tub. "That's the finest header I've seen for a long time!"

"Do it again, Nugent!" pleaded Ogilvy. "I wasn't looking that time!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Nugent scrambled out of the tub with some difficulty, and darted back into the tent to escape from his grinning school-fellows.

"Gimme a towel, Harry—quick!" he gasped. Wharton laughingly handed one over, and Nugent dried himself vigorously.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

The cheerful countenance of Bob Cherry appeared at the tent-entrance.

"It's taking you fellows a month of Sundays to get dressed!" said Bob. "Put a jerk in it! We're waiting for you!"

"How long have you been up, Bob?" inquired Wharton.

"Hours and hours."
"My hat! Been round the camp yet?"

"No. We're going round now. Johnny Bull's here, so's Inky and Dennis Carr."

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent hastily finished their toilet, and joined the others.

The camp resembled a beehive.

Everybody was up and doing by this time. So it seemed, anyway. But as the juniors passed one of the tents in the Fifth Form lines a loud snore came from within.

Bob Cherry gave a chuckle.

"Somebody still asleep," he said. "Coker, most likely!"

"Yes, rather!"
Johnny Bull produced a water-pistol from his pocket. He filled it from the tub which

stood outside the tent, and then he peered through the flap.

"Is it Coker?" murmured Harry Wharton.

"Can't be certain," said Johnny.

"Well, it's a Fifth Form bouncer, anyway!" said Bob Cherry. "Go ahead!"

Johnny Bull inserted the water-pistol through the slit in the tent-flap, and pressed the trigger.

The contents of the pistol descended in a deluge upon the face of the sleeper.

The snoring ceased as if by magic, and a fiendish yell rang out.

"Yoooooop!"

Johnny Bull again peered into the tent. But he darted back again almost immediately, with a terrified expression on his face.

"Bunk! Bunk for your lives!" he panted.

"But who—what—?"
"It's Prout!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

The Famous Five and Dennis Carr streaked away from the spot like champions of the cinderpath. And by the time Mr. Prout had thrust his dripping face through the flap, in order to discover the identity of the practical joker, the juniors were safely out of range.

"Jove! That was a narrow squeak!" panted Bob Cherry. "Fancy squirting water on old Prout!"

"I thought the masters slept in marquees," said Nugent.

"Same here! But I suppose Prout prefers a bell-tent."

"This is the Head's kennel," said Dennis Carr, halting beside an imposing marquee.

Even as Dennis spoke Dr. Locke emerged. He was attired, not in the familiar gown and mortar-board, but in a cool lounge suit.

"Good-morning, my boys!" he said pleasantly.

"Good-morning, sir!" said the juniors, in chorus.

"I trust you are comfortable in your new quarters?" said the Head.

"Awfully comfy, sir, thanks!" said Bob Cherry.

Dr. Locke nodded, and passed on. He halted in front of the notice-board which had been erected at the end of the lines, and the juniors saw him pin up an announcement.

"Wonder what's it all about?" said Wharton.

"Let's go and see," said Johnny Bull.

As soon as the Head had retired from the notice-board, the juniors sprinted up to it.

The following announcement, in the familiar handwriting of the Head, greeted their gaze,

"NOTICE!"

The following routine will come into effect forthwith, and it must be strictly observed:

- (1) All boys will rise at 7 a.m.
- (2) Breakfast will be served in the dining marquee at 8 a.m.
- (3) From 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. lessons will be held in the meadow adjoining the camp. For the remainder of the day all boys will be free, with the exception of those who, through misbehaviour, have been confined to camp.
- (4) All boys are to be in camp by 8 p.m., unless in possession of late passes, which will be issued at the discretion of the masters and prefects.
- (5) The roll will be called every evening at 9.
- (6) With the exception of the Sixth Form, all boys are to be in bed by 9.30 p.m. Members of the Sixth Form are privileged to remain up until 10.30 p.m.

"This timetable is subject to alteration and amendment.

(Signed) H. H. LOCKE,
Headmaster."

The Removites pursued that announcement with mixed feelings.

"So we're going to have lessons!" said Dennis Carr in disgust. "That's the limit!" "I was hoping to escape from Quelch's gimlet eye for a fortnight!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Same here!" "It's only for a couple of hours a day, thank goodness!" said Harry Wharton. "We're free after eleven o'clock in the morning."

"We ought to be free all the time, in my opinion!" said Bob Cherry. "Oh, dash it all, Bob, there must be a bit of discipline, or everything will be at sixes and sevens!"

"The Head doesn't say anything about dinner and tea and supper," remarked Nugent. "He only mentions brekker."

"Pr'aps we're only going to have one meal a day?" suggested Dennis Carr. "Eh? What's that, Carr?"

Billy Bunter rolled up to the group of juniors. And there was genuine alarm in his tone and his expression.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Atraid you're in for a thin time, my tulip! There's only going to be one meal a day while we're in camp—and that's brekker!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—" "It's a fact," said Bob, grinning. "You'll have to eat about a dozen rashers of bacon every morning to fortify yourself for the rest of the day!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Billy Bunter blinked at the announcement on the notice-board, and when he found that there was no reference to dinner, tea, and supper he turned quite pale.

"I—I say, you fellows, I shall starve!" he said dismally.

The juniors nodded gravely. "That's quite probable," said Dennis Carr. "It comes jolly hard on you, Bunty," said Bob Cherry. "We wealthy fellows will be able to buy grub outside the camp. We shall be able to get sufficient to keep body and soul together, anyway. But you, being perpetually stony, won't be able to do that."

"I reckon Bunter will lose about two stones a day," said Johnny Bull.

"And within a week he'll be a skinny skeleton!" said Nugent cheerfully.

"Groo!" said Bunter, with a shudder. The prospect of slow starvation was gall and wormwood to the Owl of the Remove, who was too obtuse to see that his school-fellows were merely indulging in the gentle pastime of leg-pulling.

With a ook of abject misery on his face the fat junior rolled away.

"Bunter!" Mr. Quelch hailed the plump Removite as the latter was making his way to No. 7 tent in the Remove lines.

"Yes, sir!" said Billy Bunter, stopping short. "Why are you looking so utterly woe-begone, my boy?"

"I—I can't bear the thought of being starved, sir—" "What!"

"And wasting away to a skeleton—" "Bunter!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "What nonsense is this?"

"I've just been reading the Head's notice, sir, about the camp routine. And I can't help saying it's a rotten shame, sir, that we should be restricted to one meal a day."

"Boy!" "I'd rather go home to my pater, sir, than stay here and starve!" "You are an utterly absurd boy, Bunter!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Do you seriously imagine that you will get only one meal a day whilst you are in camp?" "Yessir, The Head only mentions breakfast in his announcement—" "That is because the times of the other meals have not yet been fixed."

"Oh!" Billy Bunter brightened up at once. "Then we shall get dinner, sir?" "Yes." "And tea?" "Of course!" "And supper?"

"Yes, yes! You are a very foolish boy, Bunter, to imagine that breakfast would be the sole meal of the day."

"Where are all those fellows going, sir?" asked Billy Bunter, as a throng of Fifth-Formers and Shell fellows went hurrying past.

"To the dining-marquees," said Mr. Quelch. "Breakfast is now being served. You had better hurry, my boy!"

Billy Bunter needed no second bidding. He scuttled away like a fat hare. And the speed at which he covered the distance to the dining-marquees would have turned a Shrub or an Applegarth green with envy.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Lessons Under Difficulties!

BREAKFAST was a very cheerful function. And the Greyfriars fellows, their appetites sharpened by the keen morning air, did full justice to the eggs and bacon, and the toast and marmalade.

The members of the kitchen staff had come to the camp with the rest of the school, and they soon adapted themselves to the novel conditions.

After breakfast, Harry Wharton & Co. indulged in cricket practice. And the game terminated very suddenly when Loder of the Sixth, emerging from his tent, stopped the ball with his chin.

"Yaroooooh!" yelled the prefect. "Who—who threw that ball?"

"Guilty, my lord!" murmured Dennis Carr. "Ha, ha, ha!" Loder caressed his chin, and glared at Dennis.

"Take a thousand lines!" he snarled. "Make it a billion, old top!" said Dennis cheerfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!" The Sixth-Former scowled at the high-spirited juniors.

"Playing cricket in the lines isn't allowed!" he said sharply.

"Neither is giving lines for playing cricket!" retorted Bob Cherry. And there was a fresh burst of merriment.

Uttering a savage exclamation, Loder strode towards the juniors, doubtless with the intention of administering cuffs right and left. But he tripped over a tent-peg, and pitched forward on his face.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Didn't know you were an acrobat, Loder!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

The prefect struggled to his feet. His face was livid with fury, and his hands were tightly clenched.

But before he could proceed to commit assault and battery on the Removites, Mr. Quelch appeared on the scene.

"Sir," said Loder, "I feel it my duty, as a prefect, to report these young rascals to you!"

Mr. Quelch looked surprised. "What have they been doing, Loder?" "Disobeying orders, sir."

"Indeed! Whose orders?" "They've been playing cricket in the lines, sir."

"And they are perfectly entitled to do so, since there are no orders to the contrary!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"I consider that it's highly dangerous to play in the vicinity of the tents, sir—" "What you consider, Loder, is of small moment. I trust you have not punished these juniors?"

"I gave Carr a thousand lines for deliberately striking me with a ball!" said Loder sullenly.

"That's not true!" exclaimed Dennis indignantly. "It was quite an accident, sir—and Loder knows it!"

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"The imposition is cancelled," he said. Dennis Carr murmured "Thank you, sir!" Loder also murmured something—and it was extremely fortunate for the rascally prefect that Mr. Quelch did not hear his remark. "Come, my boys!" said the Form-master. "It is time for lessons!"

The majority of the fellows were already wending their way to the adjoining meadow. The Removites formed up in a secluded corner, close to the hedge.

"Where are we to sit, please, sir?" inquired Billy Bunter.

"On the grass," said Mr. Quelch. "But we shall be getting rheumatism, sir—"

"Nonsense! Sit down at once, all of you!" Mr. Quelch enjoyed the luxury of a chair. His pupils disported themselves in the long grass, and history-books were handed round.

The juniors made themselves very comfortable. Lord Mauleverer, the slacker of the Remove, calmly curled up and went to sleep. Mr. Quelch failed to notice him, for the simple reason that the sun was shining full in the Form-master's eyes.

Billy Bunter produced a large slab of toffee and munched it ravenously, despite the fact that he had not long had his breakfast.

"Where did you get that toffee, porpoise?" muttered Squiff.

"Tuck marquee, of course," was the mumbling reply. "Where?"

"Mrs. Mible's stock has all been brought down from the tuckshop at Greyfriars, and stored in one of the marquees."

"Oh, good!" "There is a lot of unnecessary muttering going on!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "I should advise you to study your history-books, for in a few moments I shall proceed to question you."

The juniors bent their heads over their books, and silence reigned. But only for a moment. It was broken by a wild yell from Bolsover major.

"Yaroooooh!" "Bolsover!" roared Mr. Quelch. "How dare you!"

The bully of the Remove caressed his cheek. "I couldn't help it, sir!" he said. "Something stung me. Must have been a wasp!"

"You are not sitting on an ant-heap, I trust?" said Mr. Quelch.

Bolsover leapt to his feet like a Jack-in-the-box, alarmed at the Form-master's suggestion.

"There are no ants here, fathead!" growled Johnny Bull. "Sit down!"

And he gripped Bolsover major by the tail of his jacket and jerked him backwards on to the grass.

"I could swear—" began Bolsover. "Better not let Quelch hear you, then!"

"Ass! I could swear, somebody let rip at me with a peashooter!"

"What rot!" muttered Johnny Bull. "As if any fellow would have the nerve to— Yarooooop!"

Johnny broke off with a yell of wild anguish as a small, hard object came whizzing through the air with the velocity of a bullet, and smote him on the tip of the nose.

"Bull!" Mr. Quelch's voice was thunderous. "What do you mean by disturbing the class in that way?"

"Yow! Something stung me on the nose, sir," said Johnny. "Must have been the same wasp that stung Bolsover."

Johnny knew that it was a pea that had struck him, but he had no intention of betraying the fact. If Mr. Quelch discovered the identity of the marksman, there would be trouble.

"If you make any more noises of that sort, Bull," said the Form-master, "you will be confined to camp for the remainder of the day."

"Oh crumbs!" "Who was it, Johnny?" muttered Harry Wharton.

"Dashed if I know!" The captain of the Remove looked searchingly at the other members of the class, but he saw no sign of a peashooter.

A moment later, however, he detected, through a gap in the hedge, the uniform of a Boy Scout. And then he understood.

Within a stone's throw of the Greyfriars' quarters there was another encampment—the abode of a troop of Boy Scouts, whose leader was one Jimmy Brown.

Overnight, there had been a little misunderstanding between the Greyfriars fellows

and the Scouts, and a pitched battle had ensued.

Jimmy Brown & Co. had got decidedly the worst of the argument, and it seemed that they were now endeavouring to level things up a little by lying in ambush behind the hedge, and bombarding the Removites with their peashooters.

The grinning face of Jimmy Brown appeared through the gap, and from Jimmy's mouth a peashooter protruded.

Harry Wharton shook his fist at the Scout leader.

"Who is it, Harry?" murmured Bob Cherry. "Jimmy Brown and his gang, of course! They're letting rip at us with their peashooters."

"My hat!"

The next moment a perfect deluge of peas rained upon the Greyfriars juniors. There were numerous casualties.

Lord Mauleverer was rudely awakened by a pea which lodged in his ear, and a dozen others were literally peppered with peas.

"Ow!"

"My nose!"

"My napper!"

"Faith, an' we must have disturbed a giddy wasp's nest!" groaned Micky Desmond.

Mr. Quelch rose angrily to his feet, and as he did so a pea smote him fairly and squarely on the chin, causing him to sit down again hurriedly and violently—so violently that he went right through the canvas of the deck-chair.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A peal of laughter rang out from the lane which skirted the meadow.

Mr. Quelch extricated himself with difficulty from the ruins of the deck-chair, and, hurrying across to the hedge, he peered over the top of it.

But the Boy Scouts had vanished like rabbits into their burrows.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Form-master. "It appears that a number of misguided boys have been attacking us with peashooters! Does any boy know who the assailants were?"

Everybody knew by this time that it was Jimmy Brown & Co. who had launched the attack.

But the juniors were sportsmen, and they had no intention of giving their rivals away.

There was a general shaking of heads in response to Mr. Quelch's question.

"This is extraordinary!" muttered the Remove-master. "I am convinced that a number of foolish boys were lurking behind this hedge! They have evidently decamped."

"Shall we go and chase them, sir?" said Bob Cherry eagerly.

"No, Cherry, you will not!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "The class will disperse at eleven o'clock, and not a moment before! I will now proceed to question you on the subject of English history, which you have been studying, Carr!"

"Yessir!"

"Who was Sir Walter Raleigh?"

"Loder's patron saint, sir," said Dennis.

"What! Why do you say that, Carr?"

"Because he invented smoking, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Everybody saw the joke, with the exception of Mr. Quelch, whose sense of humour was not equal to the occasion.

"You will take a hundred lines, Carr, for impertinence!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove looked up with a start.

"Did you call me, sir?"

"Yes, I did!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Who was Sir Walter Raleigh?"

Billy Bunter feverishly nudged Skinner, who sat next to him.

"Who was he, Skinny?" he muttered.

"The merchant who sunk the Hun fleet at the Battle of Jutland, fathead!" whispered Skinner.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"I am waiting, Bunter!" he said grimly.

"I repeat, who was Sir Walter Raleigh?"

Billy Bunter's answer fairly took everybody's breath away.

"The merchant who sunk the Hun fleet at the Battle of Jutland, fathead!"

For a moment Mr. Quelch stood petrified, unable to move or speak. And when he did speak his voice resembled the booming of breakers on the beach.

"Come out before the class, you grossly impertinent boy! I will chastise you with the utmost severity!"

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"But—but what have I done, sir?" faltered Bunter, in dismay.

"You have had the temerity to address me—your Form-master—as 'fathead!' " roared Mr. Quelch.

"Oh crumbs! I—I simply repeated what Skinner said to me, sir!"

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"So it was Skinner who prompted you to make such a disrespectful remark? Very well. I will deal with Skinner as he deserves! Come out here, sir!"

The cad of the Remove rose to his feet, and walked sullenly out in front of the class.

"Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch. "Ask Mr. Prout if he will be good enough to lend me a cane."

Harry Wharton departed on his errand. He returned a moment later empty-handed.

"Mr. Prout says he's sorry, sir, but he didn't bring a cane with him to camp."

"Very well," said Mr. Quelch. "Kindly repeat my request to Mr. Hacker, Mr. Twigg, and Mr. Capper."

Harry Wharton visited the various Form-masters, and after an absence of ten minutes he came back to Mr. Quelch.

"Not a single cane has been brought to camp, sir," he announced.

The class chuckled, and Skinner was grinning. He blissfully imagined that the chastisement would not come off.

But Mr. Quelch was not easily discouraged. He crossed over to the hedge, and after groping about for some time he discovered what he sought—a thin and pliant stick.

"Now, Skinner," he said grimly. "Hold out your hand!"

Very reluctantly, the cad of the Remove obeyed.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Now the other hand!" said Mr. Quelch, breathing hard.

The process was repeated, and, judging by the victim's wild lamentations, that pliant stick was even more effective than the official cane.

Billy Bunter had discreetly hidden himself from view. He lay full length on the grass, screened by the backs of the Famous Five, and he hoped that Mr. Quelch would forget all about him.

For once in a way his hopes were realised. The welcome word of dismissal came shortly afterwards, and the Removites dispersed, revelling in the freedom and the sunshine.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Bob Cherry's Brain-Wave!

"THIS was the top of the tuckshop, or the canteen, or the refreshment-room, whatever they call it!" said Bob Cherry.

The marquee over which Mrs. Mimble presided was besieged by a clamouring mob. The Famous Five of the Remove were first on the scene, but others were hard on their heels.

"Ginger-pop, please!"

"Jam-tarts this way!"

"Mine's a strawberry-ice!"

Mrs. Mimble was thrown into quite a flutter.

"Stand back, young gentlemen, please! I'll take your orders one at a time. Did you say a strawberry-ice, Master Coker?"

"Yes please, ma'am, and a couple of chocolate eclairs!"

"We come before Coker!" protested Johnny Bull.

"I'll serve you in one moment, Master Bull!" said the perspiring dame.

Fellows surged into the marquee at the rate of a score a minute, and Mrs. Mimble did a roaring trade.

The Famous Five thrust bottles of ginger-beer into their pockets, and armed themselves with bags of pastries. Then they fought their way to the exit.

"Let's go over in the shade," said Nugent.

Whilst the juniors sprawled in the grass, devouring jam-tarts and quaffing ginger-beer, there was a tramping of feet in the lane, and Jimmy Brown & Co. grinned cheerfully at the Famous Five over the top of the hedge.

"Top of the morning, you fellows!" said Jimmy.

Harry Wharton was on his feet in a twinkling.

"Collar the bounders!" he rapped out.

