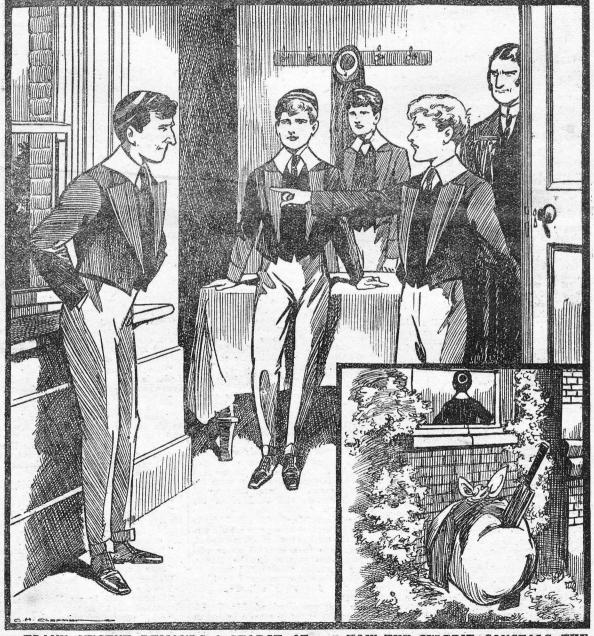
## FIVE SHILLINGS FOR ONE SENTENCE! page 12).

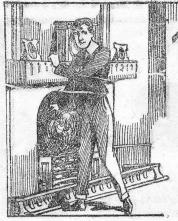




FRANK NUGENT DEMANDS A SEARCH OF SKINNER'S STUDY.

HOW THE CULPRIT CONCEALS THE EVIDENCE OF HIS GUILT.

(A tense moment in the long, complete Greyfriars tale in this issue.)



THE FIRST CHAPTER. Rallying Round !

"SAY, Bob!"
Frank Nugent, of the Remove

Frank Nugent, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, called out the name as he saw Bob Cherry just ahead of him in the Remove passage. Bob Cherry turned at once.

He and Frank Nugent were not exactly on the best of terms at the moment. Harry Wharton, who shared Study No. 1 with Frank Nugent, was in the "punishment" of Greyfriars, awaiting public expulsion for a cowardly attack upon Loder, the bullying prefect of the Sixth. Sixth.

Loder had been bullying Wharton, and Loder had been bullying wharton, and the junior had openly declared his intention of getting his own back. But nobody dreamed that Harry Wharton would take a riding-crop to Loder and attack him in the quad in the middle of

the night.
That was what Wharton apparently had done, for Loder had been found un-conscious in the quadrangle by Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout, masters of the Remove and Fifth Forms, and was even then lying seriously ill in the school sanitorium.

Of all the chums Harry Wharton had, Frank Nugent alone steadfastly believed that Wharton was innocent of the attack

Harry admitted using the riding-whip, but he declared that he had taken to his heels and run when Loder looked like getting the upper hand.

The last he had heard of Loder was the

pattering of his feet as he gave chase.

Thus Bob Cherry, his usually sunny face somewhat clouded, was rather surprised that Frank Nugent should address him in so cordial a manner. However, he stopped, and Nugent caught up with

"Bob," said Frank earnestly, "it's about time we pulled together—rallied round to do something for Harry Wharton. I know you, Johnny Bull, and Inky are not of the opinion that Wharton analy are not of the opinion that what-ton is innocent, but you might be decent enough to give him a hearing."

"We have," said Bob Cherry uncom-fortably. "Come to your study. Here,

fortably. Marky!"

Mark Linley was passing, and at Bob's request he followed them to the Bob's request he followed them to the study. Johnny Bull was found, and the door of Study No. 1 was closed behind them. In less than a minute there came a sound from the door which brought Frank Nugent to his feet.

Tiptoeing to the door, Nugent flung it open, and Billy Bunter, the fattest inviter in the Benneye, tumbled, head-

open, and Billy Bunter, the fattest junior in the Remove, tumbled head-

first into the study.
"Ow—yow!" he roared. "I say, you

fellows-

A Magnificent, Long, Complete Tale, dealing with the Early Schooldays of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS. Frank Nugent seized him in a grasp

of iron. "What are you listening for?" he de-

what are you manded warmly.

"Yow! Lemme alone! I wasn't listening. I wouldn't think of such a thing. Besides, it's all Skinner's fault!"

"Skinner's fault!" echoed Frank

Nugent. He wanted me to-to find out what you chaps were gathering f-for!" stammered Billy Bunter. "I wasn't going mered Billy Bunter.

"Kick him out!" snorted Bob Cherry. There was no need to kick William George Bunter from the study. As soon as Nugent released him he fled as if for his life. Nugent closed the door, and looked significantly at the others.

"So Skinner was anxious to know what we were gathering for!" he said musingly. "Why should Skinner be interested in what we said? Wasn't Skinner also heard to utter threats against Loder about the same time as Harry Wharton?" Wharton?"

"My hat?" ejaculated Bob Cherry excitedly. "I remember, now I come to think of it, that I heard somebody moving in the dormitory after Wharton had gone out!"

had gone out!"

"And Wharton has just told me, when I climbed up to the punishmentroom, that he heard somebody in the quad whilst he was waiting for Loder," went on Nugent, his voice vibrating with restrained excitement. "Chaps, doesn't that help you to believe that old Hærry is innocent?"

"We'll watch Skinner!" said Bob Cherry, ignoring the question. "We'll watch him day and night! He might give the game away. There might be bloodstains on the weapon he biffed over Loder, f'rinstance!"

"Just so!" said Nugent. "We'll watch Skinner!"

And the matter was quickly arranged.

And the matter was quickly arranged. Frank Nugent was very quiet and thoughtful during afternoon lessons that day. His thoughts were not upon his work, however. He was thinking of Harry Wharton, still confined in the locked room.

Several times Mr. Quelch called him to Nugent certainly was a little tryorder. ing for the most patient of Form-masters.

In response to a question as to who In response to a question as to who murdered the princes in the Tower, Nugent answered "Skinner!" much to Mr. Quelch's amazement—and to Skinner's also. The reply earned Nugent

abruptly. "You are usually one of my best pupils, and this afternoon you have What is the cause of been the worst.

Nugent coloured. "I-I was thinking about my chum, sir," he stammered.
"Wharton, do you mean?"
"Yes, sir."

"You still call him your chum?" said Mr. Quelch, looking at the junior curiously.

"Yes, sir!" said Nugent, in firm tones.
"After what he has done, Nugent?" "I do not believe he has done any-thing, sir."
"But the injury to Loder—"

"That was somebody else, sir." Mr. Quelch smiled a little sadly.

"Your faith in your friend is a good trait in your character, Nugent," he said.
"I wish I could share it. I have always had a high opinion of Wharton. With the exception of some faults of temper, I regarded his character as very good. But the evidence is too clear in this case. Wharton's own admissions make it

"But he wouldn't have made those admissions, sir, if he had really done it, said Frank Nugent quickly.

Mr. Quelch shook his head.

Mr. Queich shook his head.

"I am afraid you are leaning on a broken reed, Nugent," he said. "I am very sorry that it is so, but I cannot think otherwise. You need not do the lines I imposed, but you must give more attention to your work."

attention to your work."

"Thank you, sir. I—I hear that Loder is much better now, sir, and has seen some of his friends," said Nugent.

"That is the case."

"Could I see him, sir?"

"That rests with Loder. He is able to see you, if that is what you mean. But why do you wish to see Loder?"

"I think he may be able to tell me something about what happened, sir, which will help me to clear Wharton."

Mr. Quelch smiled faintly.

"You may certainly try, my lad." he

"You may certainly try, my lad," he

said.
"Thank you, sir!"
Nugent left the Form-room, and made his way at once to Wingate's room, and tapped lightly on the door. The door was opened by Walker of the Sixth.
"What do you want?" he demanded,

staring at the junior.
"May I speak to Loder?"

Walker turned his head towards the

Mr. Quelch's amazement—and to Skinner's also. The reply earned Nugent
fifty lines.

After class was dismissed, Mr. Quelch
signed to the junior to remain behind as
he passed his desk. Nugent stopped.

"What is the matter with you this
afternoon, Nugent?" Mr. Quelch asked

"No!" came a growling voice.

Nugent grinned. He knew Loder's
voice, and it did not sound as if the injured prefect was in a good temper.

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"Buzz off!" said Walker, with his

hand on the door.

Nugent gently inserted his boot into

"Just a minute!" he said. "I say, Loder, I want to speak to you on an important matter. You might let me

"Oh, come in if you want to!" growled the prefect.

Nugent passed Walker and went in. Loder was sitting up in bed, propped up with pillows. His face was ghastly pale, and there were thick bandages over his and there were thick bandages over his head, leaving only one eye visible. His look was sick and ghastly, and Nugent could not help feeling sorry even for the bully of the Sixth.

"I say, I'm sorry to see you like this, Loder!" he exclaimed, with such evident sincerity that the bully of the Sixth was placated a little.

"Well, what do you want?" he growled.

growled.
"I want to get the right chap punished for biffing you like that," said Nugent.
"Look here, Loder, there isn't much love "Look here, Loder, there isn't much love lost between us, but you ought to know that everybody is down on a rotten trick like that. It was a beastly, hooligan thing to do!"

"Well, I'm glad you see it in that light, anyway," said Loder. "I thought you young cubs would be chuckling over it."

"Well, you were offside, then," said Nugent. "Only, do you feel quite certain that Harry Wharton did it, Loder?"

The prefect stared at him with his single visible eye.

The prefect stared at min with his single visible eye.

"Certain? Of course!"

"Wharton's told me about it. After you ran into the trees after him, you didn't see him, did you?" Nugent asked.

"It was as black as pitch!"

"Then you couldn't see who, did it?"

"Nu, but it was Wharton."

"No; but it was Wharton.

"Suppose somebody else had been there, waiting for a chance to give you that crack—somebody who knew that Wharton was going to be there, and was deep enough to try and put it on Wharton."

"Oh. rot!"

"What do you think it was done, with?"

"A cricket-bat, I should say. stump wouldn't have been henough." heavy

"But you saw that Wharton hadn't a bat with him?"

"He had one ready there."

"He had one ready there."
"But 'do you think he could have found it so quickly in the dark, even if it was there?" Nugent urged. "You were close behind him."
Loder paused. He had certainly not

thought of that before.

"Oh, it was Wharton right enough!" e said at last. "He ran into the dark, he said at last. to get me there, on purpose, of course!

to get me there, on purpose, of course! There may have been another fellow helping him."

"Still, you didn't see Wharton hit you, and that's something," said Nugent. "I suppose if it wasn't Wharton you'd be glad to have the right fellow found?"

"Yes, of course! But it was Wharton right enough."

"I think it wasn't but I'm sain to

"I think it wasn't; but I'm going to find out," said Nugent. "As for a cricket-bat, I know Wharton sold his bat a couple of weeks ago, and he hasn't one."
"He could easily have taken one from

"Well, we shall see," said Nugent. "We're going to get at the truth, somehow, that's all."

Loder grinned.

"I wish you luck!" he said. "I want to have the right party found, of course. But it was Wharton, right enough. Shut the door after him, Walker."

Nugent quitted the study. He had learned little from seeing Loder, excepting that the Sixth-Former fully believed that his assailant was Wharton. And Loder's firm belief upon that point, of course, gave additional weight to his accusation. Bob Cherry joined Nugent

accusation. Bob Cherry Joined Nugent in the passage.

"Well?" he said. "Bull's keeping an eye on Skinner, as we arranged. Mark Linley is going to relieve him in half an hour. What's the use of shadowing Skinner about the house, Franky? Blessed if I quite like this detective himey."

Blessed if I quite like this detective bizney."
"I don't, either; but we've got to clear Wharton."
"I know. But what's the use of shadowing Skinner?" said Bob.
"Lots, perhaps!" said Frank. "Beb, old man, I tell you we're on the track. I've seen Loder, and he feels sure it was a cricket-bat he was biffed with. You know Wharton sold off his bat two weeks ago. He hasn't one! Now, look here. Loder's had a frightful crack on the head—worse than I imagined. on the head—worse than I imagined. There must be some signs of it left on that bat.

Bob Cherry whistled. "The giddy bloodstains!" he ejacu-

lated. "Yes."

"Well, it's quite likely."

"You "You remember what you thought when Wharton came into the dorm last night, with stains of blood on him," said Nugent in a low voice. "It was from biffing his nose on a tree in the dark. Now, there must have been blood shed when Loder got that crack; and there may have been some signs of it on the chap who did it, or his clothes. Do you understand?"

"You ought to be a giddy Sherlock Holmes, Franky," said Bob Cherry admiringly. "I should never have thought of all that."
"I've got to think of it if Wharton's to

"I've got to think of it if Wharton's to be cleared," said Nugent quietly. "If it was a cricket bat that Loder was biffed was a cricket-bat that Loder was biffed with, we've got to find the cricket-bat. And if the chap who biffed him got any stains on his clothes, we've got to find the clothes. See?"

Bob Cherry nodded.

"I see."

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Nugent Takes the Plunge!

SKINNER, of the Remove, glanced up and down the passage care-lessly, or with assumed careless-ness, and strolled towards the ness, and strolled towards the stairs. John Buli strolled after him. Skinner's study-mates in the Remove passage, Stott and Snoop, were both out in the Close, and Skinner made directly for his study. He went in and locked the door

John Bull paused in the passage. The locked door certainly prevented him from following Skinner any further; and yet the investigators had agreed that Skinner was not to be allowed out of sight. Bull returned to the staircase and whistled.

Frank Nugent and Bob Cherry came

upstairs at once.
"Well?" said Nugent quickly.
"Skinner's locked himself in his

study."
"Oh!"

In a moment the three juniors were outside Skinner's door. From within the study came a sound of crackling. Skinner was lighting a fire.

Nugent tapped on the door.

He heard a low, startled exclamation

within.

"Hallo!" came Skinner's voice faintly.

"Let me in, Skinher!"
"What do you want?" "I want to speak to you." "I'm busy."

"Busy with what—lighting a fire?"
"Mind your own business,"
"Open the door, Skinner"

"I won't!"
"Why don't you let us in?"
"Because I don't choose to."
The three juniors looked at one another.

"He's burning something, or he's going to," whispered Bob Cherry. "And—and we can't prevent him. We can't break into a fellow's study on supplicing." suspicion.

Nugent's eyes gleamed. At that very

Nugent's eyes gleamed. At that very moment the suspected junior was very probably in the act of destroying the only evidence that existed against him. "We're jolly well going to!" he exclaimed. "Bring that stool along, and we'll biff the lock in!"
"I—I say, Nugent—"
"Bring the stool!"
"Oh, all right!"
Nugent's determination carried the day. The heavy oaken stool at the end of the passage was brought along, and the three juniors grasped it, and brought the three juniors grasped it, and brought it with a terrific crash against the lock of the door The door was strong, and the lock was a stout one, but neither was built to resist an attack like that. Crash!

Crack! There was a howl of rage in the study. "Leave my door alone!" shouted

Skinner.
"Go it, before anybody comes!" muttered Nugent.
"Right-ho!"

Crash!
The lock gave an ominous creak. One more smashing blow was all that was wanted to burst it into pieces.
"Hold on!" yelled Skinner. "I'll open the door."
"Better be quick, then."

There was a moment's pause. Then the key grated in the damaged lock, turning with difficulty, and the door was opened. Skinner stood there, white and trembling with rage and perhaps with

"Now, what do you want?" he said, between his teeth.
Frank Nugent looked towards the fire-Frank Nugent looked towards the fire-grate. There was a fire burning, but it was of wood and coal, and there was no trace of any other fuel. But during the attack on the door Skinner had had

ample time to conceal anything he chose.
"What do you want?" cried Skinner shrilly. "How dare you smash in my door in this way? I'll complain to Mr. Quelch!"

"Complain away!" said Nugent. "I dare say I shall have something to say, too. What were you burning?"
"Wood and coal."
"What else?"

"Nothing else."

"Will you let us search the study?" asked Nugent. Skinner stared at him.

Search the study! What for?" "To find what you were going to burn," said Frank.

Skinner burst into a sneering laugh. He was recovering his nerve now.

"What do you think I was going to burn?" he asked scoffingly.

"A cricket-bat, I think—and clothes, workers with bloodstains on them." said

perhaps, with bloodstains on them," said Frank Nugent sternly.

Skinner laughed again, but there was a cracked sound in his laugh. It did not ring true, and the chums of the Remove

could hear that.
"May we search the study?" asked

"May we search."

Bob Cherry.
"No. I'm not going to have my study searched!" exclaimed Skinner savagely.
"If you don't get out at once, I'll complain to Mr. Quelch!"

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## 4 Lord Mauleverer Edits the "Magnet" Library Supplement this Week!

"You can complain. As sure as I be-lieve in Heaven, I believe you're the guilty party," said Frank Nugent party,"

iemniy. "Guilty!" Skinner's voice was shrill id discordant. "Guilty of what, you and discordant.

