

AT THE TOP OF THE TREE FOR SCHOOL & ADVENTURE STORIES!

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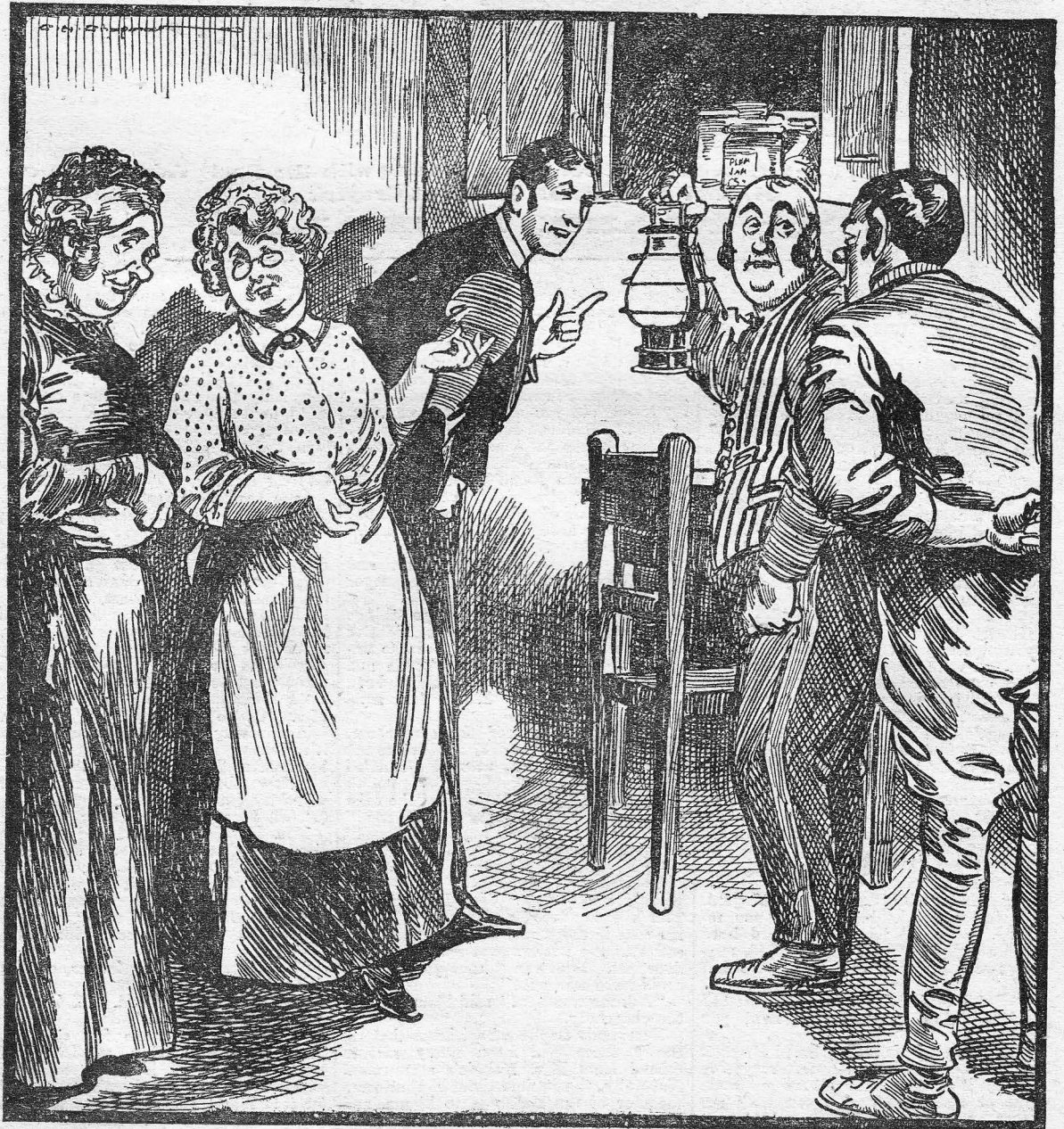
Greyfriars

The POPULAR

11d
12d

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

Rookwood St. Jims



"THERE ARE THE GOODS IN DIBBS' LOCKER!" SAID GOSLING.
(A Dramatic Moment in the Long Complete Tale of Greyfriars Inside.)

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



**"BILLY BUNTER'S
WEEKLY!"**
Grand Four-page Supplement.
Edited by **WILLIAM GEORGE
BUNTER** of Greyfriars.



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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Mrs. Kebble on the Warpath!

HARRY WHARTON, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, glared at his chum and study-mate, Frank Nugent, in speechless indignation.

"You burbling idiot!" he roared. "Same to you, and many of 'em!" said Frank Nugent warmly. "It was your giddy fault!"

"Rats!" "The blessed book's ruined!" shouted Harry Wharton.

"Good job, too!" "You're a nice chap, Franky!" exclaimed Harry wrathfully. "Go and bust up another fellow's book, and then say it was my fault!"

"Well, you said it was mine!" Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were in Study No. 1. They had finished tea, and were about to start their prep. They were both looking very flushed, for they had just had an argument concerning a Latin grammar.

Wharton had borrowed it from Tom Brown a few moments before, on the distinct understanding that he brought it back as soon as he had finished with it.

Unfortunately, Nugent had wanted it, and had tried to grab it in a playful way. The result was a Latin grammar with the cover torn off!

"You ass, Franky! What did you grab the blessed thing for?"

"I didn't grab it," said Frank Nugent. "I simply got hold of it, and you resisted. If you'd let go it would have been all right. The thing's busted, anyhow; so it's no good making a row about it."

"But I can't take it back like that!" said Wharton. "It's nearly new, you chump!"

"It doesn't look it!" grinned Nugent. "I should think not, after you've mauled it about! Haven't we got some glue or something? We can stick the cover on, and Brown'll never know the difference."

"Mrs. Kebble's got some," said Frank

Nugent. "At least, she's got some secotine; and that would be the very stuff!"

"Good egg!" said Wharton. "I'll buzz off to Mrs. Kebble and get some of the giddy stuff. We simply can't take this book back in its present condition."

"If you did you might get it chucked at you!" exclaimed Nugent.

Harry Wharton departed, and made his way to the domestic quarters of Greyfriars. He found Mrs. Kebble in her room, and she raised no objection to fetching a tube of secotine for him. Mrs. Kebble always kept some by her in case of breakages.

But it was in the store-room, and Harry Wharton followed the housekeeper up the passage.

"There's been very strange things happening in the store-room, Master Wharton," said Mrs. Kebble as she unlocked the door. "There's biscuits and cakes and all manner of things been taken by somebody. It's a fair mystery!"

Mrs. Kebble entered the store-room, carrying a hand-lamp. She looked round her suspiciously, then uttered a startled exclamation.

"My cake," she ejaculated—"the cake I made this very morning! It's gone!"

"Something else missing! By Jove!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes, Master Wharton; one of the very richest big cakes!" said Mrs. Kebble excitedly. "Well, I never did! This is going too far altogether! I put the cake in there only this afternoon, and saw that the window was secure and the door fast. How can it have gone? Who could have taken it?"

"Ask me another!" said Harry Wharton cheerfully.

Everybody in the school knew that recently there had been many articles missed from Mrs. Kebble's store-room. Naturally, the juniors thought that some member of the staff was to blame, and the staff put the mysterious disappearance down to one of the juniors.

Curiously enough, the culprit was the

one who made the most fuss about it—William George Bunter, the fattest junior at Greyfriars. Billy declared that the thief ought to be caught and shown up.

That declaration, coupled with the fact that Billy Bunter's figure was one that could be easily recognised if seen anywhere near the store-room, served to turn the thoughts of the juniors from him—and they knew their Billy Bunter—to the staff.

As a matter of fact, it was quite by accident that Billy had discovered a way into the store-room. He had found it necessary to enter the coal-cellar to dodge the wrathful Loder on one of the many occasions the fat junior had roused the wrath of the prefect, and it was whilst searching for a way out that Billy had come across the trapdoor which gave admittance to the store-room.

Needless to say, Billy Bunter had made the best of his knowledge!

"I shall go to the Head!" went on Mrs. Kebble indignantly. "I haven't said anything about it so far, but now it's getting serious. I shall go to the headmaster this very minute!"

"How about my giddy secotine?" asked the junior quickly.

"Oh, here you are, Master Wharton. Mrs. Kebble quickly found the secotine, and then fastened the door of the store-room. She rushed off immediately, and went straight to the headmaster's study. She tapped on the door, and, without waiting for an answer, walked in. Dr. Locke sat at his writing-desk alone.

"I won't stand it any longer, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Kebble flatly.

"Eh?" said the Head. "I beg your pardon, Mrs. Kebble."

