

143

FOOTBALLS FOR READERS!

(See Our Grand "POPLETS" COMPETITION Inside.)

Week Ending—
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New
Series,
No. 143.

Grey-friars

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Stories, Jokes & Pictures
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BILLY BUNTER AT THE GREYFRIARS BALL!

(See the Grand Carnival Number of "BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY" Inside.)

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



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

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



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

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Dicky Comes Back!

"**H**A, ha, ha!" The sound of the loud laugh came from Vernon-Smith's study in the Remove passage. Frank Nugent started as he heard it, and gritted his teeth. He knew what was the cause of the merriment of Vernon-Smith & Co. The Bounder and Snoop and Bolsover were rehearsing in the study; and Nugent knew what they were rehearsing.

But Nugent did not stop. He hurried on down the Remove passage, and went out into the Close.

Nugent was in trouble. His father and mother had quarrelled over a trivial matter, but his mother had left her husband's house, and Dicky, Nugent's minor in the Second Form, had gone with her.

Already Dick had written to say that he was tiring of being alone with his mother. That, coupled with the fact that Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greystones, had "written" a comedy having for its plot the trouble in the Nugent family, and was even now rehearsing for a public performance, was enough to worry any junior, let alone a sensitive fellow like Nugent of the Remove.

Frank had written to Dicky imploring him to stay with Mrs. Nugent. But the fags of the Second had received a letter from Nugent minor imploring them to send funds with which he could buy a ticket back to Greystones.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You back again?"

It was Bob Cherry's powerful voice, and Nugent swung round, and looked towards the gates. He started. Bob Cherry's greeting had been to a dusty fag who had just entered; and the fag was Nugent minor!

He had come back, then!
"So you've turned up again, young shaver," said Bob Cherry.

Dick Nugent nodded.

"Yes, I've come back," he said, "and

I'm jolly well not going away again, too. Frank can go and be blubbed over, if he likes!"

"Shut up, you young ass!" muttered Bob Cherry. "Frank's there."

"I don't care!"
Frank Nugent hurried towards his young brother. Bob Cherry nodded to him and strolled away. Frank caught Dicky by the shoulder.

"You've left mother, Dicky?"

"Yes, I have," said Dicky sulkily.

"You got my letter?"

"Yes, I did."

"And it didn't make any difference to you?" said Frank.

Dicky sniffed.

"I didn't write to you for a lot of rotten grandfatherly advice," he said.

"I wanted some tin to get back to school. You didn't send me any?"

"Did you ask mother for it?"

Dicky chuckled for a moment.

"No fear. She wouldn't have let me come."

Nugent major started.

"Have you come away without telling her?" he exclaimed sharply.

"Of course I have!" said Dicky aggressively. "Do you think I wanted her crying over me at the station. There's been nothing but blubbing all the time I've been away, and I never got the pony, either. Gatty sent me the tin, like a decent chap, and I've come back. I left a note for mother to say I wanted to be back at school. It's what the pater wanted, too. He came down to see us the day after we got to Scarcliffe, and said I was to go back; but the mater wouldn't have it. But I got fed-up. If you want to go, you can go. I don't. I've had enough."

"How is the mater?"

"Oh, she's all right! Only frightfully weepy!"

"You—you—"

"Oh, don't you begin to slang me!" said Dicky resentfully. "I've had enough of it. The mater has worried me to death. Says I'm all she has left, and all that. Well, I ain't. If she misses

the pater, why doesn't she make it up with him? I think it's all rot. Married people ought to put up with one another. Anyway, they ought to leave the kids out of their rows. I told her I was due to play for the Second in a footer-match with Tubbs' lot to-morrow. She didn't understand; only cried."

And Dicky grunted.

"And you couldn't give up a footer-match for mother?" said Frank.

"You needn't put it like that. I could give up one match, I suppose, but not all of 'em. Besides, what good was I doing down there—dreary hole—no body there but mother and a blessed deaf grandfather?" growled Dicky. "It was sickening. I can't help it if the pater and mater can't keep the peace, can I? Why should I suffer for it?"

"You're a young rotter!" said Frank. "I would have stuck to mother."

"I dare say you would," agreed Dicky. "You ain't like me. I don't like weepy bizney at all. You always were a sentimental old codger, Frank."

Nugent was silent.

"I told mater you'd come, if she liked," said Dicky confidentially.

"Blest if I can see why you wouldn't do as well as me. Why wouldn't you? You could stand it better than I could. I told the mater so. Then she started weepy - weepy, again!" exclaimed Nugent minor, in a tone of great exasperation.

"Blest if I can understand the mater. But I couldn't stand it—I simply couldn't! I was getting into frightfully low spirits. I've never had such a rotten time in my life. You can go down and take your turn. I'm fed-up!"

And Nugent minor tramped away towards the Close in the dusk.

Frank Nugent stood still.

It had come to it, then—Dicky had come back, and his mother was alone. She had left her husband, and her son had left her! And what would she do now?

Would she think of him?

If only he could have done some-

thing to heal the breach—if only he could have thought of some means of bringing his father and his mother together again. He had thought that over and over again, till his brain was weary with it. There was no real cause of quarrel. Although Frank tried to think respectfully of the parents he loved, he could not disguise from himself that the trouble was due to foolish temper and impatience and obstinacy on both sides. But, alas! such obstacles were harder to overcome than real causes of dispute.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Performance Cancelled!**

HARRY WHARTON paused in the passage and glanced at the notice-board. Among the other papers pinned up there was one in the handwriting of Vernon-Smith of the Remove. It had attracted a good deal of attention already, and a good deal of laughter. It ran:

"NOTICE!

"A performance of the new Comedy, 'The Grass-Widower; or, Why Henry Left Home!' will be given in the Remove Form-room this evening at eight precisely.
"Admission Free."

Harry Wharton's eyes glinted.

The Bounder was evidently ready for business now. The lesson Coker had given him had had no effect, and the precious comedy was ready for performance. There was no doubt that there would be a crowd to see it. The Bounder would certainly succeed in scoring over No. 1 Study if the performance took place; and the bounder was not particular about hitting below the belt, so long as he succeeded in scoring.

Wharton knitted his brows as he went upstairs. As he passed Vernon-Smith's study in the Remove passage he heard Bolsover's voice booming out. The comedians were having a dress rehearsal, the last before the performance.

"The kidneys were burnt, I tell you!" came Bolsover's voice, in the character of Mr. Bolter.

"Brute!" came Snoop's voice, high-pitched to imitate a feminine voice. "I shall go back to my mother! Boo-hoo!"

Wharton went on his way, and entered No. 13 Study—Bob Cherry's quarters. Bob Cherry and Mark Linley and Hurree Jamsat Rani Singh were there.

"Have you seen the notice on the board?" asked Harry abruptly.

"Yes," said Bob.

"What do you think of it?"

"Rotten—and very like Smithy!"

"Caddish!" said Mark.

"The caddishfulness of the esteemed Bounder is terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh, with a shake of the head.

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"Smithy knows that Nugent won't interfere, because he doesn't want to admit that the case is his," he said.

"But I think, as Franky's pals, we're called upon to chip in."

"I'm ready," said Bob Cherry. "I don't know whether Franky wants us to, that's all."

"We won't ask him. I'll call up some of the fellows, and we'll drop in on them at rehearsal," said Wharton. "After we've done with them, they won't feel up to a performance to-night, and they won't have any props left!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Good wheeze!"

Wharton went along the passage, calling on his special followers. Johnny Bull and Penfold and Micky Desmond

and Ogilvy and Morgan joined him at once, and Bob Cherry came out of his study with Mark and Hurree Singh.

The whole crowd of fellows went along to Vernon-Smith's study. There was a sound of loud laughter within, but it ceased as Bob Cherry kicked the door open.

There were four fellows in the study—the Bounder himself, Bolsover major and Snoop, and Bolsover minor, of the Third. Bolsover minor was not looking happy. He did not like the part he had to play, but he was too much under his elder brother's influence to resist him.

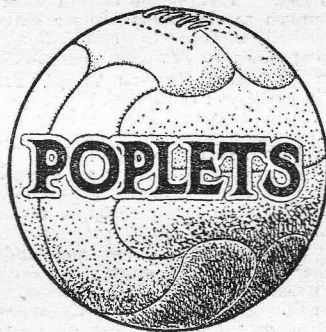
The four amateur actors looked angrily at Harry Wharton & Co. as they crowded in.

"What do you fellows want?" demanded the Bounder, scowling.

"We've come to the giddy dress rehearsal!" said Bob Cherry.

The actors retreated behind the table, uneasily. They were made up for their parts—Bolsover in a ridiculous imitation

**DON'T MISS THIS
SPLENDID OFFER!**



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of Mr. Nugent, Snoop in feminine attire, and Vernon-Smith with his cheeks chalked and dabbed with pink, in imitation of Frank Nugent's fresh complexion.

Harry Wharton held the door open. "You can get out, Bolsover minor!" he said.

"I—I—" stammered Billy, looking doubtfully at Wharton and then at his major.

"Don't go!" said Bolsover major.

"Chuck the kid out!" said Harry. "Don't hurt him! He's not a cad like the others—Bolsover has dragged him into this."

"I—I say—" said Billy.

"Outside!"

Two or three of the Co. grasped Bolsover minor, and deposited him in the passage without hurting him. The door was closed upon him. Bolsover major had moved forward to interfere, but Johnny Bull and Mark Linley stopped him. The bully of the Remove clenched his fists furiously.

"What have you rotters come here for?" he shouted.

"We're going to muck up the performance!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"Get out of this study!" yelled Vernon-Smith.

"So we will—when we're finished!"

The Bounder gritted his teeth.

"Look here! How dare you interfere with us?" he demanded. "We haven't

interfered with your rotten Shakespeare tragedies."

"And we sha'n't interfere with you—if you play Shakespeare," said Harry Wharton. "You are going to play a skit on Nugent's family, and we're going to stop you!"

"Does Nugent object?"

"Nugent has said nothing."

"Well, if he's said nothing, what has it to do with you?" demanded the Bounder. "If Nugent has any objection to make, let him come and make it himself!"

"You know that he won't do that," said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "You are taking a rotten, cowardly advantage of him!"

"Oh, mind your own bizney!"

"This is my business!" said Harry.

"Take off those things!"

"Sha'n't!" said Bolsover.

"Take them off!"

"What do you want to do with them?" demanded Vernon-Smith.

"Burn them!"

The Bounder jumped. "What!" he yelled. "Burn them! Burn my property! Do you know these costumes cost me three pounds and more?"

"I don't know, and I don't care! I know I am going to burn them! If you suffer any loss, you can put it down to your own caddishness!"

"Hear, hear!" said the Co.

"I won't have it!" shrieked the Bounder. "If you lay a finger on my property, I'll call in Mr. Quelch. I'll complain to the Head!"

"Lock the door, Bob!"

"Right-ho!"

Vernon-Smith made a spring towards the door. Bob Cherry pushed him roughly back, and turned the key in the lock. Then the whole Co. advanced upon the three comedians.

"Are you going to take those things off?" asked Wharton quietly.

"No!" yelled Bolsover.

"Then we'll strip you!"

"I—I say, hold on!" stuttered Snoop.

"I—I don't mind taking them off!"

"Don't be a coward, Snoop!" bellowed Bolsover.

"Well, I—I can't fight half a dozen of 'em!" said Snoop. "You can try, if you like! It's not good enough for me!"

"Funk!"

"Oh, rats!"

Snoop stripped off the feminine attire, and put his own jacket on. Bob Cherry picked up the costume, and jammed it in a heap in the study fire. Vernon-Smith made a spring forward to save his belongings, and was instantly grasped and hurled back.

Bolsover clenched his fists, and began to hit out; and in a moment he was upon the floor, and two or three juniors were sitting upon him. Held fast by many hands, the cads of the Remove looked on in helpless rage at what followed.

Bob Cherry stirred the costume down into the fire with the poker. The material was inflammable enough, and it burnt up. The study was filled with a pungent smoke as it burned, and Ogilvy opened the window to let it out.

"Phew!" gasped Bob Cherry. "It's getting rather thick! But we'll be through soon!"

"I'll make you pay for this!" shrieked the Bounder, writhing with rage in the grasp of the Removites.

"All serene; we'll chance it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry stirred away industriously. Slowly but surely the costume of Mrs. Bolter was reduced to smoking ashes. Bob Cherry, panting with the heat and

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exertion, retired to the window to cool himself.

"Your turn now, Bolsover!" said Harry Wharton. "Yank those things off him!"

Bolsover struggled furiously, but it was in vain. The frock-coat and striped trousers were yanked off him, and the false beard and whiskers and wig. All of them were jammed into the fire, and Johnny Bull took his turn at stirring them in. Bolsover, his brow black with rage, dressed himself in his own clothes. The study was smokier than ever, and the juniors' eyes were smarting by the time Bolsover's costume was reduced to smoky ashes.

Harry Wharton looked round the study. Sticks of grease-paint, false hair, and chalks and charcoal, lay upon the table, and all of them were swept into the fire, and rammed well in.

"Oh, I'll make you pay for this!" said Vernon-Smith, grinding his teeth.

"I—I—I'll smash you!" stammered Bolsover.

"Oh, good!" said Bob Cherry. "But we're going to do the smashing at present. You want to give the fellows a funny show. We've mucked up this one for you, but we'll give you a chance to give 'em another! Yank them over here! Never mind Snoop; kick him out!"

The struggling pair were dragged over to the hearthrug. Bob Cherry rubbed handfuls of the blackened remains of the costumes over their faces and hair, while they gasped and writhed and yelled. Snoop had fled, only too glad to escape.

Bob Cherry was very liberal, and by the time he had finished Vernon-Smith and Bolsover major were scarcely recognisable.

Seven o'clock rang out from the clock-tower, and Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Performance booked to begin in an hour," he remarked. "I don't think the company will be ready."

"Faith, and ye're right; unless they go on as nigger minstrels, or the 'Wild Man from Borneo' Company!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think they've had enough!" grinned Harry Wharton. "They won't get all that off much before eight o'clock. Only remember this, Smithy. If there's any attempt to give that comedy minus the costumes, we shall be on the scene, and we'll give you such a time that you won't feel like comedy!"

"More like tragedy, bedad!" grinned Micky Desmond.

And the avengers unlocked the door and streamed out of the study. They left the cads of the Remove writhing on the floor exhausted with their struggles, blackened with soot and ashes, and panting with rage. Bolsover sat up, and looked at Vernon-Smith. Vernon-Smith sat up and looked at Bolsover. They did not speak; their feelings were too deep for words. They both crawled away to a bath-room to clean themselves.

Downstairs, fellows who passed the notice-board found that there was an addition to the notice pasted up by Vernon-Smith. A slip had been pinned across it, and upon the slip were written the words, in Bob Cherry's sprawling hand: "PERFORMANCE CANCELLED."

And it remained cancelled.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

For His Mother's Sake!

FRANK NUGENT was in Study No. 1 when Harry Wharton returned there. Wharton was a little flushed with his exertions, and breathing rather quickly.

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Nugent glanced at him inquiringly.

"What's the row about?" he asked.