"Of the attack on Loder last night."
"Oh, you are mad!"
"I'm going to search this place!"
"You are not! I'll call on Mr. Quelch-

'Mr. Quelch is here!" said a quiet voice.
The Form-master stood in the open

The juniors swung round towards him with startled looks. The Form-master's face was very angry. The terrific crashing in the Remove passage had been heard all over the school, and Mr. Quelch had hurried up to see what new mischief his unruly pupils were guilty of. Two or three prefects had followed him, very thoughtfully bringing canes in their

"What is the cause of this disturb-ice?" Mr. Quelch demanded, in stern ance ?"

"They have broken into my study, sir!" Skinner exclaimed shrilly. "They broke in the lock, sir, because I wouldn't let them in."
"Is that two Numerat?"

"Is that true, Nugent?"
"Yes, sir," said Frank unflinchingly. "Then why-

"Then why—"
"Skinner wouldn't let us in, sir."
"I suppose he had a right to keep you out of his study if he wished to do so, Nugent," said Mr. Quelch, frowning.
"I thought they wanted to rag me, sir!" exclaimed Skinner.
"Do you hear, Nugent?"
Frank did not flinch.
"You sir. Skinner was lighting a fire.

"Yes, sir. Skinner was lighting a fire, and we wanted to know what he was going to burn."

Mr. Quelch stared at the junior

blankly. "In the name of goodness, why?" he exclaimed.

"We suspect Skinner, sir."
"Suspect him! Of what?"

"Of having done what Wharton's accused of doing, sir," said Frank firmly. The Form-master gave a violent start.

"Nugent, are you serious?"
"Quite serious, sir."
"You suspect Skinner of having made that brutal attack upon Loder last night?"

"Yes, sir."
"He'd suspect anybody to get Wharton cleared, sir!" exclaimed Skinner, who was white to the lips now. "He'd lie about anybody for the sake of his rotten chum."

Silence, Skinner! I do not believe that of Nugent for a moment," said Mr. Quelch sharply. "Nugent, you must have some grounds for this astounding statement."

I have, sir." "What are they?"

Nugent hesitated a moment. Satisfactory as the grounds of suspicion appeared to him, he felt that they would be filmsy, shadowy, in the eyes of the Form-master.

Skinner burst into a shrill, scoffing

He has nothing to say now, sir!" he exclaimed.

"Silence! I am waiting to hear you, Nugent." "Very well, sir. I suspect Skinner. I believe that he hit Loder with that bat, and that he lighted the fire here to burn the bat, and perhaps some clothing with bloodstains on it. He refuses to have his study searched. I believe he has enough evidence hidden here to convict him, if the place were searched. If you will THE PORULAR.—No. 125. order the study to be searched, sir, that will settle the point."

Mr. Quelch looked sharply at Nugent,

and then at Skinner.

"Have you any objection to a search of the study, Skinner?" he asked.

"Not if you order it, sir," he said.
"Not if you order it, sir," he said.
"You hear that, Nugent?"
Nugent turned pale.

His brain almost swam at the thought that he was upon the wrong track after all—that he had suspected Skinner un-justly, and that it was merely Skinner's well-known obstinacy and ill-nature that had given some colour to the suspicions against him. Had he really made such a terrible mistake? If it proved to be so, the consequences would be serious for himself—such an accusation as that he had made against Skinner could not be lightly made. For a moment Nugent felt sick.

But he braced himself. Whatever risk he ran, it was for the honour of his chum—and he must not falter.

Besides, was not Skinner bluffing? Doubtless he guessed that Mr. Quelch would order a search in any case; and he was simply bluffing in appearing to invite one. At all events, there was only one course for Nugent to take.

"Let the study be searched, sir. I ask it in fairness to Wharton."

Mr. Quelch nodded.

Mr. Quelen nodged.
"Very well. Not a stone shall be left
unturned, Nugent, in getting at the truth
of this matter; but if you have made a
reckless and unfounded accusation against this boy, I warn you that the consequences will be severe for you."

Nugent bowed his head.
"I'm ready to face the consequences, sir, whatever they are," he said firmly.
"Very well, the study shall be searched."

Mr. Quelch called in Wingate and North, the two prefects who were look-ing in at the door. The Sixth-Formers entered

"Will you oblige me by searching the study?" he said. "Skinner is suspected of having hidden there a cricket-bat and some articles of clothing. In justice to Skinner, if for that alone, the search should be made."
"Certainly, sir!" said Wingate.

And the search began.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. The Search!

with pale cheeks.

RANK NUGENT stood silent.

He had made the plunge now. He had a feeling, which amounted to a moral certainty, that Skinner was guilty, and that proofs of his guilt could be obtained by searching Yet when he came to look at for them. it dispassionately, as others must look at it, he realised that he had made a plunge in the dark. If proofs were not found, he, Frank Nugent, would be held up to public scorn as a slanderer—a reckless and unscrupulous slanderer. That was what it amounted to. For if no proofs were found it would show that his accusation was hasty and unjust. And what right had he, or anyone else, to make hasty and unjust accusations, involving the honour of a schoolfellow? Frank realised very clearly that he was treading out thin ice; that search must end in the condemnation of Skinner or in his own disgrace. There was no middle course. His heart was beating

painfully; but he thought of his chum in the locked room, and set his lips. Wingate and North searched carefully.

The Removites stood and watched them at work. Outside, in the passage, a crowd gradually collected. Mr. Quelch had the study door closed, but the fellows outside knew very well what was going on. Skinner's study was being searched!

Why?
The reason was soon guessed, or whispered. There was a buzz of excitement in the Remove passage. Skinner was suspected of having attacked Loder, the offence for which Harry Wharton was condemned, and his room was being searched for evidence.

Nugent heard many of the comments passed in the passage, and his brow grew

very troubled.

The whole school knew of the matter

There was no keeping it in—Skinner's guilt or Nugent's slander would be blazoned forth to the whole of Grey-

If Nugent was wrong, he could not stay at the school after that. It would be impossible. He would have to go forth with his expelled chum—both in disgrace.

Bob Cherry and Bull and Linley were silent. In the faces of Bob and John Bull, at least, Nugent could read the thought that he had been too hasty. Would the search never end?

Could they discover nothing? Skinner was standing by the window, with his back to the panes, and a sneering smile on his face, his hands in his trousers pockets.

Evidently he expected nothing to come of the search of the study.

Wingate and North paused at last, and looked towards Mr. Quelch. They had turned out the study pretty thoroughly. North had even raked up chimney, and brought down a shower of soot. He brought down nothing else-After all, the articles that were supposed to be hidden were not small-a cricketbat, and a boy's clothes, or some articles of clothing. They could not be thrust into any little nook. And the two prefects had looked into every nook, turned everything out—and the Formmaster and the juniors had been watching closely all the time. It seemed impossible—it was impossible—that anything had been missed.

Nugent was sick at heart. "I think we have finished think we have finished now, sir," said Wingate, in his quiet tones.

The Remove-master nodded.
"I think you are right," he said.
"The room has been thoroughly examined, and there is no trace of the articles alleged to have been concealed. Have you anything more to say, Nugent?"

Nugent licked his dry lips.
"Yes, sir," he said.
"What have you to say?"
"Where 'is Skinner's cricket-bat?"
said Frank desperately. "It doesn't seem to be here.

"Rats!" exclaimed Bob Cherry promptly. "I remember Smith minor offering you four bob for it, and you wouldn't sell." "I haven't one, sir," said Skinner.

I sold it to a pedlar afterwards, for more than that—six shillings, I believe or six-and-six," said Skinner, with said Skinner, with

perfect calmness.

Nugent was defeated again. Quelch's eyes were upon him, hard and stern. The Remove boys had often com-pared Mr. Quelch's eyes to gimlets, so keen and piercing were they. Never had they seemed so much like gimlets as they did to the unfortunate Nugent at the present moment.
"Well, Nugent," said Mr. Quelch, and

### "The Lad from the Lower Deck!" New Naval Serial in the "Boys' Herald!" 5

his voice was like iron, "I am going to give you every possible chance of proving your accusation. Have you anything

more to say?"

"Yes, sir. If Skinner attacked Loder last night—and I believe he did—there should be some stains of blood on the clothes he wore."

Skinner started.

"I think most likely he put his clothes on outside his nightshirt," went on Nugent. "He wouldn't take the trouble to put on shirt and collar. If we turn out at night for anything, we generally do that. Can Skinner's nightshirt be examined to see if there is any trace of blood on the sleeves, and his jacket also?"

Skinner turned white as death. "Certainly," said Mr. Quel said Mr. Quelch; to corner this young scoundrel, who had an answer ready for everything? The fact that the shirt was missing changed Nugent's strong suspicion into a certainty. He knew now that he was right.

But how was he to prove it?

Mr. Quelch looked puzzled. Skinner's reply was unexpected, and yet it was perfectly reasonable. If Nugent had intended to trump up that charge against him, his first step would have been to hide the shirt.

But Skinner's face was like chalk now. He knew that he, as well as Nugent, was upon very thin ice.
"Have you anything else to say, Nugent?"

Frank was desperately silent.
What could he say?

His very evidence was turned against

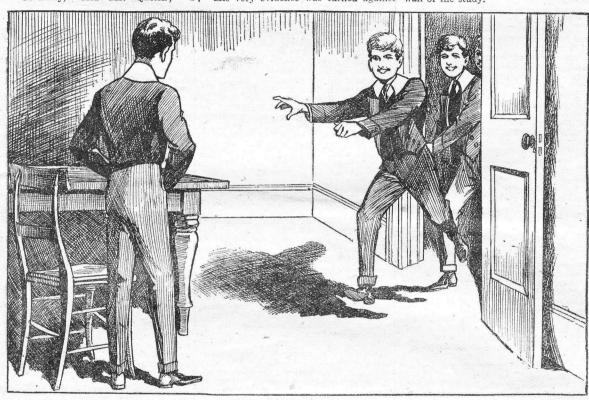
"There's thick ivy there, sir," exclaimed Nugent hurriedly. "And a cord could be tied there to hold a bundle. And now I think of it, I heard a creak when I was biffing at the study door. It was Skinner shutting the window. Look—look at his face, sir!"

Mr. Quelch glanced at Skinner.
The wretched boy seemed about to faint.

If ever guilt was "writ large" in a human face, it was written in Skinner's at that moment. Mr. Quelch gave him one look, and then turned to North.

"Look in the ivy outside the window,"

he said.
"Yes, sir."
North opened the window. Skinner gave a low moan, and reeled against the wall of the study.



There was a grating of a key being turned in the lock. The door was flung open, and Nugent, followed by the rest of the Co., rushed in. "Hurrah! Come out of this! You are innocent! The real culprit has just confessed! You are free now!" gasped Nugent. (See Chapter 4.)

think this is verging on the farcical now, Nugent; but you shall have every chance, for if you have wronged Skinner, you will be asked to leave Greyfriars. I will write a message to Mrs. Kebble to

do as you wish."
The message The message was written, and despatched by one of the juniors in the passage. They waited for a reply. In five minutes the fag returned with a written note, which Mr. Quelch opened. He elevated his eyebrows in surprise as he read.

His eyes turned upon Skinner for the

His eyes turned upon Skinner for the first time with keen suspicion in them.

"Skinner!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir!"

"Mrs. Kebble says that a new night-shirt has been handed out for you, as the one you had has disappeared."

"Oh!" murmured Nugent.

Skinner's teeth clicked for a moment.

"I don't know about that, sir. If it is gone, I suppose Nugent has taken it and hidden it, so as to be able to trump and hidden it, so as to be able to trump up this rotten charge against me."

Nugent bit his lip hard. How was he

himself, and made into proof of a conspiracy against Skinner. What was he to say?

Skinner's face did not regain its colour, but a grin of malicious triumph stole over it

But Skinner triumphed too soon!

Frank's glance was roving desperately round the study. Suddenly it struck him, with the keenness of a flash that Skinner had been standing before the window all the time, and had not shifted his position once. Why? Surely his natural anxiety as to the search should have made him move, if only to follow the motions of the searchers. But he had not stirred.

Nugent made a step forward,

"The window!" he cried.

"What do you mean, Nugent—the window?" said Mr. Quelch testily.

It has not been searched sir-outside the window." "Nonsense! You can see the window-

sill through the glass—"
"But not under the window, sir."
"Come, come!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. At the Eleventh Hour!

ORTH leaned out of the study window, and scanned the ivy below. He was heard to utter a low exclamation.

"Have you found anything, North?" asked Mr. Quelch, in a quiet voice.
"Yes, sir."

"What is it?"

"There is a cord tied to the ivy, sir, and it seems to be supporting a weight. Whatever it is, is hidden in the ivy underneath. I am pulling it up."
"Very good."

North pulled on the cord. The bundle was jammed in thick, leafy ivy, and it came out with a jerk. North drew it in at the window. Something was wrapped round several articles, and from the role of the bundle pretyided the came the end of the bundle protruded the cane handle of a cricket-bat,

There was a general exclamation in the

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob herry. "There's the bat!" In I THE POPULAR.—No. 125. Cherry.

Nugent set his teeth. Had he succeeded at last? Was there some possible twist or turn by which Skinner could escape this terrible evidence?

"Open the bundle," said Mr. Quelch.

It was opened. A cricket-bat and a nightshirt were disclosed to view, as well as a folded Eton jacket. A newspaper had been wrapped round them and tied

with string.

Mr. Quelch picked up the articles one by one. On the wristbands of the nightshit were red dull stains, and on the cuffs the Ptop jacket the same. There was of the Eton jacket the same. To no doubt what the stains were.

There was a deep, dull red on the cricket bat, too, and deep scrapings on the wood, as if it had been cleaned to remove the stains at first before its owner decided to destroy it.

Every eye was turned upon Skinner. "Well, Skinner?" said Mr. Quelch. The boy stared at the tell-tale bundle, and his tongue was cleaving to the roof

of his mouth.

"Have you anything to say, Skinner?"
asked the Remove-master. "Nugent
appears to have made out his charge.
How do you account for these articles,
Skinner?"

"His name is on the shirt, sir," said

"His name is on the shirt, sir," said North.

"They're mine, I—I suppose, sir," muttered Skinner. "Nugent put them there, of course, so as to bear out what he said."

"It's Skinner's bat, sir," said Bob Cherry. "His initials are on it; and, besides, I know the bat perfectly well. I saw Skinner buy it in Friardale."

"That is your bat, Skinner?"

"Nugent put it there, sir."

Mr. Quelch's brow grew very stern.

"That is your bat. Only ten minutes ago, Skinner, you told me that you had sold your bat to a pedlar for six shillings, or six shillings and sixpence, you did not remember which."

Skinner staggered away.

Skinner staggered away.

There was a dead silence in the study.

The wretched junior knew now that there was no hope. Out of his own mouth he was condemned.

Your guilt is perfectly clear," said the Remove-master sternly.

Then Skinner collapsed.
His face worked, and he burst into

"Oh, sir, I—I never meant to hurt him so much!" he groaned. "He—he had been bullying me, and he licked me because I wouldn't fag for him—though fagging's been abolished for the Remove, sir. He was a brute. Anybody will tell vou what a brute he was. I waited for

a prefect with so dangerous a weapon as a cricket-bat!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.
"He—he had bullied me——"

"He—ne had bunied me—"
"And you struck Loder down—"
"I didn't mean to hit him so hard,
sir. I—I just meant to bowl him over,
and make a mark or so!" groaned
Skinner. "I didn't expect him to be Skinner. "I didn't expect him to be stunned. When he went down in a heap stunned. When he went down in a heap I was horribly scared, and I ran. And—and you nearly caught me, sir, as I came in. And I was frightened to death, as I couldn't get into the dormitory, the other fellows being still awake. Twe had an awful time since, sir!"

"And you allowed the blame to fall upon Wharton—"
"I—I—" Skinner groaned. "I was afraid of being expelled, sir—"
"You rotten liar!" broke out Nugent angrily. "You tried to put it on Wharton because you hate him, as much

Wharton because you hate him, as much as anything else. You've been speaking against him all the time!"

Skinner did not reply. Mr. Quelch drew a deep breath.

Mr. Quelch drew a deep breath.

"I will not give you my opinion of the baseness of your conduct, Skinner," he said. "You may follow me to the Head, to whom you will repeat the confession you have just made. Nugent, here is the key of Wharton's room. Go at once, and release him, and tell him that Skinner has confessed."

Nugent's face brightened.

"Yes, rather, sir!"

He hurried out of the study with the

"Yes, rather, sir!"

He hurried out of the study with the key. Bob Cherry and a crowd of juniors followed him. The news went over the school like wildfire. Skinner was guilty! Skinner had confessed! Wharton was innocent! Fellows gathered round to watch Skinner following Mr. Quelch to the Heal's style Skinner to the Heal's style Skinner. watch Skinner following Mr. Quetch to the Head's study. Skinner was pale as death, and he walked with his eyes on the floor. Many of the juniors felt sorry for him; he had taken a cowardly and cruel revenge upon Loder, but Loder had cruelly provoked him in the first place. It was his base attempt to shift the guilt upon an innocent boy that met with the strongest condemnation.

