

TWO SCHOOL STORIES IN THIS NUMBER!

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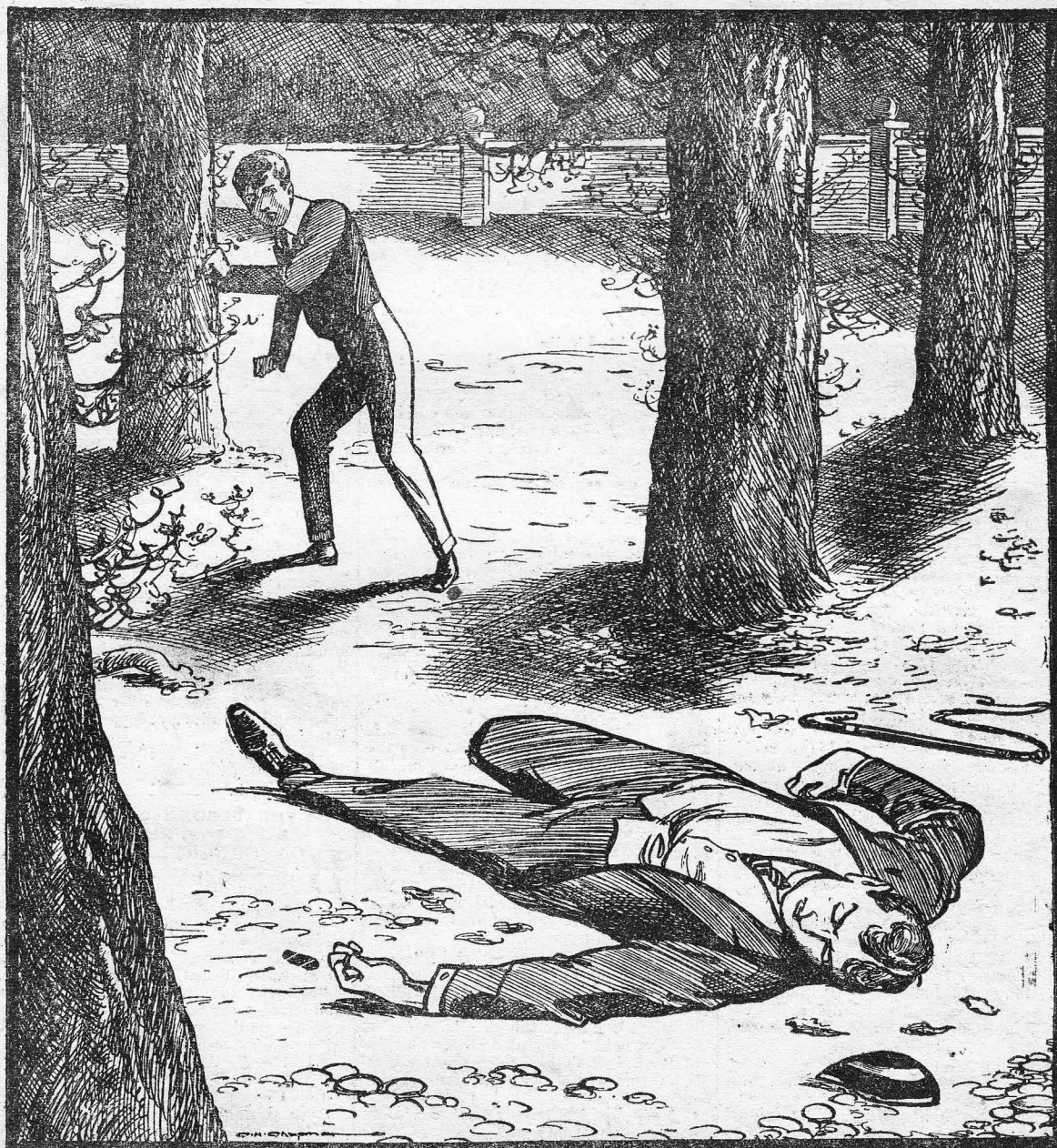
Greyfriars

The POPULAR

11d
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Stories, Jokes & Pictures
of Greyfriars, Rookwood & St. Jims

Rookwood St. Jims



WHO IS LODER'S MYSTERIOUS ASSAILANT?

(See the grand, long, complete Greyfriars tale inside.)



A Sixth-form Mystery!

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

— By —

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Advice Not Wanted!

BETTER not, Harry!" "I've made up my mind." "But—" "I tell you I've made up my mind!" exclaimed Harry Wharton irritably. "You can help me or not as you like, but I've made up my mind about what I'm going to do."

Frank Nugent compressed his lips. The chums of the Remove Form at Greyfriars were in their study, No. 1, in the Remove passage. It was very seldom that angry voices were heard proceeding from that study; Wharton and Nugent pulled together wonderfully well.

Wharton, it is true, was supposed to have a somewhat touchy temper; but Nugent was sunny and good-humoured, and would have got on well with anybody.

But just now the tempers of both the juniors were perilously near danger-point. Harry Wharton was pale with anger—though his anger was not directed against Nugent. Frank Nugent was looking impatient and exasperated.

"You needn't put it like that," he exclaimed heatedly. "I suppose I shall help you if you want me to. But I think it's a rotten idea."

"I haven't asked you what you thought about it," said Wharton tartly. "I simply asked you if you would help me out of the dorm. to-night?"

"If I'm going to help you, you can have the benefit of my opinion as well," said Frank. "I think the idea's rotten, and it will get you into trouble."

"I don't care!"

"If Loder cuts up rusty over it, the matter will come before the Head."

"Let it!"

"You might get expelled from Greyfriars."

"I'm going to risk it!"

Frank Nugent watched his chum uneasily. There was silence in the study. As Frank looked at his chum, he saw his profile, and he saw a dark bruise on Wharton's forehead, just under the dark, curly hair. He started a little.

"Where did you get that bruise, Harry?"

Wharton swung round.

"Oh, that was Loder!" he said, with a bitter smile.

"The hound!" Nugent exclaimed indignantly.

"I'm going to make him smart for it, Frank!"

"If the Head knew what a rotten bully

he was, he wouldn't be allowed to remain a prefect," said Frank.

"But he doesn't know."

"Look here, Harry, old man, I know you must feel savage at being handled that way by Loder," said Nugent earnestly, "but—but I don't like to see you so revengeful. There are other ways of paying him out besides the one you've thought of. I wish you'd give up the idea, Harry."

Wharton's face set obstinately.

"I'm not going to give up the idea," he said.

Nugent bit his lip.

"You might be civil about it, at all events," he said sharply.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"The question is whether you will help me or not," he exclaimed. "If you won't, I'll ask Bob Cherry. You can say yes or no."

"Tell me exactly what you mean to do."

Wharton gave another impatient shrug.

"I've told you once, Nugent. Loder licked me this afternoon for nothing, before a crowd of chaps! He pitched me across the passage when he'd finished. I've got this bump to show for it. It's all because of the resistance we made about fagging for the Sixth. Loder has some lie ready if I complain about him. But he knows I won't complain."

"Well, sneaking is barred," said Nugent.

"Exactly. The cad feels quite safe about that. But I'm going to take the matter into my own hands. I'm going to his room to-night, with a horsewhip, and I'm going to thrash him. I'm not big enough to tackle him with my hands, or I'd fight him, prefect as he is; but that's no good. But to-night I shall yank him out of bed and horsewhip him before he knows what's happening to him. He can smash me afterwards; if he likes, but he can't alter the fact that he's been horsewhipped by a junior."

"It would serve him right," said Nugent slowly.

"I'm glad you admit that," said Wharton sarcastically.

"But I don't like the idea."

"Why not?" demanded Harry sharply.

"Well, I don't like the idea of taking a chap by surprise in bed, for one thing; and—"

"I shouldn't have any chance against the big brute otherwise."

"I know; but—"

"And was it fair of him to tackle me as he did—a fellow not high enough to

reach his shoulder, and three years younger?"

"Well, we don't expect Loder to play the game," said Nugent. "He's a howling cad, I know that. But there's no need to imitate his methods. I—"

Wharton clenched his hands.

"So I am acting like a howling cad, eh?" he exclaimed.

"I didn't say so—"

"But you meant it."

"Look here—"

"I've heard enough. I don't want your opinion, Frank Nugent. If you don't want to help me, I can get another chap to do it," said Wharton savagely.

"Enough said."

"But—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

Nugent's eyes flashed.

"I know you're upset by what's happened this afternoon, or you wouldn't be allowed to talk to me like that!" he exclaimed angrily.

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here, Wharton—"

"Oh, give us a rest!"

Nugent clenched his fists. Wharton's hands were clenched, too, and they faced one another with blazing eyes. The chums of the Remove had never been so near to laying hands upon one another; and in one second more, probably, blows would have been struck. But in that second, fortunately, there came an interruption. The study door was kicked open, and a ruddy, cheery face looked into the room.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry cheerfully.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Bob Cherry, Peacemaker!

BOB CHERRY of the Remove looked curiously at the chums of Study No. 1. Harry Wharton dropped his hands, looking very sheepish, and Nugent turned away with a crimson face. Both the juniors felt ashamed of having been caught in such an attitude. Bob Cherry grinned.

"Sorry to interrupt the circus," he said. "If you two fatheads are going to hammer each other, don't mind me. I'll sit on the table and keep time."

"I—I—"

"You see, Bob—you see—"

Bob Cherry nodded.

"No, I don't see," he replied; "but that's all right, hammer away! There are some fags in the passage, too. I'll call them in to look on; they'll find it amusing."

"Look here, Bob—"
"And Vernon-Smith and Bolsover, I dare say they'd be glad to see you hammering one another," said Bob Cherry sarcastically. "Go it!"
"You see—"

"You blithering asses!" said Bob Cherry, changing his tone. "What are you rowing about? Don't you feel jolly well ashamed of yourselves?"
"We're not rowing," said Wharton, blushing.

Bob Cherry grinned.
"It looked remarkably like it, when I came in," he exclaimed, "but I dare say my eyes deceived me. I suppose you were really arguing out some point in Latin grammar?"

Harry Wharton laughed. He could not help it. It was very difficult to remain in a bad temper with Bob Cherry in the room.

"Oh, don't be an ass, Bob! I suppose we were both getting rather ratty. Nugent doesn't want to help me carry out an idea of mine—"

"I didn't say I wouldn't help you—"
"And I don't want him to, anyway," said Wharton. "It's simply a question of helping me out of the dormitory window to-night, with a rope, and you can do it, Bob."

Bob Cherry looked serious.
"Breaking bounds at night!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, I'm not going far!"
"How far?"
"As far as Loder's study."

Bob Cherry whistled comprehensively.
"Oh, you're had trouble with Loder?"

"Yes," said Harry, between his teeth, "I've been licked, and chucked about, because I took the lead in stopping fagging for the Sixth. I'm going to horse-whip Loder in his own room."

"Phew!"
"Nugent doesn't approve—"
"I didn't exactly say that—"

"It's a good idea," said Bob Cherry.
"I'll come and help."

Wharton shook his head.
"No, you won't," he said. "There may be trouble over it, and I'm not going to drag anybody else into it. But you can help me out of the dorm window on a rope. I can't get into Loder's room by the door—it's kept locked at night on the inside. I shall have to get in at the window."

"Like a giddy burglar?"
"That can't be helped."

"I say it's a rotten idea," burst out Nugent, "and it will jolly well lead to trouble."

"I don't care if it does!"
"Oh, you're a silly ass!"
"Look here, Nugent—"

Bob Cherry waved his hand pacifically.
"Order! Order!" he exclaimed.

"Cheese it, both of you! I don't see that the wheeze is a bad one, Franky; but if you don't like it, I'll help Wharton instead of you. Loder ought to get it in the neck, I know that. He was bullying Skinner to-day in a rotten way. I know Skinner's a cad, but Loder was ragging him for nothing. He seems to have made up his mind to come down heavy on the Remove, since we stopped the fagging. He ought to be made to sit up."

"He's going to be made to sit up to-night," said Harry Wharton, compressing his lips.

"There's one thing you've overlooked. Suppose he's out?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"I know that Loder spends at least one night a week down at the Cross Keys in Friardale, gambling with Mr. Cobb and his set."

"If he's out to-night, I can try again to-morrow."

"It's a rotten idea," said Frank

Nugent, "and I won't have anything to do with it!"

"I don't want you to," said Harry.
"Peace, my children, peace!" said Bob Cherry. "You can stand out of the matter, and Wharton can go ahead, and you'll both be pleased that way. You can agree to differ. No need to slang one another and pommel over a little matter like this."

"Wharton's an obstinate ass—"
"Nugent's in a funk—"

"What!" roared Nugent.
"Hold on!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Br-r-r! It'll jolly well show the obstinate chump whether I'm a funk or not!" yelled Nugent.

He rushed at Wharton.
The latter, nothing loth, put up his hands to meet him; and the two chums were nearer than ever to a desperate encounter.

But Bob Cherry rushed between.
"Hold on! Stop! Ow! Wow! Yow!" roared Bob Cherry.

The unfortunate Bob had suffered the fate of many peacemakers—the wrath of both parties had descended upon him. Wharton and Nugent were both hitting out, and Wharton's right crashed upon Bob Cherry's ear, while Nugent's left caught him in the eye.

"You! Yowp! Yarooop!"
"My hat—"
"Sorry—"
"Yaro-o-oo!"

The unfortunate Bob rolled on the carpet, quite dazed. Wharton and Nugent dropped their hands, and stopped and helped him to rise. Bob Cherry looked quite dazed as he stood upon his feet. He caressed his eye with one hand and his ear with the other.

"Sorry, Bob—"
"Ow! You frabjous asses!" roared Bob Cherry. "You unspeakable chumps! You horrible idiots! You dangerous jabber-wocks!"

"Ha, ha, ha! I mean, I'm awfully sorry—"
"Yow! Ow!"

"Quite accidental! You see—"
"Yow! You can punch each other's silly heads as much as you like. I've had enough of peacemaking!" said Bob Cherry indignantly, and he tramped out of the study.

But there was no more head-punching in Study No. 1. Harry Wharton followed Bob Cherry out of the study, and Nugent was left alone.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Bully of the Sixth!

"FAG!"
"Fag!"

It was Loder's voice.
A scuttling of feet followed the call of the bully.

Every junior who heard Loder's voice hastened to put as much distance as possible between himself and Loder.

The question of fagging had lately been thrashed out at Greyfriars. It had been decided, once for all, that the Remove—the Lower Fourth—were not subject to fagging for the Sixth. But there had been a hard struggle on the point, and the Sixth had taken their defeat with a very ill grace.

Wingate, the captain of the school, was good-humoured enough about it. He had declared that Remove fags were just as much a nuisance as Third Form fags, and that one was as good as another, and as bad, and that for his part he would be thankful and contented to have no fags at all.

But most of the Sixth felt that their personal dignity had suffered in the matter; and the worst set in the Form—Loder and Carne and Walker, and a few others—had lost no opportunity of

visiting their chagrin and anger upon the successful juniors.

Fagging the Remove was over and done with. But Loder chose to revive it on his own special behalf. And his authority as a prefect gave him the power to order the juniors about, and to cane them for disobedience, and it was rather difficult to tell where the proper authority of a prefect began and ended. Juniors naturally felt chary about entering into conflict with a prefect, and Loder had things very much his own way in dealing with them.

When Loder wanted a fag, the safest thing for the Remove to do was to run. And most of them did so. A few proud and stiff-necked fellows like Wharton refused to run, and stood upon their rights; and upon those fellows the hand of Loder fell very heavily.

"Fag!"
Loder came down the passage, and two or three juniors who had not had time to escape crowded into the window recess to avoid his glance. But Loder spotted them there, and came up with an angry frown. There was Skinner of the Remove and Tubb of the Third and Nugent minor—Dicky Nugent—of the Second Form.

"Did you hear me call?" demanded Loder.

"Ye-es," said Skinner nervously.
"Why didn't you come?"
"You can't fag the Remove, you know."

