

"THE TEST OF FRIENDSHIP!" GRAND SCHOOL TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. IN THIS ISSUE.

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Greyfriars

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Stories, Jokes & Pictures
of Greyfriars, Rookwood & St. Jims

Rookwood St. Jims



BILLY BUNTER IN DREAMLAND!



At War with the Prefects!

A Magnificent, Long, Complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co's. Early Schooldays at
-- Greyfriars. --

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Question of Fagging!

FAG!

"Fag!"
"Fag!"

The call came from the Sixth Form passage, but it was quite audible in other quarters. Fellows in the Remove passage could hear it quite distinctly. Fellows on the stairs, and in the lower passages, heard it more plainly still.

There was really no need for Loder, the prefect, to call three times, so far as that went. But he did; and even when he had called thrice there was no response.

"Juniors were not eager to fag for Loder. Fagging, indeed, was very unpopular at Greyfriars, anyway." It was an old-fashioned custom that was kept up at the school, and the seniors—who had all been juniors and fags in their time—did not see any reason why it should be abolished. And there were some seniors whom the Lower Form fellows did not object to as fag-masters. Wingate, the captain of the school, for instance, was a fellow any junior would have walked miles for, and there was keen competition among them to fag for Wingate. And they were always glad to oblige good-natured prefects like North. But with Loder it was different. Loder was a bully, and Loder was not good-tempered, neither was he popular. Wingate or North would always help a junior with his lessons in return for his services as a fag; but Loder was more likely to repay them with a rough word or a cuff. And Loder, when he called for a fag, generally had to call a good many times before one came, and one never came willingly. And that did not make the unpopular prefect any better-tempered.

"Fag!"

Loder was standing at the door of his study, calling. His face was growing red with wrath, as no answer came to his call. He heard a sound of scuttling footsteps at the end of the passage, and he heard a sound of hurried retreat on the stairs. That was all. Such fags as were within hearing were making haste to get out of it.

"Fag!"

Loder bawled out the word now with a crimson face. On the stairs three juniors hurried up to the Remove passage. They were Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, and Russell, of the Remove. They grinned as they gained the safety of their own passage.

"He sounds rather ratty," Frank Nugent murmured. "It's Loder, of course. I know his sweet, dulcet tones."
"He won't get me to fag for him!"

said Bob Cherry. "I'm fed up with Loder. He threw a saucer at me the other day because I spilt some tea on his tablecloth."

"Fag!"

"Better cut!" said Russell.

And the three juniors vanished into their respective studies.

"Fag!"

Loder was tired of calling out. He turned back into his study, and picked up a cane. Carne, of the Sixth, was sitting at the table, and he grinned. Tea was ready in Loder's study, but the toast was not yet made, and Loder's fag should have made the toast by the time the seniors came in. Hazeldene had the honour of being Loder's fag, but he had evidently forgotten to make the toast after laying the table, or else he had neglected his duties as a fag. Any other fag would have served equally well, but no other fag was forthcoming.

"You'll catch one in the passage," said Carne.

"I'll skin them!" said the prefect, between his teeth. "This is a regular plot among those young cads. They come fast enough for Wingate, but they never hear me."

And Loder strode from the study in wrath.

Two or three Removites had just come in from the Close. The autumn evening was drawing in, and the juniors came in early from the playing-fields. Harry Wharton, John Bull, and Mark Linley, of the Remove, came in together. The three Removites were looking ruddy and healthy after their exercise.

"Fag!"

Harry Wharton and his comrades did not look round. They made for the stairs immediately.

But Loder was there first, and he stopped them on their way. There was a very unpleasant expression upon Loder's face, and his grip was very tight upon the cane.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed.

The three juniors looked at him warily. "I've been calling for a fag for some time," said Loder. "I suppose you didn't hear me before—eh?"

"No," said Wharton. "We've only just come in from footer."

"You lying young cad!"

"Liar yourself!" said Wharton promptly.

"Why, you—you—you—"

"You may be in the Sixth, and a prefect, but you've no right to doubt my word!" said Harry, with a flash in his eyes. "And keep that cane to yourself,

Loder! If you use it on me I shall use my boots!"

"You cheeky young cad!" roared Loder. "You just heard me call, anyway, and you were making for the stairs instead of coming to my study."

"Quite so."

"I want a fag!"

"I'm not going to fag for you!" said Harry Wharton resolutely. "I don't like you. Besides, I'm not your fag. Hazeldene is!"

"He seems to have gone out."

"Well, I'm not his substitute."

Loder pointed to the Sixth Form passage.

"Go into my study and make the toast," he said.

Wharton did not stir. The prefect took a tighter grip on the cane. His face was very dark as he came towards Wharton.

"Are you going?"

"No," said Harry firmly.

"I order you—as a prefect!"

"I'm not going to fag for you!"

Wharton spoke calmly and deliberately, though he knew he was in a risky position. Loder was doubly in the right in giving him orders—as a senior and as a prefect—as well. But Wharton was Loder's pet aversion, and Loder was his; and he knew very well that if he went into the prefect's study, he would not escape without being bullied, and perhaps roughly handled as well. He knew Loder!

Loder did not waste any more words on him. He grasped the junior by the shoulder with the left hand, and raised the cane with the right.

"Hands off!" said Harry Wharton between his teeth.

Lash!

The cane came slashing down across Wharton's shoulders. The Removite uttered a cry of pain, and struck out fiercely with both fists. Loder staggered back. Wharton faced him, with clenched fists and blazing eyes.

"You cad!" he exclaimed. "You—"

He was interrupted. Loder leapt forward, lashing savagely with the cane. Wharton closed with him and struggled, and in an instant John Bull and Mark Linley rushed to his aid, and the three juniors closed upon the burly senior like dogs upon a stag. There was a crash as Loder went to the floor, with the three youngsters clinging to him.

"Ow!" roared Loder. "Yow! Help!"

"Bump him!" shouted John Bull.

"Hurrah!"

The three juniors were too excited to think of anything but punishing their

enomy. Bumping a prefect was a rather serious matter, and they were in the open hall, where a master might have come upon the scene at any moment. But they did not think about that. They bumped Loder, and he roared.

"You young rascals! What are you doing?"

"Cave!" muttered Wharton. "It's Wingate!"

And the three juniors dropped the prefect as the captain of Greyfriars strode upon the scene, his eyes gleaming with anger.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

By Order!

WINGATE, the captain of Greyfriars, stared angrily at the juniors. Loder staggered to his feet, dusty and dishevelled. Harry Wharton & Co. looked rather sheepishly at the captain of the school. Wingate was evidently very angry.

"You young sweps!" exclaimed the Greyfriars captain. "What are you up to? How dare you lay hands on a prefect?"

"He laid hands on me," said Wharton. "That's a different matter!" said Wingate sharply. Kind and good-natured as Wingate was, he was a great stickler for discipline, and he always insisted upon the high and mighty Sixth being treated with the most profound respect by the Lower School. "But what is the matter? Do you mean to say that Loder has been bullying you?"

Loder's reputation as a bully was quite well known to the Greyfriars captain as to the juniors.

"I ordered Wharton to fag for me," said Loder, in a choking voice, "and I'm not going to stand any interference from you, Wingate! I'm a prefect, and—"

"And I'm head prefect and you'll shut up while I'm speaking!" said Wingate unceremoniously. "Have you refused to fag for Loder, Harry?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"And why?"

"I'm not his fag."

"Who is?"

"Hazeldene."

"Hazeldene's buzzed off somewhere," said Loder.

"You know perfectly well, Wharton, that any member of the Sixth has a right to fag the juniors, and any junior he pleases," said Wingate sharply. "A senior is supposed to keep to his own fag; but if his fag is absent, he has a right to call on any other junior. You know that's the rule."

Wharton was silent. He knew that that was the rule, but it was a rule he did not like. He intended never to fag any youngster when he became a senior himself, and he did not mean to be fagged by the bully of the Sixth. Besides, the Fourth Form at Greyfriars were exempt from fagging; they had won that liberty for themselves. In the old days all Forms below the Fifth had been fagged. Now the Upper Fourth was free from it. The Remove was the Lower Fourth, and they did not see why they should not be equally exempt. If it was a matter of custom, they were quite prepared to start a new custom on the subject, as Frank Nugent had humorously remarked.

Wingate was frowning very darkly. The refusal of the juniors to fag touched the honour and dignity of the Sixth. He did not like Loder any more than they did, but he was prepared to back up any senior in claiming his accustomed rights.

"You hear me, Wharton?"

"Yes," said Harry quietly.

"You have no right to refuse to fag for Loder. My hat! You will be refusing to fag for me next when I order you!" Wingate exclaimed angrily.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed all three of the juniors at once. "We'd always fag for you, Wingate."

The captain's face softened a little. "That's all very well," he said, "but we can't allow the juniors to pick and choose like this! Loder is quite within his rights, and you had no right to refuse. Wharton. Go and do as he tells you at once!"

Harry Wharton hesitated. He could not disobey Wingate, because he was head prefect, captain of the school, and the most popular fellow at Greyfriars. But it was a bitter pill to swallow, to fag for Loder, after refusing to do so.

"Do you hear me, Wharton?" rapped out the Greyfriars captain.

"Ye-es."

"I suppose you are not going to disobey me?"

"N-no," said Wharton, with an effort. "Then go with Loder at once!"

"Very well."

Loder strode away towards his study, and Harry Wharton followed him, his face pale with anger.

John Bull and Mark Linley went disconsolately upstairs.

"It's rotten!" said Bull. "Loder will give Wharton a rotten time when he gets him into the study by himself. Wingate doesn't understand that."

The Lancashire junior nodded. "Yes," he said, "but I don't see that Wharton should go like a lamb to the slaughter. Let some of us get along to the Sixth Form passage, and if there is trouble in Loder's study we can chip in."

John Bull chuckled.

"Ripping idea!" he exclaimed.

Bull looked into Bob Cherry's study. Bob was boiling a kettle on a spirit-stove, and there was a very strong scent of methylated spirit in the room. Bob was smelling of it, and the kettle was smelling of it, and the grate, and the tea-caddy; and it was extremely probable that the tea, when Bob Cherry made it, would smell of it, too, and would probably taste of it. Bob looked round with a rather red and flurried face as the juniors came in.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he exclaimed.

"Hands wanted?" said Bull.

"What's the trouble?"

"Wharton's fagging for Loder, and we think he's going to be ragged," said Mark Linley. "We're thinking of turning up in force in case he wants help."

Bob Cherry burst into a chuckle at once.

"Good egg!" he exclaimed. He blew out the methylated spirit-stove and jammed on the lid, and wiped his hands absent-mindedly down his trousers. "I'm ready! We may as well take some cricket-stumps with us."

"Good!"

Bull hurried along the Remove passage, calling out to the juniors. They responded nobly to the call. Tom Brown, and Bulstrode, and Fisher T. Fish, and Russell and Leigh, and Smith minor and Micky Desmond, and a dozen more fellows came cheerfully on the warpath, with bats or stumps in their hands. Bob Cherry looked into Vernon-Smith's study. Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, was smoking a cigarette—one of the little customs that had earned him the title of the "Bounder." Bob Cherry sniffed. He had brought in a distinct odour of methylated spirit to mingle with the scent of Vernon-Smith's cigarette, but he preferred his own scent of the two.

"Are you coming, Smithy?" he called out.

The Bounder took the cigarette from his lips and stared at him.

"Coming where?" he asked.

"We're going for Loder."

"You can go for him," said Vernon-Smith. "It's rather too serious a business going for a prefect, to my mind. I don't want to get sacked from the school."

"You've come jolly near it a good many times," retorted Bob Cherry, "and if Dr. Locke caught you smoking that cigarette, you'd very likely get sacked, anyway."

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "He won't catch me," he said. "You won't come, then?"

"No."

"Rotter!" howled Bob Cherry.

And he went out of the study and slammed the door. The Bounder laughed, shrugged his shoulders again, and went on smoking serenely. Bob Cherry looked into the end study in the Remove passage. Lord Maulerever, the dandy of the Remove, was there, and he was reclining on his sofa, reading, or, rather, holding a book in his hand. It seemed too much fag for his lordship to read. He gave Bob Cherry a lazy look.

"Come on!" said Bob.

"My dear fellow—"

"Come on!"

"I'm rather tired," said Lord Maulerever plaintively. "I've walked a quarter of a mile this afternoon, and I'm—"

"I'll help you up," said Bob cheerfully. He picked up the end of the sofa, and shot the schoolboy earl off it on the floor with a heavy bump. "Feel all right now?"

"Ow!"

"Come on! We're on the warpath!"

"Yaas, all serene," said his lordship, with a sigh.

"Bring a cricket-stump!"

"I can't!"

"Can't!" roared Bob Cherry. "Why can't you?"

"I can't carry it!"

"Can't carry it?"

"No," said his lordship. "How can I carry a cricket-stump when I've got my hands in my pockets?"

Bob Cherry stared at him for a moment. There was a striking contrast between the laziest fellow in the Remove and its most energetic member. Bob Cherry did not argue. He seized Lord Maulerever by the collar, and propelled him forcibly from the study with a rush that took his breath away.

"Oh!" gasped Maulerever. "Ow! Oh! Ah!"

"Come on, you blasted slacker!"

"Begad!"

"This way!" shouted Bob Cherry, flourishing his cricket-stump, to the great peril of Lord Maulerever's aristocratic nose. "This way! Hurrah for the Remove!"

And the juniors crowded down to the Sixth Form passage. If there was trouble for Harry Wharton in Loder's study, there was certainly trouble for Loder to follow.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

Loder's Fag!

L ODER marched Harry Wharton into his study. Wharton's face was dark and grim. He had been forced to fag for Loder, but it went very much against the grain.

His services were not to be willingly rendered. But he had undertaken to obey Wingate, and he meant to do so, if Loder gave him a chance. But if the prefect bullied him, there would be trouble. Wharton was quite determined upon that.

Came grinned as Wharton came in. Wharton was the fellow in the Remove the bullies of the Sixth disliked most. He was one of those whose spirit they knew they could never break.