"I say it's gone too far, sir!" said Mrs. Kebble, glaring at Dr. Locke angrily. "I don't like to trouble you with the matter, but there's nothing else for it! Matters have gone so far that I can't let it pass any longer!"

"Pray explain yourself, Mrs. Kebble," said the Head. "What has gone far

enough? You appear to be excited over something."

"And enough to make me, sir! When tins of biscuits, pots of jam, and whole cakes disappear from the store-room, it's enough to make any woman excited!"

-Dr. Locke looked up patiently.

"Will you please come to the point, Mrs. Kebble?" he requested.

"And now I go to the store-room this evening," concluded Mrs. Kebble excitedly, "and find that one of my best cakes—a cake I made for your own table, sir—has been stolen! It's past all endurance!"

"Dear me, Mrs. Kebble, this story of yours is extremely singular!" said the Head, looking puzzled. "Do you think it possible that some of the boys have been raiding the store-room?"

"No, sir, I don't!" said Mrs. Kebble. "I don't see how any of the boys could get down to the back premises without being noticed. There's nearly always some of the maids in the scullery, and a boy would have to pass through the scullery to get to the store-room."

"But the window, Mrs. Kebble?"

"And the window's just as hard to get at for a boy, sir," replied Mrs. Kebble. "You see, the kitchen window's quite close, and if any boy got in and out of the store-room, he'd be heard as well as seen by Dibbs, the groom, who's always about the yard. No, sir; it looks to me as if the store-room's being robbed by one of my own servants. I really don't know what I shall do! The store-room might as well be open to everybody!"

The Head looked thoughtful.

"It strikes me, Mrs. Kebble, that somebody is possessed of a duplicate key," he said. "Either that, or the lock is out of order. It may be possible to open the door with the key belonging to some other lock. In any case, I think it would be as well for you to instruct Gosling to examine the store-room door."

"Very well, sir," said Mrs. Kebble. "Though I don't see how that's going to do any good. It's my opinion that the only way to catch the thief is to set a watch. The lock's as good as it ever was."

"We'll see, Mrs. Kebble. After Gosling has reported to me, I will send word down to you what to do," said the Head. "I quite realise your uncomfortable position, and will make every effort to get to the bottom of the matter in the shortest possible space of time."

And Mrs. Kebble left the study and went in search of Gosling, the school porter.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter's Dodge!

"WOT I says is this 'ere—all boys ought to be drowned afore they grow up!" growled Gosling, the school porter.

"It's them young raskils who's bin a-stealin' things out o' the store-room! My heye! I'll give 'em stealin' if I cop 'em!"

"But it's not the boys, Gosling—I'm sure of that!" said Mrs. Kebble. "Will you please come over to the house at once and examine the door lock?"

Gosling growled.

"Yes, ma'am, I'll come," he said ungraciously, "though it ain't me dooty to examine locks arter me day's work's done! The 'Ead ain't got no consideration!"

Mrs. Kebble had found Gosling seated in his little lodge smoking his pipe and taking occasional sips of a transparent liquid beside him. It looked like water, but it wasn't. Gosling would rather

have lost a week's wages than drink a glass of water neat.

He rose to his feet with a grunt, and followed Mrs. Kebble out into the dusky Close.

"Things o' this sort ought to be left till the mornin'!" he grunted. "Wot I says is this 'ere—I ain't goin' to waste much time on the old door! Strikes me as the 'Ead don't know wot 'e's doin'! 'Ow should I know wot to do with the lock? I ain't a locksmith!"

"But you can examine it and see if it has been tampered with," said Mrs. Kebble.

And they disappeared into the house.

The back door closed behind them, and as it did so, a sigh of relief escaped the fat lips of William George Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was in the very act of dropping into the coal-hole, and his heart had been in his mouth while Mrs. Kebble and the school porter were within hearing. True, a low wall divided the back door from the yard where the coal-hole was situated, but Bunter mopped his brow with relief.

"My only Aunt Maria!" he murmured. "I thought they were coming this way! I shall have to be jolly quick, or I shan't be out again before Gossy leaves!"

And Billy Bunter lowered himself into the coal-cellar, and quickly made his way to the trapdoor.

The fat Removite was feeling very perturbed. Ten minutes before, while in the common-room, it had suddenly struck him that he had no handkerchief. Then he remembered that he had laid it on the store-room floor while he negotiated the cake through the trapdoor. It was there now! And it was marked with his initials!

Bunter felt flabby all over as he thought of the consequences which would ensue if the handkerchief were discovered.

There was only one thing to be done—regain possession of it.

Therefore Bunter had hastened out into the darkness upon his errand.

Despite his bulk, he could be fairly active if he liked, and he liked now. In a very short space of time he stood within the store-room. His handkerchief lay upon the floor near the trapdoor, and Bunter stuffed it into his pocket with a sigh of relief. But he hesitated before taking his departure.

"Might as well have another look round now I am here," he murmured. "That cake was prime, but I'm feeling peckish again, somehow! There's nobody about now, so I may as well take those giddy mince-pies. They look great!"

But Bunter was cunning, and before he proceeded to raid the mince-pies, he took a stout piece of string from his pocket and looped it round the handle of the door. It was made specially for the purpose, the other end hooking on to a nail fastened in the beading. This was a precaution in case of a surprise visit. The door opened outwards, so that the string would delay a would-be intruder sufficiently long for Bunter to make his escape.

Having taken this very necessary precaution, Bunter proceeded to fill his pockets with mince-pies.

But somehow he seemed destined to be disturbed this evening.

He had hardly stowed away half a dozen when he heard Gosling's voice in the passage. With a startled gasp, Bunter swung round and made for the trapdoor. Unfortunately, he tripped, and his fat form rolled heavily against one of the shelves.

The shelf was not made for such harsh

treatment, and it gave way with a splintering crash. Eight or nine pots of jam descended to the floor and shattered to fragments. The row was tremendous, and Bunter stood still, in dire terror.

"My hat!" he gasped.

From the other side of the door he heard Mrs. Kebble's voice raised in a shriek.

"My heye!" roared Gosling. "There's someone in the store-room now! Wot I says—"

"Open the door!" screamed Mrs. Kebble.

"Well, ain't I a-doin' of it?" growled Gosling. "These 'ere keys—"

"Give them to me!" exclaimed the housekeeper.

Billy Bunter recovered his wits. Necessity is the mother of invention, and the fat junior realised that if he was to escape he would have to make haste. But there was a chance that he would be missed from the School House, and that Mrs. Kebble would put two and two together.

So Bunter, with unscrupulous cunning, uttered a roar of affected agony. But he did not use his own voice. Billy Bunter was a ventriloquist of no mean powers, and he could imitate anybody's voice with perfect ease. On this occasion he used the voice of Dibbs, the groom.

"Oh, crumbs!" he roared. "I'm nigh busted up! Ow!"

Then Billy Bunter rushed to the window, flung it up, and threw his voice outside.

To Gosling and Mrs. Kebble it sounded precisely as if Dibbs, the groom, had been in the store-room, and had escaped by means of the window.

"My heye!" roared Gosling. "It's Dibbs!"

"Dibbs!" shrieked Mrs. Kebble. "Gracious me!"

"I can't git this 'ere door open!" growled Gosling, tugging at the handle.

"The dratted key's turned in the lock, too! My heye, it's fastened on the inside! Wot I says is—"

"Run round!" ordered Mrs. Kebble quickly. "Here, Trotter, you go with Gosling! Dibbs is out the back somewhere, and you must catch him immediately!"

"Dibbs!" exclaimed Trotter, coming up. "Dibbs wasn't in there, ma'am! Why, I just left him talkin' to Mrs. Mimble, over at the little shop!"

"Nonsense!" said the housekeeper quickly. "I heard Dibbs' voice as plain as I hear yours! Can't you get off, Gosling? The wretched man will escape!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere—Dibbs ought to be ashamed of himself!" said Gosling.

And the school porter, with Trotter beside him, hurried round to the back door.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter had lowered himself through the trapdoor into the cellar. The fresh thought had struck him that the coal-hole was uncovered, and that in the darkness Gosling and Trotter might flounder into it.

Bunter was troubled with no anxious thoughts with regard to Gosling's limbs. He realised that if Gosling fell into the coal-cellar he himself would be discovered.

So Bunter lost no time in making his escape.

Owing to Gosling's little argument at the store-room door, Bunter found that he had time, and to spare. He quickly put the stone slab in place, and then rushed away in the direction of the Close.

But he was not in time. The back

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"THE SCHOOLBOY DOMESTICS!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

door opened, and Gosling and Trotter came out.

"There he is!" roared Gosling. "Dibbs, you bounder, come 'ere!" said Trotter, rushing forward. "Why, it's Master Bunter! What are you a-runnin' away for, Master Bunter?"

Bunter breathed hard. "Who's running away?" he gasped. "I—I say, Trotty, is something up? I—I thought I saw somebody running about here, you know. I—I just came to see what's up."

