

A FOOTBALL FOR A POSTCARD!

See the "Poplets" Competition on Page 19.

Week Ending—
Oct. 8th, 1921.

New Series,
No. 142.

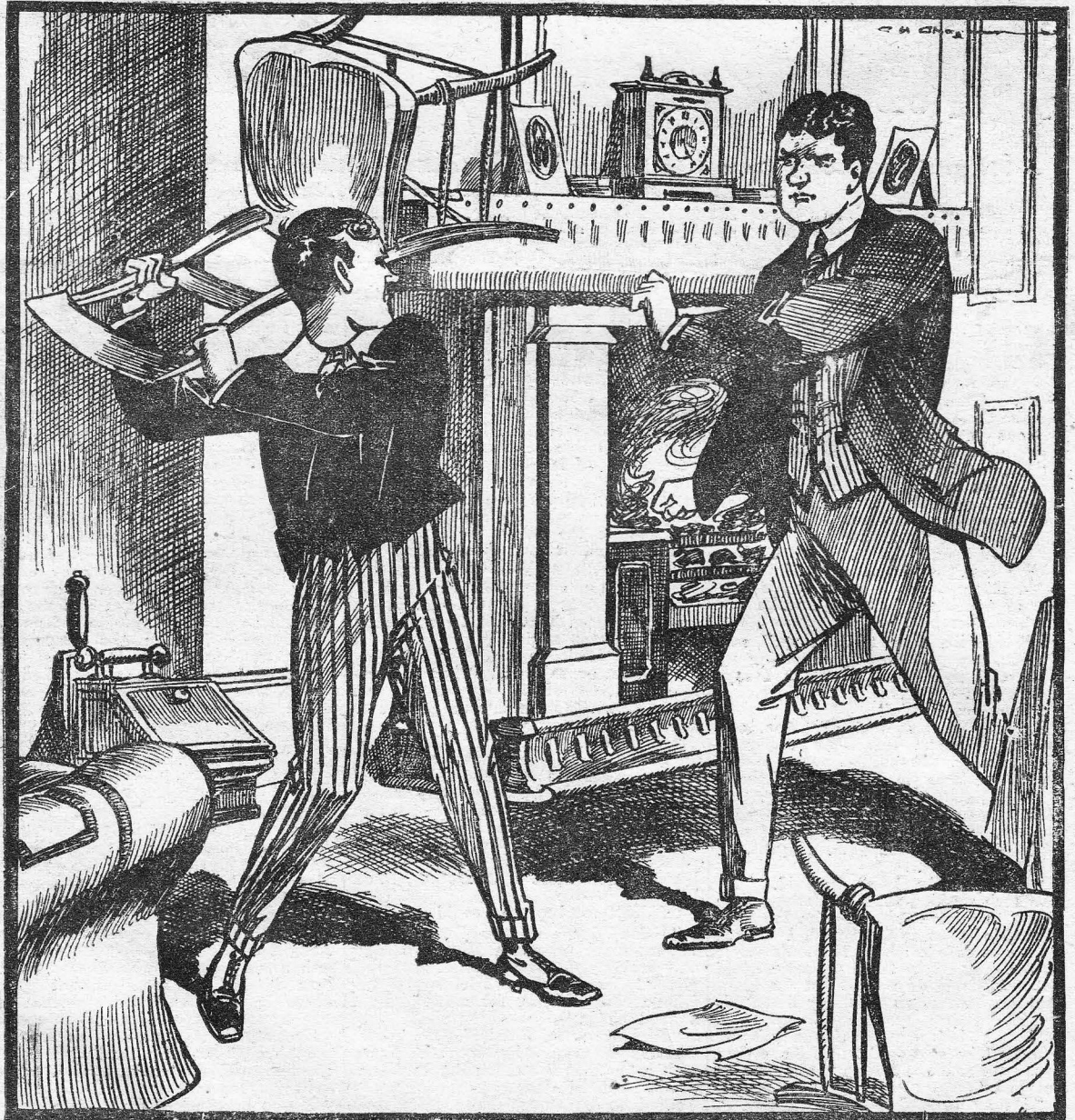
Greyfriars

The POPULAR

11d
12d

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

Rookwood St. Jims



THE BOUNDER AT BAY!

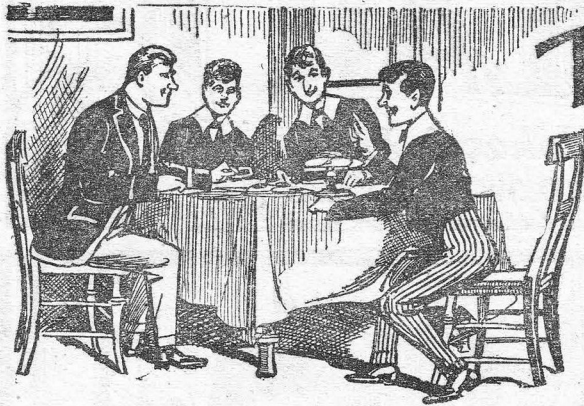
(An Amazing Incident in the Long Complete Tale in this Issue.)

**TWO LONG
COMPLETE SCHOOL
TALES
EVERY WEEK.**



**"BILLY BUNTER'S
WEEKLY!"**

Grand Four-page Supplement.
Edited by **WILLIAM GEORGE
BUNTER** of Greyfriars.



The Bounder's Comedy!

A Magnificent Long Complete School Story, dealing with the Early Adventures of
HARRY WHARTON & CO. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Shadow of Sorrow!

HERE you are, Franky!" Frank Nugent looked up with gloomy brow, as he reached the gates of Greyfriars. Three Removites were waiting for him there, and Frank nodded to them without speaking. Harry Wharton slipped his arm through his chum's.

"We've been bribing Gosling to keep the gates open till you came in, Franky," said Bob Cherry. "Do you know you came near being locked out?"

"Yes. I didn't notice the time."

"We've bribed and corrupted Gosling with a bob," said Johnny Bull. "But you'd better come in now, or his conscience will begin to work, and he will want another bob."

"Which it's time to lock up," said Gosling, the porter, gruffly, coming up with his bunch of keys. "Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Come in, Frank."

Frank walked in with Wharton, and Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry followed more slowly. The school-porter closed the gates with a clang, and locked them.

"Dick hasn't come in," said Wharton, as he crossed the dusky Close with Nugent. "Gatty came back, and said Dick had gone with Mrs. Nugent."

Frank nodded.

"I suppose he has," he said. "I—I've been walking about for a long time trying to think it out. I—I'm the most miserable rotter in the world, I think."

There was a catch in Nugent's voice. In the dusk of the Close Wharton could not see his chum's face, but he knew that the tears were rolling down his cheeks.

"Don't let's go in for a minute, Franky," he said softly. "Take a turn round the Close. I hope it hasn't turned out bad."

"I may as well tell you, Harry. I suppose all Greyfriars will know about it by to-morrow," said Frank wretchedly.

"My mother can't get on with the pater, and she's left him."

"Good heavens! I say, I'm sorry, Frank, old man."

"I know you are, Harry. She's taken Dick away, and—and the pater doesn't know yet. I shouldn't be surprised to see him down here. I—I don't know what will come of it. I knew there was a lot of trouble at home, but—but I never dreamed it would come to this."

"What's a chap to do when his parents can't agree? He can't side with both of them, and he can't side with one against the other. And he can't be indifferent. I don't think a chap was ever in a rottener position."

"It's rotten enough, Franky. Is it really so serious as all that—not just a bit of a storm that will blow over?" asked Wharton anxiously.

Nugent shook his head.

"The mater says not. They've separated. It—it seems impossible, but there it is. There won't be any home after this, I suppose."

"Poor old Frank!"

"Dick's gone; but the mater will find him more trouble than she thinks. And—and very likely father will say that I ought to have kept Dick here—perhaps I ought. If I'd spoken to the Head, he'd have kept Dick here till he knew what father wanted in the matter. But I couldn't interfere with mother, could I?"

"I don't see how you could, Frank."

"I don't know what will come of it. Let me alone for a bit, Harry. I shall only make you feel as rotten as I feel myself! And—and don't let any of the fellows come looking for me, there's a good chap!"

"Right you are, Frank!"

Harry Wharton went into the house with a troubled brow, leaving his chum in the Close. He saw that Nugent wanted to be alone. Even his closest chum's company was irksome to him at the moment.

But solitude was as painful. The un-

happy boy was trying to think it out; but there was no solution of the difficulty that he could arrive at. His father and mother had quarrelled and separated; there was nothing he could do. If love for their children could not keep them together and patch up a peace, it was not likely that they would listen to anything Frank could say. And, whatever the faults upon both sides, it was no duty of a lad to lecture his parents. Frank had nothing to do but to submit to Fate—to make the best of it.

He did not feel like making the best of it just then. On the morrow all the school would know about it—they would know why Dicky had left; they would look at him, they would jeer or be sorry, according to their natures; and the boy felt that he would be able to endure the jeers more easily than the compassion.

He wandered into the quiet old Cloisters of Greyfriars, and walked up and down there under the old stone arches, on the old stone flags that had been worn by the feet of generations of Greyfriars boys and generations of dead-and-gone monks before them.

His brows were burning; his eyes were heavy with unshed tears.

What was he to do?

How could he face the future with a shattered home always in his mind? How could he take up his life at Greyfriars again and pursue it, knowing what had happened? He thought of the Form-room, of the study, of the footer-field, with a strange new nausea at the thought of them. He felt a longing to rush away from all who knew him—to bury himself in some distant place, where he could endure his sorrow un-seen by mocking or compassionate eyes.

He paused, weary with his restless tramping to and fro, and leaned his burning, aching forehead against one of the old stone pillars.

The cool contact of the stone refreshed him—seemed to make him able to think more clearly.

He tried to decide what he should do.

He felt that he ought to leave Greyfriars, yet to tear himself away from his friends, away from his daily associations—how was he to do that?

Yet to face the fellows, feeling that every one of them was thinking about his wretched misfortune. He felt that he could not even enter the lighted School House now, and let the other fellows see his flushed and fevered face.

A voice called from the dusk of the Close. Someone was calling his name.

"Nugent! Nugent!"
He did not answer. He stood there, leaning upon the stone pillar, motionless, silent, almost dazed by the stress of emotion he had gone through.

"Nugent!"
"Frank!"
It was Johnny Bull's voice. Bull came striding into the Cloisters, and he caught a glimpse of the shadowy figure by the pillar, and hurried up to Nugent.

"Nugent, old man—"
Nugent looked at him without speaking. Johnny Bull could see the glimmer of his deadly white face in the darkness.

"Frank! Your pater's come!"
Nugent started.
"My father! He's here?"
"Yes. He's waiting for you in your study," said Bull. "I came out to look for you. I suppose you wanted to know?"

"Yes, yes; thanks!" said Frank confusedly. "Has he been here long?"

"I don't know. He's seen the Head, and then he came to your study. Wharton's with him, and he asked me to come and find you."

"Thanks! I'll go in now."
Johnny Bull hesitated.

"I—I say, Frank, I don't know what's the matter, but—but I'm sorry to see you crooked like this!" he said. "I wish I could do something or other!"

"It's all right, Johnny! Tell my pater I'm coming in."

"Right-ho!"
Johnny Bull disappeared in the shadows of the Close. Frank moved away wearily towards the fountain, and bathed his face in the cool water, and dabbed it with his handkerchief. Then he hurried towards the School House.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Father and Son!**

MR. NUGENT was in Study No. 1, waiting for his son. Harry Wharton was with him, but as Frank entered Wharton quietly left the study and closed the door behind him. Mr. Nugent was standing by the window. He fixed his eyes upon his son as Frank came in.

Frank could see that his father was very much disturbed. His face was paler than usual, and there was a troubled, angry frown upon his brow. Mr. Nugent looked like a man who found himself suddenly in an unexpected situation, with which he felt himself unable to deal.

"Well, Frank?"
"Well, dad?"
Mr. Nugent hesitated a moment, and then plunged into the matter.

"Have you heard from your mother lately, Frank?"
"Yes, dad."
"Have you seen her?"
"Yes."

Mr. Nugent started a little.
"Then you—know?"

"Yes," said Frank miserably.
His father frowned. He hardly seemed to know what to say to his son, and yet it was necessary to say something.

"You don't understand these things, Frank," he said at length. "I can

assure you, however, that what has happened was not my fault."

Frank was silent.
"Do you think it was your father's fault, Frank?" demanded Mr. Nugent, raising his voice a little.

Like many men of irresolute nature, he felt himself stronger when he was angry.

"I don't know, dad. It's not for me to say either way," said Frank. "I know that it's made me very miserable."

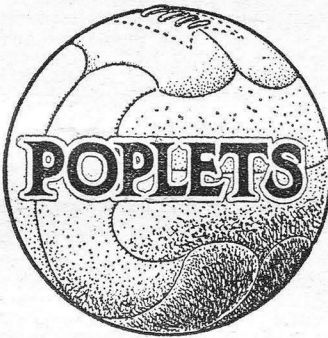
"I suppose it has, my boy," said his father, softening again. "But it can't be helped. I should not have told you anything about it yet, only I was sure your mother would come here to see Dicky. Has she seen Dicky?"

Frank breathed hard. He wondered what his father would say when he knew that Mrs. Nugent had taken Dicky away from Greyfriars.

"Come, Frank, tell me! Has Dicky been told anything about it?"

"Yes, dad."
"What does he say?"
"I don't know. He's not here."

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"Not here?" exclaimed Mr. Nugent.
"No."

"What do you mean? If he is not here, where is he?" exclaimed Mr. Nugent, his voice rising again.

"Mother has taken him with her."
"Taken him away from the school?"
"Yes."

"Good heavens!"
Mr. Nugent paced to and fro in the study for a few minutes in a state of angry agitation. Frank stood silent.

Mr. Nugent stopped at last, and glanced at his son.
"Did you know your mother was going to take Dick away?" he asked.

"Yes. I saw her at the station, and she told me. She sent Dick a wire, and he went to the village to meet her. He hasn't come back."

"You should have warned me!" exclaimed his father angrily. "You should have kept Dick in. You should have told the Head."

Frank did not reply.
"You have done wrong, Frank!" said Mr. Nugent sharply. "You know very well that Dick should not have been taken away by his mother in this—this irresponsible flight. It was all about nothing, too—nothing at all but your mother's incredible obstinacy!"