Nugent had no further thoughts for Skinner. He raced downstairs, and along the passage to Harry Wharton's prison, as if he were on the cinder-path. After him came a whooping, trampling crowd of juniors. Everyone was anxious to be account to the record the feat to break the record the process. to be among the first to break the news to Wharton.

Harry Wharton was pacing the narrow

him under the trees with the bat. I—I limits of his prison with a gloomy brow, knew it was no good trying to fight a prefect, but I wanted to pay him out." when he heard the terrific uproar in the passage outside. He paused in his walk, and turned towards the door.

There was the grating of a key being inserted in the lock—a click as it turned.

Wharton The door was flung open. Wharton expected to see Gosling with his teabut it was Frank Nugent who rushed in—Frank, wildly excited, and gasping for breath. After him came a wildly whooping crowd. "Hurrah!"

"It's all right!" "Come out of this!"
"Hurrah!"

Wharton stared at them blankly. "What on earth—" he began. "You're innocent!" shrieked shrieked Bob Cherry.

I know I am, ass-"I mean, it's proved-"It was Skinner—"He's confessed!"

Wharton gasped.

"Yes, rather! He was bowled out, you see—we bowled him out, and he's had to own up!" shouted Nugent. "Do you understand?"

understand?"

Wharton turned pale, and gasped for breath. It was so sudden, and so joyful, that it almost overcame him.

"Nugent found him out," said Bob Cherry. "Blessed if he didn't stek to the trail like a giddy bloodhound! We had our doubts all the time—but Nugent never had! He stuck to him like—like glue, and bowled him out."

"Oh, Frank, old man—" murmured Wharton.

Wharton.

"Come out of this," said Frank, linking arms with his chum, "Come out!

ing arms with his chum. "Come out! You're going to have tea in the study. Isn't it ripping?"
"Yes, it's ripping! I sha'n't forget this, Franky!"
"Oh, that's all right! I did have a beast of a time, though," said Nugent.
"If Skinner had been able to bluff it theoryth I shall have have in so wifeld. through, I should have been in an awful hole. But all's well that ends well. Everything in the garden's lovely now.

And the Removites cheered loudly as they marched Harry Wharton in triumph out of the room where he had been imprisoned.
"Hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

THE END.

(Look out for another splendid long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co.'s early days at Greyfriars in next week's issue.)

# YOU MUST READ

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A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

## By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Talk on the Telephone!

"Come in!" said Mr. Bootles. The master of the Fourth Form at Rookwood was finishing his morning paper in his study. It was nearly time for lessons.

The door opened, and Erroll of the

Fourth came in.

Mr. Bootles bllnked at him over his spectacles. The handsome face of the new junior at Rookwood was very grave.

"Well, what is it, Erroll?"

"May I ask you a favour, sir?" said

Erroll hesitatingly.
"Certainly, my boy!"

Mr. Bootles blinked at him over his Erroll had not been long at Rookwood, but the Form-master had taken a liking to him, as most of the fellows had. Jimmy Silver & Co. of the Fourth were his firm friends, and he had no enemy in the school but Mornington, the dandy of the Fourth.

"May I use your telephone, sir?"

"Ahem! If there is any necessity for you to use the telephone, Erroll, you may certainly do so. But—"
"I should like to speak to my father, sir!"

Bootles regarded him rather Mr.

curiously.

"I understood that Captain Erroll had returned to British Honduras, my boy!

"He is still in London, sir!"

"He is still in London, sir!"
"Ah, you wish to bid him a last goodbye! Is that it?" said Mr. Bootles, with a benignant smile. "My dear lad, I should certainly place no difficulty in your way. I have a very great respect for Captain Erroll, who distinguished himself so greatly at the Front. You may certainly use the telephone, Erroll, and you may wait till you get your call if there is any delay." if there is any delay."
"Thank you, sir!" said Erroll grate-

fully.
"That's all right, Erroll! Come to the Form-room as soon as you have spoken to your father."
"Yes, sir!"
Mr. Bootles glanced at his watch, laid

down his newspaper, and quitted the

Erroll stepped towards the telephone. It was a trunk-call he wanted, to speak It was a trunk-call he wanted, to speak to his father in London, and there was likely to be delay in getting it. Mr. Bootles had benevolently given him permission to wait, under the impression that he desired to speak once more to Captain Erroll before the latter started his voyage.

There was a faint flush in Erroll's Gentleman Jim's voice at last.

cheeks as he took up the receiver. He had not deceived the Form-master, but he had certainly allowed Mr. Bootles to deceive himself.
"Number, please?"
"Trunks."

There was a long pause, and then a feminine voice demanded the number. Erroll gave it, and put up the receiver.

He went to the window, and stood looking out into the quadrangle while he waited for "Trunks" to ring him up. The sunshine of early summer fell

brightly into the old quadrangle of Rookwood. Erroll

stood looking out,

gloomy brow.

He was looking his last on Rookwood. That day was to be his last at the old school, and his heart was heavy with the thought of it.

Buzzzzz!

He was through at last, and he crossed quickly to the telephone, and took up

He gave the number again, and after a minute or so a cool, clear voice came through.

"Hallo!"

"Hallo!"
"Laptain Erroll. Who is that?"
"Captain Erroll. Who is that?"
"It is I, father—Kit!"
"I thought so. What are you phoning for?"
"I have news for you."
"Mind how you talk. You urstand?" What are you tele-

You under-

stand?".
"I understand. But I must ten you,
father. I am leaving Rookwood tofather. I am day!"
"Wha-a-at!"

"I suppose I shall find you when I

return?"

"What do you mean, Kit? You are not to return! You are not to leave Rookwood. Are you out of your senses?"

senses?"
"I have no choice, father!" Erroll's voice was calm and steady. "You remember our talk at the woodman's hut yesterday, in Coombe Wood?".
"Yes, yes!"

"Yes, yes!"
"It was overheard!"
"By gad! And by whom?"
"Mornington of the Fourth. I mentioned him to you—my enemy!"

"Was he spying on you, then?" Yes."

"And he knows "Everything!"

An oath was audible on the telephone. The news came as a shock to Gentleman Jim, the cracksman. Erroll smiled bitterly.
"He has betrayed you?" went on

"Not yet. He has promised to say nothing if I leave Rookwood to-day without any fuss. I have agreed. After lessons I shall go out as if for a walk, and shall not return to the school."

"Nothing has been said, then, so for?"

"Nothing as yet."
"Then the secret is safe till after lessons?"
"Yes." Yes."

"Yes."
"Hang on a moment, Kit. I must think this over."
"Yes, father."
The schoolboy waited. Far away in London, Gentleman Jim, the cracksman, was thinking hard. It was a sudden blow to all his plans. The cracksman had imposed himself upon the Head of blow to all his plans. The cracksman had imposed himself upon the Head of Rookwood as "Captain Erroll." He had placed Kit in the Fourth Form at Rookwood without a hitch. And all his plans were thrown into disarray by the enmity of a junior schoolboy. Mornington, the dandy of Rookwood, had been too much for Gentleman Jim, the cracksman

man. "Kit!" came the cracksman's voice at

last. "Yes, father!" said Erroll dully. "You are sure that Mornington has "Quite sure. I should have heard of it fast enough if he had."

"Yes, yes, that is true. Do not leave Rookwood until you hear from me again."
"But—"

"Who is this Mornington? Tell me all you know about him. It is import-

"He is the richest fellow at Rookwood, a good deal of a bounder. I think he is an orphan. His guardian is his uncle, Sir Rupert Stacpoole, one of the governors of Rookwood. That is all I know of him."
"Codd. Doos his guardian come to

"Good! Does his guardian come to see him sometimes?"
"I believe so."
"What telephone are you using?"

"My Form-master's. Mr. Bootles thinks I wanted to say good-bye to you before you sailed."

A chuckle was audible on the wires.

"That was very cute, Kit. Give me the number."

"You cannot telephone to me again,

father—"
"Give me the number!"

Erroll gave it.
"Good! Leave the matter to me,
Kit. Lucky you let me know. Mind,
you are not to leave Rookwood. There will be time to do that when the game THE POPULAR.—No. 125...

LEES POPULARIENCE 125.

"Good-bye, Kit! Stick it out!"

" Father-There was no reply. Gentleman Jim had rung off. Erroll, with a sigh, put up the receiver. With a gloomy brow he made his way to the Fourth-Form room, and took his place in the class.

> THE SECOND CHAPTER. The Sword of Damocles!

IMMY SILVER clapped Erroll on the back as the Fourth Form came

out after morning lessons.
"Come along to the cricket, old scout!" said Jimmy cheerily. "I want you to give me some bowling before dinner."

Erroll smiled faintly. He was a keen cricketer, but cricket

was not much in his mind just then.
"What are you scowling about?"
asked Lovell

asked Lovell

"Was I scowling?"

"Well, frowning!" said Lovell, laughing. "You've been at it all the morning. What's the merry trouble?"

"And what made you so late for lessons?" asked Raby. "I thought Bootles was going to drop on you when you came in half an hour late. But he didn't."

"I had leave," said Erroll. "I had been telephoning to my father."

"Oh! Hasn't Captain Erroll started for home yet, then?"

"Well, he couldn't have, if Erroll's been 'phoning to him this morning," said Newcome.

Erroll smiled faintly. He wondered,

Erroll smiled faintly. He wondered, Erroll smiled faintly. He wondered, for a moment, what the cheery Co. would have thought if they could have known what had been said over the wires. The thought brought a flush to his cheeks. After all, if he had to leave Rookwood, it would be an end to deception. tion. There was solace in that.
"Nothing wrong with your pater, is there, Erroll?" asked Jimmy.

"Oh, no! Why?"
"You've been looking so jolly serious all the morning, I thought something might be wrong. If there's nothing the matter, get that scowl off your chivyy and come down to the nets."

And Erroll went down to Little Side

And Erroll went down to Little Side with the Fistical Four.
"Awfully thick, that gang!" remarked Townsend to Mornington as they passed. "I hear that Erroll's name's down for the St. Jim's match."
Mornington smiled sarcastically.
"Erroll won't play for Rookwood

"Erroll won't play for Rookwood against St. Jim's!" he said.
"Two to one he does—in quids!" said

Townsend .

Mornington laughed.

"I should be robbin' you," he said.
"Erroll won't play for Rookwood again; and you can bet your hat on that,
Towny!"

"I don't see what you're drivin' at," said Townsend, puzzled. "Jimmy Silver selected him for the Junior Eleven. I know that!"

"You're talkin' out of your hat, Morny!" said Topham. "Erroll's safe for the St. Jim's match!" "I say, Morny!" Tubby Muffin of the Fourth rolled up. "Bootles wants

you!"

"Oh, bother Bootles!" growled Mornington. "What's wrong now?"

Tubby grinned .
"'Tain't a licking. He's been rung
up by your guardian, old Stacpoole, and he's got a message for you. He told me to tell you so."

Mornington yawned .
"By gad! Is my gue
The Popular.—No. 125. guardian comin'

is up. And it is not up yet by long down here?" he said. "That means chalks!" that I sha'n't be able to get out after do?" the said of the I sha'n't be able to get out after lessons to-day, you fellows!" "I'll tell 'em at the Bird-in-Hand that

you're sorry you can't come," grinned

Townsend. "Oh, rats!"

"Oh, rats!"
Mornington looked decidedly cross as
Mr. Rootles' study. Morny's he went to Mr. Bootles' study. Morny's uncle was a most indulgent guardian, and in most matters Morny's wishes were law to him. But the dutiful nephew regarded the kind old gentleman as a good deal of a bore, and he was not at all enthusiastic about receiving a visit from him. Morny had his own engagements after lessons—engagements such as he could not quite have explained even to the most indulgent of guardians. He tapped at Mr. Bootles' door and entered, and the Form-master looked up.

"Ah! You may come in, Mornington. I have just received a telephone call from your uncle, Sir Rupert Stacpoole."

"Yes, sir."

"Sir Rupert telephoned from the Royal George Hotel in Latcham. He is in Latcham at present, and he wishes you to go and dine with him there. He has asked me to excuse you from lessons for the afternoon." Mr. Bootles looked rather serious. "I did not see my way to decline, Mornington, so you may go to Latcham to meet your guardian.

Mornington brightened up consider-

He was not "keen" on lessons, not by any means. The prospect of that sunny afternoon out of the Form-room was distinctly attractive.

"Thank you, sir!"
"That is all, Mornington."

"May I take a friend with me, sir?"

"You may not, Mornington. Sir Rupert Stacpoole stated that he wished you to come by yourself. In any case, Mornington, I could not give your riends permission to miss lessons for no reason at all."

"Very well, sir."

Mornington left the study.

"Licked?" asked Townsend, as the

Nuts of Rookwood met him at the end of the passage.

"No, ass! I've got to go over to Latcham this afternoon. My uncle's there, and he wants to see me. Can't take a chap with me, though!"

"Rotten favouritism!" growled Higgs of the Fourth.

Mornington laughed.

"Well, nobody'll ever make a favourite of you, Higgs!" he remarked. And he walked on.

The juniors went in to dinner, and Mornington sauntered down to the gates, and started for Coombe to take the local train to Latcham.

Grand Long Detective Tales, featuring World's Famous Detective Sexton Blake. and many other popular characters in the

GET A'COPY TO-DAY.  THE THIRD CHAPTER. Kidnapped!

HERE was no thought of danger in Mornington's mind when he sauntered away from the gates of Rookwood that afternoon.

He was in a cheery humour. An afternoon away from lessons was agreeable enough, even if coupled with spending the holiday in the company of that somewhat boresome old gentleman,

Sir Rupert Stacpoole.

Mornington had allowed himself plenty of time to catch the local train to Latcham, and he sauntered in a leisurely way down the leafy lane to

Near the cross-roads, where the lane turned off to Bagshot, a cart was stand-ing, the horse with a nosebag on. The carter was sitting on the shaft, smoking

a pipe.

Mornington glanced at him carelessly

The carter wore corduroy trousers and a smock and a slouched hat, and looked like any other of the villagers Morninghad seen often enough about ton Coombe.

His face was decidedly dirty, and his beard thick and shaggy. He seemed half asleep as he sat on the shaft, smoking lazily, but from under his brows his eyes were fixed on the Coombe road, and a gleam came into them as the handsome, well-dressed junior came along from the direction of Rookwood.

He detached himself from the shaft. removed the pipe from his mouth, and called to Mornington.
"Excuse me. You be from Rookwood,

"Yes," said Mornington, glancing at the man again. He did not see why the carter should be interested in that

circumstance.
"P'r'aps you know Master Mornington

of Rookwood School, sir?"
The Classical junior looked at him harder.

"I am Mornington," he said.

"Then you're the young gent I've got a message for!"

"Oh! A message for me?" said Mornington, wondering whether Joey Hook, ington, wondering whether too, the bookmaker, had chosen this rough fellow as a messenger. "Well, I'm Mornington. Go ahead, my man! What fellow as a messenger. "Well Mornington. Go ahead, my man!

is it?"

The man glanced up and down the lane was lonely enough, and there was no one in sight.

Then he approached Mornington, who

watched him curiously.
"'Ere you are, sir, 'ere's the letter what was give to me," said the carter, holding out a grubby hand with an envelope in it.

Mornington carelessly stretched out his

To his amazement, the carter, instead of handing him the letter, grasped his wrist in a grip that was like iron.

He uttered a whistle at the same moment.

There was a rustle in the trees by the road, and a man ran out behind Mornington.

The dandy of the Fourth, crimson with anger at the rude grasp laid upon him, struggled savagely, seeking to wrench his hand away.

nand away.

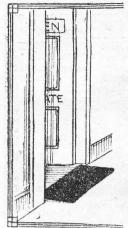
"You impertinent scoundrel!" he shouted furiously. "How dare you lay hands on me! Let me go! Are you drunk, or mad?"

"Quick, Badger!" panted the carter.

As Mornington struggled with him, a strong grasp was laid upon him from behind.

behind. Struggling violently, the Rookwood

junior was swept off the ground, and, in (Continued on page 3.)

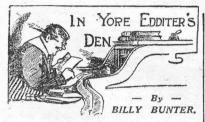


# BILLY BUNTER'S WFFKIYI

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.



My Deer Reeders,—By every post I reserve sholes and sholes of letters, which furnish abundant proof that my wunderful "Weekly" is more eagerly sort after than ever!

My "Speshul Numbers" have proved a sauce of speshul attrackshun, and have been devoured with rellish by my millyuns of boy and girl chums.

devotred with relish by my millyuns or boy and girl chums.

Torking about speshul numbers, one of my Manchester reeders has maid a very brillyunt aud brainy suggestion. He says: "Why not have a Billy Bunter's Benefit Number, the whole of the profits to go to the edditer?"

I thort this was a reelly ripping idear, and I forwarded it on to the edditer of the "Poplar," who replide that their was nuthing doing. "If you have a benefit," he wrote, "everybody will be wanting benefits. Your minor, and Baggy Trimble, and Fatty Wynn, to say nothing of Tubby Muffin, will be clamouring for special benefit numbers; and then the 'Greyfriars Herald' staff will get up on its hind legs and claim the same privilege. So I am afraid, Billy, that your Manchester reader's request must be put on the shelf." 