"You young rip!" said Gosling. "I thought you was Dibbs!"

"Well, I like that, Gossy!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Why are you looking for Dibbs, anyhow? I believe I saw him round by the store-room window somewhere. In fact, I'm sure I did! He—he was running away, yelling out for all he was worth! Blest if I can make out what's up!"

"You say you saw Dibbs?" asked Trotter quickly.

"Yes, I did!" lied Bunter. "Then we'd best be a-going," said Gosling. "Hif Master Bunter's seen Dibbs, there ain't no more doubt. My heye, I should never 'ave believed it! Wot I say—"

Trotter uttered an exclamation. "There he is!" he said quickly. Billy Bunter turned round with remarkable swiftness.

"What did I tell you?" he exclaimed indignantly. "I knew it was Dibbs I saw!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Rough On Dibbs!

BILLY BUNTER blinked at Gosling and Trotter through his big spectacles.

"Come on!" he said quickly. "Dibbs'll escape if you're not quick! I think it's a jolly good job we've found out the rotter!"

"I can't make it out," said Trotter in a puzzled voice. "Why, I saw Dibbs myself a-talkin' to Mrs. Mimble!"

"You must a-bin dreamin'!" declared Gosling. "I've got ears, I 'ave, an' I 'eard Dibbs a-yellin' out in the store-room. 'E got out o' the winder an' 'ooked it. Look at 'im now, comin' towards us as if 'e didn't know nothin' about it!"

"That's only his swank," said Billy Bunter quickly. "Why, only a minute or two ago I saw him running like anything!"

Bunter felt one or two quakes at having to tell such barefaced untruths, but now he had started the thing there could be no backing out. He had done it on the spur of the moment, and it would not do for him to appear to be in Dibbs' favour.

Whatever the consequences for Dibbs, Bunter vowed that he wouldn't own up. He knew very well that if he did own up it would either mean expulsion or else a public flogging. So Bunter lay low.

Dibbs came up. Dibbs was a thin man of about thirty-five, and his character had always been good. He was a great friend of Gosling's, and he looked at the porter and Trotter in surprise.

"Well, what's the matter 'ere?" he asked genially.

Gosling gasped.

"What's the matter?" he said darkly. "Wot I says is this 'ere. I've always been a friend o' yours, Dibbs, an' I'm downright sorry to see as you've sunk to stealin' grub out o' the school store-room!"

Dibbs stared at Gosling in amazement. "You off your 'ead?" he asked. "You may be a friend o' mine, Gosling, THE POPULAR.—No. 147.

but I don't allow no man to call me a thief! I ain't bin near the school store-room, let alone nicked any grub!"

"You fibber!" said Bunter indignantly. "I saw you running away from the store-room window!"

"Why, you—you—" began Dibbs wrathfully.

"It's no sorter use denyin' of it," said Gosling. "I 'ear you myself, Dibbs. You was in the store-room, an' you jumped out o' the winder! Mrs. Kebble 'eard you as well, an' you'll do yerself no good by tellin' lies. I'm surprised at yer! You'll 'ave to come along o' me to the 'Ead's study!"

"I sha'n't do no such thing!" said Dibbs flatly. "You must a' bin dreamin'! I've only just come from Mrs. Mimble's shop! I've been there for the last twenty minutes, an' Mrs. Mimble can prove it. My young sister was there, too, so you ain't goin' to come it over me, Gosling!"

Gosling scowled.

"Wot I say is this 'ere. I've got ears, an' them ears ain't ones that are easily deceived. I 'eard you meself—"

Trotter looked round.

"Hallo," he said, "here comes Mrs. Kebble!"

The housekeeper came up excitedly, and with her was Mr. Quelch, the Remove Form-master.

"They've got him!" exclaimed Mrs. Kebble, looking at the little group in the gloom. "Now, my man, what have you got to say for yourself? You were caught fairly in the act, and Dr. Locke will only be doing right if he dismisses you at once!"

Dibbs became angry.

"I reckon this has gone far enough," he said. "I don't know what you're talkin' about! I 'aven't bin near the store-room the whole day long! I've just come from Mrs. Mimble's shop."

"Don't tell lies to me!" said Mrs. Kebble sharply. "I heard you myself, my man, so it's no good your denying it. Mr. Quelch, this is the culprit, and he's telling deliberate untruths if he says he was in Mrs. Mimble's shop!"

Mr. Quelch came forward.

"Let me get this quite clear," he said. "You, Mrs. Kebble, and Gosling, were outside the store-room door when you heard a crash within. You then heard Dibbs' voice and the window flung open?"

"Which is right, sir," said Gosling.

"Wot I says—"

"You failed to open the store-room door because it was fastened on the inside?" proceeded Mr. Quelch. "You then rushed out by the back door, and managed to secure Dibbs before he got away?"

"Managed to secure me, sir?" shouted Dibbs indignantly. "Why, I just walked up from the Close!"

"Oh, what a fib!" said Bunter. "I saw you running away from the store-room window myself!"

"You've been dreamin', Master Bunter," said Dibbs angrily, "or else you're tellin' lies agin me for some reason o' your own."

"You insultin' rotter!" shouted Billy Bunter, with great indignation. "You don't know who you're talking to!"

"Silence!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter, go into the School House at once, and remain there!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Go at once!"

Billy Bunter rolled off, and Mr. Quelch turned to Dibbs.

"So far, Dibbs, things look black against you," he said sternly. "Both Mrs. Kebble and Gosling say that they heard you in the store-room, and it is

impossible that they should both be mistaken. Before taking you to the Head I will examine the store-room window."

And Mr. Quelch moved off across the yard, with Dibbs, Gosling, and Mrs. Kebble bringing up the rear. Dibbs was very indignant, and, considering the circumstances, he had good cause to be. Mr. Quelch arrived at the store-room window. Trotter had rushed indoors to get a lantern, and he now appeared with it. By its light Mr. Quelch could see that the store-room window was wide open. It was impossible to detect any footprints beneath the window, for the yard was stone-paved right to the wall.

"Well," said Mr. Quelch, "it is quite evident that somebody escaped from the window. If it was not Dibbs, who could it have been? Now, considering the circumstances, the most obvious place for Dibbs to hide his spoils would be in one of these outhouses. We'll examine them before we do anything further."

"But I can prove I wasn't near the window, sir!" protested Dibbs.

"Please be silent, Dibbs!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Gosling, take this lamp and make an examination of the stables and other buildings. It's a most extraordinary thing for a man in his position to rob the store-room, but we must go by the facts."

"Facts?" snorted Dibbs. "I wish you would go by the facts, sir!"

"You scoundrel!" exclaimed Mrs. Kebble angrily. "You know very well that you are the culprit, Dibbs, so it is useless your making any lying excuses!"

Gosling and Trotter, with the lamp between them, searched through the stables. From them they went to the new harness-room, and then to the old one. Quite by accident Billy Bunter had hit upon a place for eating his spoils which was to make matters look very black against Dibbs. After searching for five minutes Gosling gave a shout. They were in the old harness-room, and some biscuit-crumbs on the floor had attracted the porter's attention. An old locker was fixed to one of the walls, and Gosling had flashed his lamp into it.

"My heye!" he ejaculated. "Look hin 'ere!"

"Well, I'm blowed!" gasped Trotter. "It must be Dibbs, after all!"

The locker was filled with biscuit-tins and empty jam-pots. Mr. Quelch came up quickly, followed by Dibbs and Mrs. Kebble. Mr. Quelch set his lips as he saw the remains of Billy Bunter's numerous feasts.

"Now, sir," he said, turning to Dibbs, "what have you to say?"

"By gum!" gasped Dibbs. "I never put them there, sir! I don't know nothin' about 'em!"

"How dare you!" shrieked Mrs. Kebble excitedly. "How dare you deny it in face of such positive proof? The man's effrontery is amazing!"

"You will come with me to the head-master's study at once!" said Mr. Quelch firmly.

"But, sir—"

"Enough!" said the Remove-master. "Come with me!"

And Mr. Quelch hurried away, with Dibbs, Mrs. Kebble, and Gosling following. They arrived at the Head's house, and were admitted to his study. It was still comparatively early in the evening, and the Head looked up in surprise. Mr. Quelch and the rest trooped in.

"Dear me!" said the Head. "What on earth is this?"

"We've got him, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Kebble triumphantly.

"Got whom, my good woman?"

"Why, the scoundrel who's been robbing my store-room!" said Mrs. Kebble.

"We caught him in the act, sir, and he hasn't got a word to say!"

"Oh, ain't I!" said Dibbs indignantly. "I don't know wot Mrs. Kebble's talkin' about, sir! Everybody seems to be off their 'eads—"

Dr. Locke held up his hand. "Mr. Quelch will explain," he said. "Please be silent."