"Oh, only a little unrehearsed scene in Smithy's comedy," said Harry. "There won't be any performance to-night."

"Thank you, old man," said Nugent gratefully. "The cad! He knew it was impossible for me to say anything about it."

"It's all right, Franky; I don't think he'll start anything of the kind again. But, I say—" Wharton looked at his chum in surprise. Frank Nugent had his overcoat on, and there was a bag lying on the table. "Are you off somewhere?"

Nugent nodded.

"Where are you going, Franky? Not—not leaving?"

"Yes."

"Leaving the school?" exclaimed Wharton, in dismay.

"For a time, anyway!"

"But—but, I say—what about the Head?"

"I've asked the Head's permission, and he's given it to me," said Nugent quietly. "I must go, Harry. I'm going to my mother."

"Frank!"

"Dicky's left her—I suppose it wasn't to be expected he'd stay," said Nugent wearily. "I know she doesn't want me so much as she wants Dicky; but—but somebody will have to stand by her. I'm going down to Scarcliffe to-night!"

"It's rotten for you to go, Frank. When will you come back?"

"I don't know. Not so long as the mater wants me."

Wharton looked troubled.

"You're chucking up everything here," he said. "Your work—and everything—all the footer matches, too. We shall miss you, Frank."

"I shall miss you, too, and—and the other chaps. But I must go. I can't let the mater feel that she's deserted," said Frank. "She—she's awfully sensitive, you know; and she's not over strong, either. She might be ill, and—and after all, a chap is supposed to make a bit of a sacrifice if necessary for his mother's sake, Harry."

"I suppose so, Frank. But—"

"So I'm going. I wanted to say good-bye to you, Harry. I don't know when I shall be back, or whether I shall be back at all. You—you might keep an eye on my minor. He's always getting into scrapes, and he won't have anybody to back him up when I'm gone."

"I'll look after him, Frank."

"Good-bye, then!"

"I'm coming down to the station with you, anyway," said Harry. "Wingate will give me a pass-out, or Gwynne. Wait at the door for me!"

"Right-ho!"

The chums of the Remove descended the stairs. Nugent waited outside the door, in the deep October dusk in the Close. Harry Wharton joined him in a few minutes, with his coat and cap on.

They walked across the Close, and Gosling let them out at the gate. Harry Wharton was deeply troubled, and he was silent; and Nugent did not speak.

"Does your mother know you're coming, Frank?" asked Wharton, after a long pause, when the lights of the village came in sight.

"Yes; I've wired."

"And your pater?"

"I've written to him."

"He won't like this, Frank!"

Nugent sighed.

"I don't know. When a chap's father and mother can't get on together, it's frightfully difficult to know what to do. But I can't leave the mater alone. If

she doesn't want me, I can come back. But I think she will want me."

"I should think so, Frank. But—well, it's rotten all round."

"I'm not sorry to get away from Greyfriars for a bit," said Nugent abruptly. "The fellows all know about what's happened—there are only a few like Smithy, who want to make capital out of it—but they all know. I can't bear it. It's too rotten. I sha'n't be sorry to get away. I—I hope I shall come back, though. Anyway, we shall meet again somewhere."

They reached the station.

Wharton waited on the platform with his chum till the train came in. Nugent stepped into the train, and tossed his bag upon the rack. He gripped his chum's hand through the doorway.

"Good-bye, Harry!"

"Good bye, Frank, old man; and good luck!"

The porter closed the carriage door, the whistle shrieked, and the train moved out of the station. Wharton waved his hand from the platform; the train disappeared into the night—Nugent was gone. Gone!

It had all been so rapid that Wharton could hardly realise yet that he had lost his chum. Would Nugent ever come back to Greyfriars? Was his place at the old school to remain empty? Wharton knew what a difference it would make to him if his chum's place remained unfilled; he would miss Frank at every turn, at every hour of the day. But still, he did not think of himself; his thoughts were with Frank, and the heavy sorrow that had come into his young life. What was to be the end of it all? Wharton's brow was clouded, and his heart was heavy, as he walked slowly home to Greyfriars alone!

Nugent's heart was as heavy as his chum's, as the train bore him away into the darkness and silence of the night.

He had thought out what he was doing, and he had decided. But there was so much for and against the step he had taken, that he could not decide, to his own satisfaction, whether he was acting wisely.

He had thrown up everything, so far as he himself was concerned, in order to go to his mother.

It was Dicky that she wanted. But in her loneliness and desertion, she must be glad to see her elder son, and his devotion must be a comfort to her.

Frank was sure of that.

And if he could lighten her trouble, was it not his duty to go, without stopping to consider himself?

He thought so.

The train stopped at station after station; he did not notice them. Later in the evening it began to rain, the windows of the carriage were blurred as it stopped in the stations; he could not see the names of the places.

He looked at his watch at last.

Half-past nine!

It was time that he was near Scarcliffe now.

When the train stopped again he let down the window and looked out into the gloomy station, with the rain-drops falling round him.

"Is it far to Scarcliffe now?" he called out to a shadovy porter.

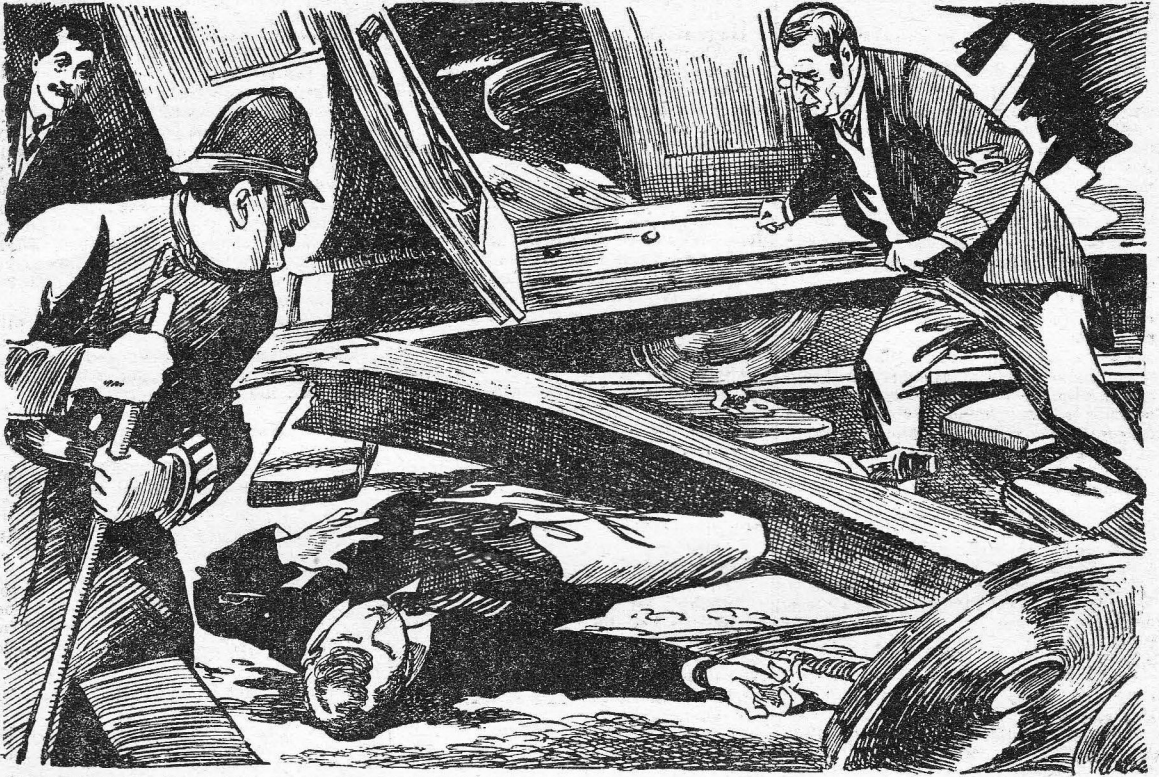
"Next station."

"Thank you."

He sank back into the corner of the carriage again.

His heart was beating strangely.

A few minutes more, and he would be at Scarcliffe. Probably his mother would be at the station; he would see her. Only a few minutes more, and he



"Lift him out!" Nugent heard the deep voice, only half understanding it. What had happened? He tried to cry out, but his voice was dumb—a heavy weight seemed upon his tongue. He knew he was only half-conscious; he knew that he had been in an accident. He tried to move, but something heavy pinned him down. (See Chapter 3.)

would know whether she was glad he had come—

Crash!
Crash!
A jarring, grinding shock ran through the train, and then it seemed to Frank Nugent as if the world were falling into pieces about him.

Darkness rushed upon him; he had a vague knowledge that he was springing up, that he was struggling, that something was weighing upon him, crushing him—he was fighting for his life—

Then darkness—vacancy!

Again lights flashed in his eyes. His eyes were open wide, staring—he was wondering dully where he was, what had taken place! To his swimming senses nothing was clear. He had been charged over in a football match—the players were piling on him—he was crushed—suffocated—No! It was not a footer-field; something hard lay across him, something that pinned him down. In the darkness and the rain there was a buzz of strange voices, a glimmering of strange faces.

Was he dreaming? Was he in bed in the old dormitory at Greyfriars, in the grip of a torturing nightmare?

But the pain he was suffering was real; his face was wet—wet—wet with rain, and wet with blood; he knew that it was blood upon his face, although he could not see it.

"Lift him out!"

He heard the deep voice, only half understanding.

What had happened? Recollection came back—he was in the train, in the rushing train, speeding to meet his mother. What had happened? He tried to cry out, but his tongue was dumb—

a heavy weight seemed upon his tongue, upon his heart, upon his mind!

He knew that he was only half-conscious; he knew that he had been in an accident; he wondered dully, dimly, without fear, whether he was dying! He felt himself lifted up; he was being carried in the arms of strong men; he felt himself laid down—down—and darkness swam over his vision again.

Then a sharp cry—a woman's cry! It pierced the heaviness that was sinking upon his senses, it brought him to keen remembrance. His eyes opened again, dizzily. He tried to raise himself, to hold out his hands; but he could not move. There was no strength in his limbs. He was feeble—weak— weaker than a little child.

A woman's face, wet with rain and with tears, startled, terrified eyes looking down upon him—a cry, a sob.

Frank's lips moved.
"Mother!"

Then all was darkness again.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
The Valley of the Shadow!

SLOWLY, strangely, through the mists of sleep and suffering, Frank struggled back to consciousness. His first consciousness was of pain—hard and bitter pain, that gripped his limbs as he lay, and made him want to cry out in anguish; but no cry passed his lips. He was crying out voicelessly, and there was no sound. Stay—there was a sound in the room, a low, soft sound of a woman sobbing.

He was in a room now—he was in bed. He must have been placed there, then, while he was insensible.

Where was he?
He tried to raise himself, to look about him.

He could not move. And the mere effort made his senses reel, and he felt himself sinking back into oblivion. There was a rustle; a face bent over him—his mother's face.

"Lie still, my dear boy—lie still! You are safe now."

The face vanished into darkness.

Again light.

Frank, without attempting to move, looked round him, his eyes wandering on every side. He could see a window, with the sunlight streaming in. It was morning, then; or, rather, it was afternoon—the sun was in the west. A new day had come—how many new days since he had been struck down—how many? Had he lain upon that bed of suffering for hours, days, weeks—or centuries? His glance wandered weakly from side to side. He was in bed still, and it was daytime; that was all he could understand at first. Then a sound of voices in the silence.

"Hush!" It was his mother's voice.

"You will wake him."

"Mr. Nugent is downstairs, madam." Silence.

The silence seemed to Frank interminable.

His father was there, then. His father! He had forgotten his father! He remembered now that he had written to his father before leaving Greyfriars; his father would know that he was at Scarcliffe. Had he come there for him, then? Why had he come? Why did not his mother answer?

A voice at the door. Nugent could not see the door where he lay, he could

not move to look at it; but he could hear.

"Mary!"
His father's voice.
"Henry! Hush! He is sleeping!"
"What is it, Mary?" The voice was whispering now, but Frank could hear.
"What has happened? I heard that there was an accident on the railway last night—the train from Court-field—"

"Yes."
"Is Frank here?"
"Yes."
"Mary! He—he was not in the accident?"
"Yes."
"Oh, good heavens! But not—not—"

The voices died away; the boy was unconscious again. He did not know that his father bent over him; he knew nothing now. It was as well. Mr. Nugent's face was white, terror-stricken, as he bent over the insensible boy and saw the white face, the bloodstained bandages.

The man turned from the bed with a groan.

"Mary!" he said. "Oh, Mary, this—this is terrible!"
"He was coming to me," said Mrs. Nugent quietly. "Dicky left me yesterday, to go back to the school. Poor little fellow, he was wearied of his dull life here."

"And Frank—"
"Frank came to me. Poor boy! But you—"

"I had a letter from him to-day," said Mr. Nugent. "He wrote to me from Greyfriars last night, before he left. He told me Dick had returned, and that he was coming here. I—I came to—"
He broke off. "Oh, heavens, if he should die!"

Mrs. Nugent shivered.
"If he should die, his death lies at our door," she said. "We have done this."

"Mary!"
"I will not say that you have done it," she went on. "We were both to blame. Our folly—yours and mine—has brought this to pass. What is our foolish dispute now—what does it matter—now that our boy's life is in danger?"
"His life!" muttered Mr. Nugent.
"Oh, if he should die—"
His voice broke; the tears were rolling down his cheeks.

There was a long silence.
"Mary!" Mr. Nugent broke the silence. "Mary dear, I—I am sorry. It—if I could have foreseen anything like this—"

"And I," she said. "But we had our duty to do, whether we could foresee or not. What did our disagreements matter? We had no right to trouble our children with them. This is a punishment—just, so far as we are concerned; but poor Frank—"

"He will not die!" murmured the man. "He must not—he cannot! Mary, we will save him between us."

Mrs. Nugent sobbed; her self-possession was breaking down. Her husband drew her into his arms.

There was a faint voice a little later.
"Mother!"

Mrs. Nugent hurried to the bedside. Frank's eyes were open again; he had found his voice. Mrs. Nugent, concealing her tears, bent beside him.

"Yes, Frank darling? Quiet—you must not move!"

"I—I thought I heard father's voice."

"Yes; he is here."
"I am here, Frank," said his father, "THE POPULAR.—No. 143."

trying to speak calmly. "I am here, my dear lad."

He was holding his wife's hand, and Frank saw it, and understood.
He smiled.

"Am I very bad?" he asked. "I mean, am I—"

"No, no, no!"
"You may as well tell me, mater. I'm not afraid."

"No, no, no!" wailed Mrs. Nugent.

"No, my dearest boy! It is not as bad as that. There has been a terrible accident. You were pinned under the wreck of the train; but Heaven was kind to us. You might have been crushed; but you were not. You are ill, Frank, my dearest; but—but there is no danger."
Nugent smiled again.

He understood.
There was danger, but they did not dare to tell him. It was clear enough to him; his mother was speaking from her hope, not from her knowledge.

"It's all right, mater," said Frank feebly, but with a strange cheerfulness. "I'm going to put up a fight, anyway—won't be bowled first ball, you know. Are you staying down here, dad?"