"We'll teach 'em to pelt us with their confounded peashooters!"

Hurree Singh caught his leader by the arm.

"The Quelchy sahib is approachfully coming!" he muttered.

"Oh crumbs!"

Wharton glared at the Boy Scouts.

"We can't get our own back now, you cubs, or wolves, or whatever you call yourselves," he said, "but we'll put the kybosh on you before long!"

"Yes, rather!"

And Jimmy Brown & Co.'s retort consisted of the ancient and classic monosyllable.

"Rats!"

With Mr. Quelch hovering in the offing, so to speak, it was quite impossible for the Famous Five to get to grips with their rivals. But they consoled themselves with the reflection that they would soon have an opportunity of turning the tables on Jimmy Brown and his fellow Scouts.

"There's just time to nip down to the sea for a bathe before dinner," said Nugent.

"Good wheeze!" said Wharton. "Come on!"

Dennis Carr and Mark Linley and Vernon-Smith were already in the act of quitting the camp. They carried towels and bathing costumes, and the Famous Five hurried after them.

"Hang on a jiffy, you fellows!" sang out Bob Cherry. "Your uncles are coming!"

"Bathing?" asked Vernon-Smith, looking round.

"What-ho!"

"Duck up, then!"

The sandy beach of Woody Bay was not far distant.

The juniors glanced back over their shoulders once or twice, half expecting to find that they were being followed by Jimmy Brown & Co. But there was no sign of the Scouts.

"Here we are!" said Dennis Carr at length.

"By Jove! Isn't it ripping?"

It certainly was. The sunlight sparkled on the sea and glistened on the yellow sands.

Woody Bay was not a large watering-place, but it was becoming increasingly popular.

There was only one hotel in the vicinity, and that was filled to overflowing by happy holiday-makers.

A row of bathing-tents had been erected on the beach, and there were boats and canoes of every description for hire. Bare-legged boatmen moved to and fro, their faces tanned by the wind and sun, and joyous trippers lounged on the sands, or disported themselves in the surf.

And the Greyfriars fellows were free to enjoy themselves at their own sweet will—thanks to the thoughtfulness of Bolsover minor in contracting German measles!

Harry Wharton hired the tents, and a few moments later the juniors sprinted down to the sea together, and plunged into the inviting surf.

"Who's for a long swim?" asked Dennis Carr.

"I am," said Bob Cherry. "We'll just nip across the English Channel and back!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The swimmers did not cross the Channel. But they looked as if they had every intention of doing so. They swam out far beyond the end of the little pier, and the holiday-makers on the beach watched them in some concern.

But the boatmen had no misgivings.

"They'll be all right," said one of them. "Them kids are fine swimmers as ever was!"

By this time the heads of Harry Wharton & Co. had disappeared from the view of the crowd on the beach. But after a time they reappeared, and the swimmers were seen to be striking out strongly for the shore.

It had been a magnificent swim, and the juniors received quite an ovation as they scrambled ashore.

"Now for a sun-bath!" panted Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

And as they stretched themselves out in the sand, with the hot sun beating down upon them, Bob Cherry had a brain-wave.

"I've been thinking, you fellows," he began.

Snort from Harry Wharton. Snort from Frank Nugent. Derisive grunts from the others.

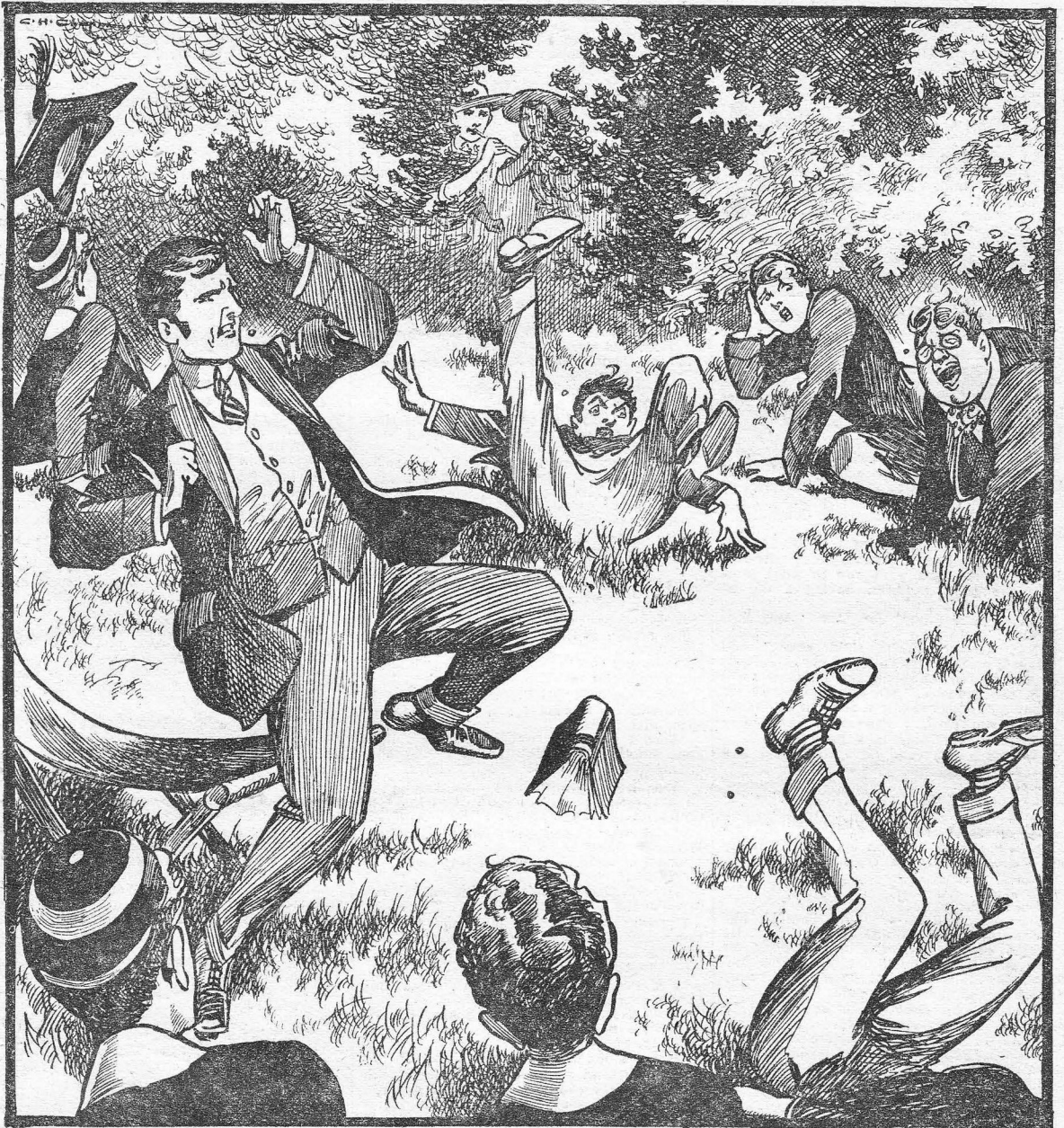
"I've been thinking of a wheeze for getting our own back on Jimmy Brown & Co."

"Oh!"

Bob's chums began to sit up and take notice. They had been hoping that a wheeze of some sort would spring up in their own fertile brains. But so far there had been nothing doing.

"Trot out the merry wheeze, Bob!" said Mark Linley.

With a flourish of his hand, Bob Cherry



Mr. Quelch rose angrily to his feet, and as he did so a pea smote him fairly and squarely on the chin, causing him to sit down again hurriedly and violently. The next moment a perfect deluge of peas rained upon the Greyfriars juniors. (See page 4.)

indicated the dozens of holiday-makers on the sands and in the sea.

"These people," he remarked, "seem to be enjoying themselves."

"Ass!" growled Johnny Bull. "We're waiting to hear your wheeze!"

"But their enjoyment," continued Bob Cherry, unheeding, "stops short when the evening comes. What can they do with themselves in the evening? Nix! They can't visit a cinema, because there isn't one. They can't go to a concert, or a show of any sort, for the same reason. There aren't any!"

"Would you mind telling us what you're driving at, Bob?" said Harry Wharton.

"Certainly. I suggest that we get up a really ripping concert for the benefit of these people."

"My hat!"

"We can give a show this evening," said Bob. "We shan't need any make-up or any elaborate preparation. We'll sing songs and give comic turns here on the sands."

"Not a bad stunt," said Vernon-Smith.

"But how does it affect Jimmy Brown & Co.?"

"Why, they'll turn up in full force to see the show. And we'll sing some special songs at their expense. We'll get the poet-laureate of the Remove—Dick Penfold—to compose some extra-special ditties, taking a rise out of the Scouts. The ditties can be sung to well-known tunes, and when Jimmy Brown & Co. hear them they'll have several sorts of a fit! They'll hear themselves slanged and slated, and they won't be able to spoil the show. The rest of the audience will see to that."

The juniors "cottoned on" at last to Bob Cherry's wheeze, and they were heartily in favour of it.

The concert on the sands would serve a double purpose. It would afford amusement to the holiday-makers, whose evenings were usually barren of pleasure, and it would cause Jimmy Brown and his followers to be covered with ridicule.

"Ripping!" said Dennis Carr. "Now, the first thing to do is to advertise the show,

and then we'll set Dick Penfold to work on the songs."

The juniors hurriedly dressed themselves, and then Harry Wharton obtained a large sheet of white cardboard from one of the boatmen. He then drew up the following announcement:

"NOTICE!"

A SPECIAL CONCERT
(to which all are invited)
will be given on the sands this evening
at seven o'clock

by
THE BURLESQUES,
an amateur Concert-party.
FREE! FREE! FREE!
Roll up in your thousands!"

The placard was displayed on the pier-gates, and it attracted instant attention. Holiday-makers congregated round it, and
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little dreaming that the "Burlques" were merely a set of enterprising schoolboys, they decided to turn up at the concert.

When the juniors had proceeded a hundred yards or so in the direction of the camp, Bob Cherry glanced back, and gave a chuckle. "What's up?" asked Nugent.

"There's Jimmy Brown!"

"Where?"

"Close to the pier-gates. He's reading our announcement."

"In that case, he's bound to turn up at the concert, and bring all his giddy family with him," said Vernon-Smith.

"Yes, rather!"

And Harry Wharton & Co. walked on, eagerly looking forward to settling their account with Patrol-leader Jimmy Brown.

Whether Jimmy Brown would fall an easy prey to their designs remained to be seen.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Not According to Programme!

"WHERE'S Penfold?"

"Anybody seen him?"

Harry Wharton & Co. passed through the Remove lines, making inquiries as they went. And presently the cheery, sunburnt face of Dick Penfold bobbed out from one of the tents.

"What's wanted?" he asked.

"You are!" said Dennis Carr. "It isn't often that we want to enlist the services of a long-haired poet, but we do now."

"We want you to compose a few ditties, Pen," said Mark Linley.

"What about—the joys of camp-life?"

"Bust the joys of camp-life!" growled Johnny Bull. "We want you to write some verses to popular tunes, having a dig at Jimmy Brown & Co."

"Oh! Are they for the 'Greyfriars Herald'?"

"No; we want them right away," said Harry Wharton. "We're giving a concert this evening on the sands, and the Scouts will be in the audience. We must have at least a couple of songs taking a rise out of them."

"And you think I can grind out poetry to order—what?" said Dick Penfold.

"We know you can, old sport!" said Bob Cherry.

"Don't let us down, for goodness' sake," said Nugent. "We're relying on you."

"Absolutely!" said Dennis Carr.

"All serene," said Penfold. "I'll do my best. I'll get to work on the songs directly after dinner, and you shall have them by tea-time."

"Good!"

"That's the style!"

When dinner was over Dick Penfold, like Achilles of old, remained in his tent. He thought of all the unflattering things he could say about Jimmy Brown & Co., and he composed a couple of screechingly funny ditties to the tunes of popular songs.

In spite of the fact that he had been born and bred in lowly circumstances, and had a hard battle with poverty before coming to Greyfriars, Penfold had developed a keen sense of humour. And never was that sense of humour so much in evidence as when he wrote poetry.

It was not real poetry, of course, that Pen wrote. Unkind critics called it doggerel. But it sparkled with fun, and it always had a good swinging metre. And even the critics agreed that the poet laureate of the Remove might one day blossom into a Byron or a Kipling.

Shortly before tea Harry Wharton & Co. peeped into Penfold's tent.

"How's it going Pen?" inquired Johnny Bull.

"First-rate!" was the reply. "I've written one song, and I'm just putting the finishing touches to the second."

"Ripping!"

The juniors waited until Penfold had completed his task. Then they perused what he had written, and their laughter echoed through the camp.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Topping, by Jove!"

"This will make Jimmy Brown & Co. sing small, with a vengeance!"

Bob Cherry gave the Remove poet a sounding slap on the back.

"You're a giddy marvel, Pen!" he said heartily.

"Ow! I feel more like a punctured tyre!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come along to No. 1 tent, you fellows," said Harry Wharton, "and we'll commit these songs to memory."

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"Might as well make a proper rehearsal of it," said Nugent.

"Good egg!"

The "Burlques" soon got busy.

It was a very rowdy rehearsal, owing to the fact that everybody was singing at once.

Bob Cherry rendered one of the special songs which had been composed at Jimmy Brown's expense, and Frank Nugent rendered the other. Dennis Carr chanted a popular old English refrain, and Johnny Bull informed everyone, at the top of his voice, that there was a tavern in the town. Vernon-Smith was imploring somebody to put him among the girls, and Mark Linley was warbling about an old rustic bridge by a mill.

The result was something like this:

"Drink to me only with thine eyes,

And I will pledge with mine."

"There is a tavern in the town—"

"Oh, bird of love divine!"

"There's an old-fashioned house in an old-fashioned street—"

"It was there, Maggie dear, with our hearts full of cheer—"

"Put me among the girls!"

This unearthly din continued for some time, and quite a crowd congregated around No. 1 tent in the Remove lines.

"What on earth's the matter?" demanded Wingate of the Sixth, thrusting his head through the tent-flap.

Bob Cherry paused in his song.

"Rehearsing, Wingate," he explained.

"My hat! I thought it was pig-killing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast!" murmured Hobson of the Shell.

"But I doubt if it will soothe Quelchy!" chuckled Hoskins.

The master of the Remove came striding on the scene.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "What is the meaning of this discordant din?"

"Wharton and his friends appear to be rehearsing for a concert, sir," explained Wingate, with a grin.

"Then I wish they would rehearse a little more quietly!" said Mr. Quelch. "They have disturbed Dr. Locke's afternoon siesta."

"You hear that, you kids?" said Wingate. "You've spilt the Head's beauty-sleep! Chuck it! Chuck it at once! Do you hear?"

"Put me among the girls!" chanted Wingate grimly. "You don't want to be confined to camp for a week, I suppose?"

"Nunno!"

"Dry up, then! You're making enough row to wake the Seven Sleepers!"

The rehearsal came to an abrupt termination. But the singers weren't sorry. Most of them were either hoarse or husky—or both—by this time.

"I've got my song by heart," said Bob Cherry. "It's a beauty!"

"Same here," said Frank Nugent. "Penfold deserves a putty medal!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!"

"I understand you're giving a concert this evening on the sands," said the fat junior,

"Right on the wicket!" said Harry Wharton.

"Can I take part in the show?" asked Bunter eagerly. "You fellows know what a ripping ventriloquist I am!"

"Br-r-r!"

Johnny Bull was about to throw something at Billy Bunter's fat face, which presented a very inviting target as it protruded through the tent-flap. But Harry Wharton intervened.

"Hold on!" he said. "We'll let Bunter give a turn."

"What!"

"He's precious little use at anything, but he's certainly a top-hole ventriloquist. And he'll be able to make things warm for Jimmy Brown & Co. He can work off no end of gags at their expense."

"By Jove, I never thought of that!" said Bob Cherry. "You can join the 'Burlques,' Bunter, by all means!"

"My fee's five bob for the evening," said Billy Bunter.

"Ahem! We'll discuss that afterwards."

Harry Wharton & Co. waxed very jubilant. They had no doubt that their concert-party would prove a big success, and that they would succeed in lowering the colours of the scouts from the rival camp.

Shortly before seven o'clock Harry Wharton mustered the party, and they set off in the direction of the beach.

"My only aunt!" ejaculated Frank Nugent. "We shall have a crowded house, and no mistake! There are scores and scores of people waiting on the sands!"

"Good!" said Dennis Carr. "The more the merrier!"

"I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, "I'm going to give the first turn!"

"Right you are," said Bob Cherry. "You'll give Jimmy Brown & Co. a turn, too—quite a queer turn!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But when the Greyfriars juniors reached the sands they halted in dismay.

For a concert was already in progress.

And the performers were Jimmy Brown & Co.!

"What the merry dickens—" exclaimed Wharton, in astonishment.

"Those bouncers have queered our pitch!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"They're pretending that they're the 'Burlques'!" gasped Vernon-Smith.

"Well, I'm jiggered!"

"What cheek!"

"What awful nerve!"

Jimmy Brown & Co. were going strong.

The leader of the scouts was rendering a comic song, which tickled the audience immensely. So much so that as soon as Jimmy Brown finished singing there were loud and persistent demands for an encore.

The only individuals who did not look happy were Harry Wharton & Co. Their expressions were almost homicidal. And if looks could have killed, the members of Jimmy Brown's concert-party would straightway have expired on the sands.

For a moment the Greyfriars juniors stood rooted to the ground. And then Harry Wharton rapped out a sharp command.

"Rush the rotters!"

But the other members of the audience were enjoying the concert, and they would not allow it to be interrupted.

Harry Wharton & Co. attempted to elbow their way through the throng, but they were rudely repulsed.

"Stand back there!"

"Shove those kids out of the way!"

"They're tryin' to wreck the show!"

The Greyfriars party was beaten back, and their attempt to rush the rival concert-party had to be abandoned.

"No go," said Bob Cherry gloomily. "We can't fight a crowd of this size!"

"Better get back to the camp," growled Johnny Bull.

"No; we'll stay and listen to the show," said Wharton.

So the juniors stayed. And they bitterly regretted doing so, for the very next song which Jimmy Brown rendered was a direct hit at them.

"There is a camp at Woody Bay—Woody Bay,

That's where the Greyfriars bouncers stay—where they stay;

In their funny Eton collars, that they haven't washed for weeks,

They look a most appalling lot of freaks!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

From the audience came a roar of laughter, in which, needless to state, Harry Wharton & Co. did not join.

"I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, "they've fairly done it on us this time!"

And the juniors groaned in chorus.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Brown proceeded merrily with his song.

"Of all the asses under the sun—under the sun,

The Greyfriars bouncers take the bun—take the bun.

We have often seen choicer specimens on view

Within the monkey-cages at the Zoo!"

Jimmy Brown himself had composed that song. It was fearful doggerel—Dick Penfold's effusions were perfect gems by comparison—but it went well with the crowd, who laughed uproariously.

Harry Wharton & Co. stuck it out until they could endure it no longer.

The laughter of the crowd and the gloating triumph of Jimmy Brown and his fellow-performers were more than they could bear.