Now, isn't that a shame? I mite have maid kwids and kwids out of a speshul bennyfit number, and I should rank among the welthlest felloes in the Remove.

But a lass! It is not to be. The edditer of the "Poplar" has spoken, and his wurds are like unto the laws of the Swedes and Nasturshums.

I felt so bitterly disappoynted at first that I neerly resined from my post. And then I reelized the danger of such a policy, for Baggy Trimble or Tubby Muffin or Fatty Wynn wood be only too keen to step into my shooze. And I'm sertain that not one of them could edit a paper so well as yore stout pal, W. G. B.

Meenwile, my "Weekly" kontinews to flurrish, and new readers are roped in every week. Trussed the British' boy to no what's good for him in the way of fickshun.

My only regrett is that I haven't the space to reply to my numerous korrespondents. I can't reply threw the post bekawse none of the meen beests in the Remove will lend me any stamps; and I karn't reply threw the paper, owing to the konsiderations of space a-4-menshuned.

Still, I will ask every reeder who has ritten to me to axxept my best thanks and good wishes. May there shaddoes never grow less, as the saying goes!

This is not a speshul number, but it's a jolly good one, as you will all agree. Why? Bekawse the ingredients have been prepared, not by sum inegesperienced jernalist, but by

not by sum ineggsperienced jernalist, but by



FLASHES FROM

FAG-LAND! By SAMMY BUNTER.

Hear we are agane, deer reeders—all alive and kicking, like the tadpoles which Dicky Nugent fished out of the duckpond yesterday.

Torking about fishing for tadpoles, I'm a bit of an angler myself. I fished for three hours from the jetty at Pegg on the last j-hollerday, and then discoverred that I hadn't bated my line! However, I soon caught a fat worm (I don't meen my majer), and I brought back to Greyfriars with me a small codfish, a cupple of spratts, and a hundredweight of seaweed!

Whilst on the subjick of fish, I must tell you all about the shocking axxident that hefell young Tubb. He was having supper at Gatty's Fish and Oyster Bar, when sumboddy stuck a fish-fork in his foot. Poor

Tubb's in the sanny now, suffering from toemane poysoning!

Gatty's Bar is in the fags' Kommon-room, of corse. I nevver patternize it myself, bekawse it's too eggspensive, and the Dover souls seem to have no boddy in them. You karn't get sufficient at Gatty's Bar to sattisfy a small sparro!

"Always katch yore own fish"—that's my mottoe. And do yore own boyling, baking, and roasting. Then you can always be sure of getting niee, fresh fish—not fish that's as old as Fisher T. of the Remove!

By the way, why do peeple use that silly eggspression, "A rod in pickle"? I soaked my fishing-rod in musterd pickles for 24 hours, but it didn't make it any better. In fackt, it was in an awful pickle!

Then their's anuther stupid eggspression that peeple use. They tork about "a nice kettle of fish." Well, I put a lot of fish in a kettle, and they took hours to boil! And when they were dun, they didn't taste at all nice! You mite just as well say "A nice tee-pot of fish!" Bar! Such eggspressions are heaplessly out of plaice! are hopelessly out of plaice!

- THE -SECRET OF SUCCESS!

By BILLY BUNTER.

Translated into King's English and versified by Dick Penfold.



worked as a kid (I shall never forget) in the "Courtfield, Wapshot, & Pegg Gazette."

I scrubbed the floor of the editor's den, And many fine articles fell from my pen. I worked so well they rewarded me By giving me a paper of my own,

I corrected the proofs, and I set the And I polished the bowl of the editor's

vou see

pipe. reported the weddings, and fetes, and

things, sat down to dinner with mayors and kings.

I sat down to dinner so frequently That I turned the scales at fourteenthree!

When our "rag" came out on a Friday night

The local people went mad with delight. They read the articles penned by me, And they chanted the praises of W.G.B.!

I wrote and spelt so accurately That now I have a paper of my own, you see!

Now, journalists all, whoever you may be, .

If you want to climb to the top of the

you fain would become a successful "chief,"

Just take my tip, and you'll never come take my top, and to grief!
Simply model yourselves, you fellows, on ME,
And you'll all become editors-inchief, you see!
THE POPULAR.—No. 125.



WAS rolling along Wayland High Street, in company with Figgins, Kerr, and Gussy, when Lowther of the Shell bore down upon us on his bicycle. Figgins sang out to the cyclist. "Cheero, Monty!" Instead of returning the cheery salutation, Lowther jumped off his machine, and turned to us with an unusually grave expression. "Rotten luck about poor eld Taggles isn't.

"Rotten luck about poor old Taggles, isn't

te?" he said.

"Eh? What's w'ong with Taggles, deah boy?" asked Gussy.

"He's lost his leg," said Lowther solemnly.

"What!"

We stared in amazement at the humorist of the Shell. But for once in a way Lowther was not laughing. Indeed, it looked as if he might start blubbing at any moment.

"Poor old Taggles!" he muttered, in broken accents.

"But—but when did this awful accident happen—if it did happen?" asked Figgins. He could not bring himself to believe that Taggles, the porter, had really lost a limb.

"Only an hour ago," said Lowther. "I don't know what you're grinning at, Kerr. It's a serious thing for a man of Taggy's age to lose a leg."

"How did he lose it?" asked Kerr. "I suppose you've been pulling his leg to such an extent that you pulled it off?"

"Don't jest on such a serious subject," said Lowther reproachfully

"Do you mean to tell us—honour bright—that Taggles has lost his leg?" exclaimed

"Honour bright!" was the solemn reply.

Kerr grew suddenly grave. And Figgins and Gussy looked quite distressed.

"What a dweadfully twagic thing!" sald Gussy. "Have you any idea how it happened, Lowthah?"

"The kitchen cat was responsible, I be-lieve," was the reply.

The light of understanding dawned upon

The light of understanding Gussy.

"Bai Jove!" he ejaculated. "I think I know how it happened, deah boys. I was weadin' an article in the papah the othah day about vicious cats. A cat-bite is often just as dangewous as a dog-bite. Taggles has doubtless been badly bitten, an' his leg became poisoned an' had to be amputated."

Lowther uttered a queer sort of gurgle.

"Did you say anythin', Lowthah?" inquired

"Did you say anythin', Lowthah?" inquired Gussy.

"Nunno! I was merely trying to choke

"Nunno! I was merely trying to choke back my emotion."

"This is most appalling news, and no error!" said Figgins. "We'll go along and see poor old Taggy at once, and see if we can cheer him up. He's in the Cottage Hospital, I take it, Lowther?"

Monty shook his head.

"He's "All the Market."

"He's still at St. Jim's," he said.

"Still at St. Jim's! Hasn't anybody sent for the ambulance?" "Not to my knowledge," said Lowther.

"You mean to say the operation was performed in Taggy's lodge?" exclaimed Kerr.
"I know nothing of the operation. I simply know that Taggles has lost his leg. And, naturally, he's awfully cut up about it."

"He must be taken to hospital at once!"
said the horrified Gussy. "We will collect
the ambulance ourselves, deah boys, an'
huwwy back to St. Jim's."
"Good wheeze!" said Figgins.

We proceeded without delay to the ambulance-station, while Monty Lowther remounted his machine and rode away. His
conduct seemed to us.rather callous. Fancy
going for a joy-ride when poor old Taggles
was maimed for life!

We had no difficulty in obtaining the
ambulance. We pointed out that it was a
most urgent case, and the driver bade us

The Popular.—No. 125.

hop in, and then went full speed ahead to St. Jim's.

A few moments later the vehicle swung through the school gateway, and slowed up outside the porter's lodge.

And then we had the surprise of our lives! The familiar figure of Taggles appeared in the doorstep, surveying the ambulance in wonder.

"Gweat Scott!" gasped Gussy.

For Taggy's limbs were intact:

"Wot I say is this 'ere," said Taggles
"As hanybody met with a haxxident?"
"We—we thought you had!" gasped Figgins.

Taggles shook his head.

"I've sertingly been the wictim of a calamity—" he began.

"But you haven't lost your leg!" said Kerr.

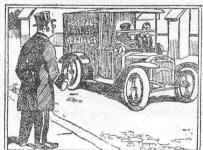
Taggles grunted.

"I ain't lost one of me lower limbs that's wot you mean, Master Kerr. I've lost me leg."

"You silly old duffer!" roared Kerr. "You say that you haven't lost one of your lower limbs, and in the same breath you tell us that you've lost your leg!"

"Yes-a leg of mutton," explained Taggles. "What!"

"Which I 'ad a prime leg of mutton for to-morrer's dinner, an' that there kitchen cat—drat the beast!—came prowlin' into my lodge an' took it off the table." "Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Figgins. "I can



A few minutes later the ambulance swung through the school gateway and slowed up outside the porter's lodge.

see through it now. This is a little joke of Lowther's! He always was a funny mer-chant."

chant."

"Well, it was quite true what he said about Taggles losing his leg," I said. "But he didn't add that it was a leg of mutton!"

"It's a gweat welief to know that Taggy is still sound in wind an' limb," said Gussy. "All the same, we can't allow Lowthah to play pwactical jokes of this sort at our expense. We'll bump the beggah when he comes in!"

"Yes rether!"

"Yes, rather!"

The driver of the ambulance turned to us with a snort.

"So you've brought me here for nothing!" he growled.

Gussy promptly slipped a ten-shilling note into the man's hand, and he was considerably mollified.

The ambulance disappeared through the

The ambulance disappeared through the school gateway in a cloud of dust, and we waited for Lowther to return

But the humorist of the Shell was wise in his generation. He was careful to keep out of the way until the affair had blown over, and he missed the bumping which he so richly deserved for pulling our legs!

## FALSE PRETENCES!

By ARTHUR NEWCOME

(of Rookwood.)



Tubby Muffin departed, bag in hand, for the station.

UBBY BBY MUFFIN was feeling homesick. It's a feeling that most of us get at some time or another, but we have to possess

most of us get at some time or another, but we have to possess our souls in patience until the vac comes.

The summer vac, however, was still a long way off, and Tubby Muffin was not disposed to wait patiently until it arrived. He was simply longing for a spell of freedom.

"I'm feeling out of sorts, you fellows," he confided to us one evening in the

he confided to us one evening in the Junior Common-room. "It's lack of nourishment that has pulled me down. A fellow never gets enough grub to keep body and soul together in this beastly hole. I want a complete rest and change."

change."

"So do most of us," said Jimmy Silver, "but we've got to wait till the vac comes round."

"Rats! I mean to have at least three days' holiday right away," said Tubby.

"Three days at Aunt Christabel's will set me on my feet again. Aunt Christabel has a well-stocked larder, and I shall be in my element."

"But the Head work sive remembers."

"But the Head won't give you permission to go to your aunt's," said said

Lovell.
"P'r'aps not. But I mean to get three days' holiday out of the old buffer, anyway. I'll go and tackle him right

away."
So saying, Tubby Muffin rolled out of the Common-room.
Not many of us would have had the "cheek" to beard the Head in his den. But the fat junior had no compunctions. He rapped boldly on the door of the Head's study, and the deep, stern voice of Dr. Chisholm bade him enter.
"Well, Muffin, what is it?" said the Head testily. "I am not in the humour to be disturbed."

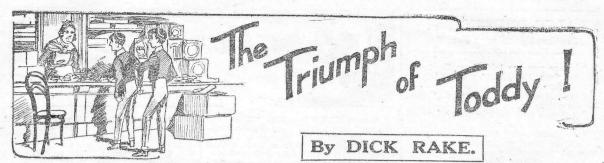
to be disturbed."
"I've come to ask you if I can take three days off, sir?" said Tubby.
"What!"

"You see, sir, the Australian cricket team is playing Hampshire to-morrow at Southampton."

at Southampton."

The Head stared.
"I quite fail to see what bearing that has upon your request, Muffin," he said.
"Why, didn't you know, sir? I've got an uncle in the Australian Eleven!"
"Indeed! This is news to me."
"I haven't seen my uncle for ages, sir," said Tubby. "He's been buried in the heart of Australia for donkeys' years, and this is his first visit to England. and this is his first visit to England. He'll be frightfully disappointed if I'm not present on the ground to cheer him

(Continued on col. 1, page iv.)



W-OW-OW! Leggo, Loder, you bullying beast! I haven't been within a mile of your beastly OW-OW-OW! Loder, you aven't been cake!

Peter Todd, the leader of Study No. 7,

reter Todd, the leader of Study Ro. 1, rose to his feet.
In the corridor without there was a scuffling of feet, accompanied by shrill lamentations.

lamentations.

Peter went to the door and glanced out.

A curious scene met his gaze.

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, was being dragged along the corridor by the scruff of his neck. Over him towered Gerald Loder, the bully of the Sixth.

There was a look of ferocity on Loder's face, and an expression of abject terror on Billy Bunter's.

"What's the trouble, Loder?" inquired Peter Todd.

Loder gave a snarl.

"This fat worm has pinched my plumcake—the best part of it, anyway!" he said.

"Ow! I haven't! I didn't! I never!" protested Billy Bunter, almost tearfully.

"I'm going to take you along to Mr.

protested Billy Bunter, almost tearfully.

"I'm going to take you along to Mr. Quelch, and report you for pilfering!" said Loder savagely. "There's been too much of this sort of thing going on!"

"Quelchy's not in," said Peter Todd.
"He's out golfing with Prout."

"Then I'll take you along to him later, you thieving young rascal!" said Loder, releasing his hold of Billy Bunter. "You'll report to me at eight o'clock, and I'll suggest to Mr. Quelch that he gives you a jolly good lamming!"

So saying, Loder turned on his heel and strode away.

strode away.

Peter Todd turned back into his study, and

Billy Bunter followed.

The pitiful expression on Billy's face would have melted a heart of stone.

"You were a priceless ass, Bunty, to raid Loder's study!" said Peter Todd. "It was fairly asking for trouble!"
"But I haven't been near Loder's study—I swear it!"

Billy Bunter was a notorious fibber, but on this occasion he really seemed to be speaking the truth.
"You mean that—honour bright?" said

Peter.
"Honour bright!" echoed Bunter solemnly.

"Then why should Loder suspect you of

"Honour bright!" echoed Bunter solemnly.

"Then why should Loder suspect you of laying hands on his cake?"

"Well, it was like this," said the fat junior. "Loder's table was laid for tea, and he went out of his study to fetch Walker. When he returned, about five minutes later, he found that half of his plum-cake had been hacked away. Then he discovered a handkerchief, which looked as if it had been dropped by the raider as he made a hurried bolt. And what do you think, Toddy? The handkerchief had my initials in the corner!" Peter gave a low whistle.

"In that case I can understand Loder suspecting you," he said.

"But you—you don't believe I tampered with the beastly cake?"

"No," was the reply, "For once in a way I think you're telling the truth." Billy Bunter gave a groan.

"I'm innocent, and yet I'm going to be hauled before Quelchy and licked!" he said.

"Can't you do something to help me out of my fix, Toddy?"

Peter looked thoughtful.

"I'm not a giddy 'tec," he said. "Still, I'll do my best to find out who did tamper with Loder's cake."

Billy Bunter's face brightened up.
"Thanks awfully, Toddy!" he said. "As you know, I'm not exactly pining for a licking."

Peter Todd didn't let the grass grow under

Peter Todd didn't let the grass grow under his feet. He went along to Loder's study.

"What do you want?" growled Loder, as the junior entered.

"I'm interested in this affair of the cake, Loder," said Peter. "I'm satisfied that Bunter didn't touch it—"

"Don't talk rot!" said Loder sharply.

"The fat young thief must have raided my study, else how do you account for his handkerchief being found here?"

"That was probably put here as a plant," said Peter calmly.
Loder snorted.

"You're talking out of the back of your neck!" he said.

"Do you mind if I make an examination

"Do you mind if I make an examination of your study?" asked Peter in professional

What the thump--" began Loder, in astonishment.

astonishment.

"If you'll give me a free hand, I'll undertake to nail the thief."

"But the thief's nailed already! Still, if you want to amuse yourself by nosing round you can go ahead!"

"Both to arrow the livestication."

commenced his investigations at Peter



Peter clambered through the window and dropped lightly to the ground. Footmarks showed clearly in the moist earth, and Peter stooped down eagerly and examined them.

and the prefect looked on, with a

sarcastic smile.

"Is this all that was left of the cake?" inquired Peter, pointing to a portion of plum-cake on the table.

Diffin-care on the Ladie.

Loder nodded.

"What do you deduce from it, Detective Todd?" he asked, with a sneer.

"Several things," was the reply. "This cake was purchased in Courtfield, and you biked back to Greyfriars with it yourself." Loder stared.
"How on earth did you know that?" he

exclaimed.

exclaimed.

"It's simple enough," said Peter Todd.
"Mrs. Mimble, at the tuckshop, never makes plum-cakes this size. This cake is of an unusual oval shape, peculiar to a certain pastrycook's in Courtfield."

"Yes; but how do you know I bought it myself?"