Mr. Quelch related the facts as he knew them, and the Head looked very grave.

"The case seems very clear, Mr. Quelch," he said at last. "Both Mrs. Kebble and Gosling heard Dibbs inside the store-room."

"Wot I says is this 'ere. I ain't the man who's likely to be deceived," said Gosling. "I 'eard Dibbs knock some-think over in the store-room, yell out, an' then climb through the winder Mrs. Kebble 'eard it, too. I don't like speakin' agin a friend, but facts is facts!"

"I heard Dibbs most distinctly!" said Mrs. Kebble firmly.

"Dibbs was then found to be in the near vicinity of the store-room," proceeded the Head. "He claims that he had just come from Mrs. Mimble's shop, but that is obviously an excuse. If any further proof were needed, it was supplied immediately upon finding the remains of the stolen goods in the harness-room."

"Exactly!" said Mr. Quelch. "Dibbs' guilt is obvious."

Dibbs looked round wildly. "I—I ain't done nothing!" he gasped. "I ain't done—"

"Silence, sir!" said the Head coldly. "You will leave my service in the morning! The matter is a trifling one—a mere case of petty pilfering, so I shall simply take the course of dismissing you! I may say that I am grieved to find that a man of your steady habits should have descended to robbing a larder! Why you did it is more than I can imagine!"

"I didn't do it!" panted Dibbs frantically. "I don't know nothing about it, sir! I can prove that I was talking to Mrs. Mimble at the time this affair 'appened. 'Ow those jampots an' things came to be in the 'arness-room I don't know! I never put 'em there!"

"You are only making matters worse by lying!" said the Head sternly.

"I'm tellin' the honest truth—"
"Oh, you wicked man!" shouted Mrs. Kebble hotly.

"Dear me!" said the Head. "There seems to be quite an uproar! Dibbs, you will leave the school to-morrow! Mrs. Kebble, will you kindly see that there are some bars placed across the store-room window before many days have passed?"

"I'll see about it to-morrow!" declared the housekeeper firmly.

"I—I ain't sacked, sir?" gasped Dibbs.

"Good gracious! You are not deaf?" said Dr. Locke testily. "Go, sir!"

"But—"

"Leave my study!" shouted the Head. And Dibbs, looking angry and dismayed, turned to the door and left, the others following behind him. Mr. Quelch stayed in the Head's study. Both the headmaster and Mr. Quelch thought the case was conclusive, and, after a few minutes' conversation, dismissed the matter from their minds.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Dibbs Proves His Case!

GOSLING tapped Dibbs on the shoulder.

"You silly hass!" he said.

"Dibbs, I'm surprised hat yer!"

Dibbs, Gosling, and Trotter were in

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"THE SCHOOLBOY DOMESTICS!"

the Close, and Dibbs hardly knew whether he was standing on his head or his heels. The whole thing had been so sudden that he could not grasp it. He could scarcely realise that he was dismissed from the Head's service.

"Look 'ere, Gosling," he said, "you'd better mind wot you're a-sayin'!"

"My heye!" said Gosling. "I never thought you was that sort o' chap, Dibbs! Wot I says is this 'ere—you ain't got no sense! Fancy goin' an'

"My heye!" ejaculated Gosling. "I never thort o' that!"

Dibbs uttered a sarcastic laugh. "No," he said; "you wouldn't! Come across with me to Mrs. Mimble's shop!"

"Right-ho!" said Gosling. "I'll come, Dibbs! Blowed if I don't believe we've bin agin you too much—blowed if I don't!"

They crossed the dusky Close and entered Mrs. Mimble's little shop. Bul-



The four members of the school household trooped into the Head's study. "Dear me!" said Dr. Locke. "What is it you want?" "We've come to tell you that Dibbs is innocent of the charge of stealing from the store-room!" said Mrs. Kebble. "And we demand that you reinstate him!" added Mrs. Mimble. (See Chapter 4.)

nickin' things out o' the larder—jest as if you 'adn't enough to eat!"

Dibbs recovered his composure.

"I didn't!" he said warmly. "It's all your fault, hany'ow! Wot you mean by sayin' you 'eard me in the store-room is more than I can make out. At the same time you said you 'eard me I was in Mrs. Mimble's shop!"

"Look 'ere—"

"I was in Mrs. Mimble's shop!" repeated Dibbs firmly. "I'm goin' to ferrit this 'ere thing out an' show the 'ead that 'e's mistook! I ask you plainly, Gosling, was I 'ot an' flustered when I walked up to you? Did I look as if I'd been runnin'?"

"Of course you didn't!" said Trotter.

"There's a mistake somewhere."

Gosling scratched his head.

"Well, come to think of it," he said, "you wasn't wery flustered. But that don't prove nothin'—"

"Oh, don't it?" said Dibbs. "It proves that I 'adn't bin runnin'. An' another thing—if I 'ad jest come out o' the store-room, d'you think I should 'a' walked right into your arms? Why, I saw you long enough afore you saw me. If I'd bin up to these 'ere tricks, I should 'ave 'ooked it clear away!"

strode, Tom Brown, Micky Desmond, and several other Removites were there, and they looked up in surprise as Gosling, Trotter, and Dibbs entered.

"Hallo!" said Tom Brown. "Come to buy some lemonade, Gossy?"

"I don't want none o' your cheek, Master Brown!" growled Gosling.

"What's all this about somebody boning things out of the store-room?" asked Bulstrode. "Billy Bunter's been pitching us a fine yarn!"

"It ain't none o' your business, Master Bulstrode!" said Gosling. "There's bin a great hinjustice done, by what I can make hout, an' we're goin' to set it right!"

"What! Have you turned detective?" asked Vane.

"Gossy, private detective!" grinned Tom Brown.

"Wot I says is—"

"Cases undertaken at the shortest notice!" went on the New Zealand junior. "All work to be paid for at the same rate. Fees: One bottle of gin per case! Clients invited to roll up!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Gosling glared.

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A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Better come into the back room," he said to Dibbs and Trotter. "These young rips won't give us no peace if we stop 'ere!"

"We'll give you some pieces, if you like!" said Bulstrode, offering Gosling a plate of crumbs.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gosling did not deign to look round, but walked into Mrs. Mimble's little back parlour. Dibbs and Trotter followed, all of them looking serious. Mrs. Mimble gazed at them in astonishment.

"Why, what ever's the matter?" she inquired.

"Dibbs 'as bin sacked," said Trotter shortly.

"Sacked!" repeated Mrs. Mimble. "What ever for?"

"For doin' something I didn't do!" said Dibbs. "I've come to you, Mrs. Mimble, so as you can prove to Gosling I was 'ere when 'e said I was in the store-room. You remember when Gosling and Trotter came out o' the back door a while back?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Mimble. "I wondered what was the matter."

"How long afore that 'ad I bin in your shop?" demanded Dibbs eagerly.

"Why, you'd only been gone about a minute!" said Mrs. Mimble, in surprise.

Gosling turned to the triumphant Dibbs.

"My heye," he said, "that's flat, any'ow!"

"I tell you, Gosling, I don't know anythink about the store-room affair," said Dibbs. "If I was in this 'ere shop a minute afore you came out o' the 'Ouse, 'ow could it 'a' bin me?"

"Wot I says is this 'ere!" exclaimed Gosling. "I've bin too 'asty, Dibbs. If Mrs. Mimble says as you was 'ere at the time of the 'appenin', I don't see 'ow you could 'a' bin in the store-room as well! I'm sorry, Dibbs! Give us yer 'and!"

And Gosling, completely won over to Dibbs' side, solemnly shook hands.

"I suggest we go over an' see Mrs. Kebble," said Trotter shrewdly. "When we explain to 'er, she'll realise she was too quick in accusin' Dibbs. It was 'er fault, really, for fetchin' Mr. Quelch. If we'd bin left to ourselves, we should 'ave got at the truth without goin' to the 'Ead, and this wouldn't 'ave 'kem about!"

So they made their way to the domestic quarters of Greyfriars, and presented themselves at the housekeeper's room. She looked up, in surprise as they entered, and frowned at Dibbs.

"You here!" she exclaimed. "How dare you come into my room in this manner? Gosling, take this wicked man away!"

Gosling waved his hand.

"We've made a mistake," he said. "Dibbs 'ad no more to do with robbin' the store-room than I 'ad! We've proved that 'e was in another place altogether!"

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Kebble sharply.

"We've just learnt from Mrs. Mimble that Dibbs was in 'er shop at the very moment we 'eard the crash inside the store-room!" said Gosling.

"It's impossible!" said Mrs. Kebble incredulously.

"Gosling's right, ma'am!" said Trotter. "An' didn't we find Dibbs right close ag'in the store-room?"

"That proves his guilt!" said Mrs. Kebble triumphantly.