"Yes, Frank."
"And—and—"

"Yes, Frank," said his father, understanding. "That is all over. You have brought us together again, Frank; and, please Heaven, the future shall not be like the past. My eyes have been opened, Frank."

"That's all right," said Frank. "I'm jolly glad, pater!"

"My dear lad!"
Frank's eyes closed again.

He slept.
It was a peaceful sleep; his heart was lighter; a happiness that had long been strange to him had come back to the boy. If he suffered, he did not suffer in vain. What he had gone through, what he risked, had brought back peace and love to his home, and that was something—that was as much as he would have asked.

Long, dreamless sleep—then wakefulness again—and the grey light of an early dawn. Another day had come. Frank lay watching the sunlight strengthening at the window, too weak to move, but strangely peaceful. There was someone sitting beside his bed; it was not his mother. He started as he recognised who it was—

"Harry!"

Harry Wharton turned towards him. His hand sought Frank's.

"Yes, I'm here, old man," he said. "Buck up, Frank. You mustn't talk; I'll do the talking."

"When did you come, Harry?"
"Last night. I heard from your pater, and the Head let me come at once. I'm going to stay till you're on your feet again, Frank. You'd like me to?"

"What ho!"
"You've come a regular cropper," said Wharton; "but you're on the mend—the medical johanie told me so. The other chaps are coming down to see you when you are better; I'm going to stay all the time. I've got a letter from Dicky. Shall I read it to you?"

"Yes, do—do!"
Wharton extracted a crumpled sheet of impot paper from his pocket, and Frank recognised the scrawl of his minor.

"Dear Frank,—I'm sorry to hear you're crooked. I'd come down to look after you, but the mater thinks I should make a row, and you've got to be kept quiet. You know the mater—she always says I make a row, but I don't. Buck up, old man. Gatty and Myers are very sorry, too. Gatty says you should try a mustard-plaster, but I dare say your doctor knows. The mater was going to buy me a pony, but she didn't buy me one, and you can have it."

"Your affectionate minor,
"DICK."
"P.S.—Honest Injun about the pony."

Frank Nugent chuckled, quite his old chuckle. The letter of his minor seemed to have a very cheering effect upon him. "Good old Dicky!" he said. "I say, Harry, if you stay down here you'll miss the match with the Shell on Saturday."

"Blow the Shell!" said Harry.
"Yes, but the match—"
"Blow the match!"
"It's jolly good of you, Harry, old fellow!"

"Rot!" said Wharton cheerfully.
"I'm not sorry," said Frank, after a long pause. "I—I suppose you've noticed—my people, you know—the pater and mater have made it up. That's a jolly good thing."

Harry Wharton nodded.
"I'm glad, Frank."

"Yes, it's jolly isn't it? It was worth while getting crooked."
"And you'll be back at Greyfriars in a week or two, Frank. The fellows have all sent messages to you. Inky says his sorrowfulness is terrific."

Frank smiled.
"Even the Bounder's sorry," said Wharton. "He came to me before I started, and asked me to tell you that he was sorry; and he'll tell you so himself when you're back."

"He's not such a bad sort," said Frank.

"No; even the Bounder has his good points," said Harry, nodding. "Bolsover said the same, too, and he meant it. But you mustn't talk any more; I've got to see that you don't."

"Right-ho, Harry!"
Frank lay silent.

He was in pain, and he was very weak. He believed that he would recover, but it would be a long time; he had pain and suffering before him. But he was happy. What he had not dared to hope for had come to pass, and that was enough to bring happiness to his heart.

It was a week or more before Frank Nugent left his bed. A good constitution had pulled him through, and he was

(Continued on page 16.)

CINEBLANKS

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

By **OWEN CONQUEST**

(Author of the Famous Rookwood Stories appearing in "The Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Erroll's Enemy!

"PENNY for 'em!" said Jimmy Silver humorously. Kit Erroll of the Classical Fourth started a little, and looked up.

Erroll was alone in his study when the captain of the Fourth looked in. He was standing by the window, his eyes on the quadrangle without, and a deep shade of thought upon his brow. He had not heard Jimmy's tap or the opening of the door.

"Well, what's the subject?" asked Jimmy Silver. "Thinking out something awfully deep in maths, or whether we're going to beat Greyfriars at footer—what?"

Erroll smiled. "No, I was thinking about something else," he said.

"Well, chuck it now, and come down to footer," said Jimmy. "We're getting fine weather for once, and we mustn't waste it. Nothing wrong, I hope?" he added.

"N-no! Not exactly. I've had some news—" Erroll paused. "It's not exactly bad news; it doesn't concern me really. But—"

"Well, keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver encouragingly. "If it doesn't concern you, why worry?"

"I wasn't worrying exactly. I was wondering—" He paused again, and coloured. "You remember that rotten fellow, 'Gentleman Jim'?"

Jimmy Silver became very grave. "I remember, Erroll. You haven't heard anything from him. He's gone to chokey, hasn't he?"

"I thought so. But it appears that he got away somehow after the trial. It was mentioned in the paper to-day. He's been at liberty quite a long time now, but I never knew. I—suppose I shall never hear anything more of it. But—but I was wondering."

Erroll was evidently troubled. He remembered Gentleman Jim well enough—the rascally cracksmen who had been supposed to be Erroll's father, until he was found and claimed by Captain Erroll.

Jimmy knew something of Erroll's strange and troubled earlier days, and of the struggle he had had to keep to the path of honour, against the influence and under the threats of his supposed father.

But the truth had come out at last, and Gentleman Jim had passed out of Kit Erroll's life—into the hands of the police.

Jimmy Silver had almost forgotten the matter, but, naturally, it lingered in

Erroll's mind. And the discovery that the cracksmen was not, as he had supposed, a prisoner of the law, had been a shock to the Rookwood junior.

"Well, the rotter will keep pretty clear of Rookwood, I should say," remarked Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "I suppose the bobbies are looking for him. If you came across him, Erroll, you'd only have to give the word to the police, and he would be nailed. You'd do it?"

Erroll nodded. "I certainly would. That man made my childhood a misery, and I owe him nothing. He wronged and injured my father. I would have no mercy upon him. But I hope he will never cross my path."

Mornington of the Fourth came into the study as Erroll was speaking.

"You're wanted, Erroll," he said.

"Yes, Morny, what is it?"

"Somebody's rung you up on the telephone," said Mornington, with a grin. "Old Bootles is rather waxy, but he says you're to answer it. Buzz off to his study. The man's holding the line, whoever he is."

"Thanks!"

Kit Erroll quitted the room, and hurried down to Mr. Bootles's study. He found the master of the Fourth frowning a little.

Mr. Bootles blinked at Erroll over his glasses. The receiver was off the telephone.

"Ah, Erroll!" said Mr. Bootles. "Someone has rung up to speak to you! This is—is somewhat disconcerting, Erroll! It is not usual for Fourth-Form boys to be rung up on their Form-master's telephone—what, what?"

"I'm sorry you've been troubled, sir."

"Yes, yes. As the—the person states that he is an old friend, and the matter is important, I have sent for you, Erroll. Kindly convey to your friend that his proceeding is—is somewhat disconcerting, Erroll."

"Certainly, sir."

Mr. Bootles, evidently disturbed, whisked out of the study, leaving the junior to take the call.

Erroll picked up the receiver, wondering who could be at the other end of the wire. His father was not in England, and he had no other relations that he knew, and he could not think of any acquaintance who would be likely to ring him up.

"Hallo!" he said, into the transmitter. "Hallo!" came back. "Are you there?"

Erroll started. The voice was familiar to his ears.

"I am Erroll," he said quietly. "Who is speaking?"

"An old friend, Kit."

The receiver almost dropped from Kit Erroll's hand.

He knew the voice. It was the voice of Gentleman Jim, the cracksmen, the man whose villainy had shadowed all his young life, and who had striven to lead him into the ways of crime—the man who was wanted by the police!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Cracksmen's Farewell!

"HALLO, hallo! Are you there, Kit?"

The voice came impatiently along the wires.

Erroll stood rooted to the floor. Only that day he had learned that his old enemy was at large. And now here was the man speaking to him on the telephone.

The junior's face flushed, and his eyes glittered with anger.

Did Gentleman Jim suppose that he had still a hold upon him? If he did, he would find out his mistake fast enough.

"Kit, are you there?"

"I am here!" said Erroll, at last.

"I have surprised you—what?"

"Yes!"

"You hadn't forgotten me, Kit?"

"I had not forgotten you, Gentleman Jim! How dare you speak to me?"

asked Erroll, his voice trembling with anger. "Do you think there is anything in common between us now?"

"Why not, Kit?"

"You scoundrel! Do you know what you have to expect from me? I shall ring up the police-station immediately, and tell them—"

"You cannot tell them where I am, dear boy—you don't know!" came the cracksmen's chuckling voice. "But don't be too hasty, Kit! I have something to say to you! Don't ring off! It's important!"

"I have nothing to say to you, Gentleman Jim!"

"Does that mean that we are enemies, Kit?"

"Did you expect anything else?" asked Erroll scornfully.

"No. But I am sorry! Kit, I've had my lesson. There are five years' penal servitude hanging over my head if I fall into the hands of the police. The old game is finished for me. I've made a fresh start, Kit. I wanted to tell you something—that is, that I'm sorry for the

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past, and that you will never be troubled by me again."

Erroll started.

He had wondered what the cracksman could have to say to him. But certainly he had not expected this.

"You'll never see me again, Kit," went on the cracksman's voice. "I'm leaving England to-morrow."

"Leaving England?" repeated Erroll.

"Yes, I'm off to America! Won't you say good-bye, and wish me luck before I go? I shall never come back!"

"I do wish you luck!" said Erroll in a moved voice. "I believe you, and I wish you the best of luck! I owe no grudge for the past; it's forgotten and forgiven, so far as I'm concerned."

"That's what I wanted you to say, Kit. That's all I wanted. You'll never know whether I live or die. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, and good luck!"

Erroll put up the receiver.

He left Mr. Bootles' study, his face very thoughtful, and returned to his own quarters.

Mornington was in his study, his handsome face bent over Xenophon, with grim and determined attention. But he looked up as his study-mate came in, glad of the interruption.

"I've had a message from Gentleman Jim," said Erroll.

Mornington started.

"By gad! What has he to say?"

Erroll explained.

"By gad!" repeated Mornington.

"Well, he couldn't do better, the rascal! He may make a fresh start over there. Anyway, you're well rid of him. Now, what about some footer?"

Erroll smiled.

"Yes, I think it would do us both good."

"Right-ho!" Mornington jumped up, and pitched the "Ten Thousand" across the study with a crash. "Come on, old scout! Blow Xenophon, and bother the scholarship!"

And the chums left Study No. 4 together, and joined Jimmy Silver & Co. on the football-ground.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"JIMMY, old chap—"

Tubby Muffin met the chums of the Fourth as they came back to the School House after footer.

There was an expression of almost owl-like seriousness on the fat face of Tubby Muffin. Jimmy Silver waved him off.

"Nothing doing, Tubby! Stony!"

"It isn't that," said Tubby warmly.

"I've got an idea, Jimmy, and I want you to help me carry it out, as captain of the Fourth, you know. It's up to you."

"Buzz off, Fatty!" interjected Lovell.

"We're going in to tea."

"Hold on a minute. It concerns the lot of you," said Tubby. "It's about old Mack, you know."

"Old Mack?" repeated Jimmy Silver.

"Has he been reporting you?"

"No, no! He's going."

"That's no news."

"Well, old Mack's been porter here for a jolly long time," said Tubby Muffin.

"Longer than the memory of the oldest inhabitant, in fact. Now he's got lumbago or something bad, and the Head's given him a long holiday. He's going, and he may not come back any more."

"Well, there will be dry eyes when he goes," remarked Raby. "Macky was rather too fond of reporting a chap."

"Still, he's an old and faithful servant!" urged Tubby Muffin. "He's been here dozens of years. It's up to us."

"What's up to us, you, duffer?" asked

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Jimmy Silver puzzled. "Do you want us to stand round and cheer when Mack goes? Or weep over him?"

"I was thinking of a testimonial."

"A which?"

"A testimonial," said Tubby Muffin firmly. "A testimonial in the form of cash, you know. It would be very acceptable to old Mack. I dare say lumbago comes expensive—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And it would be only grateful, considering that Mack has been porter here for nearly a hundred years—"

"Not quite that!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "Still, it's a good idea. Get up the testimonial by all means, Tubby."

"You'll help?" asked Muffin eagerly.

"Certainly! You raise the cash, and I'll present it to Mack with a neat little speech. That will be an equal division of labour."

"Look here, Jimmy Silver—"

"You fat duffer!" roared Lovell.

"Don't we know you? Do you think

THE MAN WHO KNEW THE SECRET



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

we're going to shell out tin to help you gorge yourself? Buzz off!"

"But I say—"

Lovell made a jump at Tubby, and the fat junior fled. And the Fistical Four chuckled, and went to tea, uninterrupted by Tubby Muffin.

And the next day old Mack departed from Rookwood, minus a testimonial—never even knowing Tubby's benevolent intentions towards him.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The New Porter!

LATTREY of the Fourth drove his hands deep into his pockets, his brows deeply knitted, as he left the School House on Wednesday afternoon.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had gone down to the playing-fields, but Lattrey's steps did not lead him in that direction. Football was not much in the line of the black sheep of Rookwood.

He moved slowly down to the gates with a moody face.

His eyes glittered as they fell upon

Erroll and Mornington, who were going out together on their bicycles.

Mornington glanced at him for a moment, and a sarcastic smile flickered on his lips.

"Lattrey looks down on his luck, Kit," Mornington remarked, as he wheeled his machine out with his chum.

"No wonder!" said Erroll drily. "He was lucky, though, not to be sacked from the school. He would have been if the Head had known what happened last week."

"No doubt about that!"

The chums mounted their machines and pedalled away towards Coombe. Lattrey stood in the gateway, looking after them with a bitter expression.

The cad of the Fourth was feeling that afternoon that the way of the transgressor was hard.

Since he had been at Rookwood Lattrey had earned more contempt than anything else among his schoolfellows.

True, there were other "blades" and "giddy goats" among the Rookwood fellows. Smythe & Co. of the Shell prided themselves upon being "dogs" of the first water. Townsend and Topham of the Fourth were very "goey," and Peele and Gower were still more goey, and decidedly shady in some ways.

But Lattrey was easily the blackest sheep of the whole flock.

He was careful enough to keep his shady character a secret from the school authorities, or he would not have remained at Rookwood long. But he could not help most of the juniors knowing him as he was.

The "nuts" of Rookwood associated with him, but in a somewhat lofty way, and hardly concealed their scorn for him. Fellows like Jimmy Silver & Co. seldom gave him even a word or a look.

And since his latest escapade even Peele and Gower had taken to avoiding him.

His hatred of Mornington, his former friend, had carried him too far, added to the state of "hard-upness" caused by losses on "gee-gees."

All the Classical Fourth knew that he had taken banknotes from the pocket-book of Mornington II., of the Second Form, and "planted" one of them on Valentine Mornington of the Fourth.