"Come on!" muttered Wharton. "Let's get out of this!"

And the juniors, baffled and humiliated, turned their faces towards the camp. And as they tramped along, the chorus of Jimmy Brown's song wafted to their ears by the summer breeze:

"Fare thee well, for we must leave you! Do not let this parting grieve you, but remember that the best of friends must part—must part; Adieu, adieu, kind friends—adieu, adieu, adieu!

We can no longer stay with you—stay with you.

For the smart Boy Scouts we are not the slightest match, so we're going back once more to Colney Hatch!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Raid and a Resolve!

DARKNESS descended like a pall over the rival camps at Woody Bay. In the Greyfriars camp all was still and silent.

Masters, prefects, juniors, and fags had retired for the night.

But in the Boy Scouts' encampment—in one section of it, at any rate—there were signs of activity.

Jimmy Brown was wide-awake and fully dressed, and so were his three faithful henchmen—Jack Hardy, Kid Lennox, and Tommy Towers. These three were listening with rapt attention to what their leader was saying:

"Twice to-day, you fellows, we've scored over those Greyfriars beggars. We pelted 'em with our peashooters while they were at lessons, and we nipped their concert-party in the bud, and got up one of our own. So far, so good. But I don't think we ought to rest on our laurels just yet. Two successful japes in one day is pretty good going. But I think we ought to carry out a third."

"Hear, hear!"

"If we complete the hat trick, so to speak, we shall deserve well of our country!" said Jack Hardy.

"But what can we do?" asked Kid Lennox. "It's close on eleven o'clock, and all the Greyfriars bouncers are tucked up in their little beds."

"So much the better!" said Jimmy Brown. "We shall have a clear field!"

And then the leader of the scouts gave an explosive cackle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Brown's chums stared at him blankly.

"Would you mind telling us the joke, Jimmy?" asked Tommy Towers.

"I've got a wheeze, dear boy—a stunning, gilt-edged wheeze!"

"Good!" said Jack Hardy. "Let's hear it!"

"All we need for our purpose," said Jimmy Brown, "is a bottle of red ink, a bottle of black ditto, and a rag."

"But what on earth—"

"We'll visit the sleeping quarters of our young friends, and smear red ink over their chivvies and black ink over their noses. They'll be asleep, and we shall have to go very warily in case we wake 'em!"

"Good!" said Kid Lennox. "We ought to take some feathers along, too, to stick in their hair!"

"Go up one, Kid!" said Jimmy Brown. "I didn't think of that!"

"It takes a master-mind to think of these things!" said Lennox, tapping his forehead significantly. "You fellows ready?"

"Ready, aye ready!" murmured Tommy Towers. "I've got both bottles of ink in my pocket. Jimmy's handkerchief will do for the rag. And there are two or three dozen feathers here! I bought them for the scoutmaster to clean his pipes with, but they'll serve a far more useful purpose than that! Come along, kidlets!"

With many chuckles the four scouts quitted Jimmy Brown's tent, and made their way in the direction of the Greyfriars camp.

The night was intensely dark; but the training of the scouts stood them in good stead, and they picked their way with comparative ease.

On entering the rival camp they found it hushed and still.

"Not a single giddy sentry to challenge us!" muttered Jimmy Brown.

It certainly looked as if the invaders would have matters all their own way.

But, in spite of Jimmy Brown's well-developed sense of location, he was unable for a long time to find the Remove tents. But at last he halted, and beckoned to his companions.

"Here we are!" he murmured. "This is the tent that Wharton and Nugent sleep in. You come inside with me, Tommy, while the other two keep guard."

Very cautiously, Jimmy Brown opened the flap and stepped into the tent. And Tommy

Towers followed, with the ink and feathers. It was pitch-dark inside the tent.

Jimmy Brown possessed an electric torch, but it would not have been prudent to switch it on.

Dropping on to one knee, the scout leader was just able to distinguish a human face, and that was all. He could not tell whose face it was; but he knew that it was not Harry Wharton's or Frank Nugent's, for in this particular tent only one person was sleeping.

"Hand over the stuff, Tommy," he said, in a whisper.

Tommy Towers handed over the ink and feathers, and Jimmy Brown got busy.

It was a very delicate operation to smear ink over the face of a slumbering individual without rousing him.

But Jimmy Brown went to work very cautiously. He gently daubed red ink over the sleeper's cheeks and black ink over the sleeper's nose—at least, what he thought to be the nose. In the intense darkness accuracy was impossible.

Having applied the ink without rousing the victim, Jimmy stuck a number of feathers into his hair.

"In the morning," murmured Tommy Towers, "he'll look an Indian war chief!"

And Jimmy Brown, chucking softly, gathered up the ink and the remainder of the feathers, and, emulating the Arabs in the poem, he silently stole away.

Tommy Towers followed.

They proceeded to the next tent, and were somewhat surprised to find that here, again, there was only one occupant.

Stealthily, and with scarcely a sound, Jimmy Brown set to work with the red ink. And then came disaster.

Jimmy finished with the red ink, and he was about to use the black, when the bottle tilted upside-down in his hand, and the contents swooped down in a shower upon the face of the sleeper.

"Geroooooogh!"

There was a terrible gurgling and spluttering on the part of the victim, and the two scouts realised that detection would be certain if they lingered in the tent. So they stood not upon the order of going, but went at once.

"Scoot! Scoot for your giddy lives!" panted Jimmy Brown, as he and Tommy Towers rejoined the two who were waiting without.

"What's up?" gasped Jack Hardy.

"The bouncer—whichever he is—has woke up, and he'll rouse the whole camp in a jiffy!"

"Oh crumbs!"

The four scouts promptly took to their heels.

Not until they reached the safety of their own encampment did the scouts pause.

Then they pulled up, panting.

"Not quite such a good night's work as we could have hoped," remarked Jimmy Brown. "But we painted two of the bouncers' chivvies, anyway."

"And we'll give the others a dose tomorrow night," said Kid Lennox.

"Yes, rather!"

"We will now repair to our downy couches," said Jimmy Brown poetically.

And they did. A few moments later they were in the arms of Morpheus.

Next morning there was quite a sensation in the Greyfriars camp.

For the two victims of Jimmy Brown & Co.'s jape were not Removites. They were not juniors at all. They were masters.

In a nutshell, they were Mr. Prout and Mr. Quelch!

The master of the Fifth had been the first victim, and he slept peacefully throughout the night, little dreaming that his cheeks were a vivid red, that his nose was black, and that feathers adorned his hair.

As for Mr. Quelch, he it was who had received the contents of the ink-bottle. The sudden deluge had awakened him; but, not having any matches handy, he was unable to throw a light on the situation, so to speak. He had mopped his face with a handkerchief, thinking that the fluid was rain which had splashed through a hole in the canvas. Not until the next morning did he realise that it was ink; and even then he did not make the discovery himself. It was made by the Famous Five of the Remove, who were taking a stroll through the camp.

When the juniors caught sight of Mr. Quelch, they nearly fell down.

For the aspect of their Form-master was most ludicrous.

Mr. Quelch, who was on his way to the masters' washing quarters, halted in astonishment.

"Why are you looking so startled, my boys?" he demanded.

"I—I—" stammered Harry Wharton.

"We—we—" stuttered Frank Nugent.

"It's your face, sir!" said Johnny Bull frankly.

"My—my face?"

Harry Wharton produced a hand-mirror and held it in front of the Form-master's face.

When Mr. Quelch caught sight of his reflection he fairly jumped.

"G-g-good gracious!" he exclaimed.

And then he remembered the incident which had occurred during the night.

"Some boy—some unmitigated young rascal—has had the effrontery to invade my tent in the night, and to smear my countenance with red and black ink!" he stormed.

"My hat!"

"Do you know anything of this, Wharton?"

"No, sir!" said the captain of the Remove promptly.

At that moment Mr. Prout emerged from his tent.

The appearance of the master of the Fifth was even more ludicrous than that of Mr. Quelch. His cheeks were flaming red, his nose was black, and his hair—of which he had not a great deal—contained a miniature forest of feathers.

The Famous Five strove manfully to keep their faces straight. But they were not successful.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

The master of the Fifth bestowed the glare of a basilisk upon the almost hysterical juniors.

"How dare you!" he roared. "How dare you laugh at me in that grossly impertinent manner— Why—bless my soul!—what ever is the matter with your face, Quelch?"

The Remove-master looked grim.

"We both appear to have been victimised in the same way, Prout," he observed.

"What do you mean?"

"Pray allow Mr. Prout to see his reflection in your mirror, Wharton."

The captain of the Remove obeyed. And the master of the Fifth, when he caught sight of his red-and-black countenance, and his feathered head, nearly had a fit. He tried to speak, but he could only splutter incoherently.

"It is only too obvious what has happened," said Mr. Quelch. "This is the handiwork of some audacious and misguided young rascal, who, if his identity is discovered, will be dealt with very severely. I will question my pupils, with a view to tracing the author of this unparalleled outrage. And you, Prout, will be well advised to do the same."

Mr. Prout nodded grimly. And then, finding that he was the cynosure of all eyes, he hurried away to restore his countenance to its normal condition. And Mr. Quelch followed suit.

"Well I'm jiggered!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, when the masters had retreated. "Who do you think is responsible for this, you fellows?"

"The scouts, of course!" said Nugent.

"But—but they're not up against Quelch and Prout—"

"No; but they're up against us. And it's easy to see what happened. They raided the camp in the night, with the intention of inking our chivvies and sticking feathers in our hair. And they visited the wrong tents."

"Oh!"

Frank Nugent's solution was undoubtedly the correct one. And the Famous Five congratulated themselves on their escape.

"Look here, you fellows," said Harry Wharton seriously, "we can't allow this sort of thing to go on. Dash it all, there's the reputation of the Remove to consider! Those scouting johnnies will have to be put in their places—and the sooner the better!"

"Hear, hear!"

There was grim determination on the faces of the Famous Five.

Jimmy Brown & Co., of the rival camp, had had their innings. And now it was the turn of the Greyfriars Remove to assert themselves, and to prove to all and sundry that they were top dogs!

(Another splendid story of Harry Wharton & Co. and Jimmy Brown & Co. next Friday, entitled: "Getting Quits With Greyfriars," by Frank Richards. Order your PENNY POPULAR in advance.)

A MAGNIFICENT NEW DETECTIVE SERIAL STARTS NEXT WEEK!



By NAT FAIRBANKS.

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. Halibut, 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 has the misfortune to make a dangerous enemy of a hunchback dwarf, named Bernard Grimshaw.

One day Dick discovers a secret passage leading from Grimshaw's room and out into the grounds by the lake. He has reasons to believe that it is frequently used by the dwarf. Dick falls in with an expedition of schoolboys, led by a Fallowdale boy, named Faulkner, who proposes to explore Wildfell Grange. The schoolboys are occupying a houseboat—the Gaffly—and Dick joins forces with them. Later, Dick discovers that the actors of the Western Super-Film Company have gone on strike, excited by Grimshaw. He persuades Trent and Biglow to join the expedition until the strike is over, and they camp on the island near the Wildfell Estate. The same night Trent and Tulliver visit the Grange with the purpose of catching the dwarf there. They enter the secret passage unobserved, and are half-way through when a white light appears suddenly and moves towards them.

(Now read on.)

Peril.

SUDDENLY the light disappeared. At the same moment a deafening sound of appalling intensity paralysed Dick and Harry. It was like twenty thunderclaps rolled into one. The ground really shook under their feet. It was not a mere effort of the imagination. A fine powder came floating to the spot where they stood, choking nose and mouth.

"Merciful Heaven!" at length stammered Harry Trent. "Is it an earthquake? Who was that coming towards us? I wonder. Poor devil! Whoever he was, he's done for now. Dick, the roof of the passage must have fallen in."

Dick had a horrible feeling of numbness; he was deaf for the moment, and this was why he did not reply.

Another terrifying rumble broke out, but this time it was farther away.

Instinctively Dick and Harry glanced upwards, and tried to pierce the darkness to see if the roof above where they stood showed any signs of giving way. This, however, they could not determine. But, in any case, their position was dreadfully perilous. To advance was out of the question. The passage leading to the Grange no longer existed. To retreat to the cave where Archie Deen lay was to invite capture. But then to stop where they were was equally perilous. The whole place might collapse at

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any moment. Close at hand they could hear the rattling of pieces of rock and the louder crashes of the big ones as they thundered to the ground.

But they were alive and uninjured. The peril had passed them by for the moment. What effect had it had on the gang mustered in the rear?

"Harry," whispered Dick, "what's to be done?"

"We dare not stop here," returned Harry. "I'd sooner have a crack on the head with a stick than have a few hundred tons of of the two evils to go back. Besides, there's rock and earth fall on me. It's the lesser poor old Archie Deen to consider. Think of him lying there, battered and helpless. His gaolers will only think of their own skins. They won't linger underground a moment longer than is necessary."

Dick nodded.

"Then we will go back," he said.

They cautiously retraced their footsteps until they reached the cavern. The old ship's lantern no longer flickered; either the thunderous report of the falling rock had extinguished it, or else someone had turned it out. The place was in complete darkness and apparently deserted. Anyway, there was not a sound to be heard.

"Risk it, and strike a match," breathed Dick.

Harry did so.

Anxiously they glanced around. The cavern was empty—empty, that is, with the exception of the motionless form of Archie Deen.

Harry relit the lantern. Dick, meanwhile, crept over to the entrance to listen for sounds of the enemy returning.

"They seem to have cut and run," he reported. "At least, I hear nothing of them. If you think it safe to venture out in the open, I vote we try and get in touch with either Mr. Halibut or the colonel, if only for the sake of that poor chap lying there."

"I agree with you. Besides, Archie Deen will probably be able to throw a lot of light on the mysteries that have been going on around here. He holds the key to the puzzle."

"That's so," returned Dick. "I believe this cavern is safe enough. By the look of it, it is a natural formation. Now, that passage was probably constructed by hand, and was bound to give way after a number of years. Which is the best thing to do? Leave Deen here, or try and carry him outside?"

"Oh, we can't move him in his present condition," said Harry emphatically. "The slightest jolt might prove fatal. I'm not a medical man, but I can see that Deen's condition is touch and go, whether he recovers or not."

"Then the only thing to do is for one of us to remain with him, whilst the other goes for assistance."

Harry nodded.

"That's the only way," he agreed. "Now, which of us does which? In point of risk there's nothing to choose between the two evils. Very well, what do you say to tossing-up, Dick? Here's a bob; I'll spin it up. Heads, I stop here; tails, you stop."

"Spin her up!" said Dick briefly.

The coin spun in the air, and then fell to the ground.

It had come down "heads."

"Then I remain with Deen," said Harry. "Now, where do you propose to go, Dick? Where's the most likely place to find Mr. Halibut or the colonel?"

"I should say the White Lion, down in the village."

"Very likely you're right. Get off there at once. Good luck, old chap! Take care of yourself."

Dick's preparations for departure were soon made. They only consisted in searching about for something that could be used as a weapon. This he was lucky enough to find almost at once. Behind the place where Archie Deen lay he discovered a couple of broken chairs. He soon wrenched one of the legs off, and, thus armed, he set out.

With the utmost caution he crept along the tunnel, stopping every now and then to listen. His progress was slow, but it was a case of "hurrying slowly" if he was to bring the venture to a successful issue.

At length the darkness ahead was cut into by a pale gleam of light, and Dick made the somewhat disturbing discovery that the moon was shining full on the entrance.

This increased the risks a hundredfold.

He drew a deep breath. What unknown perils might be awaiting him outside?

Dick went down on all-fours and crawled out into the open, making no more noise than does a fox creeping through a thicket. Cautiously he raised his head and shot a brief glance around. As far as he could see there were no signs of any human beings.

Dick wriggled his way through the long grass. His most direct way to the village was along the path which skirted the east wing of the Grange. To his amazement, however, he quickly found that this path no longer existed.

The tunnel had evidently run directly underneath this path, and the subsidence had wiped away all traces of it. In its place was a churned-up mass of broken ground, pitted with holes, and generally bearing a close resemblance to the shell-marked No Man's Land of the Western battlefields.

Dick suddenly thought of the gipsy van. It had been standing close to the scene of the catastrophe. Had it escaped, or had it been engulfed in the collapse of the tunnel? There seemed to be no trace of it anywhere.

But he had little opportunity for investigating this point, for suddenly in front of him arose an unmistakable cry for help.

Grasping the chair-leg firmly, Dick ran like a deer for the spot whence the sound had come. As he drew near he became aware of a confused medley of voices, and he could dimly make out a vaguely defined group of about half a dozen people engaged in a deadly struggle.

Dick paused for one brief second. Naturally, he wanted to be quite sure which party of the combatants should have his assistance. The moon still shone brilliantly, but the light was not sufficient for him to recognise anyone. Only one detail could he be sure about, and that was that one party was considerably outnumbered. It was a case of two against one.

All at once Dick recognised one of the com-

butants—it was Bernard Grimshaw, the dwarf.

That settled it as far as Dick was concerned.

Creeping up to him, Dick raised his weapon and brought it down on the dwarf's skull with all his force. The dwarf dropped as though he had been poleaxed.

Before Grimshaw's companions realised what had happened, Dick had whipped in amongst them, dealing blows right and left. They instantly became panic-stricken. They had no idea how many of their new assailants there were. They simply took to their heels, and were soon lost in the darkness.

Dick, however, paid little heed to this. He was far more interested in the surprising discovery that the two people to whose assistance he had flown were none other than Colonel Allingham and Mr. Halibut.

The Police on the Scene.

COLONEL ALLINGHAM, very stiff, very erect, and with his waxed moustache bristling with warlike fury—not unlike the tail of an angry cat—marched up to the prostrate form of Bernard Grimshaw.

"I'm glad we've got one of the scoundrels!" he said. "Did you give him that crack on the head?"

"Yes," said Dick. "Hullo, Mr. Halibut," he said, turning to the manager. "I hope they haven't hurt you?"

"Why, it's young Tulliver!" cried Halibut. "You came up just in the nick of time! Are you alone?"

"Yes, sir. Harry Trent's not very far away, though."

"Good! Now, let's look at the prisoner!"

"It's Bernard Grimshaw, Mr. Halibut."

Mr. Halibut gave a gasp of astonishment.

"Half a minute!" broke in the colonel tartly. "You're going too fast! All these names convey nothing to me. Bernard Grimshaw, Harry Trent, Tulliver! Who and what are these people? Explain, sir—explain at once!"

Mr. Halibut endeavoured to do so. The colonel condescended to listen patiently for half a minute, and then, having absorbed the fact that Bernard Grimshaw and the prisoner were one and the same man, he had no further interest in anything else.

"Tie his hands and feet!" he ordered. "He's only stunned. We must secure him before he comes to. Now, where are the police? They ought to have been here ten minutes' ago, and then we should have captured all the scoundrels! I shall have a few words to say to that superintendent when he does arrive. Just blow that whistle, Halibut. They may have some difficulty in finding us."

Whereupon Mr. Halibut performed a series of vigorous solos on a whistle.

Presently an answering whistle was heard in the distance. Then came the sharp sounds of trotting horses, and up came the police patrol.