"So you've caught one?" grinned Carne. "Yes; and the worst of the lot," said Loder. "And if he doesn't behave himself, I'll give him such a licking, now, I've got him here, as he won't get over for a dog's age. You can bear that in mind, Wharton."

Harry Wharton looked at him steadily. "You won't!" he said. "What do you mean?" you young cad?"

"If you lay your paws on me, there will be trouble," said Harry Wharton. "I'm not Bunter or Snoop, and you won't handle me as you do them, that's all. Now, what do you want done? Wingate told me to fag for you, and I'm ready to do it."

"You'll do whatever I tell you," said Loder, in his most bullying tones. "I've said that I'm ready to do it."

"First of all, make the toast, and mind that you don't burn it. If you do, you'll get a thick ear."

"Rats!" said Loder. "What?" said Wharton.

The prefect made a motion towards him. Wharton had picked up the toasting-fork, and he grasped it in his hand like a weapon, and faced the bully of the Sixth. Loder stopped.

"You cheeky young cad! Get on with the toast!"

"Very well."

Harry Wharton made the toast, and he made it well. Wingate told him that he was to fag for the bully of the Sixth, and it was not his way to do even an enforced task badly. Loder was probably looking for an excuse to complain; but the toast was made perfectly, and he could find no cause for grumbling.

"Now make the tea!" he growled. "And be quick about it," said Carne. "We've been waiting long enough."

Wharton put the kettle on the fire, and stirred the coals. Loder uttered an angry exclamation. "Not so much dust, you young fool!"

"I made no dust," said Harry. "Don't answer me!"

Wharton was silent. He was trying his hardest to keep his temper. Trouble with Loder might mean trouble with Wingate, and the junior did not want that.

The kettle boiled, and he made the tea. Loder looked round for some other task for him to do. He really required nothing else done, but he was not inclined to allow Harry to escape so cheaply. Harry Wharton waited. He knew perfectly well what was in Loder's mind. It was a case of the wolf and the lamb over again; the wolf was never at a loss for a reason to quarrel with the lamb when the latter was in his power. Wharton had felt all the time that the two bullies of the Sixth Form did not intend to allow him to leave the study without rough usage. It was only in case of interference from Wingate that Loder wished to have some excuse for ragging him.

"You can brush up the grate now," said Loder, "and don't make a dust. You'll find a broom in the bottom of the cupboard."

"Very well."

"And don't answer me in that cheeky way."

Wharton bit his lip and held his tongue. He found the hearth-broom in the cupboard and began to brush up the grate carefully. Loder uttered a shout.

"Don't make that making a little." "I cannot help making a little."

"If you make any at all it will be the worse."

Wharton looked round at him. "Shall I leave off brushing the grate?"

"Get on with it at once."

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"Very well."

Wharton went on brushing. Loder reached out with his foot, and kicked him, pitching him forward into the grate. Wharton uttered a cry. He threw out his hands to save himself, and they came in contact with the hot kettle, and his skin was blistered. He sprang to his feet. The two seniors had burst into a loud chuckle. But Loder did not chuckle for long. He had taxed the juniors' patience too far. Wharton swung round the hearth-broom, and jammed it, heavy with dust and soot, into the face of the bully of the Sixth.

"Grorrororoooo-hoooh!" spluttered Loder.

He was choked and blinded with dust and ashes. He plunged back in his chair, knocking it over backwards, and leaped up. His knees knocked hard on the table as he did so, and he set the table dancing, and there was a rattle of crockery. Carne gave a yell. Half his tea had swooped out of his cup, and swamped over his legs.

"Ow! Look out!" he yelled. "Groo-hoo!"

Wharton tossed the broom into the grate and sprang towards the door. It was not exactly safe for him to remain in the study after that; but Carne was after him in a flash, and his heavy hand fastened upon the junior's shoulder, and swung him back.

"No, you don't!" he said grimly.

Wharton struggled fiercely. He knew that it would go hard with him unless he could get away before Loder came to the aid of Carne. Loder was gouging the dust and ashes out of his eyes and nose, and spluttering wildly. But Carne held fast to the junior, and shouted to the prefect:

"Quick, Loder! The young beggar will get away!"

Loder dashed towards them. His grasp fell upon Harry Wharton, and the Remove of the study, Loder seized a cane from the wall.

"Hold him!" he ground out. "Hold him face down over the sofa, and I'll lather him! By George, I'll make him wriggle for this!"

Lash, lash!

Harry Wharton, struggling furiously, shouted as the cane descended. His shout rang out of the study and along the Sixth Form passage.

"Help! Rescue, Remove! Rescue!" He hardly hoped that his shout would reach the ears of his friends. But it did. Bob Cherry & Co. were already in the Sixth Form passage, waiting for some sound of ragging from within. As Harry Wharton shouted, the Removites came swarming along to Loder's study, and the door was flung open.

"Rescue, Remove!" yelled Wharton. "Pile in!" yelled Bob Cherry.

And in a twinkling Loder's study was flooded with excited juniors, flourishing cricket-stumps and yelling like demons.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
The Remove to the Rescue!

BOB CHERRY was first in the study, brandishing his cricket-stump in the most reckless way.

The globe on the gas-bracket crashed down in pieces as Bob Cherry's weapon came in contact with it, and was scattered in fragments over the table. One more sweep of the stump, and the tea-tings were in the same condition as the gas-globe.

Loder and Carne released Harry Wharton, in sheer astonishment, as the juniors rushed in.

They had seen some reckless proceedings on the part of the Greyfriars Remove in their time, but never any-

thing quite like this before. The rush of the juniors drove them back across the study, and Wharton, crimson with rage, sprang up.

"Come on, you chaps!" he shouted. "Wreck the study!"

"Hurrah!"

"Good egg!"

"Pile in!"

"Faith, and we'll wreck them intirely!"

"I guess that's so! Go it!"

"Hurrah!"

Loder glared furiously at the juniors. "Get out!" he shrieked. "How dare you come into my study like this! Get out! I—I—I'll smash you! Get out!"

"Rats!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Yah!"

Loder brandished the cane, and ran at the juniors, hitting out furiously. They yelled and roared as they caught the lashes across faces and shoulders. But Loder did not do much execution; he had no time. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry and John Bull fastened upon him, and he was brought with a crash to the floor.

"Hold him!" panted Harry. "Got him!"

"Got the cad!"

Carne was making for the door. But the doorway was blocked with excited juniors.

Tom Brown and Bulstrode and Bol-sover seized Carne, and he was whirled back into the study, and shoved over, three or four of the Removites sitting on him to keep him down.

"Help!" shrieked Loder. "Help!" roared Carne.

"Lock the door!" said Harry Wharton quickly. "Wingate will be along in a minute, when he hears the row, and we don't want him in this."

"I—I say, we can't defy Wingate, you know," muttered Bulstrode.

"Lock the door!"

Bob Cherry locked the door. Bulstrode was captain of the Remove, but it was certainly Harry Wharton who was giving the orders now. Loder and Carne were struggling to rise, but they were pinned down by sheer weight. There came a sharp rap at the locked door.

"What's the row here? Who is Wingate's voice?"

"Don't answer!" said Wharton. "We don't want to cheek Wingate, but we're going to make these bullying rotters sit up."

"Hear, hear!"

"Loder," shouted Wingate from the passage, "what's the matter?"

Loder opened his mouth to reply, but Micky Desmond jammed a pat of butter into it, and the Sixth Form bully spluttered and stuttered instead of replying. Ogily had a lump of butter ready for Carne; but Carne was wiser, he did not open his mouth. The captain of Greyfriars rapped sharply on the door again.

"What's the row here? Will you answer me?"

"Faith, and we're not going to answer you, Wingate darling!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Desmond! Is that Desmond of the Remove?"

"Sure, and I sha'n't tell ye!"

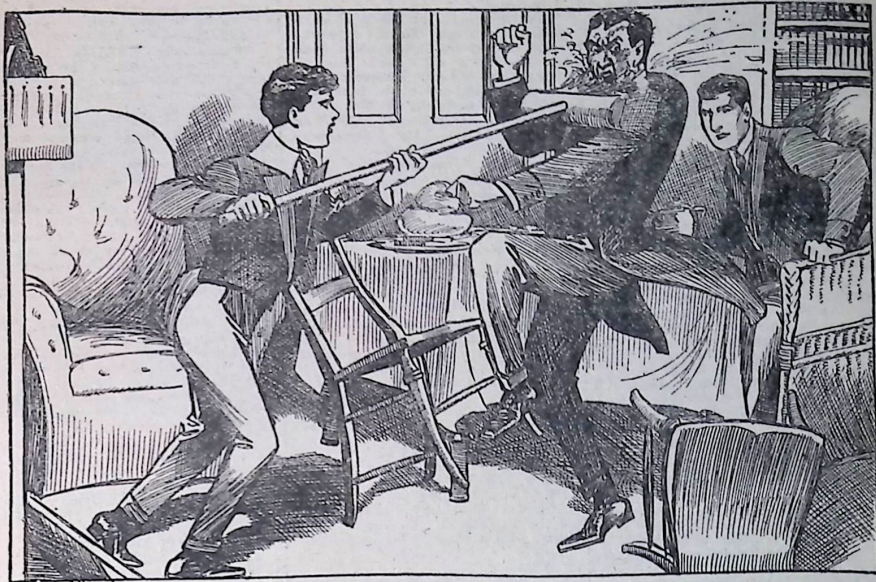
"Da, ha, ha!"

"Desmond, open this door at once!"

"Shut up, Micky, you ass!" muttered Bob Cherry. "Now, then, we'll give these cads a bumping, and then shin out of the window. We don't want to have an argument with Wingate in the passage. Wingate is a good sort, and we don't want to have to bump him, too."

The juniors chuckled. They were not likely to attempt to bump the captain of the school.

Wingate was still knocking at the



Wharton swung round the hearth-broom, and jammed it, heavy with dust and soot, into the face of the bully of the Sixth. Loder staggered back, his face covered with the black off the broom. "Grrroooooo-hoohh!" he spluttered. (See Chapter 3.)

door, and calling out to the juniors to open it; but they preferred not to hear. There was no arguing with the head of the Sixth, but they had a right to be as deaf as they liked.

Loder and Carne, powerful seniors as they were, were powerless in the grasp of the juniors.

There were more than a dozen of the Removos crowding the study, and they simply swarmed over the two hapless Sixth-Formers, and in almost less time than it takes to relate the whole room was wrecked.

"Hold them!" said Harry Wharton. "I've got something to say to them."

Loder and Carne glared at him. "I came here to fag for you because Wingate ordered me," said Wharton. "Now, look here, I'm not going to fag for either of you again, orders or no orders from Wingate. I won't set my foot in this study any more; and if the Removos choose to back me up there won't be any more fagging done for you at all."

"Hear, hear!"

"Hurrah!"

"Down with fagging!"

The Removos were certainly keen enough about it. Their yells drowned the loud knocking at the door and Wingate's angry tones from the passage.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "The Upper Fourth used to be fagged until they struck against it. Why shouldn't the Removos do the same?"

"No more fagging for anybody we don't choose, anyway!" said Nugent.

"That's the ticket!"

"Hear, hear!"

And Loder and Carne come on that list, and Walker and Gwynne and Hammerley!" said Harry Wharton. "No more fagging for any of them."

"Bravo!"

"And to begin the campaign, we'll

give these rotters a lesson," went on Wharton. "I had to come here and fag for that cad. I made his toast and his tea, and in return he kicked me into the grate and burnt my fingers on the kettle. Look at these blisters."

"Shame!"

"The brute!"

"I—I didn't mean to burn you," spluttered Loder through the butter. "I—I'm sorry about that—I—"

"I dare say you are," said Bulstrode. "And we'll make you sorer before we've done with you, you howling cad!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hold the cads!" said Harry Wharton. "They're going to have their tea and their toast, but outside instead of inside."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton took the plate of toast from the table, and jammed it over the faces of the two seniors. Then he took up the teapot.

"Stop!" shrieked Loder. "It's hot! You'll scald us! You murderous young villain, put that teapot down! Oh! Keep off!"

"Keep off!" shrieked Carne.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I'm not going to scald you," he said.

"It would be no more than you deserve, but I'm not going to do it. The tea will be cool enough when I've mixed it with the milk and the jam and the honey."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton made the mixture. He made it in a basin, and added a little soot from the chimney, and some ashes from the grate. Loder and Carne eyed the basin with the deepest apprehension as Harry Wharton brought it close to them.

The juniors held them fast, and they could hardly wriggle, let alone escape. The Removites grinned gleefully. They had suffered much at the hands of Loder

and Carne, but the hour of vengeance had struck at last.

"You young villain! Take that away!" gasped Loder faintly. "I—I—Ooch!"

Stop!

It came down over Loder's face. It was not hot, only lukewarm; but it was nasty. Some of the ingredients might have been tolerable, taken singly; but together, and applied externally, too, they were decidedly unpleasant.

"Yoo-oo! Oo-ooch!"

Carne eyed the basin wildly. He knew that his turn was coming, and that there was no escape for him. He twisted his head to one side, and then to the other, in a wild attempt to avoid the concoction as it swooped down. But in vain.

Swish! Swash!

"Groo-ooch!"

"I think the time has come for us to retire, gentlemen," said Bob Cherry, throwing open the window. "This way! Follow your leader!"

He clambered out of the window and dropped into the Close. The grinning juniors followed him fast, leaving Loder and Carne sitting gasping on the floor of the study, gouging the horrible mixture from their eyes and ears and noses, and sniffing and snorting and panting, while Wingate still hammered angrily on the outside of the door.

But within ten minutes Dicky Nugent appeared to tell the juniors that Wingate wanted them.

With rueful glances at one another the juniors went.

Wingate was not alone. Loder and Carne were in the study, and North was standing at the window, Wingate upon the mantelpiece, and his brow was very stern. It was clear that he had been thinking out how he should deal with

the matter, and he had taken his time about it.

The juniors could not help looking, and feeling, a little sheepish as they came stood in a row, with the table between them and Wingate. The stern eyes of the head of the Sixth rested upon them. "You sent for us, Wingate," said Bulstrode, breaking the silence.

"Yes," said Wingate, "I have been thinking over what you've done. I suppose you know that it's not allowed for rag a prefect."