Frank's look became resentful.
"I don't suppose it was all mother's fault," he said.

Mr. Nugent snapped his teeth.

"Ha! I expected that of you, Frank! You think I am to blame. Listen to me. It was all about nothing. I will not allow your mother to make you fancy that there has been anything serious!"

"Mother has not told me anything about it, except—"

"Except what?"
"Oh! Nothing!"

"I insist upon knowing what she has told you!" exclaimed Mr. Nugent excitedly. "You may speak to me freely, Frank. I am a calm and reasonable man. I am not a foolish, flighty, and obstinate woman. I make it a point to keep my temper, and to remain patient, under all circumstances—even the most irritating circumstances. Only this morning I explained to your mother, in the most patient manner possible, that I should not allow her folly and obstinacy to irritate me, or to disturb my equanimity in any way. And after that, she has left home. It is incredible! I insist upon knowing what explanation she has given you. Probably she has complained of my temper?"

"Yes, dad, that was it."

"My temper!" exclaimed Mr. Nugent indignantly. "You know what a good-tempered man I am, Frank." Mr. Nugent looked very bad-tempered indeed at this moment. "I appeal to you as my son. Have you ever, on a single occasion, known me to be hasty or obstinate?"

As Frank had never known his father to be anything else, he was in somewhat of a difficulty what to reply. Fortunately, Mr. Nugent did not require an answer. He was only pausing for breath, not for a reply.

"It is incredible!" he repeated. "Good heavens! What will people think of her leaving home? Naturally, they will think the fault is with me. It is not with me, Frank. I have been most reasonable—most reasonable. There is not the slightest doubt that the kidneys were burnt."

Frank gave a jump.
"The what?" he exclaimed.
"The kidneys," said Mr. Nugent.
"But—but what—"

"You are aware," said Mr. Nugent, "that I have bacon and kidneys for my breakfast every morning. I have done so all my life, ever since I can remember, almost; and I claim to be able to tell whether they are properly cooked or not. They were burnt."

"Father!"
"I suggested, in the gentlest possible manner, that the cook should be discharged. It would be far from me to interfere with your mother's proper authority in the household. I merely said that, unless the cook were discharged, it would be necessary for me to breakfast in the City. Your mother refused to discharge the cook. Refused, Frank!"

"Oh!"
"I was very calm. I make it a point to remain calm under all circumstances, as you know. I think that is the duty of the father of a family. It was quite by accident that I pushed the plate off the table with my elbow, and that it fell to the floor. Your mother promptly declared that a new carpet would be required. I stated immediately that I should not consider for one moment the purchase of a new carpet. If your mother had then admitted that she was wrong, and discharged the cook, there would have been no trouble at all."

Frank was silent.

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The cause of the family trouble would have made him smile, if he had not been directly concerned by it. But a quarrel with the lightest and most frivolous beginnings might easily develop into a lifelong estrangement, and the quarrel in the Nugent household had gone far beyond its original foolish cause now.

"I suppose I must go and see the Head now," said Mr. Nugent. "It is awkward for me—most awkward. However, I shall assure him that Dick will return to the school immediately."

"Yes, father."

Mr. Nugent strode to the door and threw it open. There was a sudden exclamation in the passage, and a fat junior flopped on the linoleum almost under Mr. Nugent's feet. Frank uttered a cry of rage.

"Bunter, you cad! You've been listening!"

Bunter gasped.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

Mr. Nugent, with a glance of angry contempt, pushed Bunter aside and strode away. Billy Bunter scrambled up, and blinked nervously at Nugent.

"You rotten cad!" groaned Frank.

"It will be all over the school now."

"I—I haven't heard anything," said Bunter. "I was stooping down to tie up my shoelace, that's all. I didn't know your father was here, Nugent, and I never heard him say anything about your mater bolting— Oh!"

Bunter made a spring out of the study as Nugent ran towards him with his fists clenched. Bunter's footsteps died away down the passage.

Frank Nugent stood with knitted brows and set teeth. Bunter, the spy and tattler of the Lower School, had heard it all—in a short time it would be common property to all Greyfriars. Nugent groaned.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Bouncer Has An Idea!

VERNON-SMITH, the Bouncer of Greyfriars, was in his study. Vernon-Smith's table was set for tea, and there was a pleasant scent in the study of boiled ham and eggs. Bolsover major and Snoop were there to tea, and they were looking very pleased with the prospect. Vernon-Smith's feeds were famous in the Remove; the Bouncer was a very rich fellow for a junior, and when he was in the humour, or had any point to gain, he would spend money lavishly. The Bouncer had a point to gain now. He was generally in opposition to Harry Wharton & Co., and his feeling towards Study No. 1 was very bitter just now.

Harry Wharton & Co. were getting up a play. Vernon-Smith had been offered a part—a very small part, it is true. The Bouncer had refused it, and slammed the door of Study No. 1 in his wrath.

The feed he was now giving was for the purpose of soliciting the aid of his cronies in getting up some scheme to interfere with Wharton's production.

The study door opened, and a pair of large spectacles glimmered in. Vernon-Smith cast an angry look at Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Remove had a gift for scenting out feeds that was almost miraculous.

"Get out, you fat cad!" growled the Bouncer.

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter affably, apparently not hearing the remark. "I didn't know you were feeding. I haven't come here for tea, though; I've had my tea, and I've got some news."

"Oh, rot!"

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE NEW PORTER!"

"It's jolly interesting," said Bunter, blinking at Vernon-Smith. "Of course, I shouldn't mention it to you if Nugent had been civil about it. But when a chap goes for you with both fists, because you happened to hear about his family rows by accident—"

"Family—rows!" said Bolsover. "Have they been having trouble in Study No. 1?"

"N-o," said Bunter. "I mean about Nugent's mater bolting."

"What?"

"You didn't know, I suppose—"

"What are you giving us?" said Vernon-Smith suspiciously. "You'd better not let Nugent hear you yarning about his mater, you ass!"

"Oh, really, Smithy! Nugent couldn't deny it, as it's true."

"True that his mater's bolted?"

"Yes."

"How do you know—"

"I happened to stoop down to tie up my shoe-lace while Nugent's mater was talking to him in Study No. 1," said Bunter. "I chanced to hear—"

Bolsover chuckled.

"I've no doubt about that," he remarked. "You happen to hear lots of things, don't you, Bunter—and your shoe-lace always wants tying when you're near a keyhole?"

"He, he, he!" cackled Snoop.

"Oh, really, Bolsover! I trust you don't think I would listen to a private conversation," said Bunter indignantly.

"What I happen to hear is another matter. However, if you fellows don't want to hear about it—"

"Hold on, Bunter!" said Vernon-Smith cordially. "Have some ham and eggs, will you? We're quite well supplied. And some tea. And there's tarts to finish with."

"I don't mind if I do, Vernon-Smith, as you're so pressing," said Billy Bunter, drawing a chair up to the table. "I've had tea in Hall, but you know the kind of tea you get there. I couldn't have any in my study; I've been disappointed about a postal-order, and I happen to be short of cash at the present moment. Yes, I'll have some ham—and you may as well give me three or four eggs at once; it will save the trouble of passing the dish again. And some pickles. And some toast."

Billy Bunter sat down to tea. The three juniors waited for him to go on with his information; but Bunter seemed to have forgotten it. He was very busy now with the ham, and eggs, and toast.

"Well," said the Bouncer, at last, "about Nugent—"

"I say, you fellows, this ham is prime!"

"Yes; but about—"

"Is that tongue over there, Smithy?"

"Yes."

"I'll have some, if you don't mind."

"Here you are?"

"Thanks!"

And Bunter's jaws worked rapidly, but only in the way of eating. He seemed too busy to talk. Vernon-Smith waited some minutes impatiently. Bunter knew that Vernon-Smith's study was the place to retail anything to the disadvantage of Harry Wharton & Co., but now that he was feeding all other matters vanished from his mind.

"I'm waiting," said Vernon-Smith.

"Eh?"

"What's that about Nugent's mater bolting?"

"I really don't know whether I ought to tell you fellows, after all," said Billy Bunter thoughtfully. "Upon the whole, perhaps I'd better keep it dark."

Vernon-Smith's hand closed upon the handle of the poker, and Billy Bunter went on rather hurriedly. "But if

you'd care to hear about it, all right. I happened to hear all that Nugent's mater said to him in Study No. 1—"

"Your bootlace happened to take a long time to tie up!" Bolsover major suggested, with heavy sarcasm.

Billy Bunter blinked at him, and nodded.

"Just so!" he agreed. "That's how it was, and I heard it all. There's been a row in Nugent's house, and his mater has bolted, and taken young Dick with her."

"By Jove," said Bolsover, "there's something in it—Nugent minor has gone!"

"There you are," said Billy Bunter. "Old Nugent is going to tell the Head that he's coming back in a day or two. He's gone with his mater now. Old Nugent seems to be a ridiculous old duffer. He quarrelled with his wife about the kidneys and bacon being burnt for brekker, and she bolted. She's gone off on her own, and old Nugent is on his lonesome—a giddy grass-widower, you know. Nugent major is looking jolly down in the mouth about it, I can tell you!"

Vernon-Smith uttered a quick exclamation.

"My hat! I've got it!"

"Got what?" asked Billy Bunter.

"What I wanted—an idea," said the Bouncer coolly. "But I'm not going to tell you, to babble it all over the school. You can clear off!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Get out!"

"But I haven't finished my tea yet!" roared Bunter.

"You've finished enough for two already," said the Bouncer. "Get out! Will you walk out, or go out on your neck?"

"Look here—"

"And you'd better not let Nugent know that you've told us this," added the Bouncer. "If I know anything of him, he'll scalp you bald-headed if he knows you've been talking about him. There's the door!"

"I—I say—"

"Chuck him out, Bolsover!"

"Certainly," said Bolsover, rising.

Billy Bunter jumped up. He grasped a couple of jam-tarts in one hand and a cake in the other, and skipped to the door. Bolsover opened the door and raised his foot. The Owl of the Remove darted into the passage, and narrowly escaped the lunge of Bolsover's boot.

"Buzz off!" said Bolsover. "And don't stoop down here to tie up your bootlace, either. If I catch you—"

"Oh, really—"

Bolsover slammed the door.

"What's the idea, Smith?" asked Snoop, as Bolsover resumed his place at the table, and his attacks upon the ham and eggs.

Vernon-Smith's eyes gleamed.

"What price bringing out a rival play?" he asked.

"A rival play?" said Bolsover major.

"That's the wheeze! I think if we brought out a really good comedy, it would cut out the heavy drama they're getting up in Study No. 1. What?"

"I don't quite catch on," said Bolsover. "What comedy?"

"I shall write it myself."

"Oh!"

"And it will tickle the fellows immensely—a comic skit, you know, with personal applications to fellows we all know," said the Bouncer coolly. "It will be called 'The Grass-Widower; or, Why Henry Left Home!'"

Bolsover and Snoop yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I rather think that will make Study



"Are you asleep, Nugent?" asked Vernon-Smith. "Nugent, old man—" A boot came flying through the air, and the Bounder, who had raised himself on his elbow to call Nugent, received it on his chin. "Ow! Who threw that boot?" he roared. "You'll have the foot as well if you don't shut up!" said Bob Cherry. (See Chapter 4.)

No. 1 sing rather small, eh?" said the Bounder, with a chuckle.

And the Bounder's friends agreed cordially that it would.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. The Comedy!

FRANK NUGENT did not come down into the Common-room that evening. Neither did he do his preparation in the study. He spent the evening in listless, miserable thought. His father had gone from Greyfriars, assuring Frank before he went that Dick would be sent back the following day. Frank doubted it. He did not believe that his mother would part with Dicky; and he did not think that she would have a very happy time keeping him with her.

Dicky would not enjoy the part he had to play, of consoling a bereaved woman and sharing her solitude and grief. Dicky was too young and too careless to understand such things, and after a day or two he would certainly be pining for Greyfriars, and the excitements of life in the Second Form. But Frank was sure that his mother would not part with the boy, and the matter would be a fresh cause of disagreement between his parents, and would probably end in making a reconciliation impossible.

Absurd as the cause of the estrangement was, the estrangement itself was serious enough; and Frank knew that every day it lasted would make reconciliation more difficult.

Frank Nugent was not seen again by the Removites until bed-time, when he went up to the Remove dormitory with the rest. He was pale, and very quiet. Wingate of the Sixth, who was seeing lights out for the Remove, looked at him very curiously in the dormitory.

"Are you ill, Nugent?" he asked suddenly.

Frank Nugent coloured.

"No," he answered.

"You are looking very seedy," said Wingate, with real concern. "You must take care of yourself, you know."

"I'm all right, thanks."

"Turn in, you kids!" said Wingate, laughing.

The Removites turned in, and the captain of Greyfriars put out the light and retired.

There was the usual buzz of talk after lights out.

Frank Nugent was silent. He was not inclined to sleep; he was feeling troubled and restless. But neither was he inclined to talk. The amateur dramatists of the Remove began to chat on the subject of the coming representation of "Julius Caesar," in the hope of interesting Frank and cheering him up; but he was not to be drawn.

Vernon-Smith was also talking to Bolsover and Snoop, who were in the beds on either side of the Bounder's.

"I shall put you down for the part of the Widower, Bolsover," said the Bounder.

"Right-ho!" chuckled Bolsover. "I dare say I shall work it all right. Give me some good lines."

"Oh, rather! Snoop will have to take the feminine part."

"All serene!" said Snoop. "What part do you take, Smythy?"

"I shall be the son and heir at school, you know. That will be a very important character," said the Bounder. "Bolsover's the grass-widower, and you're the widow, and I'm the elder son. I shall have to have a minor to make the caste complete. What about young Bolsover of the Third?"

"Good!" said Bolsover major. "My minor will do rippingly."

"Good, then!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as he caught some of the talk. "Are you fellows getting up a play, too?"

"Yes," said the Bounder; "nothing in your line. We're not worrying with Shakespeare. We are going in for something in the modern comedy line."

"Bernard Shaw?" suggested Johnny Bull, with a chuckle.

"Oh, no! I'm writing it myself!" said the Bounder airily.

"My hat! What is it called?"