"No fear!" said Trotter shrewdly.

"It proves that Dibbs 'ad nothin' to do with it. We didn't get out in the yard until five minutes arter the smash-up in the store-room 'ad took place. Why, if it 'ad really bin Dibbs, he'd have got clear away! Instead o' that he walked up to us an' asks wot was the matter, which was natural, seicin' as 'e'd just come from Mrs. Mimble's shop!"

"Good gracious!" said Mrs. Kebble. "It really appears that you are right!"

If Mrs. Mimble can positively say that Dibbs was in her shop at the time, it proves that he couldn't have been here. But we heard him, Gosling—we heard him quite distinctly!"

"Well, it did sound like 'im!" admitted Gosling.

Dibbs snorted.

"Do you think as 'ow I'd let out a yell if I'd really bin in the store-room?" he said sarcastically. "Why, if I'd knocked all them things down, I should 'ave kept as mum as an oyster an' 'ooked it!"

"Of course!" agreed Trotter. "I think, Mrs. Kebble, that the fact of the chap yellin' out proves that 'e wasn't Dibbs. He knew that 'e was discovered, so 'e yells out in a imitation of Dibbs' voice—jest to put you off the scent!"

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Kebble. "I

believe I have done you an injustice, Dibbs!"

"You 'ave!" said Dibbs. "A great hinjustice, ma'am!"

"I will fetch Mrs. Mimble," said Mrs. Kebble, "and I will then go to the headmaster. I am sorry that I misjudged you, Dibbs, but the facts certainly looked black. Strictly speaking, it was Mr. Quelch's fault for insisting upon taking you to Dr. Locke before you had time to prove anything. I realise, of course, that a man of your character would not descend to such petty thefts!"

So they fetched Mrs. Mimble, and then held a short consultation. It ended with Mrs. Kebble, Mrs. Mimble, Gosling, and Dibbs hurrying to the Head's study. Gosling tapped on the door.

"Come in!" said Dr. Locke.

The visitors trooped in, and the Head looked at them with a frown.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed testily.

"Am I to be bothered all the evening over these petty household matters? Please understand, Mrs. Kebble, that I am busy!"

"I'm sorry, sir," said Mrs. Kebble, "but we've made a mistake!"

"A mistake!" said the Head. "In what way?"

"Dibbs is innocent, sir," said the housekeeper firmly. "We've proved that it wasn't him who took the things out of the store-room!"

The Head looked amazed.

"You've proved that he was not guilty?" he asked incredulously. "You say that to me, Mrs. Kebble, after declaring that you yourself heard him in the store-room? You say that after the remains of the stolen goods have been found in his harness-room? My good woman, it is absurd to come to me with such a tale! I am quite convinced that Dibbs is guilty, and I have done with the matter!"

Mrs. Mimble stepped forward.

"But that wouldn't be fair, sir!" said the good dame warmly. "I can prove that Dibbs was in my shop at the very moment Gosling and Mrs. Kebble heard somebody in the store-room. He's innocent, sir, and we demand that you reinstate him!"

The Head frowned. He did not like the word demand. And perhaps Mrs. Mimble had been rather injudicious in using it. The Head thought rapidly. It struck him very forcibly that the servants were planning it among themselves to get Dibbs reinstated. Dr. Locke fully believed that the man had been guilty, and that this visit was an attempt to get him back into his position.

"I really cannot consider this matter any longer," he said firmly. "I am still of opinion that Dibbs is the culprit; and he will leave my service to-morrow morning. I have already told you that I am busy, so please leave me!"

And Mrs. Mimble, Mrs. Kebble, Gosling, and Dibbs went—all of them feeling at boiling point at the Head's obstinacy. It did not strike them that his view of the case was almost the only one which could have resulted, considering all the facts. The servants knew that they were in the right, and the Head fully believed that he was in the right also.

And there was trouble to follow which the reverend Head of Greyfriars never dreamed of.

THE END.

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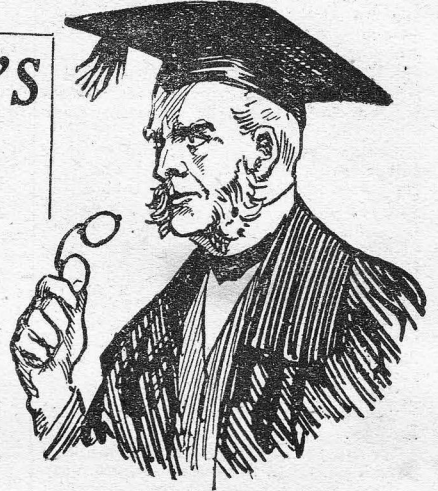
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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Chopper Comes Down!

"LATTREY!"
"Adsum!"
Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, was taking the roll, and he gave Lattrey a somewhat curious glance as that junior answered to his name.

The roll-call went on. When it was finished, and the Rookwood fellows were dismissed, Mr. Bootles called to Lattrey.

"Lattrey, you will be wanted in the headmaster's study shortly. Kindly come to me in a quarter of an hour."

Lattrey of the Fourth started, and the colour changed in his face. The Fourth Form fellows glanced at him.

The cad of the Fourth was evidently booked for trouble.

No one was surprised at that. Lattrey's reputation was bad, and it was growing worse. He had been sent to Coventry by the Lower School for his many rascalities, and his shady manners and customs were so much discussed that it was no wonder something had reached the ears of authority at last.

His latest escapade had brought him into collision with Bulkeley, the head prefect and captain of the school, and Bulkeley could scarcely have failed to report to the Head.

"By gad! You've done it now, Lattrey!" murmured Townsend.

"The game's up!" remarked Peele, apparently in the role of Job's comforter. "You were bound to be dropped on sooner or later, old scout!"

"It's the finish, I dare say!" Gower observed.

The nuts of the Fourth seemed to have forgotten that Lattrey was in "Coventry" for the purpose of making those pleasant remarks.

Jimmy Silver chipped in.

"No need to rub it in when the chap's down!" he said. "Let him alone!"

"I suggest passin' a resolution of sympathy with Lattrey," remarked Mornington, with a grin. "He's in a sad an' moul'tin' state, an' entitled to our sympathy!"

Lattrey gave the juniors a bitter look, and strode away.

There were few, if any, to sympathise with him in his fall.

Jimmy Silver felt sorry for him, as he felt sorry for any fellow who was down on his luck, but even Jimmy could not possibly wish that Lattrey should remain at Rookwood.

Lattrey was a "bad egg," if ever there was one, and if the Head had found him out it was evident that he would have to go.

"But what is the Head after, I wonder?" Oswald remarked. "He can't know anything about Lattrey's trick with Morny and the banknotes. That was kept dark."

"He may know about Lattrey's palling with the sharpers at the Ship," remarked Newcome. "Bulkeley knows, and he was bound to report it."

"Phew! That's serious!"

"It may have come out, too, about his going to the Bird-in-Hand," said Rawson. "The Head was there this afternoon!"

"The Head?" exclaimed a dozen voices.

Rawson nodded. "I saw him going into the place," he said.

"Howly smoke!" exclaimed Flynn. "The Head—going into the Bird-in-Hand! Does the Head play banker?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You silly ass! He must have been going there to make inquiries about something!"

"About Lattrey!" said Van Ryn. "It looks like it."

"Then Lattrey's done for!" remarked Conroy. "Can't help feeling sorry for the poor beast, in a way. But he fairly asked for it."

"And now he's got it!" said Lovell. "I don't see anything to worry about, for one. Let him rip!"

The juniors dispersed, discussing the matter with some excitement. The general opinion was that Lattrey of the Fourth had reached the end of his tether.

There was nothing surprising in that. The surprise was that the crash had not come earlier. The kind of game that Lattrey played could not be played with impunity for ever, though the black sheep's luck had been wonderful for a time.

Now that Lattrey seemed to be fairly "landed," some of the fellows dropped the Coventry, and spoke to him civilly.

Lattrey's answers were short and savage enough.

The sentence of Coventry had been irksome and humiliating, but it weighed little in the balance now, with the prospect of expulsion from the school hanging over his head.

At the appointed time he presented

himself in Mr. Bootles' room. The master of the Fourth rose as he entered.

"Ah! It is you, Lattrey?"
"You told me to come!" said Lattrey sullenly.

"Quite so!" said Mr. Bootles, taking no notice of the junior's manner. "You will now accompany me to the Head, Lattrey!"

Mr. Bootles whisked away, and the cad of the Fourth followed him, with a black and moody brow, to the Head's study.

Dr. Chisholm was in his study, his expression very grave and sombre.

"I have brought Lattrey, sir!"
"Thank you, Mr. Bootles!"

The Form-master gave Lattrey a commiserating glance, and left the study. His glance was enough to tell Lattrey what he had to expect, and his face was paler.

Dr. Chisholm fixed his severe glance upon the junior.