"The chaps came to help me," said Wharton. "I called for help, because those two cads were ragging me."

Loder made a movement. Wingate signed to him to keep back.

"Don't use words like that, in speaking of the Sixth, Wharton," said Wingate quietly. "It's not respectful. What were Loder and Carne doing?"

"If you're going to listen to that lying young cad—" began Loder.

Wingate made a gesture. "I'm going to listen to him, or I shouldn't ask him questions," he replied. "Be good enough to shut up for a few minutes, Loder."

Loder relapsed into angry, sullen silence. Wharton did not even look at him. He replied to Wingate's question with his eyes upon the Greyfriars captain.

"Carne held me while Loder caned me," he said.

"What had you done to be caned?"

"Jammed the hearth-broom into my face," interjected Loder.

"Did you do that, Wharton?"

"Yes; he had kicked me."

"A push with the foot, and he tumbled over on purpose," said Loder. "Carne can tell you that it was merely a playful push, and then he came for me like a demon."

"Quite so," said Carne.

Wingate's brow clouded. It was very probable that the cads of the Sixth had bullied Wharton. But how was he to get at the facts?

"We needn't go any further into that," he said, after a pause; "but if you are badly treated by a senior, Wharton, your business is to come and tell me, not to take the law into your own hands. If juniors were allowed to attack seniors, and rag prefects, and raid a Sixth Form study when they pleased, you can see for yourself that all order would be at an end in the school."

Wharton was silent.

"Therefore, you were in the wrong, whatever provocation you had," said Wingate. "The only question is, whether you prefer to be punished by me, or punished by the Head."

The juniors started.

"The Head!" repeated Nugent.

"Yes. I will take a report of the matter to the Head, and leave it in his hands, or I will punish you myself, as you please. Take your choice."

"We don't want to drag the Head into it," muttered Bulstrode.

"Very well, then I shall cane you!"

"Cane us!" said John Bull.

"Yes, and severely, too. Discipline is going to be maintained, or I will know the reason why," said Wingate grimly. He picked up a cane.

"There were a lot of others, too," said Loder. "I remember some of them—Finley, and Linley, and Bolsover, and Leigh, and Russell, and—"

"Never mind them," said Wingate. "We have the ringleaders here, and that's enough. I don't want to cane a whole Form. Punishing the leaders will be enough."

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"But—"

"You've heard what I've decided."

Loder bit his lips. There was no graining the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate signed to the juniors to come forward. As captain of the Remove he would take his punishment first.

"Hold on a minute!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "May I say a word, Wingate?"

"Certainly, if you like."

"We've been up against Loder and Carne because they are bullies. We've never declined to fag for you or North or any decent chap. You can't say we have."

"That's right enough," said North.

"You can't be allowed to pick and choose," said Wingate, frowning. "Fags have to do as they're told. There's altogether too much cheek and independence in the Remove."

"If we're allowed to fag for seniors we can get on with, we don't grumble," said Wharton. "But fagging for Loder is impossible! I won't ever do it again!"

"What?"

"Or for Carne, either. Or for Walker, or Gwynne, or Hammersley," said Harry Wharton.

"You'll do as you're told."

"Not in this case. And if you cane me now, Wingate—"

"I'm certainly going to."

"Then it will be the last of fagging for me or anybody at Greyfriars!" said Harry, with a blaze in his eyes. "It's unjust—"

"What?"

"It's unjust. You can cane me if you like, I suppose, as you're captain of the school, but you can't make me fag, and I never will fag again for anybody!"

"Hear, hear!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Same here! I'm on! Hurrah!"

"Hurrah!" echoed John Bull. "Same here!"

"Don't make that row in my study, please!" said Wingate quietly. "Come up and take your canings, and then go away and think it over. If you stick to what you have said, Wharton, there

will be a good many canings in store for you yet, I imagine."

"I don't care!"

Wingate smiled grimly, but he did not reply. He caned each of the juniors in turn, and a severe caning it was. Wingate did not like inflicting punishment, but he was moved by a sense of duty. His point of view was very far removed from that of Harry Wharton & Co. For the first time there was something of anger and bitterness in the breasts of the juniors towards the captain of the school.

They took their punishment quietly. Not one of them uttered a sound; only lips were tightened, and eyes gleamed. When it was over they turned towards the door. Harry Wharton paused, last of all, with his hand on the handle of the door, and looked back at Wingate as he laid down the cane.

"That's the end of it," he said. "No more fagging!"

And he closed the door before Wingate could reply, and followed his comrades.

The other juniors did not speak as Harry Wharton came up to them. They looked at him, however, in a manner which spoke volumes.

"It's the end!" said Harry Wharton between his teeth. "We're not going to fag any more—not for any prefect! I rely on you chaps—"

"Rats!" growled Johnny Bull. "There's no need to say anything about that. We're finished fagging!"

"Hear, hear!" said the others.

That was the resolution. It remained to be seen what happened when the first call for a fag was made.

(Next Friday there will be another Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., dealing further with their campaign against the prefects, entitled "Holding Their Own!" By Frank Richards. Order your copy of the Popular early. Meantime, read next week's issue of our companion paper, the MAGNET Library, out on Monday.)

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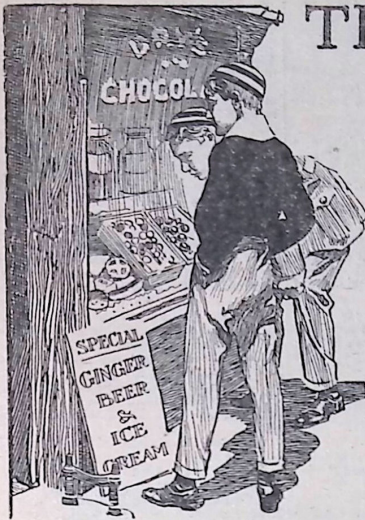
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THE TEST OF FRIENDSHIP!

A Splendid Long Complete School Tale, dealing with the Adventures of JIMMY SILVER & Co., of Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Divided!

MORNING lessons were over, and Jimmy Silver & Co. came out of the Fourth Form-room at Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver drove his hands into his pockets, and walked out into the quadrangle by himself.

The Co.—Lovell and Raby and Newcome—looked after him, with somewhat glum looks, but did not join him.

Jimmy Silver was looking morose. Lovell and Raby and Newcome were looking equally morose.

Evidently there was trouble in the family.

Tommy Dodd of the Fourth came over from the Modern Side with a thoughtful expression on his rugged face.

That afternoon the Bagshot match was to be played—a very important match for the junior footballers of Rookwood—in fact, greatly transcending in their eyes the importance of any of the first-eleven matches played by Bulkeley's team.

Tommy Dodd looked round as he came into the School House and spotted Lovell and Raby and Newcome, and bore down upon them.

"Where's Silver?" he asked.
"Don't know!" said Lovell gruffly.
"Oh, I hear you've been rowing with him!" remarked Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, rats!"

Tommy Dodd laughed.

"Well, you don't seem very cheerful about it," he remarked. "No business of mine, however—"

"Has that just occurred to you?" asked Lovell sarcastically.

"Oh, I want to speak to Silver about the match."

"Better look for him, then!"

"Br-r-r!" said Tommy Dodd.

And he looked for Jimmy Silver. He found him in the end study, alone, with a glum expression on his face, staring out of the window. Tommy Dodd coughed as he came in, and Jimmy looked round from the window.

"About the match," said Tommy Dodd.

"Tain't time yet!"

"I know that. Are we in the team?"

"If I'd made any changes I should

as you like, but I shall put you in the team all the same, so long as you're any good there."

"We haven't exactly been putting on airs," said Tommy Dodd, colouring.

"We haven't spoken to you, I know, since the other day when we found you at that low den, the Ship. We're not exactly gone on pub-haunters on the Modern side."

Jimmy Silver's eyes glamed.
"So you think me a pub-haunter?" he exclaimed.

"I don't think—I know!" said Tommy Dodd coolly. "We found you there, at that disreputable den, out of bounds, talking to a boozy backguard. You hadn't any explanation to give us for being there. We drew our own conclusions."

"Like your confounded cheek, you Modern waster!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Tommy Dodd. "Your own pals have drawn the same conclusion—I can see that. Most of the fellows don't know what you've quarrelled about, but I can jolly well guess. They know you were hanging about the Ship, and they don't like it!"

Jimmy Silver was silent.

"Blessed if I can understand a chap like you taking up that sort of thing," went on Tommy Dodd. "I should think you could leave it to Smythe and Townsend and that set. It's a mug's game, at the best!"

"Any charge for sermons?" asked Jimmy.

"None!" said Tommy Dodd cheerfully.

"While I'm on the subject, I'll advise you to chuck it—to give the Ship and your boozey friends there the go-by. They won't do you any good, you know. All those betting cads want is your money—if you've got any left by this time. From what I hear, you can't have much left."

"And what have you heard?"

"Well, it's no secret that you've been borrowing money right and left in the Fourth," said Tommy Dodd. "You've borrowed money of Leggett, too—the cad who lends money at interest among the fellows. You ought to have sense enough to know where this kind of thing leads, Jimmy Silver."

"And you ought to have sense enough to know when a fellow's a backguard,

and when he isn't!" said Jimmy Silver savagely. "Go and eat coke! Buzz off, and take your sermons along with you!"

"Look here—"

"And when you want to sermonise somebody again, find somebody on the Modern side—Leggett, for instance. We don't have amateur moneylenders on the Classical side."

Tommy Dodd flushed angrily.

"Leggett's a cad!" he said. "We own up to that, though he's a Modern. But a cad who lends money at interest isn't much worse than a cad who borrows it."

Jimmy Silver jumped up.

"You cheeky rotter—"

"You Classical worm—"

"If you've come here for a thick eat

I—"

"I'll take all you can give me," said Tommy Dodd disdainfully.

"Here goes, then, you Modern worm!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp! The Classical and the Modern, locked in an affectionate embrace, staggered round the study.

They bumped into the chairs, and sent them flying; they crashed upon the table, and hurled it over in the fender.

Tramp! Crash! Bump! Bang!

There was a rush of juniors along the Fourth-Form passage to see the row. The doorway was soon crammed.

"Go it, Silver!" shouted the Classical juniors.

"Chuck him out!"

"Snatch the Modern rotter bald-headed!"

"Hallo! What's the row?" exclaimed Lovell, coming along with Raby and Newcome. "Modern cad in our study, by Jove! Boot him out!"

Three pairs of hands were laid upon Tommy Dodd, and he was dragged away from Jimmy Silver by main force.

"Leggo!" shrieked Tommy Dodd.

"Largo him to me!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"Rats!"

The Co. swung Tommy Dodd through the doorway, and there was a wild scrambling of the juniors to get out of the way. Hooker roared as Tommy Dodd bumped into him and knocked him over, and Oswald gave a yell as one of Tommy's flying elbows was planted on his nose.

"Roll him along!" roared Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow-ow-woop!" spluttered Tommy Dodd, as he was bundled bodily along the passage, and rolled down the stairs.

The Co. returned to the end study triumphantly. They found Jimmy Silver dusting his clothes.

"We've chucked him out!" said Lovell.

"You needn't have troubled," said Jimmy Silver coolly. "I could handle him, or any other Modern cad."

"If that's all your thanks—"

"That's all, and quite enough!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Cheese it, youuffers!" said Raby.

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anxiously. "Look here, Jimmy—look here, Lovell—we've had enough of this. What's the good of being at loggerheads. The study ain't fit to live in now. Chuck it!"

"I'm willing," said Jimmy Silver. "I haven't quarrelled with you fellows. You have quarrelled with me."

"I'm willing enough, if Jimmy Silver chucks up pub-haunting," said Lovell. "I bar that."

"You silly ass!" shouted Jimmy. "You boozey bouncer!" retorted Lovell.

"Oh, come away!" said Newcome, dragging Lovell out of the study. Raby glanced uneasily at Jimmy, and followed them.

Jimmy Silver shrugged his shoulders, but his face was dark when they were gone. The rift in the lute was not easily mended; but Jimmy Silver felt the estrangement from his old chums keenly.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Called Away!

JIMMY SILVER came out of the School House, with his coat and muffler on over his football clobber, as the juniors were gathering on Little Side for the match. He came out alone, with a wrinkled brow. Keen footballer as Jimmy was, he had other weighty matters on his mind than the Bagshot match.

He had been misunderstood and misjudged by his chums; but it was inevitable, and he did not see how it was to be cleared up. He could not tell them that the bouncer he had met at the Ship Inn was his reprobate uncle, John Silver—he had to keep that secret, for his uncle's safety. He wondered a little bitterly what they would think if they knew that his uncle was under suspicion of embezzlement, and was hiding from the police.

Certainly he could not tell them. He had to let matters take their course. But it was bitter enough to him.

Leggett of the Fourth stopped him as he was on his way to the football-ground. The Modern junior grinned as he noted the expression of distaste that came over Jimmy Silver's face at the sight of him. Leggett was not popular, even on his own side of the school—his was not a pleasant nature.

"Can't stop now," said Jimmy brusquely.

"The week's up!" said Leggett.

"What?"

"You haven't forgotten?" smiled Leggett. "I lent you nine quids, nearly all I had in the Post-Office Savings Bank, last week. You were going to pay me ten in a week's time. Well, the week's up. Where's the tin?"

Jimmy was silent.

"You signed a little paper," pursued Leggett agreeably. "I've got it all ready for you as soon as you hand over the money."

"I haven't got the money yet," growled Jimmy.

Leggett's face hardened.

"A promise is a promise," he remarked. "I trusted you because I thought you were square, Jimmy Silver."

"Do you mean to say that I'm not square?" burst out Jimmy Silver savagely.

Leggett started back a pace.

"Keep your wool on!" he said. "I want my money, that's all. You didn't expect me to give it to you, I suppose?"

"Time's not up till to-night," said Jimmy Silver. "I hoped something would turn up, but it hasn't. But your money's safe, you Shylock. I'm going

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to sell my bike to raise it, unless something turns up in time."

"You won't get ten quids for your bike," said Leggett.

"It cost fifteen."

"Buying and selling ain't the same thing. I'll take it off your hands for five quids, if you like, the other five in cash."

Jimmy Silver's lip curled.