"The Grass-Widower."

"By Jove, that sounds funny!" said Bob Cherry. "I hope you'll make a success of it. You'd do better as a heavy villain, though. It would come more natural."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, I dare say we shall make the thing comic enough!" said the Bounder. "There will be topical allusions, you know; they always go down. The full title is: 'The Grass-Widower; or, Why Henry Left Home!'"

"Ripping!" said Bolsover.

Frank Nugent started.

It seemed impossible that any fellow in his Form could be cruel enough, and cad enough, to make fun of his home troubles, even if he knew about them. But Frank could not fail to see the drift of Vernon-Smith's remarks. He lay very quiet, trembling a little.

"When did you think of writing that comedy first, Smythy?" asked Harry Wharton, in a tone which showed Nugent that he, too, understood.

"Oh, weeks ago!" said the Bounder.

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"NUGENT'S SPLENDID SACRIFICE!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

airily. "I showed Snoop the first draft of it last week—didn't I, Snoop?"

"Yes; beginning of the week," said Snoop cheerfully.

"We must begin rehearsing tomorrow," said the Bounder. "We're going to knock your drama sky-high with our comedy, Wharton."

"You are welcome to do that," said Harry.

"I've thought out the opening lines," continued the Bounder, addressing his friends. "First scene, the dining-room at the Bolters. Enter Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bolter. Table laid for brekker—bacon and kidneys. Bolter speaks: 'Mary, the kidneys are burnt!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then Mary: 'Nonsense, my dear! It is your fancy. If you say another word about the kidneys, I shall take my chee-yild and flee!'"

There was a ripple of laughter from the Remove fellows. Only Wharton and Bob Cherry understood the application of the Bounder's precious comedy to Frank Nugent's trouble at home.

Nugent did not speak. He lay quivering with rage and dismay. He could not speak. If he accused the Bounder of the caddishness he was guilty of, he would only turn his father and mother and their quarrel into greater ridicule. By showing that he was hard hit he would, in fact, be barbing the Bounder's arrows against himself.

The only thing he could do was to pretend not to hear, not to understand, while the Bounder knew perfectly well that he both heard and understood.

"It will go splendidly!" said Bolsover major.

"Blest if I see much in it!" said Ogilvy. "If I couldn't write a better comedy than that, Smithy, I'd get a fag in the Second Form to write one for me."

"Oh, the topical illusions will make it go!" said the Bounder. "I'm quite satisfied with it."

"Faith, and it's easily satisfied ye are, then!" said Micky Desmond.

"What do you think of it, Wharton?"

"I think it's rot, and that you're a rotter!" replied Wharton.

"What do you think, Cherry?"

"Go and eat coke!"

"What do you think, Bull?" persisted the Bounder.

"I think you'd better shut up and let us go to sleep!" said Johnny Bull.

"What do you think, Nugent?"

There was no reply.

"I say, Nugent, how do you like my comedy?"

No reply.

"Are you asleep, Nugent?"

"Shut up!" said Harry Wharton. "It's time we all went to sleep. Will you be quiet, Smithy?"

"No, I won't! Nugent, old man—yaroooooh!"

A boot came flying through the air, and the Bounder, who had raised himself on his elbow to call to Nugent, received it on his chin. He roared.

"Ow! Who threw that boot?"

"You'll have the foot as well if you don't shut up!" said Bob Cherry sulphurously.

"And mine!" said Wharton.

"And mine!" said Johnny Bull.

And the Bounder thought that, upon the whole, it would be better to shut up. But he had done enough. Perhaps even the Bounder, hard and cynical though he was would have repented a little if he could have seen Nugent's face at that moment—pale, worn, wretched, with the hot tears rolling down his cheeks upon the pillow.

THE POPULAR.—No. 142.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Coker's Opinion.

DICKY NUGENT did not return to Greyfriars the next day.

What the Head thought about the matter Frank Nugent did not know. Dr. Locke did not speak to him on the subject. Frank avoided any chance of meeting the doctor's eye. He was a keenly sensitive lad, and he felt deeply the humiliation of having his home troubles known and discussed by strangers. There was no fault of his in the matter; he would have given his right hand to see his home happy and united, like other fellows' homes. It was a case of the sins of the fathers being visited upon the children. Perhaps both Mr. and Mrs. Nugent would have been a little more patient with one another if they had fully understood the trouble that their disagreement entailed upon their sons. Frank tried to face the thing out bravely, and to pretend not to know that the other fellows were discussing his intimate concerns, but it was a hard struggle. It would have been hard enough if all had been sympathetic and all tactful. But there were some who were neither sympathetic nor tactful.

All that Vernon-Smith saw in the affair was its absurd side, and the chance of scoring over a member of the "Co."

And Vernon-Smith had no intention of letting the opportunity pass.

Any open taunts on the subject would not have done. If the matter had come out into the open, Frank Nugent was a hard hitter, and he had devoted chums ready to back him up. And he was in a mood to let fly at a word. The Bounder's little game was deeper than that. He was getting on with his precious comedy, and against that it seemed impossible for Nugent and his friends to cope. Vernon-Smith kept up the fiction that he had thought of that little comedy a long while before, and did not utter a word to hint that it could possibly refer to Nugent in any way. He affected, indeed, to be completely ignorant of Frank Nugent's home troubles, to take no interest whatever in his private concerns. Frank could not even say for certain that Bunter had told the Bounder anything, though of course he was pretty certain of it. And if Nugent raised any objection to the comedy, on the ground of its being a slur upon his parents, he would be, in fact, admitting what he wanted to keep secret.

One or two tactless fellows, who had heard Bunter's story—for Bunter told it wherever he could find listeners—did ask Nugent if it was true, and if his "mater" had "bolted." The look they got in response was enough for them, without any words. The fellows in the Remove, and in the other Forms, too, talked of the matter, and made surmises on the subject. Paget, of the Third, who was supposed to know all about high society, being related to any number of earls and marquises, said it wasn't an uncommon thing for a chap's pater or mater to bolt; he had had an uncle who had bolted, and there wasn't any trouble till he came back again.

Vernon-Smith's comedy became a subject of discussion, too, and the fellows could not help seeing its connection with the rumour about Nugent's people. Most of them grinned over it, and some of them asked Vernon-Smith if it was intended as a skit on Nugent. The Bounder shook his head when he was asked. He replied categorically that he knew nothing about Nugent or his affairs, that he didn't want to know, and that he didn't intend to know. He had chosen "The Grass-Widower" as a subject for his comedy, because it was comic. That was a sufficiently good reason, he declared. Most of the fellows did not accept the Bounder's assurance on the subject, however. They knew that Vernon-Smith's word was far from being as good as his bond.

And some of them told him, in beautifully plain English what they thought of him. At which the Bounder shrugged his shoulders, or sneered, till Coker came to his study to deliver his opinion. Coker of the Fifth was a powerful fellow, and not to be shrugged at or sneered at with impunity. Coker of the Fifth was generally "up against" Study No. 1, and he was generally regarded as an ass. But Coker took an exceptionally correct view of this matter, and when he heard of Vernon-Smith's comedy he came to Vernon-Smith's study to speak to him on the subject, and brought a dog-whip with him.

Harry Wharton & Co. met Coker of the Fifth as he came striding down the Remove passage, with the dog-whip under his arm. They lined up across the passage, prepared to dispute Coker's progress, naturally assuming that the big Fifth-Former was on the warpath.

But Coker waved his hand in a friendly way.

"It's pax!" he said.

"Is it?" said Harry Wharton suspiciously. "What are you going to do with that dog-whip?"

"Use it, I expect. But we shall see. I'm not after any of you fellows," said Coker. "I'm going to see a worm."

"Which worm?" asked Bob Cherry, laughing.

"The Bounder."

The Famous Four opened at once to allow Coker to pass.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Johnny Bull. "Go ahead!"

And Coker grinned and passed on.

He arrived at Vernon-Smith's door, and planted his foot against it with a tremendous kick. The lock jumped open, and the door flew back, and Coker of the Fifth strode in. He kicked the door shut behind him, as Vernon-Smith jumped up from the table.

The Bounder had been writing busily. There were several sheets on the table covered with writing, and he had scattered a shower of blots over them as he rose hastily. He glared most unpleasantly at Coker.

(Continued on page 18.)

1000
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See this week's "FUNNY WONDER" for full particulars of the grand offer of FREE footballs, and do not miss the screamingly funny "Charlie Chaplin" comedy on the front page. Be sure you ask for the

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NEXT
FRIDAY!

"THE NEW PORTER!"

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.

By OWEN CONQUEST.



**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Guilty, or Not Guilty!**

TROT in, 'Erbert!"

The Fistical Four, of the Classical Fourth, were in the end study, when 'Erbert of the Second Form tapped timidly at the door and looked in.

Jimmy Silver's usually sunny face was very serious.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome were very grave, too. The Fistical Four were not by any means in their accustomed cheery mood.

Jimmy Silver gave the fag a welcoming nod as he appeared in the doorway.

Mornington II.—more generally known as 'Erbert—was pale, and there was a suspicious redness about his eyelids.

He came timidly into the study. "Cheer up, kid!" said Lovell kindly. "It wasn't your fault, 'Erbert," said Raby. "You couldn't help your precious cousin bagging your banknotes!"

'Erbert's pale face flushed. "He never did!" he exclaimed hotly. "Erbert, old chap!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"That's what I come 'ere to speak about," said 'Erbert. "Master Silver, won't you stand by Mornington, an' see him through? All the fellows are saying that he is a thief!"

"Well, isn't he?" demanded Newcome, in surprise.

"No, he ain't!" "You young ass!" "Master Silver—"

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows. "Look here, 'Erbert," he said quietly. "This won't do. I know you're attached to Mornington, and that he did a lot for you in the past, but there's such a thing as common-sense, you know. Mornny came to your dorm last night and bagged two fivers from your pocket. You know he did. What's the good of sticking out that he didn't, when you know he did?"

"He didn't!" "Oh, rot!"

"Then you won't 'elp 'im?" said 'Erbert wistfully. "I thought you 'ad more sense, Master Silver! As if Mornny could be a thief!"

"He's a gambler," said Raby curtly. "It's not such a tremendous step from gambling to stealing."

"He wouldn't soil his 'ands stealin'!" said 'Erbert. "Besides, where was the need for 'im to steal?"

know what Master Mornny 'as done for me! Me, what was starving in the road, when he found me and brought me 'ome, and all his 'igh-class pals sneerin' at 'im for doin' of it!"

'Erbert's voice broke. Jimmy Silver shifted uneasily. He had no doubt of Mornington's guilt, but 'Erbert's loyal faith held true, in spite of the clearest of evidence.

"It ain't proved!" went on 'Erbert. "It can't be proved! I didn't think you would go for a chap what was down, Master Silver!"

Jimmy made an impatient gesture. "Look here, 'Erbert, it is proved!" he exclaimed.

"Clear as daylight!" growled Lovell. "It ain't!" said 'Erbert.

"For goodness' sake, listen to me!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "I'll try to make you see sense. Two five-pound notes were taken from your pocket-book while you were asleep last night. Mornington's handkerchief was picked up in your dormitory."

"It was put there!" said 'Erbert. "Oh, rot! Mornny's own chum, Erroll, suggested searching him, to prove that he hadn't got the banknotes," said Jimmy Silver. "Erroll thought that would clear Mornny, and we all hoped it would. And Mornington objected, and had to be searched by force."

"He's proud!" said 'Erbert. "He wouldn't be suspected, an' he wouldn't be touched. He's proud, I know. And ain't he got a right to be proud—a splendid feller like 'im?"

"He had to be searched by force," said Jimmy, unheeding. "And one of the banknotes was found on him."

"I—I know it was."

"Well, what evidence do you want stronger than that?" demanded Newcome.

"It was planted on 'im some'ow!" "That's pretty steep!" said Jimmy Silver. "But a fellow might take that view if Mornington hadn't resisted the search. But he did resist, and the banknote was found on him. Look here, 'Erbert; I know all that Mornny did for you, and it was ripping of him—I've said so. But facts are facts!"

"He wouldn't soil his 'ands stealin'!" said 'Erbert. "Besides, where was the need for 'im to steal?"

PROVED INNOCENT!

A Splendid Long Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., the Chums of Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST

(Author of the famous Rookwood Yarns in "The Boys' Friend").

"He couldn't 'ave done it!"

'Erbert's voice trembled. "As if he would! If he'd asked me, I'd 'ave given 'im the money, and all I 'ad, too! You his uppers."

"But—"

"Yes, I know his uncle looks after him, but it's different. Besides, he hates taking money from his uncle, and he's even working for a scholarship to avoid doing so. I'm willing to admit this much—that perhaps he looks on himself as having a right to your money, as he was brought up to believe that the Mornington money was his. He mayn't have looked on it as ordinary theft. But that's all that can be said for him."

"That ain't all!" said 'Erbert.

"Well, what else is there?" asked Jimmy Silver impatiently.

"There's this 'ere," said 'Erbert. "Mornny 'adn't any need to steal. Think I've forgotten all he done for me? I wouldn't never 'ave known my own name, or 'ad any money at all, if Master Mornny hadn't taken me in when he supposed I was jest a tramp on the road. I've begged Master Mornny to take 'arf my money, and he's refused."

"That's his pride, if you like."

"Them banknotes," continued 'Erbert. "Why, I'd 'ave been 'appy to 'and them to Master Mornny if he'd wanted them—he had only to say the word. I'd 'ave given him them, or anything else, and been 'appy to do it. Think he'd steal them when he could 'ave them for the askin'!"

"That's where Mornny's pride comes in," said Jimmy, with a curl of the lip. "I know he wouldn't ask for money. But he's taken it."

"You're up agin Master Mornny," said 'Erbert. "I thought you'd see what was right Master Silver; but you don't."

"Oh, rats!"

"Do you mean to say that you still believe in him?" demanded Lovell.

"Yes, I does."

"Then you're a young idiot!"

"I'd rather be a young idjit than believe that Master Mornny was a thief," said 'Erbert simply. "I know he ain't! And if this 'ere matter comes before the 'Ead, I won't let Master Mornny suffer. I'd rather tell lies, an' swear that I never 'ad any banknotes at all!"