"Lattrey, I am sorry to say that I have received very shocking reports concerning you," he said.

"I have asked your Form-master his opinion of you, Lattrey. He tells me that he had found you untruthful, unscrupulous, and that he had several times had occasion to punish you for breaking the rules of the school, particularly with regard to smoking and breaking bounds."

"Well, he punished me, sir, as you say. I understood that a matter was dropped when a fellow had been punished for it."

"That is true. But if your Form-master had been able to speak in your favour, Lattrey, it would have weighed with me in coming to a decision regarding you. I have received a report from the head prefect of Rookwood, Bulkeley of the Sixth Form. It appears that you have made friends—I might rather say confederates—at a low resort called the Ship, a place strictly out of bounds for all boys belonging to this school."

"You flogged me for it yourself, sir," muttered Lattrey. "I—I thought that was over and done with."

"So did I," said the Head grimly. "I considered that a flogging would be a warning to you. I find, however, that it is neither over nor done with. It seems that, by a cunning trick, you inveigled Silver, of the Fourth Form, into the Ship Inn, and caused him to be detained there forcibly, and then informed Bulkeley that you had seen Silver enter the place."

Lattrey compressed his lips.

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DOMESTICS!"

This was the accusation he had feared. "If Jimmy Silver says—" he began. "Silver has said nothing. It is not my custom to obtain information from one boy against another," said the Head, frowning. "My information comes from Bulkeley's report, made in the ordinary course of his duty as head prefect. Bulkeley proceeded to the inn to take Silver away, and if he had found him there it would have appeared that Silver was a habitual visitor to the place, and the consequences to him would have been serious. As it happened, he escaped from the hands of your confederates. Otherwise, a very great injustice would have been done. That was your intention. Lattrey, this is a very serious matter—more serious than you appear to realise."

"I—I—" "Well?" "Bulkeley caned me, sir," muttered Lattrey.

"Quite so. It is not my intention to punish you; but the circumstances make it impossible for you to remain in this school, Lattrey. So much duplicity in one so young is shocking—almost appalling. I cannot allow you to stay at Rookwood, where your association with the other boys may be harmful to them."

"I—I've been sent to Coventry by the other fellows, sir. They don't speak to me now," Lattrey muttered.

"That shows the estimation in which you are held by your schoolfellows," said the Head drily. "I am not surprised to hear it—not at all. There are other grave suspicions regarding you, Lattrey. I have been making inquiries to-day. Actual evidence has not been found, but there is grave suspicion that you have been addicted to breaking school bounds after lights out, and visiting places of disreputable character."

Lattrey licked his dry lips. There was no hope, and he knew it.

The Head's tone was not unkind, but it was final. He felt some compassion for the miserable fellow who had chosen to follow crooked paths when the straight way lay so easily before him. He was compassionate; but he had his duty as headmaster to do, and it would be done inflexibly.

"So—so I am going to be expelled!" muttered the junior, with a hunted look in his eyes.

"I shall not expel you publicly, Lattrey. Had not the head prefect already punished you, I might have done so. As the matter stands, you will leave Rookwood. I shall write to your father, and ask him to call upon me, and shall explain the matter fully to him. You will leave Rookwood with him, and you will not return. That is all."

He made a sign to the junior to retire, and Lattrey left the study.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Cad to the Last!

SACKED!" Tubby Muffin of the Classical Fourth asked that polite and cheerful question as Lattrey came down the passage.

Lattrey's face was white, and his eyes glittered under his bent brows. He was suffering for his sins; but there was no repentance in his breast, only bitter chagrin at discovery and punishment.

He gave the fat Classical a bitter look. "Is it the sack?" inquired Tubby. "You look as if it was. Well, you've asked for it, haven't you, Lattrey? I really must say—Yooooop!"

Bump! Tubby Muffin rolled over on the floor THE POPULAR.—No. 147.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"A BONE OF

as Lattrey struck him savagely, and the disgraced junior strode on, and left him rolling there and roaring.

With a quick, savage tread, Lattrey went up to the Fourth-Form passage. Many curious glances were cast upon him there.

The look in his face was sufficient to tell the juniors the result of his interview with the Head.

Lattrey gazed at them with hatred and malice in his face.

"You've had your way, Jimmy Silver," he said. "You can rejoice now. I'm kicked out of the school!"

"I'm not rejoicing," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I'm sorry for you, Lattrey."

"Liar!" Jimmy compressed his lips. But he allowed that reply to pass. He would not hit a fellow who was down.

"I'm not sorry!" said Lovell grimly. "You're not fit for Rookwood, Lattrey, and you ought to go."

"I'm not gone yet," said Lattrey, his eyes glittering; "and if I go some other fellows may go with me."

"Any fellow ought to be glad of your company en route," grinned Mornington. "But who's goin' with you, dear boy?"

"You, for one!" "What!"

"You!" said Lattrey. "I know enough about you to get you sacked, Mornington, if I choose to talk."

"So you are going to sneak about other fellows now you've been bowled out?" exclaimed Erroll.

"Why shouldn't I?" "Well, you're a rotter!" said Townsend, with a rather scared look.

"By gad!" muttered Topham. "Look here, Lattrey—"

Mornington laughed. "By gad, Lattrey's improvin'," he remarked. "However, you're welcome to talk about me all you want, old scout. Shall I come to the Head with you?"

Lattrey scowled savagely, and strode into his study, and closed the door with a slam.

His words had caused dismay among a good many fellows, as he had intended that they should.

There were some fellows in the Classical Fourth with little secrets to keep, and Lattrey knew their little secrets.

Townsend and Topham, Peele and Gower, felt extremely uncomfortable.

And when Lattrey's words were repeated, they caused alarm and discomfort in some of the Shell studies.

Adolphus Smythe, the great man of the Shell, turned quite pale. Howard and Tracy and Chesney were alarmed.

The nuts of Rookwood had sportive tastes that the Head certainly would not have approved of, though none of them were quite down to the level of Lattrey. He, in fact, had been the means of leading them into half their shady escapades.

"By gad!" said Adolphus Smythe to a gloomy and worried meeting of the nutty brigade in his study. "Did you ever hear of such a snakin' worm? Now he's got the chopper, why can't he take it like a man?"

"We wouldn't give a chap away if we got it in the neck," muttered Townsend. "Why, it's unspeakable! It's worse than Prussianism! I never heard of such a thing!"

"He can't prove anything, anyway," muttered Howard. "I don't see that we need be afraid. He can't prove anything."

"Some things don't need proving," growled Peele. "They prove themselves. Suppose they searched the studies, an' found some things—"

"By gad! My cigarettes are goin' into the fire!"

"An' my cards after them, an' the bridge-markers!"

"And that pink paper—where is the dashed thing?" exclaimed Tracy. "For goodness' sake, let's find it an' burn it!"

There was a dismayed search in several studies for incriminating evidence, and in a short time the nuts of Rookwood were making a burnt offering on quite a large scale.

Peele and Gower went back to their study later for prep, and found Lattrey alone there, savage and sullen.

He gave his study-mates a mocking grin as they came in. He knew what the effect of his threat would be.

"Look here, Lattrey, you can't mean to do such a beastly, cowardly mean thing!" exclaimed Peele. "What's the good of givin' your friends away? It won't save your neck!"

"My friends joined with Jimmy Silver in sending me to Coventry, I seem to remember," sneered Lattrey.

"Didn't you ask for it, you toad?"

"Besides, we were always willin' to speak to you in the study," said Gower. "You can't say we weren't. We couldn't stand out against the whole Lower School, of course."

"Why should I go?" said Lattrey. "I'm no worse than some fellows who are stayin'. You fellows, for example."

"Oh, come off!" growled Peele. "D'you mean to say that I'd have played a dirty trick like yours on Jimmy Silver? I may be a bit of a sport, but I'm not a plottin' criminal."

"You've done enough to be sacked a dozen times, if the Head knew; and he's goin' to know, if I go!"

"How will that help you, you rotter?"

"Well, you fellows might do somethin' for me," said Lattrey. "There's Smythe, of the Shell; he's got a relation on the Governing Board. So has Howard and Townsend. They might be got to interfere."

"They wouldn't."

"They might, if Smythe and Towny and Howard tried hard," said Lattrey sullenly. "Something might be done. I warn you, all of you, that I'm not goin' down alone. I'll drag down anybody I can with me, especially Mornington."

"You can do as you like with Morny, but you might be commonly decent with your own friends."

"Let my friends stand by me, then," said Lattrey savagely. "I tell you, if I go, I'll make everybody I can suffer for it; and make as big a scandal of it as possible, too, for the benefit of Rookwood. I'll get so many fellows sacked, if I can, that it'll get into the papers."

Peele and Gower stared at him. Their own consciences were somewhat tough, but this was a shock to them. It was pretty clear that Rookwood was no place for a fellow of Lattrey's kind.