"I'll consider that if I don't get a better offer," he said. "Can't stop now; there's the footer."

And Jimmy Silver strode on towards the football-ground.

The rest of the junior footballers were there, but the Bagshot team had not yet arrived. Tommy Dodd & Co. were punting a ball about to keep themselves warm. Lovell and Raby and Newcome stood in a gloomy group. Dick Oswald came towards Jimmy at once to speak to him. Oswald looked concerned.

"Sorry to see this state of affairs," he remarked, with a nod towards the gloomy Co. "I suppose it's all about nothing!"

Jimmy shrugged his shoulders.

"Sort of misunderstanding," he said. "Nothing a fellow could do?"

"Nothing, thanks!"

Oswald hesitated a moment.

"You don't mind if I—mention—something—something I've heard?" he said slowly.

"Oh, pile in!"

"There's a sort of rumour going round. Nobody seems to know how it started. I'm sure your pals haven't said anything; but—"

"Well, what's the rumour?" asked Jimmy, with a bitter smile.

"That you have been playing the giddy ox—something like Smythe of the Shell, only more so," said Oswald frankly. "I thought I'd mention it to you so that you can knock it on the head—see?"

"Thanks!"

"Of course, it isn't true?"

"Of course it isn't!" assented Jimmy.

"I knew it wasn't," said Oswald. "I knew you'd never go near a low den like the Ship. That's what's been said."

Jimmy bit his lip.

"And I'll jolly well speak plainly if I hear a fellow say it again, now you've told me there's nothing in it!" added Oswald.

"Hold on," said Jimmy quietly. "I haven't denied going to the Ship. I've denied playing the giddy ox!"

Oswald stared at him.

"But—but you haven't been there?" he exclaimed.

"I don't want to say anything about it," said Jimmy. "After all, it's my business."

"I suppose it is. Sorry I spoke!" said Oswald, colouring.

"Not at all!" said Jimmy rather sarcastically.

He could not deny what was the truth; that was not at all in Jimmy Silver's line. But his admission that he had been to the Ship had made the inevitable impression upon Dick Oswald's mind. He drew the same conclusions that the Co. had drawn; it could not be helped.

Jimmy Silver turned away moodily.

So the story was getting out—that was not to be expected. The three Comrades and his own pals knew of that visit to the Ship. They would not have given him away—he knew that. But incautious Leggett had doubtless been overheard—and Leggett, of whom he had borrowed a large sum of money, had suspected, and had uttered his suspicions.

It had been inevitable that the rumour should get out in the long run. Jimmy Silver was a prominent figure in the Lower School at Rookwood.

Townsend, or Topham, or Smythe of

the Shell could play the "giddy ox" without any great regard being paid to their doings. But Jimmy Silver, junior captain of football, chief of the Fiscal Four, and a leader in most things, was quite different. Any departure from the normal on his part was sure to attract attention. It was the penalty of popularity and celebrity.

It was all the worse for Jimmy Silver in that his friends were all among the best fellows—the fellows who were likely to be most "down" on shady exploits such as the "Giddy Goats" of Rookwood indulged in.

It was a new experience to Jimmy Silver to be under a cloud in this way, and he certainly did not like it.

He had risked it to help his ne'er-do-well uncle, in whose innocence he firmly believed. His only comfort was that with the money he had taken to him John Silver had been able to escape to safety, and was no longer in the neighbourhood of Rookwood School.

Jimmy waited restlessly for the arrival of the Bagshot footballers. A lad in uniform was seen making his way down to the football-ground from the direction of the house. He had a telegram in his hand.

"Master Silver here?" he asked, as he came up to the group of juniors.

"Here!" said Jimmy.

The lad handed him the telegram.

"Thank you!" said Jimmy heavily. Somehow or other the sight of that telegram had given him an oppressed feeling.

Who could be telegraphing to him?

His uncle, perhaps, from some report, to announce that he had departed safe owing to the help Jimmy Silver had given? It was possible; but Jimmy's heart was heavy as he drew apart from the juniors and opened the telegram.

There was a rattle of wheels and a buzz of voices at the gates. The brake from Bagshot School had arrived.

"Here they come!" called out Lovell. Jimmy Silver did not heed.

He was reading the telegram—devouring it, with startled eyes and with pale cheeks. It was from his uncle, and it ran:

"Come and see me to-day. Important. "UNCLE."

There was nothing in that message to excite suspicion if it had been seen by a master or prefect of Rookwood. But to Jimmy Silver it brought consternation.

His uncle had not gone!

His sacrifice had been made in vain. He had borrowed money right and left, and he had incurred a debt to Leggett, which it would tax all his resources to clear. And it was all for nothing. John Silver had not gone.

Jimmy stood with the telegram in his hand, staring dazedly at it. His uncle was still at the Ship, evidently, since he gave no other address. He wanted to see him—to explain, perhaps, why he had not gone; doubtless to ask him for further help—help that Jimmy could not give. He must go!

"They're here, Jimmy!"

It was Lovell's voice. He shook Jimmy Silver by the shoulder, and Jimmy started out of his gloomy reverie.

He looked confusedly at Lovell.

"What—who's here?"

"The Bagshot chaps; they're ready."

"Oh!"

Jimmy had forgotten the football match. The teams were ready, waiting for the Rookwood skipper. And his uncle had wired him to come!

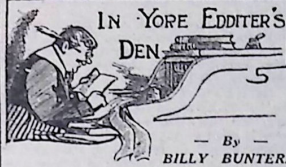
He had to see his uncle—to know why he had not gone—to know what he intended to do. With that weight on

(Continued on page 9.)



BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY

EDITED BY
WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER,
Assisted by **FATTY WYNN** and **BAGGY TRIMBLE**
of **St. Jim's**, **SAMMY BUNTER** of **Greyfriars**, and
TUBBY MUFFIN of **Rookwood**.



DOWN WITH FAGGING!

Skooboy's Never Shall Be Slaves!
By **SAMMY BUNTER.**

SICK-ROOM SNAPSHOTS!

By the **MATRON.**

MONDAY.—W. G. Bunter admitted to the sanatorium, suffering from a blow on the head. Ordered him to bed, and gave him some nice hot gruel. Temperature normal.

TUESDAY.—Great alarm at Bunter's condition. He complains that his brain feels as heavy as a good-sized cocoon. I fear concussion of the brain—if any! Temperature, 100.

WEDNESDAY.—The boy Bunter was interviewed by his four sub-editors. Evidently the excitement has proved altogether too much for him, for his temperature this evening was 102. What a bad, brutal boy Bolsover was to throw that boot!

THURSDAY.—Bunter complained bitterly of lack of nourishment, but I found the remains of a boiled currant pudding in his locker. No wonder he is ill! His temperature is now 103, and I am seriously thinking of summoning a specialist.

FRIDAY.—Bunter's temperature still soaring. I feel certain the wretched boy will waste away to a shadow. It is my belief that Bolsover's cruel blow has caused a softening of the brain.

SATURDAY.—Entered the sanatorium unexpectedly, and caught Bunter in the act of holding the thermometer over the fire. No wonder his temperature has been so high during the past few days! He has been deceiving me all the time. By way of punishment I shall increase Bunter's allowance of gruel!

I had no sooner got rid of Bunter when Dicky Nugent, of the Second Form, came groaning to the door with his face the colour of yellow paper and his hands embracing the region of his waistcoat. I took him to one of the beds, then went for the thermometer. When I came back he was gone, but in his place, sitting on the bed, were three white mice. I am not a coward, as a rule, but the sight of those mice sent cold shivers down my back. Five minutes later, when I returned to the room, those pests were gone, and it was safe to enter. Of Nugent there was no trace, so evidently he had taken the opportunity of making himself scarce. Now I know why he held his waistcoat like that as he came in.

My dear Readers,—I've got a trajlek tail of woose to relate to you this week.

For sun days I have been in the sunny, groning on a bed of aggerny!

It was that broot Bolsover majer what kawsed it. The other nite, wite I was laying down the lor in the Remove dorm about certain things, he through a book at my head, and I was karrted to the sunny, and found to be suffering from konkushun.

I was rather afrade brane-fever would set in, but the docker says that is kwite impossibel!

Don't imagine, deer reeders, that my troubles were over when I reched the sunny. They had only just begun!

Their was a kid in the neckst bed suffering from hoopng-koff, and I promptly went and cort it, too!

Another chapp in the room had flew, and, in a spirit of jennyrossity, he went and passed it on to me. I shouldn't be serprized if newmoola sets in!

It isn't all milk and vittels, as the saying goes, when you're in the sunny. My cheef bone of kontenshun is the diet. Thin grool three times a day! Groo!

I consider that when a fello is in the sunny he should have a substanshul diet of roast duck and green peaze, with plenty of boyled pooldings. He would then be able to 40-fy himself against all forms of disease—eggsept eating diabetis!

I have interviewed my four fat subbs at vargus times wilst in bed, and they have smuggeled sun nurrishng food into the sunny for my bennifit. If it wasn't for this, I should have waisted away to a skellington by this time threack of nurrishment, and you'd have Mr. Frank Richards writing another story like "Thin Bunter!"

Deer reeders, I trussed you will think of me in the mist of my aggerny. My brane is in a fogg, and if I kontieue to let off vaper I shall kollapse!

The matron had just been in with my grool. She didn't notiss a roly-poly pooding nesling underneeth my pillo!

When I am fit and well agane I shall soo Bolsover majer for dammidge. It duzent matter if he says he hasn't got a soo. I shall soo him!

I hope all my reeders are still alive, as it leeves me at prezant—only just!

Yores in grate pane,

Yore Edditer

I am fed up to the neck, deer reeders, this week.

My majer being in the sunny, having had a book buzzed at his snapper by Bolsover majer, I've had to tuckel most of the editorrial work myself, and I have been prevented from doing it thurroughly.

Why?

Simply bekwase of this fagging noosance!

When I'm not fagging for Wingate, I'm fagging for Loder! When I'm not fagging for either of them, I'm fagging for Gwynne; and sumtimes I'm fagging for all!

Think of it! Me, a little gentlemen, what has never been used to soying my hands, having to wash up plaits and sorcers and other crok! Me, what has always been well bread, having to make toast for upaturs in the 8th! A crool injustis, that's what I call it!

Oh, it's Sammy this, and Sammy that, and it's Sammy, lay the tea! And it's Sammy, skrub my studdy flore, or pay the penunalty! You no, it reedly makes me feel as if I'm doing time, and in my indignasun I am bersting into rime!

Fagging wood be quite all rite if only a fag was treated properly. To my mind, he ought to be pade a hanson sum of munney each week, besides getting a bonus, and a speshul dole from the Government. The Government has given doles to every bobby, eggsept jernals and fags, and it duzent seem fare!

Fansy a yung fello of berth and reffement—like me—having to skrub flores, beet karpets, lite fires, wake prefox up every mornung, and bring them hot water, so that they can wash their nex!

I think it's a jolly shame that such a state of afares should eggisat, and I mean to call a meeting of fags, with a view to getting fagging abbokkated (good word, that!).

If only the kids will stand together, sholder to sholder, under my leadership, I feel certain we shall be successsul. And when that happy day dorns, deer reeders, I shall be able to devote my soul attenshun to the responsible task of subb-edditng my majer's "Weekly."

Of course, we have a sturn file before us, and I do not antispate that the prefox will give in without a strugel. But so long as all the felles in the Sekkond and Third acknollidge my leadership, and rally under my banner, I have no dout we shall come threer our grate kampagne with flyaw culiers!

THE SORROWS OF A SKIPPER!

By GEORGE BULKELEY (Captain of Rookwood).

Some people seem to imagine that it's a mighty fine thing to be the skipper of a public school.

"It's jolly nice," they say, "to be able to boss the show—to say to one fellow, 'Come!' and he comes, and to another, 'Go!' and he goes. 'It's nice to be waited on hand and foot by fags—in fact, it's the laziest and happiest life under the sun!"

I wish these good people would step into my shoes for a day or two. They would then see that the life of a public-school skipper is anything but a bed of roses.

To begin with, one carries on one's shoulders a tremendous amount of responsibility. If anything goes wrong at Rookwood—if some duffer goes and breaks his neck, or tumbles into the river, or gets run over by a motor-lorry—the authorities say: "Where was Bulkeley at the time? Why didn't he prevent the calamity?"

If the school first eleven happens to do well at cricket, one is a hero. The skipper, bearing his blushing honours thick upon him, is tossed about on people's shoulders until he reaches the pavilion.

If, on the other hand, the school fares badly, the poor old skipper has to spend the best part of the afternoon dodging missiles!

Then take the fagging.

It's certainly very nice to be waited on hand and foot; but none of the Rookwood fags seem to know their jobs. A more destructive set of pests I never yet came across. My crockery bill for this term alone amounts to over ten quid!

When will the little brats learn how to light fires without setting the study

carpet in flames? When will they learn how to carry a pile of crockeryware across the study without dropping the lot? And when—oh, when will they stop making hunks of toast as hard as brickbats?

Another thing that adds years to a skipper's life is the incessant demand for late passes.

All day long there is a queue outside my study door clamouring for permission to go to the cinema or the theatre or the skating-rink or the barber's or the dentist's. It's perfectly awful!

As for me, I seldom get a chance to go out of gates. I've got my hands full at Rookwood. If any superfluous hair asserts itself on my upper lip I can't have it shaved off professionally. I have to perform the tricky operation in my own study.

Personally, I consider that the skipper of a public school should receive an income of five hundred a year, and be given a baronetcy and a country mansion on leaving school.

Why don't I resign? you will probably ask.

Because, if I did, the captaincy of Rookwood might pass into the hands of a cad like Cartnew, and then the school would go to the bow-wows.

Come what may, Rookwood must be saved from that sorry fate!

(With all respect to Bulkeley, I consider he is torking out of the back of his neck. If he is fed up with his job, I beg to send him my condiments and to say that I shall be willing to take it off his shoulders. As skipper of Rookwood I should be a hooge success. Not 1—TUBBY MUFFIN.)

Hints on Swimming!

By TUBBY MUFFIN.

Every fello, from the time when he first washes his neck, is filled with the ambition to become a grate swimmer like me and Kaptin Webb and Jabez Wolf.