"It won't come before the Head," said Jimmy Silver, after a pause. "It's not known to any of the masters or prefects. I don't suppose that anybody will report

NEXT FRIDAY! "NUGENT'S SPLENDID SACRIFICE!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. !! By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE POPULAR.—No. 142.

it. We all know what to think of Mornington now. He'll be sent to Coventry by all the Lower School, and I hope he'll clear out! I shan't say anything about him, at all events."

"We don't want a thief at Rookwood!" grunted Lovell.

"He can't stay, now he's found out," said Jimmy. "Let him leave quietly, without a scandal. If he doesn't go, we'll put it to him plainly."

"Well, that's all right."

"And so you're down on 'im, all of you?" said 'Erbert.

"Yes, rather," answered the Fistical Four, with one voice.

'Erbert gave them a miserable, haggard look, and turned and left the study without another word.

"Young ass!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver had a troubled look.

"He is a young ass, and no mistake," he said. "But—but this is a blow to the poor kid. He simply worshipped Morny, and—and, after all, it was splendid the way Mornington took him up. It was pretty hard on Morny, 'Erbert turning out to be the missing heir of Mornington. But there isn't any excuse for a thief. But—but I'm sorry for 'Erbert."

And the Fistical Four went down to the Common-room with glum faces.

They were sorry for 'Erbert, and touched by his devotion to his hero. His blind faith in Morny, in spite of the evidence of the plainest facts, was a little exasperating; but it was touching, all the same.

The whole affair was disturbing and troublesome. It was not pleasant, either, to think of its getting about Rookwood, especially to the ears of the Moderns.

It was a disgrace to the Classical side, and to Rookwood generally.

The only thing was for Mornington to go, and the sooner he went, the better it would be for all concerned.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Facing the Music!

THERE was a crowd in the junior Common-room.

Nearly all the Classical Fourth were there, and most of the Shell. An excited discussion was going on.

The discovery of Mornington's dishonour had greatly excited the Classical juniors.

No one was inclined to lay information before the Head on the subject. But that Mornington, a proved thief, should stay at Rookwood, was impossible.

He must go!

If he did not choose to go, he would have to be made to go; that was the general opinion. And Jimmy Silver, disinclined as he was to kick a fellow who was down, heartily agreed.

As captain of the Fourth, Jimmy Silver was expected to take the lead in the matter. He was quite prepared to do so.

The fellows were not surprised that Mornington did not put in an appearance. In the circumstances, it was natural enough that he did not want to face his schoolfellows. Even Morny's nerve was not equal to that.

But the Classics were quite mistaken on that point. The discussion was still going on, when Tubby Muffin squeaked out:

"Here he is!"

The elegant dandy of the Fourth stood in the doorway, looking at the crowd of juniors with a cool smile.

All eyes were turned on Mornington at once.

"By gad!" ejaculated Townsend. "THE POPULAR.—No. 142.

"He's got the cheek to show himself here, after all! By gad!"

"What a nerve!" said Smythe of the Shell.

"Don't come in here, Mornington!" growled Higgs. "You're not wanted here! We bar thieves!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Get out, you rotter!"

Mornington stepped calmly into the room. Angry looks and jeers had no more perceptible effect upon him than hail upon glass.

"By gad! You fellows seem excited this evenin'!" said Mornington calmly. "Anythin' special on?"

"What a nerve?" repeated Adolphus Smythe, with some admiration. "Doesn't he take the merry biscuit—what?"

"He'll take somethin' else if he sticks here!" grunted Lattrey. "Does the fool think he can brazen it out?"

"Looks like it!"

Kit Erroll followed Mornington into

but if you all speak at once I lose some of the pleasure of your conversation. Take it in turns."

Jimmy Silver strode towards Mornington.

The dandy of the Fourth eyed him coolly, and did not recede an inch.

"You takin' first turn?" he asked.

"Ring off, you others, an' give Jimmy Silver a chance! I'm sure we shall enjoy his well-known eloquence. Go it, Silver!"

"If you think you can brazen it out, Mornington, you're making a mistake!" said Jimmy Silver grimly. "You've brought a good deal of disgrace on your Form, one way and another. You've touched the limit now. A thief isn't wanted at Rookwood. You can understand that, I suppose."

"Quite!"

"Nobody wants to inform against you," went on Jimmy. "That's not in our line. But we expect you to get out of the school. It's not much to ask, considering that you would be expelled at once if the Head knew the facts!"

"Why?"

"Why?" echoed Jimmy, taken aback.

"Yes; why?"

"Are you potty? I suppose you know the Head would expel you if he knew you were a thief?" exclaimed the captain of the Fourth.

"You said if he knew the facts!" smiled Mornington. "If the Head knew the facts, dear boy, he would pat me on the back, as a sadly wronged an' innocent youth, and I suppose he would expel the fellow who pinched 'Erbert's banknotes. I'm sure I hope he would!"

"You silly, cheeky ass!" roared Lovell.

"Do you think you're going to get anybody to believe that?"

"Certainly!"

"Well, you're mistaken," said Jimmy Silver. "You needn't take that line, Morny. It won't do you any good."

"You know you're guilty, you rotter!" growled Conroy. "What's the good of lying?"

"Am I allowed to speak a word or two?" asked Mornington, with undiminished calmness. "I believe there's such a thing as fair play."

"You can say what you like," said Jimmy Silver. "It won't make any difference!"

"Thanks! In the first place," said Mornington, "I'm innocent!"

"Rats!"

"Rot!"

"Liar!"

"Shush! I haven't finished yet, and this is my innings, you know."

"Let him run on," said Jimmy.

"Thanks! Bein' innocent, gentlemen, I am sorry to see you backin' up like this, and playin' the game of the rotter who planted 'Erbert's banknote on me."

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Van Ryn.

"I beg to point out that Jimmy Silver, our respected and never-sufficiently-to-be-admired Form captain, was once suspected of theft, owing to a banknote bein' found in his clothes. Is there any gentleman present who doubts the lofty an' unstained moral character of Jimmy Silver?"

"Why, you rotter," roared Lovell, "it was you planted it on him, and you owned up to it!"

"Quite so. I am only mentionin' the circumstance as an illustration," said Mornington urbanely. "I have first-hand knowledge of the matter, as I planted it on Jimmy Silver, as you express it. May I suggest that another rogue—even worse than I was at that

(Continued on page 13.)

**THE MAN WHO
KNEW THE
SECRET**



Look out for ANSWERS' great new autumn serial story. Two million people will read it

the Common-room, and joined him. He was dismayed by Mornington's insolent coolness, but he would not desert his chum.

Jimmy's Silver's brow was dark. Morny's supercilious cheek was not pleasant at any time. At the present time it was intolerable, and not to be borne.

There was a threatening murmur from all sides.

It did not affect Mornington. With his hands in his pockets, and a cool smile on his face, he glanced round at the lowering juniors.

"Quite a merry meetin'!" he remarked. "Am I flatterin' myself unduly, or is this excitement on my own account?"

"Ye thafe of the world——" growled Flynn.

"Look here, you rotter——" began Lovell hotly.

"You sneakin' worm!"

"You thievin' cad!"

"Don't all speak at once!" urged Mornington. "You're all delightful;

BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!



A GRAND FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

Edited by
WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER of Greyfriars School.

Assisted by
HIS FOUR FAT SUBS—SAMMY BUNTER of Greyfriars, **FATTY WYNN** and **BAGGY TRIMBLE** of St. Jim's, and **TUBBY MUFFIN** of Rookwood.

Contributions from the Three Famous Schools.

THE WITCH OF WAPSHOT!

By **SAMMY BUNTER.**

In the villidge of Wapshot, not far from Greyfriars, their lives a witch named Mother Mooney.

If she had lived in the olden days she wood have been burnt at the steak. At any rate, she would have been put in the stox.

Last Wensday, it being a ½ hollerday, I went over to see the old hagg. I crossed her palm with a peace of silver, as rekwested, and she was too short-sited to see that it had a whole in it.

"Tell me my forchune, Mother Mooney," I said.

"Sertingly, my child. Now, to begin with, yore line of life is very good. Like the herrings which you fry in the 2nd Form-room, you will live to a ripe old age."

"A hundred?"

"At the very leest."

"That's good! Now, what about the line of luv?"

"At the age of thirty," said Mother Mooney, "you will lose yore hart to a plump cook. You will woo and wed her, and live happily ever after."

"Eggsellent!"

"But their is trubble in store for you in the immejit fewoher," said the old dame. "A dark man will come into yore life, and cause you grate pane."

I didn't understand this at the time, but I understood it all rite neckst day.

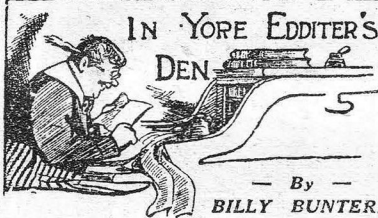
The "dark man" was mister twigg, my Form-master, and he sertingly caused me grate pane. He gave me three on each paw for putting an upturned tintack on his chair.

"You will also go on a jersey by water," said Mother Mooney. "And their will be a kallamity."

This also came trew. On the neckst ½ hollerday I hired a boat at Pegg Bay, and foundered in a ruff sea. Fortunately, a fishing-boat came to the reskow. I was taken out of the water, and after artyfishul inspiration had been applied, I was as rite as rane.

Mother Mooney told me menny other things, and she was korrekct in every detale.

I think forchune-telling is simply wunderful—don't you, deer reeder? One of these days I shall set up in bizziness as a forchune-teller myself. The prophets will be like my own serkumferense—enormous!



By
BILLY BUNTER.

My Deer Readers,—I'm not certain weather "mistry" is the korrekct word to use in konneckshun with this number.

The stories and artikles in this issew of my "Weekly" will deel with palmistry, fortune-telling, and all that sort of thing. I rather think it all comes under the heading of mistry. Anyway, they tork about Maskerleen and Devvant's misteries, don't they?

I'm rather proud of this partikular number, bekwase I got out the idear myself. Sumtimes I cribb idears from Wharton ('sh!), and sumtimes I get them from my reeders, who write and say, "Deer Billy,—Pleese have a speshul Marbels Number," or sumthing of that sort. But this 'time the fool credit belongs to me. It was a reel Bunter brane-wave.

I am very lucky to have on my staff severel felloes who are eggspert fortune-tellers. By glansing at the palms of yore hands, they can tell weather you are in the habbit of washing regularly.

I have also engaged the servisses of Tom Brown, who is a frennologist. In case you don't no what this means, I will eggspain. A frennologist is a fello who eggssamines yore bumps. He punches you on the napper, and he can tell by the shape of yore scull weather you will ever become a grate rowing champion, or anything like that. You will enjoy Browney's artikle, I feel shore.

Fortune-telling has a grate fassination for most felloes. As a rool, you have to cross the fortune-teller's palm with a peace of silver, but I am not on the make. Severel reeders have ritten to me from time to time, asking me to tell their karracters from there handwriting. I am giving a speshul kollum of replies in this issew, without making any charge for same. W. G. B. is not a phopheteer!

I trusted this novvel number will be a grate susses. If it falls flat, it will be a sharp blow for

Yore misterious pal,

Yore Edditer

--: FISHY, THE --: FORTUNE-TELLER!

By **DICK PENFOLD.**

Cross my palm with a tanner, boys,

And I'll tell you fortune for you.

No bounce, no bluff, it's genuine stuff—

Look slippy, I implore you!

I'll tell you if you'll win success,

Or be an "also-ranner."

I'll tell you lots of things, I guess,

If you'll cross my palm with a tanner!

I'll tell you what you're going to be

At the age of five-and-twenty.

I'll tell you what the future's got

In the way of peace and plenty.

I'll tell you if you're going to climb

To Fame in a rapid manner,

Or whether you're booked for a life of

crime—

If you'll cross my palm with a tanner!

There are those who criticise my stunts;

But do not heed the scoffer.

Come round to-day, without delay,

To clinch this tempting offer.

I'll tell you all that the Fates do hold

If you'll rally round my banner,

And cross my palm—with a piece of

gold?

No, no—with a humble tanner!

A GREAT PEACE OF NEWS. SPECIAL CARNIVAL NUMBER

NEXT WEEK.

Don't miss this grand feast of stories.—W. G. B.

THE POPULAR.—No. 142.



A Very "Modern" Jape!

By GEORGE RABY.

**KARRACKTER ::
FROM
HANDWRITING!**

THE EDITOR SIZES UP
SUM OF HIS REEDERS.

"A WITCH!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "A witch?" "A witch!" "Which witch?" Jimmy Silver spun round from the study window at which he was standing, and bestowed a hostile glare upon Lovell, Newcome, and myself.

"Stop slinging those tongue-twisters at me for goodness' sake!" he growled. "You'll be saying, 'Which switch is the switch, miss, for Ipswich?' next!"

"Can you really see a witch, Jimmy?" asked Lovell.

"Well, there's an old hag who looks remarkably like one coming across the quad," said Jimmy Silver. "Come and cast your optics upon her."

We joined our chum at the window, and saw that he had spoken truly.

A doddering, decrepit old dame was in the act of crossing the quad. She was shrouded from head to foot in a shawl of the type worn by gipsies. She leaned heavily on a stout stick, and her face—of which only the lower portion was visible—seemed wizened and drawn.

"My hat!" said Newcome. "What does she want at Rookwood, I wonder?"

"Not your aged grandmother come to see you, Jimmy?" I suggested.

"Rats!"

We watched the strange creature until she finally disappeared into the building.

But we had not seen the last of her.

A moment later there was a shuffling of feet in the corridor, and a rat-ta-tat sounded on the door of the study.

"Come in!" sang out Jimmy Silver.

It was the ancient dame who entered. She came into the study looking in the last stages of exhaustion, and sank down on to the sofa. We gazed at her in astonishment.

"I have walked many a weary mile, my masters," she said, in a croaking voice. "I would fain partake of refreshment."

"Who—who are you?" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"I am Mother Maloney, and I am a woman of strange and wonderful powers. Some call me a witch. Maybe they are right."

We edged away from the strange woman, shuddering a little.

"Be not afraid, my masters," she said reassuringly. "I will do you no harm. All that I crave is a bowl of tea and some food. It is long since I had bite or sup."

"But why did you come here?" said Newcome. "I should have thought you would have called at some cottage, if you were hungry and thirsty."