Loder glared at him. The rules of Greyfriars allowed him to fag either Tubb or Dicky Nugent, as he chose. But he did not choose. He stretched out his hand and seized the Remove by the collar.

"Come on!" he said.
"Look here, Loder—"

Loder shook him savagely.
"I—I—I'll complain to Mr. Quelch!" stammered Skinner.

"Will you?" said Loder grimly.
"Then I'll give you something to complain about! Come into my study!"

Skinner was marched into the study of the bully of the Sixth.

Loder gave him a twist that sent him spinning into the middle of the room, and Skinner, throwing out his arms wildly to save himself, knocked a vase off the mantelpiece.

Crash!
The vase dropped into the grate, smashing to a hundred fragments, and there was a shout of rage from Loder.

"You clumsy young scoundrel!"
"I—I couldn't help it, Loder!" stammered Skinner. "I—I'm sorry!"

"I'll teach you to wreck my study!"
"I—I— Please let me go, Loder!"
"You cheeky young sweep!"

"I—I'll fag for you with—with pleasure, Loder, if you like!"

Loder smiled grimly. Skinner was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. He was spiteful, and he could save up a grudge for a very long time; but he was not brave. But even a brave fellow might have been dismayed at being shut up in the study with the powerfully-built senior. In a tussle with Loder, Skinner would have had no more chance than a fly against a spider.

"I'm going to bring you young scoundrels to your senses!" said Loder. "Complain to your Form-master, will you?"

"I—I didn't mean that, Loder."

Loder was selecting a cane. Skinner watched him with terrified eyes. It was not always safe even to submit to the bully. Loder bullied for the amusement of bullying. He came towards Skinner, and the Remove dodged desperately towards the door.

Loder made a clutch at him.

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Loder made a clutch at him.

"Stop!" he shouted.

Skinner did not stop. He reached the door, and dragged at the handle. At the same moment Loder's grasp descended upon him, and he was dragged back into the study.

Then the cane sang through the air and lashed upon Skinner's back and legs.

Lash, lash, lash!

"Yow! Ow!"

"You young cub!" said Loder. "You'll complain to Mr. Quelch, will you?"

Lash, lash, lash!

"Ow, ow!"

Lash, lash!

"Yaroooh! Help! Oh!"

Loder caned the junior till his arm was aching. Skinner squirmed about wildly, but he could not escape the bully's grip, and he could not elude the lashing of the cane.

"There!" exclaimed Loder at last, flinging the junior from him. "Now go and complain to your Form-master! I've caned you for breaking a vase in my study, do you hear? Now get out!"

And he opened the door.

Skinner rushed out, narrowly escaped a kick from Loder's boot, and sprinted down the passage. Loder slammed the door after him.

Skinner, gasping with pain and rage, ran out of the Sixth Form passage, and in the hall almost ran into Bob Cherry. Bob caught him by the shoulder, and steadied him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he exclaimed. "In trouble again?"

"It's Loder!" gasped Skinner.

"Oh, the cad!"

"I'm going to complain!" howled Skinner. "I won't be caned for nothing! I'll make a complaint to Mr. Quelch!"

"Better think it over," said Bob. "Prefects have the right to cane, you know, and Loder's too deep to leave marks on you. He'll say you've done something, and he gave you a flick or two. I know him!"

Skinner ground his teeth. He realised that Bob Cherry was right. Loder was utterly unscrupulous; there was no doubt that, if a complaint was made, he would represent that Skinner had broken a vase in his study from pure mischief, and that he had caned him for it.

"Oh, I suppose he's too deep for me!" panted Skinner. "But I'll make him suffer for this, somehow!"

"The cad ought to be kicked out of the school!" said Harry Wharton between his teeth. "But he will be sorry for himself to-night."

Wharton turned on his heel and walked away. Skinner was left alone to propound his views to the desert air. He gritted his teeth, and tramped away into the Common-room, where he met with a great deal of sympathy.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Wharton Cuts Up Rusty!

HARRY WHARTON received many curious looks when he came into the junior Common-room some time later. His trouble with Loder had been the talk of the Form, and the fact that Wharton had been licked, and "chucked out" by the bully of the Sixth, was a very interesting item of news to the juniors. Wharton held his head very high, and there were a good many fellows who were not sorry to see him taken down a peg or two, as they expressed it.

But he did not say a word on the subject.

During the evening he was very silent. Temple, Dabney, & Co., of the Upper Fourth, came over to him presently to talk—somewhat injudiciously.

They ought to have been warned by

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his look, but they did not take warning.

As a matter of fact, the Upper Fourth fellows did not approve of the Remove objection to fagging.

They considered that the youngsters were putting on airs in the matter. And Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth, was very much given to delivering lofty lectures.

Wharton was sitting by the fire, with his hands in his pockets, staring moodily into the flames, when the Fourth-Formers strolled over to him. Temple planted himself in front of the gloomy Remove, and wagged a forefinger at him.

"I hear you've been licked!" he remarked.

Wharton glared. Any reference to that fact touched his sensitive nature on the raw; though, as a matter of fact, he had nothing to be ashamed of, for it was not to be expected that a junior could hold his own against one of the biggest fellows in the top Form at Greyfriars.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"And I must say," went on Temple, "that I approve. You Remove kids have been getting your ears up altogether too much lately."

"Oh, rather!"

"Just what I think," said Fry. "And it may save us the trouble of licking you, Wharton, so don't look so grumpy about it."

"Shut up, you Fourth Form asses!" called out John Bull, of the Remove. "You will go out of this room on your necks if you jaw!"

"Well, you cheeky fag—"

"We're not fags in the Remove now," said Tom Brown; "and we don't want any cheek from the Upper Fourth! Shut up!"

"Yes, rather!" said Mark Linley. "Shut up, for goodness' sake, Temple! You go on like a gramophone."

"You'd better shut up!" said Wharton, with glinting eyes. "For two pins I'd wipe up the floor with the three of you!"

Temple, Dabney, & Co. burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, stop that cackling!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Temple. "Hear us smile! Ha, ha, ha!"

Smack!

Wharton's open hand came upon Temple's cheek with a sounding report, and the captain of the Fourth staggered back.

"Now perhaps you'll shut up!" said Wharton.

"M-m-my hat!"

"Serve you jolly well right!" said Bob Cherry. "Shut up!"

"I'll smash you!" roared Temple.

Wharton rose to his feet.

"Come on, and do the smashing, then!" he said.

Temple did not need twice bidding. He rushed on, and his fists sailed in the air in a terrifying way. But Wharton's guard was perfect. He brushed Temple's wild drives aside, and put in an upper-cut with his right that laid the captain of the Fourth on his back on the floor with a crash that shook the room.

"Hurrah!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Collar him!" shrieked Temple.

Dabney and Fry rushed at Wharton. In a moment a couple of Removees—Bob Cherry and John Bull—rushed to Wharton's aid. Then Temple scrambled up, and joined in, and so did Mark Linley, and in a few minutes more a general row was in progress, Upper Fourth and Remove joining in on all sides.

"Stop that row!"

Loder, the prefect, looked in at the door.

His face was very angry, and he had a cane in his hand.

The row ceased.

Loder strode into the room. His eyes glinted as they fell upon Wharton. Wharton and Dabney had been fighting hammer and tongs.

"I'll have order kept in this room, or I'll know the reason why!" said Loder, with a scowl. "Who started this?"

There was no answer.

"Very well!" said Loder. "If the fellow is afraid to own up, I shall punish all of you!"

Wharton's eyes flashed.

"I struck the first blow," he said.

Loder smiled unpleasantly.

"Oh, you did!" he exclaimed. "I thought as much. You are the most quarrelsome boy in the Lower School, Wharton, and—"

"Hold on!" said Temple. "I was raging Wharton, and it's no wonder he landed out. I don't bear any malice."

"That's not the question. Hold your tongue, Temple!"

"But I say—"

"Hold your tongue! Wharton. I shall report this to your Form-master!"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, report away!" he said.

"Look here!" said Temple. "Wharton was no more to blame than I was, and—"

"Hold your tongue. I tell you!" growled Loder. "I shall report this to Mr. Quelch, Wharton. It is useless for me to cane you."

Wharton smiled grimly. He had his hand upon a heavy inkstand on the table, and if Loder had tried to cane him, that inkstand would have gone whirling at Loder's head. The prefect knew it, and he did not use the cane.

He turned and strode from the room. Wharton threw himself into his chair again.

"I—I say, I'm sorry!" said Temple.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

Wharton nodded carelessly.

"It's all right!" he said.

And he did not say another word. But when the Remove went up to bed Wharton's teeth were hard set. Bob Cherry looked at him rather uneasily.

"Don't take it too much to heart, Harry," he said. "Loder is a beastly bully, and it doesn't matter much what he does."

"I'm fed up with him," said Wharton, in a low, concentrated voice. "I'll make him sorry for what he has done."

Bob Cherry was silent. He knew that it was of no use to argue with Harry Wharton when he spoke in that tone. Nugent glanced at his chum once in the dormitory, but did not speak. They went to bed without saying good-night.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

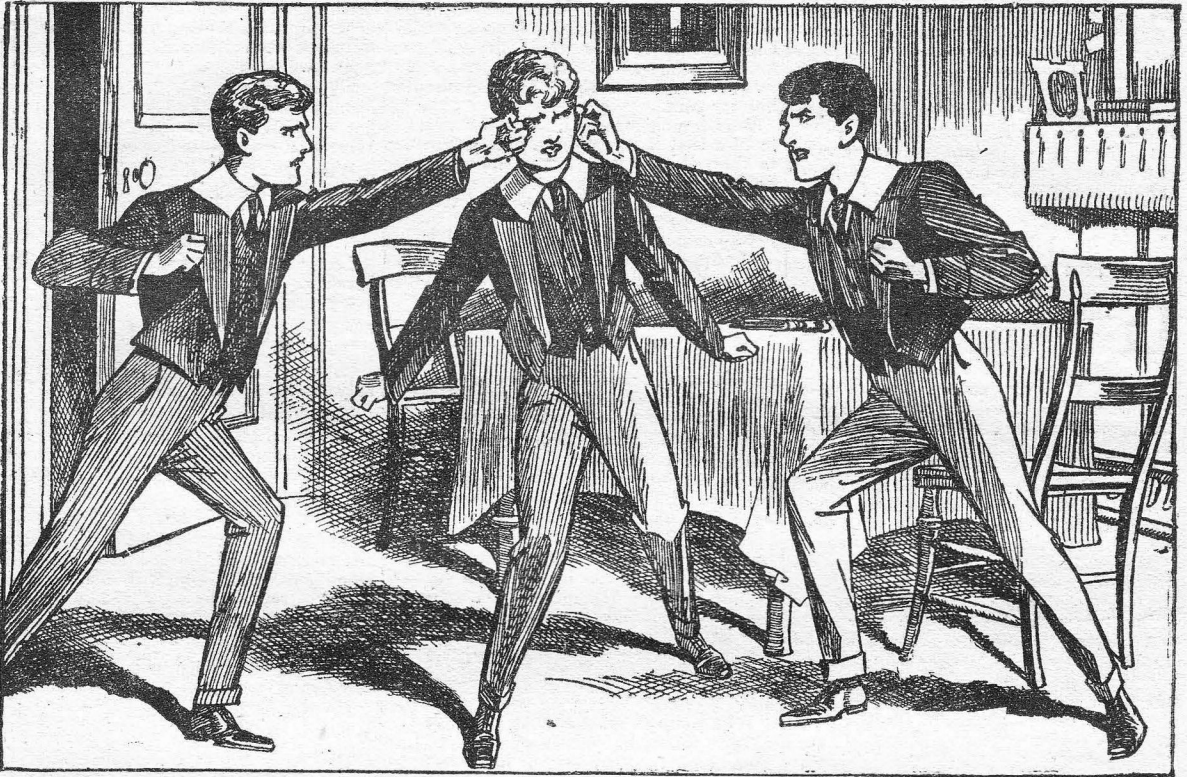
A Night Expedition!

HARRY WHARTON did not sleep.

He lay awake after the rest of the Remove were buried in slumber, and listened to the regular chimes from the clock-tower.

The junior's mood was very bitter.

On the morrow he had to face Mr. Quelch, after Loder's report. He would not be able to deny that he had struck the first blow and so started the row in the Common-room. He would be in the bad books of his Form-master now, to add to his other troubles. His resentment against the bully of the Sixth was bitter and undying. He was not in a mood to think it over calmly. He knew that it was his duty to banish revengeful feelings from his breast, but for the



"Stop, you chumps!" yelled Bob Cherry. He rushed between his two wrathful chums. Wharton and Nugent were both hitting out, and Wharton's right crashed upon Bob's ear, whilst Nugent's left caught him in the eye. "Wow! Yow! Hold up!" roared the unfortunate peacemaker. (See Chapter 2.)

present he could not do it. Afterwards, when he had punished Loder, perhaps, but not now.

Eleven strokes boomed out from the clock-tower.

Wharton sat up in bed.

"Bob!" he called out softly.

There was no reply: Bob Cherry was fast asleep. Wharton slipped out of bed, and shook his chum gently by the shoulder. Bob grunted.

"Groo! 'Tain't rising-bell!" he murmured drowsily. "Lemme alone! Groo!"

Wharton smiled faintly.

"Get up, Bob!" he whispered.

Bob Cherry opened his eyes wide.

"Groo! Oh! Is that you, Harry?"

"Yes."

"Oh, all right! I think I was asleep."

"I think you were, Bob. It's eleven o'clock."

Bob Cherry turned quietly out of bed. The two juniors dressed themselves. Frank Nugent opened his eyes, as if warned by instinct that his chums were awake. A faint glimmer of starlight came in at the high windows. Frank looked over the bedclothes towards the two juniors.

"Can I help you?" he asked quietly.

"Thanks, no!" said Wharton.

Nugent compressed his lips, and closed his eyes again.

Bob frowned a little.

"Where's the rope?" he asked, rather abruptly.

"Here it is."

Wharton drew a coil of strong rope from under the mattress. He unwound it, and handed it to Bob, who looped it over his arm. Then Harry extracted a short, strong riding-whip from under the mattress.

Bob Cherry chuckled softly as he looked at it.

"Is that for Loder, Harry?"

"Yes."

"Good egg! He will feel it, especially if you catch him without his things on."

"He's sure to be in bed at this time."

"Unless he's gone out on the razzle," grinned Bob Cherry. "You know his little ways."

"I must chance that."

The two juniors moved towards the window. Wharton pulled a washstand under it, and mounted, and Bob handed up the rope. He fastened the end of it to the leg of a bedstead, and Wharton opened the window and lowered the rope out. It dangled down the wall, and the end reached the ground below.

"Careful now, Harry!"

"I'm all right!"

Wharton clambered out of the window, and knelt on the sill and groped for the rope. Bob Cherry handed out the riding-whip, and Wharton held it in his teeth.

"All serene?" whispered Bob.

"Yes."

"Mind how you go. It means a broken neck if you drop!" said Bob Cherry anxiously.

"All right! Take in the rope when I'm gone, Bob. One of the masters might find it if he makes his rounds this way, and there's plenty of starlight."

"Right-ho!"

"I'll toss up a pebble when I come back, and you can lower it. I know it's rotten to ask you to stay awake perhaps an hour."

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry. "I offered to help you, didn't I?"

"Thanks, Bob, old man!"

Wharton slid down the rope, and disappeared into the shadow of the wall.

Bob Cherry watched anxiously. A sharp pull upon the rope told him that Wharton had landed safely upon the ground. He hauled the rope in quietly,

and coiled it up, and hid it under the nearest bed.

Then he closed the window, and moved the washstand back to its place. Then he arranged the pillows and bolster in Wharton's bed to give it an appearance of being occupied.

It was always possible that some master or prefect might look into the dormitory.

Bob Cherry went back to his bed when he had finished, and sat down.

He did not intend to sleep, in case he should be asleep when Wharton returned and gave the signal for the rope to be lowered.

But Bob Cherry was very sleepy.

He sat on the bed, and put a pillow behind his head and leaned back, and in spite of himself he closed his eyes several times.