"Because I heard you yelling 'Fag!' an hour ago, and there was no response. And as you happen to have bicycle-clips on your trousers, I naturally concluded that you had been obliged to do your own shopping."

The sneer vanished from Loder's face. He looked at Peter Todd almost with respect.
"You're a pretty cute youngster." he said.

looked at Peter Todd almost with respect.

"You're a pretty cute youngster," he said.

"What else do you deduce from the cake?"

"Something that is much more to the point," said Peter. "It has been cut with an ordinary penknife—not with a cake-knife or a table-knife."

"What of that?"

"Well, as Bunter doesn't possess a penknife, and nobody in the Remove will lend

him one, it's pretty obvious that it wasn't Bunter who carved this cake."
So saying, he crossed to the window.
"Was the lower sash raised as high as this before the theft took place?" he asked.
"No," said Loder.
"Then it's safe to conclude that the thief escaped via the window. In that case, he must have dropped down into the Close, and has probably left some footprints."
Peter clambered through the window and dropped lightly on to the ground.
Footmarks of recent imprint were easily, discernible on the moist earth. Peter stooped down, and examined them closely.
"A size seven shoe, coming to a very narrow point," he mused. "There are only two fellows in the Remove who wear shoes of that size and shape. One is Alonzo, and Lonzy isn't a cake-lifter. The other is Skinner."
Smiling grinly at his discovery. Peter

Skinner."
Smiling grimly at his discovery, Peter strolled away. He hadn't proceeded very far when he encountered Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove.

As he drew near to Skinner, Peter Todd suddenly produced a blunt stump of lead-

pencil.

"Lend me your penknife, Skinney!" he said carelessly.

Somewhat reluctantly, Skinner produced is penknife, and handed it to his school-

Peter Todd opened the blade, but be made

no movement to sharpen the pencil. Instead, he examined the blade keenly.

It did not require the aid of a microscope to see that the blade bore traces of cake-crumbs.

"Do you always use a penknife to carvo cake, Skinner?" asked Peter. Skinner looked startled. "No, not always," he said.

"It was your own cake that you carved?" "Of course!"

"Of course!"
"Where did you get it?"
"I don't see that that's anything to do
with you!" said Skinner sullenly. "But if
you want to know, I bought it at Mrs.
Mimble's this afternoon."

Peter Todd's hand descended upon Skinner's

collar.

"Come along!" he said briefly.

"Eh? Where to?"

"To the tuckshop, so that Mrs. Mimble can verify your story."

Skinner began to protest. But his protestations were useless. He was marched across the Close to the school shop, and Peter Todd dragged him inside the establishment.

"Good-afternoon, ma'am!" he said, addressing Mrs. Mimble. "Has Skinner bought a cake from you recently?"

"Not for weeks, Master Todd!" was the prompt reply.

"Good enough," said Peter. "Now, Skinner,

"Not lor weeks, masser rooms from reply.

"Good enough," said Peter. "Now, Skinner, I'll trouble you' to come along to Loder's study. You've already paid it one visit this afternoon."

Skinner turned pale.

"You needn't attempt to deny it, you cad," said Toddy. "You evidently had a grudge of some sort against Billy Bunter, so you went into Loder's study, rifled half his cake, and bolted through the window. You left behind a handkerchief belonging to Bunter, in order that suspicion might fall on him."

behind a handkerchief belonging to Bunter, in order that suspicion might fall on him."

• Skinner gave a gasp.

Peter's handling of Harold Skinner was none too gentle. He piloted him off to Loder's study without ceremony.

"Herewith the thief, Loder!" he said, pushing the trembling cad of the Remove into the study.

Loder was amazed when Peter explained how the culprit had been brought to book, He was angry, too, as Skinner knew to his cost.

THE END. THE POPULAR.-No. 125.

#### FALSE PRETENCES

(Continued from page ii.)

"I hope you are telling me the truth, Muffin," said the Head. "What is your uncle's name?"

uncle's name?"
"Mr. MacBardsley-Collins, sir," said Tubby promptly.
"And you wish to take three days off in order to see the match?"
"Yes, please, sir," said Tubby eagerly.
"In the event of my giving you permission, where will you stay?"
"At the South Western Hotel, sir, with my uncle."

"At the South Western Hotel, sir, with my uncle."
"Very well, Muffin. As you have not seen your uncle for such a long time, and the case is an exceptional one, I will allow you to go. You must be back on Saturday evening without fail."
"Thanks awfully, sir!"
When Tubby Muffin entered the Junior Common-room a few moments later be

Common-room a few moments later he seemed to be-walking on air.

"I've worked the oracle, you fellows!" he exclaimed. "I shall travel by the first train in the morning."

"You—you mean to say the Head's given you permission to take three days off!" gasped Jimmy Silver.
Tubby nodded.
"Three glories.

Three glorious days of freedom!" he said, with a fat chuckle.

We envied Tubby Muffin his good fortune when he departed, bag in hand, for the station.

For three long days we had no news of

our prize porpoise.

It was at eight o'clock on Saturday evening that Tubby put in an appear-ance. Before we could question him on the subject of his holiday a message came to the effect that the Head wished to see him immediately.

Tubby looked rather uneasy as he made

his way to the Head's study.
"Well, Muffin," said the Head, as
Tubby entered. "Did you see your
uncle?"

"Of course, sir! He made a great show in the Australian Eleven—flogged the Hampshire bowling to all parts of the fold sir!"

the Hampshire powing to an parts of the field, sir!"

The Head looked grim.

"I did not see the result of the match in the papers," he said.

Tubby Muffin drew a breath of relief.

"And the reason why I did not see the result of the match in the papers was that it was never played!" the Head added.

"Nun-nun-not played, sir?" Tubby

stuttered.

"No. The fixture was cancelled at the eleventh hour, owing to the Austra-lians having another engagement."
"Oh crumbs!"

"You have therefore been describing to me a match which you did not see a match which never took place!"
Tubby Muffin gave a hollow groan.

"You have lied to me, Muffin!" said the Heal sternly. "Moreover, you have no uncle who is in any way connected with the Australian team."

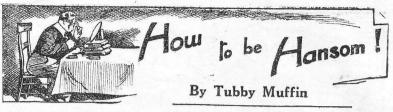
"I do not know where you have been spending your holiday, but I assume that you visited an aunt in Sussex. Am I not

Ye-e-e-s, sir!" "Ye-e-e-s, sir:
"I will not waste any more words on you," said the Head. "You will be publicly flogged on Monday morning. Now go!"

Tubby Muffin crawled away.

He had obtained his three days of freedom, but they had cost him dear-as he discovered when the Head's birch rose and fell on Monday morning!

The POPULAR.—No. 125.



I have entitled this artikle, "How to be Hansom." But I don't meen Hansom of the Fifth. No jolly feer! Hansom is very far from being hansom. In fackt, he is, without eggseption, the ugliest fello at Rookwood.

Well, the other day sumboddy suggested a Beauty Contest, in which members of the Fourth Form (Classical Side) were to kompeet. Bulkeley of the Sixth prommist to be the judge, and the first prize was to be a free feed at the tuckshop. We all had to pay an entranse-fee of a tanner to go in for the kompetition, and the hole of the tanners were lumped together in order to provide the free feed.

Of corse, I new I should win hands down.

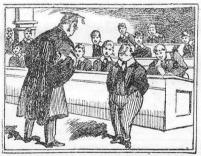
provide the free feed.

Of corse, I new I should win hands down, for their's noboddy in the Fourth who can hold a candle to me for good looks.

Still, I wanted to make absolutely sertain of bagging the prize, so I konsulted sum of the advertissments in a weekly perioddical.

"Hansom men," I was told, "are slightly sunburnt." I took that to inklood boys as well, so I sent for a tin of "Bronzo" with which to tan my face. (I've often had my hands tanned before now, but not my chivyy!)

I then came across anuther advertissment which said, "Be manly, and kultivate a military mistosh! Apply a little 'Sprouto' to yore upper-lip, and you will have a fine manly mistosh within a cupple of days!



"Good gracious, Muffin!" gasped Bootles. "What is the meaning of that peculiar growth on yors upper lipp, and yore bronss complexshun?"

'Sprouto' is wunderfull stuff, and you can buy a tin for forepense. Turns boys into men!"

men!"
I borroed a forepenny stamp from Kit Erroll, and sent for a supply of "Sprouto."
By retern of post I reseeved two parcels. One kontained the "Bronzo," and the other the "Sprouto." I retired to the solly-chewed of my studdy early in the mourning, and tanned my face with the "Bronzo." Then, after reeding the direckshuns on the tin, I applide some "Sprouto" to my upper-lipp. When I went in to mourning lessons.

When I went in to mourning lessons, Bootles said to me:

"Why, Muffin, what ever have you been doing to yore face? You look even more unprepossessing than usual!"
"Ahem! I must have caught the sun, sir!" I stammered.
"Are you a kricketer, Muffin?" asked Bootles.

Bootles.
"Yessir!"

"Yessir!"
"A smart feeldsman?"
"Of corse, sir!"
"Then I must kongrattulate you on yore remarkable feet of catching the sun!"
At this there was a titter from the class. (It's always discreet to larf at a master's feebles joaks.)
Bootles maid no ferther reverence to my face until two days later—the day of the Beauty Contest.
By this time my upper-lipp was covered

with hares, and Jimmy Silver & Co. rored with larfter whenever they saw me.

"Good gracious, Muffin!" gasped Bootles.
"I hardly rekkernized you when you came into the Form-room! Yore appearanse is eggstrordinary! What is the meening of that peculiar growth on yore upper-lipp?"

"Don't call if a growth is!"

"Don't call it a growth, sir," I said in pained toans. "It's a mistosh!"

"Good 'Evans!" gasped Bootles. "It is perfeckly loodicruss for a boy of yore tender yeers to have a mistosh! Why, you-look five yeers older than you reely are!"

I did not regard that remark as very

I did not regard that remark as very komplimentary.

"I don't mind looking old, sir," I said,
"so long as I look mauly."

"Manly!" echoed Bootles. "Why, you look as if you had just been releesed from a kommic opera!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" rored the class.
And then Bootles maid anuther feeble joak.
"I shall have to introduce a sort of Day.

"I shall have to introduce a sort of Day-light Shaving Act, Muffin," he said. "In other wurds, you must go villidge, and have those removed at wurce!"

"Oh, crumms! But I shall want them, sir, for the Beauty Contest!"

At this there was another rore of larfter from the class.

from the class.

"You are an utterly absurd boy, Muffin!" said Bootles. "You cannot possibly hope to win a Beauty Contest with a face like that! You will proseed at wunce to the barber's, and have that appology for a mistosh taken away; and then you will give yore face a good skrubb, and remove the tan!"

"But—but hansom men are always slightly sunburnt, sir!" I protested. "The advertissment says so!"
Bootles smiled sarcastick-like.

Bootles smiled sarcastick-like.

Bootles smiled sarcastick-like.

"It is trew that a sunburnt appearance mite make men hansom, Muffin," he said, "but that remark does not apply to boys—boys of yore type, at leest. Nuthing short of being re-created could possibly make you hansom! Go at wunce, you stupid boy, and follo out my instruckshuns!"

Very reluctantly I went down to the villidge, and got the barber to shave my upper-lipp.

As the hares dropped on to the cloth I trembled like a fritened rabbit, for I was afrade the barber mite cut me. He weelded the razer in a very careless manner.

However, I escaped without a skratch, and when I got back to Rookwood I spent an hour in the barf-room getting the tan off my face. After which, I was my normal self wunce more.

In dew corse the Beauty Contest took plaice, and the prize was awarded, as you may guess, to R. Muffin.

But it wasn't the first prize; it was the booby prize, and it konsisted of a putty meddle!

The first prize went to that ugly beest, Teddy Grace, who hasn't as much beauty in the whole of his figger as I have in my little finger! I eggspect he bribed Bulkeley of the Sixth be-4-hand!

I have no doubt that if I had been aloud to retain my wunderful mistosh and my tanned komplexion I should have romped home with the first prize.

Konfound that old buffer Bootles! He's always poking his nose in wear it isn't wanted!

If it is yore ambishun to be hansom, deer reeder, you will now no how to proseed. Purchass a tin of "Bronzo" and a tin of "Sprouto," and you will ackwire a smart, manly appearanse, calculated to win the hand and hart of any fare maiden.

But I hope you won't run up against a Form-master like Bootles, who orders you to have yore mistosh shaved off just as you are beginning to blossom fourth into an Adonis!

THE END.

the grasp of the two men, rushed towards the waiting cart.

His arms and legs flew wildly in the air as he was tossed into the vehicle. "Help!"

Mornington had time for only that one

cry.

The carter was on him, kneeling on him as he lay panting in the bottom of the cart. His eyes blazed down at the dazed junior of Rookwood.

"Silence!"

"You—you hound!" panted Mornington; he was astounded, dazed by the strange attack, but he was not terrified. It was rage, not fear, that was in his looks. "What does this mean, you looks. "W scoundrel?" "Silence!"

The second man clambered in. As Mornington sought to shout again, he drove a wad of rag into his mouth, and the junior's shout died in a choked gurgle.

The carter dragged a cord from his

pocket.

In a minute or less, the kidnapped junior was bound hand and foot, and lay helpless in the bottom of the cart.

The gag jammed in his mouth kept him silent. He lay helpless, only his eyes blazing defiance and fury at his kidnappers.

The carter jumped down into the road.
The man he had called "Badger"
covered a tarpaulin over the bound

junior.

The carter stepped back to the cross-roads, and looked this way and that. The clumps of trees by the roadside had screened the scene. In the fields, at a distance, labourers were working, but none had seen the kidnapping.

"All O.K., Badger?" he said.

"Easy as winkin', guy'nor."
"Cet going, then."

"What-ho!

Badger sat in the cart, after taking the nosebag from the horse. The carter mounted in front, taking the whip and reins. The clumsy cart rolled off up the lane towards Bagshot School.

Halfway to Bagshot it turned into a rough cart-track that led across Coombe Moor. It followed the track for half a mile or more, and then turned upon the moor itself, jolting and bumping away over the rough ground. Under the tar-paulin in the cart Mornington lay helpless and silent.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Held By the Enemy!

ORNINGTON writhed helplessly in his bonds under the tar-paulin as the cart jolted over the rough ground. Rookwood junior could see

nothing, hear nothing but the heavy bumps of the wheels on the moor.

The rage that consumed him died away, however, and his struggles ceased. He realised his helplessness. He realised his helplessness. He was utterly at the mercy of the ruffians who had kidnapped him. What was their object? Who were they? He asked himself those questions a score of times

without being able to find an answer.
What did it mean? What could it
mean? Whither was he being taken? The kidnapping had been carefully planned; he realised that. The cart had been in waiting, the kidnappers ready for him to pass. How had they known that he was leaving the school at

that time-a time when all the fellows ! were usually within gates?
Evidently they had known.

It was a hopeless puzzle. He waited with feverish anxiety for the strange journey to come to an end. He could not guess in what direction he was being taken; only the jolting of the vehicle told him that he was traversing the pathless moorland.

The cart stopped at last.

The tarpaulin, after some delay, was drawn aside, and Mornington blinked in the sudden sunshine.

He sat up with difficulty. Round him stretched the wide moor, dotted here and there with gorse and

No habitation was in sight.

The cart had halted in a hollow of the moor, and the view was cut off on all sides by rising ground.

He looked at his captors.

He looked at his captors.

The ruffian Badger grinned down at him. It was the man who had played the part of a carter who was the leader, Mornington knew. He knew, too, that the man could not be a carter. Who and what was he?

"Get him out, Badger."

"Right-ho, guv'nor!"

Mornington was lifted from the cart

in the ruffian's strong arms. The about his ankles was loosened.
"Walk!" said Badger laconically.

Walk! said Badger laconicary.
His heavy grasp was on the Rockwood junior's shoulder. Mornington moved along as the man led him.

The grassy slopes of the moor, as he saw now, were marked and scarred by old quarry workings. He remembered the disused Coombe quarries, which had lain idle for a hundred years or more, and were mostly flooded. Why had the

kidnappers brought him there?

The carter had tied the horse, and he was moving ahead. Badger followed

with Mornington.

They followed a sloping path into the deepest part of the grassy hollow.

From there a rough and precipitous way led down into one of the old quarry workings.

Fifty feet below the level of the moor, the shadowy old working, they

Here a gap opened in the quarry side. where slaty edges cropped out into view. It was like a small cave, extending a dozen feet into the earth, closed on all

sides but one. Mornington stood alone, while Badger returned the way he had come. The carter remained with the kidnapped

Mornington's eyes scanned savagely.

The carter met his glance, and smiled slightly. He removed the gag from the junior's mouth.

"You know where you are, I suppose?" he said.

Mornington gasped for breath. "Yes. What am I brought here for?" "You are a prisoner, as you can see.

"I know you have kidnapped me, you scoundrel! But what is it for? I suppose you've got some reason?"
"Naturally." "Naturally.