"What's all this?" asked the officer in charge, not quite taking in the situation.

"You're just in time to be too late, Mr. Superintendent!" snapped the colonel. "We've got one of the gang. There he is. I give him in charge!"

The superintendent jumped off his horse, and one of his men turned the light of his lantern on Bernard Grimshaw.

"I reckon he's the chap they've telephoned about from London," said the superintendent.

"I know he's one of the ruffians who attacked me!" boomed the colonel. "And that's all I'm interested in!"

The superintendent nodded curtly.

"We have a more serious charge than that against him, sir!" he retorted. "Capturing this hunchback has given us just the clue we want. It's a pity that the others escaped—"

"Ah!" ejaculated Colonel Allingham. "I'm glad you think so! Now, if you and your men had only turned up—"

Dick did not trouble to listen to the wordy argument that ensued between the colonel and the police superintendent. He had more important matters to attend to. He took Mr. Halibut on one side and poured into his astonished ears the news that Archie Deen had been discovered.

"Tulliver," said Halibut, "I have created mysteries all my life for the films, but the mysteries of real life such as have been going on here, have me beat every time. Show me this wonderful cavern; we'll take a couple of the policemen with us in case of further attack. I only hope the colonel won't want to come. Since he arrived

here yesterday morning he's not given me a minute's rest. And his temper gets more—more military, let us say, every moment."

Poor Mr. Halibut! There was no doubt that he had had a rough time. Dick did not hear the harrowing details then, but he was told subsequently how the colonel had dragged the perspiring manager with him in his endeavours to try and get in touch with the company, who had scattered all over the country. How, failing to discover the leaders of the strike, he had sent Mr. Halibut on a four-mile trudge to the nearest telephone office for the purpose of phoning to London for fresh actors. Mr. Halibut arrived there, rather more dead than alive, and, after phoning, got hopelessly lost in attempting to rejoin his superior officer. They eventually ran into each other at nine o'clock that night.

The colonel, who had been in his motor all the time, was as fresh as paint. Not so Mr. Halibut. He hardly had a crawl left in him.

that he should be bound had not been carried out.

Therefore, Grimshaw, on coming to and flinging his limbs free, made a bold dash for liberty.

With a cat-like movement he rolled over on his side, and before anyone could prevent him he lowered his head and butted violently between Mr. Halibut's legs.

The next instant the manager found himself hoisted into the air, and then came down on mother earth with a bump.

For the minute it really looked as if the dwarf would make good his escape. He wriggled out of the outstretched arms that grabbed at him, and even when they got a grip on him he continued to fight like a little demon. It was as much as they could do to overcome him.

At last, however, he lay panting on the ground, a stalwart policeman with his knee on his chest, and his arms and legs pinioned, his last chance of escape gone.



The superintendent jumped off his horse, and one of his men turned the light of his lantern on Bernard Grimshaw. "I reckon he's the chap they've telephoned about from London," said the superintendent grimly. (See page 9.)

All he desired was the nearest bed. He discovered, to his horror, that this would be Wildfell Grange. The colonel had arranged that he and Mr. Halibut should stay the night there, as an example to the mutineers.

To the Grange accordingly they went. The colonel scorned all idea of rest. No, they would thoroughly explore the place, and, according to the colonel, prove once and for all how absurd were those rumours of supernatural occurrences.

Then came the tremendous crash of the tunnel dashing in. They heard the sound plainly in the house, and dashed out to see what had happened. They were just investigating the scene when they were set upon by four men. The result of this combat we know.

As we say, Dick learnt all this afterwards. At the moment he had no thought other than getting back to Harry Trent and Archie Deen as quickly as possible.

But before this could be done Grimshaw provided an incident.

The dwarf had regained consciousness a minute before his captors were aware of the fact. Consequently there was not such a close guard over him as there would have been had they known of his recovering his faculties. Unfortunately, the colonel's orders

Clues!

BUT before the party reached the cavern their attention was directed by Dick to the subsidence. He hurriedly related how, when at the moment the tunnel collapsed, they had seen a light approaching. The unfortunate bearer of the light was probably imprisoned in the debris. There was little chance that he was alive. Crushed to death, most likely. But whatever had happened to him, it was clearly his duty to do everything in their power to ascertain his fate.

Accordingly they halted when they reached the spot, and the police flashed their lanterns over the broken ground, and gave vent to loud shouts on the off-chance of being heard.

For five minutes they lingered there, but there was no response. It would take many hours to clear away the fallen earth, and even then, what hope was there of their finding anyone alive? Practically none.

They found Harry Trent seated by the rough couch which supported the form of Archie Deen.

"Not a soul has been here since you left, Dick," he reported. "But I've made some rather startling discoveries while you have been away. If you look in the corner over

yonder, Colonel Allingham, I fancy you'll find the valuables that were stolen from your house. Not only your property is there, but the proceeds from other burglaries, I imagine. This cavern was evidently used as a storehouse for stolen goods till it was convenient to get them out of the country."

Colonel Allingham and the superintendent hurried over to the spot which Harry indicated, and, sure enough, there was the plate taken from Grandcourt Lodge, together with a large selection of trinkets and other articles of value.

"This is an extremely interesting discovery!" cried the superintendent. "It clears up a lot of matters which have been puzzling us for the last six months. You've heard, of course, colonel, of the number of daring burglaries that have been committed in these parts. So far the police have been completely baffled. We could find no trace of the thieves, neither could we trace the stolen property. You're right, young man," he continued, turning to Harry Trent, "this place was their storehouse. I've no doubt that the Grange was the headquarters of the gang. After all, until the film company came here they couldn't find a better place for their purpose. The reputation of the house being haunted was sufficient guarantee that they would not be disturbed."

The superintendent appearing likely to go on evolving his theories for some time, Harry Trent interrupted with the suggestion that it would be a good thing to get Archie Deen to the nearest hospital as soon as possible.

"You see," he observed, "directly he recovers he'll be able to tell us all about this gang."

Acting on Harry's suggestion, the superintendent sent one of his men post-haste for a police ambulance. The colonel handed round his cigar-case, and suggested that it would not be a bad plan to hold a sort of preliminary court of inquiry, and collect the evidence of those present.

Mr. Halibut groaned inwardly. During the last twelve hours he had been called upon to relate to the colonel no less than half a dozen full accounts of his experiences at Wildfell Grange. He was getting a bit sick of it.

However, there was no escape. For the seventh time he underwent a severe cross-examination from the colonel. At the end of it he was like a limp rag.

Then followed the evidence of Dick and Harry Trent. Dick's account of the secret passage between the cavern and Grimshaw's room in the house naturally caused what newspaper-men term a "sensation."

"The dwarf was evidently the ringleader," declared Colonel Allingham. "I wonder how many other members of the Western Super-Film Company are incriminated in this business. Upon my word, Halibut, I can't congratulate you on your choice of artistes. Directly I can get them together I'll parade them and select the sheep from the goats. When's pay-day?"

"To-morrow, colonel," said Mr. Halibut.

The colonel turned to the superintendent.

"To-morrow you'll have your men ready to make further arrests," he said.

"I wonder if Biglow is mixed up in it," murmured Mr. Halibut. "You know he was always coming to me with stories of the ghosts he had seen. He was very keen on getting me to shift our quarters. Must say it looks very suspicious."

Both Dick and Harry were up in arms at once in defence of Biglow.

"Biglow!" boomed the colonel. "It's not a name I should trust. Just make a note of the name, Mr. Superintendent. Does anyone know where this person is to be found?"

"Certainly, sir," said Dick. "He's on a houseboat that's moored near the breakwater on the other side of the river."

"We'll pay him an early morning visit," grunted the colonel.

At this point the ambulance arrived, and Archie Deen was placed in it, and taken away to the cottage hospital. The colonel at length showing symptoms of sleep, his yawns were received as a token of dismissal, and accordingly Dick, Harry, and Mr. Halibut adjourned to the Grange, and, for once, sleep under its roof was peaceful and uninterrupted.

The Clean Up,

AS it happened, there was no need to seek out Biglow the following morning. As Colonel Allingham and party were proceeding to the White Lion to get breakfast they observed a small

gathering of the youthful population of the village approaching them. In their midst was a tall, lanky individual, dressed in a scarlet tunic, miles too small for him, a pair of trousers which only just reached below his knees, and generally bearing a close resemblance to that well-known public character—Guy Fawkes.

"My word, it's Biglow!" exclaimed Harry. "In old Sattlebee's uniform," added Dick, bursting with laughter.

All at once Biglow spotted them. Giving a sudden clout on the head to the nearest of his escort, he bounded forward, and almost fell into the arms of Harry Trent.

"I've had a terrible time!" he bellowed. "That young devil we captured—what was his name? Blogson! Yes, that's it! That young devil got up early this morning when we were all asleep, threw my clothes, which were drying, into the water, played a lot of



With a cat-like movement the dwarf sprang to his feet, and with his head lowered, he butted violently between Mr. Halibut's legs. (See page 9.)

other tricks, and then did a bunk. I had to put these things on, there was nothing else to do. It's awful!"

"This is Mr. Biglow, colonel," explained Mr. Halibut.

"Oh!" grunted the colonel, viewing Biglow with grave doubts. "I'll have a few words with him presently. He'd better come along, and have breakfast with us. Mustn't let him give us the slip," he added, in an undertone to Mr. Halibut. "His appearance is highly suspicious. Looks as if he had adopted this disguise for the purposes of escaping."

"That's all right, sir," broke in Dick, who overheard this. "Trent and I will be responsible for him."

Accordingly, a procession was formed, with the colonel and Mr. Halibut leading, Biglow, with Dick and Harry each side of him, following close behind, and the youthful population bringing up the rear.

As they walked along they dragged further details out of Biglow as to the doings on board the Gaffy.

It appeared that when the "army" awoke and discovered Blogson had escaped, and Dick and Harry had "deserted" (so Faulkner described their action), they decided that they had seen enough of the locality, and made instant preparations to return to Fallowsdale.

"I made no attempt to stop them," said Biglow. "You didn't particularly want them to stay here, I suppose?"

"Not in the least," laughed Dick and Harry.

"And now," said Biglow, "tell me what has been happening here."

"Well," returned Dick, "I think you'd better wait until after breakfast. You'll be stronger then. Besides, it so happens, Biglow, old chap, that, in a manner of speaking, you're under arrest, so we must be careful what we say to you."

"What!" ejaculated Biglow.

"There, there!" broke in Harry soothingly. "Don't cry out before you're hurt. I don't suppose you'll get more than five years' hard."

Biglow glanced from one to the other in great consternation. Then, detecting a slight twinkle in their eyes, he gave a grunt of relief.

"I might have known you were only fooling!" he muttered.

But the colonel wasn't fooling, as Biglow soon discovered. Colonel Allingham was one of those people who, once they get an idea into their heads, find it extremely difficult to get it out. He had firmly made up his mind that Biglow was one of the conspirators; therefore, the more Biglow protested he wasn't, the more the colonel was convinced to the contrary.

Luckily for Biglow, the colonel was as much in the dark as to the exact identity of the criminals as anyone else. His suspicions therefore only remained suspicions.

This unsatisfactory state of affairs continued for a fortnight. At the end of that time Archie Deen was sufficiently recovered to make a statement. His evidence, coupled with a confession by Bernard Grimshaw, completely cleared up the mystery of Wildfell Grange.

It appeared that about six months previously, the dwarf, when strolling along a London street celebrated for the sale of second-hand books, had, while looking over the contents of a stall, come across an ancient volume, yellow and torn, of a history of Wildfell Grange, with a complete description of its various secret rooms and passages.

He at once hit on a scheme of utilising this place for a series of daring burglaries he contemplated. It was a rare piece of luck coming across this book, because the district round Wildfell Grange contained many big estates which would yield rich plunder.

Grimshaw reported the "find" to the members of his gang, and at once steps were taken to investigate the possibilities of the Grange. That these possibilities were immense they saw directly they arrived there.

"Haunted!" said the villagers. "Been to let for years. No one dare go near it, even in the daytime." Grimshaw & Co. shook hands with themselves. Nothing could be better.

So, unknown to anyone, they took up their abode in the secret portions, which, thanks to the book, Grimshaw had discovered, they had no difficulty in locating.

Their first two burglaries were most successful. The stolen property was taken to the cavern, and when the first hue and cry was over, it was quietly disposed of without any suspicions being aroused.

Grimshaw and his lot were a well-organised band of criminals, men well educated, daring, and unscrupulous. Their foreign connections enabled them to get rid of their spoils with ease. Their agents were everywhere. They had plenty of money, and they paid well.

All for a time went swimmingly.

Then a bombshell exploded in the shape of the Western Super-Film Company descending on Wildfell Grange.

It really looked as if Grimshaw & Co. would have to find other quarters. The dwarf, however, was a man of resource. Before he had taken up the profession of gentleman crackman he had achieved some fame in America as a cinema actor. He resolved to get engaged by the Western Super-Film Company.

Once more his luck was in. His quaint figure happened to be the very thing that Mr. Halibut required for his production of "Glittering Gold." He was taken on at once.

Grimshaw chuckled. He reckoned that with a little assistance he would soon send the Western Super-Film Company out of the Grange. With this end in view, he got Quarry and Martin (the camera-operator) into the company to aid him in his scheme.

His scheme was very simple. The three of them were to act up to the haunted reputation of the place by pretending to "see things." Martin's photograph, for instance, of the ghostly figure in the view of the banquetting-hall was a fake. So was Grimshaw's convulsions. They were responsible for the other mysterious "stunts."

Their first set-back was Archie Deen. Deen, by chance, stumbled across the secret opening to the cavern. Just as he was investigating, he was pounced on by some of the gang concealed there, and Quarry felled him to the ground with a heavy blow. They dragged the body inside, thinking that they had killed him. Finding that he still breathed, they tended him with a certain amount of rough kindness. Criminals though they were, they steered clear of murder.

taking up his quarters there. Neither could they foresee that he would plan a midnight visit by the police. As a matter of fact, he had only requested their presence because he feared the strikers contemplated doing some injury to the property.

Such were the main facts that came out during the trial of Bernard Grimshaw.

His accomplices escaped, all save the man Quarry, and he was discovered, terribly injured, amongst the ruins of the tunnel.

Harry Trent, Biglow, with O'Flaherty and the Fallowsdale boys as a background, together with old Sattlebee and Snap) are grouped around Colonel Allingham as he proposes a vote of thanks to our hero, Dick Tulliver, for services rendered.

As a matter of fact, the colonel did no such thing. He was not addicted to thanking people. He took most of the good things of this earth for granted.

But our friend Dick Tulliver can do without such favours. He had reached the goal of his ambition. He was taking part in a real film, he had mounted the first step of the ladder to fame, and if hard work commands success, success is certain to be his.

Of course, his uncle and aunt, when they eventually heard of his doings, sniffed at the whole thing, and prophesied dismally that he would soon be glad to come back and go into the employ of Wibbleswick & Co.; but they had to confess, when crowds went to see the films featuring the inimitable Dick Tulliver, that, after all, there was something in picture work.

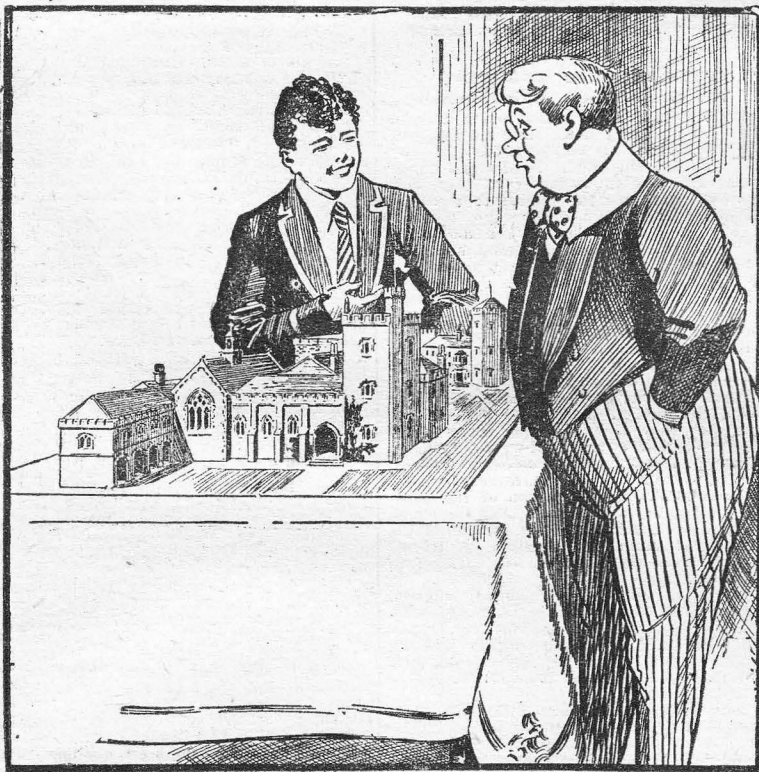
THE END.

(Look out for our grand new adventure serial next week, entitled: "THE EXPLOITS OF FERRERS LOCKE, DETECTIVE!" by Maurice Everard. It will sure to please.)

A MAGNIFICENT MODEL OF GREYFRIARS SCHOOL.

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YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS IT!



Harry Wharton: "Here you are, Bunter! Just look at this beautiful coloured model of Greyfriars School which is being presented to readers in CHUCKLES!"

Billy Bunter: "Oh, really, Wharton! That's a ripping wheeze! Where have they shoved the Tuckshop?"

READERS OF THE "PENNY POPULAR" ARE ADVISED TO BUY "CHUCKLES" TO-DAY. THERE WILL BE AN UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND FOR THIS GRAND ISSUE.

Deen's little dog, however, they were forced to destroy.

The second set-back was the arrival of Dick Tulliver.

Dick, as we know, refused to be intimidated by their supernatural fakes. They quickly found that he and Harry Trent were likely to upset all their plans. Time was precious. They had fixed up the burglary of Colonel Allingham's house, and it was liable to end in disaster unless they could get the Western Super-Film Company away from the Grange. Thereupon, they organised the strike.

This, as we know, was successful in getting the majority of the company to quit.

But here Colonel Allingham proved a spoke in their wheel.

They never reckoned on that gallant warrior

It was he whom Dick and Harry saw approaching bearing a light at the moment the tunnel collapsed.

As an outcome of these revelations, the Western Super-Film Company were induced to regard the Grange with a more favourable eye. Peace was signed with Colonel Allingham, and once more the work of producing "Glittering Gold" proceeded merrily. At the time of writing it is about to be "released," which is more than Bernard Grimshaw can say. He has still to serve another ten years of his sentence.

And now, as the curtain is about to descend for the last time, let us imagine that the characters in this story (Maisie Hope, Mrs. Scotton, Mr. Haibut, Bobbin and Waddell,

STORYETTES!

"PUDDING" IT NICELY!

Billy: "I've heard that the Yorkshire cricketers eat nothing but Yorkshire pudding."

Buster: "You don't say so."

Billy: "Yes; and that's why they are all such good batters!"

THE ONE EXCEPTION!

"So you can speak seven languages?" incredulously exclaimed Mrs. Askalett. "How marvellous!"