Each time, however, he made an effort, and came back heavily into wakefulness.

Once, as he started from semi-slumber, he thought he heard a noise in the dormitory, and looked round quickly and suspiciously.

He listened, but no sound came from the window. It was not a pebble on the glass that he had heard. Probably it was only one of the fellows moving in his bed.

"You awake, Nugent?"

There was no reply.

"Any of you fellows awake?"

Silence!

Bob Cherry, satisfied that it was nothing, did not speak again. In the dimness of the dormitory he could see only a few of the beds; but the silence, broken only by the sound of low, steady breathing, and an occasional snore from Billy Bunter, convinced him that everybody in the Remove dormitory was asleep, with the exception of himself.

He resumed his drowsy watch, but as

the long minutes passed, he became more and more drowsy and less and less watchful, till at last he dropped off.

There was no suspicion in Bob Cherry's mind that the faint, indefinable sound he had half heard was caused by someone stealthily leaving the dormitory.

He had no suspicion that there was now another empty bed in the room, and the dimness hid it from his sight!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Vengeance!

DARKNESS in the Close, broken only by a dim glimmer of starlight, struggling through the foliage of the old trees.

Harry Wharton paused close to the School House wall, and listened. The riding-whip was grasped in his hand now.

His resolution was inflexibly fixed.

Even if master or prefect had been abroad on the look-out for fellows breaking bounds, Wharton would not have turned back with his purpose uneffected.

He would have waited, and bided his time.

He stepped out of the shadow of the wall at last, and made his way with cautious steps towards the window of Loder's room.

The Sixth Form studies, which were also bed-rooms, were on the second floor, and the windows were quite easy to reach.

All along that wall ran the old ivy in great masses, and it was well known among the juniors that Loder frequently left his study at night by means of the ivy.

For Loder was the black sheep of the Sixth, and his reckless doings were known to a good many fellows in the school, and suspected by a good many more.

And he was the more easily able to carry out his rascally expeditions by virtue of being a prefect, for if found out of his quarters at unusual hours he had only to say that he was making his rounds to assure himself that nothing was wrong with the juniors. As a prefect, too, he had a key to the side gate, by which he could let himself in and out of the school.

Wharton reached the ivy under Loder's window, and glanced up. A large elm threw its shadow over the wall here, but there was a glimmer of starlight on the window.

It was partly open.

Wharton watched it keenly. The fact of its being open made his entrance easier, but he wondered if it meant that Loder was not in the study. Had the prefect gone out, as Bob Cherry had suggested, on one of his mysterious expeditions?

Wharton started suddenly.

There was a footstep in the darkness under the elms.

He paused, listening breathlessly.

He had been out of the dormitory for some time—a quarter of an hour, perhaps. Had his absence been discovered?

He looked cautiously round him.

Where he stood a glimmer of starlight fell upon him, but under the trees was deep gloom, and he could see nothing there. He could be seen, but whoever had made that sound was invisible.

Was it Loder?

If the prefect had left his study, and was returning to it, he would have to pass under the old elms, certainly; but why should he lurk there, concealing himself?

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That it was another prefect, or a master, was impossible. Someone who had nothing to hide would have shown himself at once. Whoever was under the trees was anxious that Wharton should not see him.

Wharton shivered a little as it occurred to him that it might be a lawless visitor to the school—a burglar whom, perhaps, he had surprised when about to begin his work. But that was not likely.

It was a mystery.

Wharton waited.

Half-past eleven had already struck, and now a quarter to twelve chimed out from the clock-tower of Greyfriars.

Still there was no sound, no movement, from the deep shadows of the elms. Whoever had been there had doubtless crept quietly away, or else was hiding in the deep black shadows of the old trunks.

But Wharton could wait no longer.

All Greyfriars was sleeping now; even the lights in the Head's private quarters had gone out, and not a single gleam twinkled from any window in the great mass of buildings.

Harry Wharton crept along the wall towards the study window, and paused close to the ivy. As he did so there was a footstep under the shadowy elms again, but it seemed heavier than the one he had heard before.

Then there was a sharp exclamation.

"Wharton, what are you doing here?"

It was Loder's voice.

Wharton started, and swung round.

The prefect had just emerged from the shadow of the big elms outside the study windows. He had been coming towards the School House, evidently to climb into his window by the ivy, when he caught sight of the junior under the window.

He halted in amazement.

Wharton grasped the whip convulsively, looking at him. It was easy to see that Loder had been breaking bounds. His face was flushed, and his eyes had an unnatural glitter, and as the starlight caught his face Wharton knew that he had been drinking. It was easy to guess that he was returning from one of his midnight visits to the Cross Keys in Friardale.

Yet Wharton was puzzled. Loder had evidently only just come upon the scene. Then whose footstep was it that he had heard a quarter of an hour ago?

He had no time to think about the

matter now. Loder's eyes were fixed upon him with a deadly look. The prefect had seen the riding-whip, and he guessed.

"You young cub!" he exclaimed, coming towards Wharton. "You young hound! What are you doing here? Were you going into my room?"

Wharton faced him grimly.

"Yes," he said.

"What for?"

"To horsewhip you."

Loder seemed scarcely able to believe his ears.

"To—to horsewhip me—a prefect!" he gasped.

"Yes, you cur!"

"By the Lord Harry!" said the prefect, between his teeth. "I'll smash you!"

"Stand back!"

Loder laughed savagely, and sprang forward. The riding-whip lashed through the air, and came down fairly across the prefect's face.

Loder staggered back with a cry.

Across his face, suddenly white, was the red mark of the lash, and Wharton stood looking at him with blazing eyes, ready to repeat the blow.

Loder's hand flew up to the face. He stood dazed.

"You—you young villain!" he muttered thickly, at last.

He sprang madly towards the junior. Wharton struck, and struck again, and then the whip was wrenched from his hand by the maddened prefect. Loder grasped it, clubbing it to strike the junior down with the butt. He was so enraged that he hardly knew what he was doing.

Wharton sprang away.

Loder rushed at him, striking savagely. One terrible blow just missed Harry as he dodged, and then the junior dashed into the cover of the trees.

"Stop, you young hound!"

Loder ran into the trees after the junior.

But the sudden darkness baffled him, and he paused. He caught his foot against a root, and stumbled.

There was a footstep close to him in the darkness.

Loder swung round.

"You young hound! Oh—oh, help! Oh!"

A crashing, blinding blow, a thousand lights dancing before his eyes, dull, aching pain, and oblivion.

Crash!

The whip dropped from Loder's hand as he reeled back, and he fell with a crash upon the ground, stunned and senseless.

There was a scurry of hurried footsteps retreating.

Then silence.

Loder did not move.

He lay quiet, with a streak of blood upon his white face—quiet, motionless, as one dead. Under the old shadowy elms, there was no sound, no motion, save the sigh of the wind, and the soft pattering of the falling leaves.

THE END.

(There will be another grand story of Harry Wharton and the boys of Greyfriars in next week's issue of the POPULAR. In the meantime, you should get the "Magnet Library," out on Monday, for a magnificent, long, complete story of Greyfriars.)

INJUN & WHITEY STRIKE OUT FOR THEMSELVES

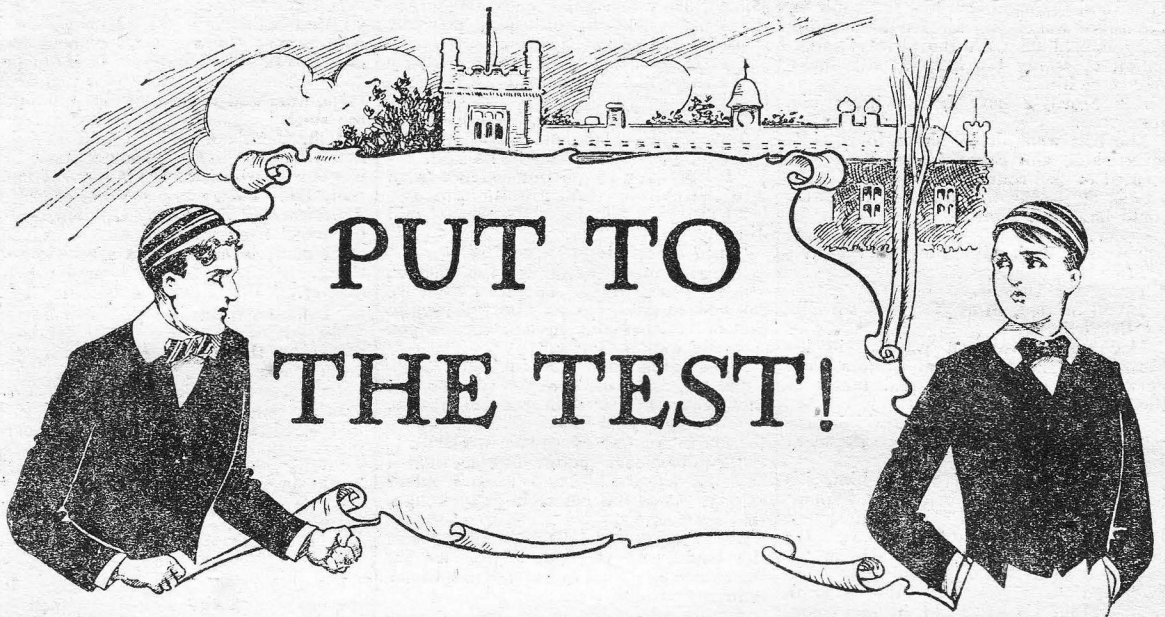


GREAT
NEW SERIAL BY
BILL HART

Another grand Wild West story by the greatest of all cowboy film stars. Do not miss the opening chapters in

BOYS' CINEMA WEEKLY

On Sale Everywhere.



A Splendid Long Complete Tale, dealing with the Adventures of JIMMY SILVER & Co. at Rookwood.
By OWEN CONQUEST.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Bowled!

"WELL hit!"
"Bravo, Erroll!"
The new boy at Rookwood smiled, as the shouts of the Classical juniors rang round Little Side. Erroll of the Fourth was at the wickets, and he was getting the bowling from no less a person than Jimmy Silver, captain of the Fourth, and junior cricket captain of Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver was the champion junior bowler; indeed, there were a good many senior batsmen at Rookwood who would have found it difficult to keep their "sticks" up against Jimmy at his best.

Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth was practically the only junior bat who could play Jimmy Silver's bowling with any degree of success.

And here was Erroll, the new "kid," standing up to Jimmy Silver's best bowling, and never turning a hair.

It was only practice, but it meant a good deal to Erroll. For Jimmy had already spotted his form as a cricketer, and was giving him a final trial now, with the idea of playing him in the Classical versus, Modern match on Saturday.

There was no doubt that Erroll was satisfactory.

Though it was Jimmy's own bowling that he was defeating, Jimmy was brimming with delight. The new fellow was a rod in pickle for the Moderns, and that was all Jimmy Silver cared about.

He sent down the ball again, in his best style, and the crowd of Classical juniors round the field watched it breathlessly. It was an unusual entertainment to see a junior bat standing up to Jimmy Silver in this way.

"That'll be a wide," said Mornington of the Fourth, shrugging his shoulders.

But Morny was wrong; it wasn't a "wide." It broke in at an utterly unexpected angle, and if Erroll had not been an exceedingly wideawake batsman, he would have been caught napping. As it was, he just stopped it.

"Good man!" shouted Lovell.

Mornington bit his lip.

Morny prided himself upon knowing all about cricket, and certainly he was a first-rate player when he chose. As a bowler he was very nearly the equal of Jimmy Silver, and but for his usual slackness, and his uncertain temper, he would have been assured of a place in the junior eleven.

"Not a wide, after all," grinned Peele. "Not exactly!" smiled Gower.

"I say, that new fellow can bat!" said Townsend, watching Mornington's face as he spoke, and grinning as it clouded angrily.

The nuts of the Fourth were very friendly with the wealthy Mornington, but it amused them to play on his sulky and passionate temper. They knew that he had a bitter dislike for the new boy; Morny was a fellow who disliked very easily. It was sufficient to cross his lofty will in the smallest way to earn his hatred.

"Yes, he can bat," smiled Peele. "A regular corker, by Jove! Silver will have to shove him in the eleven."

"Even Silver can't touch his wicket," said Topham, taking up the tale, "and Silver's our champion bowler."

"Best in the Fourth!" said Townsend, with a nod.

Mornington gave his comrades a bitter look.

"Jimmy Silver can't touch me at bowlin', an' you know it!" he snapped savagely.

"Oh, draw it mild, Morny!" protested Townsend.

"Morny's good, when he hasn't been smokin' too much!" grinned Peele. "But when he has—"

"Hallo! Where are you goin', Morny?" called out Gower, as the dandy of the Fourth stepped over the ropes. Mornington did not reply.

He went on the pitch, towards Jimmy Silver, who had just caught the ball as it was tossed back by Conroy.

Jimmy looked at him. "Clear off the pitch, Mornington!" he said. "Don't interrupt the practice!"

"Off, there!" shouted Lovell.

"Get off, Mornington!" called out Newcome.

The dandy of the Fourth did not heed. He came on towards Jimmy Silver.

"You can't touch that fellow's wicket," he said.

"Well, I'm trying," said Jimmy good-humouredly. "You're in the way, Mornington."

"Let me try."

"Oh, I see!"

Jimmy hesitated.

"You know I can do it, and you don't want to let the fellows see it done!" sneered Mornington.

"When he's fit!" snapped Lovell. Silver. "You're interrupting the practice! Still, you can try if you like. Catch!"

He tossed the ball to Mornington, who caught it neatly enough with one hand, and went on the bowling-crease.

"Look here! We haven't come out to see Morny playing the giddy ox!" growled Raby. "This is cricket!"

"Give him a chance," said Jimmy Silver. "After all, he's a good bowler."

"When he's fit!" snapped Lovell.

"How often's that?"

"Well, he looks fit enough now."

Erroll glanced along the pitch, and stood ready. He had not seen Mornington bowl, but he could see that the elegant Classical knew something of it, from his attitude.

All eyes were on Mornington now. There was a bitter look on Morny's handsome, sulky face. He meant to take the new junior's wicket, somehow. He would have given a term's pocket-money to down the new batsman, after Jimmy Silver had failed to do so.

He disliked Erroll bitterly, but there was more than that in it. The junior team was weak in bowlers, and an exhibition of fine form might compel Jimmy Silver to put his old enemy in the Rookwood team against his will. At least, Morny hoped so.

He retreated, ball in hand, with a good grip on it, and took a little run.

"Now look out for fireworks!"

Townsend grinned to his companions, and there was a chuckle from the nuts. They looked on with the cheery anticipation of seeing the lofty Morny make an ass of himself.

But Morny's dear friends were disappointed.

The ball went down like a four-point-seven shell, and Erroll played it; but it seemed to curl round the ready bat, with a twist on it that only a first-class bowler could have put there.

Crash!

"My hat!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"Bowled!" gasped Lovell.

"There was a shout.

"Well bowled, Morny! Good man!"

"Bravo!"

Mornington was not popular in his Form, but the Rookwood juniors were never slow to recognise real merit at their favourite game.

"By gad, he's done it!" said Townsend. "Clean bowled, by thunder! Bravo, Morny!"

Mornington glanced round him, his eyes gleaming. With a lofty and supercilious look he walked off the pitch, and joined his congratulating friends. He did not want to bowl again. He might not have such luck a second time. He preferred to retire with the triumph intact. Like Cæsar of old, he had come, and seen, and conquered.

Oswald fielded the ball, and the cricket practice went on. Jimmy Silver downed Erroll's wicket at last. But there was no doubt that the honours were with Morny; and Jimmy, when he left the ground, could not help thinking what a pity it was that Morny was such a howling cad that it was impossible to play him in the Rookwood Eleven.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Accused!

THE Fistical Four had a guest to tea in the end study after the cricket practice.

It was Erroll, the new fellow in the Classical Fourth.

All the four—Jimmy, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome—had taken a liking to the handsome junior, the son of the gallant Colonial soldier who had distinguished himself at the Front.