"Naturany.
"Who are you?" Mornington watched man's face savagely. "I've heard "Who are you? Morningoon waters the man's face savagely. "I've heard your voice before; I'm sure of that."
"You have seen me before," smiled the carter. "You need not be alarmed, the carter. "You need not be alarmed, and the carter."

Master Mornington. You are not be alarmed, Master Mornington. You are not going to be hurt. You will simply remain here a prisoner for a few days—"
"You think you can keep me here?"
panted Mornington. "I shall be searched

for. My uncle is expecting me in Latcham this very minute—"
"Your uncle is not in Latcham"

"Your uncle is not in Latcham."
"What!"

"And he will not know that you have disappeared until he hears it from Rookwood

Mornington staggered.

He began to understand now.

"Then—then the telephone-call—it was not Sir Rupert Stacpoole?" he stammered.

"It was I."

"But you-you-how did you know anything about me—about my uncle? I
—I don't understand." Even as he was speaking a light broke upon the junior's mind. "Erroll!"

Badger came back into the cave with bundles in his arms. He put down the bundles, and tramped away again to the

Mornington glanced at the things-a roll of blankets, several rugs, a camp-chair, cooking utensils. Evidently the kidnappers were making preparations for camping in that desolate recess.

His eyes fixed on the pretended carter again.

"I know you now!" he muttered. "I know your voice. You are the man who brought Erroll to Rookwood, calling yourself Captain Erroll. You are the man he met in the woodman's hut. You are Erroll's father, the cracksman-Gentleman Jim!"

"It has taken you a long time to guess it," smiled Gentleman Jim. Mornington ground his teeth with

rage.
"You've brought me here so that I can't give Erroll away to the Head!" he

"You've guessed it."

"You've guessed it."

"But—but— Oh, you're mad!"
panted Mornington. "You can't keep
me here long. I shall be hunted for.
Suppose they don't find me for a week,
even a month, it comes to the same
thing. The minute I set foot in Rockwood again I shall tell Dr. Chisholm
everything." everything.

"You will be welcome to," yawned

Gentleman Jim.

He turned away from the junior as Badger entered the excavation again, his arms full.

The two rascals unpacked the bundles together, Mornington watching them with a moody brow.

Gentleman Jim uncoiled a thin, strong Gentleman Jim uncoiled a thin, strong chain, with a padlock at the end. Badger was driving a stake into a cleft in the hard ground.

"You will find this more comfy than being tied up, my boy," said the cracksman, as he passed the chain round Mornington, whist and locked it.

ington's waist and locked it. "You hound!"

The cracksman fastened the end of the chain to the stake. Mornington had a freedom of eight or nine feet. Then the cracksman cut through the bonds on his limbs.

on his highes,
"I am going now, Master Mornington," said Gentleman Jim quietly. "One
ton," and of warning before I go. This is ton," said Gentleman Jim quietly. "One word of warning before I go. This is a lonely spot, miles from any house. If you shout you will not be heard. But we do not intend to run risks. If you utter one cry you will be gagged. If you have any regard for your own comfort you will toe the line quietly."

Mornington gritted his teeth.
"You will be cared for as well as circumstances permit," resumed Gentleman Jim. "You are being kept out of the way till you cannot do any further harm. That is all,"

He turned away with that, and left the excavation.

Mornington heard his footsteps die away in the hollow. A few minutes later the sound of wheels rumbling in the distance came to his ears.

Gentleman Jim haa gone! THE POPULAR, -No. 125.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Missing!

"That was the ques That was the question in the Classical Fourth dor-

"By gad, he's keepin' it up!" said Townsend, with a grin. "Bootles will have somethin' to say when he comes back!"
"He's given Nunky the slip, and gone on the spree," opined Peele. "Just like Morny!"
"Woll T

Morny!"

"Well, I suppose nothing can have happened to him," said Jimmy Silver, as he kicked off his boots. "He's making a day of it, that's all."

"Just like him!" growled Lovell.

Erroll made no remark.

His face was pale.
The absence of Mornington was being prolonged. So far it had saved him from the revelation that meant ruin to his

hopes. Was it merely the recklessness of the blackguard of Rookwood manifesting itself once more in this way? Or—

With a chill at his heart, the unhappy junior thought of Gentleman Jim.

The cracksman had bidden him remain at the school; he had undertaken that Mornington should keep silence. Was Mornington's absence due to some scheme of the cracksman? Was it

a coincidence, or a plot of Gentleman Jim? He could not tell, but his heart was heavy. There was no sleep for Erroll of the Fourth that night.

The rest of the Fourth were not the missing junior. They anxious about the missing junior. They had no doubt that he would turn up late with some "yarn" to satisfy Mr.

Bootles.
But Mr. Bootles, who did not know

But Mr. Bootles, who did not know Mornington quite so well as his Form-fellows knew him, was decidedly anxious. After Bulkeley had put out the lights for the Classical Fourth, he went down to the Fourth Form-master's study.

"Mornington has not come in, sir!" he

announced. extraordinary,"

"It is extraordinary," said Mr. Bootles. "I cannot help fearing that some accident has happened to him, Bulkeley. Even his guardian has no right to keep him late for bedtime. I will telephone to Sir Rupert, and ask him whether Mornington left him in time to get home for bed."

The worried Form-master turned to the telephone, and rang up the Royal George, at Latcham. "Hallo!"

"I wish to speak to Sir Rupert Stac-cole. Is he still at the hotel?" said poole. Mr. Bootles, into the transmitter.
"What name?"

"Sir Rupert Stacpoole."

"No gentleman of that name here, sir."

"Dear me! Has he left?"

"Hear me: Has he left;"
"I do not think anyone of that name
has been here, sir; but I will inquire."
"Thank you!" said Mr. Bootles, very much surprised.

He waited. The voice came through again in a

The voice came through again in a few minutes.

"No one of that name at this hotel, sir."

"Dear me! That is very extraordinary! Sir Rupert Stacpoole telephoned to me from your hotel early today."

day."
"Some mistake, sir."
this

"Some mistake, sir.
"Kindly tell me this. Has a boy belonging to this school—Rookwood—called at your hotel to-day to see a gentlamen there?" tleman there?

I will inquire." Another delay, while Mr. Bootles wrinkled his brows in perplexity. He was both puzzled and alarmed by this

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Again the voice came through from Latcham.

"Nothing is known here of any school-boy having called, sir. Perhaps it is some other hotel you want. This is the Royal George, Latcham."

"Yes, yes; that is right. You are sure that Sir Rupert Stacpoole has not been at your hotel, and that his nephew from Rookwood School has not called

Mr. Bootles rang off, and hurried out of the study. He was disquieted and alarmed. He found Dr. Chisholm in his study, and hurriedly explained the matter to him.

The Head listened in utter astonish-

ment.
"This is astounding, Mr. Bootles. It appears that the telephone-call did not come from Mornington's uncle at all, then!"

Apparently not." "It is extraordinary! And the boy has not returned from Latcham?"

"No; neither is he known to have arrived there." The Head knitted his brows.

strange affair put him entirely at a loss. "I must speak to Sir Rupert Stac-poole!" he said at last. "It appears that someone has used his name, in order to obtain a holiday for Mornington. We shall see."

The Head rang up the baronet's town house, and waited for his trunk call to be put through.

The Head was looking anxious now. He had returned to his papers, but his brow was knitted. The telephone-bell rang at last, and the Head took up the receiver.

"Is that Sir Rupert Stacpoole?"
"Yes, yes." The thin, cracked voice of the old gentleman came through. "What is it?"

"This is Rookwood School: Dr. Chisholm speaking. Have you any know-ledge of your nephew's present whereabouts?

"Eh? Is he not at Rookwood?"
"He left early this afternoon, presum-

ably to visit you at Latcham.

"What? What? I have not been to Latcham. I have not left London to-

day. What do you mean?"
"Mr. Bootles received a telephonecall from Latcham in your name, asking
for Mornington to visit you at the Royal

"He has not."
"Good heavens! Well, I know nothing of the matter. Reckless young rascal! Let me know in the mornin' that he is all right."
"Oh. certainly!" "Oh, certainly!"
The Head put up the receiver, and looked at Mr. Bootles. upon him?"

"Absolutely."

"It is extraordinary!" That gentleman looked at him.

"This is very strange," said Dr. Chisholm.

"We had better wait a little longer, and if Mornington does not return, I shall conclude that he has met with an accident, and the police had better be communicated with."

"Very well, sir!" "Very well, sr!"

Mr. Bootles left the study. It was his bedtime now; but he did not go to bed. At cleven o'clock all Rookwood had turned in, excepting Mr. Bootles and the Head. Mornington had not returned.

Then Dr. Chisholm, really alarmed, rang up Coombe Police Station, and then the redies station at Latabase.

George Hotel there. He went, and has not returned."

"Bless my soul! Some trick to get the young rascal a holiday, I presume. But he has not returned?"
"He has not."

Neither had any information to give him; neither knew of any accident having happened to a schoolboy.

The Head went to bed at last, and Mr. Bootles followed his example, both in a very uneasy frame of mind.

In the morning, when the Rookwood fellows came down from the dormitories, the news spread through the school like wildfire. Morny had been away all

night, and had not yet returned.

The telephone-bell rang very often in the Head's study that morning. In the afternoon Sir Rupert Stacpoole arrived at the school, looking pale and worried.

A police-inspector called from Latcham, and was shut up with the Head for some

Rookwood thrilled with the strange

Mornington of the Fourth had disappeared without leaving a trace behind

Father and Son!

IMMY SILVER & CO. discussed the strange mystery in available of amount of a more control of a more cont of amazement that day. All Rook-wood was talking of it. Tommy Dodd & Co. came over from the Modern side to learn all particulars, and to give their opinion.

The only junior in the school, in fact, who did not discuss the mystery, and venture an opinion on it, was Kit Erroll.

Erroll was silent.

The all-absorbing topic of Morny's disappearance prevented the fellows from noticing Erroll specially. Otherwise they could not have failed to note his pallor and his harassed looks.

Afternoon lessons were almost a farce, so far as the juniors were concerned. They could think of nothing but Morn-

ington.

There were many theories among the juniors. An accident seemed scarcely possible, for even if there had been a possible, for even if there had been a fatal accident, the search must have discovered Mornington by this time.

Tubby Muffin certainly suggested that Morny had run away to sea to become a pirate, but that suggestion was not taken seriously.

But unless Mornington had run away from Rookwood, he must have been taken off by force; and a case of kid-napping, amazing as it seemed, was the only explanation.

As a matter of fact, the Head had already come to the conclusion that it was a case of kidnapping, and so had

the police.



Sir Rupert Stacpoole was in full expectation of receiving a demand for money from the unknown miscreants as the price of his ward's liberty. But if that was the kidnappers' intention, they were in no hurry, for no word came to the baronet.

Kit Erroll said no word. He was the only fellow at Rookwood who could have thrown light on the subject.

For his doubts were gone now. He knew that Mornington's disappearance was the work of Gentleman Jim.

It was at that price that he was to remain at Rookwood. While Morning-ton was gone he was safe there.

Jimmy Silver looked for Erroll after tea, and found him in Little Quad, with a letter in his hand. The school page had brought it to him, explaining that it had been handed to him by a lad from the village.

Erroll understood, and he "tipped" the page, and retired to Little Quad to read the letter. He coloured, and thrust it hastily into his pocket as Jimmy Silver

"I've been looking for you," said Jimmy cheerily.

"I-I don't feel so fit as usual to-day," said Erroll. "I won't come down

"All screne. It's a free country," said Jimmy; and he went off to join his chums.

Erroll took the note from his pocket

again.

There was a single line scribbled upon

it in pencil:
"The hut at six-thirty."

There was no signature, but that was not necessary. He knew the handwriting of Gentleman Jim.

Erroll tore the note into fragments, and threw them into the fountain. Then

he walked down to the gates.

The days were drawing out now, and locking-up was later. Erroll strolled out of gates with an assumption of care-lessness; but once out of sight of Rookwood, he broke into a run.

It was already past six.

He crossed the fields to the wood, and plunged into the trees. Without a pause, he made his way to the old woodman's hut in the heart of the wood—the spot where he had met the cracksman before, and where Mornington had played the spy upon them.

The old hut was silent and deserted

when he arrived there. Gentleman Jim had not yet put in an appearance.

The junior, breathing hard after his hurry, sat on the log in the hut to wait. But he could not keep still.

He rose again and raced to and fro. occasionally glancing anxiously out at the shattered doorway.

There was a step in the grass at last, and Erroll uttered an exclamation. "Father!"

Gentleman Jim stepped into the hut.

The Rookwood fellows who had seen him as "Captain Erroll" would not have known him now. He had discarded the carter's garb, and he looked like a business man of middle age. It was not judicious for "Captain Erroll" to risk being seen near Rookwood without coming to the school.

"You're here first this time, Kit," he said, with a smile. "So you got my note?"

"Yes. I came at once."
"Good!" Gentleman Jim bit the end from a cigar, lighted it, and blew out a wreath of smoke. "All goes well, Kit. You can sleep quietly to-night in the dormitory at Rookwood. Mornington will not talk."
"Where is he?" muttered the schoolbov.

Gentleman Jim grinned through the smoke.

"In a safe place, Kit. The Badger is looking after him. You remember the Badger?"

Erroll shuddered
"I remember him! It was from him I

"I remember him! It was from him I first learned—"
He broke off.
"That your father was Gentleman Jim, the cracksman," said the adventurer, laughing. "I should have told you sooner or later, Kit. You had to know. You were already wondering, long before you knew the facts."
"Where is Mornington?"

"Where is Mornington."
"Not very far from you," smiled Gentlemar Jim. "You remember telling me of the old quarries on the moor in your letters?"
"Yes, yes!"

and as soon as he is released the truth will be known. You will have to leave Rookwood. The plans I laid did not count on this chance. Mornington's interference has shattered them. You cannot remain at Rookwood, as I intended. It would have been a great advantage to you. It would have made you more useful to us in many ways. But that is over now."

"Let me go at once, and let Morning-

ton return."
The cracksman did not seem to hear. "But the game is not up, Kit. You can make a fresh start elsewhere," he said. "Another school at a distance, perhaps under a fresh name."

haps, under a fresh name."
"No! I have done with it. I am tired of lies and imposture. I did not think there would be great harm in taking a name that was not mine, to get



Struggling violently, the Rookwood junior was swept off the ground, and, in the grasp of the two men, rushed towards the waiting cart.

(See chapter 3.)

"Well, I have made use of them, that Well, I have made use of them, that is all. It did not take me long to make my plans, and I lost no time carrying them out. All goes well. The boy cannot be traced, that is certain. He will remain in my hands as long as I choose."

"And then?"

"And then?"
Gentleman Jim shrugged his shoulders.
"Then he can go back to Rookwood or to the dickens!"
"Father, when he cames back I shall be given away. Why did you not be the came have been day instead." be given away. Why did you not me leave Rookwood to-day instead-

me leave Kookwood to-uay instead—
"Because your work is not done at Rookwood!" said the cracksman coolly.
"We may as well have this out, Kit.
You must know by this time why you are at the school."
"You told me that it was to give me count in life to enable me to learn

"You told me that it was to give me a start in life, to enable me to learn to earn my bread, and to hold up my head among decent people!" said the schoolboy bitterly.:

"And that still holds good. But you must be useful as well, Kit. Mornington cannot be kept a prisoner indefinitely,

away from—from—" He did not finish. "But I've made friends there—decent fellows who would despise me if they knew. I'm done with it. When I leave Rookwood, ito more of it." "And what will you do?" sneered the

cracksman.

cracksman.

"Work for my bread, or starve!" said the boy between his teeth. "That is what I have determined, and nothing shall change me."

"A turn of starvation may help to teach you sense!" said the cracksman, with a sneer. "But before you leave Rookwood, Kit, there is work to be done. Mornington cannot betray you so long as he is kept safe. Before he is done as he is kept safe. Before he is released our work at the school must be finished, and you will be safe away. I have information about the place. The school silver alone is worth more than a thousand pounds, and there are other things. You are in the place. You can give me the information I need to make

(Continued on page 16.) THE POPULAR.-No. 125.

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PRESENTATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PERSON O

No. 17.-ROBERT ARTHUR DIGBY.



Robert Arthur is perhaps one of the oldest

Robert Arthur is perhaps one of the oldest members of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's. He was there with Herries and Blake long before the Terrible Three appeared, and even before the noble Gussy.

There is no need to probe deeper into what happened then; all that we are concerned about now is, who and what Dig is, what he does, and how he does it. Of course, we all know he's a schoolboy of St. Jim's, and what his name is, but at present we want to introduce ourselves to his real self—his real character.

all know he's a schoolboy of St. Jim's, and what his name is, but at present we want to introduce ourselves to his real self—his real character.

He has as good brains as anyone in Study No. 6. First of all, he is more level-headed than Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, quicker and smarter than Herries, and perhaps cleverer than Blake. Of course, by saying all this we are praising Dig tremendously, and calling him an exceptionally clever boy. But he is not that; just a trifle better than his study-mates on several points.