"Yes," replied the professor. "Of course it takes time."

"But surely you must have found one tongue with which you had great difficulty, and that you couldn't master? Wasn't that so?"

"Oh, yes!" answered the professor. "My wife's!"

PICK AND JEWS!

"Fader, a shentleman wants to know if that all-wool non-shrinkable shirt will shrink."

"Does it fit him?"

"No, it is too big."

"Yah, it vill shrink!"

MAKE THE MASTER WHACK-SY!

Schoolmaster: "What are you laughing at all the time I'm thrashing you?"

The Boy: "I'm laughing 'cos you're thrashing the wrong boy—te-hee!"

PERFECT CONTENTMENT!

"It's too bad!" groaned Brown to a stranger in a theatre. "Just think, we paid real good money to hear that execrating and agonising noise!"

He was referring to the efforts of one of the performers. It was supposed to be singing.

"I didn't pay," returned the stranger. "Come in with a 'complimentary.'"

"Well, you no doubt spent good money on fares getting here."

"No. I live within walking distance."

"But," persisted Brown, "surely you hoped to be entertained—er—er—not punished?"

"No; I don't care," grinned the man. "I came mostly to get away from home. My wife is spring-cleaning!"

ONE TOO MANY!

Inspector (to policeman, who is running towards the station): "Hallo! What's the matter? Where are you going?"

P.-c. 49: "To fetch an ambulance for a chap who is in a fit, sir."

Inspector: "Can't you bring him to?"

P.-c. 49: "What's he want two for?"

OUR SPECIAL COMPLETE STORY OF ST. JIM'S!

:: OFF TO OLYMPIA! ::

A Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at the Great Scout Jamboree.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Tom Merry's Plans.

"TOM MERRY here?"
Curly Gibson, of the Third Form at St. Jim's, put his head in at the door of Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage, and asked that question.

"Hallo! Who wants me?" sang out the junior named—Tom Merry, the junior captain of St. Jim's. The study, of which Blake & Co. of the Fourth were the rightful owners, was crammed with juniors. Evidently there was a meeting on, and, judging by the absorbed look on many faces, the meeting was an important one.

"Buzz off, young Curly!" exclaimed Blake impatiently. "We're busy!"

Curly Gibson sniffed.
"Tom Merry's wanted in Kildare's study. Do you want me to go back and tell Kildare you're busy?"

"Oh!"
Eric Kildare was the popular captain of St. Jim's. When he sent for a junior, that junior had to go, and quickly.

Tom Merry got up.
"I'm coming along, Curly. We've practically fixed everything up, chaps, haven't we?"

"Yaas, wathah!" said an elegant junior with an eyeglass—none other than Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth. "I shall expect all you chaps ova at my patah's place for the Jamboweh!"

"Good egg!"
Tom Merry hurried off to Kildare's study. He tapped on the door, and in response to a curt "Come in!" entered the study with a heart that beat a little more quickly than usual.

A summons to the captain's study was often just as bad as one to a Form-master's room. Prefects at St. Jim's had a pretty free hand, and Kildare, popular captain as he was, could be handy with his asphalt on occasion. Tom Merry could think of nothing particular, at the moment, that he could be "carpeted" for; but one never knew.

"Come in, Merry! I wanted to see you about the Scout Jamboree!"

Kildare's first words dispelled Tom's lingering fears.

"Yes, Kildare?"
"You are looking after the matter, I suppose? St. Jim's ought to have some scouts there, and I think you, as junior captain, are the fellow to fix it up."

"It's all fixed up practically, Kildare. We have just been having a final meeting about it," said Tom.

"Who's going, then?" asked Kildare.
"Twelve of us. Manners, Lowther, Noble, and myself, from the Shell. Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy, from the Fourth; and Figgins, Kerr, Wynn, and Redfern, from the New House."

Kildare grinned.
"Quite a family party! Have you made arrangements about the camp yet?"

"Yes, Gussy—I mean, D'Arcy—has asked the whole lot of us to Eastwood House for part of the vac, and we shall all go together from there to Richmond Park to camp."

"Right. You have it all cut and dried, I see. I thought I had better speak to you about it. You ought to have a jolly good time."

"Rather! We mean to!"
Kildare nodded and smiled, and Tom left the study in high spirits. As he stepped out into the passage, he almost tripped over a plump junior who was stooping down and fumbling with his bootlace.

"Baggy! You fat worm—listening again!" said Tom Merry, in disgust.

Bagley Trimble, the fat junior who had an unenviable reputation for listening at key-holes, looked confused for a moment.

"Ahem! Not at all, Merry! My shoe-lace, you know. I never heard a word of

what Kildare said to you about the Jamboree!"

"You—you—"
"Besides, what about me—that's what I want to know?" went on Baggy hastily.

"Where do I come in?"
"You don't come in anywhere, you fat, spying toad!" said Tom Merry emphatically.

"I've a good mind to boot you down the passage as it is. Get!"

He made a threatening movement with his boot, and Baggy promptly "got."

"Beast!" he muttered, as he fled down the passage. "We'll see about that! Beast!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Great Camp at Richmond.

THE twelve St. Jim's scouts made a very merry house-party at the mansion of D'Arcy's noble "patah," Lord Eastwood. Picnics and motorcycle runs were the order of the day, until the time came for the juniors to repair to Richmond to camp.

They went off, packed in two motor-cars kindly provided by Lord Eastwood, and when they arrived they were amazed at the size of the great scout camp in the old park.

"My hat!" said Blake. "This is a camp, if you like! Goodness knows how we shall ever find one's tents among all these!"

But they found it quite an easy matter, for, despite its size, the great camp was laid out and organised with military precision.

There was no confusion, and they soon found their tents. They were delighted to find that they were alongside their friends Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars School.

"The pleasantness of meeting our worthy St. Jim's chums is great!" exclaimed a dusky junior who emerged from one of the Greyfriars tents, as they arrived. And the chums of St. Jim's grinned as they recognised the weird and wonderful English of Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, the Indian member of the Greyfriars Co.

"All the old crowd here, I suppose, nabob?" said Monty Lowther, with a smile.

"All—except for the esteemed and ludicrous Bunter!" said Hurree Singh, with an expansive grin. "And the difficultfulness of leaving him behind was immense!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Like Baggy!" said Blake, with a grin. "He worried the life out of Gussy to get an invitation to Eastwood House. I believe he would have come without one if he could have raised the fare!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry, of Greyfriars, who had made his appearance by then. "Whom have we here?"

A very fat youth, in a very tight-fitting scout uniform, came up to them with an ingratiating smile on his plump face.

"Why, it's Muffin, of Rookwood!" said Tom Merry.

"How are you, old chaps?" said Tubby Muffin, beaming. "This is jolly lucky, meeting you. I can't find the Rookwood tents, and I'm jolly hungry. Are you having supper now?"

There was a moment's pause. The juniors were a little taken aback at this broad hint. But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, ever polite, gallantly stepped into the breach.

"We shall be vewy glad if you would honah us by stayin' to suppah. Cwumpet—"

"Muffin, you ass—I—I mean, old chap!" said Tubby.

"Sowwy, deah boy! We are just goin' to have supper, Muffin."

"Right-ho! Since you're so pressing, I'll stay, Gussy, old chap!" said Tubby briskly.

Arthur Augustus winced at the "Gussy, old chap." He did not care for the fat Rookwooder; but what could not be avoided had to be borne.

Tubby Muffin stayed to supper, at which he greatly distinguished himself, eating about as much as all the rest of the juniors put together. Even Fatty Wynn, of the St. Jim's

New House, himself no mean trencherman, looked at him in amazement.
After supper Tubby announced that he was sleepy.

"Which is your tent, Gussy, old fellow?" he inquired.

"Eh? That one ova theah!"

"Good! Is there a bed in it?"

"Yaas, wathah! But—"

"Oh, good!" said Tubby Muffin, with satisfaction. "I'll sleep here, I think, and look for the Rookwood chaps in the morning. I'm tired! I think I'll turn in."

Arthur Augustus gasped.

"But—but I'm afraid—" he stammered.

"Afraid of what?" demanded Muffin.

"I—I—I've onlay one bed, you know, deah boy, and—"

Tubby waved his hand airily.
"That's all right, my dear chap! I only want one bed, don't I? Good-night!"

And Tubby Muffin rolled off, to make himself comfortable on D'Arcy's own particular little camp bed, leaving Arthur Augustus gasping.

"Blessed if I'd let that fat spoofer bag my bed, Gussy, you ass!" snorted Herries. "He's a blessed cadger, like Baggy Trimble, and with more cheek!"

"Yaas, wathah! He's a feahful outsidah, weally, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, in great distress. "But he's a stwangan within the gates, as it were, you know."

And Arthur Augustus, a slave of the sacred laws of hospitality, had to share Blake's couch that night with his chum, while Tubby Muffin, of Rookwood, snored the night away comfortably in his bed.

The chums of St. Jim's were truly relieved when, next morning, they ran into Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood. They handed Tubby Muffin over with deep thankfulness, though the Rookwood scouts looked far from pleased to see him. To judge from their expressions, as Monty Lowther remarked later, they had evidently hoped that they had lost him for good.

"He's just another Baggy Trimble—worse, if anything!" said Jack Blake. "Thank goodness we aren't troubled with Baggy here!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We must get off to Olympia for rehearsals," said Tom Merry. "There's the Historical Episodes and the Pageant to go through to-day."

"Yaas, wathah!"
They went off to Olympia by char-a-banes, and soon arrived at the great building, which was crowded with scouts. The activity and bustle was confusing at first, and Tom Merry stopped in front of a tall gentleman who was standing near one of the entrances.

"Could you tell me whom to report to for the Pageant rehearsal, please sir?" he asked politely. "We're St. Jim's scouts."

The tall man looked at them with kindly interest.

"St. Jim's, ars you? Your patrol-leader has been here some time, waiting for you. He has been giving me a few particulars about you, and about himself." The big man smiled slightly. "I am the Press agent, you know."

Tom Merry & Co. stared at the speaker in blank amazement.

"W—what did you say, sir?" gasped Tom Merry. "Our patrol-leader is here, waiting for us?"

"Yes. You seem surprised!"

"You—you see, I'm the patrol-leader, sir. I—I don't understand!"

It was the turn of the Press agent to look surprised.

"Really! There must be a mistake somewhere. This other fellow distinctly said he was the leader of the St. Jim's contingent. He must be a very fine scout, too, from what he says!"

The gentleman's tone was a little dry as he made this last remark.

The chums of St. Jim's looked at each other blankly.

"What was this—this other chap like, sir?" asked Kerr, the canny Scottish junior, suddenly.

"Oh, fat—remarkably fat for a scout, I thought!" returned the Press agent.

There was a yell from Tom Merry and Blake together.

"Baggy!"

"Bah, Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Trimble!"

"The—the spoofer!"

"The fat fraud!"

The gentleman was looking at them with good-natured amusement.

"You've got on to him, then, have you?" he remarked. "Was he an impostor?"

"Well, he's a St. Jim's chap, sir," said Tom Merry awkwardly. "If he's the chap we think he is, that is. But he's not the patrol-leader at all. When he said that, I'm afraid—"

"He was pulling my leg—eh?" said the gentleman pleasantly. "Well, I'm not altogether surprised to hear it. But don't worry!" He laughed lightly. "I did not take everything he said for gospel, as a matter of fact— Ah, excuse me! There's the man I want to see."

And, with a pleasant nod, the friendly Press agent hurried away.

"A jolly decent chap!" remarked Jack Blake. "Fancy that fat spoofer Baggy—"

"Why, there he is!" cried Figgins.

A fat scout, who looked as if he was almost bursting out of his uniform, came towards them, with a grin on his fat features.

"Here I am!" he remarked cheerfully. "I told you fellows I should come after all, didn't I?"

The juniors glared at the cheerful Baggy.

"You—you awful spoofer!" growled Tom Merry. "What do you mean by giving yourself out to be the leader of the St. Jim's scouts?"

Baggy looked taken aback for a moment.

"I—I didn't! I was only pulling the chap's leg, you know, I—"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Jack Blake in disgust. "Don't roll 'em out any more! Fortunately, we met the Press agent—told him you were a spoofing rotter!"

"Oh, really, Blake!"

"Well, we don't want you, goodness knows! But now you've come we shall have to look after you, I suppose," said Tom Merry resignedly. "Fall in with the others, and try to look less like an overfed porker, and more like a scout! If you play the fool any more we'll burst you!"

Baggy grunted, and fell in with the others.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
One Out of the Box.

IT was Sunday afternoon, and the St. Jim's scouts were enjoying a stroll in London. That morning they had attended the great Thanksgiving Service in the Grand Arena at Olympia, in the course of which an impressive sermon had been preached by the Archbishop of York. Then they had lunched, and afterwards sallied forth for what Arthur Augustus D'Arcy described as a "look wound."

They walked up Oxford Street until they came to the Marble Arch.

"What about a stroll in the Park?" suggested Noble. "That's what all the Nibs do. Why shouldn't we?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The scouts turned into the Park. Their attention was immediately attracted by a raucous-voiced gentleman in a check cap, who was mounted on a chair and addressing an apparently bored crowd of twenty or thirty persons with passionate vehemence.

"I wondah what this fellah's saying?" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It may be intewestin'. Let's go and listen."

Spurred, apparently, to still greater efforts by the addition of thirteen fellows to his audience—for Baggy was still with the St. Jim's Scouts—the orator became almost frenzied in his denunciation of the existing state of things. He belonged, evidently, to the "down with everything" party.

"Wot do we want with an Army?" he vociferated. "Sweep it away! What do we want with a Navy? Wash it out! What do we want with—er—with—here his glance, seeking inspiration, lighted upon the St. Jim's Scouts—"with Boy Scouts?" he finished triumphantly. "Send 'em home to their mothers!"

There was a chuckle from one or two of the listeners, who noted the disgusted and indignant looks of the juniors on hearing these valuable suggestions—especially the last one.

Tom Merry made a motion to turn away, but not so Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. The noble blood of the swell of St. Jim's rose in a moment to boiling-point, and he pushed his way through to the front of the little crowd.

"You ah talkin' wot, you—you wottah!" he shouted indignantly. "You ought to be awvested and sent to pwison, you mischief-makin' outsider!"

The orator paused in his vociferation, and stared at his interrupter. Then he grinned. He was by no means displeased to have "drawn" someone, especially as it was a schoolboy, whom it would probably be quite easy to score off.

"It's a free country, ain't it, cocky?" he said. "I s'pose a feller can say what he thinks in a free country, can't he?"

Arthur Augustus' eye gleamed behind his monocle.

"If it's a free countwy, it's because the Army and Navy have defended its freedom!" he flashed out. "If you swept them away, as you are wottah enough to suggest, the countwy wouldn't be free vevy long."

"Bravo, youngster!" cried several voices. "That's give 'im as good as 'e gave!"

The stump-orator, who was a quite young, but weedy-looking man, looked a trifle disconcerted and angry. He bent down from the chair towards D'Arcy.

"Wot about the Boy Scouts, then, cocky?" he snarled. "Wot 'ave they done, eh? Let's 'ear that!"

"If you'd come to the Jamboree at Olympia you'd seen what we're taught to do," said

Arthur Augustus, more quietly: "Scouts are taught that actions are bettah than words."

The orator sneered.

"Ho, indeed! You don't say! Well, we've 'eard your words—let's 'ave a sample of the actions you say you've bin taught, me young cock-sparrer!"

"Certainly, you wottah!" said Arthur Augustus, with the greatest calmness. "Take that!"

His fist shot out like lightning, and the astonished orator took it—under the chin! With a loud howl, he shot off the chair and disappeared amongst the legs of the crowd on the other side.

There was a roar of applause and laughter. "Good for you, young 'un!"

"That showed 'im!"

"Haw, haw, haw!"

Out of the tail of his eye Tom Merry saw a couple of policemen strolling towards the crowd, with the air of indifference they always adopt in the neighbourhood of the stump-orators' meetings. Tom seized Arthur Augustus by the arm.

"Come on, Gus!" he whispered hurriedly. "Grab him, Blake! We don't want a row here at any price!"

Blake seized D'Arcy's other arm, and before he had time to protest he was out of the crowd and being marched rapidly away, followed by the rest of the St. Jim's Scouts.

Monty Lowther clapped Arthur Augustus on the back, and chuckled.

"Simply ripping, Gus! He asked for a sample, and he got it! One out of the box, and no mistake!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys, pway let go my arms!" "Will you promise not to knock any more stump-orators off their chairs, then?" said Tom Merry.

"You're very lucky not to be run in, you ass, Gussy!" said Blake. "Think what it would look like in the papers. 'Lord Eastwood's son arrested! Unseemly disturbance in a public park!'"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let him go!" said Tom Merry. "Better save the rest of your punches for the boxing competition in the arena to-morrow, Gussy!"

"Yaas, bai Jove!"

And the St. Jim's Scouts finished their walk and made their way back to Richmond without any further sensational incident.

The great Jamboree went off in a continual round of interest and enjoyment for the St. Jim's Scouts.

During the week they carried off several distinctions in the arena, both Tom Merry and Jack Blake winning awards in the boxing competitions. In the woodcraft and pioneering demonstrations Noble specially distinguished himself, as did a number of other lads from Australia and other Dominions beyond the seas. Kerr made a most creditable showing in other scouting contests, as did Redfern and Manners. All enjoyed the great Pageant, and the singing and the playing of the many bands was magnificent.

"Next time we'll bring up a band from St. Jim's to compete," said Tom Merry, with determination. "I should like to have had a band here, so as we could have had a shot at that topping trekart which the editor of the "Boys' Friend" presented. It was really worth winning."

And there was a unanimous chorus of "Hear, hear!"

Everything comes to an end at last, and when the final day of the great Jamboree came, and the St. Jim's Scouts left the vast building for the last time, they were in a very contented frame of mind.

"Well, we leave camp to-morrow, and I shall be jolly sorry to go, for one," said Tom Merry. "I think this has been one of the finest weeks I have ever spent in my life! Seeing Scouts from all over the world like this has made me proud to be a Scout."

"Hear, hear!"

"Yes. And it makes you feel as if you are really some good in the world, doesn't it?" said Figgins shyly. And again there was a chorus of assent, for that was exactly what they all felt.

And so the St. Jim's Scouts agreed, with one voice that their expedition to the great Jamboree at Olympia had been a huge success!

THE END.

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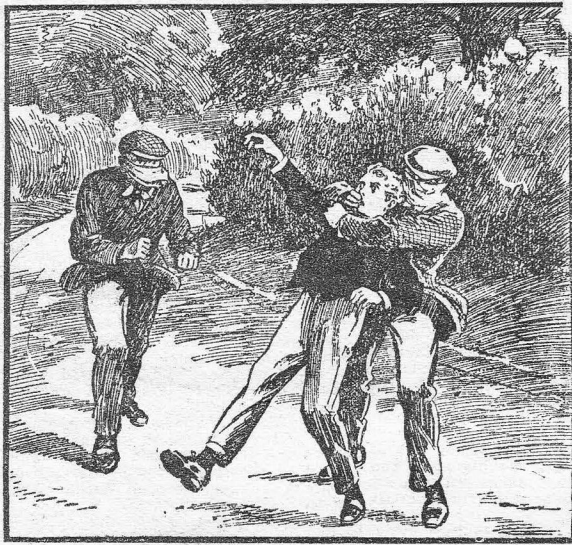
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By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver's Little Dodge,

"**W**HETHER that frown, O chief?" Raby of the Fourth asked the question.