His trick had been detected, and he had been remorselessly exposed. He attempted a feeble pretence that the whole affair had been a "lark," but, naturally, nobody was inclined to credit that explanation.

He had been sent to Coventry at first, and, though that was wearing off, he was very generally avoided.

Even Peele and Gower, who were far from particular, did not care to be seen in his company till the affair had had time to blow over a little. Lattrey had his time on his hands that afternoon.

His bitterness was almost all turned upon Erroll. But for Erroll he felt he would still be friends with Mornington. It was Erroll's influence that had drawn Morny away from evil associates.

But for this break with Morny he would never have made that last false step, which would have caused his expulsion from the school if it had been made known.

It was Erroll—Erroll all the time; and Erroll, though known now to be the son of an Army captain, had been brought up from early boyhood by Gentleman Jim, the cracksman.

That he had been "straight" in spite of temptations and threats Lattrey did not believe. He was not the kind of fellow to place faith in anybody.

(Continued on page 13.)

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.

At the Carnival!

By **SAMMY BUNTER.**

"What are you going as, Sammy?" inquired Dicky Nugent.

"Henry the 8th," I replied.

"Henry the which?"

"The king who bernt the cakes while the Magna Charta was being signed," I said. "Surely you've heard of him?"

"I always thort Henry the 8th was the fello who had umpteen wives," said Gatty.

"Well, he mite have dun, for all I no," I said. "Anyway, I'm going to reprezent him at the Carnival Ball, which comes off to-nite."

"Wear are you going to get yore costume?" asked Dicky Nugent.

"I shall hire it in Courtfield."

"Will it costume much?"

"Oh, what a terrible pun!" I said. "You ought to be eggsterminated for that, Dicky!"

I borroed Paget's bike, and buzzed over to Courtfield.

Their was no difkulty about hiring a Henry the 8th costume. The only drorbak was that it was several sizes too big for me. I asked the man to cut it down, but he said it was too valeuable a costume to cut.

"Dror yoreself up to yore fool height, and noboddy will notiss that yore royal robes are about two feat too long," he said. "By the way, the cost of hiring the costume is fifteen shillings."

"You shall have it as soon as my majer's postle-order arriives," I said. And then I went back to Greyfriars, carrying the costume under my arm. When the time of the ball drew near, I put on my robes, and serveyed myself in the mirrer.

I looked Henry the 8th to the life, and it was with any amount of swank and swagger that I strutted away to the ball-room, which was Big Hall.

But on reeching the ball-room, I reeseved a rood shock.

Their was another Henry the 8th prezzent. It was my majer!

"I'll trubble you to keep off the grass, yung Sammy!" he said.

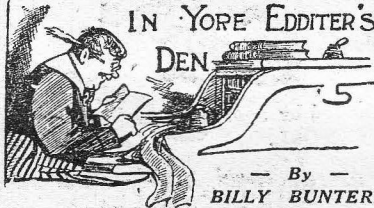
"But I'm Henry the 8th—"

"Not this evening. You'll have to be Henry the 9th!"

Of course, I was never in the pickeher after that. My majer took all the onner and glory, and I was obliged to crawl away to the refreshment-room and hide my diminished head.

So the Carnival Ball was a wash-out, so far as I was konserned.

Supplement I.]



My deer Reederers,—You no what a Carnival is, don't you? If you don't, then all I can say is that yore eddication has been sadly neglected.

I'm not kwite cleer in my own mind what it is, but I fanny it's a sort of festivity—dancing, singing, feesting, flaggs, and bunting, and all that sort of thing. (By the way, bunting was invented by my unkle, Sir Hogg Bunter, O.B.E., which means "Original Bunting Eggspert.")

But to come to the point. We have just had a Carnival at Greyfriars. St. Jim's has had one, two. So has Rookwood.

Under the serkumstances, I felt it was fitting (as the chap said when he tried on a new wastecoat) to publish a Speshul Carnival Number of my "Weekly." It is a brany idear—all my idears are brany—and I hope you will all enjoy the wonderful feest of fun and flickshun which I am dishing up to you hearwith.

If you are fond of dancing, you will revel in this number. If you are a songster—a warbler of weerd mellerdies—you will simply luv it. If you beleeve in the old saying, "Eat, dr̄ink, and be merry," you will simply waller in it! Though how a fello can eat, drink, and be Merry, when his name's Jones, Brown, or Robinson, I karn't for the life of me understand. You mite as well say, "Eat, drink, and be Wharton!"

Severall reederers have ritten to no if I have settled all my differenses with my staff. I am pleased to say that we are now a happy famby working together in perfect harmony. Let us hope their will be no more strikes and resurrections—I meen insurrections. If their is much more trubble of that sort I shall devellop a nervus brakedown, and then it will be all up with this 'Weekly,' bekwase their isn't another fello with enuff intelligense to run it.

I trussed, deer reederers, that when you have finnishd with this Speshul Carnival Number you will pass it on to one of yore palls who is a non-reeder.

Yore corpulent chum,

Yore Edditer

KING OF THE BALL!

Written by **DICK PENFOLD.**
Sung by **BILLY BUNTER.**

Many will go to our fancy-dress ball,
Many there be who will not go at all.
Some will be heroes, and some will be knights,
Some will be pierrots, and some will be frights.

Some will be chieftains, and some will be clowns,
Some will wear armour, and some will wear gowns.

But I shall be King of the Ball,
I shall be King of them all!
Clad in my robes, I shall strut to and fro,

Gazed at with envy wherever I go.
I shall be King of the Ball,
I shall be King of them all!

I sha'n't look a fright on that night of delight,
For I shall be King of the Ball!

Some will win prizes for costumes they wear;
You bet your life Uncle Bill will be there!

Some will win glances of deep adoration,
Others will exercise great fascination.
Some will be sneered at, and some will be hooted,
Some will be cheered at, and others saluted.

But I shall be King of the Ball,
I shall be King of them all!
Grasping my sword, I shall strut up and down,

Swelling with triumph and pride and renown.
I shall be King of the Ball,
I shall be King of them all!

They'll worship me quite, on that night of delight,
For I shall be King of the Ball!

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The Human Tank!

By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

It will take me about six hours to write this article, dear readers.

Do you know why?

The editor of the companion papers has written to me saying that my spelling is so shocking that he simply can't stand it any longer.

This letter came as a bombshell to me. I had no idea that my spelling was all wrong. I thought everybody else's spelling was faulty, and that my own was perfect.

I am writing this article with a Nuttall's dictionary at my elbow. At every other word I have to paw—I mean, pause—and see which way it's spelt.

Now, take the word "carnival." I should spell it with a "k," wouldn't you? But the dictionary says it begins with a "c." And I suppose I must bough—I mean, bow—to the superior

nollidge—I mean, knowledge—of the chap who compiled the dictionary.

Carnival Day at St. Jim's was a huge success.

In the afternoon we all paraded in the quadrangle in fancy dress.

Most of the fellows had decorated their bicycles with flowers and flags.

Bernard Glyn made an armoured car out of an old sugar-box which he found in the lumber-room. He fixed wheels to it, and rode in it himself, armed with a couple of water-pistols. Clifton Dane pushed him along.

Talbot was Dick Turpin. He couldn't get a Black Bess to ride, so he went over to Courtfield and hired a donkey. They both looked silly asses as they trotted through the quad.

Jack Blake led the procession with a cornet. But as some practical joker had

stuffed it with rag beforehand, no harmony was forthcoming, except for a few weird grunts.

Tom Merry was Charles the First. But Monty Lowther, who walked beside him in the garb of public executioner, couldn't have done much beheading with Taggles' axe, the edge of which was as jagged as a saw.

Of course, the great hit of the afternoon was me. I represented a tank, and rolled across the quadrangle, with toy guns sticking out of me. I was just the right size—I mean, size—for a tank, and I made a loud, snorting noise as I rolled into action.

Needless to say, I was an easy first. Talbot got the second prize, and Tom Merry the third.

In the evening we had a fancy-dress ball, but I wasn't so fortunate on this occasion.

Having no costume of my own to wear, I borrowed Fatty Wynn's, and he didn't like it. He set the dogs on me—the "dogs" being the New House bouncers—and I had a very sorry time of it. But I made up for it in the refreshment-room.

Then the judges came out to award the prizes.



Our Camera Corner.

Conducted by
KIT ERROLL.

I was able to get some ripping snapshots of the Rookwood Carnival, and I also took some flashlight photographs at the fancy-dress ball which followed.

One of the best snaps I got was of Tommy Dodd, who was togged up to represent Julius Caesar. Tommy was riding in state in his chariot—a decorated wheelbarrow—when the whole box of tricks suddenly overturned, and there, at the foot of Pompey's statue—in other words, at the foot of the fountain in the quad—great Caesar fell! His retainers took about a quarter of an hour to sort him out.

Another good snap was of Jimmy Silver, who appeared in the role of King

Henry the Fifth. His crown was several sizes too big for him, and it slipped down over his face and clung lovingly round his neck. There was a sudden "click," and Jimmy was snapped. I expect he'll be awfully snappy about it!

Lovell minor was Jack the Giant-Killer, and Bulkeley of the Sixth was the giant. Young Lovell stuck a pin in Bulkeley's calf, and the skipper of Rookwood looked as if he was trying to beat the high-jump record. Click! Another beauty for my photograph album.

At the fancy-dress ball in the evening I got a snapshot of Hansom of the Fifth trying to dance. I think I shall send the

snap to "Chuckles," and have it reproduced as "A Performing Hippopotamus." It's bound to cause great amusement—except to Hansom!

I also got a snap of Tubby Muffin in the act of raiding the refreshments. I shall use this snap in evidence against him at the next session of the Rookwood Police Court. Tubby can't keep his hands from "sticking and peeling," as the fellow said when he dissected the plum!

Perhaps the best gem in my collection is my snap of the Head doing the fox-trot. If he could only see that snap he would have a series of pink fits. Perhaps I had better get it enlarged, and present it to the Head on the occasion of his next birthday!

By the way, if there are any Rookwood fellows desirous of learning photography, I might mention that I give lessons in the noble art at a tanner a time! Applicants must provide their own dark-room.

Carnival Chatter!

By FATTY WYNN.

The St. Jim's Carnival proved a big success, though Baggy Trimble was badly biffed for borrowing my costume without permission. The fellows who did the biffing were afterwards heard to refer to the Carnival as a "thumping" success!

Cardew, Levison major, and Clive were attired as the Three Musketeers. Cardew was heard to say, on entering the ball-room: "I must get here; Levison must get here; and Clive must get here." So there you have the Three Must-get-here's!

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George Alfred Grundy represented a silly clown. So there was no need for him to "make up" at all.

Jack Blake was a trumpeter. But he didn't "blow his own trumpet," as the saying goes. He borrowed Herries' cornet.

Arthur Augustus D'Arey was a knight. Judging by his icy and aloof manner towards everybody, he was a very cold and frosty "night."

Dick Redfern turned up as the Emperor Nero. But he found himself so unpopular that he was forced to flee, returning later in the evening as the Duke of Wellington.

Knox of the Sixth was Sir Walter Raleigh. We shouldn't have known him as such but for the faint odour of tobacco which clung to his person.

Tom Merry made a very excellent Charles the First. Unlike that unfortunate monarch, however, Tommy never once "lost his head."

D'Arey's Cousin Ethel appeared in the role of Joan of Arc. No relation to Noah.

What was I? King Alfred, of course! But I didn't burn the cakes. I scoffed them.



Bunter at the Ball!

By Johnny Bull.

GREYFRIARS was seething with excitement.

Even the usually staid and sedate Sixth-Formers, their dignity forgotten, were as hilarious as kids.

For it was the evening of Carnival Day at Greyfriars, and the fancy-dress ball was about to take place.

The corridors were thronged with fellows, attired in all sorts of weird and wonderful costumes.

Vernon-Smith, Tom Redwing, and Archie Howell went swaggering along arm-in-arm in the dazzling raiment of the Three Musketeers. Wooden swords clattered at their sides.

Then a burly fool in the garb of Tom Fool went striding past. This was Coker of the Fifth, and he could not have chosen a more appropriate costume.

Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, in their ruffles and powdered wigs, were courtiers of the Georgian period.

Penfold made a ripping Dick Turpin, and Bolsover major was a prizefighter of a hundred years ago—the time of the Corinthians.

And Billy Bunter?

Bunter was in the picture, of course. You can't imagine a fancy-dress ball without Bunter, can you?

Billy was attired as Henry the Eighth. You wouldn't have known he was Henry the Eighth, but for the placard on his chest announcing the fact. You would have taken him for a misfit, for his regal garments were several sizes too large for him. Besides, Henry the Eighth—unless I've got my history all wrong—didn't wear spectacles.

There were going to be prizes for the best costumes, and Billy Bunter was quite confident that when he paraded in front of the judges—Mr. Prout, Mr. Quelch, and Mr. Lascelles—they would at once hail him as the winner.

The ball was not confined to Greyfriars fellows. Frank Courtenay & Co. had come over from Highcliffe, and Tom Merry & Co. had made the journey from St. Jim's by motor charabanc. Baggy Trimble had come with them. He was attired as Falstaff.

A special orchestra had been hired for the occasion. And as we trooped into the ball-room the haunting refrain of a waltz greeted our ears.

"By my halidom," said Bob Cherry, adjusting his wig, "there will be great doings to-night, my masters! Do my aged eyes deceive me, or is that Miss Phyllis sitting over yonder?"

"Yea, brother," said Nugent. "And Marjorie Hazeldene's there, too, as Joan of Arc." "Methinks I will dance with Miss Phyllis, unless she should say me nay," said Bob. "Doesn't she look simply stunning in that Oriental dress?"

"Yes, rather!"

Bob Cherry and his chums had no difficulty in finding partners. They looked very attractive in their historical costumes, and were soon paired off with the Cliff House girls.

Others were less fortunate. Nobody seemed to be madly anxious to dance with Coker of the Fifth; and nobody wanted to trip it on the light, fantastic toe with Henry the Eighth.

Not that Billy Bunter minded much. His attire was very weighty, particularly the crown which was perched on his head. Beads of perspiration stood out on his brow, and trickled down his grease-paint.

Besides, Billy Bunter had his eye on the door, over which was the welcome sign, "Refreshments." Bunter preferred eating to dancing, any day.

The fat junior waited until he was unobserved—then he slipped quietly away towards the refreshment-room.

He feared that he might find somebody there in charge of the food and drink.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Mimble was in charge of the catering arrangements, but

the good dame had slipped out for a few moments in order to watch the dancers as they went whirling round the room in their gay attire.

The coast was clear. Billy Bunter had a free hand, and his mouth watered as he surveyed the rows of tempting cakes, the delicious strawberry and vanilla ices, and the big jars of home-made ginger-beer.

"Now's my chance!" muttered the fat junior.

The next moment he was piling in like a person who had not fed for a fortnight.

The cakes, the pastries, and the ices began to disappear with lightning speed.

Billy Bunter had lived only for this moment. He had sacrificed his tea in order to be able to do justice to the good things in the refreshment-room. And his jaws worked at an amazing rate.

He had no pockets into which he could stow anything, so he was obliged to make hay while the sun shone.