Every boy worth his salt wishes to sample the salt water, and to plow threw the waves as kwickly as if he was on terror firmer.

As one who has alreddy swum the Channel and the Ninggerer Falls, I feel that I am kwallified to set 4th a few hints for the bennyfit of the reeders of "Billy Bunter's Weekly."

So hear goes!

Brest Stroke.

This is the most kommon stroke employed in swimming. It was invented by the frogs, and, although it's not a bad way of getting along, it's panefully slow! You lie flat on yore brest, and kick out with yore arms, shooting out the legs at the same time. You will be able to do this for kwite a long time without getting tired, but this method is no good for winning races.

Sighed Stroke.

This is a very poplar method of progress, and it makes kwite a big splash. You lie on yore sighed in the water, and shoot out one arm and one legg alternattly. Yore boddy will cut the water like a nife, and you will be able to attane to a high tern of speed.

Swimming on the Back.

This is a very lazy method of getting threw the water, and I karnt rekommend it. The grate drorbach is that you karnt see wear you are going, and you mite easily run into a wail or a shark. And that woodn't be very plezzant, wood it?

Muffin Stroke.

This, of course, is the best stroke of all. I done the Channel and the Ninggerer Falls by this method. You shoot out both arms at wunce, at the same time blowing bubbles with yore mouth. I wish I was an artist, and then I wood drow a diagram showing you eggactly what I mean.

The Muffin stroke was, as you may guess, invented by me, and it has become the most fashunable stroke of modern times. Everyboddy's doing it!

By the way, you should always partake of a harty meel on coming out of the water, but not before going in—or you mite not come out at all!

FIGGY!

By FATTY WYNN.

Who routs me out at half-past six,
By means of prods and biffs and kicks?
Who lams my hide with hockey-sticks?
Why, Figgy!

Who says that I'm a rolling tub,
And makes me keep away from grub
Before a match? (Ay, there's the rub!)
Why, Figgy!

Who nurses the absurd belief
That he's a sort of Great White Chief?
And yet who often comes to grief?
Why, Figgy!

Who calls me "Chump!" and "Silly
ass!"
Yet frequently forgets, alas!
That he belongs to that same class?
Why, Figgy!

But who, in spite of all his whims,
His curious fads, his scraggy limbs,
Is "straight" as any at St. Jim's?
Why, Figgy!

FATTY!

By GEORGE FIGGINS.

Who snores in foghorn style all night,
And gives the natives quite a fright?
Who needs my boot to set things right?
Why, Fatty!

Who sits and stuffs and stuffs and stuffs
Himself with cakes and tarts and puffs,
And pays no heed to our "Enoughs!"?
Why, Fatty!

Who turns the scale at fourteen stone
(Thirteen of flesh and one of bone)?
Whose I weight makes chairs and couches
groan?
Why, Fatty!

Who plays a sparkling game in goal?
Who knows the way to bat and bowl
With skill and cunning, 'pon my soul?
Why, Fatty!

Who, though he loves to sit and gorge,
Will quite a famous future forge,
Thanks to the care of Brother George?
Why, Fatty!

BILLY BUNTER'S BUST-UP!

By PETER TODD.

POR old Prout, the master of the Fifth, was looking as if he carried all the cares of this world and the next on his shoulders.

You see, the Head was away in London, and Prout was head cook and bottle-washer for the time being.

And a Tragedy had happened. I've asked the compositor to print it with a capital "T," because it really was an appalling Tragedy.

Mrs. Mimble, the tuckshop dame, had been called away to visit a sick relative, and there was nobody to preside over the school tuckshop.

Prout felt so worried about the matter that he summoned a general assembly in Big Hall. In a few muddled, stammering sentences he explained the situation, and concluded by saying:

"The circumstances, my boys, I think I had better close down the school shop until Mrs. Mimble returns.

At this there was such a bellow of protest from three hundred throats that Prout turned quite pale.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "Am I to understand that you object to this arrangement?" There was another bellow, louder than before.

"Close the tuckshop going!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Carried unanimously!"

Prout turned to Quelchly, who stood next to him on the raised platform.

"You hear them, Quelchly?" he said. "Something like a riot will occur unless I humour them. What had I better do?"

"I suggest that you control the school shop yourself, Prout," said Quelchly dryly.

"Why do not be sarcastic, sir!" It would be beneath his dignity to dispense doughnuts and jam-tarts to a clamouring crowd of customers. Besides, I have my duties to attend to. A man who is left in charge of a big public school cannot fold away his time behind a counter!"

Quelchly's lips twitched a little. Perhaps he was conjuring up visions of Prout, clad in an apron, bustling about in the tuckshop. "Your best plan, sir," he said, "is to wire to Dr. Locke for advice."

"Excellent!" said Prout.

He dismissed the school, and then despatched the following telegram:

"Locke, Hotel Majestic, London.—Mrs. Mimble called away. No deputy available. Please advise.—Prout."

A couple of hours elapsed before a reply came.

The tuckshop was temporarily closed, and a hungry, bustling crowd of juniors and fags surged round the door.

Then up came Prout with a telegram fluttering in his hand.

"My boys," he announced, "I have just received a communication from your headmaster. It is a most extraordinary message, and it would appear that Dr. Locke has—er—suddenly become bereft of his senses. His telegram is worded as follows:

"Wire received. Place Bunter in sole charge of school shop pending Mrs. Mimble's return.—Locke."

There was a general gasp of amazement, and a whoop of delight from Billy Bunter.

"The Head knows his business!" said the fat junior, with a smirk. "He couldn't be chosen a better man. Shall I start right away, sir?"

"One moment, Bunter!" said Mr. Prout. "I am reluctant to let you take charge of the shop until you have proved to me that you are capable of selling the goods and taking the money."

"Oh, I can take the money all right, sir!" said Bunter confidently.

"Now, I will just make a note of the amount of stock there is in the shop, and at eight o'clock this evening you will close the establishment, and render me a satisfactory account of the money you have taken. Do you understand, Bunter?"

"Certainly, sir!"

Prout unlocked the door of the shop. Then he went inside and took a complete inventory of the stock. This was a fairly simple job, and occupied about ten minutes. And

then Billy Bunter was told to go ahead with the good work. He took up his position behind the counter, and the hungry and hilarious crowd took the tuckshop by storm.

"A dozen jam-tarts, please!"

"The peppery ones!"

"Buck up, Bunter!"

"Put a jerk in it!"

"Glass of peppermint cordial, please!"

"Yes, and hand me this way!"

The din in the tuckshop was, as lanky rightly remarked, "terrible."

"The silence is so intense," said Skinner, stopping his ears, "that you could hear a cane drop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter got busy behind his counter. The fat junior was in his element.

Here was a job after his own heart, and he blessed the Head for having selected him to deputise for Mrs. Mimble.

We felt sure that there must have been some mistake. Still, ours not to reason why. We were hungry; and what did it matter to us, so long as we got what we wanted?

Billy Bunter did a roaring trade. But he was a very clumsy shopkeeper. Bultrode's peppermint cordial was splashed over his face, and Ouzie's jam-tarts shot out of the bag and were trampled underfoot.

Bolsever major was howling for his change; Snoop was saying that Bunter had charged him a tanner too much; and Fisher T. Fish "gusses" an "estimated" that things would be in a merry muddle by the evening.

As a matter of fact, they were in a muddle already.

Bunter was businesslike in one respect. He did not take white he served. He couldn't; an enormous lump of toffee reposed in his mouth, giving him the appearance of a fellow who has chronic toothache.

The fat junior must have taken at least fifty cents in many minutes. And then the dinner-gong sounded, and we stampeded out of the shop.

Billy Bunter didn't budge. For once in a way, there was no need for him to answer the welsh and sniggers. What could be better, he reflected, than to be left alone in the tuckshop, with grub to the right of him, and grub to the left of him, grub before and behind him, and grub all round him? He was in a palace of plenty—a land flowing with milk and honey.

Moreover, he was free from afternoon lessons. For the time being, at any rate, he was the sole proprietor of the school tuckshop.

It was about to start operations on a dish of pastries when Prout walked in.

"Ah! I am glad to see you at your post, Bunter!" said the master of the Fifth. "If you are anxious to get to your dinner, you may close the shop for half an hour."

"That's all right, sir!" said Bunter cheerfully.

"Now, let us transact a little business. I require one ounce of extra strong peppermint."

"Yesir! Certainly, sir! These are the goods!" said Bunter, weighing out the necessary ounce. "They're hot stuff, sir. That'll be sixpence."

Prout glanced at the price-list, and saw that the charge was correct.

"Splendid!" he murmured. "You appear to have got thoroughly into the swing of the business, Bunter!"

Prout popped the peppermints into his pocket and quit the shop.

"Jolly lucky he came in before I started feeding!" muttered Billy Bunter. "He won't worry me again now. He's satisfied that I'm the right man in the right place. I can go right ahead now."

And Bunter did. He went ahead with such sweeping effect that when we swarmed down to the tuckshop half an hour later we found the door locked, and the following announcement pinned thereon:

"SOLD OUT!

NO MORE BIZZINESS WILL BE TRANSACTED TO-DAY!

BY ORDER."

In vain we rapped on the door and demanded admission.

We knew that Billy Bunter was inside, and we threatened him with all sorts of pains and penalties if he refused to open the door.

Threats having failed, we tried entreaties, but there was nothing doing.

The tuckshop remained closed, and the temporary proprietor remained inside. And porary proprietor he was, for he forced the door open, and we were inside Bunter's many, many good things were inside Bunter's.

We continued to clamour for admission until the bell rang for afternoon lessons. Then we gave it up.

At the lesson we again swarmed down to the tuckshop. Deep and direful groans, as of a spirit in agony, came from within.

We were debating whether to force the door open, when Prout came striding on the scene. He glanced at the quaint notice on the door, and frowned.

"Bunter!" he thundered. "You! Help! Save me! I'm dying by inches!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Open this door at once, you ridiculous boy!"

We heard Bunter lurch and stumble across the floor of the shop. Then the key turned in the lock, and the door was opened.

A remarkable scene was revealed. A. Empty dishes were scattered along the counter. Empty biscuit tins lay about the floor. Empty wine-bottles were ranged in a row along the shelf.

And Bunter?

We felt really sorry for the prize porpoise at that moment. For his complexion was a sickly yellow, and he was writhing in agony.

"Bunter!" exclaimed Prout, in astonishment. "What—what does this mean? The—the stock is exhausted!"

"And so's Bunter!" murmured Skinner, at the fat junior sank on to the floor.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That was over seven pounds' worth of stock in this shop," said Prout grimly. "That being the case, there should be seven pounds in the till. I will investigate!"

And he did, with the result that he found just over fifteen bob!

"You are a depraved, greedy, gluttonous boy, Bunter!" said Prout, after a long and painful pause. "You have consumed the greater part of the money that I take steps to render to you from your father, and you shall be reported to Dr. Locke on his return. This is outrageous! I—"

At that moment, who should come on the scene but the Head himself.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated. "What is the meaning of this, Prout? What is Bunter doing here in this condition?"

"He has been managing the shop, sir, in accordance with your instructions!" said Prout, rather bitterly.

"My instructions!" gasped the Head blankly. "I—I do not understand!"

"You sent me a telegram, sir, to the effect that Bunter was to have sole charge of the shop in Mrs. Mimble's absence."

"Most certainly I did not!"

"But here is your wire!" said Prout, handing it over.

The Head glanced at the flimsy sheet of paper; and then the light of understanding came to his eyes.

"There has been an error on the part of some incompetent post-office servant," he said. "The name I transmitted was—"

"Bunter," and it has been wrongly construed. I intended to say Mr. Bunter, of the Elysian Cafe, Southfield, should come and take charge of this shop for the time being!"

"Oh!"

"It was absurd of you, Prout, to think that I should ever entrust a boy like Bunter with the management of the shop! I can see clearly that he has been overeating, and making himself ill. Wretched boy! Go at once to the matron. I will inquire fully into this matter, and will deal with you later!"

The visitor of the day was that Billy Bunter received a public flogging next morning, and the Head told him that he had come within an ace of being "sacked."

Poor old Bunter! He had suffered agonies both internally and externally—for the Head didn't spare rod and stone.

Still, our prize porpoise admitted to us afterwards that he had had the biggest and best feed of his life, and that if only he had known where to draw the line, everything would have been all right.

But that's the road of Bunter. Once he starts operations in the eating line, there's no stopping him!

THE POPULAR.—No. 117.

COMPANY MEETING!

The Greyfriars Pork-Pie, Sausage-Roll, and Ham-Sandwich Corporation.

The annual meeting of this flourishing concern was held in the Rag on Wednesday afternoon, all the directors and shareholders being in attendance.

Mr. Fisher Tarleton Fish, the chairman, was greeted with cheers, jeers, hoots, and old boots on rising to present the annual report.

"Gentlemen—and Skinner, Stott, and Bolsover," began the chairman, "I guess it's a real pleasure to me to get up on my hind legs and spout out the annual report of this hyer flourishing business.

"The Greyfriars Pork-Pie, Sausage-Roll, and Ham-Sandwich Corporation was formed exactly a year ago, for the purpose of feeding hungry mouths when the tuckshop happened to be sold out.

"We kicked off with one chairman—myself—one director—myself—one shareholder—myself—one pastrycook—myself—and one pork-pie—"

"Yourself?" queried Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence, you jays! I sorter guess and calculate that from accorns oak-trees grow, and we now have a Board of Directors and umpteen shareholders."

A Voice: "Where are the year's profits? Hand 'em over, Fishy, you Shylock!"

The Chairman: "Dry up, you noisy galoots! Now, listen hyer! The number of pork-pies sold during the past year amounts to 3,650; that's an average of ten per day. Of this number, Billy Bunter has purchased 3,000, and the odd 650 have been snaffled up by others."

A Voice: "The profits! What about the profits? Cut the cackle, Fishy, and come to the horses!"

The Chairman: "I regret to state, gents, that Billy Bunter omitted to pay for the three thousand pork-pies he consumed during the year."

(Howls, yells, catcalls, groans, shouts, and stamping of feet!)