Jimmy Silver certainly was frowning. The captain of the Fourth looked decidedly exasperated. Lovell and Raby and Newcome were doing their preparation in the end study, but Jimmy Silver had not settled down to work. Apparently he had some other matter on his mind.

"What's the row, Jimmy?" demanded Lovell.

"Better get on with your prep," advised Newcome. "Are you looking for a row with Bootles in the morning?"

Jimmy Silver granted. "It's rotten!" he growled. "Prep is? Can't be helped, old chap." "Not prep, fathead. Do you know what's going on in Mornington's study?"

Lovell yawned. "Blessed if I know, or care," he answered. "Tain't our business," suggested Raby.

"That's all very well. Who's captain of the Fourth?" demanded Jimmy Silver. "A Form-captain oughtn't to let a set of wasters disgrace the Form. Mornington's got a card-party in his study—there's Morny, Peele, Higgs, Topham, and Townsend. They're playing nap, and smoking."

"Let 'em!" "They've got the door locked," went on Jimmy Silver. "Pretty disgrace it would be for all of us if a prefect dropped on them. The Modern cads chip us already about having a crowd of blackguards on the Classical side."

"My dear chap, we can't help it," said Lovell. "Besides, they won't get dropped on. The prefects never interrupt prep, and the cads are supposed to be doing their prep. Let 'em rip."

"I've been thinking—"

"Bow-wow! We're not going to raid Morny's study because he's playing the giddy ox. Besides, if the door's locked we can't get in. If we make a row there it will bring up Bulkeley, or Neville, or Beaumont, and all the fat will be in the fire. Morny ought to be sacked, but we don't want to bring it about."

"And we don't want to set up as Good Little Georgies!" murmured Raby. "Let 'em rip, and get on with your prep, Jimmy."

"I've got an idea."

"Go and bury it, and get your prep done." "I don't know whether I ought to chip in," said Jimmy. "A chap doesn't want to take up the line of being superior to his neighbours. All the same, it oughtn't to be allowed to go on. That crew were bad enough before Mornington came, but he's making them worse. I think a bit of a fright would do them good. Suppose they

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heard Bootles at the door while they're going strong—what?"

The Co. chuckled. "It would scare them out of their wits," grinned Lovell. "But we're jolly well not going to bring Mr. Bootles down on them. This study bars sneaking."

"Who's talking about sneaking, you ass?" "Well, Bootles won't come of his own accord. Bootles never suspects anybody of anything."

"You know Bootles's voice?" "Eh! I suppose so." "I've been practising it," said Jimmy Silver. "Bootles has a voice that anybody could imitate—a cross between the bark of a dog and the toot of a frog. I can do it a treat."

"Yes, I've heard you. Better not let Bootles hear you. He wouldn't be flattered if he heard what his tot was really like."

"I'm not going to let Bootles hear me, fathead. I'm going to let those cads in Morny's study hear me—through the door."

"Oh!" "That's the idea," said Jimmy Silver, with considerable satisfaction. "I rather think they will take me for our respected Form-master, as they can't see through the door. And it will give them a hint of what they'd feel like if they were really bowled out—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Jimmy Silver rose from the study table.

"Come on!" he said. "What about prep?" asked Raby doubtfully.

"Blow prep!" roared Jimmy Silver. "Bless prep! Bust prep! Isn't this a first-class jape, you howling ass?"

"Oh, all right! Keep your wool on!" Jimmy Silver led the way, and the Fistical Four left the study. At the other end of the passage, near the stairs, several grinning juniors were collected. The door of Mornington's study was closed and locked, but the Fourth-Formers seemed interested in what was going on in that study. From within there was an occasional clink of coin, and an occasional remark could be heard.

"Your deal, Peele."

"Hand me the matches."

"Nap!" "Silly asses!" growled Lovell, in disgust.

"Anybody passing might hear that. That silly idiot Mornington is simply hunting for trouble."

"Looking for the sack, bedad," said Flynn of the Fourth. "You can smell the smoke outside the study."

"They ought to be stopped," said Dick Oswald.

"What a goey study!" chuckled Newcome. "Morny & Co. will go the pace—till they go out of Rookwood on their necks."

"Sure, we could get the door open with a chisel, and mop up the silly blackguards," said Flynn.

Jimmy Silver shook his head. "Leave them to me," he said.

"The door's locked."

"All the better for the little game. Mind, not a word!"

"What's the game?" asked Jones minor.

"You'll see."

Jimmy Silver advanced to the door of the study and tapped.

"Tap!" "Oh, clear off!" came Mornington's voice from within. "Don't bother, you asses! We're not openin' the door."

"Mornington!" There was a gasp of merriment from the juniors in the passage. For Jimmy Silver, in uttering that word, had imitated exactly the somewhat wheezy voice of Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth. Had not the Fourth-Formers seen him with their own eyes, they would have supposed that it was Mr. Bootles who was speaking. And the juniors chuckled gleefully as they heard an exclamation of utter dismay inside the locked study.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Something Like a Scare!

THE card-players in Mornington's study sat frozen. Only Mornington seemed to have energy enough to move.

Tap, tap!

The Blades of the Fourth stared at the door as if mesmerised.

They had supposed that they were quite safe in the study. Mr. Bootles seldom or never visited the junior studies, and prefects were not likely to come along at an hour when the juniors were supposed to be hard at work upon their preparation. The Nuts of Rookwood had locked themselves in the study for a high old time—according to their peculiar ideas.

There were cards on the table, and cigarettes, and little heaps of money, cigarette-ends on the floor, and cigarette-ash on all sides. The atmosphere of the room was heavy with smoke.

And outside came that imperative tapping at the door, and the voice of Mr. Bootles demanding entrance. The voice was going on sternly:

"Mornington! Peele! Townsend! Open this door at once—at once, I say! I am perfectly aware of what is going on in this study—perfectly! You hear me, Mornington? What—what!"

Mornington's face was furious.

He was the only fellow in the study who did not look scared to desperation.

"Oh, by gad!" groaned Townsend. "Oh crumbs! Caught at last!"

"Fairly caught!" mumbled Peele.

"A flogging from the Head!" muttered Higgs. "That's what it means—a flogging from the Head!"

"You fool, Morny!"

"Open this door!" went on the voice outside. "Why is this door locked? Bless my soul, I can actually smell tobacco! Mornington, I am shocked—astounded! Will you open this door at once? What—what!"

"B-b-better open the door!" mumbled Topham. "We-we-we: can't keep Bootles out."

Mornington gritted his teeth. "Get the study tidy, you fools!" he said, in a fierce whisper. "Don't sit there like a set of moulting fowls! Get the smokes out of sight, open the window, hide the cards! Get a move on!"

"But-but Bootles--"
"Quick, I tell you!"
Tap, tap!

"One moment, sir!" called out Mornington. "I can't find the key, sir. It's dropped out of the lock."

"Mornington, I fear that you are prevaricating. There is smoking going on in this study! What--what!"

"Oh, no, sir! Nothing of the kind!"
"Mornington, I can smell the tobacco!"
"It's some cigarettes I've been burnin', sir. I took them away from a fag. I thought they ought to be destroyed."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Peele. Mornington's ready wit had not forsaken him, and he was not hampered by any scrupulous regard for the truth. While Mornington was talking, the Nuts of the Fourth were busy. Cigarettes were hidden, cards hurried out of sight, fag-ends picked up and tossed into the grate. Peele opened the window wide, and Higgs and Topham waved newspapers about to clear off the smoke. Mr. Bootles could not be kept out for long. But under Mornny's able lead the Blades of Rookwood hoped yet to escape the consequences of their recklessness.

Tap, tap, tap!
"Have you not found that key, Mornington?" rapped out the voice outside.

"I--I'm still lookin' for it, sir."
"I fear you are prevaricating, Mornington."

"Oh, sir!"
"I have reason to believe that smoking and card-playing are going on in this study."

"Oh, sir! I assure you I am quite incapable of anything of the sort!"

"I trust so, Mornington--I trust so. But I have a very serious suspicion. I have reason to believe that you have dealings with a disreputable person named Joseph Hook, a book-maker of Coombe."

"I--I've never heard the name, sir!"
"What--what!"

"It's the first time I've heard the name, Mr. Bootles. I hope you do not think I would speak to a racin'-man?"

"I trust not, Mornington. That is what we shall see. Why do you not open this door?"

"I'm looking for the key, sir. Higgs chucked it behind the bookcase for a joke, sir."

"A very foolish joke, Higgs! I do not like being kept waiting outside a junior study, Mornington!"

"I'm awfully sorry, sir!"
"Make haste! Do you hear?"

"Yes, sir--oh, yes!"
"Oh, you deep rotter, Mornny!" murmured Townsend. "We'll spooft him yet. I--I say, what are you doin' with those fags?"

"Burnin' them."
"Look here."
"We've got to keep it up to Bootles, you idiot!"

"Oh, dry up!"
Three or four boxes of cigarettes were piled in the fender, and Mornington was setting a heap of matches to them. The boxes and the cigarettes burned and smouldered.

"The smell of tobacco is very distinct," came from without. "I am sure I am not mistaken!"

"It's those cigarettes I've been burnin', sir."
"Is that the truth, Mornington?"

"Yaas, sir. I felt they ought to be destroyed. Pernicious things, sir!"

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Topham.
"I trust you are speaking with veracity, Mornington. Have you not found that key yet?"

"I--I can see it now, sir."

Five minutes had been gained by the young rascals owing to Mornington's presence of mind. In five minutes the Nuts of the Fourth had done wonders. There was not a glimmer of a card, the money had vanished, no cigarettes were to be seen save those burning in the fender, which would account for the smoke-laden atmosphere. The admiration of the Nuts for their leader was deep and breathless. Truly, Mornington was a leader worthy of their admiration.

Mornington turned to the door, and rattled the key as if he were putting it into the lock. Then he turned it.

The door was thrown wide open. The Nuts of Rookwood stood respectfully

for their Form-master to enter. The next moment they gasped.

In the doorway, wide open now, there was nothing to be seen of Mr. Bootles. Jimmy Silver was standing there.

Behind him was a crowd of the Fourth, almost in paroxysms of mirth, and as the Nuts stared at them blankly the long-held laughter burst out in a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Straight from the Shoulder!

"H A, ha, ha!"
"Howly mother av Moses! Ha, ha, ha!"

The Classical juniors roared, and howled, and shrieked. The sight of the Nuts in the study was irresistible.

Mornington & Co. could scarcely believe their eyes.

They had had the scare of their lives; they had laboured under wild excitement and terror for five mortal minutes. And now that the door was open they saw nothing more dangerous than a swarm of yelling juniors.

"I--I say--" stuttered Townsend.
"Where's Bootles?" shrieked Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Has he gone?" gasped Higgs. "Where's he gone? What's he gone for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Spoofted!" yelled Lovell. "Can't you see you're spoofted, you smookey rotters?"

"Wha-a-a-at!"
"I am convinced," said Jimmy Silver, once more adopting Mr. Bootles' tones--"I am convinced that smoking has been going on in this study!"

Mornington's brow became as black as thunder as he realised how the humorous Jimmy had pulled his leg. The cigarettes--five shillings' worth of them--were smouldering away merrily in the fender.

"So you were trickin' me?" yelled Mornington.

Jimmy Silver nodded coolly.
"Exactly," he replied.

"You rotten cad!"
Mornington's savage temper was quite out of control now. He made a spring at the table, and grasped a heavy inkstand. He swung round on Jimmy Silver with the inkstand in the air.

"Look out!" shrieked Townsend. "Mornny, you mad idiot--"
Crash!

Before Mornington could strike the intended blow, which would certainly have done serious injury, Jimmy Silver was upon him. His right fist crashed into the face of the Dandy of the Fourth. The inkstand fell with a crash to the floor, and Mornington crashed into the fender.

He lay there gasping on the smouldering cigarettes.

The blow had been a terrific one, straight from the shoulder. Jimmy Silver looked down on him with blazing eyes.

"Is that enough for you, you cad?" he exclaimed.

Mornington only groaned in response.
"You get out of our study," growled Peele. Jimmy's flashing eyes turned on the Nuts.

"Now listen to me!" he exclaimed. "I've given you a fright, and if that isn't a lesson to you, you'll get something stronger. This kind of blackguardism isn't going on in the Fourth Form of Rookwood. It's not good enough. I warn you to look out. If there's any more of it, you'll all get handled--and pretty severely, too!"

And with that Jimmy Silver strode out of the study.

Peele closed the door.
"Hurt, Mornny?" he asked.

Mornington sat up dazedly in the fender.
"Hurt? Yes, you fool!" he mumbled.

"Well, it serves you right," grunted Higgs. "Suppose you'd stunned Silver with that inkstand? You'd have been sacked from the school."

"Mind your own business!"
Mornington staggered to his feet.

He was pale with rage, and a stream of crimson from his nose stained his chin and ran over his collar. He dabbed at it savagely with a cambric handkerchief.

"You do look a sight, and no mistake!" grinned Higgs.

"Oh, shut up!"
"I--I suppose we're not goin' on?" asked Townsend doubtfully.

Mornington laughed savagely.
"No; I'm not goin' on playin' cards now.

I don't feel up to it. I'm goin' to get level with Jimmy Silver."

"Not much use tacklin' him," said Townsend, shrugging his shoulders. "He can lek any chap here--even Higgs."

"I'm not goin' to tackle him."
"Better leave him alone," remarked Peele.

"After all, it was only a jape. You needn't have got into such a rotten temper, Mornny."

"Leave him alone!" Mornington gritted his teeth. "Yes, I'll leave him alone--when he's been worse handled than I've been--when I see him lying without being able to move--when I see him--"

"Are you dotty?" exclaimed Townsend in astonishment. "What the thunder are you driving at, Mornny?"

Mornington gave him a savage look.
"You'd better not know."

With that the dandy of the Fourth quitted the study, his handkerchief still to his nose. Townsend & Co. looked at one another uneasily.

"What's he got in his mind now?" muttered Peele.

"Dashed if I know!" growled Townsend. "Askin' for the sack most likely. Whatever it is, I'm not goin' to have a hand in it."

The Nuts were all agreed on that. They had found an able leader in Mornington. But they were almost scared, sometimes, by his passionate temper and his revengeful nature. And whatever scheme he had in his hot head they were quite resolved to know nothing about it, and have nothing to do with it.

Mornington, with all his faults, had plenty of pluck, and he was more reckless than any of the noble society of the Giddy Goats of Rookwood. Sometimes he had shown traces of good in his wayward and passionate nature. But the traces were rare. It was the evil that predominated. And such a nature could not be popular, even among the fellows who found it to their interest to pal with Mornington.

That Mornington had some scheme in his head for revenge upon the captain of the Fourth was quite clear. And as it was quite on the cards that it might lead to Mornington being sacked from Rookwood, his dear pals intended to give him a wide berth while he carried it out.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Precious Pair,

"VERY glad to see your 'Ighness!"
Joey Hook's tone and manner were very respectful. He rose from his seat in the garden of the Bird in Hand as Mornington came down the path in the sunset. Joey Hook was sunning himself in the garden, smoking a big cigar, and conning over a betting-book, when Mornington appeared.

Mr. Hook could be overbearing and bullying sometimes, as fellows who had got into his debt discovered. But with Mornington he was always extremely respectful.

Mornington simply rolled in money, and he was a reckless gambler. Every now and then he made winnings, which Mr. Hook paid up promptly, for the sake of encouragement.

As a rule, of course, he was a loser, and Mr. Hook's dealings with him brought a new and unaccustomed affluence to the enterprising Joseph.

Mornington had so much money that he did not miss his losings, though they were sometimes very heavy. And Mr. Hook was always at his service. He would have sacrificed much rather than have quarrelled with the dandy of Rookwood. And he endured Mornington's tone of half-contemptuous, half-friendly patronage with great equanimity. Mornington paid for his insolence, and that was all Joey Hook cared about.

Mr. Hook regarded Mornington curiously as the junior sank on the bench under the trees. Very few of the most reckless fellows at Rookwood would have cared to visit the Bird in Hand in broad daylight; but it was very like Mornington to do so. Mornington's face was clouded now; his eyes gleamed, and his nose was red and swollen. Mr. Hook opined that the junior had lately been having some of the check knocked out of him. He was right.

Mornington took a case from his pocket and selected a cigarette. The bookmaker passed him a match.

"Wot is it this time?" he asked. "I was jest a-wonderin' whether you'd give me a call--about the Saturday afternoon's race."

Mornington shook his head.

"It's not racin' this time," he said. "I want you to do somethin' for me, Hook."

"Anything you like. I'm yours to command," said Mr. Hook. "I'd be proud to do anything for you."

"You know Jimmy Silver?"

Mr. Hook's fat face clouded.

"Yes, I know the young 'ound," he said.

"You don't like him?"

"No, I don't—unless he's a friend of yours," added Mr. Hook hastily. "If he's your friend, I ain't the man to bear malice—"

"I hate him."

"Well, you naturally would, sir," said Mr. Hook. "A cheeky, cocky, exasperating young varmint—not your sort."

"I want him thrashed."

"Eh?"

"I suppose we can't be heard here?" said Mornington, looking round.

"No; that's all right. But—you say you—"

"You see the state of my face?" hissed Mornington. "Well, Jimmy Silver did that."

"Cheeky young 'ound, to lay 'ands on you," said Mr. Hook, suppressing a grin. As a matter of fact, Mr. Hook wondered that hands had not been laid on Mornington many times. Sometimes his insolent manner would have provoked Mr. Hook to lay his own fat hands on him, if Mr. Hook had not had such a keen eye to the side upon which his bread was buttered.

"I've tried to tackle him, and I can't," went on Mornington. "I've put up a bigger fellow to lick him—a burly beast named Higgs—and he licked Higgs. But he's got to pay for what he's done. I want him thrashed!"

"My eye!" said Hook. "I'd like to lay my stick about the young rip, ready and willin'! But—but that ain't in my line."

Mornington made an impatient gesture.

"Don't be an ass, Hook! I don't want you to handle him yourself. He could knock you into a cocked hat!"

"Oh, could he?" growled Mr. Hook, nettled.

"Yes, he could!" Mornington scanned the fat, flabby bookmaker with a glance that was not flattering. "I'm not thinking of that. I want you to find a couple of roughs to deal with him."

"Oh, my word!"

"I—I suppose you can do it?"

"I—I suppose I could," said Mr. Hook.

"Yes, I dessay I could. A couple of them stablesmen from the Ship Inn on the moor—they'd do it, if it was made worth their while. They're 'ooligans."

"I don't care what they are, so long as they'll do it. You'll have to point Silver out to them, so that there'll be no mistake."

"Sartin!"

"And I'll pay for the work—anythin' in reason."