"Alas! The cottagers of to-day do not bestow hospitality upon such as me. But young gentlemen at school are kind of heart, and I know you will not turn me away."

"Of course we won't!" said Jimmy Silver. "Lucky you weren't seen by any of the masters, though. They would have ordered you to quit. Put the kettle on, Raby, there's a good chap, and I'll go along to the tuck-shop and lay in provisions."

Jimmy Silver was back in a few minutes with a big bag of scones and cakes.

I bustled about and made the tea, and Lovell laid the table.

Mother Maloney fell to with a good appetite. Indeed, her appetite would have compared favourably with that of Tubby Muffin.

Somewhat to our surprise, we noticed that the old dame had all her teeth intact. Witches, as a rule, are toothless old hags, and we could not understand it. Finally, however, we came to the conclusion that Mother Maloney's teeth were false.

We attempted to have our own tea at the same time, but we hardly got a look-in.

Our weird guest demolished the majority of the scones and cakes herself. Then she turned to Jimmy Silver.

"Would it be taxing your kindness too much to ask you to go and get some more?" she said.

"Nunno! Not at all!" muttered Jimmy. And he paid a further visit to the tuck-shop for Mother Maloney's benefit.

Altogether our visitor consumed about five shillingsworth of cakes, which was pretty good going for a doddering old creature of ninety.

"Now," she said, wrinkling her face into a queer smile, "if you will cross my palm with a piece of silver I will tell your fortunes."

Jimmy Silver good-naturedly complied.

Mother Maloney examined his palm intently.

"A long life and a happy one," she said. "But stay! You are shortly to become the victim of a delusion—a hoax. One of your deadly enemies—"

"Haven't got any!" said Jimmy Silver. "One of your keenest rivals, then, will score over you."

"Oh, that's all rot!" said Jimmy impatiently. "How is he going to do it?"

Before Mother Maloney could reply the door opened, and Bulkeley of the Sixth came in.

"I've been told that there's a strange woman here," he began. "Ah, there she is! I



Mother Maloney demolished the majority of the cakes and scones, then asked Jimmy Silver for more.

say, ma'am, you've no right here, you know. I must request you to leave these premises." A startled expression came over the old dame's face.

"Oh, crumbs!" she gasped. It was not in her usual croaking voice that she uttered the exclamation. It was in a voice which we knew well—only too well.

For the voice belonged to Tommy Dodd, of the Moderns!

Instantly we jumped to our feet.

"Spoofoed!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"Dished and done!" gasped Lovell. "It's that Modern bouncer, made up as a witch!"

"Just look at the make-up on his chivvy!" exclaimed Newcome. "Why didn't we notice it before?"

Bulkeley gave a gasp.

"Is it—is it really young Dodd?" he exclaimed.

"It is—it are!" replied the cheerful voice of Tommy Dodd. "You must admit that I've fairly scored over these beggars this time, Bulkeley!"

The captain of Rookwood grinned.

"I should advise you to go and shed that rig-out," he said, "or you'll be getting mobbed. Witches aren't popular in this country. They never were."

Tommy Dodd turned to Jimmy Silver.

"Thanks for the excellent tea!" he said sweetly.

We were writhing with helpless fury. It was impossible to deal with Tommy Dodd whilst Bulkeley was present. And Tommy Dodd knew it. Chuckling with merriment, he kissed his hand to us and withdrew.

This narrative in a nutshell goes to prove that it isn't always the Classics who come out on top.

"A Staunch Bunterite" (Battersea).—Yore-fool, round handwriting denotes that you are fond of a good skware meel. I don't meen to imply that you are greedy, but you like a lot. You and me have a grate deel in koommon. You are short-sited, and yore bootlace has a tendency to come undun. You are a luvver of dum animals, and have a grate affeckshun for me!

R. W. B. (Reading).—You are rather meen in yore habbits. I can tell that bekwase you didn't stamp yore letter, and I had to pay forepense on it. I shall be broke for the rest of the term now. Besides, you've crammed 1,500 words on to a ½ sheet of notepaper; another proof that you're meen. Don't get ratty with me. I don't meen anything, eggset that you're meen. See what I meen?

Fred R. (Manchester).—You were upset when you wrote yore letter, and so was the ink. In fackt, their's such a big blott across yore missiff that I karn't see the handwriting. It is impossibol for me to sighs you up, but I should say you were a bit of a chump.

Maidie S. (Kensington).—From yore handwriting I should say you were a charming yung lady with bobbed hare, dreemy eyes, and dimpled cheeks. You are a very fassinating yung person, and a keen supporter of my "Weekly." Won't it be awful if you tern out to be a doddering old deer of ninety?

"Battling Mike" (Bermondsey).—You are a bit of a boolly, I'm afrade. I can tell that by the thickness of yore downward strokes. You wood nock me into the middel of neckst week if you had ½ a chance. But you won't get it—see?

"Tubby" (Burton-on-Trent).—Yore handwriting is very similar to my own. You are, therefore, a grate genius, a fello who will go far, espeshully if samboddy eggsploodes a ton of dynermite just behind you!

Rupert H. (Cheltenham).—The flurishes at the end of yore words denote grate welth. You are evidently rolling in ritches. If you wood advance me five bob till my postle-order came I should never forgive you—I meen, forgett you!

"Peeping Tom" (Coventry).—I don't like yore handwriting a bit. You are a Nosey Parker, always interfering in matters which don't konsern you. Yore letter is a very cheeky one into the bargain, and if you are not careful I shall come up to Coventry and tweek that long nose of yores!

"A Lover of Doughnuts" (Exeter).—See reply to "Tubby" above. You are a fello after my own heart. May you always bo hail and harty, and long may you rain!

[Supplement II.]



Character from "Bumps"!

By Tom Brown,
Consulting Phrenologist.

I CAN imagine some of you wrinkling your noble brows in perplexity, and saying:

"What the merry dickens is a consulting phrenologist?"

A phrenologist, dear reader, is neither a fish, a fowl, nor a good red-herring. It is a person who can tell by the shape and development of your cranium exactly what sort of a fellow you are, what you are best suited for when you grow up, and what your principal faults and failings are. He is an individual who can weigh you up, and tell your character to a "t."

For some time I have been a deep and earnest student of phrenology, and I have now started in business as a consulting phrenologist.

Fellows have flocked to me in their thousands to have their "bumps" examined. I have been patronised by his Highness the Nabob of Bhanipur—commonly known as "Inky"—and also by Lord Mauleverer, Sir James Vivian, and other shining lights of the nobility and gentry.

My fees are a bob per consultation. In London you would have to pay two guineas; but Tom Brown is not a profiteer. He is merely a prophet here!

In order that readers of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" may have proof of my ability, I give below details of the examinations I have made this week.

The first client who came to me was the editor of this journal. I sized him up as follows:

BUNTER, W. G.

- Bump of Knowledge: Not in evidence.
- Bump of Imagination: Strongly developed. Hence Bunter's vivid accounts of rescuing people from drowning and performing similar heroic feats!
- Bump of Intelligence: Conspicuous by its absence.
- Bump of Observation: Very good. As a Peeping Tom, Bunter has no equal.
- Bump of Veracity: Considerably underdeveloped. It will be impossible for Bunter to speak the truth, except by accident!
- Bump of Greed: Strongly pronounced. Bunter's appetite is insatiable. He could go on eating till further orders.
- Bump of Mentality: All efforts to locate the brain have failed. It can therefore be safely assumed that Bunter is totally deficient in this respect.

General Character: Very poor. Unless a marked improvement is shown, Dartmoor will be Bunter's ultimate destination. I can detect no virtues in his character, but a whole host of vices. I foresee breakers ahead—unless he turns over a new leaf.

(Brown, you beast, you're not a frennologist at all! You're a slanderer! How dare you say such things about the edditer of this jernal? If you are not careful, I shall ask you to meet me in the Jim, and then I shall administer the nock-out—Ed.)

So much for Billy Bunter.

The next client to call upon me was Bolsover major. I inspected his bumps, and sent him the following diagnosis of his character:

"Your head is shaped like that of a puglist. If you take up prize-fighting as a profession, you are bound to make a great hit one of these days! Your bump of mentality is like Bunter's. There is no evidence that you possess a brain. The cavity is overdeveloped, showing that you are a bully of the worst type. You are very fond of ill-treating fags—and smoking them!

"I am sending this report round to you by hand. If I gave it to you personally, you would doubtless reduce me to a pulp."

That's a pretty accurate summing up of Bolsover major. Don't you think so?

My next visitor was Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. He was very pleased with my description of him, which I framed in the best English language.

"I have carefully examined your esteemed bumps bumpfully, and find that the good points in your esteemed and worthy character are terrific!

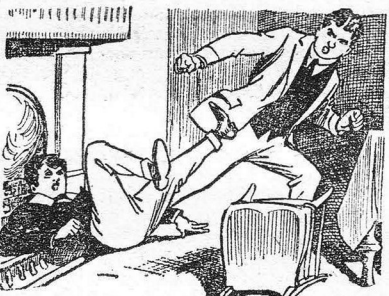
"Beneath that dark and curly mop of hair is an active and clever brain, and your bump of knowledge is strongly developed. The same remark applies to your bump of loyalty and your bump of courage. It is easy for an esteemed and ludicrous phrenologist like myself to see that you are the worthy and illustrious scion of a noble race. By the way, Inky, could you lend me half-a-crown till Saturday?"

Needless to state, Inky turned up trumps. Not only did he lend me the half-crown, but he insisted upon paying a double fee for the consultation.

Then in came Coker of the Fifth. "I hear you're a bit of a phrenologist, young Brown," he said.

I bowed. "Well, would you mind examining my bumps?"

And Coker turned down his sock, displaying a couple of large bumps.



The third blow from Coker caught me under the chin and I alighted in a huddled heap in the fireplace.

"I got 'em during a footer match," he explained.

"Ass!" I growled. "I can't judge your character from bumps of that sort. It's the bumps on your napper that I want to examine. Be seated!"

Coker dropped into a chair, and I ran my fingers over his cranium.

"Yours," I said, "is the head of a lunatic."

"What!" hooted Coker.

"Be calm!" I murmured. "You might have had the head of a criminal, which would have been far worse. As it is, the shape of your nut suggests mental deficiency."

"You—you—"

"I should advise you to consult a mental specialist without delay. You ought not to be at large. You are on the wrong side of the Colney Hatch wall."

"This isn't phrenology!" shouted Coker. "It's confounded cheek! Where's my bump of poetry, I should like to know?"

"You haven't got one. You couldn't write poetry if you tried. In fact, you couldn't invent or create anything. Your intellect is warped. The only bump on your cranium which is developed above the average is the bump of idiocy."

"Look here—"

"You would make an excellent comedian. If you manage to dodge the lunatic asylum, I should advise you to go on the boards. George Robey and the rest of the comedians

wouldn't be able to hold a candle to you. You'd freeze them out."

That was too much for Coker. With a bellow like that of an infuriated bull, he rose to his feet, and launched a frontal attack upon me.

"Take that, you cheeky young cub—and that—and that!"

The first blow made me gasp. The second made me stagger. The third caused me to alight in a huddled heap in the fireplace.

Having thus let off steam, Coker strode out of the study.

"Come back!" I groaned. "You haven't paid my consultation fee! I want a bob!"

"What you want," said Coker, looking back over his shoulder, "is a tanner—somebody to tan your hide for you!"

And he went on his way.

That's the worst of being a phrenologist. If you're frank with a fellow, he always takes offence at it!

I managed to collect a few more bobs during the day.

Peter Todd dropped in for a consultation, and I told him he would make a first-class lawyer, which pleased him very much.

Dick Penfold came along, and I predicted for him a great career as a poet. I told him his head was shaped just like Lord Byron's. This delighted him so much that he invited me to his study for tea!

I informed Lord Mauleverer that he had all the qualifications for becoming the chief of a Government Department. This pleased his lordship mightily, for he's very fond of sleep!

I told Oliver Kipps that he would one day perform conjuring feats before crowned heads. I told Fisher T. Fish that he would become one of the most notorious swindlers of the age. I brought visions of the treadmill before the horrified gaze of Harold Skinner. I prophesied that Harry Wharton would one day become a field-marshal, and Tom Redwing an admiral.

I was even permitted to examine the bumps of Mr. Prout, and when I told him he had the makings of a great golfer and a sure shot he fairly beamed, and invited me to tea on Sunday.

Anybody else want their bumps examined? If so, they should make an appointment with Tom Brown, the greatest phrenologist of modern times!

THE END.

There's a blade in the Sixth known as Knox, Who was "stony"—in fact, on the rox; So he backed a fine horse, Which broke down on the course, And gave him the greatest of shox!

There's a comical fellow called Wynd, Who does not regard it a synn To seek the school shop - And to drink ginger-pop Until he has blued all his tynn!

There's a chap in the Shell known as Gunn, Who rallies round Grundy for funn. But he's quite a good sort, And believes, like a sport, That a game isn't lost till it's wunn!

LOCAL LIMERICKS.

By MONTY LOWTHER.

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PEEPS INTO THE FEWCHER!

By Our Tame Proffit,
BAGGY TRIMBLE.

I am a very good profit, as others no to there loss. I've got an uncanny way of looking into the fewcher, and seeing what it holds in store.

* * *

What will happen fifty yeers hense? Trussed Trimble to no. Will St. Jim's be standing? Yes—unless it's been berat down in the meentime. Will Baggy Trimble still be hear? No. Wear will he be? He will be Kommander-in-Chief of the British Air Force, konducting the war against Mars!

* * *

And wear will Tom Merry be? Ah! He won't be very merry fifty yeers hense, I can assure you! He will be down at heal, carrying sandwidge-bords along the Strand, or selling pickcher-postcards of London at tuppence a time. How are the mighty fallen!

* * *

And Lowther? He will be serving a term of imprisonment for perpetrating potty puns! And serve him jolly well rite!

* * *

Fatty Wynn will be a sheff at one of the big hotels in London—either the Carlton or the Writs. Keer will be one of the leeding lites at Scotland Yard. And Figgins—goodness knows what will happen to Figgins! He will probably be cattle-farming at the South Pole.

* * *

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy will be a prosperous country skwire. Harry Hammond will be his lodge-keeper. Herries, of course, will be a dog-breeder in a small way; and Jack Blake will keep a fride-fish shopp.