The Chairman: "Turn the tap off! There's no sense in all this music. We will now turn to the sausage-roll department of our famous and flourishing business. There were no less than 5,000 of these choice delicacies sold during the past year. I guess that's by way of being a record."

A Voice: "How many did Billy Bunter have?"

The Chairman: "4,900. He has given his solemn undertaking, gents, to settle for them when his postal-order arrives—"

(More howls, yells, catcalls, groans, shouts, and stamping of feet.)

A Voice: "What about the profits on the odd hundred sausage-rolls that were sold?"

The Chairman: "I guess they've been eaten up by medical expenses."

"Eh?"

"You see, gents, we had seventeen cases of ptomaine poisoning during the year, and the doctor had to be called in from Friardale. His fees were jolly heavy—in fact, they have plunged the corporation into debt, and I fear I must ask the shareholders to have a whip-round in order to put matters right again."

A further storm of protest and indignation arose.

The Chairman: "Dashed if I can see what you're grumbling about! We must thank our lucky stars that none of the cases of ptomaine poisoning proved fatal! Now let us turn to the ham-sandwich side of the business. In the first six months of the year, gents, we sold thousands of the blessed things—billions, almost! And then we suddenly ran short of ham, and had to find a substitute. We used the soles and tongues of old boots. After which, for some unknown reason, there was a considerable falling-off in the sales! Even Billy Bunter couldn't masticate one of the substitute sandwiches!"

Billy Bunter: "Ass! As if I'd want to eat old boots!"

The Chairman: "Dry up, you fat clam! There are no profits in connection with the sale of the ham-sandwiches, gents—"

A Voice: "Why not?"

The Chairman: "I regret to say that they have been pinched from the corporation's cashbox by some galoot unknown."

The Shareholders (excitedly): "We want our money!"

The Chairman: "I guess—"

Skinner: "No time for guesswork, old chap. Pay up!"

The Chairman: "I kinder calculate—"

Shareholders: "Give us our money!"

The Chairman: "I guess if you'll agree to wait till next year—"

Bolsover Major: "We'll have it here and now!"

Bob Cherry: "And if we can't have it in cash we'll have it in kind!"

The Chairman: "Oh, Jerusalem crickets! I'm in an awful fix! I've already explained about half a dozen times that there aren't any profits on the year's working. It's Bunter's fault, not mine! I guess you'd better take your pound of flesh out of him. He's fatter than me!"

Bolsover major: "For the last time, will you hand over our money?"

The Chairman: "I guess the only possible answer to that question is 'None!'"

A Voice: "Mob him!"

At this juncture the chairman and the Board of Directors were swept off their feet soundly bumped on the floor of the Rag. Several of them hobbled away on crutches, and the remainder followed on the Greyfriars ambulance.

The Greyfriars Pork-Pie, Sausage-Roll, and Ham-Sandwich Corporation was duly declared bankrupt!

CHOOSING THE CRICKET ELEVEN!

By TOM MERRY.

"T. Merry (captain), R. Talbot, H. Manners, M. Lowther—"

That was as far as I had got in compiling the St. Jim's Junior Eleven for the first match of the season.

Then came a thunderous knocking on the door of my study, and in rushed a crowd of excited fellows.

"I say, Merry—"

"I hear you're getting up the eleven—"

"Count me in!"

"And me, old chap!"

"Likewise me!"

"Faith, an' if ye leave me out, Merry darlint, it'll be a tragedy intirely!"

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I stopped my ears in order to shut out the babel of voices. But it was no use.

"Tell us who you've put down, Tommy!" said Jack Blake. "Not leaving out the old firm, are you?"

"No," I said, laughing. "I'll count you in, Jacky."

"An' me, dear boy?" said Gussy eagerly.

"Of course! Can't do without our tame comedian, you know!"

"Weally, Mewwy—"

"What about the New House?" demanded Figgins. "We want at least ten New House fellows in the team!"

"And one School House chap, I suppose?" I said sarcastically. "Well, you'll be unlucky! I've room for four New House bounders—"

"Four!" hooted Figgins.

"Yes. Yourself, Kerr, Wynn, and Redfern. That brings the total up to ten."

"You want an odd man?" asked Grundy excitedly.

"Yes—but you're a jolly sight too odd! Your cricket's a sight for gods and men and little fishes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Guess you can find room for a little one, Merry?" drawled Cardew.

"I'm not sure. You see, there's Levison major and Brooke and Lumley to be considered—"

"Shuro, an' if ye make me take a back seat, I'll scalp ye!" threatened Reilly of the Fourth.

"I think it's up to us to do the scalping!" said Monty Lowther. "Time you fellows melted away!"

The crowd of applicants still lingered, whereupon Monty Lowther brandished a cricket-stump aloft, and gave the signal to charge.

Manners and Talbot and I lent a hand, and the crowd was dispersed with many casualties, leaving me free to complete my task of drawing up the eleven.

That evening the names of the selected ones duly appeared on the notice-board in Hall. They ran as follows:

"T. Merry (captain), R. Talbot, H. Manners, M. Lowther, J. Blake, A. A. D'Arcy, G. Figgins, G. Kerr, D. Wynn, R. Redfern, and R. Brooke.

"Reserves: R. Cardew and E. Levison.

"Umpire: J. Lumley-Lumley. Scorer: B. Glyn. Spare part (suitable for rolling the pitch): B. Trimble."

My task is now accomplished. And those who don't like my selections can jolly well do the other thing!

THE TEST OF FRIENDSHIP!

(Continued from page 8.)

his mind Jimmy knew that his play would not be much use to the Rookwood side. He made up his mind at once. After the match it would be too late to go to the Ship; he could not have got back before dark. And to miss calling-over, and cause inquiries, was the last thing he dared to do.

"Well, come on!" said Lovell, amazed by the expression on Jimmy's face. "What's the matter with you, Jimmy Silver?"

"I—I can't play!"
 "Can't play!" exclaimed Lovell.
 "No!" said Jimmy hurriedly. "I—I'm called away. Tommy Dodd will have to skipper the team—he's vice, you know. I'll speak to him!"

Lovell's eyes gleamed.
 "You're going to stand out, and let a Modern rotter skipper us, against Bagshot!" he exclaimed.
 "I can't help it!"

"You can't help it! Then you jolly well ought to! Unless—" Lovell's look softened a little. "Is that wire from home, Jimmy? Is anybody ill?"

"No!"
 "But it's calling you away?"
 "Ye-es!"

"And you're going, and leaving the team in the lurch!" exclaimed Lovell fiercely. "You needn't tell any more. I know where you're going. It's to the Ship, to see your precious booby friend there. You're a blackguard, Jimmy Silver!"

Lovell strode away furiously. Jimmy Silver set his teeth, and thrust the telegram into his pocket.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

John Silver's Demand!

"SILVER standing out!"
 "What rot!"
 "Can't be did!"

There was a chorus of surprise and exasperation among the Rookwood footballers. Even the Modern members of the team were exasperated. Jimmy Silver's powers in the front line were well known.

More Modern members in the eleven would certainly, from the Modern point of view, have improved it. But they wanted to win, and Jimmy Silver, the finest junior footballer at Rookwood, could not well be spared.

Tommy Dodd, of course, was not averse to assuming command. But, with great self-denial, he remonstrated with Jimmy Silver.

"For goodness' sake don't be such an ass!" he said, when Jimmy told him. "I suppose you want to beat Bagshot, don't you?"

"Yes; but—"
 "Pankley's lot are in tip-top form, you can see that, and they think they're going to lick us," said Tommy Dodd.

"I'll skipper the team with pleasure—I really think I'm a better skipper than any Classical ass in Rookwood—but I want you in the forward line, just the same!"
 "I've got to go—it's an appointment. Important!"

And Jimmy hurried away.

There was a good deal of "grousing" among the Rookwood players. But they had to accept the inevitable. Tommy Dodd called a Modern junior to fill the empty place in the team, which led to fresh growling on the part of the Classics. But Tommy Dodd was a good

skipper, and he got his team together, and led them into the field to face Pankley & Co. of Bagshot. Jimmy Silver would be missed in the Rookwood ranks, but the match would be hard fought, all the same.

Jimmy hurried away to the House, and changed in the dormitory into his Norfolk. Then he wheeled his machine out of the shed. As he went down to the gates he heard a shout from the football-ground.

"Goal! Bravo, Pankley!"

The shout came from Bagshot fellows who had come over with their champions, and who were delighted to see Pankley score first. It was first blood to Bagshot. But Jimmy Silver closed his ears to the shouts, and went on to the gates.

He would have given a good deal at that moment to be on the footer-field, helping in the tussle against the old rivals of his school; but it was not to be. He mounted in the road, and pedalled away, with a knitted brow.

Important as that footer match was from a junior point of view, it soon faded from Jimmy's mind. He was thinking of his uncle.

What were John Silver's intentions? Jimmy Silver thought of that problem all the way during the long ride by the lonely track across Coombe Moor to the Ship Inn, on the uplands looking towards the sea.

He reached the lonely inn, and wheeled his bicycle into the garden. The Ship, with its evil reputation, was strictly out of bounds for Rookwood fellows; but that was a risk that Jimmy Silver had to run.

Jimmy Silver entered the inn with an inward shrinking. The atmosphere of beer and stale tobacco that hung about the place sickened him. A low-browed, beery-looking man in shirt-sleeves asked his business, and Jimmy inquired for "Mr. Robinson," the name by which his uncle was known in those shady quarters.

The man looked at the clean, healthy, fresh-looking schoolboy very curiously. Jimmy Silver was certainly very much out of place in the purlieus of the Ship. Jimmy coloured under his gaze, and was glad to escape from it. He was directed to Mr. Robinson's room, and he went down a dirty passage and knocked at the door.

There was a sound of voices in the room, and a smell of strong tobacco came from it. The door was opened a few inches ajar.

"Nap!" said a voice, as Jimmy knocked.

It was his uncle's voice.

Jimmy's brow grew harder.

He pushed open the door and entered.

The room was not pleasant to look at. Although it was late in the afternoon the bed was unmade, and the room was untidy. John Silver, in an old coat and slippers, was seated at a table, with a cigar in his mouth, playing cards with a man in loud check clothes, who was also smoking. The room reeked with tobacco to such an extent that the junior coughed as he came in.

"Uncle!"
 John Silver turned his head quickly and started to his feet. To do him justice, he looked ashamed of having been thus caught.

He threw down the cards in his hand, and made a sign to his companion, who grinned and quitted the room at once. Jimmy crossed to the window and threw it wide open. He was not inclined to stand upon ceremony. John Silver had asked, or rather demanded, that he should come there, and this was how he had met him. A deep anger was burning in Jimmy Silver's breast.

"Well, Jimmy, I'm glad to see you!"

said John Silver, looking a little uneasily and very searchingly at his nephew.

Jimmy compressed his lips.

"I—I didn't expect you quite so soon," said John Silver. "I—I mean, I hardly noticed how the time was passing—"

"You mean that you didn't intend to let me see you gambling like this, uncle," said Jimmy bitterly.

"Only a little game, Jimmy, to pass the time!" pleaded the wastrel. "You can't guess how horribly dull it is in this hole of a place. I've been tempted to give myself up to the police more than once. It couldn't be much worse than this in Dartmoor."

"Why haven't you gone?"

"I—I couldn't go, Jimmy."

"Last week I brought you ten pounds," said Jimmy, his voice vibrating with indignation. "You didn't know, didn't care, what a twist it was to raise the money. I gave it to you to get away with! I've been expecting to hear that you were safe out of England. Why haven't you gone, as you promised?"

The man was silent. The furtive expression on his face showed plainly enough that he was mentally seeking excuses.

"Where's the money?" asked Jimmy suddenly. "You've got it still!"

"I—I—no! That's why I asked you to come here, Jimmy. I—I can't get away without more money."

"What have you done with it?"
 "I've had to live, I suppose," said John Silver sullenly. "I've had to pay my way here—pretty stiff, too, as they suspect there's something shady, and I can't object to over-charges. Then—I had some other expenses—"

"You mean you have been gambling, and lost the money," said Jimmy, his eyes gleaming. "Drinking, too; I can tell that by your face."

"I—I—"
 "And you can afford to smoke cigars!" said Jimmy, with increasing bitterness.

John Silver bit his lip.

"I didn't ask you to come here to lecture me, Jimmy," he said sulkily. "I'm your uncle, and I'm an innocent man accused of embezzlement. If you want to keep me out of prison you can help me."

"I have helped you," said Jimmy, "and I've got myself into a fix in doing it, too. I've got suspected of pub-haunting by my best chums through coming here, and they won't speak to me."

"You must be living in a remarkably high moral atmosphere at Rookwood," said his uncle, with a sneer.

"Never mind that," said Jimmy. "I believe you mean you told me you were unjustly accused. I've tried to help you. You've gambled the money away. Instead of escaping with it, I can't do any more. I don't know whether my father would approve of what I've done already; he won't have anything to do with you himself. It's no good my staying. Good-bye!"

"Is that your last word, Jimmy?"

"Yes."

"And you're going to desert me?"
 "I can't do anything more. I did all I could, and it was enough if you hadn't gambled the money away. You've got yourself to blame for that."

"Do you want me to come to Rookwood, Jimmy?"

Jimmy started.

"To Rookwood!" he repeated.

"Yes. How would you like me to be arrested in the quadrangle at Rookwood? The other fellows wouldn't let you forget it soon, I imagine."

"Why should you come to Rookwood?"

"I might."

There was a savage look upon the hardened, drink-coarsened face of John

Silver. Jimmy stared at him hard, and then he understood.

"You mean that you'd come to my school on purpose to disgrace me?" exclaimed Jimmy, fiercely yet almost incredulously.

"Why shouldn't I, if you won't help me?"

"I can't help you. You can raise money somehow. Borrow it."

"I've borrowed all I can."
"Borrow some more, then—without asking permission. You can pay it back later—some time. There are a lot of rich fellows there."

Jimmy looked at his uncle aghast.
"Are you mad?" he exclaimed. "Are you asking me to steal for you?"

"I must have money!"
Jimmy Silver trembled with anger. He had known little of his uncle, excepting that the man was on bad terms with Jimmy's father. Jimmy understood now why Mr. Silver had refused to have any further dealings with his wastrel brother.