"A couple of quid each would be enough for Hince and Strauss," said Mr. Hook.

"They ain't rolling in money. A fiver would cover it."

"I don't care if it's a tenner, if it's done as I wish!"

Mr. Hook's eyes sparkled.

"You're a gentleman, you are!" he said.

"You 'and me a tenner, and I'll take the matter in 'and, and if Master Silver don't get the drubbing of his life, my name ain't Joey 'ook!"

"I'll send you word where to get at the cad," said Mornington. "He could be caught in the lane—some time that he goes down to the village alone. At night would be best; some time when he breaks bounds to go down to Mrs. Wicks' for tuck. They do that sometimes."

"Fust rate!" said Mr. Hook.

"Mind, he's got to be thrashed so thoroughly that he won't be able to crawl home!" said Mornington. "Tell the men they're to hammer him till he's black and blue. He will put up a fight."

"I reckon his puttin' up a fight won't 'elp him much!" grinned Mr. Hook. "Them two fellers I was speakin' of are reglar terrors. They'll 'andle 'im!"

"Good! And if he's out of bounds there'll be trouble with the Head if he's found out; as he will be if he's licked so that he can't get home," said Mornington. "I think I can work it for him to be out of bounds. I've got an idea about that."

"You send me word when and where, and I'm your man!" said Joey Hook. "As fur the tenner—"

He coughed.

"Here it is!"

Mornington opened his pocket-book, and detached a ten-pound note from a wad of banknotes. Joey Hook's eyes gleamed covetously as they rested on the banknotes.

for a moment. He was more than ever disposed to oblige a young gentleman who was so exceedingly well supplied with money.

"I'm your man!" he said. "You rely on me!"

"I do!"

Mornington quitted the inn garden, leaving Joey Hook rustling the ten-pound note in his fingers in great satisfaction. The transaction was likely to show a large profit for Mr. Hook, as well as wiping off his old grudge against Jimmy Silver.

The dandy of the Fourth strolled back to the school. Old Mack was locking the gates, and he was just in time. Peele and Higgs and Gower looked at him inquiringly when he came into the study.

"How's your nose?" grinned Higgs.

"Not so bad as Jimmy Silver's nose will be shortly!" said Mornington.

"You've seen Hook?" asked Peele.

"Yes."

"Don't tell us anythin' about it," remarked Gower hastily.

Mornington sneered.

"I don't intend to!" he said.

"Look here," said Higgs, "I don't know what the little game is, but if it's a dirty trick, Morny—and I suppose it is—you can leave me out of it!"

"I'm leavin' you out of it."

"I don't like the idea, anyway!" said Higgs uneasily.

"I'm not askin' you to like it!"

Higgs grunted, and went on with his preparation. And the matter was not discussed again in Morny's study.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Night Expedition.

"W H O'LL GO?"

That, as Hamlet remarked of old, was the question.

It was several days after the "row" in Mornington's study, and that matter had been generally forgotten. If Mornington remembered it, he did not speak on the subject.

Townsend & Co., indeed, were glad to think that their noble pal had forgotten it. They had been very uneasy as to what wild plans of vengeance he might have been forming.

As for Jimmy Silver, he had hardly given the matter a second thought.

Any vengeance that the dandy of the Fourth might be plotting did not worry Jimmy Silver. He despised Mornington too much to care for what he thought or what he did. He was prepared to give him another licking if he asked for it; and that was as much as the cheery Jimmy thought about it.

The question now was a dormitory spread. The Classical Fourth were in their dormitory, and lights were out. Mornington had undertaken to stand a dormitory spread that night; and the juniors, whose digestions were equal to anything, had considered it an excellent idea of Morny's. Morny's beastly money was always in evidence, certainly; but so long as it went in "spreads" to which the whole Form was invited, it was not so very objectionable.

But alas for the happy anticipations of the feasters! The huge bag of tuck had been hidden in the dormitory, under Mornington's bed; and it had been spotted there by Beaumont of the Sixth, who saw lights-out for the Classical Fourth.

It was really Mornington's own fault. He had pulled the bag out to look at it just when the prefect was coming into the dormitory.

Naturally, Beaumont had taken the cargo away. It was a tremendous supply, and had cost Mornington two or three pounds. And Beaumont, having announced that the tuck would be confiscated, was strongly suspected of intending to do so by using it at his own study table.

Lovell had proposed a raid on Beaumont's study to regain the captured tuck. But that was scarcely feasible. Mornington had a more practical suggestion to make. He suggested that somebody should cut down to Coombe and bring in a fresh supply from Mrs. Wicks' little shop in the village. And the Fourth-Formers, who had been looking forward to that handsome spread, concurred heartily.

"You're simply full of good ideas, Morny," said Dickinson minor. "But it'll run you into a lot of tin."

"Oh, never mind that!" said Mornington. "I've lots of tin."

"Reekin' in it, ain't you?" grunted Lovell.

"Oh, cheese it, Lovell, when Morny's standin' a Form feed!" said Higgs. "I think it's a jolly decent thing of him to offer to stand it all over again."

"Yes, rather!" chimed in Tubby Muffin. "Morny's a real nobleman—that's what I say—a genuine nobleman!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But who's going?" said Oswald.

"Ahem!"

"Rather risky."

"Suppose Beaumont should be suspicious—or old Bulkeley—you never know!"

"Or Bootles!" said Rawson.

Mornington laughed unpleasantly. Nearly every fellow in the Fourth regarded it as an excellent idea to fetch in the consignment of tuck from Mrs. Wicks'; but nobody seemed keen on making the venture. Breaking bounds after lights-out was a serious matter.

"What about Jimmy Silver?" asked Mornington.

He was a little surprised that Jimmy had not offered.

Generally, Jimmy was well to the fore when any enterprise of unusual risk was to be undertaken. But this time the captain of the Fourth had not spoken.

"What about you, Jimmy?" asked Tubby Muffin anxiously. "It's up to you as skipper, you know. You ain't a funk, Jimmy."

"I'm not a funk!" growled Jimmy Silver. "But I don't care to feed with Mornington."

"Well, you needn't feed, so long as you fetch in the grub."

"Yes, that's the important point!" chuckled Hooker. "Fetch in the grub, and please yourself about scoffing any of it."

"My opinion is that it's up to Jimmy Silver," said Mornington. "Silver claims to be head of the Form."

"I am head of the Form!" snapped Jimmy. "Then it's your place to go. A Form-captain's job isn't to stick safe in bed while another chap runs risks."

"I'm not thinking about the risk," said Jimmy Silver gruffly. "But it's nothing to do with me, and I don't want a hand in it. We're not friends, and never shall be, and I want to have nothing to do with you."

"Well, if you choose to bear malice, the fellows will know what to think of you. So far as our row goes, I've got more to complain of than you have."

"That's a true bill, Jimmy," chuckled Lovell. "After all, you've licked Morny, and you don't want to owe him a grudge for it."

"I don't owe him a grudge. But I don't like him, and I don't want his feed."

"Oh, rot!" said Higgs. "That's only an excuse."

"If you want me to swipe you with my pillow, Higgs, you've only got to make that remark again."

Higgs snorted.

"Dash it all, Jimmy, you might feed with a chap!" said Lovell. "I don't believe in refusing a whack in a fellow's feed!"

"Silver's quite welcome," said Mornington. "I invite him, and all the rest. I can't say more than that."

"That's quite cricket," said Oswald. "Jimmy, old man, you're in the wrong."

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver uneasily.

"But if Silver funks it, who's going?" said Mornington. "I don't want to shove myself forward in Silver's place, but if he's afraid to go, I'll go."

Jimmy Silver sat up in bed, his eyes gleaming in the darkness of the dormitory.

"If you want me to yank you out of bed and thump you, Mornington—"

"I don't!" said Mornington calmly. "I'm speakin' plainly, because I want the matter settled. I think you ought to go."

"Like your rotten cheek to think so!"

"If you don't choose to go, I'll go. But if you hang back, I suppose the fellows won't need telling your reason."

"Oh, cheese it!" said Lovell. "As you're standing the feed, you might as well go without all this jaw!"

"Especially as it's your own fault the grub was taken," remarked Raby. "You fairly shoved it under Beaumont's nose."

Mornington stepped from his bed.

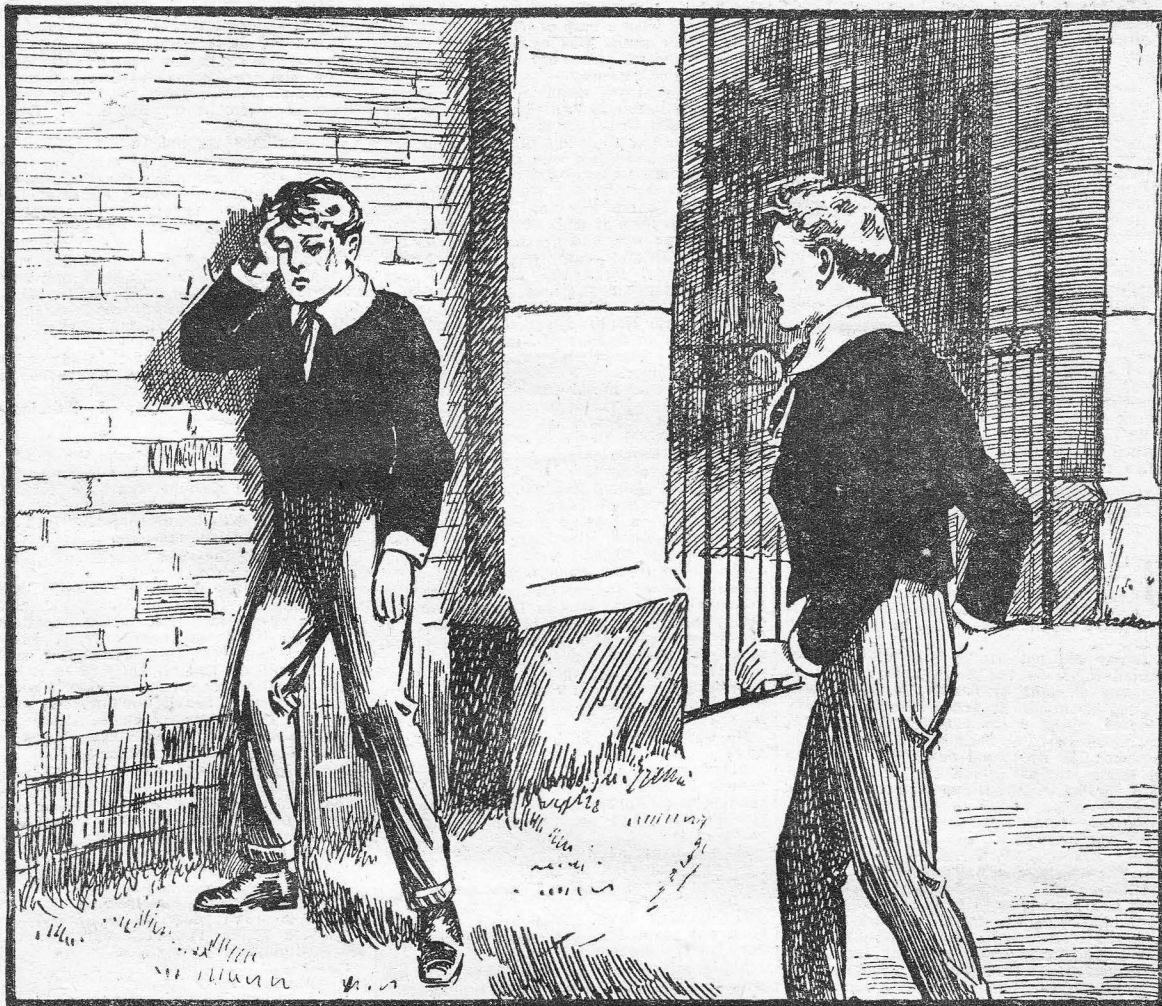
"I'm goin'!" he said. "Jimmy Silver's afraid!"

"Shut up, you rotter!"

Jimmy Silver turned out. He was breathing hard. He knew very well what the Fourth Form would think if he did not go now. Not that he had any special objection to going. It was only that he did not care to have anything to do with the cad of the Fourth.

"I'll go," said Jimmy quietly. "I've done it before, and I can do it again. And to-morrow morning, Mornington, I'll make you answer for calling me a funk."

"If you're not a funk, I'll withdraw the word," said Mornington coolly. "As for licking me, we all know you can do that,



Mornington was leaning against the wall, his face white as chalk. There was blood on his face where the savage blows had fallen. Jimmy Silver stared at him. It was Mornington, the slacker—and his enemy—who had come to his rescue, (See page 18.)

and it's no special use braggin' of it, that I can see."

Jimmy Silver made no reply. The cad of the Fourth had succeeded in putting him in the wrong all along the line. He proceeded to dress himself in the dark. Lovell put a leg out of bed.

"I'll come with you, Jimmy, if you like!" he called out.

"No; that's all right. No good two getting nailed instead of one, if there's trouble," said Jimmy. "I can carry the stuff all right. Mrs. Wicks will lend me a bag. You stay where you are."

"Buck up!" said Tubby Muffin. "You're a jolly long time starting, Silver! I'm jolly hungry!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Well, I didn't have much tea," said Tubby, "and I didn't have any supper, to do justice to Morny's feed. I could have cried when that beast Beaumont collared it, I could really!"

"Here's the money," said Mornington.

Jimmy Silver grunted, and took the three pound notes Mornington passed into his hand. "Three quids?" he said.

"That's it."

"I don't suppose I can carry so much stuff as all that. Our dormitory feeds don't run to three quids, as a rule," said Jimmy. "Get as much as you can carry comfortably, then, and leave the rest. Mrs. Wicks can send it home to-morrow."

"Jolly good idea!" said Tubby.

"Oh, all right!"

Jimmy Silver had finished dressing. Mornington returned to bed, his eyes glimmering strangely in the gloom.

The captain of the Fourth, without a single suspicion in his mind, was walking into the trap.

Mornington had counted, as a certainty, upon being able to induce Jimmy Silver to undertake the expedition. There was little difficulty in it.

Word had been passed to Joey Hook that afternoon, and Joey had assured his noble patron that all would be in readiness.

Little did Jimmy Silver dream of the thoughts that were passing in the mind of his bitter enemy.

The whole affair annoyed him. But he was far from dreaming that Mornington had ulterior motives in thus forcing the nocturnal expedition upon him.

His opinion of Mornington was not a flattering one, but he would never have suspected him of such black treachery.

Lovell slipped from his bed to help him out of the window. It was easy for a good climber with plenty of nerve to descend by means of the old, thick ivy.

"Have the rope ready to pull up the bag when I get back," said Jimmy. "I'll whistle. Right you are!"

Jimmy Silver slipped quietly from the window, taking a good grip on the strong, stout tendrils of the ivy. Lovell watched him descend, hand over hand. The moon was glimmering in the sky over Rookwood, and Jimmy was dimly visible till he reached the ground.

He waved his hand to Lovell at the window, and disappeared across the quadrangle towards the school wall.

Lovell closed the window softly.

Then he made up the pillow and bolster in Jimmy's bed, to give it the appearance of containing a sleeper, in case any inquisitive eye should look into the dormitory. Then he went back to bed.

"I say, how long do you think he will

be?" said Tubby Muffin anxiously. "I'm awfully hungry, you know."

"A good hour," said Oswald.

"Oh dear!"

"You can wake me when he comes in some of you," yawned Townsend. "I'm going to sleep."

"Same here."

"Good-night, Morny!"

"I'm not goin' to sleep," said Mornington. He was sitting up in bed. "I—I wonder—"

"What's the matter?"

"Nothin'."

Mornington went to the window, and mounted on the chair Lovell had used, and looked out into the moonlight. There was a strange expression on his face, and he was a little pale.

Now that his dastardly plot was assured of success did the blackguard of Rookwood feel a twinge of remorse? He hardly knew himself. He was thinking of the unsuspecting junior tramping along the dark, lonely lane—of the paid ruffians who lay in wait. Townsend blinked at him sleepily from his bed.

"Why don't you go to bed, Morny?"

"I'm goin' out!" said Mornington abruptly. "Goin' out, by gad!"

"What the merry dickens are you goin' out for?" exclaimed Peel. "Goin' to look after Jimmy Silver? He's all right."

Mornington did not reply. He pushed the window up and looked out. Jimmy Silver had long since vanished.

The dandy of the Fourth came back towards his bed, and dressed quickly in the darkness.

"You won't do any good by going out," said Newcome. "Jimmy Silver is safer without you. You're more likely to get spotted."

"Get to bed, and don't be an ass," said Lovell.

Mornington did not answer. Having finished dressing, he went to the window, and climbed out.

"Silly ass!" said Townsend, and he turned over and settled himself down to sleep.

"Blest if I can make him out!" growled Lovell. "If he wanted to go, why couldn't he go without fairly shoving Jimmy into it?"

"Oh, he's a dotty duffer!" said Raby. Headless of what the Classical Fourth might be thinking, Mornington clambered actively down the ivy. He dropped lightly to the ground, and hurried across the quadrangle, taking care to keep out of the radius of the lighted windows. He reached the gate, climbed over it, and dropped into the road.

There he stood, hesitating, for some moments.

Why had he come? Was it remorse, or was it a desire to see Jimmy Silver's punishment administered—to see it with his own eyes? He could hardly have answered the question. The strange uneasiness in his breast was a surprise to himself.

But his hesitation did not last long. He turned his back on Rookwood, and started down the shadowy lane at a rapid run.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. In Deadly Peril,

JIMMY SILVER strode away cheerfully down Coombe Lane towards the village. It was a fine, clear summer's night, and the deep lane, shadowed by trees, was rich with the scent of the hedges and the fields.

Jimmy did not dislike that walk at forbidden hours in the moonlit lane; and as for any thought of danger, it never even crossed his mind. It would take him twenty minutes' quick walking to get to Coombe, and he hoped to be back in the Fourth-Form dormitory in Rookwood under the hour. As he strode along through the keen, scented night air, he forgot his annoyance, and forgot Mornington and his gibes.

Half-way to Coombe the lane dipped, and ran in dark shadows under overhanging trees. Jimmy Silver whistled cheerily as he swung on. The whistle died on his lips as he caught a sudden moving shadow in the gloom.

He had not expected to meet a pedestrian on the lonely road at so late an hour as half-past ten o'clock. It was dangerous to be seen outside the school walls at that hour by anyone who knew him by sight. It meant a report to the Head of Rookwood, and a severe caning.

The junior halted at once, intending to dodge back into the shadows while the pedestrian passed.

There was a patter of feet on the road, and two burly forms emerged from the deep shadows into the moonlight.

Jimmy Silver backed away.

The two men had their faces covered with handkerchiefs, tied across them below the eyes, evidently for the purpose of disguising their features. Jimmy Silver did not need telling that this meant that they were footpads. And the way they were advancing upon him showed him that he was their "game."

His heart beat a little faster. It was not a light matter to encounter a couple of ruffians on a lonely road at a late hour far from help. And he had Mornington's three pounds in his pocket.

"Old on a minute, young gentleman," said one of the ruffians, in a hoarse voice.