At any moment he might be interrupted in his orgy, but he would have to risk that.

Directly he saw the door-handle move, he intended to dodge down behind the counter, in the hope that the intruder would not see him.

The minutes passed; the good things continued to disappear; and the door-handle remained stationary.

But Billy Bunter had forgotten the window. He had overlooked the fact that he could easily be seen from without.

He was tucking into his seventh ice when a murmur of voices caused him to look up.

Then he saw two faces pressed against the window-panes. They were the faces of Russell and Ogilvy, of the Remove, who had gone out to get a breath of fresh air.

"Somebody's scoffing the grub!" he heard Russell say.

"Who is it?" asked Ogilvy.

"Don't know," said Russell. "But we can jolly soon find out. He's wearing the rig-out of Henry the Eighth!"

Then the faces disappeared from the window.

"Oh crumbs!" muttered Billy Bunter, in dismay. "That's fairly done it! Those two fellows will give the show away!"

It was a time for instant action.

The fat junior paused only for a few seconds. And then an inspiration came to him.

Chuckling softly, he went back to the ball-room.

The first person he met was the very fellow he was looking for—Baggy Trimble.

"Hallo, Bunter!" said Baggy. "I say, you do look ripping in that costume. Wish I could have got one like it. But they only had a Falstaff among the theatrical props at St. Jim's, so I had to be content with that!"

"Would you like to swap togs with me?" said Bunter quickly.

"Eh?"

"We can pop out to the cloak-room and make a quick change."

Baggy Trimble looked suspicious.

"But what's the idea?" he said.

"I'm struck on that Falstaff costume!" said Bunter. "It would suit me down to the ground, and set off my figure to advantage. And you'll look perfectly stunning as Henry the Eighth. Come on!"

Without more ado, Baggy Trimble followed the Greyfriars junior to the cloak-room.

It did not take long to change the costumes, which had been donned over the juniors' Etons.

Baggy Trimble bore a striking resemblance to Billy Bunter; and in the garb of Henry the Eighth, of unlamented memory, he would certainly be taken for the Owl of the Greyfriars Remove. Which was precisely what Bunter wanted.

The change having been completed, the two juniors returned to the ball-room.

They found quite a commotion going on.

The dancing had been temporarily suspended, and Russell and Ogilvy were breathlessly explaining to a crowd of fellows

that the refreshment-room had been raided by a person in the guise of Henry the Eighth.

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Henry the Eighth—eh? That's Bunter!"

"The fat toad!" said Wharton angrily.

"He's always playing tricks of that sort! Where is he now?"

Frank Nugent pointed to a portly figure in kingly apparel.

"There he is!" he exclaimed dramatically.

A loud roar went up.

"Bump the fat pirate!"

"Pulverise him!"

There was a sudden rush of feet towards Baggy Trimble.

Baggy had sufficient presence of mind to save the situation. In another five seconds he would have been whirled off his feet. But before those seconds had passed he managed to raise a shout.

"Hands off, you fellows! I'm not Bunter—I'm Trimble!"

"Great pip!"

"Bunter persuaded me to change togs with him!" exclaimed Baggy. "I can see what his little game was now! He'd raided the refreshment-room, and he wanted me to stand the racket!"

"The fat cad!" said Bob Cherry indignantly. "Where's he got to?"

Baggy Trimble pointed across the ball-room.

"He's over there, dressed as Falstaff!" he explained.

"Good!" said Harry Wharton. "Collar him!"

Billy Bunter's hour of reckoning had come. He was seized by many hands, and marched out of the ball-room into the darkness of the Close. And there he was soundly and severely bumped, until scarcely a breath remained in his body.

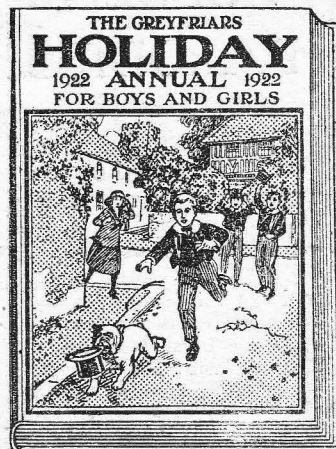
That was bad enough, so far as Bunter was concerned. But "worse remained behind," as Shakespeare says.

On returning to the ball-room Billy Bunter found, to his intense disgust, that the judges had awarded the first prize to Baggy Trimble, as Henry the Eighth!

This staggering news fairly bowled the Owl of the Remove over, and although the majority of us spent a perfectly stunning evening, Billy Bunter had little cause to bless the Carnival Ball!

THE END.

A FEAST OF FICTION IN—



NOW ON SALE!

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By TUBBY MUFFIN.

LIKE Baggy Trimble, of St. Jim's, I've been taken to task by the editor of the companion papers on the subject of my spelling.

The two Bunters have also been called over the coals, but Billy declares that he simply can't alter his style of spelling. It was born in him, he says, and it's as much a part of him as the birthmark on his neck.

Before this article of mine goes to press I shall hand it to Jimmy Silver, and get him to correct all the spelling mistakes. (I've corrected them, porpoise! There were two hundred and fifty-nine!—Jimmy Silver.)

I had no idea that there was anything wrong with my spelling, until the editor wrote to me. I thought I was the only fellow on the staff of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" who knew how to spell correctly. But the editor thinks differently, for he wrote as follows:

"Your spelling, Muffin, would disgrace that of an infant in a kindergarten. It has doubtless given amusement to many thousands of readers, but I think it is high time you took yourself in hand, and learnt how to spell properly.

"You are not the only culprit in this respect. I have had to write similar letters to the brothers Bunter and to Trimble, of St. Jim's.

"The only person on the staff of 'Billy Bunter's Weekly' who can spell and write intelligently is Wynn. I trust you will take him as a model, and improve your own spelling very considerably, or I may have to take drastic action."

This letter put me in a blue funk. The thought of losing my job on the staff of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" fairly appalled me.

There was only one thing to do, in the circumstances, and I did it. I made Jimmy Silver promise that he would overhaul all my articles, and correct the spelling where necessary.

The Bunters can go on in their own sweet way if they like; but I'm not going to run the risk of losing my job on account of faulty spelling.

Now, I've almost forgotten what I'm going to write about this week. Oh, I know! The Rookwood dance, which took place on the evening of Carnival Day.

I'm not a dancing-man. I have no use for the stuffy atmosphere of ball-rooms.

But there's one jolly good thing about a dance, and that's the sitting-out part of it.

What could be nicer than to sit out on a terrace, with the faint, dreamy music of the waltz in the distance, and with a big bag of assorted pastries on your lap? As old Omar Khayyam said:

"Here with a bulging bag I fain would sit,
The moonlight streaming on my marble brow.

Such blissful hours are absolutely 'IT;
And terraces are paradise enow!"



I helped myself to some choice cakes and pastries from the refreshment room.

Well, on this particular evening I successfully dodged the dance; and raided some choice cakes and pastries from the refreshment-room. Then I went outside on the terrace, and settled down to the feast with great enjoyment.

I kept popping into the refreshment-room at intervals, and replenishing my bag with pastries.

Not a single fellow came near me all the evening, except Peele of the Fourth. He found me on the terrace, with my jaws working overtime.

"Hallo, Tubby!" he exclaimed. "Stuffing, as usual!"

"You mind your own bizney!" I growled.

There was a peculiar smile on Peele's face as he strolled away—the sort of smile that a fellow gives when a good practical joke has occurred to him.

Next day my pater was due to arrive at Rookwood. He comes to see me now and again, as dutiful paters should.

I went down to the station to meet him, and found that the train was already in, and that my pater was chatting with Peele. The latter sloped off when he saw me coming.

My pater usually greets me very affectionately, but on this occasion he looked jolly ratty.

"Anything the matter, pater?" I asked, in tones of concern.

"Matter? I should say there was! I'm surprised at you, Reginald—surprised and disgusted! A boy of your age, too!"

"I—I really don't know what you're driving at!" I stammered.

"Then I will enlighten you. Last night there was a fancy-dress ball up at the school."

"That's so."

"And a number of young ladies were present—the sisters of some of your school-fellows."

I nodded.

"These young ladies," my pater went on, "were attired as maids of honour. And you, I am given to understand, spent the whole evening sitting out with them on the terrace."

"What!" I gasped.

"Do you deny it, Reginald?"

"Of course I do, pater!"

"You deny absolutely that you were sitting out on the terrace?"

"No, I don't deny that."

"And that you had a number of maids of honour with you?"

In a flash I realised what had happened. Peele had informed my pater that I had been sitting out with some maids of honour; but he hadn't mentioned that the "maids of honour" in question were cakes which were called by that name!

"Answer me, Reginald!" said my pater sternly.

"I admit that I was sitting out with some maids of honour—"

"Ah!"

"But they weren't girls at all; they were cakes!"

"Bless my soul!"

At last my pater began to see daylight. The clouds vanished from his brow, and he laughed uproariously as we walked up to Rookwood together. But Peele of the Fourth was jolly careful to keep out of my pater's way for the remainder of the afternoon!

THE END.

POPULAR PARODIES!

Compiled by MONTY LOWTHER.

Mary had a little lamb,
The creature was contrary.
An illness it began to sham;
The little lamb "had" Mary.

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To watch a kite last Monday,
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And when they reached the top they found
The "silly kite" was Grundy.

Old Mother Hubbard she went to the cupboard
In quest of a bone for her terrier,
But when she got there it came down unaware.
And promptly proceeded to bury 'er.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
Light of heart, but his purse was lighter;
He pawned his gear at the pawnshop near,
And received a "crown" for his mitre.

Little Miss Muffet she sat on a tuffet,
Eating her curds and whey;

Then Trimble espied her, and sat down beside her,
And stowed all the curds a-whey.

Jack Sprat could eat no fat,
His wife could eat no lean;
So Billy Bunter promptly said:
"I'll scoff the lot, old bean!"

Hey-diddle-diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over a pole;
The dog did a dance in a sort of trance,
For Grundy had scored a goal!

Sing a song of sixpence, a jocket full of rye,
Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie;
When the pie was opened, the birds began to sing:
"Fatty Wynn, keep off the grass!
There's none for you, old thing!"

[Supplement IV.]

THE NEW PORTER!

(Continued from page 8.)

And this fellow—trained by a crackman, probably a thief himself—was the cause of his downfall.

"Hang him!" muttered Lattrey, as he watched the two chums cycle away, unconscious that he was speaking aloud, in his savage bitterness. "Hang him! If ever I get a chance at Erroll—"

"Ahem!" Lattrey spun round angrily as he realised that someone was near him.

It was John Brown, the new porter. Lattrey flushed as he realised that the man must have heard his incautious words.

The porter had been standing near him, a little back, looking down the road after the two cyclists as they departed.

"Excuse me, sir. Is that young gentleman Master Mornington?"

"What are you hanging about behind a chap for?" snapped Lattrey.

"Sorry, sir, I'm sure!" said the new porter apologetically.

Lattrey grunted.

"That young gentleman with Erroll, who passed by just now, is Master Mornington, isn't it, sir?"

"Yes," snapped Lattrey.

"A very wealthy young gentleman, isn't he, sir?"

"No; he's a dashed beggar!" growled Lattrey, finding some solace in making that remark, even to the school-porter.

"He lost all his money when his cousin turned up." Lattrey looked more sharply at the porter. "Brown—your name's Brown, I think—"

"Yes, sir."

"Haven't I seen your face before somewhere?"

Lattrey scanned the man's face.

John Brown was middle-aged in appearance, with a stolid-looking face, and somewhat dark and heavy brows and moustache.

He smiled as Lattrey asked the question, and it was not a pleasant smile.

"I think so, sir," he said. "Of course, you won't mention it here."

"By gad!" said Lattrey, under his breath. "It was yesterday I saw you in Coombe. You were—"

He broke off.

"You passed me in the garden of the Bird-in-Hand public-house, sir," said John Brown quietly. "I had gone in there for some refreshment, not knowing the reputation of the place, being a stranger in the district."

"You needn't give me that," said Lattrey. "You were jawing with Joey Hook, and pretty deep in it, too!"

"Ahem!"

"You saw me there," said Lattrey savagely. "Why haven't you reported me, then?"

"I shouldn't like to cause trouble to a young gentleman like you, sir," said the porter, with a cough. "I am afraid, sir, that neither of us ought to have been there. But I'm sure you won't mention having seen me in the place, and I should not think of causing you any inconvenience on the subject. I like to be obliging, sir."

Lattrey looked at him very curiously.

This was a very different kind of porter from old Mack and decidedly an accommodating man—so accommodating, in fact, that he would certainly have been discharged if Dr. Chisholm had known how accommodating he was.

Lattrey thought he understood the man's object, and he groped in his pocket for a shilling.

Brown made a gesture.

"Thank you—no, sir!" he said, as the shilling glimmered in Lattrey's fingers.

"I did not mean that at all, sir. Perhaps you would care to step into my lodge, if you would do me the honour of chatting for a few minutes." He lowered his voice. "If you would care to try my cigarettes, they are quite at your service, sir—under the rose, of course."

Lattrey wondered whether he was dreaming for a moment.

How a man of this kind had succeeded in obtaining a post at Rookwood School was beyond comprehension.

But the cad of the Fourth was very quick to realise how useful such a man might be to him.

He nodded cordially, and followed the porter into his lodge for a "chat." A few minutes later he was smoking cigarettes in the safe seclusion of the porter's parlour.

The "chat," as it turned out, was all on the subject of Mornington of the Fourth. John Brown appeared to possess an inexhaustible curiosity on that subject.

Lattrey told him the story of the finding of Cecil Mornington, and the consequent fall from wealth and importance of Mornington of the Fourth. He had smoked a good many expensive cigarettes by the time the chat came to an end.

"Any time I can be of service to you, sir, you have only to mention it," said John Brown, when Lattrey rose to leave.

Lattrey left the lodge in a state of great astonishment. He chuckled as he wondered what Mr. Bootles would think if he could have known how the new porter had been entertaining a junior of the Fourth Form.

He wondered, too, what John Brown's object was. Whatever it was, there was no doubt that John Brown might be very useful to him, and it did not occur to Lattrey just then that he might be very useful to John Brown.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Startling Suspicion!

"LATE!" said Mornington.

Erroll and his chum came whizzing up to the gates of Rookwood in the deep autumn dusk now closing in.

They had been on a long spin that afternoon, and had put on speed on their return; but the gates of the school were closed and locked when they arrived there and jumped off their bicycles.

"Too bad!" said Erroll. "That means a report and lines."

"May only mean a bob or two to the porter," said Mornington carelessly.

"It isn't old Mack now, you know. The new man may be a bit more accommodating. We'll see. You'll have to hand out the bob."

Erroll laughed as he rang the bell.

The porter came down to the gate, and looked at the two juniors through the bars.

"Let us in," said Erroll. "We're a few minutes late."

"Yes, sir," said the porter respectfully.

The gate was unlocked and opened. Morny and Erroll wheeled their machines in, and Brown reclosed the gates.

"I suppose this means a report?" said Mornington. "Is a bob any use to you, Brown?"

John Brown shook his head.