Erroll was a quiet and somewhat reserved fellow; kind and good-natured, but of a more quiet and thoughtful turn than most of the Fourth. In some ways he seemed to have an old head on young shoulders.

Jimmy Silver had wondered once or twice whether there had been any trouble in Erroll's life to bring that thoughtful cast to his handsome face.

If that was the case, Erroll never referred to it. He never, in fact, spoke about himself at all.

But the juniors knew enough of him for their own satisfaction. Captain Erroll's name had been known to them before his son came to Rookwood.

Erroll was very cheery over tea in the end study, however. Jimmy had told him that he was to play in Saturday's match. It was a distinction to be played in a match after being only two or three weeks at Rookwood.

The cheery chat round the study table was interrupted, as Mornington of the Fourth looked in.

His brow darkened at the sight of Erroll. The latter took no notice of the knitted brow turned upon him, however.

"Hallo!" said Jimmy Silver. "Anything wanted?"

"Only a word with you," said Mornington.

"Two, if you like."

"About Saturday's match—"

Jimmy Silver gave a comical groan.

"Are you beginning that again?" he

said. "Do you want me to explain all the reasons why I won't play you any more for Rookwood?"

"You needn't. I know them. Jealousy and things like that," said Mornington coolly.

"You silly fathead!" cried Lovell.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"Well, let it go at that!" he said.

"I hear you're putting a new man into the eleven," said Mornington.

"I'm trying Selwyn of the Shell," said Jimmy.

"And that fellow?"

"If you mean Erroll by that fellow, Morny, you're right. Erroll is a bat we can't leave out. I expect he will play in School matches this season, too, if you specially want to know."

Mornington smiled sardonically.

"I suppose I can't expect you to put in a better bowler than yourself, Silver, as bowling's your line. It wouldn't do for me to rob you of all the limelight."

"You're not a better bowler than I am—not so good," said Jimmy Silver calmly. "You did better to-day, though, that's a fact."

"But if you want to make changes in the team, and you won't put me in, there are plenty of other fellows better than an outsider."

Jimmy Silver rose to his feet.

"That may be the special Mornington brand of manners," he remarked, "but you're insulting my guest. Will you get out on your feet or your neck?"

Mornington's lips curled.

"As a member of the club, if not of the team, I protest against that chap being in the eleven," he said.

Jimmy Silver started at him.

"You utter ass!" he exclaimed.

"And why? Why shouldn't Erroll be in the eleven if he's considered fit?"

"I don't say he's not a good bat. It's a question of character."

"Got anything to say against Erroll's character?"

"Yes. The son of a thief and a forger is not a suitable member of the Rookwood junior eleven, in my opinion."

Mornington spoke slowly and very distinctly.

There was a breathless hush in the study. Erroll rose quietly to his feet.

His handsome face had paled a little.

Jimmy pushed him back.

"Wait a minute, Erroll, before you smash the insulting cad," he said.

"Mornington, we'll have this out. Are you quite mad, or what do you mean?"

"I mean what I say. You know young Murphy—Erbert of the Second Form—"

"Well?"

"You know he was mixed up with all kinds of rotters before I brought him to Rookwood?"

"I know," said Jimmy, his angry brows relaxing a little. "Cad as Morny was, it had been an act of generous kindness his rescue of poor little 'Erbert from poverty and want."

"'Erbert saw Captain Erroll when he brought this fellow to the school," said Mornington coolly. "He recognised him—not as an Army captain, but as a cracksmán, well-known as 'Gentleman Jim.' That fellow is the son of a criminal, who is passing himself off as an Army captain."

"'Erbert said so?" exclaimed Jimmy, in amazement.

"He did! He will tell you so, if you like."

"He must be off his rocker!"

"Mad as a hatter!" said Lovell.

"Don't you worry, Erroll, we know it's all rot."

Erroll smiled.

"I hardly think you'd believe it," he said.

"Of course not!"

"You shrieking ass, Morny!" said Newcome. "We know all about Captain Erroll. His name was in the papers some months ago. He was a planter in Honduras, and come over to join up at the start."

"Oh, there's a real Captain Erroll. I don't doubt," sneered Mornington. "He was invalided out of the Army. I know that, too. I dare say he's gone back to America, and that's why Gentleman Jim borrowed his name."

"I don't want to make a row in your study, Jimmy Silver," said Erroll quietly. "But I can't stand this!"

"I don't expect you to," said Jimmy. "My advice is, take that slandering rotter by the neck, and rub his lying nose in the carpet!"

Jimmy stood aside.

Erroll stepped towards Mornington, who faced him with a sneering, mocking smile.

"Will you take back what you've said, Mornington?"

"I'm not likely to take back the truth."

"Then you'll put up your hands!"

"Willingly."

Erroll pushed back his cuffs. But the dandy of the Fourth stepped out into the passage.

"Not here!" he said. "I'll be ready for you in the gym in ten minutes."

Jimmy Silver's eyes blazed.

"You mean you want to make what you just said the talk of the school!"

he exclaimed.

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"We usually have our little rows in the gym, don't we?" he sneered. "I'll wait there for the merry son and heir of Gentleman Jim!"

He walked down the passage, with a laugh. Erroll hesitated a few moments, and then sat down to the tea-table again.

His face was quite calm, but the Fistical Four were all looking very uncomfortable. They did not believe a syllable of Mornington's wild accusation, but it left an unpleasant taste in the mouth, as it were.

When they had finished tea, the Fistical Four marched down to the gym with Erroll, with a very sincere hope that he would give the dandy of the Fourth the licking of his life.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Too Much for Mornington!

THERE was a crowd in the gym when Erroll arrived there with Jimmy Silver & Co.

Moderns as well as Classics had turned turned up in force.

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows as he noted it.

He knew that Mornington and his friends had spread the news of the coming fight far and wide, in order that the cause of the conflict should be well known and discussed.

All eyes were turned on Erroll.

Morny's accusation was known to all the fellows—Morny & Co. had taken care of that.

True, most of the juniors regarded it as utterly wild and unfounded.

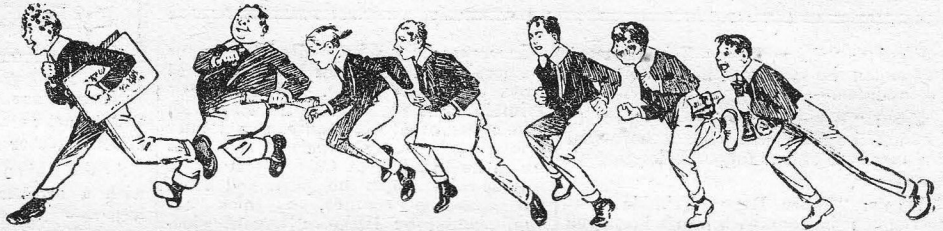
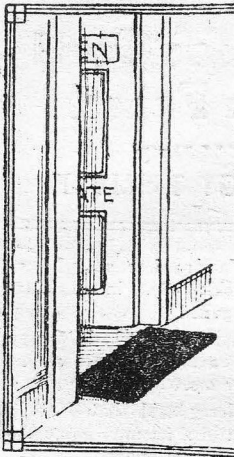
Most of them had seen Captain Erroll when he brought his son to the school, and the suggestion that that military-looking gentleman was a member of the "swell mob" masquerading as an Army captain seemed wildly absurd.

The suggestion, in fact, had done Morny no good. It made the fellows look upon him as a reckless slanderer, as a fellow who would stop at nothing to injure a person he chose to dislike.

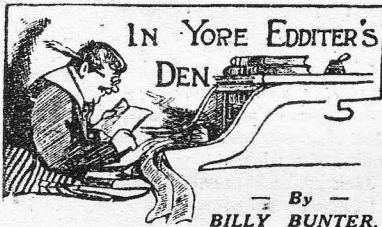
(Continued on page 9.)

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.



By BILLY BUNTER.

My Deer Reeders,—Footbawl is dead and dun, and King Cricket is wunce more raining beneath sunny skies.

In this merry month of May everything suggests cricket. In fact, their is a cricket chirping on the harth as I write!

Cricket is the national summer game, and I think it will remane so—although lorn-tennis, kiss-in-the-ring, hopscotch, marbels,

kite-flying, kwoit-throwing, and other indoor games each have a large number of supporters.

It is only natcheral and fitting that I should perduce a Speshul Cricket Number at this time of the year—although Skinner of the Remove suggests that I leeve it till December, when the whether will be warmer!

Their has been a lot of argement in the papers about the failure of the English cricket eleven in Australier. I don't no the fool facks of the case, but it appears that our men were unnable to recover the "Aashes" owing to the coal strike.

The reel reezon why they came a kropper, however, was this. They didn't seleckt W. G. B. to be a member of the English sighth!

If I had been aloud to play, how different it wood have been! I should have hit up senturies with monnoterus reggularity, and bagged no end of wickits with my wonderful boling. Like that other famus kricketer

whose inishuls were W. G., I should have maid histery.

Over but a lass! The Selecksstun Kommittee overlooked me, and their you are! England—without W. G. B.—got licked in every match. England—with W. G. B.—wood have finished on topp every time!

But it's no use crying over spillt milk, as the cat said when it put its pore in the sorcer and upset the hole box of trix. What's dun karn't be undun—with the eggsepction of my bootlace, wich has an unforchunitt habbit of coming unstuck.

I trussed, deer reeders, that you will devour this wonderful Kricket Number of mine with a viddity, or with a lacerity—or with both!

Ever yore "stout" pal, —

Yore Edditer

CRICKET CHATTER!

By BOB CHERRY.

The rumour that Billy Bunter has been asked to play for Kent is quite correct. Not at cricket, though—at hopscotch!

Coker of the Fifth declares that, in order to become a proficient cricketer, he is going to engage a coach. Why a coach? Wouldn't the station hack be just as suitable?

Mr. Prout took part in a friendly game the other day, and fielded at long-leg. We can now understand why everybody calls him "Daddy Long-legs"!

Loder of the Sixth has been having plenty of cricket lately. The other evening, on leaving the Cross Keys, he was "caught," "bowled out," and "fairly stumped"!

Billy Bunter made a century the other day. Fact, dear readers! It so hap-

pened that ninety-nine fellows were going over to Courtfield to the cinema and Billy Bunter bagged a late pass, and went with them, thus making a hundred! (Sarky beast!—Ed.)

Bunter's cricketing ability, however, falls a long way short of that of his celebrated ancestor, who went in first with Henry the Eighth!

By the way, whilst we were playing against the Upper Fourth, a few days ago, Prout was roaming around with his Winchester repeater. He fired several shots—presumably at rabbits—and Temple was badly missed at point! When Prout's on the warpath, we always make a point of being missed!

Stumps will be drawn at six sharp tomorrow. At that hour Billy Bunter has an appointment with the dentist!

Out First Ball!

A Cricketing Song.

By DICK PENFOLD.

(With apologies to the author of "When You Come Home.")

Birds in the garden all day long,
Singing for Bunter a happy song.
Ducks in the farmyard at the back,
All of them seem to say, "Quack! Quack!"
You that I long for, century dear,
Will take a century to make, I fear!
Bowling is deadly, bowling is strong,
Down go my stumps ere evensong!

When you go in, Bill, when you go in,
Fellows will snigger, and fellows will grin.
You, Bill, will NOT be the hope of your side
When you go in at eventide.

Birds in the garden sing no more.
Nothing is heard save Bunter's snore.
Softly the shades of evening fall,
Gone are the sounds of bat and ball.
Now when we reach the close of day
Bunter has dreams of a grand display.
Dreams that he won the match for his side,
And his stumps were still standing at eventide!

When you get out, Bill, when you get out,
Fellows will guffaw, and fellows will shout.
Your stumps will be scattered around
Little Side
When you get out at eventide!

(I have sent a kopy of this song to my solliciters, Messrs. Toddy & Toddy, with a view to bringing an akshun for libel against Dick Penfold!—Ed.)

Baggy Trimble's Trip To Town!

The following dialogue took place between seven St. Jim's fellows on a wet half-holiday, for the purpose of testing their memories.

Figgins: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau—"

Kerr: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau and a topper belonging to Gussy—"

Wynn: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a topper belonging to Gussy, and a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study—"

Redfern: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a topper belonging to Gussy, a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study, and a sultana-cake which he purloined from the tuckshop counter—"

Lawrence: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a topper belonging to Gussy, a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study, a sultana-cake which he purloined from the tuckshop counter, a thick ear administered by Blake—"

Owen: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a topper belonging to Gussy, a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study, a sultana-cake which he purloined from the tuckshop counter, a thick ear administered by Blake, and a bag of monkey-nuts to take to his brother at the Zoo—"

D'Arcy: "When that fat boundah Twimble went to London, bai Jove, he took with him a bowwowed portmanteau, a toppah belongin' to yours twuly, a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study, a sultana-cake which he purloined from the tuckshop countah, a thick eah administahed by Blake, a bag of monkey-nuts to take to his bwothah at the Zoo—yaas, wathah! —an' a feedin'-bottle, in case he got thirsty in the twain—"

Figgins: "Jove! This is getting rather confusing, but I'll do my best. When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a topper belonging to Gussy, a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study, a sultana-cake which he purloined from the tuckshop counter, a thick ear administered by Blake, a bag of monkey-nuts to take to his brother at the Zoo, a feeding-bottle in case he got thirsty in the train, and a copy of 'Billy Bunter's Weekly' to read to his fellow-passengers—"

Kerr: "This is getting too bewildering for words! When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a thingummybob, a thingummyjig, a what-you-may-call-it, and a— Oh, dash it all! I give it up!"

Wynn: "When Baggy Trimble went to London he—well, he went to London, you know—"

Redfern: "Give it up, Fatty! When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a choice and varied collection of articles, both useful and ornamental, which shall be nameless."

THE POPULAR.—No. 123.

Lawrence: "Why, Reddy, your memory's no better than Fatty Wynn's! Now, just listen to me. When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a borrowed portmanteau, a topper belonging to Gussy, a pair of silk spats which he lifted from Cardew's study, a sultana-cake which he purloined from the tuckshop counter, a thick ear administered by Blake, a bag of monkey-nuts to take to his brother at the Zoo, a feeding-bottle in case he got thirsty in the train, a copy of 'Billy Bunter's Weekly' to read to his fellow-passengers, and a rabbit-pie which he took from the refreshment buffet at Rylcombe in a moment of weakness—"

Owen: "Oh, my hat! This is too terrible for anything! Wish I had a memory like yours, Lawrence. Evidently you go in for Spelmanism. Now, lemme see. When Baggy Trimble went to London he took with him a portmanteau administered by Blake, a bag of monkey-nut belonging to Gussy, a copy of 'Billy Bunter's Weekly' to take to his brother at the Zoo, a pair of silk spats to read to his fellow-passengers, a rabbit-pie in case he got thirsty in the train, a feeding-bottle which he lifted from Cardew's study in a moment of weakness, and a—"

D'Arcy: "You're all w'ong, deah boy! You haven't got the dwift of it at all. Shockin' memowies youf New House boundahs have got! Lend me your eahs, and I'll wecite the whole thing without a mistake. When Baggy Twimble went to the wefeshment buffet at Wylcombe in a moment of weakness, he took with him a twip to London—"

Chorus: "Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy: "I wish you wouldn't intewwupt, deah boys! It's vevy wude. Now, where was I? When Baggy Twimble went to the Zoo he took with him a toppah to give to me, a pair of silk spats which he purloined from a bowwowed portmanteau, a sultana-cake which he took from his fellah passengahs in a moment of weakness, a thick ear for wearin' a pair of silk spats in the twain, a feedin'-bottle administahed by Blake, Cardew's study, which he lifted from a bag of monkey-nuts—"

Figgins: "Must be a champion weight-lifter, I should think! Ring off, Gussy! You've got hopelessly mixed, and it's time the game was abandoned."

Stumps were drawn at six-thirty, and there was no second innings!

THE TRIBBULATIONS -:- OF SAMMY! -:-

Wunce more, deer reeders, I'm left out; my bruther thort it best.