* * *

Racke will come to a nasty end. His tellygraffick address will be "Convict 99, Dartmoor." And Skimpole, if he isn't at Hanwell, will be at Colney Hatch!

* * *

Knox of the 6th will be a bookmaker. Cutts of the 5th will be a cardsharper. Manners will be taking fotygraphs at a tanner a time. Talbot will have gone from bad to worse by becoming an M.P.

* * *

As for the masters, they will be having injeckshuns of thyroid, and writing letters to the Press saying that a man isn't too old at ninety! And I hope the Head won't forget to send me an invitashun to the feest which will sellybrate his 110th berthday!

THE POPULAR.—No. 142.

DREAMERS

:: OF ::

DREAMS!

By FATTY WYNN.

(I don't claim to be a Dream Expert, but I have done my best to satisfy those who have written to me, asking for an interpretation of their dreams.—F. W.)

"Baggy" (School House).—To dream of matchsticks suggests that your legs are going to get terribly thin—so thin that they will be unable to support your trunk. Like the British bureaucracy, you will probably develop "wasting" disease!

"Gussy" (School House).—(1) Dreaming of a rainbow clearly implies that you are about to purchase a new fancy waistcoat! (2) If in your dream you hear a noise like somebody sawing wood, it means that you will shortly render a tenor solo!

"Figgy" (New House).—If you dream that you are sleeping in the same bed as a School House bounder, and that during the night you kick him four times, and he kicks you once, it means that the New House are going to lick the School House at footer by four goals to one!

Aubrey R. (School House).—To dream that you can hear a pig squealing means that you are about to receive a public flogging!

Wally D'A. (Third Form).—If you dream that you resemble Tarzan of the Apes—well, dash it, you couldn't have been dreaming at all!

"Reddy" (New House).—To dream that the hot-water tap in the bath-room has been left running clearly implies that you will shortly get into hot water!

Gerald C. (School House).—Dreaming of stars, comets, constellations, earthquakes, and violent upheavals means that you will be badly knocked-out when you meet Tom Merry in the gym!

G. Herries (School House).—If you dreamed that you heard a snapping, rending sound it means that you will have to buy Gussy a new pair of trousers, your bulldog Towser having ripped a large portion out of the seat of those which Gussy was wearing!

G. F. K. (New House).—Cheer up! To dream that you are deeply in debt implies that a fat remittance is on its way to you. Dreams often go by contraries, you know!

Monty L. (School House).—To dream that you went into a butcher's shop and saw some tripe, means that before you went to bed you had been reading the editorial of "Billy Bunter's Weekly"!

:: My Strange :: Premmernitions!

By TUBBY MUFFIN.

It isn't everybuddy who suffers from premmernitions, but I have been having them for a long time now.

The other mourning, on waking up, I felt a tingling sensashun in the palms of my hands, and I new very well what that ment. It ment that I was going to get a licking; and, sure enuff, I got one that very mourning for going into the Form-room with $\frac{1}{2}$ a lb. of toffy in my mouth.

Shortly afterwards I happened to pick up a tanner in the kwadrangle. Nothing in that, you will say. But to me the finding of a peace of silver ment a grate deel. It ment that Silver, the kaptin of the 4th, was lost, and that I should be the one to find him. I set out with this object in view, and discuvered that Jimmy Silver had fallen into the hands of sum villidge ruffs, who had tied him to a tree in the wood. I reskewed him, and he fell on my neck and wept barning tears of gratty-chewed.

Last Satterday afternoon, while I was in the bunshop, argewing with the waitress as to weather I had eaten fifteen pastries or twenty-five, I felt a sudden pane in my ankle, as if I had twisted it. The pane only lasted a sekkond, and on looking at my ankle I found that it was kwite sound.

Now, what did this portend?

For a moment I was completely fogged. Then I remembered that the waitress' name happened to be Grace. Obviously, therefore, sumthing must have happened to Teddy Grace of the 4th.

That evening, when the Rookwood jewnier eleven came back from St. Jim's, wear they had been playing a match, it transpired that Grace had twisted his ankle!

Wonderful things these premmernitions, aren't they?

When I was walking threw Latcham a few days ago I saw a street accident. A cab overterned, and the driver landed on his nut on the pavement. He wasn't hurt, eggsept for severe broozes and konkussion of the brane.

Now what did this cab axcident meen? Their could be only one meening to it. Hansom of the 5th was about to have a nasty spill!

Believe it or not, as you like, but that same afternoon Hansom was carrying a laden tray along the 5th Form passidge, when sunboddy barged into him, and sent him flying, tray and all!

This mourning I watched Mack, the gate-porter, sweeping up the ortum leaves in front of his lodge. The broom he was using was maid of birch twiggs.

Another terribul premmernition!

I karn't remember having dun anything that I ought not to have dun, or leeving undun anything which I ought to have dun. But the grim fackt remanes that I'm doomed to reseeve a birching in Big Hall.

Of course, I shall bare it with 40-tude, as I always do. But I hate these beestly premmernitions!

PROVED INNOCENT!

(Continued from page 8.)

time—has heard of that trick, and is usin' it against me? It's possible, you know."

"Why did you refuse to be searched then?"

"Because he knew the banknote was in his pocket," said Lattrey.

"Let him answer!"

"I'm willin' to explain, dear boys. I refused to be searched, because I regarded a search of my person as a rotten insult—and I still do! I hadn't the faintest idea that Lattrey had put the banknote in my pocket."

"Lattrey!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"I?" yelled Lattrey.

Mornington nodded.

"Yaas. I'm sure I hope that you don't mind my mentionin' it, Lattrey, as it's rather a personal matter. But, the fact is, I suspect you of stealin' 'Erbert's banknotes."

"You slanderin' rotter!" shouted Lattrey furiously.

There was a laugh from some of the juniors. Mornington's coolness and his unflinching politeness struck them in a comic light.

"Don't shout, dear boy," chided Mornington. "I didn't shout when I was accused. I think it was you, Lattrey. I'll give my reasons. You are about the only fellow at Rookwood mean and unscrupulous enough to play such a dirty trick! You admit that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You hound!" hissed Lattrey.

"Secondly, you have been my enemy ever since I gave up pub-haunting and glambin' with you," said Mornington.

"That's true!" said Erroll.

"Thirdly, my dear Lattrey, I pulled your nose the other day, because you proposed to me to go into partnership with you, an' swindle young 'Erbert out of his money at nap and banker. I believe you were very much annoyed at havin' your nose pulled, though you disdained to fight me about it."

Lattrey's face was a study.

"And is that all?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"That's all at present, dear boy."

"Well, there's nothing in it. You could make that accusation against anybody, if you don't bother about proofs. I don't believe a word of it."

"I didn't expect you to. I'm statin' it because it's the fact, not because I expect you to believe it."

"Have you anything more to say?"

Mornington reflected.

"No; I think that's the lot," he said at last.

"Then you can hear the decision of the Form!" said Jimmy Silver quietly. "You're guilty of theft, and you've got to get out of Rookwood. You'll be given time to write to your uncle, and ask him to take you away. In any case, you'll go. If you're still at Rookwood at the end of the week, we shall have to consider whether to take you to Mr. Bootles, and report the matter. We're not having a thief in the Fourth Form, and that's settled!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Good!" said Mornington, unmoved. "And if I prove my innocence, dear boys, I suppose I may count upon an apology from you?"

"Oh, don't talk rot!"

"And can I count upon your assistance, Silver, in provin' my innocence?"

"You silly ass!"

"I may need it," explained Mornington.

"Enough said!" said Jimmy Silver. "You've heard the verdict. And you're sent to Coventry as long as you stay here."

"Thanks! I shall try to bear up under the misfortune of missin' your entertainin' conversation."

Erroll stepped a little nearer to his chum. Jimmy Silver observed him with a frown.

"You're not sticking to that fellow, Erroll, after what he's done?" he exclaimed.

"I believe in him, and I'm standing by him," said Erroll quietly.

"Then you're a silly ass!"

Erroll did not reply to that. His mind was made up, and his intention was fixed.

"Send him to Coventry, too!" exclaimed Lattrey. "If they're birds of a feather, let 'em have the same measure."

"Hear, hear!"

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver crossly. "Let Erroll alone! He's a silly ass; but if he believes in that fellow, let him stick to him. It won't be for long, anyway—Mornington's going!"

"A little mistake on your part, dear boy," said Mornington. "I'm not going."

"Sure of it, dear boy. Whom else could it have been?"

Erroll was silent.

He had declared that he believed in his chum's innocence—and he did! It followed that someone else was guilty—and that that someone had striven to throw his guilt upon Mornington.

Lattrey, as Erroll knew, was a rascal, and he hated Mornington.

Yet to suspect the fellow of such base-ness, without an atom of proof, went against the grain.

Mornington glanced at his chum with an amused smile.

"Look here, Mornington, if you suspect Lattrey, why not demand a search of him and his belongings?" asked Erroll at last. "He could not refuse; the fellows wouldn't let him refuse. The second banknote hasn't turned up yet, and if Lattrey's got it—"

"He's got it."

"Then it could be found."

"My dear chap, Lattrey isn't such an idiot as that. That banknote isn't about him, or his belongings. It's hidden in some place where, if it were found by chance, it couldn't be connected with Lattrey at all."

Erroll's face fell.

"I suppose you're right," he said slowly. "But—but, Morny, there's no proof whatever that Lattrey was mixed up in it! I—I don't like your saying such things of him without any proof."

"Whom else could it have been?"

"I don't know."

"Lattrey or I," smiled Mornington.

"If it was I, where's the other banknote? It wasn't found in the search of my study. Hidden somewhere, the fellows would say. But why should I have hidden one banknote somewhere and kept the other in my pocket? What?"

Erroll nodded.

There was a thump at the door, and Conroy of the Fourth opened it. Half a dozen juniors were with him—and Lattrey.

Erroll rose to his feet. Mornington looked round, with a cool smile, without rising.

"Trot in!" he said genially. "Have you come to apologise?"

"No!" said Conroy grimly. "We've come to tell you something—and Erroll. You accused Lattrey of stealing 'Erbert's banknotes, and planting one of them on you."

"Yaas."

"Nobody believed a word of it, of course," said Jones minor.

"No, really?"

"No," growled Conroy. "But Lattrey asked that a search should be made, to make it clear. He had a right to that. He has been searched, and his study, too, and there's no sign of 'Erbert's other banknote. You had better withdraw what you said about Lattrey, Mornington. It's the least you can do."

"Not much good expecting a thief to do the decent thing," sneered Lattrey.

"Well?" snapped Conroy.

"I'm withdrawin' nothin', dear boy," drawled Mornington. "Shut the door after you, will you?"

The Australian junior gave him a dark look. Conroy, like all the Classical Fourth, looked upon Morny's accusation against Lattrey as nothing but an example of utterly reckless slander.

As several fellows pointed out, Morny might just as well have said it about any other chap as Lattrey, as there was not the faintest shadow of proof to be adduced.

The thought that the reckless accusation might have been made against any

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At all events, I'm only going—to do my prep! Ta-ta!"

And Mornington strolled out of the Common-room with Erroll, leaving the Classical juniors in a state of great exasperation.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
A Study Ragging!

KIT ERROLL glanced at his chum several times uneasily, as they sat doing their preparation in Study No. 4 that evening.

He could not understand Mornington. The dandy of the Fourth was working away sedately, apparently quite in his usual mood.

Erroll worked, too, but less steadily. He was more concerned for Mornington than Morny appeared to be for himself.

Mornington pushed his books away at last, with a yawn.

"Finished?" he asked.

"Yes, if you are."

Morny laughed.

"My dear chap, don't neglect your prep! You'll have to have it out with Bootles in the mornin' if you do."

"Never mind Bootles now," said Erroll. "I can't put my mind into prep. I'm thinking about you, Morny."

"Thanks!"

"Morny, you're in an awful fix!"

"Yes, it looks rather rotten for me, doesn't it?" said Mornington calmly.

"Lattrey has played his cards well."

"You think it was Lattrey?"

NEXT FRIDAY!

"NUGENT'S SPLENDID SACRIFICE!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

one of themselves naturally made the juniors very angry.

Indeed, Mornington was more severely condemned for that wild accusation than for the theft itself. No fellow's reputation was safe if the reckless black sheep of the Fourth was allowed to make such wild and whirling charges.

"Is that all you've got to say, Morny?" demanded several voices.

"Oh, yaas!"

"Then you're a slandering cad!" said Conroy.

"Thanks!"

"And a mean rotter!" roared Higgs.

"Good!"

"As well as a thief!" hooted Flynn.

"Keep it up!"

"Erroll, you're not standing by that outsider?" shouted Conroy. "You see what he is—a thief and a slanderer!"

Erroll's face was pale and harassed. But he did not falter.

"I'm sticking to Morny," he said quietly.

"Perhaps you believe what he's said about me?" said Lattrey, with a sneer.

"I don't know what to believe about that."

"Why, you rotter—"

"It's not fair," said Conroy. "I don't like Lattrey. You fellows know I've always been down on him. I can't stand him. But there's such a thing as fair play. Morny has accused him without a shadow of proof or reason. Morny's got to take it back."

"Rats!" said Morny.

"That's only fair!" said Rawson.

"Go an' eat coke!"

"You'll withdraw it, or you'll take a jolly good ragging, Morny."

"Look here—"

"Shut up, Erroll! We're speaking to Morny. What's your answer, Mornington?"

"Rats!"

"Collar him!" exclaimed the exasperated Conroy.

There was a rush at the dandy of the Fourth.

Mornington jumped up, and Erroll sprang to his side at once.

But the Colonial Co. pitched Erroll aside, and barred him off, and the other fellows seized Morny, and, in spite of his savage resistance, bore him to the floor.

"Bump the cad!" roared Pons.

"Give him jip!" said Higgs.

Bump, bump, bump!

"Oh, by gad!" gasped Mornington, struggling furiously in the grasp of the ragers.

Erroll, struggling fiercely, was held in the grasp of the Colonial juniors.

Morny smote the floor thrice again with sounding concussion.

"Now, are you going to withdraw your lies?" demanded Flynn.

"Hang you, no!"

Bump, bump!