"Thank you, sir—no!" I am quite satisfied with my wages."

"Isn't that rather unusual?" asked Mornington sarcastically.

"I hope not, sir."

"That means that you're going to report on us. Well, report, and be hanged! Come on, Erroll!"

"Not at all, sir," said Brown smoothly.

"I'm sure, sir, I shouldn't care to cause a young gentleman trouble for a matter of a few minutes."

"Oh, good!" said Mornington, in surprise. "You're a jolly good-natured chap, Mr. Brown!"

"Thank you, Master Mornington!"

"Good-night!"

"Good-night, sir!"

"Come on, Erroll! What's the matter?"

Erroll was staring at the new porter in the dusk, with a strange expression on his face.

Morny caught his arm.

"Come on! What are you dreaming about?" he asked. "We've got time to get in for calling-over!"

"Yes, I'm coming," said Erroll, his eyes still on the porter.

Brown seemed unconscious of his strange, fixed scrutiny. He touched his hat to the juniors, and went back into his lodge.

"That—that's the new porter, Morny?" said Erroll at last, in a low voice.

"Yes; man named Brown, I heard somebody say. What about him?"

"Oh, nothing!"

Erroll did not speak again as he wheeled his machine after his chum. They hurried into the Hall for calling-over, and were just in time to answer to their names.

"Nearly missed it, you bounders!" remarked Jimmy Silver, as the Fourth came out of Hall. "Had a good spin?"

"Oh, rippin'!" said Mornington.

"You don't look specially cheerful, Erroll. Overdone it?" asked Jimmy, glancing at the grave, troubled face of the Fourth-Former.

"Oh, no!" said Erroll. "Come up to the study, Morny. I'm as hungry as a hunter."

"Right-ho!"

Erroll had said that he was hungry, but when the chums sat down to tea in Study No. 4 he hardly touched the meal. Morny regarded him very curiously across the table.

"Out with it!" he said abruptly.

Erroll coloured.

"It's nothing, Morny. But—"

"But what?"

"But—something about that man Brown—"

"The porter?" exclaimed Mornington in amazement.

"Yes."

"I noticed you were blinking at him. What about him?"

"It's nonsense, of course. But something in the tone of his voice struck me. It reminded me—"

Erroll smiled.

"He reminded me, somehow, of a man I'd like to forget the existence of— Gentleman Jim!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's rot, of course!" said Erroll. "I suppose I'm haunted by that man since I saw that he was free again. But, of course, he's on his way to America before this!"

"My dear chap, get Gentleman Jim out of your mind," said Mornington. "You've done with the rotter for good. That man Brown seems a very civil-spoken fellow. Not much likely to be a relation of Gentleman Jim, the cracks—"

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man— What do you want, you fat idiot?"

Tubby Muffin's fat face glimmered in at the door.

"It's all right. I haven't heard what you were saying!" said Tubby, in a great hurry. "I wasn't listening, you know. Can you fellows lend me a tin of sardines for tea?"

"I'll lend you a thick ear!" growled Mornington.

"Don't be a touchy beast, Morny. If you're not needing all your sugar, I'll borrow a few lumps. That beast Higgs uses all his own himself, and Jones is just as bad. I—"

Tubby Muffin did not stay to finish. Morny had grabbed up a cushion, evidently as a missile. Tubby backed out hastily and closed the door.

"Yah! Rotter!" he howled through the keyhole.

Then he departed hurriedly.

Tubby Muffin had had tea in the Hall, but he was hungry—he always was hungry. Supplies in his own study were cut off till he could stand his "whack," a matter of difficulty to the impecunious Tubby.

After some thought he started for Lattrey's study, with a very determined expression on his fat face.

Lattrey was having his tea alone there. Peele and Gower were honouring Smythe of the Shell with their company. Lattrey had not been included in the invitation. He sat at his solitary board in a black mood, and as Tubby came in he started up with an angry exclamation. The outcast of Rookwood was in no humour to be bothered by the greedy Classical.

"Keep your wool on, Lattrey!" said Tubby. "If you touch me with that stump I'll go to Bulkeley and tell him about you smoking in the lodge this afternoon!"

Lattrey dropped the stump.

"What?" he ejaculated.

Tubby Muffin gave a fat chuckle.

"You didn't know that I saw you. He, he, he!"

"You spying cad!" exclaimed Lattrey furiously.

"Well, I saw you chumming up with the porter," grinned Tubby. "I wondered what the game was, and I peeped in at the side window. I'm shocked at you, Lattrey—and at Brown, too! Smoking! I'm really surprised at you!"

Lattrey gritted his teeth. The Peeping Tom of Rookwood always seemed to know everything that went on. He was not particular in his methods of gaining information. His knowledge in this case was rather awkward for Lattrey.

"All serene. I'm not going to tell," grinned Tubby. "I'm awfully discreet, you know, if a chap treats me as a pal. But that man Brown is shockin', ain't he? Fancy letting a Rookwood chap smoke in his lodge! No wonder Erroll thinks he looks like a burglar!"

Lattrey jumped.

"What?" he exclaimed. "What are you babbling about?"

"He said so," said Tubby. "I happened to hear him. He said that man Brown reminded him somehow of Gentleman Jim. You've heard of Gentleman Jim. It was before you came here—"

Lattrey's eyes glittered.

"Did Erroll say that, Tubby, old chap?"

"Yes, rather!" said Tubby, greatly pleased by Lattrey's change of tone, which was a testimony to the interesting nature of his yarn. "Morny laughed. Erroll said Gentleman Jim was free now, and going to America. He said something about Brown reminded him of that THE POPULAR.—No. 143.

fellow. Rot, of course! Erroll said it was rot himself. Can you lend me a tin of sardines, Lattrey?"

"Take it, and go!" grunted Lattrey.

"Thanks, old chap! I sha'n't mention a word about your smoking. All right, I'm going!"

And Tubby Muffin went.

When he had gone Lattrey closed the door. He did not return to his lonely tea. He lighted a cigarette, and smoked in silence, pacing to and fro in the study. Strange thoughts were working in his brain.

"It's impossible!" he muttered. "Sheer lunacy! But why should that man remind Erroll of Gentleman Jim?"

It's rot, of course! Erroll thinks it rot, according to that fat fool. But—but Erroll doesn't know what I know—that Brown is a pal of Joey Hook, the sharper, and that he's shady—jolly shady! He wouldn't have given me cigarettes in his lodge if he hadn't been pretty shady. And—and what did he want to know all about Mornington's affairs for? What does Morny matter to an ordinary school porter? He isn't an ordinary school porter, that's a cert! By gad! Lattrey's eyes fairly burned. "By gad! If—if there should be anything in it, and if I could find out, then—then I should have that hound Erroll in the hollow of my hand!"

And Lattrey laughed, a soft, low laugh, that was not pleasant to hear.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Spy in the Night.

THE departure of old Mack, the porter, and the arrival of the new man to take his place, were events of the smallest possible moment to the Rookwood fellows.

Nobody took any special notice of John Brown, naturally.

It was noticed that he was much more civil and obliging than old Mack had been, and that was all. Old Mack was a good-hearted man in his way, but he had a crusty temper, and when it was his duty to report a fellow for being late he never failed to perform that duty with great exactitude.

John Brown was much less exact in the performance of his duties.

So the fellows sometimes had a kind nod or word for the porter. Otherwise, they hardly noted his existence. They had little or nothing to do with him.

Erroll, it is true, for a day or two gave the porter keen glances when he came across him. But the quiet, sedate porter never seemed to notice it, and his manner to Erroll was the same as his manner to the others—quiet and civil and respectful.

Erroll himself smiled at the odd thought that had come into his mind, that something about the man had reminded him of Gentleman Jim the cracksmen.

He soon dismissed the incident from his mind. If he thought of Gentleman Jim at all, it was to wonder how he was getting on in America, for there was no doubt in his mind of the truth of the statement the cracksmen had made to him on the telephone.

Had he been able to assign a motive for deception, certainly he would not have taken Gentleman Jim's word. But he could think of no motive, and so he accepted the cracksmen's statement at its face value.

But there was one fellow in the Fourth Form who was giving a great deal of thought to the new porter, and to Gentleman Jim.

Lattrey had pondered again and again over what Tubby Muffin had told him.

If the cracksmen was there, and if he was there with Erroll's knowledge, what a revenge upon Kit Erroll, when he had the proofs in his hands!

Lattrey felt his heart beat more quickly at the thought.

One thing was certain. He meant to know.

When he knew the truth, if it was the truth, he would use his own judgment as to the use he would make of his knowledge. But, at all events, he would know.

Lattrey was a good deal about the porter's lodge for the next two or three days.

The cad of the Fourth was such an outcast at present among the juniors that his new occupation was hardly noticed, if noticed at all. Peele remarked sneeringly that Lattrey had taken to talking to the porter because nobody in the Fourth wanted to talk to him, and that was all.

But Lattrey did not drop into the porter's lodge simply to talk.

He was there to watch and observe.

If the man was playing a part he played it well. Lattrey had found a photograph of Gentleman Jim in a newspaper, but it bore little or no resemblance to John Brown.

But the cracksmen was clean-shaven, while John Brown wore a heavy moustache, and that would account for the difference.

And Lattrey, observing the man closely, knew that the hirsute adornment was genuine enough. That proved nothing, for Gentleman Jim had been long enough out of prison to grow as much hair as he liked on his face.

Lattrey made no progress, but the suspicion remained sharp in his mind, and he meant to know. If he could not make the discovery from the man himself, he might make it in another way, and ere long he had laid his plans for making a search in the lodge during the porter's absence.

After a few days, too, Lattrey learned a new fact from his estimable friends at the Bird-in-Hand. Sometimes when John Brown was supposed to be asleep in his lodge, when all Rookwood was plunged in slumber, the porter was in reality engaged in card-playing in the back parlour of the village public-house, strictly under the rose, with Joey Hook and a few select sporting gentlemen.

And that discovery gave Lattrey one cue he wanted. During one of those nocturnal absences of John Brown there would come his opportunity of making a search in the lodge.

And a few nights later Jimmy Silver woke up in the dormitory of the Classical Fourth at the sound of someone quietly dressing in the dark.

Jimmy sat up in bed, and blinked at the dim figure in the gloom.

"Who's that?" he ejaculated.

"Do you want to wake the House, you dummy?" came Lattrey's snarling whisper.

"So you're breaking bounds again, you cad!" growled Jimmy Silver.

"Find out!"

Jimmy Silver grunted. He was greatly inclined to get out of bed and "mop up" the cad of the Fourth on the spot. Fortunately for Lattrey, Jimmy decided that it was too much fog, and turned over and went to sleep again.

Lattrey finished dressing, and slipped quietly out of the dormitory.

Five minutes later he was in the cool, keen air of the quadrangle.

The hour was late. Not a single light glimmered from the great array of

windows. Like a ghost in the gloom, Lattrey glided away towards the porter's lodge.

He knew that John Brown would be absent that night. He had learned that much from Mr. Hook in Coombe. It was his opportunity at last, and he meant to make the most of it.

The porter's lodge was closed, and there was no light. Anyone passing it would have supposed that John Brown was fast asleep in bed, and he certainly ought to have been at that hour.

Lattrey knew better. In the shade of the big beech near the lodge, Lattrey worked at the catch of the little parlour window with his pocket-knife. His face was a little pale. He knew well enough the risk of his proceeding. But he did not falter.

The catch yielded at last. Lattrey slid up the lower sash and drew himself into the dark room. With a beating heart, he closed the window behind him, and drew the blind carefully across it. He was fairly committed to his rascally adventure now.

**THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.
Gentleman Jim.**

"BY gad!" muttered Lattrey. The junior had not been idle. He had been in the lodge a whole hour, and it had been a very busy hour.

But if there was any evidence in the building to connect John Brown with Gentleman Jim it had escaped him.

He was standing now in the bed-room, unoccupied save by Lattrey. His eyes were bent upon a small oaken chest, fastened by a patent lock, which he had dragged from under the bed, where he had discovered it.

The chest was well-made of tough oak, and the lock was far beyond Lattrey's powers.

What did John Brown want with such an article unless he had something in his possession which it was absolutely necessary to conceal from prying eyes?

He was still regarding the chest with a baffled look, in the dim light of a candle-end, when a sound below made him start and draw a panting breath.

In the silence of the night he heard the faint but unmistakable sound of a door unlocking and opening.

The porter had returned! Lattrey, with a thumping heart, instantly blew out the candle, and thrust it into his pocket.

He had intended to be gone without leaving a trace before John Brown returned to his quarters. He had stayed too long.

His heart beat almost to suffocation as he listened to the soft footfalls on the old stair.

The man was coming up in the dark. He was very quiet in his movements. It would not have suited John Brown, whatever he was, to allow Rookwood to learn of his nocturnal excursions.

Lattrey was white now. There was no escape for him. The man was coming up to the bed-room, and there was no escape by the door, and no time to escape by the window. He would be found there. And if the man was the man he suspected, what might not the crackman do?

That thought came into Lattrey's mind now for the first time, and it was a terrible thought.

For he knew that Gentleman Jim was a desperate man, with a sentence of penal servitude hanging over his head in case of discovery. And if he found that he was suspected!

Lattrey trembled.

And if the man was, after all, only John Brown, the porter, how was he likely to take this treacherous search of his quarters?

The footsteps sounded at the bed-room door, and the door opened. Lattrey stood rooted to the floor.

He heard a sniff and a sharp exclamation. The odour of the hastily-extinguished candle had been detected at once.

"By thunder! Who is there?" The voice rang out sharply and threateningly, quite unlike the usual silky and civil tones of John Brown, porter.

Lattrey did not speak. "I know you're here! Who are you?" The voice was savage and threatening.

"By thunder!" A match scratched in the darkness. As the flame flickered up, the porter

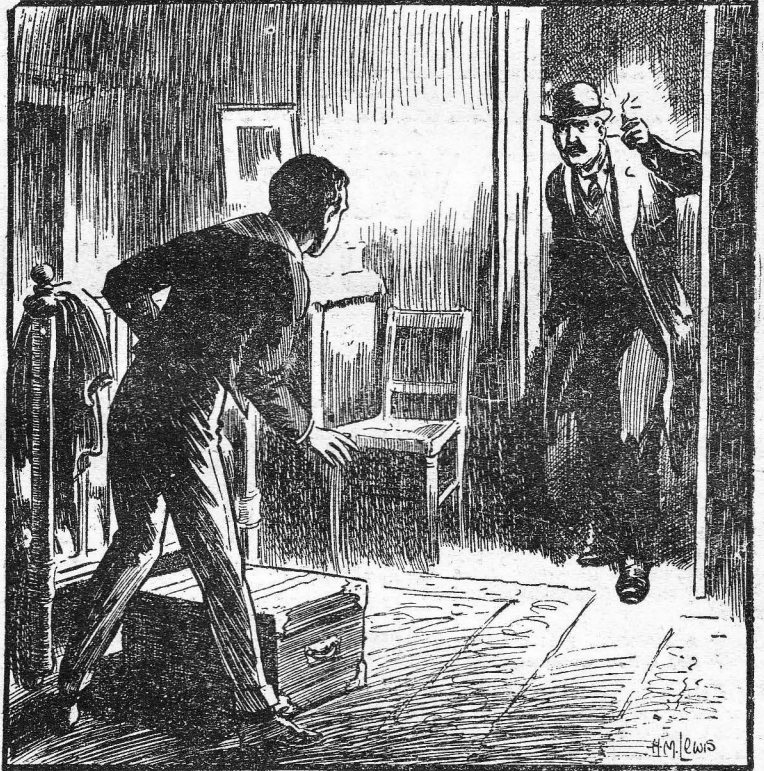
it was some rascal of his own fraternity, there for purposes of robbery. He certainly would not have revealed his weapon otherwise.