"You're going to help me, or I shall come to Rookwood," said John Silver deliberately. "If I go down, I'll drag down those who won't assist me, if I can. You can take your choice about it."

"I've taken my choice!" panted Jimmy. "You are my uncle, but you are a scoundrel. I will have nothing to do with you! Do as you choose! You'll see how much you can threaten me!"

Jimmy strode out of the room. But for the fact that the man was his father's brother, the Rookwood fellow felt that he would not have been able to keep his fists off the flabby, bloated face.

"Jimmy!"
The junior did not answer. He strode away from the room and away from the house. He had done with John Silver.

With a grim brow, Jimmy Silver wheeled his bike out of the inn-garden and mounted it. He did not look back once.

He put on the speed as he rode away from the ship, his heart still throbbing with anger and resentment.

Was his uncle, after all, an innocent man? He doubted even that now, after the villainous proposition John Silver had made to him.

At all events, he was finished with him. Whatever happened, he would have nothing more to say to the blackguard of the family. As for John Silver's threats, let him do his worst. Jimmy Silver was the last fellow in the world to be influenced by threats.

He reached Rookwood, and put up his machine and went into the School House. He received grim looks from some of the juniors.

"How did the match go?" Jimmy asked, as he met Jones minor.

"Bagshot just did it—two to one," said Jones with a snort. "I suppose you're satisfied now, Jimmy Silver? How are your pals in the pub—what?"

"You silly ass—"
"You boozey blackguard!"

Jimmy Silver came very near at that moment to wiping up the floor with Jones minor. But he refrained, and went on to the end study.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome were at tea. They gave Jimmy Silver glum looks as he entered. The defeat at the hands of Bagshot had hit them hard.

"Know we're licked, I suppose?" growled Lovell.

"Yes. I'm sorry," said Jimmy.

"Nothing for you to be sorry about," said Lovell satirically. "I suppose you've had a ripping afternoon—what! What are the odds on Mugg's selected for the Swindlers' Plate?"

Jimmy Silver flushed.

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"Oh, cheese it, Lovell!" said Raby, the peace-maker. "Let's have tea, and not so much chin-wag."
And the Fistical Four had tea, but it was not a happy meal.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Loyal Chums!

"SILVER here?"
Leggett of the Fourth asked the question, looking into the end study after tea. The Co. were there, but Jimmy Silver was gone. He did not find the atmosphere inspiring under present conditions.

"No, he isn't!" growled Lovell. Leggett looked unpleasant.

"Dodging me, I suppose," he said. "Well, I'll jolly soon find him!"

"Hold on!" said Lovell. He made a quick stride towards the door, grasped the cad of the Fourth by the shoulder, and swung him unceremoniously into the study. "I've got a bone to pick with you."

Leggett looked a little alarmed. "I've got no business here," he growled. "I want to see Jimmy Silver."

"You've been lending Jimmy money?" "Suppose I have?"

"Have you or not?" demanded Lovell. "It's got out. I suppose you've jawed about it. Is it true, or isn't it?"

"Yes."
"How much?"

"Nine pounds!" said Leggett sulkily. The Fistical Three jumped.

"Nine pounds!" shouted Lovell. "Nine pounds!" gasped Newcome. "What a whopper!" said Raby.

"Where did that worm get nine quids from?"

"I had it in the Post Office Savings Bank," said Leggett. "I save my money, instead of wasting it as you chaps do!"

"You save other chaps' money, you mean!" snorted Lovell. "Look here, if you lent Jimmy Silver a sum like that, you've got some acknowledgement of it."

"Yes."
"Show it to me!"

Leggett looked very uneasy. "No snatching, your know!" he mumbled.

Lovell looked at him with deep disgust. He raised a heavy hand for a moment, but dropped it again.

"You ain't worth licking!" he said. "Do you think I should steal your paper, you sickening worm? Show it to me! Hold it as tight as you like!"

"All right!"
Leggett opened his pocket-book, and showed the I O U with Jimmy Silver's somewhat sprawling signature upon it.

"That's for ten quid," said Lovell. "Silver's paying me ten quid."

"A pound interest in a week!" ejaculated Lovell. "You must thrive on this kind of thing, you filthy young money-lender!"

"It's Silver's business, if he chooses to borrow my money!" said Leggett sulkily. "I told him the terms."

"You're dunning him for this?" said Lovell abruptly. "I've seen you!"

"Time's up to-day, and he's got to pay! I'm not expected to lose my money, I suppose? He shouldn't gamble money away if he can't afford it!"

Lovell's eyes blazed.

"How dare you say Jimmy Silver's been gambling, you worm!"

"All the fellows know it," said Leggett. "But I don't care; it's no business of mine! Perhaps he gave the quids away in charity—one never knows!"

"Oh, shut up! If time's up, why hasn't Silver paid you? You said just now he was dodging you. That means that he can't pay!"

"He's got to!" said Leggett. "I'm willing to allow him five quids for his bike as part settlement."

"Five quids for a fifteen-quids jigger, you Shylock!" said Lovell, in disgust.

"Well, you're not going to bag Jimmy Silver's jigger for five quids! You're going to hand me that paper—"

"I won't!" yelled Leggett.

"When the debt's settled," said Lovell. "We're going to settle it, and get our pal out of your clutches—see!"

Leggett looked relieved.

"You can have the paper if you settle the debt, of course," he said. "I don't care who settles it, so long as I get my money! Jimmy Silver can't pay up."

He quids for his bike, as it cost fifteen. He doesn't know the difference between buying and selling. I'd take the bike on account, and charge him another quid to wait another week for the rest. That would be fair."

"Fair!" said Lovell. "If that's fair, what do you call foul? But don't talk to me, you worm! You make me sick! I've a jolly good mind to go and let Bootles know about it. He'll jolly soon put a stop to your precious money-lending!"

"You—you won't sneak!" faltered Leggett.

"No, I won't, you cad! You'd jolly well get expelled if I did, and serve you right!" grunted Lovell. "I'm going to pay you, and take that paper. You fellows, it's up to us to raise that ten quid, as Jimmy Silver can't."

Raby and Newcome nodded assent, but they looked very grave. Raising ten quid was not an easy task, even with their resources combined for the purpose. It did not occur to the Classical chums that, now they were on bad terms with Jimmy Silver, it was no business of theirs to help him out of his fix.

"It's past the limit of time already," hinted Leggett. "That expired at six o'clock. I'm entitled to charge extra interest, as a new week has been entered upon."

"Are you?" said Lovell. "I'll show you whether it pays to talk to me about extra interest, you money-grubbing worm!"

He grasped Leggett by the collar, and whirled him over, and proceeded to rub his long, thin nose energetically in the hearthrug.

To judge by Leggett's wild yell, he did not enjoy the process.

He wriggled and struggled spasmodically.

"Yurrooh! Leggo! Chuekit! Stoppit! Yoop! Ooop! Yowp! Ow!"

"Go it!" chorused Raby and Newcome enthusiastically.

"Yow-ow-ow-groo-oooh!"

"Now then!" panted Lovell, dragging the wriggling Leggett up again. "Now are you going to talk about any extra interest—what?"

"Wow—wow—wow—wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Raby and Newcome.

"Groogh! I was only—only putting a case!" spluttered Leggett. "Yow-ow! I—I really didn't mean anything of the sort! Grooh!"

"Well, don't put any more cases to me," said Lovell. "Now, we're going to pay you that money somehow, you sneaking worm! You're not to dun Jimmy Silver any more, do you hear?"

"Gerrooogh!" mumbled the unfortunate Shylock of Rookwood. "Ow, my nose! I—you've rubbed the skin off, you beast! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Do you hear?" roared Lovell.

"Yes, yes! All right. Ow!"

"Now get out! The sight of you makes me sick!"

Leggett got out.

The meanest fellow at Rookwood was impervious to contempt, but he was not impervious to Lovell's energetic methods of showing his contempt. He went down the passage gritting his teeth and rubbing his nose.

Lovell looked at his chums.

"It's up to us," he said. "Jimmy has turned out a howling idiot, with a touch of the blackguard in him. I can't understand it, but there it is. But he was our pal, and we've been through a lot of things together. We won't speak to him, but we're backing him up."

"Right-ho! But where the thunder is ten quid coming from?" asked Raby.

"I've got five for my new footer rig-out," said Lovell gruffly. "It came to-day. I'm going to make my old things do. That's half."

"I say, Lovell, that's rather thick, you know. You ain't called on to pay up to a tune like that," said Raby slowly.

"Well, I'm going to," said Lovell obstinately. "That's half, I tell you. You chaps will have to stand the other half between you. You had a remittance to-day, Raby."

"A quid from my aunt," said Raby, with a grimace.

"That makes six."

"Ahem! Exactly!"

"How are you fixed, Newcome?"

"About nippence in cash," grinned Newcome.

"Be-r-r!"

"But—but there's my stamp-album," said Newcome, with rather an effort. "I've been offered three pounds for that. It's worth a lot more. But young Baker will give me three—he's offered it."

"Hard cheese, old chap! But it's all for the sake of the study," said Lovell. "We'll buy it back from Baker some day when funds rise. Take it to Baker and screw the quids out of him. He's got lots of 'em."

Newcome nodded, and quitted the study with his stamp-album under his arm. It was a wrench to part with it, but Jimmy Silver was not to be left in the lurch, in the clutches of a youthful Shylock like Leggett.

"That'll make nine," said Lovell. "Where's the other quid coming from, Raby?"

"What about my camera?" asked Raby.

"Good! And if that don't make it up there's my pocket-knife with the three blades and the tools in it. That'll easily fetch ten bob."

"I—I say, what will Jimmy say about it?"

"Hang Jimmy!"

"Oh, all right!"

Half an hour later the three chums were minus some of their dearest possessions, but Jimmy Silver's I O U reposed safely in Lovell's pocket.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Honest Injun!

JIMMY SILVER was looking down in the dumps that evening. He could not help it.

Jimmy's motto was "Keep smiling," and as a rule he succeeded in keeping smiling. But just now everything seemed to be going wrong.

There was his reprobate uncle's threat of coming to Rookwood and showing him up if he did not provide him with further cash. Jimmy was not influenced in the slightest degree by the threat, so far as that he could not help thinking of the possibility with misgiving. True, he was not to blame for his uncle's misdeeds, but he had a naturally strong disinclina-

tion to let the Rookwood fellows know that he possessed such an uncle.

Then there was his parting with his old chums. The breach was growing wider. They hardly spoke to him now, and he hardly spoke to them. It seemed as if the old friendship was dead.

Then there was the general reproach of the fellows on the subject of the lost footer match. That match with Bagshot had been touch and go. If Jimmy Silver had been on the field it would have been sufficient to turn the scale in favour of Rookwood—at least, all the footballers thought so.

Then—last, but not least—there was his debt to Leggett.

Jimmy Silver had contracted that debt to provide his scapegrace uncle with money—money which he knew now had

study to do his preparation, his brow was clouded, and he found it quite impossible to keep smiling.

He noted that Lovell and Raby and Newcome were looking a little self-conscious, and that they exchanged rapid glances as he came in. But he did not speak. He sat down to his work without a word.

Lovell coughed.

Raby coughed, and then Newcome coughed.

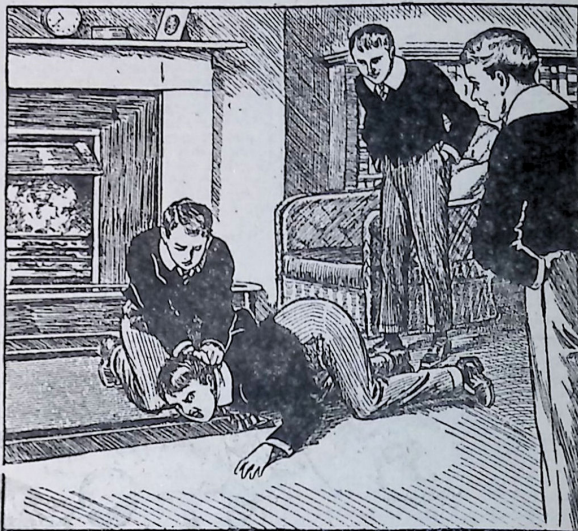
Jimmy Silver looked up.

"You fellows got something to say?" he asked.

"Ahem!"

"If you have, you may as well say it out, and not keep on coughing and snorting!" said Jimmy irritably.

The others were silent.



"I'll show you if it pays to talk moneylending to me!" shouted Lovell. He grasped Leggett by the collar and whirled him over, and proceeded to rub his long, thin nose energetically on the hearth-rug. (See Chapter 4.)

gone in gambling and drink. He had no doubt about his ability to meet it in time. But certain remittances he had hoped for had not arrived, and it seemed as if the debt was to cling about his neck.

His bike was well worth ten pounds, second-hand; but it was not a season for disposing of bikes to advantage. There seemed only one recourse before him—to let Leggett have the bike for five pounds on account, and to accept the young-rascal's terms—another week of grace at the cost of another pound in interest.

It was not an agreeable recourse. It would leave him with a debt of six pounds to meet in a week's time, as well as several small debts that he had to settle. If he could not pay, there would be more interest. He could not haggle with the ead of the Fourth about that. The fellow was a rascal; but Jimmy had dealt with him of his own free will, and he had only himself to blame.

It looked as if he would be in Leggett's clutches for the rest of the term, and that the astute young rascal would bag all his financial resources all the time.

So when Jimmy Silver came to the end

"Do you want to jaw me about the football match?" asked Jimmy sarcastically. "I should think I've had enough about that without getting it in my own study. Lots of the fellows think they can play footer better than I can, but they're all agreed that the match was lost because I happened to be away."

"So it was!" said Lovell warmly.

"Well, it was up to you to save it!" grunted Jimmy Silver. "What the dickens did you let Bagshot beat you for? Why didn't you lick them? Don't you know how to play footer?"

"Look here—"

"Shush!" said Raby. "For goodness' sake don't let's have any more ragging! I'm fed up about that footer match, too!"

"Well, I'm fed up about it right up to the chin!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Tain't a footer captain's piece to clear off when there's a specially tough match on," said Lovell.

"Give it a rest!" urged Raby.