"That will do!" said Conroy. "He's an obstinate beggar! Mornington, that's for a start! Another word about Lattrey from you, and you get the same over again! Come on, you chaps!"

The ragers crowded out of the study.

Mornington rose to his feet, dusty, panting for breath, his eyes gleaming with fury.

"The hounds!" he panted.

"It's natural they should be ratty," said Erroll quietly. "It's a bit thick your accusing a chap without any proof."

Mornington gritted his teeth.

But he did not answer. He brushed down his clothes, and set his tie straight.

Then he glanced at his watch.

"Hallo! Time we were movin," he remarked.

"What—"

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"I told 'Erbert to go to the end study as soon as the Second-Form prep was over," said Mornington. "We're going there to see him. Come on!"

"But what the dickens—" exclaimed Erroll, in astonishment.

Mornington left the study, and Erroll, in blank amazement, followed him to Jimmy Silver's quarters.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Up to Jimmy Silver!

JIMMY SILVER & CO. had just finished their prep when 'Erbert tapped at the door, and went into the end study.

The fag glanced round as if expecting to see someone else there.

"Hallo, kid!" said Jimmy. "What is it now?"

"Master Morny ain't 'ere?"

"Eh? No. He's not likely to be here, I suppose."

"Master Morny told me to come 'ere," said 'Erbert. "He told me to come when prep was done. So I've come."

"What the dickens for?" grunted Lovell.

"Well, sit down, and have some of these chestnuts, as you're here," said Jimmy Silver good-humouredly.

The half-open door was pushed open a few minutes later, and Mornington and Erroll came in. Mornington carefully closed the door after him, that proceeding being watched grimly by the Fistical Four.

"Have you come here for a thick ear, Morny?" demanded Raby.

"Thanks, no!"

"Then you'd better slide."

"What does this mean?" demanded Jimmy Silver angrily.

"I don't know," said Erroll. "No good asking me."

"Let me explain," said Mornington calmly. "We've never been friends, Jimmy Silver, and I'm not pretendin' to feel friendly now. But you're captain of the Fourth, and you're straight. I want your help."

"Oh, rot! What do you mean?"

"To prove my innocence, dear boy!"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"Look here, Mornington, you get out!" growled Lovell. "You're not wanted here, and that's flat!"

"You won't hear what I have to say?"

"You had a chance of saying anything you wanted in the Common-room," said Jimmy. "You said too much, as a matter of fact. No good beginning again here."

"I couldn't speak out there."

"Why not?"

"I'll explain, if you'll give me a chance. Look here! Admitting the bare possibility that I am innocent, you'd like to nail the guilty party, I suppose, and see justice done?"

"Of course. But—"

"Give me a chance, then."

"Dash it all, you can hear him, Jimmy!" exclaimed Erroll warmly.

"That won't do any harm, I suppose?"

"Oh, all right!" said Jimmy Silver resignedly. "Only more jaw, I suppose; but you can run on, Mornington."

"Cut it short!" said Newcome.

Mornington sat on the corner of the table, cool as ever.

"I couldn't bring it all out in the Common-room," he said. "I couldn't put the thief on his guard without spoiling my own game. That is how the matter stands. 'Erbert lost two banknotes. One was found on me. Where's the other?"

"You ought to know!" said Raby drily.

"You're beggin' the question, dear boy. I don't know. The thief knows. 'Erbert!"

"Yes, Master Morny?"

"Did Lattrey know that you had two fivers in your pocket-book?"

"Yes."

"Oh!" said Jimmy Silver. "How did Lattrey know that, 'Erbert? You don't have anything to say to Lattrey, as a rule!"

"He spoke to me arter I had been to see Master Morny in his study yesterday," said 'Erbert, colouring. "He made out that Morny 'ad been borrowin' my money, and wouldn't believe different till I showed 'im the notes. Tracy minor 'ad told him I 'ad them. He's thick with that young rotter!"

"Oh!" said Jimmy Silver.

Mornington smiled.

"Lattrey had heard of the fivers, and he wanted to make sure 'Erbert had them, and to see if he carried them about with him," he said lightly. "That's why he pretended to think I had borrowed 'Erbert's tin. He found out what he wanted to know that way."

Jimmy Silver was silent.

"Last night," continued Mornington, "you heard someone leave the dorm, Silver. My handkerchief was picked up on the floor in the Second dorm. A fellow who sneaked out of one dorm to another to pick a pocket wouldn't take the trouble to dress first. My hanky was left in my pocket when I went to bed. The chap who went to the Second dorm went in his pyjamas, I fancy; but he took my hanky to leave there. He bagged two fivers from 'Erbert's pocket-book. He planted one in an inside pocket of mine when he came back from the Fourth-Form dorm. It was found there to-day. But the other—"

"Lattrey's been searched at his own request," said Raby.

"Quite so. He didn't keep it about him. You see the game—killin' two birds with one stone. One banknote was used to fix it on me an' clear himself. The other he is keepin' to spend. Lattrey's hard up. He's had bad luck on the cards and the gee-gees. Towny & Co. will tell you that if you ask them. Lattrey's goin' down to the Bird-in-Hand to-night. You know that. Towny's mentioned it."

"I know it."

"And he's goin' to take 'Erbert's other banknote with him," said Mornington coolly. "He knows 'Erbert can't report the theft an' give the numbers, because it's fixed on me, an' 'Erbert won't see me suffer. So he's quite safe to pass the banknote. But 'Erbert's got the numbers."

"Yes, Master Morny."

"The note found on me was 0002463," said Mornington. "The missin' one is the next number—0002469. If that note's found on Lattrey, what then?"

"Lattrey's been searched."

"Exactly! The note isn't on him. My belief is, that, after he gets out of the dorm to-night, he will take that fiver from the place where he's hidden it, and take it out of the school with him."

"Oh!"

"That's where I want your help!" said Mornington quietly. "If I laid for him, and found the note on him, he'd say I put it there, an' you'd believe him. But Jimmy Silver, the great and only, is above suspicion. You've got to collar Lattrey to-night, Jimmy Silver, after he's started for the pub. You've got to search him for that note. I know it's risky, gettin' out of bounds at night. But—"

"Never mind the risk," said Jimmy Silver. "If I thought there was anything in it—"

"There's this much in it," said Mornington. "If you don't do it, I'm going down to the police-station at Coombe, and goin' to get a policeman to do it. That means an awful scandal, an' prison for a Rookwood chap. I'm givin' you the choice of savin' that, if you choose. But my mind's made up."

"You can't refuse, Jimmy," said Erroll, whose eyes were glistening now. Jimmy Silver was silent.

The Fistical Four looked at one another. Oddly enough, Mornington's cool confidence had taken them quite aback.

They could not help admitting that Mornny's contention was, at least, possible. If he was the victim of a cunning plot, it was up to them to get at the truth.

And what motive could he have for telling them this, unless he believed it himself? For a search of Lattrey's person, after he had got out of the school, would settle the matter one way or the other.

Jimmy Silver spoke at last. "I'll do it, Mornny. Blest if I don't half believe you!"

Mornington grinned. "Thanks! You'll wholly believe me later, I think. Of course, not a whisper about this. If Lattrey had the faintest suspicion it would be no go."

"I don't see how we're to get out of the dorm to-night without his knowing," said Lovell.

"Easy enough. Let him go first," said Mornington. "After he's gone, we go. He has to go straight up the road to the Bird-in-Hand, and we can put on a spurt and run him down."

"Well, that's so!"
"It's a go!" said Jimmy Silver resolutely. "Lattrey hasn't the note about him now, that's certain. If he has it about him when he's out of bounds to-night, it's because he's stolen it and hidden it somewhere, to take away when it's safe to do so. It follows that he kept one note for himself, and planted the other on you, Mornny. We shall see—to-night."

Mornington slipped off the table, with a grin.

"We shall see," he agreed. And he left the study with Erroll and Erbert.

Jimmy Silver looked at his chums. "Well, what do you think, Jimmy?" asked Lovell.

Jimmy shook his head. "Blest if I know what to think! But it's up to us to give Mornny a chance—and we're going to do it!"
And the Co. agreed to that.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Landed at Last!

JIMMY SILVER did not close his eyes that night, after Bulkeley had seen lights out for the Classical Fourth.

Mornington was keeping awake, and he had promised to call the other fellows when Lattrey had gone. But Jimmy kept awake, too, and so did Erroll. They lay silent, in the dark dormitory, waiting.

An hour passed. All was dark and still in the Fourth-form dormitory.

But soon after half-past ten there was the sound of a movement.

Jimmy Silver lay very still. He heard the slight sounds of someone dressing in the dark, and then the faint noise of a closing door.

The blackguard of the Fourth had

gone. His destination was the back parlour at the Bird-in-Hand, where Joey Hook and the other sporting "gentlemen" were improving the shining hour with cards and dice.

"You fellows awake?"
It was Mornington's cool, drawling voice.

Jimmy Silver slipped out of bed, and awakened Lovell, and Raby, and Newcome. Erroll and Mornington were already up.

The six juniors dressed rapidly in the dark.

Taking their shoes in their hands, they crept out of the dormitory, and Jimmy Silver closed the door softly.

The juniors moved along the passage on tiptoe. It was necessary to be

They waited a minute, within the wall, and then climbed, and dropped one by one into the road outside.

There they waited to listen. There was no sound on the road. Lattrey had gone.

"Come on!" said Jimmy Silver. He led the way at a run.

The juniors ran as softly as they could, making little sound. Their eyes were on the road ahead, in the pale starlight.

A figure loomed up dimly ahead. "Lattrey!" grinned Mornington.

The dim figure halted, and turned. Lattrey had heard the pursuing footsteps.

Jimmy Silver ran on at top speed. "Stop, Lattrey!" he called out. Lattrey had started running.



There was a thump on the door, and Conroy, followed by half a dozen other juniors, crowded into the study. "Trot in!" said Mornington. "Have you come to apologise?" "No!" said Conroy grimly. "You've accused Lattrey of pinching 'Erbert's banknotes, and we've come to make you eat your rotten accusation!" (See Chapter 3.)

cautious, for there were still lights below, though the upper passages were in darkness. The window of the lower box-room was unfastened; Lattrey had gone out that way.

In a few minutes the juniors were on the ground, and scudding away through the shadows towards the school-wall.

Lattrey had five or six minutes' start.

That was sufficient time—if Mornington's theory was correct—for the cad of the Fourth to take the stolen banknote from its hiding-place, and get out of Rookwood with it.

But the juniors were very silent and cautious as they approached the school-wall in the darkness. They did not want to run into Lattrey within the walls.

"Hark!" whispered Erroll suddenly.

It was a scraping sound in the silence—the sound of someone sliding down the wall on the outer side. The soft thud of feet on the road followed.

"Good!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Stop!"
The cad of the Fourth did not stop, and Jimmy ran his hardest. In a minute or less his hand was on Lattrey's shoulder. The black sheep of the Fourth was not much use in a race with Jimmy Silver.

Jimmy's grasp closed on his shoulder like a vice, and Lattrey was swung to a halt. The rest of the party came up panting.

Lattrey's eyes glittered at the captain of the Fourth.

"Let me go, you fool! What do you want with me? I'm in a hurry!"
Mornington laughed softly.

"You fellows handle him," he said, keeping his hands in his pockets. "I'm not coming near him! If I touch him, he'll have a chance for some more lies."

"Keep back!" said Jimmy. Lattrey's face had paled, and he made an effort to tear himself loose.

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The INVISIBLE RAIDER

A Magnificent Serial of Adventure, introducing Ferrers Lord and Prince Ching Lung.

By SIDNEY DREW.

CHARACTERS IN THE STORY.

FERRERS LORD, the famous millionaire adventurer, and owner of the Lord of the Deep.

PRINCE CHING LUNG, a very old friend of Lord's, who has accompanied the millionaire on many adventures.

RUPERT THURSTON, a young Englishman, and friend of Lord's.

HAL HONOUR, known as the man of silence, engineer of Ferrers Lord's wonderful submarine. Honour has invented a marvellous paint which causes things to become invisible when painted with it. He has also built a new kind of aeroplane which he calls a helicopter, and which is covered with this new paint, but which is destroyed by

KARL VON KREIGLER, a mysterious professor, who has great power in Germany, and who holds the secret of Germany's great treasure-chest. Ferrers Lord has ferreted out one or two of the professor's secrets, and Von Kreigler realises that Lord is a very dangerous man. After this attack, Ferrers Lord despatches Rupert Thurston, with Honour and Ching Lung, with a message to Kreigler.

However, they succeed in escaping to a cavern, finding a high aperture in which to hide. The Germans give chase, but fail to find the fugitives.

Ching Lung, who is out scouting, comes upon a great treasure store, the secret Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies.

Hal Honour discovers an opening in the wall of the cave which leads to the side of the moat. Through this hole the three escape, just in time to escape an explosion which blows the Schloss Schwartzburg sky-high. Without further adventures they eventually reached the Lord of the Deep, where Ferrers Lord is waiting for them.

Gan Waga, on the look-out for food, goes down to the store-room of the yacht, where the chef catches him on the prowl. "You fat thief!" cries Mossoo, beside himself with rage.

(Now read on.)

Trouble For the Cook!

"**A** FATS what?" asked Gan Waga, rising to his feet.

"Not nozzings a fats whats," said Mossoo. "I say a fat thief."

Who else stole my cheekins, my eggs, and my Gan Waga took anything and everything meet? Avay, fat thief—avay!" he wanted to take without asking permission from anyone, but he objected to being called a thief. He was quite angry about it. He was quite used to being called names, but he could not remember having been called a thief before. In his own mind perhaps he considered that everything on the yacht was his own to do what he liked with.

The floor of the cold room had a thin carpet of powdered ice and snow. Gan-Waga gathered up a handful of it, and began to rub it briskly into the chef's face. Standing on one leg, the chef, who was not very good with his fists, tried a little French boxing known as "la savatte." He put his left heel under Gan Waga's ear, and luckily for Gan Waga's ear the cook was wearing slippers. All the same, it was painful.

The Eskimo sat down on the block of ice, holding his ear with both hands. In spite of the pain he fixed his fascinated eyes on the chef. Mossoo was performing a series of amazing acrobatics in his wild and desperate efforts to keep erect on the slippery floor. He stood on his left toe, and then on his right heel, and waved his arms and yelled.