I never was a grumbler or a grunter. And I'll appeer agane neckst weak, so set yore miinds at rest.

I am, yore own devoted SAMMY BUNTER!

Enuff's as Good As a Feast!

By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

Never agane, deer reeders, shall I konstent to act as wickit-keeper in a krickiet-match. Never agane!

As the Raven said, after it had a scrapp with a brother raven, and lost all its fethers—"Never more!"

When Tom Merry said that I could play for his team in a friendly game the other day, I was orfully bucked.

"Will you let me hole, Merry?" I inkwired.

He shook his head.

"I karn't trussed you with the bawl," he said. "You'd better keep wickit."

So I donned a pear of pads, and a large pear of gluvns, and took up my position behind the wickit.

Jack Blake happened to be boling.

"Does he send them down very fast?" I asked.

"Oh, no!" ansered Tom Merry.

"You will have no diffukulty in stopping them. Blake karn't get any pace on the bawl at all!"

Feeling grately reassured, I bent over the wickit, and awaited devvelopments.

Biff!

I stopped the first bawl in eggcellent stile—with my chest!

"Yaroooh!" I rored. "What do you take me for, Blake—a blessed skittel?"

"Better stand ferther back, Baggy!" chuckelled Blake.

I promptly hopped back out of the danger-zone—as I thort. But the neckst bawl came wizzing down like a bullet from a masheen-gun.

Crash!

"Ow! Oh, my knows!" I skreemed in angwish.

Blake said it was a pure axcident that he hit me on the knows. But it mite have been dun by desine, deer reeders. Who nose?

I was hartily sick of keeping wickit by this time, and I told Tom Merry so. But he maid me stay at my post.

For about ½ an hour I akcted as a sort of target; and Jack Blake scored a booleseye every time!

At larst I sank down on to the grass, with a fraekchered spine, a broken back, and cutts and broozes all over my annatermy!

"Man hurt!" said Monty Lowther. "Tellyfone for the amberlanse!"

I was karried away to the 'sanny in a state of comma, and my activities as a wickit-keeper came to a fool-stop!

If ever I keep wickit agane, deer reeders—and I've sollumly vowed that I won't—I shall wear a soot of male!

To add to my tribbles, Railton has givven me a hundred lines. But I am slowly recovering from my imposition!

THE WHEEZE THAT WOULDN'T WORK!

By PATRICK GWYNNE (Sixth Form).

"G WYNNE, old man," said Wingate, his face flushed with excitement, "we shall lick Wapshot Wanderers into a cocked hat! We've got 'em cold, as they say in the classics!"

I shook my head doubtfully. "The Wanderers are hot stuff," I said. "Taken all round, they're much stronger than we are in the batting department."

"They won't be to-day," said Wingate. "Why? You don't mean to say they're bringing over a weak team?"

"No. But I've got hold of a really crack player for our own eleven—a man who has played for England!"

"My hat!" "You've heard of A. P. Driver, I take it?" "The fellow who scored a century against Australia?"

"That's the chap. Well, it so happens that he's an Old Boy of Greyfriars, and he's coming down to the school this afternoon. He's one of the best batsmen breathing. You can hear his name mentioned in the same breath as Hobbs and Hearne and Hendren. I tell you, old man, A. P. Driver is one of the giants of the game. And I'm going to ask him to turn out for Greyfriars."

"Good!" I assented. "But—but do you think it's quite fair to include him?"

"Of course! There's no law against putting an Old Boy in the team. I'll button-hole him as soon as he arrives, and ask him to play. I think it's a topping wheeze!"

"It means that you'll have to drop Loder from the team—"

At that moment I happened to glance out of the study window, and I spotted a tall, well-built man crossing the Close. He carried a gladstone-bag.

"Here's your man!" I exclaimed. "I can make out the initials on his bag—A. P. D. Better go down and tackle him right away."

Wingate hurried down into the Close, and approached the newcomer.

"Mr. Driver?" he asked breathlessly.

The man nodded. "Jolly pleased to meet you, sir!" said Wingate heartily. "We've read a lot about you in the sporting Press, and Greyfriars is proud at having turned out such a fine cricketer."

Mr. Driver looked rather uncomfortable. "That century you scored the other day—"

"Eh? Did I score a century the other day?"

"Of course, you did, sir—against the Australians. Surely you haven't forgotten? The whole country was buzzing with the news?"

"Um—yes," murmured Mr. Driver. "The fact is, I've made so many centuries that I find it difficult to recall individual performances."

"I want to ask you a favour, sir," said Wingate. "We're playing Wapshot Wanderers this afternoon, and they're bringing over a very strong team. Will you turn out and help us to lick them? They whacked us last season, and we're anxious to get our revenge to-day."

Mr. Driver did not jump at Wingate's invitation. In fact, he looked even more uncomfortable.

"Do play, sir!" said Wingate persuasively. "All the fellows know you're here, and they'll go crazy with delight when they see an England player turning out for Greyfriars."

"Perhaps I'm not such a good player as you think," murmured Mr. Driver modestly.

"Rats! A man who can knock up a century against the Australians is more than good enough for Greyfriars First."

"Ahem!"

"Do play, sir!" repeated Wingate.

"Yes, do play, sir!" echoed a party of Sixth-Formers, coming up at that moment.

"We've heard such a lot about your batting, sir," said Faulkner, "that we refuse to let you go away from Greyfriars until you've given an exhibition of what you can do."

"That's it!" chimed in North. "We want to see you knock some of the tiles off the pavilion!"

Mr. Driver hummed and hawed, but there was no escape for him. Everybody insisted

that he should play for Greyfriars. He pleaded that he had an appointment with the Head for tea, but his plea was overruled. He said that he was feeling below form, but Wingate remarked that even the worst form of an England cricketer would prove too good for Wapshot Wanderers.

The long and short of it was, that Mr. Driver simply had to consent to play. I believe he would have been dragged on to the field by force if he hadn't.

Of course, we were all very backed at the prospect of having this modern W. G. Grace in the side.

The only person who didn't seem pleased was A. P. Driver himself. The great man seemed very ill at ease.

Wingate lent the Old Boy a suit of flannels, and Mr. Driver certainly looked every inch a cricketer when he accompanied us on to the field.

Wapshot Wanderers, having won the toss, had decided to bat first.

"Would you like to bowl, sir?" asked Wingate, turning to Mr. Driver.

"Nunno!" said the Old Boy hastily. "I'll

"No, thanks!" said Mr. Driver promptly. "Send me in last, will you?"

"Last!" echoed Wingate, in wonder. "But—but it's unheard-of for a great player like you to go in last!"

"Nevertheless, I insist," said the Old Boy. Wingate and I opened the innings, and we found the Wapshot bowling very deadly.

It was as much as we could do to keep our respective ends up.

The score, however, mounted up by degrees, and the game became quite exciting when, with nine wickets down, we still wanted six runs to win.

"In you go, sir!" said Wingate, handing a pair of pads to Mr. Driver. "One hit out of the ground, and we've won!"

Mr. Driver looked more uncomfortable than ever. He turned the pads over in his hands, as if he had never seen such articles in his life before.

"Excuse me," he murmured, "but would you mind showing me how to put these things on?"

Wingate gasped.

Here was a man who had been playing in first-class cricket for donkey's years, who didn't know how to put on a pair of pads!

"I—I generally have a man to see to this sort of thing for me," explained Mr. Driver. "Confound the things! I forget which way the straps go. Would you mind adjusting them for me?"

Wingate knelt down and adjusted the pads. Whilst he was thus engaged, Faulkner handed Mr. Driver a pair of batting-gloves. The great man eyed them vacantly.

"What are these things for?" he inquired.

"Of course, you're pulling our legs, sir!" said Faulkner, laughing. "They go on your hands, as you know."

"Would you be good enough to put them on for me?"

With a gasp of surprise, Faulkner obeyed.

The amazing A. P. Driver then sauntered out to the wicket. A cheer followed him as he went. Everybody expected to see him hit a six, thus giving Greyfriars the victory.

Mr. Driver, however, did nothing of the sort. His antics at the wicket were more reminiscent of Tarzan of the Apes than anything else. He hopped and pranced about a good deal, and when the ball came down he lashed out at it, missed it by a yard, and then proceeded to knock down his own wicket!

You never saw such a deplorable exhibition in your life! A fag in the Second could not have done worse. He would at least have stood up to the ball with a straight bat.

A chorus of deep groans went up from the onlookers.

Greyfriars had lost the match, and the famous Driver had done no driving!

"I think, sir," said Wingate grimly, when the Old Boy returned to the pavilion, "that I am entitled to an explanation."

Mr. Driver smiled a rather sickly smile.

"I'll tell you everything," he said. "I'm not A. P. Driver at all."

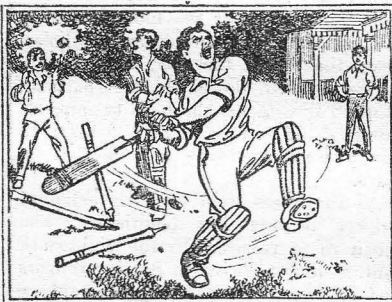
"What!"

"I am an Old Boy, and, as it happens, a close friend of Driver's. My name is A. P. Dixon. Last night I dined with Driver in London, and made a wager with him. I said that I could come down to Greyfriars in his name, without my identity being discovered either by the Head or the masters. I said that after this lapse of years the authorities would be unable to tell Driver from Dixon. I should probably have won my wager, too, but for one fact. I can't play cricket. I always was a hopeless duffer at the game, and when you insisted on my playing for the school, you knocked my little scheme on the head. I'm awfully sorry to have let you down like this, but you really were so insistent that I should play, you know! Am I forgiven?"

Wingate was not in a very forgiving mood at that moment. But the Old Boy's frank smile won him over, and he invited Dixon to tea in his study.

And when the genuine A. P. Driver comes down to Greyfriars, and turns out for the first eleven, may I be there to see!

THE POPULAR.—No. 123.



When the first ball came down Driver missed it, then he proceeded to smash his own wicket down.

be the assistant goalkeeper, if you don't mind."

"The—the what?" gasped Wingate.

"The fellow who stands behind the chap with the gloves."

"Oh! The man behind the wicket-keeper! That's the long-stop!"

"Yes, that's it," said Mr. Driver. "I'll be long-stop."

"But that's the most ridiculed position in the field, sir!" protested Wingate, appalled at the prospect of an England player acting as a sort of wicket-keeper's assistant.

"Never mind," said Mr. Driver. "I shall be quite happy in that position—so long as the ball doesn't come my way too often!"

The match started, and for a long time Mr. Driver had nothing to do. He stood at a respectful distance behind the wicket-keeper, and nibbled a blade of grass. The eyes of all Greyfriars were focused upon the great man.

Presently one of the Wapshot batsmen, in an endeavour to smite the ball to the limits of the horizon, spooned it miserably in the air. It went over the wicket-keeper's head, and dropped right into the hands of Mr. Driver, who, to the horror and consternation of the onlookers, promptly put it on the floor!

"Yah! Butterfingers!" came the shrill voice of a fag.

Wingate turned to me with a puzzled expression on his face.

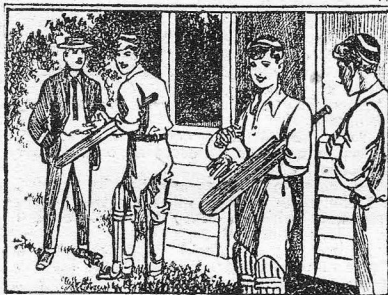
"Fancy one of the world's champion cricketers muffing a soft one like that!" he exclaimed.

"Staggering, isn't it?" I assented. "Still, he'll make up for it when he bats."

We dismissed our opponents for 80 runs—not a very formidable total.

"We ought to knock them off in a couple of hours," said Wingate. "Will you go in first, sir?"

THE LAWS OF CRICKET!



Not as drawn up by the Marylebone Cricket Club, but as revised by Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood.

1. Cricket may be played in any field, meadow, dormitory, corridor, quadrangle, or Common-room, or an any piece of land whatsoever, whether public or private.
2. There shall be eleven players on each side—except in the case of the Rookwood junior team, which reserves the right to field fifteen.
3. Each game shall be controlled by an umpire, to whom all appeals must be made. If a Rookwood fellow pokes his leg in front of the wicket, and the fieldsmen appeal, the umpire shall say "Not out." But if one of the opposing batsmen happens to stop the ball with his chest, or his napper, the umpire shall promptly exclaim "Out—leg before wicket."
4. Should the batsman be lucky enough to strike the ball, he shall immediately take to his heels, and swop places with the merchant at the other end. And the umpire shall signal "Run!" He shall give a similar signal if he sees a mad bull come charging on to the field of play.
5. If the ball should be driven through a master's window, the batsman will be awarded six—on each hand!
6. Should the cover be knocked off the ball, and the stuffing come out, the ball shall be pronounced "dead." It shall be given a decent burial in the nearest dustbin.
7. An ambulance should be in attendance on the ground, ready to convey the umpire to hospital in the event of his giving a decision unfavourable to the Rookwood players!
8. If a batsman should show a reluctance to hit out, he shall be put up against a stone wall and shot at with peashooters. This is known in cricket parlance as "stonewalling."
9. The skipper of the Rookwood junior team shall be allowed six separate innings!
10. Any person disregarding these rules will be brained with the business end of a bat!

(Signed) JIMMY SILVER,
Captain of Cricket, Classical Side.

THE HISTORY OF KRICKET!

By TUBBY MUFFIN.

I think I have menshuned before that I come of a kricketing stock.

Jimmy Silver deklares that I come of a rolling stock; but, of corse, that's sheer roodness.

The history of our grate summer game is a very fassinating one, and the name of Muffin looms largely in kricket annals—and annuals.

Yes, the Muffins have allways been hot at kricket. Who ever heard of a cold Muffin?

Kricket dates back to the days of the Drooids. Our four-fathers, however, didn't play it as we do now. The batsman wood stand at the foot of a steep cliff, armed with a sheeld, and the boler, from the top of the cliff, wood hurl a hooge boulder down. If the batsman stopped it with his sheeld it kounted as one run. If he mist it, he was taken to the neerest semi-tree and berried in state.

As the yeers went by the game of kricket became less bludthirsty, and much more refined. In the eighteenth century it was played in Sunday toppers and cravvats, and was as jentlemanly a game as you could wish to see.

Unless my memmery is at fawlt, it was in 1795 that the most famus kricket match on record was played. It was between a team komposed solely of Muffins and a team of crumpets—I meen, eleven of the nobility and jentry.

"Muffin's XI. versus All England," the match was called, and many were the wagers—and thick ears—that were given and taken in konneckshun with the grate event.

Needless to relate, the eleven members of the muffin fambly licked the Rest of England into a kocked hat!

The scores maid in that memmerable match are still preserved in the Brittish Museum. I kwote them herewith for future reverrence:

MUFFIN'S XI.

H. O. T. Muffin, b. Lord Harris...	255
C. O. L. D. Muffin, b. by same gent	240
D. R. Y. Muffin, b. Lord Dedleigh	112
W. E. T. Muffin, retired with a bad chill	0
S. T. A. le Muffin, b. Lord Harris...	170
N. E. W. Muffin, not out.....	144
A. Bigge-Muffin, b. Lord Dedleigh	34
A. Small-Muffin, killed in action.....	0
F. A. T. Muffin, run out.....	41
A. Thynne-Muffin, lost his head in the first over	0
A. Crisp-Muffin, b. Lord Harris.....	4

Total..... 1,000

ALL ENGLAND.

Lord Tomnoddy, b. H. O. T. Muffin	0
Lord Harris, nose-before-wicket.....	1
Lord Dedleigh, found it deadly dull, and retired	0
The Duke of Wails, b. D. R. Y. Muffin	4
Baron Nix, b. H. O. T. Muffin.....	Nix
Lord Stony de Broke, run clean out	0
Sir Filbert Duxegg, lived up to his name	Duxegg
Sir Hoaplesse Dudde, b. H. O. T. Muffin	0
Sir Middel Pegge, b. D. R. Y. Muffin	0
A. Longstoppe, Esq., didn't stop long	2
Laste Mannin, Esq., severely wounded	0
Total.....	7

Interesting facks and figgers—what? Shows you what a fine boddy of men the Muffins were in the days of old!