The crackman made a movement, and Lattrey stepped back hastily. There was a muttered curse as Gentleman Jim's feet came into collision with the brass-bound chest on the floor.

Another match glimmered out, and the man turned on the gas and lit it. Keeping between the junior and the door, he scanned Lattrey's face grimly.

"So it is you, Master Lattrey!" "Yes!" muttered Lattrey huskily.

The man was the smooth, suave porter again now. Had not Lattrey seen the weapon he had betrayed in the light, he would never have guessed that this quiet, suave man had so deadly a thing about him.



As the flame flickered up, the porter held up the match, and the light gleamed on Lattrey's white face. "So it is you, Master Lattrey!" said the porter suavely. (See this page.)

held up the match, and the wavering light gleamed on Lattrey's white face.

Lattrey's heart gave a great throb. The man held the match in his left hand. In his right was grasped something that shone and glittered in the flickering light. Lattrey knew that it was a revolver, and his heart almost ceased to beat.

For a moment there was tense silence. In the wavering gleam of the match, the man and the boy looked at each other, their glances meeting. The match went out.

Lattrey heard a sound. It was the sound of the weapon sliding back into a pocket. But the sight of it had been enough for Lattrey. It was more than enough.

He knew now what he had come there to find out, and he knew instinctively that Gentleman Jim, finding someone in his room in the dark, had suspected that

But he knew it now, and there was a deep and gnawing fear in his breast. He would have given worlds to be safe out of of the lodge—safe back in the Fourth Form dormitory.

He made a movement, but the man waved him back.

"You don't go yet!" he said. "I—I—" "What are you doing here?" No answer.

John Brown stooped, and slid the brass-bound chest back under the bed. Then his eyes gleamed at Lattrey again.

"Tell me why you came here, boy." "I—I came to—to—" "To steal?" "No." "Then why?" Lattrey was silent.

"I suppose you know," said John Brown quietly, "that I shall report this

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A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY! "THE HEAD'S GUEST!"

to your headmaster in the morning, Master Lattrey?"

Lattrey almost smiled, in spite of his fear. The man's eyes were scanning him anxiously, furtively, as he spoke. He was trying to divine how much Lattrey knew, how much he suspected, at the same time careful not to give himself away, in case the junior suspected nothing.

"I—I came to—to——"

"Well?"

Lattrey was recovering himself a little.

"I—I am sorry. I—I come—— I'm hard up. I've had bad luck with the cards, and—and——"

"You came here to commit a theft?"

"Yes," whispered Lattrey.

He saw, and noted, the relief that flashed into the man's eyes. And Lattrey's own relief, as he saw that his lie was believed, was as great as Gentleman Jim's.

"You were very foolish." The man spoke more calmly now. "Did you think, then, that there was money in that chest?"

"I—I thought perhaps——"

"How did you know I was not here?"

"I—I found it out at the Bird-in-Hand——"

The man compressed his lips hard.

"You know, then, that——"

"That you go there—yes," Lattrey was recovering his confidence now. "You won't say anything about this, Mr. Brown. You keep my secrets, and I'll keep yours."

"You are a precious young rascal!" said John Brown, after a pause. "But you are right! Don't try this game on again, that's all! You can get out!"

He gripped Lattrey's arm, and for a moment the junior's heart failed him, and a cry trembled on his lips. But he did not utter it. The man led him out of the lodge.

Without another word he closed the door after Lattrey.

Lattrey hurried away

In the cool, keen air of the quad he paused under the beeches to think. There was a mocking, triumphant smile on his

face now. He had learned all, and he was safe!

He no longer regretted that Gentleman Jim had returned to the lodge so inopportunistically. Lattrey was still smiling, in a feline way, as he came back softly into the dormitory of the Classical Fourth.

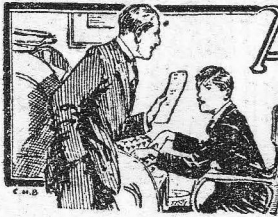
"Hallo!" Morny sat up in bed, and yawned. "What's that? Some merry roysterer comin' home just before the milk in the mornin'—what?"

"Exactly!" said Lattrey coolly.

The dandy of the Fourth yawned again, and laid his head on the pillow. Lattrey turned in, but it was long before he slept. He was thinking of his coming triumph—with Kit Erroll at his mercy!

Gentleman Jim, the crackman, was at Rookwood, in the guise of a school porter, and Erroll must know it; and in that fact—which he did not doubt for a moment—Lattrey saw endless triumph over his enemy. He held the whip-hand now that he knew Gentleman Jim's secret!

THE END.



A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

FOR NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE HEAD'S GUEST!" By Frank Richards.

That is the title of our next grand, long, complete school story of the chums of the Remove-Form at Greyfriars. The Head's guest is not a man, as one might suppose. He is a boy—a very remarkable boy—who makes things hum at Greyfriars. If you like really funny stories, then on no account miss this one!

"A RASCAL FOILED!" By Owen Conquest.

Under this title you will read about the further adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, and of Lattrey's great scheme to obtain a hold over Kit Erroll, of the Classical Fourth. That everything does not go the right way for the cad of the Fourth can be gathered from the title, but the way in which the rascal is foiled makes an extremely interesting story.

There will also be another splendid supplement in our next issue, and another fine instalment of Mr. Sidney Drew's immensely popular serial. Altogether we can safely say that our next issue will be one of the finest numbers turned out. Order your copy, my chums, and you are certain to have it.

RESULT OF "POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 29.

The Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each have been awarded to the following readers, who have sent in the best efforts to the above competition:

E. Parr, 16, Alexandra Street, Whitley Bay; Herbert Dixon, 93, High Street, Dorking, Surrey; Arthur Carpenter, 1, Dene Street Gardens, Dorking, Surrey; Albert Lynch Jun., 2, Dene Street Gardens, Dorking, Surrey; R. W. Childs, 5, Lindore Road, Clapham Common, London, S.W.11; F. G. Bissenden, 96, Nightingale Lane, Dover; A. Dimmock, 124, Warwick Road, Kensington, W.14; H. Comp-
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ston, 33, Kipling Street, Bootle, Liverpool; Edward Holt, 89, Somers Road, Walthamstow, E.17; H. Gaskin, 10, Gleave Street, Everton, Liverpool.

Again I am offering a FOOTBALL for the best "Poplet" sent in in connection with

"POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 37.

Examples for this week:

Putting It Off.	Take Trouble When.
The Carnival Ball.	Falling Off.
Bunter In Form.	Fishy Found Fishing.
Smoking in Woodshed.	Not Always There.
Manners Cuts Football.	On the Ball.
A Hurried Exit.	The Modern Romeo.

REMEMBER! A FOOTBALL FOR THE BEST, and TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH for the next in order of merit.

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

1. All "Poplets" must be written on one side of a POSTCARD, and not more than two "Poplets" can be sent in by one reader each week.

2. The postcards must be addressed "Poplets," No. 37, The "Popular," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

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 20th.

Your Editor.

Nugent's Splendid Sacrifice!

(Continued from page 6.)

rapidly mending now. When he left his bed it was only to go out in a bath-chair, with his chum walking with him, but every day saw an improvement, and Frank was very cheerful.

And what made him happiest to see the new footing upon which his parents stood. Mr. and Mrs. Nugent, one or both, hardly ever left him. The suffering and anxiety over Frank's sick-bed had drawn them together, and the bond had been so strengthened that it was never likely to be broken again. They had had their lesson, and they had profited by it; and they thanked Heaven, with full hearts, that it had been no worse.

The day came at last when Frank was able to return to the school. He was not quite his old self yet, but he was well, and growing stronger every day. His father and mother and his chum came to Greyfriars with him, and Frank Nugent was given a rousing welcome by his comrades of the Remove.

After his people had gone there was quite a reception in Study No. 1. Coker of the Fifth came to shake hands with him and to congratulate him, and so did Wingate, and the Head himself.

Vernon-Smith came into the study later in a rather chamefaced way.

"I'm sorry, Nugent," he said. "I hope you'll forget all about it."

Frank shook hands with the Bounder. "It's all right," he said. "Thank goodness, it's all over now."

Half the Remove crammed themselves into Study No. 1 to the feed which as stood by the Famous Five to celebrate Frank Nugent's return. Billy Bunter, claiming his rights as Nugent's firmest pal, who had stood by him in time of trouble, insinuated himself into the feed, and greatly distinguished himself in clearing the festive board. But Frank was so happy now that he was cordial even to Billy Bunter.

Frank had suffered; but, like most who suffer for the sake of others, he had had his reward. Peace and love in his home were his reward, and an ample recompense for what he had suffered for his mother's sake.

THE END.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"A RASCAL FOILED!"

A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

Let Your Chums Know About This Grand Adventure Serial!



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 hold 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.

They are detained, but escape 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. There is a struggle between the two, a box of eggs is broken, and Gan Waga manages to escape out on to the deck.

(Now read on.)

The Surrender of O'Rooney!

IF the yacht came to anchor outside in deeper water, there would be a chance of catching something. He was sorry he had given the lugworms to Barry O'Rooney, for though the worms were on the east side, crabs are not very particular. Still, there was plenty of fish in the cold room. By bringing it up on deck in the sunshine for a few hours it would do for bait.

Gan Waga looked out. There was nobody in the alleyway, and it was unlikely that the cook would be in the cold room. Out of the galley came Maddock.

"So here you are, you fat beauty, souse me!" said Maddock, who was munching a hefty sandwich. "You've been trying to murder the poor chef, ain't you? Souse me, Gan, but you're a bad lot! There ain't a ha'porth of good in you. I never did see such a suety rascal in my born days, never, I didn't!"

"Not so muchness of yo' suety rascals!" said the Eskimo. "What yo' do to a blackguards who swat yo' in the ears with his boot, hunk, Ben?"

The bosun took a vast bite out of the sandwich, which was a gift from the chef, and pondered.

"If he was a married man, souse me, his wife would be a widdler!" he replied, after some cogitation. "I'm mighty particular about my ears, not like some folks who never washes behind 'em! But I'm talking about myself. To the man who biffed you on the ear with his boot, I'd give medals and a pension! Ha, ha!"

Gan Waga made up his mind to let Barry O'Rooney off altogether, and put all the crabs he captured in the bosun's cot. He put his thumb to his little snub nose, and wagged his fingers vulgarly at Maddock. Gan had no time to waste on people like Maddock, so he went on to find some bait.

"Dears, dears, dears! What an awfulness mess!" he muttered, as he peered into the egg-crate. "I think old Mossoo bended a few of these chapes."

He stiffened as he fancied he heard a stealthy sound. Only one light was burning there. The door swung to and closed.

"Who thats?" asked the Eskimo, rather startled.

The next moment he was thoroughly startled. Gan Waga was plucky, but there are some things no fellow can understand. His knees began to wobble as he saw a carcass of mutton detach itself from the steel book on which it was hanging. The mutton descended gently to the snow-sprinkled floor, danced a weird dance on the point of its neck, lifted itself into the air, and hung itself up again. Gan's knees wobbled still more.

He wanted to run, but his legs were like two pillars of solid lead. Something was moving along close to the bulkhead behind the carcasses of chilled meat. He could see nothing, but the powdery snow was stirring, and the invisible feet left impressions behind. Gan Waga opened his mouth to yell, but he failed to emit even a gurgle. Something white that he scarcely saw whizzed past his ear, and struck the bulkhead on the other side with a squelch.

Then Gan Waga understood, and dropped behind the egg-crate, and dipped both hands into it. It was his own trick over again, only more carefully carried out. Real ghosts don't leave footprints in snow—footprints of number twelves in boots. Besides, no self-respecting ghost would haunt a cold room when there was nothing to frighten except mutton and beef and defunct poultry and frozen fish. Ghosts prefer moated Granges. And they don't shy eggs at Eskimos.

With one eye on the last visible footprint, Gan Waga made a guess as to the exact position of the spectre with the large boots, and grasped an egg. A very nice turkey Gan had often looked at hungrily hung there. All at once the turkey gave a dismal sort of gobble, and began to flap its wings. Something gleamed white under the turkey's neck, and kept advancing and retreating. It was an egg held between the thumb and finger of an unseen hand.

"Yo' wait a minutes, Misters Barry

O'Loonatics!" thought Gan Waga. "Dears, dears! Yo' gave me a twists at firstness, old beans! Where yo' faces now, hunk?"

He was sure O'Rooney was the ghost, for he had seen Benjamin Maddock, and Prout, of course, was at his post on the bridge. The door opened, and Maddock put in his head. Gan Waga let him have one, and with a howl the bosun clapped his hand to his chin and staggered out.

The cook had been kind enough not to destroy all the ammunition. It was like a Lewis gun firing eggs when the Eskimo got to work. Though he could not see his target, he found it first time, and again half a dozen times more in quick succession. He knew by the noise that the target was making for him. Taking a leap out of Ching Lung's book, he put his feet against the crate, and sent it shooting away from him in a direct line.

"Murther and flat-irons!" roared the frenzied voice of Barry O'Rooney. "Tintacks and tanks! Help! Wow! Bedad, Oi'm—Arrah! Howld me, somebody! Ooh!"

There was something in the egg-box. The invisible garment had slipped considerably, and Gan Waga beheld a couple of human legs clad in blue serge, and displaying a good deal of socks and bare ankles waving in the air. Then the crate turned over, and the spectre rolled out. Hal Honour's invention, though almost invisible, was not egg-proof. O'Rooney got out his head and arms, and shuddered as he sat among the ruins, as well he might, for the ruins were cold and sticky.

"Kill him, souse me—kill him, Barry!" pleaded Maddock, who was mopping his face with a big red handkerchief.

"Oi can't—Oi can't!" groaned Barry. "Oi'm bate! Oh, who did Oi lave swate Bally-bunio, me choidhood's home, to be a sailor? Bad luck to that day! Bedad, Oi don't know whether Oi'm a hen or a rooster or a custard! Me heart's broke, and so's me nose! Oi saw the ould egg-thrunk comin', but the flure was so slippery Oi couldn't dodge ut. Ochone, ochone! Come and kill the Eskimo yersilf, Ben, for Oi'm bate and Oi give in!"

"Kill him, souse me; I'll do that!" cried the bosun. "If you can't do it, you hunking coward, leave it to me!"

Gan Waga had a couple of eggs left, the last shots in the locker. One was enough for the gallant Benjamin. He left. Lighting a cigar, and placing a frozen codfish handy to use as a club, if Barry turned nasty, Gan Waga sat down on his slab of ice and smiled at the war-worn gentleman from Ballybunio.