Dig is small and light and active. Herries is burly, and by no means quick in his movements, but makes up for that to some extent by being stronger. Once the question of their respective capabilities was a very searching test. They happened to be rivals for a place in a team that was to go on a cricketing tour: There were ten selected, that left one place to be filled, and both Dig and Herries came forward to press their claims.

It seemed a problem that could only be worked out one way. And that way was given a trial. They boxed for it. They fought twelve rounds, and finished up even. The matter was then to be settled in a practice match; but both scored 20, so that failed. Then a race to Wayland followed, endling in a dead-heat. And in the end, the exasperating question was settled by them both going. Both distinguished themselves very much, and caused the promoter, A. A. D'Arcy, to thank himself he did take them. Although this is ancient history to some of you, and new to others, it all helps to give one a fairly clear idea of our character, and well worth mentioning.

In one or two instances it has shown that Dig is very simple, honest-natured, and generous, though he is no fool. He was the wictim of the scheming of Cutts of the Fifth for a long time. He had a lot of trouble with the cad of the Fifth, but his friends came on the scene. It's a long yarn, too long to be narrated here.

As a footballer and cricketer he is very reliable, though he doesn't come up to the standard set by such fellows as

very straight. That's Dig!

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#### FOR NEXT FRIDAY!

For next Friday we have another splendid budget of reading, including two long com-plete school stories. The first story is entitled:

#### "THE REMOVE SAILORS." By Frank Richards.

- Harry Wharton & Co. go down to the sea to bathe, and are carried away by a rascally captain, and forced to work aboard a ship. So, whether they like it or not, the Removites become sailors. This is really a splendid

The second complete school story is entitled:

#### " A FRIENDSHIP FOUNDED." By Owen Conquest.

This story deals with the end of the feud between Kit Erroll and Val Mornington, and the manner in which the "fight ends" will surprise you all.

There will also be another grand supplement in our next issue.

#### " BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY."

As usual, Billy gives you plenty of funny articles and fiction, and the four pages are crammed with interesting contributions from all the three famous schools—Rookwood, Greyfriars, and St. Jim's.

Readers will do well to order their copies of "The Popular" well in advance!

#### POPLETS COMPETITION .- No. 19.

Examples for this week's competition:

Wasting Good Food. For the Present. wasting Good Food.
Ending the Quarrel.
Makes Matters Worse.
Bullying the Umpire.
Bunter the Bowler.
Attracts Many

Willing to Join

A Tuck-shop Tragedy.

D'Arcy and Dignity. Willing to Join. When Loder's Good.

Read the following rules carefully, and then send in your postcard. Readers should particularly note that TWO efforts can be sent in on one card, but no effort may con-tain more than FOUR words.

Select two of the examples, and make up a sentence of TWO, THREE, or FOUR words having some bearing on the example. ONE of the words in your sentence must commence with one of the letters in the example.

You must study these rules carefully before you send in your effort:

- 1. All "Poplets" must be written on one side of a POSTCARD, and not more than two "Poplets" can be sent in by one reader each week.
- 2. The postcards must be addressed "Poplets" No. 19, the "Popular," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.
- 3. No correspondence can be entered into in connection with "Poplets."
- 4. The Editor's opinion on any matter, which may arise is to be accepted as final and legally binding. This condition will be strictly enforced, and readers can only enter the competition on this understanding.
- 5. I guarantee that every effort will be thoroughly examined by a competent staff of judges, PROVIDED that the effort is sent in on a POSTCARD, and that it is received on or before the date of closing.

All efforts must be received on or before

TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH to senders of the TEN BEST "POPLETS."

#### SPORT!

Every boy loves sport. Every boy loves a sports story. We have a grand, extra-long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, in this week's "Magnet" Library, which deals with a sports tournament at Greyfriars. A team of Lancashire lads comes to the school, and great is the rivalry between them and the Remove

to the school, and great is the rivalry between them and the Remove.

Therefore, I say to every boy, get this week's "Magnet" Library, and read the finest sports story ever written. Read how Billy Bunter wanted to box for the Remove—and how he boxed! It's a scream!

Boxing swimping supping eveling—all

Boxing, swimming, running, cycling—all kinds of sports. There is nothing to beat a really splendid school and sports story, my chums, and I am sure you will be very pleased I gave you the tip if you get the "Magnet" Library for the week-end.

## RESULT OF POPLETS COMPETITION No. 13.

The prize of five shillings has been awarded to the following readers:

Herbert, Brettell, 5, Attwood Street, Lye, Stourbridge.

Example: When Help Required. Poplet: Apply Study 1, Remove.

S. Bayliss, The Red House, West Byfleet, Surrey.

Refusing to Fag. Result of Hard "Knox."

- F. Gould, 9, Spout Lane, Walsall. When Help Required. True Friends Prove Themselves.
- J. Edwards, Jenkin Allis, Knighton, Rads. Cheering the Loser. Good Sportsmen Always Do.

Mary Young, 53, Union Street, Kirkintilloch, Scotland.

> Cheering the Loser. The Sportsman's Way.

Herbert Shaw, 61, Pontypridd Road, Porth, Rhondda, Glam.

Cheering the Loser Shows Good Sportsmanship.

J. Mather, 718, Atherton Road, Hindley Green, near Wigan.

Gussy's Tense Solos. Be (hoot) ifully Sublime.

A. T. Kirby, 16, Chequers Lane, Dagenham Dock, Essex.

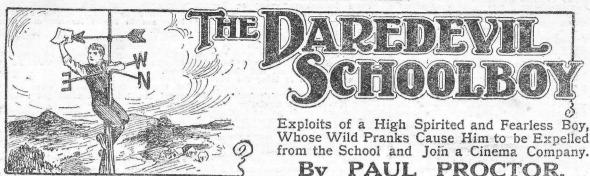
Cheering the Loser. Sporting Victor's First Thought.

Charles Radford, 22, Woodland Street, Lewisham, S.E.13.

Bunter's Favourite Pastime. Diving-in Study Cupboards.

A. W. Chandler, 37, York Street, Cowes. Explaining to Dutton. Hard With "Wun Lang."

#### AN ABSORBING NEW TALE OF THE GREAT CINEMA WORLD!



Get to know Daredevil Dick Trafford, the young hero of this exciting cinema serial. Then introduce him to your chums who are non-readers of the "Popular."

#### THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

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

Dick is turned away from home by his on the 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 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 previous 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 leaves his room by the window night he leaves his room by the window and saves Mrs. Henderson, who has been sleep-walking, from a terrible death. Her husband afterwards refuses to believe that Dick is a common thief, and in his gratitude he 'phones to Hesketh Moir, the great detective.

Hopson, a clerk of Mr. Henderson's, arrives with Moir, and is walking through the grounds when he overhears a conversation between Dr. Steele and

a conversation between Dr. Steele and the French maid. It appears that the girl, who had helped Steele to place the girl, who had helped Steele to place the pearls in Dick's trunk, threatens to give the whole show away. Dr. Steele, in his anger, reminds her that he is acquainted with her past dark history, and will reveal her real identity to the police if she as much as breathes a word.

(Now read on.)

#### His Chance At Last!

H! That surprises you, doesn't it?"
sneered the doctor. "I know more than you think! When your pretty face caught my fancy in the Montemarte I went to the trouble of finding out all I could about you, and I learned just who and what you were. That didn't matter to me. I could see you might, even he useful to me. I could see you might, even he useful to me. I learned just who and what you were. That didn't matter to me. I could see you might even be useful to me in my own work, and so I followed you back here to England! But I warn you, Madelaine Montrose, if you so much as breathe a word of what I told you to do for me—if you tell them that it was to me that you handed the pearls—then before Heaven I'll expose you, and have you handed over to the police! And, remember, Madelaine, the gendarmes of Paris are looking for you very diligently, with a warrant for your arrest over that nasty little affair of Le Moulin Rouge!"

The girl hesitated for a moment, gazing into the rage-distorted features of Dr. Jasper Steele.

Steele.

"If I go to prison, then you will also go with me!" she warned at last.
The doctor laughed callously.
"Rubbish!" he retorted. "I have done

The doctor laughed callously.

"Rubbish!" he retorted. "I have done nothing criminal. I did not steal the pearls. I shall say that it was you who took them and hid them in Trafford's luggage, hoping to retrieve them later. No, my dear; I shall not go to prison. There is no warrant out for me, but things will be different for you! Now, what is it to be? Look sharp!"

And Dr. Steele gave the poor girl's arm a savage twist which brought forth another little erv of pain.

savage twist which brought forth another little cry of pain.

Peter Hopson, seated in the summer-house, had the greatest difficulty in controlling himself. His impulse was to dash out and protect the defenceless girl, but wisdom bade him bide his time.

"Come on!" snarled the doctor again. "Answer me! What are you going to do, Madelaine?"

"Answer me! What are you going to do, Madelaine?"
"Sacre Coeur!" wailed the poor little French maid. "But you are cruel, monsieur! 'Tis true I am Madelaine Montrose, but since I 'ave been with Madame Henderson I 'ave run straight! I swear I 'ave! Oh, have mercy, monsieur! Do not send me to prison!"

" Either that, or your silence!" roared the

doctor.

"Then I must promise not to speak!" cried the Freuch maid.

"I can trust you?"

"Out, mousieur! I tell you I will not speak! Even if zey arrest me, I will keep silent! But you will wait for me, monsieur—you will marry me as you promised?"

The doctor gave a callous laugh

The doctor gave a callous laugh.
"You keep your promise first," h
"and we'll start talking abo
afterwards!" he sneered, about mine

Then, with a final brutal twist of the girl's arm, he flung her from him and, turning upon his heel, strode off without another

word.

So savage had been the force with which Dr. Steele had flung the girl away that she went sprawiling across a gravel path, and fell prone upon her knees before the summer-house within a few inches of where sat the witness of the interview, Peter Hopson.

Now he bent down, and, placing his arms about the heavy shoulders of the French maid, he gently helped her to her feet and drew her within the shelter of the summer-house.

"Don't cry!" he whispered.

"Bon't cry!" he whispered.
The girl gave a start, and, turning, gazed with frightened eyes into the sympathetic face of the poor clerk.

"But 'oo are you?" she cried anxiously.
"You 'ave 'eard everything?"
"Yes, everything!" answered Peter Honson

mopson.

"And you are another of the police?" cried Annette, in terror. "Yes, yes, of course! I saw you come wiz zee other man! Oh, mon Dieu—mon Dieu, this is the end!" "No, no!" cried Hopson quickly. "I am not a policeman. True, I came with the detective, but only to show him the way. Listen! I did hear everything that you and that man said to each other, but I will help you if only you will stop crying and answer a few questions."

"And you are not zee police?" asked the girl again, as if morning.

"And you are not zee police?" asked the girl again, as if unwilling to believe.
"No, no! I swear I am not!" answered

"But, tell me, who was that who

Hopson. "But, tell me, who was that who was talking to you?"
"It was Dr. Jasper Steele!" sobbed the girl. "E promised to marry me!"
"Yes, yes; I know!" went on Peter Hopson. "I heard you say so, and I heard him admit it. Now, listen! I am going to see Mr. Trafford, and tell him everything!"
"No, no! You must not do that!" cried Annette, lieside herself with fear.
"Hush! I shall protect you!" continued Hopson. "Listen! I shall tell him everything, but he will look after you. When the truth is known of how the doctor tried to make Mr. Trafford look like a thief, he may turn and try to harm you; but if you leave that to me and Mr. Trafford, I think it will be all right.
"Will you trust me? Remember, already it may have been discovered that your story about going on that message was not true. You had better let me help you! Will you?" Oh, yes, monsieur! I will—I will!" cried Annette, drying her eyes.
"Yery good," answered Peter Hopson.
"You leave it to me, and all will come right. Now, you run along back to the house and go on with your work as if nothing had happened, and I will go and see Mr. Trafford."
"Thank you, sir! I'll go at once,"

had happened, and I will go and see Mr. Trafford."

"Thank you, sir! I'll go at once," answered Annette.
And without further delay she turned and hastened back to the house.
Peter Hopson watched her disappear into the house by one of the side doors.

"Then he rece to his feet."

Then he rose to his feet.

"Now for it!" he cried, a light of determination in his eyes. "We'll see if Feter Hopson can't pay back his debt to Richard Trafford!"

#### Peter Hopson Repays His Debt!

7 ITH buoyant tread and a triumphant expression upon his face, Mr. Fustace K. Henderson's poor clerk, Peter Hopson, bent his footsteps in the direction of one of the garden doors of

Shoreton Towers.

Never had he felt more pleased in his life than at that moment.

Never had he felt more picased in his flet than at that moment.

Was not the prospect of being able to repay the kindness which Dick Trafford had shown him looming in the distance?

Thanks to the fortunate accident of over hearing the conversation between Dr. Jaspef Steele and Mrs. Henderson's little Frenct maid, Annette Foret, he was in a position te do inestimably good work for his benefactor, And he meant to do it.

He was going to once and for all clear Dick Trafford of all stigma which might have attached itself to him in consequence of Dr. Steele's treacherous plot.

With more courage and self-assurance than we suppose Peter Hopson had ever possessed in his life before, he made his way boldly up the gravel path which led to the main door into the house.

Arrived at the spacious hall, he unhesitatingly rang the bell.

junior clerk in Mr. Henderson's London fice. Perkins—the butler—considered himself miles above Hopson in the social scale.
"You rang, sir?" he asked, in a tone of

"You rang, sir?" he asked, in a tone of almost reproach.

"Yes," answered Hopson, either not noticing or ignoring the inference. "Will you please tell Mr. Henderson I want to see him?"

This time the butler's eyebrows went a shade higher.

"I beg your pardon, sir!" he remarked, in

"I beg your published the property of the prop

so at once: nopsen and one last two words.
"I don't think you quite understand, sir,"
"I don't think you quite understand, sir,"
"I don't think you quite understand, sir,"

"I don't think you quite understand, sir," returned the butler, in a superior tone. "Mr. Henderson is engaged."
"With whom?" demanded Hopson.
"Really, sir!" remonstrated the butler.
"With whom?" snapped out Hopson, and his boldness even surprised himself. "Tell me."

his boldness even surprised
me."

"I believe he is in the study, sir, having an
interview with a certain Mr. Hesketh Moir."
Peter Hopson nodded.
He knew quite well who Hesketh Moir was
—everyone in England knew that—for the
famous detective's name was known from one
end of the British Isles to the other.
"Is Mr. Trafford with him?" was his next
question.

question.
"I believe so, sir," answered the butler.
"Good!" ejaculated Peter Hopson. "Then
will you kindly do as I request, Perkins, and
tell Mr. Henderson that I must see him at once

The butler bowed stiffly, and, turning upon his heel, made his way in the direction of Mr. Henderson's study.

He knocked respectfully upon the door, and passed through a moment later.

A few seconds elapsed, and then he emerged once more, and came towards Peter Hopson, a supercilious and superior smile upon his face.

face. "This way!" he said, and led Peter back towards the door.

Peter, however, took no notice of the butler's expression and attitude, but straightway passed through into the room.

Here he found Mr. Eustace K. Henderson seated in an armchair, and before him the famous detective, Hesketh Moir, and Dick Trafford.

"Well?" exclaimed Mr. Henderson impatiently. "What do you want, Hopson? What do you mean by disturbing me and interrupting a most important interview? Do you realise that a man's honour rests upon the result of my conversation with this gentleman?" And he waved his hand in the direction of the famous detective.

"Yes, sir," answered Peter Hopson. "I realise all that—and that is why I am here!"

Mr. Henderson regarded his clerk in blank

amazement.

ement.
don't understand you!" he said at
a. "Kindly explain yourself—and length. yourself-and

length. "Kindly explain yoursell—and quickly, too!"
"Thank you, sir!" replied Hopson. "I am very anxious to do so. Less than a quarter of an hour ago you very kindly gave me permission to have a look round the magnificent grounds of Shoreton Towers. I did so, sir, and reached the summer-house overlooking the sea. I was seated there, sir, admiring the wonderful view from there, when I heard voices. The voices of a man and a woman—a French woman!"

Mr. Heuderson and both the detective and Dick sat up with a start, and listened still more intently.

Dick sat up with a start, and listened still more intently.

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Mr. Henderson impatiently. "Go on!"

"I had no desire to play the part of eavesdropper, sir," continued Hopson, "but I had no alternative."

"Will you go on?" cried Mr. Henderson, as he fidgeted about in his chair with scarcely-suppressed impatience. "Cut it short, man, and tell us what you heard!"

Peter Hopson slowly inclined his head.

"I will make it as short as possible, sir," he said. "As I sat there I overheard a man and a woman—who spoke with a distinct French

he said. "As I sat there I overheard a man and a woman—who spoke with a distinct French accent—having a heated alteration. It appears, sir, that the man—whom I afterwards discovered to be named Dr. Jasper Steele—had made the young French lady some promise of marriage, which, it seems, he is now unwilling to carry out. The young lady was begging him to keep his promise, or, as an alternative, give her sufficient money to get away to her French home. Dr. Steele refused to do this, sir, because he claimed THE POPULAR.—No. 125.

the young lady had not carried out his

instructions successfully.
"These instructions,"

instructions successfully.