H. O. T. Muffin, when he retired from the game, took the "Adam and Eve" public-house just outside Kennington Oval, and D. R. Y. Muffin took a "pub" with a sumwhat simmiler name—the "First Man" Inn.

Ah, these jiants of the past! The tail of these aachevements thrills me to the hart's core.

Nowadays, I'm sorry to say, the Muffins don't get the rekkernition they desserve.

By rights, I ought to be skipper of Rookwood First, in plaice of Bulkeley. But I karn't even get a plaice in the team! What's more, Jimmy Silver won't have me in the jownier elloven.

After reeding this artikle, however, I eggspcet Jimmy will chanje his mind. Reelising that I have the blud of my noble ansesters in my vains, he will put down my name for the neckst match against Greyfriars.

After all, why should I be aloud to hide my lite under a bushel any longer? I'm a far better player than Grace—both "W. G." and "Putty." As for that fello Silver, he—well, he's simply Silver, whereas a Muffin is pure gold!

Wunco I get a plaice in the team Rookwood need feer no foe. My wonderful batting, my dedly boling, my marvellus katching—I can katch anything, from a bad cold to a good hiding!—my dazzling feelding, and my clever long-stopping will win me just as much fame as my ansesters reaped in the past.

I will now proseed to instructk you, deer reeder in the art of playing kricket.

(Oh, no, you won't! You've said kwite enuff already. You're a beestly little swanker, Tubby, and I don't beleev yore ansesters played kricket at all! As for giving anyboddy instructkshun, well, if they want to lern how kricket should be played, they can't do better than come to the most talented player at Greyfriars—myself.—Ed.)

THE END.

PUT TO THE TEST!

(Continued from page 8.)

At the same time, it made Erroll an object of general interest and scrutiny. The new junior did not seem to observe it.

He walked with his head erect, and his face perfectly calm.

Assuredly, he did not look like a fellow with a guilty conscience, who had entered the school under false pretences.

Morny regarded him with a sardonic smile. He was probably the only fellow present who believed in the strange story of Gentleman Jim. Even Townsend and the rest of the nuts, though they did not like Erroll, shook their heads over it—but they backed up Mornington in public.

Townsend & Co. welcomed the story simply because Erroll was a friend of the Fistical Four, and so anything against Erroll was, to a certain extent, against their old foes of the end study.

But their private opinion was that Erbert of the Second was a little ass, who had made a ludicrous mistake, and that Mornington was a hot-headed duffer who had taken up an improbable story for his own purposes, probably without even believing it himself.

Mornington was already in his shirt-sleeves, and was putting on the gloves.

Jimmy Silver, as Erroll's second, helped him off with his jacket, and brought the boxing-gloves.

Adolphus Smythe of the Shell had appointed himself timekeeper, with a big gold watch in his hand for the purpose. The nuts approved of Adolphus as a timekeeper, but Jimmy Silver looked at him a little suspiciously. Smythe was hand-in-glove with Mornington, and Jimmy was not quite sure of fair play for his man.

"Look here, we don't want Smythe to keep time," said Jimmy directly. "Smythe doesn't know anything about boxing, anyway."

"By gad!" said Adolphus. "You cheeky fag, I suppose I know the rules?"

"We don't want a pal of either party," said Jimmy. "One of the Modern chaps will keep time—Tommy Dodd, for instance."

"I suggest Smythe," said Townsend. "I'm Morny's second, and I insist."

"It's all right," said Erroll. "What does it matter?"

"Well, I don't trust Smythe," said Jimmy.

"Oh, by gad!" said Adolphus.

"Never mind, let it go!"

"Oh, all right!" said Jimmy.

But he was dissatisfied.

It was not long, either, before there was good reason for Jimmy's dissatisfaction.

The two juniors stepped into the ring, the crowd of fellows thickening round them. Erroll was sturdy and strong, and looked like a fighting-man. And Mornington was well-known to be a boxer, and to have any amount of pluck and determination, as well as a savage temper. It was likely to be a "mill" of uncommon interest.

"Time!" yawned Smythe.

Mornington opened with a fierce attack, pressing the fighting from the start.

Probably the dandy of the Fourth intended to repeat the "Veni, vidi, vici" performance on the cricket-field in a new line.

It looked for a time as if he would succeed, too.

Erroll's guard was good, but he gave ground before the impetuous attack, and he was driven right round the ring, amid sneering grins from the nuts.

"Bravo, Morny!" chirruped Townsend.

Mornington appeared to be getting it all his own way—though it was true that few of his savage drives actually reached his adversary.

"How long are these rounds?" demanded Jimmy Silver suddenly.

"Two minutes," yawned Adolphus.

"This one has lasted two minutes and a half!"

"Afraid of your man gettin' knocked out?" jeered Adolphus.

"Fair play!"

"Yes, fair play, you spalpeen!" exclaimed Flynn. "Sure it's nearly three minutes intoirely!"

"I'm keepin' time," remarked Adolphus.

"Look here—"

"Time!"

Even Adolphus was driven to call time at last. The first round was over. Jimmy Silver looked anxiously at Erroll, as he made a knee for him.

Erroll met his glance with a quiet smile.

"You let him walk round you," muttered Jimmy.

"I was taking his measure," said Erroll.

"Oh!"

"I think the next round will surprise him a little. Smythe will call time a little more quickly, I fancy."

"Oh, good!"

"Time!" came the call.

And the combatants stepped up to the line again.

Mornington's face was full of confidence now.

He felt that the combat was in his hands. He pressed the fighting again, fully determined to finish in that round if possible. But a surprise was awaiting the dandy of the Fourth.

This time Erroll did not recede a step.

He stood like a rock, and Morny, to his surprise and chagrin, found that he could not move him. Neither did his blows penetrate Erroll's guard. The dandy of the Fourth expended his wind and strength in a savage attack that had no more effect than a wave dashing against a cliff.

And then suddenly, as Morny paused, panting, Erroll took up the attack.

He came on like lightning, his left and right lashing out with drives that Morny could not stop.

Crash!

The dandy of the Fourth went down in a heap. He was up again in a second, springing like a tiger at the new junior.

But Erroll had "woken up" now, with a vengeance. He attacked hard and fast, and Morny's guard seemed nowhere. Blow after blow rained in Morny's face and chest, and he staggered blindly round the ring.

"Time!" rapped out Smythe.

It was not quite the two minutes now. But the call of time came very opportunely for Mornington. Another second or two, and he would have been knocked spinning.

Erroll dropped his hands and stepped back.

And Jimmy Silver patted him on the shoulder, with a grin.

"Good man!" he said.

Mornington almost collapsed on Townsend's knee.

He was breathing in short, panting gasps, and his face was dark with fury. But for the gloves, Morny's face would have been terribly marked by the punish-

ment he had received. As it was, he was hurt badly enough.

"By gad!" murmured Townsend. "You've woke up the wrong passenger, Morny. You were lookin' for a sheep, an' you found a tiger, by gad!"

"I'll beat him yet," panted Mornington.

"I hope you will."

"Do you think I can't, you fool?" Townsend shrugged his shoulders.

"How long are these rests?" asked Lovell sarcastically, when a couple of minutes had elapsed. Smythe was backing up his nutty pal all he could, with a lofty disregard for the rules of fair play.

"One minute!"

"Isn't that a jolly long minute?"

"I'm keepin' time."

"Wake me up when you start again," remarked Tommy Dodd; and there was a laugh.

"Time!" said Smythe reluctantly.

Mornington staggered into the ring.

Every fellow present could see that he was already beaten, but Morny would not admit it to himself. So long as he could stand he would fight.

Erroll stepped up to him quietly.

The third round was a furious one. Morny's fury seemed to give him a chance for a moment or two, and Erroll receded a few paces. Once again Mornington hoped. But his hope was short-lived.

As he pressed on fiercely, Erroll met him with a sharp attack, and he was knocked right and left. Gately the dandy of the Fourth stood up to that whirlwind attack. But he went back and back, his guard feeble, and failing, till a heavy drive fairly on the chin carried him off his feet, and he crashed to the floor.

Smythe stared down at him blankly.

"Count!" yelled Raby.

"Count, you spoofer!"

Adolphus Smythe began to count. He counted with as much slowness as he could put into it.

"One, two, three"—a pause—"four, five, six"—another long pause—"seven, eight, nine"—a still longer pause—"out!"

Smythe might have counted a hundred, as a matter of fact. Mornington was unable to get on his feet.

"Our man wins!" grinned Lovell.

Erroll peeled off the gloves, and Jimmy Silver helped him on with his jacket. The new junior had been hardly touched.

Townsend and Topham helped Mornington up. The dandy of the Fourth, breathing quick and hard, leaned on them heavily. His eyes burned as they were turned upon Erroll.

The latter hesitated a few moments, and then came towards Mornington. He held out his hand.

"We've had it out," he said. "I've been lucky. That's all. There's my fist, if you choose to take it, Mornington!"

"Good man!" said Tommy Dodd approvingly.

Mornington did not take the new junior's hand. He fixed his eyes upon him, with a bitter hatred in his look.

"Shake hands, Morny!" shouted a dozen voices.

"Play up! Don't be a cad!"

Mornington's lip curled.

"I don't shake hands with the sons of forgers and cracksmen!" he said very distinctly.

"You rotten cad!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Are you still keeping that up?"

"I'm keepin' it up till that impostor is shown up and turned out of Rookwood!" hissed Mornington.

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"Shame!"

Mornington cast a fierce glance round at the faces of the Rookwood fellows. He read condemnation and disgust in almost every face.

"Shame!"

Mornington staggered away, leaning heavily on Townsend's arm. The shout followed him.

"Shame!"

The popularity of the dandy of the Fourth had never been at so low an ebb. Even some of the nuts looked as disgusted as the rest. Mornington left the gym with an almost livid face.

Jimmy Silver squeezed Erroll's arm as they followed.

"Don't mind him," he said. "He's ratty, and can't get over his licking. Nobody takes any notice of his silly slanders."

Erroll nodded. Jimmy Silver was right enough. A loud cheer followed Erroll as he left the gym with the captain of the Fourth. There was no doubt as to the opinion of the Rookwood fellows between Erroll and his enemy.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

King Cricket!

FEELING fit?"

Jimmy Silver asked that question in cheery tones, as he clasped Erroll on the shoulder in the quad, after morning lessons on Saturday.

Erroll looked round quickly.

He was standing under one of the old beeches, reading a letter, with a dark and thoughtful expression on his face. He thrust the letter into his pocket, and gave the captain of the Fourth a smile.

"Fit as a fiddle!" he said.

"We're playing the Moderns this afternoon, you know," said Jimmy.

"Yes; I'm looking forward to it. It's jolly decent of you to put me in the team when I've been such a short time here."

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"My dear chap, I shouldn't have put you in if you hadn't been worth your place. You can bet your boots on that!"

"Yes, I know," assented Erroll. "I hear that Mornington has been raising the question in the club."

"He tried to," said Jimmy, frowning. "That rotten yarn of his again. Nobody listened to him; even his own friends didn't back him up. Morny's in a minority of one against you."

"I wish the fellow wouldn't pick on me in this way."

"You've ruffled his lordly feathers the wrong way, I suppose," said Jimmy. "Morny hates a fellow without much trouble. He hates me, for instance, and I'm rather a nice chap."

"Yes," said Erroll, laughing. "But it's rotten. I'd have preferred to be friends with everybody here."

"Not so jolly easy. There's all sorts in a school, same as everywhere else. Right 'uns and wrong 'uns," said Jimmy. "Morny happens to be a wrong 'un. Still, it is queer the way he sticks to that idiotic yarn. If he doesn't stop it, you'd be quite justified in appealing to the Head to shut him up."

"I sha'n't do that!" said Erroll quickly. "Wouldn't that come under the head of sneaking?"

"Not under the cres. If he said anything against my father, I'd hammer him black-and-blue; and if he didn't stop then I'd see he was stopped somehow. He's making himself awfully unpopular by it. The queer thing is that Morny seems to believe it himself."

"You think he does?" asked Erroll, with a curious look at Jimmy Silver.

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"Well, yes; but it's only because it's a handle against you, of course. A chap can make himself believe what he wants to believe. And it is jolly queer about young 'Erbert, too!"

"I've seen that kid. He looks a decent sort."

"He's rough and ready, but he's one of the best," said Jimmy. "Morny got the yarn from him in the first place. 'Erbert believes it, the young ass! I've talked to him about it, and told him it's all rot! He won't argue, but I can see he's got it fixed in his silly head!"

"Who is the kid? He's a queer little beggar to be here."

"A poor little beggar Morny found starving on the road," explained Jimmy.

"Morny is a queer fish. He's got good points. He picked him up, brought him home in a motor-car, fed him, and dressed him, and all that, persuaded the Head to admit him to the school, and got his guardian to pay the fees. It was awfully decent of Mornington, and, in fact, it fairly bowled us over. We never expected anything of the kind from him."

"You don't think Mornington put the story into the kid's head?"

"Oh, no," said Jimmy Silver, at once.

"The fact is, Erroll, your pater must resemble that cheery gentleman Gentleman Jim in looks. Such things do happen. It's a case of resemblance, and led 'Erbert to make the mistake. Still, he's a silly little idiot to think such a thing, and I've talked to him pretty plainly about it. He really ought to be 'kicked!"

"Oh, no, no!" said Erroll quickly.

Jimmy laughed.

"Mornington seems a good cricketer," said Erroll. "I hear that he thinks he ought to have the place you've given me. Why doesn't he play?"

"Because he's such a worm! We've tried him in the footer, and he would kick the ball through his own goal if he was in a nasty temper. You can't play a chap like that."

"My hat! No!"

"Don't mind him," said Jimmy Silver.

"If he keeps harping on that silly story about you, he'll get a Form ragging next, and then he may ring off!"

"I'd rather make friends with him."

"Not much chance of that. You can't be friends with Morny unless you kow-tow to him. Look at his pals! They were all grinning when you licked him the other day in the gym. That's the kind of friendship he inspires. They were glad to see him taken down a peg; and a fellow can't quite blame them, either—he rides rough-shod over them."

Erroll nodded, and they went in to dinner as the bell rang.

After dinner the Classical juniors streamed down to the cricket-ground. It was a sunny, spring afternoon, and ideal weather for cricket. Tommy Dodd and the Moderns came down in great force.

Mornington & Co. were there also.

Morny was looking restive and moody. The unpopularity he had brought upon himself by his persecution of the new junior was bitter enough to him.

But he was far too self-willed and obstinate to recede a step. Bitterness and malice urged him on; though, as he firmly believed his accusation against Erroll, there was perhaps a vague sense of duty mixed up with his motives, to a certain extent.

The Classicals were fielding, and Erroll

came into the field with the rest of the team, looking very fit in his flannels.

Mornington's eyes gleamed as he looked at him.

And when Erroll caught Tommy Dodd in the second over, there was a thunderous cheer from the Classical crowd.

"Well caught!"

"Bravo, Erroll!"

"They're makin' a fuss of the cad!" said Mornington. "A Rookwood crowd cheerin' the son of a common criminal!"

But Mornington was alone in his savage-condemnation of the new junior. Kit Erroll greatly distinguished himself in that match. His bowling was excellent, and his magnificent innings of 52 runs was principally responsible for the crushing defeat of the Modern side by an innings and 6 runs.

Erroll, when he came off the field, was surrounded by a cheering crowd. He was the hero of the match, and the Rookwood juniors were not slow to recognise it.

Loud cheers for Erroll rang in Mornington's ears as he stalked savagely away.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Uncle James Knows What To Do!

I THINK I've got it!"

Thus exclaimed Jimmy Silver. It was a couple of days after the cricket-match, and the Fistical Four were at tea in the end study, with Erroll and Oswald.