"You'd do that—to your own school?" ejaculated Gower at last.

"I would—and will!"

"Where does the reptile come from?" said Peele, in wonder. "Haven't you any decency at all, Lattrey? You'd drag the name of Rookwood through the newspapers! My only hat! Look here, Gower, I'm not standing that filthy

(Continued on page 13.)

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ESSAY ON WINTER!

By . . .
SAMMY BUNTER.

Winter is hear, as you can see.

The holly berries and the mislsetoe are getting ripe, but what's the use of that when they are no good to eat?

The snowdrops are coming along nicely, the skool gardener tells me. But I'd much rather have peardropps!

Jack Frost is making his prezzance felt. When we wake up in the mournings we find frost and rime on the window-pains. Rime, I might menshun, has nuthing to do with poetry.

The spirit of Christmas will soon be in the air. And the cheering will make the welkin ring. (I don't know what the welkin is. Must be a small whelk!)

Already the ponds have been frozen over, and skating is the order of the day.

I haven't any skates yet, but I caught a beautiful cod the other day when fishing from the jetty at Pegg.

Yes, winter is hear with a vengeance! The trees are bear; the hedges and feelds are clothed in white; the robbin redbrest hops about looking for crumbs; the thud of the football is heard on Little Side.

I don't like winter. I don't think the season ought to be aloud. Still, we must bear it in silence.

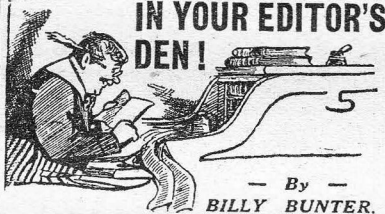
There is just one thing that saves winter from being an absolute wash-out. That is the festival of Christmas, when a fellow can eat and drink to his heart's contempt.

Good old Christmas! That reminds me. I shall soon have to start thinking out a special article for my major's Christmas Number. I tell you, our Christmas Number is going to be a real treat. It will break all records—as the man said when he threw the gramophone out of the window!

Apart from Christmas, I have no use for winter. The holly berries, the mislsetoe, and the snowdrops might appeal to a poet, but they don't appeal to me.

Give me the glorious summer sunshine! I can't stand the snow. Only this mourning young Tubb hit me on the sighed of the head with a snowball, and bowled me over.

If I had my own way, the season of winter would be abolicated!



By . . .
BILLY BUNTER.

My Dear Readers,—Our special number this week deals with the joys of the open road.

Some of the sinnicks (I hope I've spelt this word korrekctly) will sneer and snigger and scoff when they see this number. They will say, "Fancy having an issue dealing with the joys of the road at this time of the year—a time of snow and sleet and blinding blizzerds!"

To these wretched sinnicks I would reply "Bar!"—as the fellow said when he went into the tuckshop and ordered chocolate. I would also add "Rats!" "Bosh!" and "Go and eat koke!"

What's wrong with November? The snow may snow, and the sleet may sleet, and the blizzerd may blizz; but none of these things detract from the joys of the open road. Not if a fellow is hardy and in good kondition, that is.

Personally, I always enjoy a bike-ride in the snow. How ripping it is to glide over a magic carpet of white—to see the icicles glittering on the branches, and the frost glissingen on the window-pains!

Dear me, I am getting quite poetical! That will never do. I must leave it to Dick Penfold to sing of the joys of the open road in poetry.

A number dealing with out-of-door life is sure to get a good reception from my mirriads of readers. For once in a way, we will leave the musty Form-room behind, and get out into the country, where the trees are shooting and the motor-bikes are back-firing. Ha, ha! Quite a clever joak that.

This is really a grand number, though I say it who shouldn't. Take it to bed with you. Read it in your bath. But don't peruse it walking along the street (as I saw a fellow doing the last time I was in London), or you may get a nasty dig in the back with a motor-bus, or a sharp rap on the shins with a steam-lorry.

I don't think I have anything more to say this week, so I will close, hoping you are quite well, as it leaves me at prezzant.

Your sinseer chum,

Your Editor.

COKER'S TREASURE!

[After "The Wreck of the Hesperus!"]

By . . .
DICK PENFOLD.

It was an ancient motor-bike
That skimmed the frosty road;
And Coker was taking Potter and Greene
(A very hefty load!).

A vivid green was Coker's bike
(About as green as Coker!).
With oil, and petrol substitute,
The ass contrived to choke her!

"Oh, Horace! I hear the sound of guns.
Oh say, what may it be?"
"George Potter, be not terrified—
She's just back-firing—see?"

"Oh, Horace! I saw a blinding flash,
And I heard a mighty roar!"
"Just wait until I start her up,
And you will hear some more!"

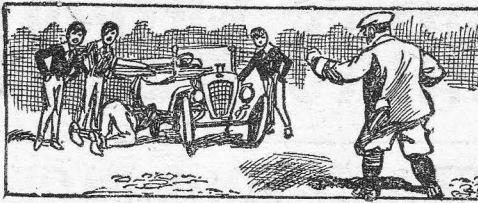
Then Potter in the sidecar stepped,
And Greene perched on the back.
Away they shot, as if engaged
On Brooklands racing track!

"Oh, Horace! I see a slimy pond!
Please—please slow up a minute!"
But the hapless trio reached the pond,
And splashed and floundered in it!

The icy water chilled them through,
And needs adorned their necks;
George Potter, Coker, William Greene,
Looked three delightful wrecks!

It was an ancient motor-bike
That skimmed the frosty road;
But it didn't skim of its own accord—
The beastly thing was towed!

THE POPULAR.—No. 147.



Prout's Priceless Possession!

By George Blundell.

THE bookstall manager at Friardale Station was the cause of all the trouble. If he hadn't shown Prout the advertisement, all would have been well, and this story would never have been written.

Mr. Prout was wandering along the platform when the bookstall manager beckoned to him.

"Good-afternoon, sir!" he said. "There's a new paper out. Have you seen it?"

"What sort of paper, Mr. Ayres?"

"A motoring journal, sir. It is called 'The Three-wheeler.' There is a splendid cycle-car advertised on the front cover."

"A cycle-car?"

"Yes. It's a cross between a motor-car and a motor-cycle. It has three wheels—two fore and one aft. See? Here is the illustration."

Mr. Prout glanced at the advertisement with interest.

The master of the Fifth had always been a keen motor-cyclist, but he was now beginning to get just a little tired of his motor-bike, which went wrong on the slightest provocation, and cost its owner a small fortune for repairs.

A small car! Something that was not quite a motor-car, and yet more than a motor-cycle. This was precisely what Prout was looking for!

On the front cover of "The Three-wheeler" was an illustration of the Express Car Company's new model. It was described as "an 'Express' three-wheeler, fitted with water-cooled engine, special starting-gear, commodious two-seater body, upholstered in real leather, excellent tyres, dynamo lighting set, horn, hood, screen, tools, etc."

All of which sounded very appetising to Mr. Prout.

But the most appetising part of the advertisement was the price of the car. It was not a thousand pounds, or even five hundred. Nor was it two hundred and fifty. It was one hundred pounds!

"Bless my soul! How very reasonable!" exclaimed Mr. Prout. "Why, I gave nearly as much as that for my motor-cycle!"

"To my mind, sir," said the bookstall manager, "it's a splendid investment. According to the diagram, this latest model is wonderful! You will be a proud man, Mr. Prout, when you tour the country in your 'Express' three-wheeler! People who know nothing about motoring will mistake it for a real car!"

Mr. Prout nodded.

"It is really a wonderful bargain!" he said. "I will order one of these cycle-cars without delay."

The master of the Fifth lost no time. He sent the order off that day, and promptly by return the cycle-car arrived. It was driven down to Greyfriars by one of the Express Car Company's representatives.

When the car arrived it was immediately surrounded by fellows. They swarmed around it like flies round a honey-pot.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Prout's invested in a car!"

"Seems determined to commit suicide somehow!" said Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's not a car!" said Boisover major disdainfully. "It's just a runabout."

"The question is," said Peter Todd, "will the runabout run?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Prout came bustling on the scene. "Run away, you boys—run away!" he said. "Skinner, how dare you crawl underneath my car?"

Skinner wriggled out from beneath the three-wheeler. His grinning face was flushed.

"I was just looking to see if she had sprung a leak, sir," he said. "It's a habit that most cars have."

"Nonsense, Skinner! An 'Express' cycle-car does not leak!"

"It must have cost you a tidy sum, sir,"

THE POPULAR.—No. 147.

went on Skinner, with careless insolence. "I shouldn't think you saw much change out of a five-pound note—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Prout turned purple. "How dare you, Skinner! This car cost a hundred pounds!"

Skinner gave a low whistle.