"These instructions," went on Hopson, after pausing a few seconds to regain his breath, "appear to have been to take a certain pearl necklace from off Mrs. Henderson's dressing-table and hand it to him. It seems, sir, that he wished to gain possession of these pearls in order that he might hide them in the luggage belonging to Mr. Richard Trafford, and thus throw suspicion upon him as being the would be thief of the pearls.

"In some way Dr. Steele's dastardly plot to sully Mr. Trafford's reputation and good name does not appear to have been successful, and he is so enraged at the failure of his scheme that he now refuses to carry out his part of the bargain and marry the French maid, or even give her a sum of money to escape from the country before the police arrest her for her share in the affair.

"I happened to know, sir," concluded Peter Hopson, "that this gentleman," and he nodded towards Hesketh Moir, "was down here for the specific purpose of proving Mr. Trafford's innocence, and, if possible, tracing the real culprit, and so I naturally thought it my duty to acquaint you of the facts as I was fortunate enough to learn them.

"And, sir," added Peter Hopson, as he turned towards Dick, "I cannot tell you how glad I am to have been able to be of some service to you. You did me a good turn, sir, in pleading with Mr. Henderson upon my behalf, and I have not forgotten it. I told you if ever it was within my power to do you a service in return, I should do so, and I feel now that I have been able to keep my promise. It's rather like the fable of the mouse and the lion, perhaps, sir—but even we little mice of the world know the meaning of the word gratitude, and we have our tiny uses."

"You have, indeed!" returned Dick fervently, as he rose to his feet, and, crossing

ing of the word strip uses."

"You have, indeed!" returned Dick fervently, as he rose to his feet, and, crossing to where the poor clerk stood, seized his bond in his and wrung it warmly. "You hand in his and wrung it warmly. "You have no idea what a good service you have done me—far more in return than I did for

Then, turning to both the detective and r. Henderson, he added:

Mr

Intell, turning to both the detective and Mr. Henderson, he added:

"You hear what Mr. Hopson says, and I don't think there is any reason to doubt the truth of it. He could hardly make up such a story, and, personally, I have suspected something of this sort all along. What do you intend to do, Mr. Henderson? I know it is very difficult for you to know how to act for the best. Dr. Steele is a friend of yours and a guest in your house. But, then, so am I. What are you going to do?"

For a few seconds Mr. Henderson remained.

For a few seconds Mr. Henderson remained silent, as if deliberating with himself as to what was his best course of action.

sheller, as it deliberating with nitinsen as to what was his best course of action.

At length he spoke.

"I shall have Dr. Steele arrested immediately!" he said sternly. "I met the doctor in rather peculiar and casual circumstances. I never knew much about him; but he seemed a genial and affable type of man, and so when he evinced an interest in my place here I asked him down to stay the week-end. From the first my wife took some unaccountable dislike to him—women are strange like that; they seem to know by instinct if a man is a 'wrong 'un' or not—and, since the doctor is nothing more than a mere casual acquaintance, I shall have no hesitation in acting as my conscience dictates to me as being the only right and proper thing to do.

"I give you full and complete power, Mr.

being the only right and proper thing to do.

"I give you full and complete power, Mr.
Moir," he added, turning to the detective,
"to go right ahead and arrest the doctor!"
"Thank you, sir!" answered Hesketh
Moir. "I will do so at once!"
And he rose to his feet, with every intention of carrying out this course of action.
But this was not to be.
Even as Hesketh Moir rose to his feet and turned towards the door, the figure of a man who had been listening outside the French windows of Mr. Henderson's study crept swiftly away.

"Curse him!" he hissed. "That little fool of a clerk has ruined me!"
The man now turned and made for one of the gates which gave egress from the grounds, and as he did so the light fell upon his face.

his face.

The features were those of Dr. Jesper Steele, now distorted with savage hate and baffled rage.

He reached the gate, and, with one final contemptuous glance back at Shoreton Towers, he ran as fast as his legs would

carry him in the direction of the railway-station.

He arrived there, hot and out of breath, but relieved to find that he could catch the train due to depart for London in four

But those four minutes seemed like a year to Dr. Steele as he sat there in a first-class carriage, his eyes strained as he gazed fear-fully back along the road by which he had come.

Any moment he feared to see the figure of Hesketh Moir hastening after him to arrest him before he could get away to London.

Those four minutes were an agony of torture to the scoundrelly doctor, but at length the guard's whistle sounded with a shrill blast. It was like music to Dr. Steele, and he gave a sigh of intense relief as the train moved slowly out of the station. He was safe!

He was safe! They would never catch him now. In a little over an hour he would be in London, and it would be a simple matter to hide in the great metropolis. No one would find him

"But I'm not finished yet!" he hissed between his clenched teeth to himself. "I'll get that little whipper-snapper Trafford down yet before I've finished!" And how nearly he succeeded in his threat we shall shortly learn.

And, meanwhile, as Dr. Steele sat back in the train which with every revolution of its wheels was carrying him nearer to London, there was great commotion going on in the seaside residence of Mr. Eustace K. Henderson.

Five minutes had elapsed after the departure of Hesketh Moir from the cinema-producer's study with the instructions to arrest Dr. Steele, and then he returned and burst into the arms.

ducer's study with the instructions to arrest Dr. Steele, and then he returned and burst into the room.

His usually expressionless face now bore traces of bitter disappointment and anger.

"We're too late!" he cried. "Whilst we've been idly seated here talking, the real bird has flown! There's not the faintest sign of the doctor in the house or anywhere in the grounds, and a gardener, whom I asked if he had seen him, told me he saw him running as if his very life depended upon it, bareheaded, in the direction of the station.

"He's probably just caught the quarter-to train, and is now well on his way to London!" cried the detective in a disappointed tone. "But I'll get him yet! I'll telephone through to London Bridge, Victoria, and Clapham Junction to have anyone arrested who answers to the description which I shall give them of Dr. Jasper Steele! I'm not beaten yet, and I'm not going to be!"

But Hesketh Moir was wrong.

He was beaten, for he never arrested Dr.

Jasper Steele.

That individual was by no means deficient

of brains and low cunning himself.

As he sat there in the London-bound train

As he sat there in the London-bound trein he realised that, when his disappearance was discovered, the conclusion which would immediately be jumped to was that he had escaped to London by that very train.

And the doctor knew quite well that he was up against one of the most astute and resourceful detectives in England. He guessed—and rightly so—that Hesketh Moir would telephone through to all stations at which the train stopped for the police to arrest the man who had tried to incriminate Dick Trafford.

Dick Trafford.

This threw the doctor into a nervous fear.
What was he to do?
How could he outwit so clever a man as
Hesketh Moir?

Hesketh Moir?
But even as he was wracking his brains for some way out of the difficulty he felt the train slowing up.
A panic of fear overtook the doctor.
What if it should be stopping at a station, held up purposely by the signals in response to a telephone message from Moir?
The train would be searched, and he would be discovered and arrested.

The doctor sprang up in a frenzy of

The doctor sprang up in a renz, or terror.

"They sha'n't get me!" he cried hysterically. "They sha'n't get me!"

Now, the train in which the doctor was travelling was almost at a standstill, and Dr. Steele noticed that it was running into

But standing upon the down line was another train—almost ready to start it

seemed.

And then a sudden and desperate idea occurred to the scoundrelly doctor.

He would double back on his tracks to clude his pursuers.

Now his own train was at a standstill in the statics and

Now his own train was at a standstill in the station, and without wasting a moment of precious time, Dr. Steele approached that door of his carriage which was nearest the stationary down train upon the other line, and as he did so he thanked Heaven that he was fortunate enough to have the carriage to himself.

In the other train he espied another empty

In the other train he espied another empty carriage.

In a flash he had opened the door of his carriage and swung himself out swiftly on to the footboard, then he gave a leap and landed upon the footboard of the down train, which even at that moment commenced to move forward.

The next instant Dr. Jasper Steele had wrenched open the door to the empty carriage of the down train, and climbing into it, and slamming the door to after him, he sank back upon the cushions with a sigh of relief.

he sank back upon the of relief.

"Beaten them!" he breathed. "They'll never get me now!"

And he was right—they never did!

The train which the doctor had so luckily for himself been able to change to was bound direct for Eastbourne, where the doctor alighted.

Those this seaside resort he worked his

From this seaside resort he worked his way along the coast until he reached Dover, and there he boarded a cross-Channel steamer to France, to lie low until the hue and cry which would be raised after him had died down.

#### Full Steam Ahead for the Pictures!

ND back in Shoreton Towers a very

ND back in Shoreton Towers a very happy little gathering took place—all were happy, that is to say, with the exception of Mr. Hesketh outwitted by the doctor.

Mr. Eustace K. Henderson sat at the head of the table in his study with his solicitor, Mr. Robinson, on his left, while the poor clerk, Peter Hopson, sat at the cinema nagnate's left elbow, ready with shorthand notebook and pencil to take down anything required. required.

The only other two individuals present were Mrs. Henderson and Dick Trafford.

were Mrs. Henderson and Dick Trafford.

The detective was still frantically ringing up police-stations all over the country in a desperate effort to prevent Dr. Jasper Steele from escaping him—but he was too late.

"Well," said Mr. Henderson, "now that the mystery of my wife's pearls has been most satisfactorily cleared up, I think we might get to business, Mr. Trafford, and go full speed ahead for the picture work I have engaged you!"

Dick Trafford nodded his head emphatically. He was keen and anxious to begin.

engaged you!"
Dick Trafford nodded his head emphatically. He was keen and anxious to begin.
"I don't think we need trouble our heads again with Dr. Jasper Steele," went on Mr. Henderson. "He's gone—and I don't suppose we shall see anything more of him."
And as Mr. Henderson spoke the words, a feeling of intense happiness rose in the breast of Peter Hopson, as he realised that the sudden flight of the doctor had prevented him from exposing the true character and past life of the little French maid, Annette Foret. She, at any rate, had no longer anything to fear from him, and Peter Hopson was glad that this girl, who was trying so hard to make good after her early lapses, was to be given a chance to win out. He felt sure that this last little divergence from the straight and narrow path would have its good results.

Mr. Henderson was speaking again:
"But, Mr. Trafford," he said, "before we finally dismiss all thought and reference to the doctor, I should be interested to hear why he seemed so bitter and vindictively disposed towards you."

Dick gave a short laugh.

"Oh, I don't mind telling you that, Mr. Henderson" he answered, "Now that Dr.

"Oh, I don't mind telling you that, Mr. Henderson," he answered. "Now that Dr. Steele is no longer under your roof as a guest, I no longer have any reason to remain silent."

And then, without further hesitation, Dick Trafford told Mr. Henderson how he had shown up the scoundrelly headmaster before the governors of St. Peter's by sticking that incriminating letter upon the arrow of the weathercock.

The letter which he had found from the unscrupulous manager of the catering firm

which supplied St. Peter's with food, in which it was clearly revealed that only half the amount allowed by the governors for the feeding of the boys was really being used, and that the balance was going half each into the pockets of this swindling catering manager, and the seoundrelly headmaster, Dr. Jasper Steele.

Dr. Jasper Steele.

"Even as he was relieved of his position as headmaster by the governors, and sent in disgrace to his study, whilst they deliberated as to whether they should prosecute him or not," concluded Dick, "he passed within a few feet of me, and even then he swore to get even with me for having exposed his dishonesty, and I suppose this was the way he tried to do it. He very nearly succeeded, too, and had it not been for the kindness of Mrs. Henderson here, in interceding upon my behalf, I really think the doctor's plan might have had the result he hoped it might."

"Hush, hush!" cried Mr. Henderson quickly

"Hush, hush!" cried Mr. Henderson quickly. as he raised his hand in protest. "You must forgive me, Mr. Trafford, if at first I seemed inclined to suspect you. All that is satisfactorily cleared up now, and I should esteem it a favour if you would never refer to it again.

to it again.

"But this adventure of yours in connection with the weathercock on the spire at St. Peter's School! It is really most interesting, and I compliment you upon your pluck in acting as you did. You risked your life to better your schoolmates. A very noble act! But the idea of scaling a tall spire such as I know that to be, shows me that you are indeed the type of dare-devil I have been looking for.

such as I know that to be, shows me that you are indeed the type of dare-devil I have been looking for.

"Some day we may include some such incident in a moving-picture story. You could always do it again, of course. But for the time being, let us both sign this new contract which Mr. Robinson has, at my instructions, been preparing.

"The first one, which was destroyed owing to a regrettable misunderstanding was, I think, for five thousand pounds a year. This one you will find is for six thousand. No, no!" cried Mr. Henderson as he saw protest coming from Dick. "I wish you to accept it without question. I have deeply wronged you within the last few hours, and this is my way of showing my regret. Sign the contract, Mr. Trafford, and we'll get right ahead with the cinema work to-day. I'll take you down to the studio in my car presently."

"Thank you, sir," answered Dick. "And when do we start the actual picture work?"

Mr. Henderson shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, I don't know," he said. "If the light's good enough, we might try out something this afternoon."
"Good!" returned Dick. "Well, I'm ready,

when you are!"

It was the afternoon following that eventful morning upon which the treachery of Dr. Jasper Steele had been revealed by Peter Hopson, that a powerful six-cylinder car ran through the village of Brançaster.

"We're nearly there!" remarked Henderson, as he turned from the driving-wheel to Dick who sat beside him. "You see that huge, glass-roofed erection in the distance?"

who sat beside him. "You see that huge, glass-roofed erection in the distance?"
Dick nodded.
"That's my studio," announced Henderson, with pardonable pride. "A day and night studio. By day I can 'take' in the light which streams in through the glass roof—which, if I desire, I can slide to one side—and by night I can 'take' equally well, for I have one of the most comprehensive electric installations of mercury vapour lamps that you can see this side of the Atlantic. I make my own power, too, so that I am completely independent of the vagaries of any electric light company, and need never worry about possible strikes. I believe in being self-reliant; it's the only way to go ahead. So sure as you depend upon any particular concern to help you carry on your business, you may be certain that they will let you down at the vital moment.

"All my workpeople live in the vicinity, and I have a private telephone-exchange. Each little cottage has its instrument, and thus I can summon any one or all of my employees to the studio at a moment's notice, if necessary.

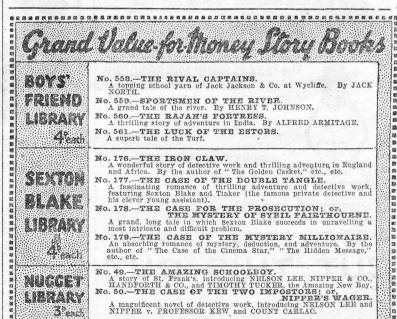
"I'm afraid I rather took Brancaster by

to the studio at a moment's notice, if necessary.

"I'm afraid I rather took Brancaster by storm when I first arrived and started work," went on Henderson. They couldn't understand things at all at first, but after a bit they ceased to regard me as a magician who conjured up a little city in their midst, but as a go-ahead Yankee, who was prepared to pay liberally to those who assisted him in his enterprise. It was amusing to see the old-fashioned villagers coming round one by one. I've got them all working for me now. Fishing used to be their main way of getting a living, but I don't suppose you could find a fisherman now who practised his trade. No; they're cither all working in the factory developing and printing the films, or else the more intelligent of them are developing into actors and actresses.

actors and actresses. what a lot of latent artistic talent there is to be found in a tiny little place like this. I was myself!"

(To be continued.)



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#### CENTLEMAN JIM'S STRATACEM !

(Continued from page 11.) 

all safe for me to enter, and when we are ready you will let me in at night—"
"Never! Never that!"

The cracksman's eyes gleamed dangerously.

"That is the way you speak to your father, Kit!" he said in a hard voice.
"Take care!"

Take care:
The boy gave him a bitter look.
"Are you my father?" he said.
"What!" Gentleman Jim started forward, his eyes on the boy's face.
"What do you say? Who has been tell-

ing you-

ing you—" He broke off. "You mad young fool! What has put that folly into your head?"
"I have thought of it many times," said Erroll, with quiet bitterness. "You have never treated me as a son. I never heavy a methor." knew a mother. I never knew a rela-

knew a mother. I never knew a relation."

"Oh, you are mad!" muttered Gentleman Jim. "I have no more time to waste here, Kit. Remember my orders!"

"I will not obey them!" said Erroll steadily. "I told you at our wretched home that you should never make me a thief. You cheated me into going to Rookwood. You said nothing of this then. I will die before I will lift a finger to help you to rob Rookwood!"

"You will obey, Kit, or you will take the consequences!" said Gentleman Jim

between his teeth. "Enough now. the

shall see you again. Return to the school, and hold your tongue!"

The cracksman turned away and disappeared into the wood. With a heavy heart Kit Erroll tramped away to Rookwood.

It had come at last-what he had

known must come.

Gentleman Jim might give his orders, but they would not be obeyed. Upon that point at least Kit Erroll's mind was clear, and his resolution would never be shaken.

THE END.

(Another splendid story of Rookwood next week. Don't forget there is a splendid story of Jimmy Silver & Co. in the "Boys' Friend" every Monday.)



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