"What do you want?" demanded Jimmy Silver as coolly as he could.

It came into his mind that the two ruffians had been watching for him—for somebody, at least. He had had no time to dodge into cover before they were upon him. From the deep shadows where the lane dipped under the trees they had been watching the moonlit road.

"That's 'im!" said the other, peering at Jimmy's face in the moonlight.

"Look here—" began Jimmy.

He broke off as the two rascals made a rush at him.

Robbery, apparently, was not their intention; they had asked him for nothing. They were rushing at him to attack him.

Jimmy sprang back, and eluded the rush.

"Nail 'im!" panted one of the ruffians. "Don't let him get away!"

Jimmy dodged again as they closed in on him. But it was not easy to dodge two. A savage hand dropped on his shoulder. Jimmy hit out fiercely, and his knuckles crashed on

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the point of a square jaw, and the ruffian reeled back with a gasp of pain.

The other rascal was on Jimmy the next moment, and the schoolboy closed with him, and struggled furiously.

What the attack meant Jimmy could not understand. But it was clear that the two rascals meant to attack him and injure him, and that he had to defend himself. Somehow or other he had made enemies of them, and they had found their opportunity now. He realised his danger; but the captain of the Rookwood Fourth was not likely to be an easy victim, even at odds of two to one.

The ruffian who had grasped him was big and powerful, and Jimmy was not much of a match for him. But as they struggled, Jimmy hooked his leg, and the rascal staggered, and went backwards helplessly. He crashed to the ground, with Jimmy Silver on top of him, and the junior's elbow driving fiercely into his ribs. He panted with pain as he writhed under the junior.

But the other rascal was on his feet now, and springing at the schoolboy. Jimmy felt, rather than saw, him coming, and he released the man under him, and rolled aside, barely escaping a savage blow.

He leaped to his feet.

"Out 'im!" panted the man on the ground.

"Lend me a hand, then."

Jimmy cast a longing glance up the road towards Rookwood. But there was no chance of flight. His enemies were upon him.

The junior fought gamely.

Again one of the ruffians crashed to the ground, but Jimmy was in the grasp of the other, and this time he could not fell him. A heavy fist was striking at him, and he reeled under the blows.

"Help!" yelled Jimmy. "Help, help!"

An arm was thrown round his neck from behind, dragging his head back, and stopping his cries.

He was fairly in the hands of the ruffians now!

Blows rained upon him as he struggled gamely in the grasp of the hooligans. A running figure appeared in the distance on the moonlit road, but none of the combatants observed it.

Jimmy struggled desperately, still holding out. He had given up hope of holding his own, but he was fighting to the last.

"Down 'im!"

Jimmy went down, still fighting. A heavy knee was planted on his chest, pinning him down in the dusty road.

Blows rained on him from above, and his senses were reeling. There was a rapid patter of footsteps on the road.

"Stop—stop!"

"Help!" panted Jimmy.

"Look out, Strauss!"

"Stop!"

It was Mornington!

He dashed up breathless, panting. The two hooligans glared at him, relieved to find that the new-comer was only a schoolboy.

"Get away!" snarled Strauss. "Mind yer own business! Clear off!"

"Let him alone!" Mornington panted. "I am Mornington!"

"I don't care who ye are! Clear off, or you'll get some of the same!"

"Help!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

Mornington set his teeth. He understood. Mr. Hook had mentioned no names, and to the two ruffians the name of Mornington was unknown. They did not know who their employer was.

"Let him alone!" panted the junior: "I tell you—"

"Knock him into the ditch!"

Mornington rushed on.

"Back up, Silver!" he shouted.

In a moment more a desperate struggle was raging.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER. A Fascal's Repentance.

MORNINGTON had closed with one of the ruffians, and Jimmy Silver renewed the fight with the other.

In the lonely moonlit lane the fight was savage and hard. The two schoolboys were no match for the ruffians; but Jimmy Silver, at least, was holding his own, now that he had only one foe to tackle.

Mornington went to the ground, with a burly rascal sprawling over him. A heavy fist was beating upon him like a hammer.

But as he struggled on the ground Mornington's hand fell upon a loose stone. In a twinkling he had grasped it, and struck.

The hard, heavy stone crashed full into the

brutal face above him, and the ruffian uttered a shriek of agony.

He reeled aside, and as he reeled Mornington struck again, the stone crashing on the side of the rascal's head with terrific force.

The man gave a groan, and dropped into the road, where he lay like a log. He was stunned.

Mornington staggered to his feet.

Jimmy Silver and his adversary were rolling in the dust, the Fourth-Former of Rookwood gallantly holding his own. With the heavy stone in his hand, Mornington rushed to his aid.

Crash!

There was a gasping cry from the ruffian as the stone crashed on his head, and he fell heavily. Half-stunned, and wholly knocked out, he lay gasping in the road.

Mornington grasped Jimmy's arm.

"Quick!" he panted.

The captain of the Fourth staggered up. His senses were reeling—he had been hard hit.

"Come on—quick!" panted Mornington.

"Before they—"

"Right-ho!"

The two juniors dashed up the road towards Rookwood. Jimmy's mission to Mrs. Wicks' shop in Coombe was quite forgotten now. It was necessary to get out of reach of the two ruffians before they recovered sufficiently to renew the struggle.

Like hares the two Rookwood juniors dashed up the road.

They were close to the school walls before they stopped. There, breathless, exhausted, panting, they looked back in the moonlight.

But the road was bare. There was no patter of footsteps; they were not pursued.

The two ruffians had evidently given it up.

Jimmy Silver gasped for breath. Mornington was leaning heavily against the school wall, his face white as chalk. There was blood on his face where savage blows had fallen. One of his eyes was closed.

Jimmy stared at him, hardly able to believe yet that it was Mornington, the slacker, dandy and blackguard, who had come to his rescue. Evidently there was more good in the cad of the Fourth than Jimmy Silver had ever dreamed.

"Mornington!" said Jimmy at last.

Mornington laughed sardonically. He was beginning to recover himself now.

"I've surprised you?" he remarked.

"Yes, a little. You came out after me?"

asked Jimmy.

"Yes."

"It was jolly lucky for me!"

"Yes, luckier for you than for me!"

"You're hurt?" said Jimmy anxiously.

"Not so much as they are!" said Mornington. "Lucky I got hold of a stone! They'll remember it for some time!"

"I haven't the faintest idea who they are," said Jimmy. "They set on me for no cause that I can understand. They didn't want to rob me—just to knock me about, so far as I could see. I suppose I've trodden on their corns at some time or other!"

Mornington laughed.

"It was jolly plucky of you to pile in like that!" said Jimmy. "I sha'n't forget this, Mornington. I might have been seriously injured!"

"You would have been," said Mornington.

"Well, I think they meant it. It's jolly curious that they should have piled on me like that—unless they mistook me for somebody else. They were watching the road for somebody; I'm sure of that!"

"For you," said Mornington.

"Oh, no; they couldn't have known that I was going out to-night. It wasn't decided till after Beaumont collared the tuck in the dorm," said Jimmy. "But if they could have known, I should certainly have thought they were watching for me. But let's get in. I'll help you up the wall. I'm really obliged for this, Morny. I—I hope we shall be more friendly in the future, old chap!"

Mornington laughed again—that sardonic laugh that puzzled Silver.

"You needn't trouble," he said coolly. "You're under no obligation to me, Jimmy Silver, and we sha'n't be friends!"

"Well, if you take it like that—"

"Can't you see what's as plain as your face?" sneered Mornington. "Those rascals were watching for you!"

"But they couldn't have known—"

"They did know."

"How did they know, then?"

"Because I sent them word."

Jimmy Silver started back.

"You!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, I," said Mornington coolly. "You

can go to the Head and tell him to-morrow morning, if you like. I shall deny it!"

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath. "I shall not go to the Head," he said quietly. "But let's have this out. You were badgering me to go to Coombe to-night, because you had this ready for me—is that it?"

"Exactly!"

"You rotter!"

Mornington shrugged his shoulders. Jimmy's eyes burned as he looked at him. "You cowardly cad!" he said, between his teeth. "There isn't a fellow in Rookwood who wouldn't shun you if he knew!"

"Pile it on!"

Jimmy clenched his hands hard, but he unclenched them again.

"There's one thing I don't understand," he said quietly. "If you planned all that, why did you chip in yourself when it was all going well? Why didn't you leave well alone?"

"Because I'm a silly fool, I suppose," said Mornington, shrugging his shoulders. "I couldn't, somehow; so I followed you, and—played the giddy ox!"

Jimmy's face softened again.

He was far from understanding that strange, tortuous nature. Mornington was something a little outside his experience. But he understood that a fellow who had repented at the last moment, and taken risks to undo his evil work, could not be all bad. Mornington was hurt; he had received his hurts at the hands of the rascals he had employed to attack Jimmy Silver.

It was a puzzle that was past Jimmy's power of solving; but he was no longer angry.

"You're not such a rotter as you set out to be," he said. "There's some decency in you somewhere!"

"Thank you!" sneered Mornington. "I'm not askin' for your good opinion!"

"You've acted like a Prussian, but you played up like a Briton at the finish," said Jimmy Silver. "I'm obliged to you for that touch, at all events! Let's get in!"

Mornington reeled as he tried to climb the wall. The struggle had told upon him more than upon Jimmy Silver. Jimmy's strong hand helped him, and they dropped into the quadrangle.

There was a surprise for the Classical Fourth when Jimmy Silver and Mornington returned.

"Well, what's the little game?" demanded Lovell, sitting up in bed. "Where's the luck?"

"Haven't got it."

"There was a wall from Tubby Muffin."

"Haven't got it! Well, you must be a silly ass! What are we going to do for the feed now?"

"Go and eat coke!"

"But what's happened?" asked Lovell, peering at his chum. "What's the matter with your face, Jimmy?"

"There's been a row—a couple of footpads," said Jimmy. "Mornington and I have been in a slogging match, and we've got hurt!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Now I'm going to turn in."

And Jimmy Silver turned in, and said no more. Not even to his chums the next day did he explain what he had learned from Mornington. The secret of Mornington's dastardly plot was safe with him, for Jimmy Silver felt that the rascal of Rookwood had atoned for it by his repentance at the eleventh hour.

THE END.

"THE BULLY'S LESSON!"

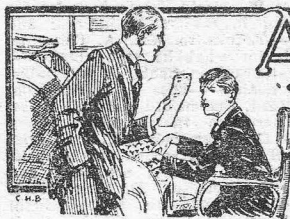
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Our next grand long story of Harry Wharton & Co. in their School Camp deals with a series of sporting contests which are arranged between the Greyfriars Juniors and Jimmy Brown & Co., the burly scouts of the adjoining camp.

As may be expected, the story will contain many thrilling and amusing incidents, which will grip my chums' sporting instincts from the very first. The title of this fine story is:

"SCHOOLBOYS AND SCOUTS!"

By Frank Richards.

The next great attraction will be the opening chapter of a grand new serial, entitled:

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Mr. Maurice Everard is one of the most popular authors of boys' stories of the day, and in our grand new serial we have him at his best. This is enough to show you that there is something extra special in store for you next week. Please don't forget to spread the news around among your friends who are not regular readers, and don't forget that the title is

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I also call the attention of my readers to a splendid complete tale of the Chums of Rookwood for next week, entitled

"THE BULLY'S LESSON!"

By Owen Conquest.

All those who are keen followers of these "Jimmy Silver Yarns" will greatly enjoy reading this fine story, in which Jimmy Silver, in a most ingenious way, teaches Bully Beaumont a much-needed lesson.

To avoid any unnecessary disappointment, I should advise my friends to put in their order for the next "Penny Popular" as early as they can, for there has been a great demand for this paper of late.

BEING CHEERY.

If anybody tells you that it is the easiest thing in the world to be cheery—simpler by far than having your dinner, and that sort of thing—don't you believe them. It is nothing of the kind. But it is a duty, all the same. Like many another duty, it is hard often enough. Now, being cheery and companionable does not mean going up and down the world with a grin on your face, or making it plain to everybody that you are in your own estimation a jolly dog. A lot of that sort of thing is sheer affectation, and goes along with the loud laugh which betrays the vacant mind. No, the good-tempered chap is usually quiet enough, but he makes the best of the passing situation, and he is welcome wherever he goes.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

The county of beech woods comes in for some pleasant words in the course of a letter

from High Wycombe. The writer tells me that the reference to Bucks in Chat gave great pleasure. The whole country here is charming. A char-a-banc runs several times a week from Wycombe to Burnham. I am sorry I omitted to mention High Wycombe, the great chair-making centre. I know the place well, and to anybody it will appear a most interesting town. High Wycombe is about the most important place in Bucks. Within a mile is Hughenden Manor, the seat of the late Lord Beaconsfield. Amersham, a pretty village, is seven miles north. Hero Dick Turpin was supposed to have run riot, and a row of cottages bear the name of the highwayman. West Wycombe is two miles farther on, and from the church, London, thirty-one miles distant, may be seen on a clear day. High Wycombe parish church is called the Cathedral of Bucks. It dates back to 1200. It has twelve bells. The clock chimes a tune every three hours. There are seven tunes. My correspondent thinks it would be well to keep a register of those readers willing to act as guides.

DISAPPOINTMENTS.

Fellows remember these, and forget, often enough, the bright things which have happened. But if you look back on life, and call a muster of the bad happenings, you will admit that in the main it makes a pretty trivial, insignificant crowd. It is just as well to bear in mind that this is the case next time you fancy you have been hard hit. The event that seems a knock-out blow will soon assume its right proportion, and, though you will not credit it at the moment, it is a thousand to one that later on you will be looking upon the incident as a real blessing, if in disguise.

BIRD CATCHERS.

Richards Jefferies, the famous writer on natural history, was fairly down on the professional bird-catcher, and he was right, for it is disagreeable in the extreme to think of song birds being captured and made to pass

(Continued on next page.)

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the rest of their time in prison. But it is well to note that the cunning bird-catcher has not made any perceptible difference in the number of birds round about the big cities. Neither has the boy who takes an egg from a nest. Many folks come back from a trip into the immediate country with the impression that there is a scarcity of birds. That idea comes merely from the fact that such superficial observers do not know where to look for the feathered population. In dry times the blackbirds, thrushes, and sparrows, even, drift towards the moister region. Of course, the robin, the detective bird of the countryside, does the same thing. Then in winter-time it is the same. Birds are always on the move, except the rooks. They always go back home at night, and in a cold, frosty spell there is a flight westward towards the rain line.

A VERY OLD GARDEN.

Have you ever when you have paid a visit to Kew had a look at the herb garden? It is worth a call. Crowds of folks who go to the wonderful gardens on the Thames miss the spot altogether, which is a pity. The casual visitor follows the stream of humanity, and sees the Palm and Temperate Houses, and, maybe, after looking at the marvellous pictures of eastern flowers in the Marianne North Museum, he ends up with tea by the Pagoda, and then goes home. But the little, old-fashioned herb garden deserves notice. Here you find all the unconsidered plants. They are carefully tended and given honourable places, just as it should be. "Weeds" they are dubbed elsewhere. There are the grasses, the dandelions, and there is rue and marjoram and sage. At Kew all the varieties are grown, and have as much attention as the choicest flowers which require well-heated houses and the utmost care of the skilled gardener.

JOTTINGS.

J. Cowin, writing from Pretoria, tells me the cold is tremendous in the Transvaal capital, and he has to swot at Latin. You feel the cold more there, as the temperature in summer is from eighty to ninety. Pretoria is having the winter of its discontent now. I am much obliged for all this correspondent says concerning the C.P.'s. He is afraid the home team has little chance against the English Soccer team which is out there now.—Joseph Greenwood, 41, Dryden Street,

Boote, Lanes, wishes to correspond with readers in Spanish, French, and Italian.—Wm. Johnstone, 26, Lexham Gardens, South Kensington, S.W., would like to hear from a boy interested in modern engineering and electricity.—Thanks to Wm. A. Clements, of Sparkhill, for what he says about the "Future" paragraph in Chat. A very interesting subject, this.—Miss Nesta Hazelton, Springfield Road, Chelmsford, asks me a few questions. Here are the answers: Harry Wharton and Greyfriars belong to the stories exclusively. H.W. is fifteen, no brothers or sisters. Greyfriars' colours are blue and white.—J. H. McGraw, 20, Carr Street, Stockton-on-Tees, sends me a thoughtful letter about an Old Story Weekly. It is worth thinking about. This correspondent wants to hear from those interested in a printed amateur journal.—Cyril W. Martin, 30, Thoresby Street, Sneinton, Nottingham, wants to correspond about photography.—I was much interested in a letter from Caerphilly. The writer has a good word for Gussy, Dexter, and many other celebrities. "The stories are splendid, and my two sisters and two brothers read them. After that the papers circulate among friends. This is the way to bring new readers."

BARRINGS-OUT.

Rebellions sore, long time they bore, so to speak, but, as a matter of fact, rebellions are not like that. Barrings-out are more popular than ever. If you doubt this, just look at the rush for the recent yarn about one of these affairs in the P.P. It was not a storm in a tea-cup, either, no mere trivial tit-up. There is something in the blood of the average fellow which makes him warm up to a rising of this kind. So long as the cause is just, everything is O.K. I do know that there is nothing so much appreciated as a rousing barring-out narrative, and for that reason I am keeping my eye on another in the same category.

AWKWARDNESS.

This never really pays, though it is popular in some quarters. A fellow has a grudge, and he thinks to show his independence by just not doing what he is expected to do. It is a hopeless, muddle-headed theory which belongs to the I'll-show-you argument. Something has gone wrong, and the victim wants to show how displeased he is, but his action

of sheering off and omitting to put in his duty is, after all, so much sulking, and tires him out before it worries anyone else.

A QUARREL.

Sometimes I am inclined to think that individuals who quarrel in public conveyances, or anywhere in the open, are simply out to give their fellow-citizens a little cheap amusement. There is something very funny about a dispute—there is really. I saw one of these controversies going on in a railway-carriage the other day. One fellow was sitting down. He kept on firing off sharp remarks at his adversary, who was standing, and who evidently had been done out of the seat, but I missed the first bout. The chap sitting down said, "I'll say no more. I shall leave you to the contemplation of your own infamy," or words to that effect. But the other man would not be left in that style. He retaliated by something very bitter, and so it went on. And how the mere outsiders laughed!

MR. JOSEPH MIMBLE.

I am pleased and proud to say that I have just received a letter from Mr. Joseph Mimble, who, as we all know, is a personage of the gardening persuasion, with a firm foot for snails. Mr. Mimble has written his mighty mind on the subject of horticulture. He thinks everybody should be on in this scene, even if it is only a case of watering the tender little seedlings and mowing the grass. Mr. Mimble has a way with him. He is as keen as mustard on allotments. Greyfriars has done some good work in this way, and Fatty Wynn slaved all through a half-holiday to help a widow, whose garden was getting unlike Mary's in the "pome." Anyhow, here is Mr. Mimble, cheery as a cricket, weighing-in with opinions about gardening for everybody, which seem as sound as the proverbial bell. For gardening does folks good, and gets the fresh air into their lungs.

Your Editor

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