Jimmy Silver had been thinking, and the result was to be announced. Erroll was looking a little clouded.

Condemned as he was by Rookwood opinion on all sides, fed-up as his own friends were with the topic, Mornington had gone obstinately on his way, and he did not allow the subject of Gentleman Jim to be forgotten.

It was not surprising that it was getting on Erroll's nerves.

He had licked Mornington a second time for calling him uncomplimentary names in the Common-room. But that had had no deterrent effect upon Mornington—rather the reverse.

A good many fellows advised Erroll to place the matter before the Head, or his Form-master at least, and bring the voice of authority to bear upon the obstinate and malicious junior.

But Erroll firmly declined to do anything of the sort.

He simply let Morny "rip," so to speak. If the dandy of the Fourth insulted him to his face, he hit out. What Morny chose to say among other fellows was Morny's own business, and Erroll passed it by, unregarding.

Erroll's friends—and they were nearly all the Fourth—were savagely angry with Mornington for not letting the wretched slander drop. A Form ragging had been suggested; but though it would have been a good punishment, it was certain not to stop Mornington in his curious crusade. Mornington believed what he stated—that was the difficulty.

Hence Jimmy Silver's cogitations upon the matter, and his announcement at the tea-table in the end study that he had "got it."

"Well, what have you got?" asked Lovell. "If you've got any more grub, you can hand it out!"

"Rats! About Erroll, I mean!"

"About me?" said Erroll, with a smile.

"What about me?"

"And about that cad Mornington's silly yarn! You see, the trouble is that the silly chump believes it himself!"

"Because Erroll licked him!" remarked Oswald.

"Yes, that's the kind of evidence he's got!" snorted Lovell. "What Morny wants is a Form ragging, and he'll get it, too!"

"But suppose Morny could be made to

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admit that it was a mistake?" said Jimmy Silver triumphantly.

"He won't!"

"Well, I've thought of a way!"

"That's good news!" said Erroll, with a smile. "It's awfully good of you to bother your head about it!"

"Well, Morny's got to be shut up, you know. He's getting on everybody's nerves with his silly rot! And I think I can squash him, and make him own up that he's played the giddy goat!" said Jimmy Silver, with satisfaction.

"Good old Uncle James!" grinned Newcome. "Listen to the pearls of wisdom that fall from his lips!"

"Fathead!"

"But what's the idea?" asked Raby.

"Oh, it's quite simple, but it's a corker!" said Jimmy. "I suppose you're like your father, Erroll? Chaps generally are."

Erroll started.

"Like my father!" he repeated.

"Yes; in looks, I mean?"

"I suppose so," said Erroll. "Why?"

"That's the idea! I dare say you've got a photograph of him?"

"No, as it happens, I haven't."

"It doesn't make any difference; I can get one," said Jimmy. "Now, some of the fellows saw Captain Erroll when he came here, but only some of them. Those who saw him only had a glance at him, mostly from a distance, so, of course, no fellow can say whether Erroll's like him or not. Now, my idea is to get a photograph of Captain Erroll."

"What for?" asked Lovell.

"Don't you see, ass? If Erroll's like his father—and he's sure to be—why, the photograph will show that he's what he says he is, and not what Morny says he is!"

A troubled look came over Erroll's face.

"I'm afraid it won't do," he said.

"Why not?" asked Jimmy.

"You see, if I send for a photograph of my pater, Morny will only say it is a photograph of the mysterious person he calls Gentleman Jim, and not of Captain Erroll at all!"

"Ha, ha!" chuckled Lovell. "Good old Uncle James, putting his foot in it! Of course, Morny would say that at once, and he would take it as evidence on his side of the argument!"

"Oh, don't cackle too soon!" said Jimmy Silver. "I meant a photograph that could be proved to be that of Captain Erroll!"

"Mornington would not take my word for that," said Erroll. "And—and if you'll excuse me, I don't care to enter into any argument with Mornington on the subject!"

"That's all very well; but it would close the matter for good," said Jimmy. "What you say is right enough—Morny would make out that your photograph of the captain wasn't genuine. But he can't say so to one that I can produce!"

"How the merry dickens are you going to get a photo of Erroll's pater?" demanded Raby.

Jimmy Silver smiled a smile of superior wisdom.

"That's where Uncle James' brains come in," he explained. "Have you forgotten the jaw there was about Erroll before he came—on account of his father having been in the papers? A few months ago Captain Erroll was being jawed about no end for the way he walloped the Huns. His photograph was in a dozen papers, and I saw it myself at the time, though I've forgotten what he was like. Well, my idea is to get an old number of the 'Daily Mirror' with Captain Erroll's portrait in it. Even Morny couldn't deny that that was genuine, with the name printed under it, a copy of

the 'Daily Mirror' printed three or four months ago!"

"My hat! What a ripping idea!" exclaimed Oswald.

"Then, if Erroll's anything like his father, the likeness will settle the matter," said Jimmy Silver triumphantly. "And that's a cert! Sons are always more or less like their dads."

"Bravo!"

"Isn't it a corker, Erroll?"

Jimmy Silver turned a smiling glance on Erroll, and started.

Erroll's face was white.

The smile died off Jimmy's face. What was Erroll looking like that for?

"Erroll!" he exclaimed.

The new junior pulled himself together.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing! But—but—"

Jimmy Silver's face was grave. Into his own loyal breast a dark doubt had crept, in spite of himself. Was it possible

"Well, let him rip, and be hanged to him!"

Again Jimmy Silver felt that chill doubt creeping upon him. He had expected the new junior to greet his ripping suggestion in the most hearty way. Surely it ought to seem worth while to Erroll to crush the slander once and for all?

"Look here," said Lovell. "That won't do, Erroll!"

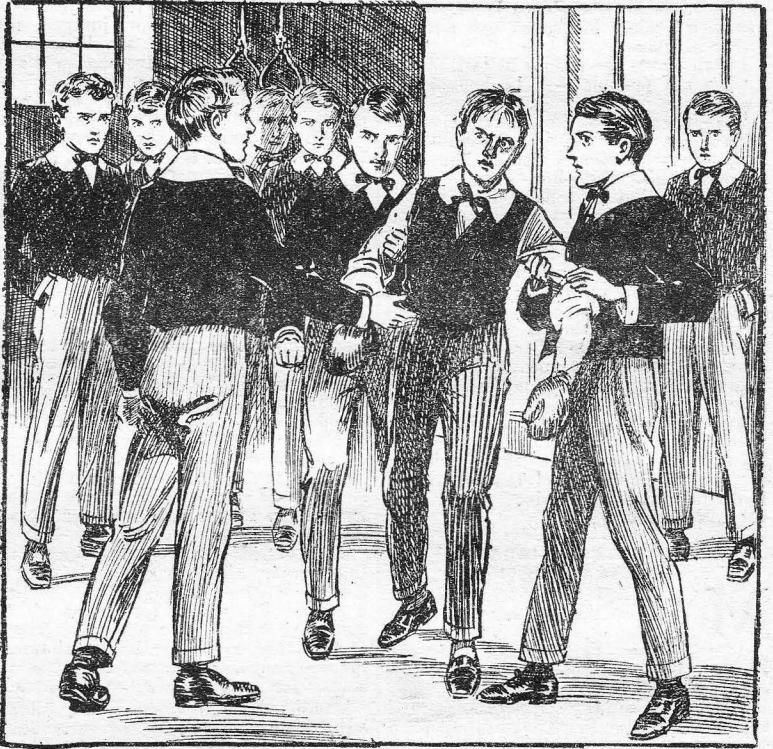
Erroll looked at him.

"We don't believe anything against you, and we've said so. But if you raise objections to the thing being put to a certain test, the other fellows will begin to think there's something in it!"

"I hardly think so."

"Well, I think so," said Lovell tartly; "and I'm blest if I shouldn't agree with them, too!"

Erroll's eyes flashed.



Mornington's lips curled as Erroll held out his hand after the fight. "I don't shake hands with the sons of forgers and cracksmen!" he said. "Shame!" cried the juniors. "Don't be a cad, Morny!" (See chapter 3.)

that Mornington had been speaking the truth?

Erroll was himself again in a moment, however. He smiled.

"It's an awfully good idea," he said.

"Oh!" said Jimmy, greatly relieved, and ashamed of the momentary doubt that had assailed him. "You think so?"

"It's a corker!" said Oswald, with a very curious look at Erroll. "It will settle the matter and finish it."

"Yes," said Erroll. "Only—"

"Only what?" asked the Fistical Four together.

Erroll compressed his lips a little.

"I'd rather not enter into any argument with Mornington about it," he said. "It's not my business to convince him that he's lying. I dare say he will drop the subject in the long run. If he doesn't, I don't care much!"

"He hasn't shown any sign of dropping it so far," said Jimmy Silver drily.

"Easy does it, Lovell, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver. "But it's quite right, Erroll. It's all very well to despise a silly slander, but if it can be proved to be a slander, it's no good mounting the high horse and declining to do it. We can get an old number of the 'Daily Mirror,' with Captain Erroll's chivvy in it, and that will shut Morny up for good."

"I don't agree with you, Silver. Mornington isn't worth that amount of notice."

"Oh, rot!" said Lovell.

Jimmy set his lips a little.

"I'm sorry to disagree with you fellows, when you've been such jolly good friends to me," said Erroll, in his frank way.

"But that's my view, and I stick to it. I sha'n't take any step in the matter."

"You needn't," said Jimmy. "I will. I can drop a line to the 'Daily Mirror' office, asking for the paper, if they've got one left."

Erroll started.
"You wouldn't do that against my wish?" he said.

Jimmy Silver looked him squarely in the face.

"I shall do it," he said. "You're making me wonder, Erroll, whether there's anything in the yarn. I tell you that plainly!"

Erroll flushed crimson.

"I'm your friend, and you know it," said Jimmy. "As your friend, I'm going to knock this slander on the head. If you raise objections to my doing it, what am I to think?"

"You can think what you like," said Erroll, rising to his feet. "I don't want to quarrel with you, so I'd better leave your study, Jimmy Silver. I decline to take the least notice of Mornington, and if you do as you suggest, it will be against my wish."

With that, Erroll left the study, closing the door after him.

There was a grim silence in the room. The five juniors looked at one another rather blankly.

Lovell broke the silence at last.

"It's not possible——" he began, and paused.

"It—it can't be!" muttered Oswald. "Erroll's a bit of an ass, I should say. Jolly queer he should get on the high horse like this. But—but——"

"I know what the fellows would say, if they heard him talk as we've just heard him," said Newcome drily. And Raby nodded assent.

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath.

"I don't quite know what to think," he said. "I can't believe anything against Erroll. But—but this is going to be settled one way or the other. For his own sake, it's going to be proved. I don't understand the line he's taken; but I'm going to have it settled!"

And within half an hour the letter was written and despatched, and the Fistical Four waited after that very anxiously for the "Daily Mirror" that contained the undoubtedly genuine portrait of Captain Erroll.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Put to the Test!

MORNINGTON of the Fourth wore a smiling face the next day.

The good-humour of the elegant Fourth-Former seemed to be quite restored. Townsend & Co., surprised by his smiling cheeriness, wanted to know the reason. They stared when Morny gave it.

"Jimmy Silver's come to the rescue," he said. "He's thought of a dodge for proving my case."

"By gad!" said Townsend. "You're wanderin' in your little mind, Morny. I hear that Silver is gettin' a picture of Captain Erroll to prove Erroll's case by his resemblance to his pater."

"Exactly!" grinned Mornington.

"Well, that will settle it, won't it?" demanded Peele.

"No doubt it will! I'm open to bet any chap five to one in quids that Captain Erroll's portrait won't resemble Erroll of the Fourth any more than it resembles you or me."

"Oh!" said the nuts together.

Mornington chuckled with glee. Jimmy Silver's scheme for clearing Erroll of the faintest vestige of suspicion was known in the Fourth, and regarded with approval by all the juniors. It was considered quite a master-stroke of Uncle James', and, when the proof arrived, it was agreed that if Morny didn't own up that he was wrong, he should be ragged till he did.

But the dandy of the Fourth took quite another view.

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Convinced that Erroll was the son of Gentleman Jim, and not of Captain Erroll at all, Morny did not believe for a moment that the captain's portrait would show any resemblance to the new junior.

Jimmy Silver was, in fact, playing into his hands without the least intention of doing so.

If the man who had brought Erroll to Rookwood was not Captain Erroll, but a rascal masquerading in his name, as Morny contended, then certainly the new junior was not the son of the real Captain Erroll. In that case, it was absurd to suppose that he bore any resemblance to him.

The photograph, when it arrived, would prove Mornington's case; of that the dandy of the Fourth was convinced.

His friends did not agree with his view, but Morny's positiveness made some impression upon them, and they were very keen for the expected proof to arrive. The matter had now become one of general interest to the juniors of Rookwood. Erroll had jumped into prominence at once in the little world of the juniors, and Mornington was a prominent character, too.

The dispute was known and commented on by every fellow in the Third, the Fourth, and the Shell, Classical and Modern. Indeed, it had reached the ears of some of the seniors by this time, and Erroll had been the recipient of a good many curious glances from fellows in the Fifth and Sixth.

Naturally, fellows spoke to Erroll on the subject. His objection to the scheme had not been mentioned outside the end study. But it was easy for anyone to see that he was not pleased. The usually frank and cheery junior seemed to have changed.

He was quiet, silent except when spoken to, and he kept a great deal to himself. He avoided Jimmy Silver & Co. that day; but his apparent resentment did not affect Jimmy. That he had done right in taking this step, Jimmy knew, and if there was anything "fishy" about Erroll, the sooner it was shown up the better.

Jimmy tried hard not to allow doubt to grow in his breast, but in face of Erroll's attitude it was difficult to keep it down. The rest of the Co. shared his feeling, but they gave Erroll the benefit of the doubt, as Jimmy did, till the proof should arrive, which would settle the matter for good one way or the other.

There was no reply to Jimmy Silver's letter that day, and Morny sarcastically pointed out to his pals that Erroll was looking more cheery after the last post was in.

"I'm readin' his merry thoughts, dear boys," said the gleeful Morny. "Those papers don't keep back numbers, as a rule, and he hopes the blessed thing is out of print and can't be obtained. That cheers him up."

"My hat! That would knock it on the head!" remarked Townsend.

"It wouldn't!" said Mornington coolly. "I've written to London myself."

"You have?"

"Exactly! I've written to an agent, offerin' any price for some paper or magazine that contains a picture of Captain Erroll. Some of them must still be in print—there were a lot published his photograph. If Jimmy Silver doesn't get his paper, I shall get one."

"You're playin' Silver's game."

"Jimmy Silver's playin' my game, an' I'm helpin' him," said Mornington, with a laugh. "Wait and see!"

And the juniors waited.

The next morning there was a letter for Jimmy Silver. It was a polite note regretting that the number of the paper he had asked for was out of print, and could not be supplied.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated the Fistical Four in chorus, as they read the letter in the hall. Erroll glanced at Jimmy inquiringly. Quite a number of juniors had gathered round.

"Can't get the paper!" said Jimmy abruptly, and he could not help noticing the light that leaped into Erroll's dark eyes.

"Sorry!" said Erroll. "Sorry if you're disappointed! But it really wasn't worth the trouble, you know."

"I think it was!" said Jimmy tartly. "Silver won't be disappointed," said Mornington, with a laugh.

"What do you mean?" snapped Jimmy. "They can't send the paper!"

"I mean that I'm gettin' a paper down, and it's pretty sure to arrive to-day," said Mornington coolly. "All the papers ain't out of print, you know. I'm gettin' one that isn't. Hallo, Erroll! You don't look pleased!"

Erroll walked away.

"What are you doing it for, Mornington?" snapped Jimmy Silver savagely. "It will prove you a liar."

"It will prove Erroll a liar! I'm open to bet any fellow quids to bobs that Captain Erroll's portrait is no more like Erroll than it is like Jimmy Silver!" said Mornington, looking round.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" growled Lovell.

Mornington shrugged his shoulders, and strolled away to the Form-room. The dandy of the Fourth was in high feather that day.