Only one electric light was burning, and it was not a very bright one. Suddenly out of the gloom a wooden crate skimmed past Gan Waga, as the prince gave it a powerful push. It settled the question of balance for the cook as it hit the one leg he was managing to keep on the ground.

With a howl of anguish and a squelching thud, Mossoo tumbled into the crate. And it was an egg-crate—all guaranteed new laid!

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Prince Ching Lung, in a tone of amazement. "What's this?"

A quick spurt had brought Ching Lung to the doorway. He stood there as if just about to enter the cold-room. Apparently the temperature was not low enough to freeze eggs hard, for the cook had badly damaged a large number of them. He got out of the crate like some uncooked human omelet all ready for the pan except for the shells, which every good chef discards when he makes an omelet.

Gan Waga was speechless. He could only glare at the strange study in yellow and white. The cook had been elbow deep in the eggs, and it was a cruel waste of money and good food. With a kind of heartbroken sob he staggered towards the door, and the prince gave him plenty of room.

"Ar-r-r! I am dead! I am murdraire!" he moaned. "I hate myself! I am disgrace! I am dirty! Ar-r-r! I stick to myself! Ar-r-r-r!"

His wailing voice faded away into silence, the voice of a strong man in his agony. Gan Waga felt his tender ear again, and grinned. "Dears, dears, dears!" he said, with a gurgle. "What a dirtiness boys, Chingy! I never see nobody who want a baths morer. And I nots know how he done it, Chingy. He call me a thief, and we swat each others. Then he put his great hoofs a hard biff on my poor ear, which is not fair fighting, hunk. Ho, ho, ho! I sits down, Chingy, to watch him dancing, and all at onces along comes the box-eggses, and in he dive kerplumps. It most mysteriousness."

"It is very cruel of you, Gan!" said Ching Lung severely. "Are you surprised that nobody loves you, when you do such unkind things?"

"But I never touches the old box-eggses, Chingy!" protested the Eskimo. "I awfulness truthfulness, Chingy. I did have a few raw before I went to sleep, but not never them twenties or forties. I mean I never push the boxes at old Mossoo. It just came itself, and I very gladful it did."

"And now you have made another enemy," sighed Ching Lung. "If you persist in aggravating the whole ship, how can you expect me to protect you? You are aggressive, and have no conscience. Your end will be the finish of you, and it will be a bad finish. And instead of weeping, and clothing yourself in sackcloth and ashes, and shedding

bitter tears of repentance, you grin! Think of what you did to Barry O'Rooney! Horrible!"

"Chingy, old bean, yo' can't pull my legs," said the Eskimo, chuckling. "Tell that stuff to Prout, or Ben Maddock. What would yo' do to a chap who put his foot ups and biff yo' in the ears, hunk? What yo' do to a bad rascality like that, hunk, Chingy?"

"I think I'd have him measured for a nice new coffin," said Ching Lung. "Br-r! It isn't too hot down here, is it? But, seriously, my fat and quarrelsome friend, you mustn't. The chef will be putting arsenic in the soup, or performing some similar delightful jape. Use something cheaper than eggs next time. Perhaps you had better keep close to me, for I believe O'Rooney is looking out for you with a battleaxe. Really Gan, you make me quite nervous!"

Gan Waga selected a few unbroken eggs to use as missiles in the event of an attack on his person, and followed Ching Lung. The door of the galley was shut, but they could hear Mossoo saying things to himself in French, mostly about Gan Waga. The Eskimo wanted to listen, but Ching Lung dragged him away.

"You would not understand, my bouncing boy," said the prince, "and if you did, it would not flatter you. Slide for your life, son! Here's O'Rooney!"

Being a privileged person, Gan Waga made for the saloon, a perfectly safe refuge, for Barry O'Rooney could not follow him into that sacred apartment.

He was rather abashed to see Ferrers Lord standing there, and Gan hid the eggs behind him. The millionaire had an open newspaper in his hand. He looked past the Eskimo at Ching Lung, who had got rid of his overcoat, and was close behind.

"I have been reading the Prime Minister's speech in the German affair, Ching," said the millionaire. "It is quite a tribute to German bluff."

"Yes, I glanced at it when the newspapers came aboard, Chief. Rupert and I smiled a few smiles. It's certainly a compliment to the gentle Von Kreigler."

"Von Kreigler could almost bluff himself," said Ferrers Lord. "As the Yankees put it, the Huns are pulling wool over the eyes of the Allies. Strange how even able men like the Prime Minister can be deceived by cant and whining. The French, too, seem to be giving it up as hopeless. Germany will pay, but it will be a matter of years and years. It is the old policy of repeating the same thing over and over again. Only make a statement often enough, and people are sure to believe it. That is the Von Kreigler-Goltzheimer trick. If they can only keep on pleading ruin and bankruptcy long enough, they know they will escape."

"After all, it's only human, Chief," said the prince. "If they weren't such a couple of rascally fellows I might feel an atom of sympathy."

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," said Ferrers Lord. "You have rowed in the same sort of boat, Ching."

The prince laughed. "Not quite the same sort of boat, Chief; but after the big revolution at Kwa-hai we

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had to plead an empty treasury, otherwise we should have gone bankrupt. That was a different affair. I had not made the revolution, but had to suppress it. Thanks to your timely help, I managed to do so. Like the genial professor, we hid our money. Luckily there was no one like yourself on the revolutionary side to scent it out."

Gan Waga still stood with his back to the door. He could not turn the knob and escape, for his hands were filled with eggs. The only one person in the world he was really afraid of was Ferrers Lord. Gan felt hot and anxious. For the first time in his life he hated eggs. He felt certain he would drop some of them in a minute, for they seemed to be growing larger and more difficult to hold every second. Then came a knock that made the Eskimo's heart quail.

"Come in!" said the millionaire's deep voice.

It was Prout, yachting-cap in hand. The steersman of the Lord of the Deep saw the eggs, and as he had recently met the chef he realised the position.

"Drop 'em in!" he whispered, pushing his cap into the small of Gan Waga's back.

Gan Waga was only too glad to obey. It was a kindly action on Prout's part. The Eskimo had been thinking of putting a baited pot overboard that evening, and placing whatever crabs and lobsters he caught that were too small to eat alive in the steersman's bunk. He decided that instead he would divide the catch between Maddock and Barry O'Rooney. Prout whisked the cap and the eggs round the edge of the door, and another hand seized them.

"A note by motor-launch, sir," said Prout, saluting. "No answer required, I think, for the launch sheered off at once."

The millionaire frowned a little as he tore open the envelope and read the message.

"It is just as well you and Thurston did not go ashore, Ching," he said. "There are several of Von Kreigler's spies on the watch still."

"Then I hope they didn't see Hal Honour, Chief," said Ching Lung.

"Honour is rather a large person to hide, but he can be the soul of caution," said Ferrers Lord. "He knew that some of the inquisitive gentlemen would not be far away. We'll leave Porthampton at once, Prout. Keep below, Ching, until we are well at sea, for these fellows have sharp eyes."

"I believe in taking precautions, Chief," said Ching Lung. "But is it any use? The soldier we left at the side of the moat must have told everything."

"One would think so, Ching. It's the obvious thing to think; but I hold another view. Presently I hope to hear something about this Hun soldier. It may be good for us and bad for Von Kreigler and General Goltzheimer, or it may be the reverse. One of my men ought to be very busy over there. I did not enter upon this little scheme without making some preparations. Even a dull-witted Hun may have a brilliant thought at times. Can you imagine the man lying there looking up at the burning schloss, and hearing the explosion. Possibly he hated army life, and we know he was anxious to be married. Let us suppose he managed to get rid of his bonds. If he did not go straight to General Goltzheimer, what would he do?"

"I give it up, Chief!"

"What would a dead man do?"

"Great Scott! That notion never crossed my mind, Chief!" cried the prince. "Of course he was dead. If he remembered that, and wanted to clear out of the army, here was his chance. He had no affection for Goltzheimer, for he described Goltz as a terrible man. Let's hope he had the intelligence you give him credit for, and that he made tracks. If I'd even dreamed of such a thing, I'd have left him some cash to help him on the road. If it's true, it's great!"

"At any rate, I shall soon know whether he has come back to live or not," said Ferrers Lord. "It will make an enormous difference."

The yacht was beginning to move astern. Though he had got rid of the eggs and felt easy in his mind on that point, the conversation did not interest Gan Waga. He secured a couple of cigars, and went out on deck.

(There will be another grand instalment of our thrilling adventure serial in next week's issue of the POPULAR. Order your copy in advance to avoid disappointment.)

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE NEW PORTER!"

The Bounder's Comedy!

(Continued from page 6.)

"You startled me!" he growled.

"What do you want?"

"Very likely I'm going to startle you some more," said Coker. "I hear you're writing a comedy?"

"Yes."

"What's it called?"

"The Grass-Widower."

"What else?"

"Or Why Henry Left Home."

"Nugent's pater's front name is Henry," said Coker.

"Is it?" yawned the Bounder.

"You know it is."

"No, I don't think I knew."

"Rot!"

The Bounder smiled unpleasantly.

"I was busy when you came in," he said. "Would you mind leaving me to get my work done?"

"What's the work?"

"I'm writing my comedy."

"What are the characters in the comedy?" asked Coker.

To any other questioner Vernon-Smith would have said "Get out!" But Coker did not look as if he would take an answer of that kind good-temperedly. Vernon-Smith was no coward, but the powerful Fifth-Former could have wiped the floor with him, and he knew it. He answered as civilly as he could.

"There's the grass-widower, Henry Bolter," he said, "and the grass-widow, Mrs. Bolter. Then there is Bolter major and Bolter minor, two schoolboys. That's all. It's a small caste, you know. Just enough characters for Snoop and Bolsover major and minor, and myself."

"Taking off Nugent's pater and mater, and Nugent major and minor, of course," said Coker.

"There might be a distinct resemblance," admitted the Bounder. "That's by chance, of course. I've made it a point not to know anything about Nugent and his affairs. It's not my fault if his mater bolts. I want to get on with my comedy."

"That's what you won't do, my son," said Coker. "As a senior, I take it as my duty to get on my hind legs in this matter. Savvy? You're acting like a rotten cad, and you're going to put that precious comedy in the fire."

"What?"

"Shove it in!" said Coker.

"What? I won't!"

Coker whirled the dog-whip in the air.

"I give you two seconds," he said.

The Bounder made a spring at the grate, and caught up the poker. Coker was upon him in a second.

He grabbed the Bounder by the collar and pitched him across the study. Then he grasped up the written sheets from the table, jammed them into the fire, and stamped them down with his foot deep into the glowing coals. The valuable results of Vernon-Smith's mental efforts blazed up at once.

"Now, then—" said Coker. "Ah, would you?"

The Bounder was coming at him like a tiger. When Vernon-Smith's evil temper was thoroughly aroused he was utterly reckless. He had caught up a chair, and he was rushing at Coker with that dangerous weapon whirling aloft. He brought it savagely down, and Horace Coker dodged round the table just in time. The chair crashed upon

the table and broke, at the same time shattering the inkstand to pieces.

Before the Bounder could recover his unwhieldy weapon for a second swipe, Coker seized him in his powerful grip.

The chair fell to the floor, and Vernon-Smith, whirled off his feet, was flung face downwards across the study table.

Then the dog-whip came into play.

It rose and fell, and each time it fell the Bounder struggled and kicked and yelled madly.

Lash, lash, lash!

"Ow, ow! Yaroo! Help! Rescue! Help! Oh!"

Lash, lash!

The door of the study burst open, and a crowd of Remove fellows stared in. Had it been any other Removite who was suffering that infliction there would have been a rush to the rescue at once. But Vernon-Smith was not popular, and the leaders of the Remove—Harry Wharton & Co.—had not troubled to come along.

"Faith, and what are ye up to, intirely?" exclaimed Micky Desmond.

"Licking Smithy!" panted Coker.

"We can see that!" grinned Mark Linley. "But what's the trouble?"

"Lesson in good taste," explained Coker. "My taste in comedies doesn't agree with Smithy's, and this is my method of criticism. There, I think that will do!"

He jerked the Bounder from the table, and flung him, gasping, into the arm-chair. Then he turned upon Bolsover major, who promptly backed away. Coker grinned.

"There are comedies and comedies, you kids," he explained. "Smithy's is a comedy of errors, and I'm helping him to see the errors. That's all!"

And Coker strode out of the study.

"I think Smithy wanted that, and I think he wants some more, look you, and if I were Nugent's chum I'd give it to him," said Morgan.

"Hear, hear!" said the other fellows.

And they streamed away, leaving Vernon-Smith and Bolsover major alone in the study. The bully of the Remove looked rather dubiously at the groaning Bounder.

"I say, that's rough, Smithy," he said. "I suppose you'll chuck the comedy now?"

Vernon-Smith ground his teeth.

"I won't! I can write it out again! And I'll make Coker sit up for this somehow! Ow!"

"Like his cheek to interfere," said Bolsover. "Of course, between ourselves, all the fellows know you are getting at Nugent in the comedy."

Vernon-Smith scowled.

"I'll make it plainer still," he said. "I'll show Coker whether he can bully me into chucking it! Hang him! Ow! And we'll have a rehearsal this very evening. Ow! Or—or rather, we'll have a rehearsal to-morrow; I don't feel quite up to one this evening!"

And Bolsover grinned. Vernon-Smith certainly did not look quite up to a rehearsal just then. Whether he would feel up to a rehearsal on the morrow was a different matter.

The Bounder was not so easily turned from his purpose.

THE END.

(Another magnificent long complete story dealing with the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars will appear in next week's issue of the POPULAR.)

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Look out for it next Friday!

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3. No correspondence may 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 October 13th.

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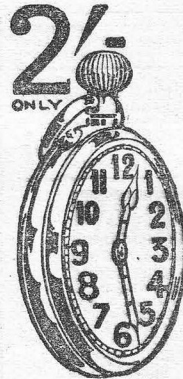
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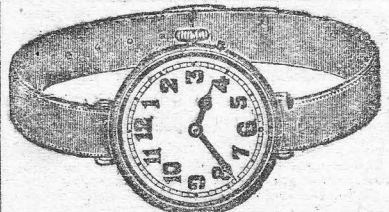
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