"Yo' feels ever so nicefuls and happy, hunk, Barry?" inquired the Eskimo. "I so gladness, fo' it make me happy, too! Tell me yo' happy, fo' ifs yo' don't I bash yo' over the head with this fish-cod. And yo' are fondness of me, yo' dear little Gan, Gan, aren't yo', hunk?" Ho, ho, hoo! Smiles at me, Barry, dears!"

Groaning, Mr. Barry O'Rooney scrambled to his feet.

"Och, Oi'll say anything ye loike, anything to plaze ye, any old loike!" he said, shuddering. "O've barked me shins, discolated me shoulders, flattened me nose, and ruined me uniform! Oi'm bate—clean bate, so Oi give in!"

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE HEAD'S GUEST!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

ve best this toime, blubberboiler! Phwat d'ye mane, smolle at ye? Oi'm an egg, a bathered, baten egg! Did ye iver see an egg smolle? Away wid ye, ye fat haythen! Though Oi'm at death's dure, a toime will come, so bewairre!"

The ruins of Mr. Barry O'Rooney limped away to the nearest bath-room. Gan Waga lighted the other cigar. He was so pleased that he could have smoked three at once.

The Prince Takes Alarm!

UNLESS the information that reached the Lord of the Deep was at fault, Private Hermann Trubner had not rejoined his regiment. Before this another message had come that could be relied on as perfectly accurate. The wireless operator brought it up as Thurston and Ferrers Lord were pacing the deck together.

"The explosion at Schloss Schwartzburg has closed up your bolthole, Rupert," said the millionaire. "I sent instructions to have the place examined."

"That's good news; but aren't you afraid of having these messages decoded and read by the Huns? For that very reason we were almost afraid to attempt to communicate with you until Ching Lung devised a message in Chinese."

"We are safe, if anything of the kind can be safe. Goltzheimer and Von Kreigler have no necessity to be as alert as they were when you dropped down on them like a human bombshell. And yet Karl von Kreigler is so amazingly clever in some things that he needs careful watching. They will get their answer from the British Commanding Officer to-day. I helped to draft it, and it will be like another bombshell!"

"In what way, Chief?"

"I hope you won't be offended, Rupert, but we are only claiming fifty thousand pounds for your lamentable death," said Ferrers Lord.

"You amaze me!" said Thurston, with a laugh. "I had no notion that I was worth so much alive."

"My dear friend, I have no intention of prying into your private affairs," said the millionaire. "We had to put some value on you. I could not allow Professor von Kreigler and General Goltzheimer to destroy you for nothing. It is a ridiculous price—an absurd price—but I could not have you murdered for nothing. You will not be offended, for I need not tell you that we are true friends, when I tell you I put four times your value on my engineer."

"Two hundred thousand pounds on Hal

Honour, and only fifty thousand on me," said Thurston. "I feel pitifully small. What about Ching Lung, Chief?"

"Not a single farthing. We couldn't charge for the prince. Poor Ching Lung was a complete interloper, and, therefore, valueless. He has nothing to do with the League of Nations even. Not one solitary farthing for his Imperial Highness of Kwai-hai, Thurston. Ching Lung is just an outsider." "And what do you value him at, Chief?" asked Rupert Thurston.

"Exactly at your own valuation," said Ferrers Lord. "That is the highest sum I can name. When you have worked out the exact amount, tell me."

In the dusk, Ching Lung and Rupert Thurston met on deck, and Thurston told the prince what Ferrers Lord had said to him.

"Well, old lad, I'm rather bucked," said Ching Lung. "As we are such pals, I don't think the Chief could have made a kinder remark. Things must be going very nicely all the time, for you know how seldom he gives us a pat on the back. So I'm dirt, and you are worth fifty thousand dead."

They both laughed.

"It would be rather interesting if we could imagine it, to know what would actually have happened to the dear, gentle professor and Goltz if we had been dead, Ching," said Rupert Thurston. "This sort of thing doesn't appeal to me very much, you know. I suppose I'm just a blunt, straight-forward Englishman, and I like a fair fight in the open. It seems that we can't have that. And for a dead man, I fell amazingly fit. I wish the dinner-bell would ring. Short rations in Schloss Schwartzburg have given me a good appetite."

Mossoo, the chef, in spite of all his sorrows and tribulations, served up a dinner fit for monarchs. As the yacht kept on her way there were no young crabs or juvenile lobsters in Maddocks' bunk that night to disturb the boss's spell of rest. A misty drizzle was falling. Ferrers Lord put on an oilskin and sou'-wester and took Prout's place on the bridge, and Prout very thankfully descended and made his way to the warmth and comfort of the glue-pot. The only occupant of this pleasant retreat was Gan Waga.

"Hop it!" roared the steersman of the yacht. "Quit by honey! Vamoozie! Hop it! Make sail! Clear! Beat it! Shin off! Skedaddle!"

Gan Waga smiled. On the table in front of him with great deliberation he placed one automatic, one Webley revolver, one large butcher's knife, one meat chopper, one

mallet, one coke-hammer, six eggs, one tin of petrol, and a box of matches. While Prout stood staring at him, petrified, the Eskimo stooped beneath the table and added a four-pound steak, half a pound of butter, and several large Spanish onions to the terrifying array.

"Tommy dears," he said sweetly, "I've borrowed yo' olds pots-glue fo' the evenings. I havings a little suppers heres, Tommy, so run aways, old ducks!"

"Oh, are you, by honey?" said Prout. "You're some joke, you are. Get on with it, then! I wouldn't think of disturbing you, my lad. Are them things loaded?"

"The eggres are, Tommy," grinned the Eskimo. "Go and tells old Barry O'Loonatics and Mossoo I got some lovelifuls eggres fo' them. Runs quickness, Tommy dears!"

Prout was dubious. When Gan Waga did absurd things like this, there was always the danger that Prince Ching Lung was aiding and abetting him, although he was hiding in the background. The steersman shut the door with a bang. He was lucky at once, for in Mossoo's galley he found O'Rooney. For once the headstrong and fiery Irishman was limp. He went on eating boiled beef with plenty of mustard to warm himself up.

"Bedad, let the fat baste have the ould glue-pot!" he said. "O'ive suffered, Tom! There's bruises on me shins two feet long and thray feet wide. The very thought of an egg makes me thremble. O'iv soaked wid egg-drinched wid the horrors. Ut's some sthunt as the blubberboiler has all them weapons. Ochone, lave well alone. Let the oily pig kape the glue-pot, and that will take all the wind out of his sails. Av we interfere we'll get ut in the neck; av we let ut alone, the whole shimozzle will fall flat. Phwat d'ye think, Mossoo? Tootsweet, alay, vooz ong. Ze blubberboiler—compreney?"

The chef himself wore a weary look—the look of a man who had suffered.

"Nevaire, nevaire!" he said. "Not ze Eskimo. I vight heem, yes, but only ze duel! I vight heem viz ze pestool or ze sword—cleek, cleek, or bang, bang!"

"I wish you could, by honey!" said Prout. "But how would it go if the fat savage pinked you first or bored a bullet into you, Mossoo?"

"Ar-r-r! I could not mees!" said the cook, folding his arms and frowning darkly. "I am ze ally of ze brave British. Togeizzer ve vight ze Bosche! Of zis fat yellow monstaire I am not ze ally—zis abominable Eskimo! Ze nose of me is pull, I am smack viz eggs, and ze angaire of me is terrificque."

"I can feel for you," said Prout. "But, by honey, haven't you been doing things! The blubberbiter told Maddock you called him a thief and kicked him on the ear!"

Barry O'Rooney dropped his knife and fork and looked aghast.

"Phwat d'ye mane—cullid the Iskimo a thafe and kicked him on the ear?" he demanded. "Ut can't be! Chef, till me ye niver did ut! A kiok's nothin'—and, bedad, Oi wish ye'd kicked him on both ears! Av ye cullid that oily thafe a thafe, ut's a different mather. Ut must be a duel!"

"By honey, that's a true word!" said the steersman gravely. "Different nations have their different ways. In Eskimoland, where Gan and the whales come from, you mustn't call a man a thief, even if you catch him stealing your best marrow-bone. It's a terrible insult!"

"Ut manes death for wan, and a grave unther the cowlid, cowlid snow, and a quart of whale-oil at breakfast for the winner," said Barry O'Rooney. "And the weapons are harpoons," added Barry, to cheer up the cook.

"By honey, that's how we lost the last chef before the war, Barry, you remember. He'd called the blubberbiter a thief. Being a matter of honour, it had to be done. We lay to at midnight on a slack tide, and dropped them overboard!"

"Arrah, now ut's coming to me!" said Barry. "Aich man had a loifebelt, an electric flash-lamp, and a harppoon. The distance was two hundred and twenty yards over hurdles—Phwat am Oi talking about? Ut was fifteen rounds of two minutes. Whin the gong sounded, the seconds left the ring. The Frinchman was the first to show prominently. Switching on the loight he wore in his hat, he almost landed a beautiful left-hook wid the harppoon on the Iskimo's solar-plexus. The Iskimo wint down for a count of noine, and we all thought he'd got the knock-out. Afore the referee could yell 'Ten' through

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NEXT FRIDAY

"A RASCAL FOILED!"

A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. BY OWEN CONQUEST.

the megaphone he was up again, noise and fresh, but he'd mislaid the harppoon. Bedad, he towld us he'd mislaid ut in the Frinchman's waistcoat—eh, Tom?"

"By honey, that's the truth!" said Prout. "The prince disqualified Gan Waga on a foul, and awarded the gold cup, purse, and championship to the Frenchman. The funny thing is, he never came to claim them. We switched the searchlights on and rowed about all night, but we never see him from that night to this. When he thought it over, the prince reversed his decision, and gave the prizes and championship to the Eskimo. It couldn't have been a blow below the belt, but a fair jab, else the other chap would have floated. To sink him, Gan must have jabbed a hole in his lifebelt."

"Och, ut was a shame!" said Barry, heaving a sigh. "Phwat lovely mutton-popies that same chef used to make, Tom! D'ye rimirer the gravy in them, boy?"

"Shall I ever forget, by honey?" said Prout. "About two hours from now we'll be anchoring in a nice bit of quiet water, the prettiest place for a duel you could ever find, Mossoo. Don't be nervous. We'll have a boat ready afloat this time, and if you jab the Eskimo first, you'll be it."

Barry O'Rooney and Prout shook hands with the bewildered cook, and promised to stand by him to the last, provided that they did not get their feet wet. It seemed that Barry's advice had been excellent. Whatever jape Gan Waga had contemplated had been spoiled by their absence. The Eskimo had departed from the glue-pot and taken with him his arsenal of weapons and his steak and onions. The only thing he had left behind was the perfume of a very good cigar.

"Whisht! Go aisy, boy!" said Barry. "Ye can't thrust that candle-devouring rogue any more than ye can thrust a snake wid his tail dipped in pethrol and set alight. He wasn't in here wid all thim things ye towld me about just to look at the scenery. Whisht! Aisy, boy—aisy!"

Barry examined the chairs to look for embedded pins or sticky material, for it was impossible to tell what the crazy Eskimo would do, or would not do. He looked under the table, and took the lid off the saucepan and sniffed the coffee-pot.

"Nothing doing at all, by honey!" said Prout. "He hasn't shoved a lot of mustard in the coffee-pot, eh?"

"Ut doesn't smell loike ut," said Barry O'Rooney.

The steersman rubbed his head, for he was extremely puzzled. After such elaborate preparations, it was curious that Gan Waga should have given up possession.

"Oh, heres we come gathering nuses in May at fifty o'clocks in the morning!" lifted a tuneless voice. "Anybody like any fresh eggesses, hunk?"

"So you've come back, have you, you over-boiled insect?" growled the steersman.

He might have said more, but behind the Eskimo was the trim, dress-suited figure of Prince Ching Lung.

"Comes backs! What yo' mean, hunk?" demanded the Eskimo. "I notted been heres all days. What yo' means, comes backs, Tommy?"

There was one thing Gan Waga did well, and that was to tell the truth. At this deliberate and shameless lie, Prout almost staggered. A look of consternation, almost of alarm, overspread Ching Lung's face, and he gripped Gan Waga by the shoulder.

"Is that true, Gan?" he gasped.

"Och! Yo' nots need to hurts me, Chingy!" said Gan Waga. "What I done, hunk? It as trues as trueness, Chingy, old dears."

Ching Lung put his fingers in his mouth, and a whistle of deafening shrillness pierced the silence of the lower deck.

The Spy!

"O H, cut it out! What do you want to join in for? Give us a hope, old man! Right, right! Yes, yes! Oh, no, I'm not! Good-night!"

After these remarks, not spoken but sent winging through space, Hindlop, the wireless operator of the Lord of the Deep, removed the listening cap from his ears, and the green shade from his eyes, and swung round in his swivel chair. His friend Joe, the yacht's carpenter, held out his tobacco-pouch.

"What were they squirting at you that time, Sparky?" asked Joe.

"Some advertising stunt from that floating hotel, the Caritania," said the operator, with a grin. "You'll be awfully glad to know, Joseph, that Muriel Mayburn, the famous film star, who is aboard the old Carrie, bound for Southampton, has become engaged to Rex Roland, who draws five or six millions a year as leading light of the Colorado Picture Company, of Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A. They were telling me that when I cut out of it."

"Awfully interesting!" said Joe. "I'm real glad to hear it! I'm glad I came down, for I wouldn't have missed that lovely information for heaps."

"I think I'll tell 'em that," said Hindlop, with another grin. "If I sling the news that my pal Joe is delighted to hear the happy news, it ought to cheer up Muriel and Rex more than a quart of champagne. I'm fed! I'm listening to nothing unless it's red or blue. You're not on."

A tiny green lamp above the keyboard of the instrument glowed out, but Hindlop merely glanced at it over his shoulder, and then ignored it.

"The Carrie again," he said. "I expect they want to inform us that the engagement between Muriel and Rex is broken off. I shouldn't be a bit surprised, for these American film stars are real hustlers, Joe. Anyhow, there's nothing doing. I'll answer to red or blue, and give all the rest a miss."

The operator was a dark-haired, keen-eyed little man, who understood half a dozen languages. At his work he was an expert. The instrument he used would have puzzled the ordinary operator, for Hal Honour had added some inventions and improvements of his own. When the blue lamp glowed it indicated that the message was intended exclusively for the Lord of the Deep. The red was the S O S call, and when the green light appeared, it told Hindlop that it was something of no great importance to the yacht and her owner, like the news that had just come through from the huge liner, Caritania.

"Hallo, there's our colour!" said Joe. "They mean to keep you busy!"

Hindlop put down his unlighted pipe, and turned to the instrument.

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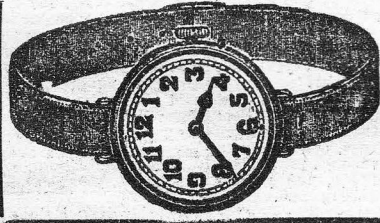
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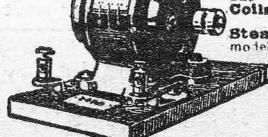
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