After lessons there was a rush to see whether there was a postal packet for Mornington. A rolled paper addressed to him reposed in the rack, and Morny grinned as he took it down.

"The Illustrated Gazette," he read on the label. "A bob paper—they keep the back numbers of that. Captain Erroll's chivvy will be in this, dear boys. Come into the Common-room, and bring Erroll. The dear fellow will be glad to see his pater's portrait—what?"

"Come on, Erroll!" called out Jimmy Silver.

Erroll had gone into the quadrangle. Jimmy ran after him.

"Come on!" he said.

"Thanks! I'd rather not!"

"Better come. You're going to see Morny knocked as flat as a flounder," said Jimmy. "Look here, Erroll, you've got to come!"

Lovell took one of Erroll's arms, and Jimmy the other. Between them the new junior was walked into the House and into the Common-room. Nearly all the Fourth and the Shell had gathered there.

Erroll's handsome face was pale. The juniors cast curious glances at him. The same thought was in every mind now—was Mornington in the right, after all? But Erroll, if he was a cheat and an impostor, must have had plenty of nerve, and he was game to the last. He met the doubtful glances of the juniors with erect head and steady eyes.

The matter was quickly to be put to the test. Mornington's slim fingers were already unrolling the paper.

There was a hush of expectancy in the Common-room.

"After all," muttered Oswald, "if—it isn't like Erroll, that don't prove much. Chaps ain't always like their fathers."

"Are you like your father, Erroll?" grinned Mornington. "You ought to know."

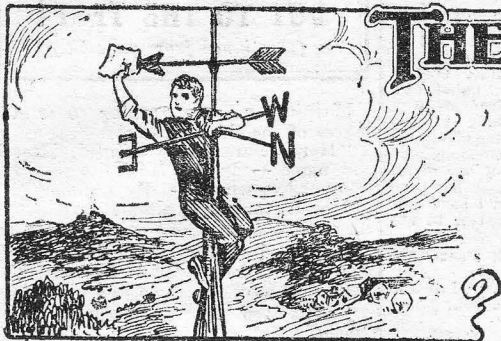
"I have nothing to say to you, Mornington."

"We shall all have something to say to you pretty quick I think!" sneered Mornington.

"Get it over, and not so much jaw!" said Jimmy Silver roughly.

(Continued on page 14.)

AN ABSORBING NEW TALE OF THE GREAT CINEMA WORLD!



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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 turned away from home by his father. He comes in touch with a cinema company on "location," and acts as deputy "stunt" actor for them. Whilst doing this he saves an express from disaster. Among the passengers whom he has saved is the manager of the World-famed Cinema Company, who comes forward to congratulate Dick on his bravery, and offers him a job in the company. Dick accepts the splendid offer and travels down to the Cinema King's home to sign the contract.

There he meets Dr. Steele, who is a guest at the house, but he decides to say nothing to Mr. Henderson concerning their precious acquaintance.

A theft occurs at the Towers, and the stolen pearls are discovered in one of Dick's suit-cases. He is accused of the theft, and locked in his bed-room. That night he sees Mrs. Henderson walking in her sleep, and going straight towards the cliffs. At a great risk, Dick climbs on to the balcony outside his window, and contrives to turn her aside from the great danger and lead her back again to the house.

(Now read on.)

Mr. Henderson's Resolution!

DICK had leaped softly down, and had hurried across to meet her, and it was now for the first time that he perceived the figure of Mr. Eustace Henderson standing there, white-faced and anxious.

Dick raised his finger to his lips as a signal to him to remain silent, and then motioned for him to stand aside and leave the way clear for Mrs. Henderson to return to her bed-room.

All danger was now passed beyond the fear that the poor woman might suddenly awaken, and suffer a severe shock at finding herself clad only in her night attire and a dressing-gown upon the open terrace of the house.

But she gave no sign of awakening. Slowly, with smooth, regular footsteps, she retraced her way towards the open French windows of her bed-room, and finally Dick had the satisfaction and relief of seeing her pass safely through into the room.

Mr. Henderson hurried after his wife, and watched her enter her bed-room, discard her dressing-gown, and then slip back into bed, drawing the clothes over her.

Then it was that the cinema magnate turned and retraced his steps towards where Dick stood upon the threshold of his own bed-room.

Without a word, Eustace Henderson approached Dick, and, taking his right hand in his, he wrung it warmly.

"Heaven bless you, my boy!" he said brokenly, but with great fervour. "You have saved the life of one who is dearer to me than anyone in this world! I cannot thank you enough! But one thing let me say: I now share the opinion of the woman

you have just saved from certain death. I believe you to be entirely innocent of the theft of those pearls which were found in your suit-case!

"No boy," he continued, "who has the pluck and resource that you have could be a common sneak-thief! There is something more behind all this, and I intend to make it my business in the morning to get to the bottom of the whole miserable affair!"

"Please forgive me for my exhibition of mistrust and suspicion this evening. I ought to have known better than to doubt you! My wife did.

"But I will say no more now, Mr. Trafford," concluded the cinema king. "Please go to your room again, and take this," he added, as he handed Dick a key from the pocket of his dressing-gown. "This is the key of your bed-room. You are a prisoner no longer. You are once more my distinguished and honoured guest!"

"Thank you!" said Dick, as he took the key. "I am glad to have been on the spot, and to have been able to do what I have done! I hope Mrs. Henderson will suffer no ill-effects in the morning!"

Mr. Henderson shook his head. "No," he said. "Thanks to you, she will not! She will not even know anything at all about it."

Dick nodded, his eyes alight with happiness.

Through this lucky chance of saving Mrs. Henderson everything seemed to be coming right again.

Perhaps, after all, he would be a great cinema star!

"Good-night!" said Mr. Henderson, once more extending his hand towards Dick. "Good-night! And Heaven bless you, my boy! I hope you'll let me have that contract made out again in the morning."

"Not until I have proved my innocence," answered Dick quickly. "I don't want to feel that you are renewing your offer out of a feeling of obligation or gratitude for what I have been fortunate enough to be able to do this night. I want you to give me full opportunity to prove my innocence, and discover, if possible, the real thief. And then, perhaps, Mr. Henderson, when I have done that I shall be very happy to avail myself of your offer."

"Very good," agreed Eustace Henderson. "It shall be as you wish. And not only shall you be given every opportunity of proving your innocence, but you shall be given all possible assistance that money—my money—can give. You shall have the finest detective engaged by me upon your behalf!"

"Thank you again, Mr. Henderson!" answered Dick; and then, with a final handshake, the two parted.

Mr. Henderson turned to retrace his steps to his own room, whilst Dick stepped back into his.

For a few moments Dick stood there gazing out over the terrace to the sea beyond, hardly able to realise that what had just happened was not part of some strange dream.

Then, tired physically and mentally, Dick slipped off his dressing-gown, and crawled wearily back to bed.

This time, his mind relieved of all worry and anxiety, he experienced no difficulty in slipping off into a restful slumber, to dream happy dreams of when he would be a famous cinema star.

The Real Thief!

WHEN Dick Trafford awoke the morning after he had saved Mrs. Eustace Henderson from the fate which might so easily have befallen her had it not been for his timely aid, his first waking thought was one of misery and chagrin.

For the moment he had forgotten that interlude in the night, and only remembered that he had been accused of theft—the theft of his hostess's pearls—and that he was that very day to clear out.

Then suddenly the memory of what had occurred during the night came back to him, and he gave a jubilant cry.

"Hurrah!" he cried, as he sprang lightly from his bed. "Splendid! Everything's going to be all right now. Of course, I remember everything! Mr. Henderson told me he believed me innocent, and promised to secure one of the finest detectives to come down and help me prove my innocence!"

And with a light laugh and humming a gay little tune, Dick Trafford commenced to dress.

Finally he was ready, and as he passed out of his bed-room he heard the sound of the breakfast gong.

He descended to the palatial breakfast-room, to find both Mr. and Mrs. Henderson there; but Dr. Jasper Steele had not as yet put in an appearance.

"Good-morning, Mr. Trafford!" said Mrs. Henderson, as she motioned him to the seat at her side. "My husband has just been telling me how you saved my life last night! It was wonderful of you, and I want to thank you!"

Dick almost blushed with modesty. "It was nothing," he said. "Anyone would have done the same!"

Mrs. Henderson shook her head. "No," she said; "I am afraid it is not everyone who would have had the pluck to risk his own life to save mine. I have been a victim of this sleep-walking ever since I was a child, and have had one or two narrow escapes already, but nothing quite so near as last night's adventure."

Again Dick shook his head. "Believe me, Mrs. Henderson," he said. "It was nothing. But I was very glad to have been on hand!"

"And so am I glad that you were there," returned Mrs. Henderson, "for not only was it the result of saving my life, but, what is also so splendid, it has resulted in my husband's belief in you being restored! He now shares my opinion that you knew nothing of the mysterious disappearance of my pearls. He is now convinced that you have been the victim of some vile plot to blacken your character, and to ruin you in our eyes. And," added Mrs. Henderson sentimentally, "I don't think we have very far to look for the real culprit!" And as Mrs. Henderson spoke the words her gaze rested upon the empty chair at the table which was usually occupied by Dr. Jasper Steele.

"Well, he shall have every assistance that money can provide," assured Mr. Henderson. "I have already been through to my office upon the telephone, and given instructions for Hesketh Moir to be sent down immediately."

"Hesketh Moir!" exclaimed Dick. "Why, he's the finest detective in England!"

Mr. Henderson nodded.

"Exactly!" he said, with a smile. "I told

you last night the best men I could procure should be engaged to prove your innocence, and to find the real thief. I gave instructions for one of the clerks to come along with him and show him the way right up to the house, so as not to waste a moment of valuable time. They'll probably be catching the nine o'clock train, and should be here within an hour and a half. I wonder why the doctor doesn't come down to breakfast?" added Mr. Henderson, as he glanced at the doctor's empty chair. "He's not usually as late as this."

Suddenly a fear came to Dick that perhaps the doctor had got wind of what had occurred during the night, and, fearing that the arrival of so famous a detective as Hesketh Moir might result in his duplicity being discovered, he had decamped.

But this fear upon Dick's part was soon allayed, for a couple of moments late Dr. Jasper Steele entered the breakfast-room.

The doctor paid his morning greetings to the cinema magnate and his wife, and then, as he turned, his gaze fell upon Dick, and an expression of malignant hate crossed his features.

"You still here!" he exclaimed, in a tone of anger and disappointment. "I thought," he went on, turning to Mr. Henderson, "you said this young scoundrel was to leave by the first train this morning! Surely you have not relented, and you are going to allow him to remain in your house? Really, Mr. Henderson, I must protest! He has been caught red-handed—proved to be a thief! Found guilty of the crime of stealing from his own hostess, and yet I still find him seated at your table, as if he were a distinguished and honoured guest! Really, Mr. Henderson, it is hardly fair upon the others in your house! How do we know that that young scoundrel may not be planning yet another robbery, and—well, he may be choosing me as his next victim! Really, if he remains, I shall have to go!"

The doctor poured forth this torrent of words in the heat of passion, and Mr. Henderson sat back, without speaking a word, waiting for him to exhaust himself.

Then it was that Eustace Henderson decided to speak.

"Dr. Steele," he said, in a cold, dispassionate tone, "you are at liberty to go whenever you please—after the arrival of Mr. Hesketh Moir."

"Hesketh Moir!" gasped the doctor. "Is he coming here? What for?"

"To try and find who really took my wife's pearls last evening!" answered Mr. Henderson icily.

"But this is ridiculous!" exclaimed the late headmaster of St. Peter's. "We know who

took the pearls! Were they not found hidden in a boot in the suitcase of this lad Trafford?"

Mr. Henderson nodded.

"They were," he agreed. "But that is really no proof that it was he who took them from off my wife's dressing-table. Certain events have since taken place, unbeknown to you, Dr. Steele, which convince me that Mr. Trafford here knew nothing of the presence of those pearls in his luggage until he voluntarily turned out his belongings and the necklace fell from the toe of one of his boots. I am quite satisfied that he has been the victim of some foul plot, and I have sent for Hesketh Moir to sort the matter to the bottom!"

Dr. Jasper Steele gasped with amazement and chagrin for a few seconds.

"But this is monstrous!" he roared at the top of his voice. "I shall leave your house immediately, Mr. Henderson!"

"I think not!"

The cinema magnate shot out the words slowly and deliberately.

The doctor gasped.

"You mean that——" he continued.

"I mean," cut in Mr. Henderson, "that I request you to remain here until Mr. Moir has arrived and satisfied himself that your leaving this house will in no way impede his work in the solving of the mystery."

"And if I refuse to grant that request?" stormed the doctor.

"Then," replied Mr. Henderson, "the request will become a command! Understand me, Dr. Steele, I make no accusations whatever, but you, amongst others, must be regarded with equal suspicion until the truth is discovered. Surely you must see that this is the only fair and right course for me to adopt? I appeal to you not to make my task more difficult than it is already."

"And if I refuse to remain here another second?" cried the doctor, half turning as if to go.

"Then I shall have no alternative but to communicate with the local police," returned Mr. Henderson, without hesitation. "I do not wish to have to resort to such extreme measures, but I am quite prepared to do so, if necessary. Please understand me, Dr. Steele: my mind is quite made up. I am determined to have this matter thrashed out to the bitter end!"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

He had enough sense to see that he could gain nothing by prolonging this scene, and, with an exclamation of disgust, he swung round on his heel and stalked out of the room.

(To be continued.)

PUT TO THE TEST!

(Continued from page 12.)

Mornington was turning over the leaves of the thick paper.

"Here we are!" he exclaimed. "Here's the name — an article and a portrait! Why—why—what — By thunder!"

Mornington's eyes almost started from his head.

He gazed at the pictured face upon the thick, glazed paper of the illustrated periodical as if it mesmerised him.

"Let's see it!" shouted a dozen voices.

Fellows crowded round on all sides to look at the reproduced photograph in the paper, under which was printed "Captain Erroll, Loamshire Regiment."

Erroll did not move. He was breathing deep and hard.

Jimmy Silver's face lighted up as he looked at the pictured features in the paper.

The portrait was that of a handsome man of about forty—a man with clear-cut features and dark eyes. But for the fact that it was evidently a portrait of a grown man, it might have been taken for Erroll's own face.

The resemblance was not only noticeable, but it was striking.

Every feature of Kit Erroll's handsome face was reproduced in the portrait under the eyes of the juniors.

"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell. "What have you got to say now, Morny?"

Mornington was dumb.

A dozen fellows patted Erroll on the back.

Erroll spoke at last.

"Is it like me?"

"Like you!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "As like as two peas!"

Erroll gave a violent start.

He looked at the pictured face with a strange expression on his own. He drew a deep, almost sobbing breath.

"It's like me," he said.

"You speak as if you'd never seen it before," said Jimmy Silver, in wonder. All his doubts were set at rest now.

Mornington found his voice.

"He never has seen it before!" he said thickly. "It's an accident—just a chance resemblance——"

"You've got this proof here yourself, Mornington," said Jimmy Silver. "It's proved that Erroll is true blue—not that anybody ever doubted it—it's proved that he is the son of Captain Erroll. They're as like as peas in a pod."

"I can't understand it! It's like Erroll. I can't catch on. But I know that he's the son of a cracksmán, not of Captain Erroll, and——"

Mornington got no further. A shout of angry disgust interrupted him, and he was collared on all sides by the juniors. Struggling and kicking, the dandy of the Fourth was bumped hard on the floor, and then pitched headlong out of the Common-room.

Jimmy Silver slipped his arm through Erroll's.

"Come on, old scout! All serene now!"

Erroll nodded without speaking. But his handsome face was very much brighter now. His strange reluctance to have the matter put to the test was forgotten now—by all but Mornington.

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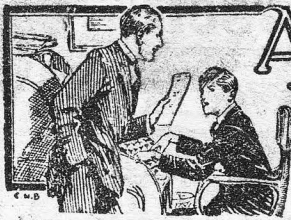
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