"Oh, let him keep on!" said Jimmy Silver. "Lovell was born to give en-

tain lectures! Get on with the sermon, Lovell!"

"Look here—"

"And get it over, so that I can get my prep done!"

Lovell seemed on the verge of an outburst. The fact was that Jimmy Silver's patience was giving way. His late experiences had caused his temper to suffer. But Lovell controlled himself with an effort.

"I'm not going to give you a sermon!" he blurted out. "But there's something else—"

"Oh crumbs!" said Jimmy Silver, with resignation. "You're like the little brook in the poem—you go on for ever! Is it going to last till bed-time?"

"I've got something for you," said Lovell.

"Not a sermon?"

"No, hang you! You've been getting into debt—"

"That's my business, I suppose! I haven't asked you to pay my debts!" said Jimmy.

"Draw it mild!" murmured Raby.

"You don't know what Lovell's driving at, Jimmy."

"No, I don't!" said Jimmy tartly.

"You silly asses have chosen to be down on me—"

"With jolly good reason, I think!" growled Lovell.

"Yes, you think so—that's because you can't think for toffee! But you can think what you like, and be blowed! If I've got into debt I can get out of it again, and I'm not likely to bother you with my debts. Let it drop! It's my business, and you're not expected to pay my debts!"

"We've paid 'em, all the same," Lovell said quietly.

Jimmy Silver jumped.

"What?"

Lovell took a paper from his pocket and tossed it upon the table before Jimmy Silver. Jimmy stared at it blankly. It was his I O U—the paper he had signed the previous week promising to pay Leggett of the Fourth ten pounds in seven days.

"But how on earth did you get hold of that?" demanded Jimmy.

"I got it from Leggett."

"But—but how—"

"He's paid."

"Leggett's paid?" said Jimmy dazedly.

"Yes. You're clear of that. And if you've got any sense at all you'll keep clear of it!" said Lovell gruffly. "That's what I had to say—not a sermon this time. If you're fool enough to go on pub-haunting you can do as you like, without any jaw from me, Jimmy Silver!"

Jimmy Silver sat silent.

The black trouble had rolled from his mind through the utterly unexpected action of his old chums. What had they done it for? Jimmy knew how difficult it must have been for them to raise such a sum of money; he understood the sacrifices they must have made. And they had done it for him—and while they were on bad terms with him! Jimmy Silver felt a lump rise in his throat.

He was silent for a long time.

When he spoke at last his voice was a little husky.

"You chaps found the money to pay that beast for me!" he said. "I didn't ask you to! I wasn't going to ask you to help me!"

"Why couldn't you ask us?" snapped

Lovell. "Wouldn't you have done it for us?"

"Well, yes. But—"

"Well, that's all!"

Silence.

"Well," said Jimmy, "it wasn't that; it was something else. I can't tell you, because it's not my secret, as I've said before. But I'll tell you this much, as you've been so decent—I raised that money to help a lame dog over a stile, and I give you my word, honest Injun, that I've not done anything that I'd be ashamed to tell my own father. Isn't that good enough for you?"

Lovell drew a deep breath.

"That's good enough," he said simply. "You know how it looks, Jimmy. But—but if you give us your word, and—and you won't be going to the Ship again—"

"That's all over."

"But why can't you explain, Jimmy?"

"I can't! It isn't my secret. But you used to be able to take my word."

"I take it now!" said Lovell. "It looks rotten enough, and you know what the other fellows think; but—but you were always square. I do take your word, Jimmy, and—and I'm backing you up."

The next day the Classical Fourth were interested to observe that Jimmy Silver was on his old footing with his old chums.

He had put a severe strain upon the faith of his chums, but they had proved equal to the test. Jimmy Silver's troubles were not over, by any means, but he felt that the worst of them had passed.

THE END.



Puzzle Picture. Find the Goalkeeper.

A STIRRING SERIAL OF THE CINEMA WORLD!



THE DAREDEVIL SCHOOLBOY

Exploits of a High Spirited and Fearless Boy,
Whose Wild Pranks Cause Him to be Expelled
from the School and Join a Cinema Company.

By PAUL PROCTOR.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Dick Trafford, a high-spirited, fearless boy of St. Peter's School, brings about the downfall of Jasper Steele, the unscrupulous headmaster, and is expelled by the latter out of revenge.

Dick is wandering along the country road, driven from his father's house in disgrace, when he comes in touch with the World-Famed Cinema Company on "location" near the railway. The stunt actor junks the dangerous jump over the bridge at the last moment, and Dick comes forward and offers to take his place. The producer sees at once that Dick is no ordinary boy, and accepts the offer. Dick, dressed in the uniform of a convict, waits on the parapet for the train on which he is to jump. The train comes roaring through under the bridge, and Dick, at the signal from the producer, jumps. He lands on the tender, and is surprised to see the driver and stoker lying unconscious on the platform. At a great risk Dick crawls forward and stops the train just in time to avoid a crash with another in front. Among the passengers whom Dick has saved is the manager of the World's Famous Film Company, Mr. Henderson. This man comes forward to congratulate Dick on his bravery, and also offers him a job in his firm.

When Dick comes to from a faint, he finds himself in an hotel in London. At breakfast, as he is reading the paper, he sees a report of the happening of the day before.

(Now read on.)

In London!

THE report did not, however, make any reference to the fact that amongst the passengers was the well-known cinema producer, Mr. Eustace Henderson; nor did it mention the fact that that gentleman had made the wonderful offer to Dick to come and work for the films at the magnificent salary of five thousand pounds a year.

But this did not worry Dick.

He placed the newspaper upon one side, and attacked his appetising breakfast with renewed vigour and delight.

He was now all anxiety to get through with the meal and keep his appointment with the fabulously wealthy Mr. Eustace Henderson, and learn what he was to do to earn this immense salary of five thousand pounds a year.

At length Dick finished his meal and rose from his chair.

The soft-footed servant who had anticipated and attended his every want now approached with a silver cigarette-box upon a silver salver.

Dick hesitated.

A cigarette had hitherto been to him a secret joy and luxury—a little stolen treat enjoyed in the secrecy of the loft or behind a hayrick.

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Of course, the boys of St. Peter's had not been allowed to smoke; but—be it whispered—many had been the times when Dick had stolen a stray cigarette from his father's study and smoked it in secret enjoyment.

And now, it seemed, he was a free agent, at liberty to do, within reason, just whatever took his fancy.

"Turkish or Virginian, sir?" asked the manservant.

"Virginian, please," replied Dick, in as careless a tone as he could produce.

The manservant extended that end of the box containing the Virginian cigarettes, and Dick, taking one, lit it from the small silver spirit-lamp which burned upon the salver beside the box.

It was not yet ten o'clock, Dick noticed by glancing at the handsome French bracket clock which was situated upon the mantelpiece of the ornate apartment.

"A car is ordered for half-past ten, sir," remarked the servant, as he turned towards the door. "I will let you know when it has arrived."

"Thank you!" murmured Dick, and then sank down into one of the delightfully-comfortable armchairs situated upon either side of the fireplace.

The next twenty minutes were absorbed by Dick in the pleasurable pastime of castle-building.

He sat there with his eyes half closed, and mentally visualised his future.

Curious little half-smiles of amusement flickered round his lips as he saw little mind-pictures of first his father seeing his photograph in the morning paper; and then, later, he tried to imagine what his father would say and think when he saw his own son appearing upon the pictures—for, Dick thought, even if his father never entered a cinema theatre, he could not fail to see the placard advertisements of Dick's performance which would be shown outside the picture theatres.

For Dick in his own mind had quite decided that he was going to be an immense success upon the pictures, and his portrait outside was to be as large, if not even bigger, than that of Charlie Chaplin and Mary Pickford.

Time soon slips by when so pleasantly occupied as painting rosy pictures of one's future, and even before he realised that thirty minutes had flitted by, there sounded a knock upon the door.

"Come in!" cried Dick, and the manservant entered, carrying a handsome fur-lined coat and silk hat.

"The car is here, sir!" he announced, as he held open the coat for Dick to slip into.

Dick took the silk hat, too, and, strangely enough, experienced no feeling of surprise when he found that it fitted him perfectly.

Already Dick was beginning to take all these extraordinary things for granted, and when he plunged his hands

into the warm-lined pockets of the coat, he instinctively felt that he would find a pair of gloves there which fitted him.

And he was right!

Dick drew them on, and followed the servant through the steam-heated corridor of the hotel towards the elevator.

The lift cage was waiting for him, and he stepped into it, to emerge a few seconds later in the foyer of the hotel.

As he passed through, more than one curious glance was shot in his direction, and a murmur of excited voices followed him.

There were others in that huge hotel who had seen Dick's photograph in the illustrated daily newspaper, and the expressions upon the faces of those who glanced interestedly in his direction were those of admiration and envy.

But Dick was ignorant of all this, and passed serenely through the vestibule of the hotel with no air of affectation or conceit.

Before the glass portico of the hotel stood a handsome limousine motor-car, with a liveried chauffeur at the wheel.

Had Dick searched London for a day he could not have found a more luxuriously fitted vehicle.

If Dick stopped to think about it at all, he probably assumed it to be Mr. Eustace Henderson's own private automobile.

But this was not the case. True, Mr. Henderson was responsible for its appearance there at that moment, but it was only one of the many handsome automobiles that can be hired in that most wonderful of all European capitals—London.

A uniformed hotel-servant opened the door of the car, and Dick entered it as if he had been used to such things all his life.

A fur rug was placed over his knees by the same servant, and almost simultaneously the car shot forward with a gentle and graceful movement.

Dick sank back upon the luxuriously-padded seat and sighed with gorgeous self-content.

It was good to be alive.

And this was what it felt like to be rich!

All this was the unexpected outcome of Dick's lucky meeting with the cinema company the previous day, and his plucky leap on to the express train passing below.

It was wonderful—terrific—almost unbelievable.

Dick Trafford had been to London but a few times before—just once or twice at Christmas-time to see the pantomimes—and now he gazed out through the thick plate-glass windows of the car upon the wonderful streets of London.

Dick did not know the name of the traffic-crowded thoroughfare through which he was now passing; but it was the Strand—that straight thoroughfare which runs from Trafalgar Square, which

commemorates the life and victory of Nelson, to Temple Bar, which is the dividing line between the West End of London and the beginning of the City.

Here starts, without doubt, the most wonderful street in the world.

Fleet Street, it is called. Little more than a quarter of a mile in length, and yet there is more romance in one yard of it than in a mile of any other in the whole City of London.

From here pulsates the news of the world.

There is hardly a building which does not bear in gilt letters the name of some well-known London newspaper or the title of a thriving provincial journal.

The street that is never still. Newspaper Land.

The street that when others sleep is throbbing with waking life.

The street of life!
But the smooth-running automobile

was heading Dick away from the home of news into that of light, laughter, and amusement.

Into the West!
Dick's fancy and imagination was taken and fired by the sight of the tall, handsome and imposing hotels which he had passed, the theatres and the restaurants.

At length the finest square in England was reached, and Dick caught his breath with wondering admiration at the sight of the massive fountains playing there.

"This, then, is Trafalgar Square!" he murmured.

Now the automobile was gliding swiftly up the Haymarket—a broad thoroughfare with its restaurants and theatres again on either side.

Now it swung round into Piccadilly Circus.

The heart of the world!

Dick's eyes opened wide in wonder as he sighted that graceful fountain in the

centre with the delightful figure of Eros surmounting it all.

There was a jam in the traffic here, and Dick had a good opportunity of taking in the wonder of it all.

Shaftesbury Avenue next, where one theatre jostles another for the most favourable sight, and then finally Wardour Street.

Before the cinema industry had developed to the extent that it now has in England, this street was probably only famous for the fact that the pre-eminent costumier of the world had his remarkable establishment situated in this street, but now it is known amongst the cinema world as "Film Alley," for there is hardly a cinema company of repute that has not its London agency office situated in this thoroughfare.

The magnificent automobile came to a graceful standstill before an imposing
(Continued on page 16.)

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building, and streaked across the photograph filled windows were the words:

"THE WORLD-FAMED CINEMA COMPANY."

The chauffeur sprang down from his seat, and, opening the door, stood respectfully aside for Dick to alight.

The Signing of the Contract.

"ARE we here?" exclaimed Dick suddenly, as he half rose from the seat and took up his highly-polished silk hat from the seat beside him. "Is this Mr. Eustace Henderson's office?"

"Yes, sir," answered the chauffeur. "And you have a couple of minutes to spare. It is only ten fifty-eight," he added, as he glanced at his wrist-

watch, "and your appointment is not until eleven o'clock."

Dick nodded, and, placing his silk hat at a jaunty angle upon his well-groomed head, he stepped down from the luxurious car to the pavement.

"Please wait," he murmured, as he stepped past the chauffeur towards the plate-glass swing doors of the offices of the World-Famed Cinema Company.

"Very good, sir," answered the chauffeur. And the next moment Dick found himself in the outer office of Mr. Henderson's thriving cinema company.

A sleek-haired clerk hurried towards him.

"You are Mr. Richard Trafford?" he inquired respectfully.

"Yes, that's right," answered Dick. "I have an appointment with Mr. Henderson for eleven o'clock. Will you please let him know I am here?"

The clerk bowed, and, turning, approached door upon the ground-glass panel of which appeared the words: "Private. Mr. Eustace K. Henderson" painted upon it.

The clerk knocked softly upon the door and passed through.

Hardly a moment elapsed before he came hurrying back.

"Please come this way, sir," he said in a tone of mingled awe and admiration. "Mr. Henderson will see you at once."

Dick nodded, and followed the clerk towards the door, and as he did so the clock in the outer office struck the hour of eleven.

Dick passed through the doorway into a sumptuously-furnished office.

(Look out for another instalment of this wonderful serial in next week's issue of the POPULAR.)

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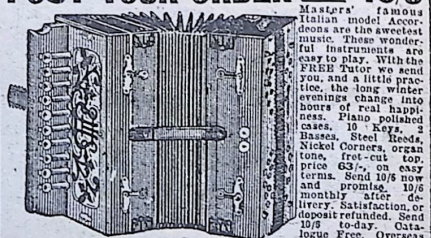
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