"Fancy spending all that money on a car, when it will be on the scrap-heap to-morrow!" he exclaimed.

"Boy! What do you mean?"

"You're bound to have a nasty smash, sir."

"Take a hundred lines, Skinner, for impertinence!"

"All serene, sir! I only hope you'll still be alive when the time comes to hand 'em in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you utter another word, Skinner, I shall report you to your Form-master, and have you caned. Ah, here comes Mr. Quelch!"

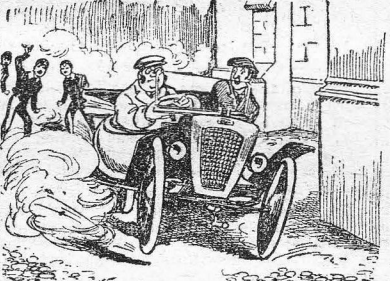
Skinner promptly scuttled out of range. Mr. Quelch, attired in a tweed suit, and with his golf-clubs slung over his shoulder, halted in astonishment beside the three-wheeler.

"Is this your property, Prout?" he asked. Mr. Prout nodded.

"A magnificent vehicle, is it not?" he said. "As you will see, there is room for a passenger. Let us adjourn to the golf-links."

Mr. Quelch hesitated.

"Have no fears, Quelch," said Mr. Prout



The cycle-car leaped through the gateway, and out into the road beyond.

reassuringly. "You always were nervous about accompanying me in the sidecar of my motor-cycle. I agree that there was a certain amount of risk attached to it. But this is a perfectly safe vehicle. In the hands of a capable driver like myself, it will skim the roads like a swallow!"

"Possibly," said Mr. Quelch drily. "But I prefer to walk to the links."

"What nonsense! Get in at once. Do not let the boys think that you are deficient in courage."

The words had the desired effect.

Mr. Quelch got into the cycle-car with difficulty. The difficulty arose from the fact that there was no side door to the vehicle. Needless to say, this little drawback had not been pointed out in the advertisement.

The Remove-master cocked one leg over, and then the other, in a very undignified manner, and foundered into his seat.

"Comfortable?" inquired Mr. Prout genially. "Er—very!" gasped Mr. Quelch. But he didn't look it.

Mr. Prout swung the crank-handle, and he continued to swing it until the perspiration stood out in beads on his scholastic brow. But no sound came from the engine. There was not a quiver, not a murmur, not a vibration.

"Something gone wrong with the works!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Prout stuck viciously to his task, and at last, after what seemed an age, the engine showed signs of animation.

"Now they're off!" chuckled Skinner. "Better bid a fond farewell to Quelch, you fellows. This is the last time we shall see him intact!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Prout got into the cycle-car, and after much pressing of feet and pulling of levers he succeeded in getting it to go. And not merely to go, but to go at express speed, as befitted a vehicle made by the "Express" Car Company.

Fortunately, the school-gates stood wide open.

The cycle-car leapt through the gateway and out into the road beyond.

"Turn her, man—turn her!" panted Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Prout obeyed—with such drastic suddenness that the vehicle nearly turned turtle. But it righted itself by a miracle, and sped on its way, sending up clouds of dust, and giving forth an objectionable odour of petrol substitute.

Mr. Quelch was shaking from head to foot with excitement. Not with joyful excitement, but with nervous ditto.

"Slow up, Prout—slow up!" he panted. "This speed is suicidal!"

Mr. Prout did not slow up. Perhaps he couldn't. Anyway, the car rushed on as if possessed of demons. It went through the village of Friardale in a flash. It reached the golf-links, but instead of stopping there it swept on, with Mr. Quelch in a fever of excitement, and Mr. Prout looking dazed, bewildered, and helpless.

Some wise scribe has said that all good things come to an end. If you set out in a cycle-car, you've got to stop sooner or later. You cannot go whizzing on into infinity.

Mr. Prout's "good thing"—if his joy-ride could be called such—came to an end with dramatic and sensational suddenness.

There was a sharp turn in the road, which the driver was unable to negotiate.

Straight in front was a hedge—a tall, thick hedge. And into the tallest, thickest part of it rushed Mr. Prout's cycle-car.

There was a terrible sound of cracking twigs, and it seemed for an instant as if the cycle-car would crash clean through the hedge, and emerge into the meadow beyond. Instead, however, it reeled drunkenly, steadied itself, and finally came to a halt amid the twigs and brambles.

There was a last dying whir, and then—silence.

At the end of a moment an agonised voice made itself heard.

"Quelch!"

"Oh dear!"

Mr. Prout's tone changed to one of relief. "Ah, then you are alive!"

"Only just, I fear!" groaned the unhappy Mr. Quelch.

"A few slight scratches," said Mr. Prout. "Nothing more. Hark! There is someone calling."

The "someone" proved to be Inspector Gray, of Courtfield.

When Mr. Prout and his colleague had managed to alight from the car and crawl out of the hedge, the master of the Fifth was informed that he would be proceeded against for dangerous driving.

Mr. Prout protested, but in vain.

With great difficulty, he and Mr. Quelch extricated the cycle-car from the hedge.

The vehicle was damaged to such an extent that it could not be driven back to Greyfriars. For which, Mr. Quelch was duly thankful!

The cycle-car was towed back to the school by the next car that came along. In due course the matter came before the Courtfield Bench.

Mr. Prout did not appear. He was fined five pounds, and his licence was suspended for six months.

THE END.

[Supplement II.]



By Val Mornington.

WHEN the last vacation arrived, Jimmy Silver & Co. hit upon the brilliant notion of going to London by motor-charabanc. They argued that it would be cheaper, and a jolly sight more pleasant, than going by train.

There was just one drawback. The charabanc people refused to take the luggage on board. And Jimmy Silver and his chums had plenty of "traps."

"What's to be done about the baggage?" asked Lovell, on the morning of breaking-up.

"Anybody going to London by train?" inquired Newcome.

"I am!" volunteered Teddy Grace.

"Good! Then p'raps you'd take our traps as far as Waterloo Station, and put 'em in the cloak-room?"

"Certainly!" answered Grace.

Little did Teddy dream that he was letting himself in for. He had often travelled with his own luggage—a solitary portmanteau—and it had been quite simple. To see to the luggage of four other fellows was a task the magnitude of which he had not yet realised.

But he soon did! Jimmy Silver & Co. departed into the building, and presently reappeared in the quadrangle, bringing their luggage with them.

Jimmy Silver had a hefty trunk, which he carried on his back with difficulty. Lovell had a couple of suitcases. Raby had three small bags and a bicycle. Newcome had a large gladstone bag, with a couple of hockey-sticks strapped on to it.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Teddy Grace, as the luggage was dumped at his feet. "Have I got to be responsible for all this?"

"There's only eight pieces," said Jimmy Silver, "and they can all go in the luggage-van. When you get to Waterloo, get a porter to shunt them off to the cloak-room. We'll call and collect them when we get to town."

"Oh, all serene!" said Teddy Grace. "How am I going to get this little lot down to the station?"

"Here comes the hack," said Newcome. "The driver will take the luggage down, and you as well. We'll foot the bill."

"Very good of you, I'm sure!" said Teddy. The luggage was lifted into the hack, and Teddy clambered in after it.

"Good-bye, you fellows!" he said. "Hope you have a good time!"

"Samé to you," said Jimmy Silver. "Don't lose the luggage, whatever you do!"

The hack rattled away to the railway-station.

It was here that Teddy Grace's troubles began.

"You'll have to pay excess on this lot, sir," said the porter. "Each passenger is only allowed so much free luggage. You've got nine pieces here—ten, if you include your own portmanteau and the hockey-sticks."

Teddy put his hand in his pocket.

"How much do you want?" he growled.

"Six-and-ninence, sir, please!"

Teddy gave the porter three half-crowns, and told him to see that the luggage was put safely on the train. The porter touched his hat, and went off in search of a trolley.

When the train started off Teddy settled himself in a corner seat, and tried to read.

But he was unable to concentrate on his book. His mind was haunted by the knowledge that he was responsible for the safety of one trunk, one portmanteau, two suitcases, one gladstone bag, three small bags, a bicycle, and a pair of hockey-sticks.

"I was a dashed fool to let myself in for all this!" he muttered. "When those fellows mentioned luggage I thought they meant one or two small bags—not a shiptoad of stuff!"

The train rumbled on until it reached Woking Junction.

Here it was necessary for Teddy Grace to change.

As the train steamed into the station, he thrust his head from the carriage-window, and bellowed: "Porter!"

There was no response.

The good old days, when a porter would come rushing up at the sight of an uplifted finger, were dead and gone.

There were several porters on the platform, but they were holding an animated discussion concerning the prospects of Tottenham Hotspur in their next League match. They might have seen Teddy Grace waving frantically from the carriage-window. They certainly heard him. But they did not stir.

The Rookwood junior threw open the carriage-door, and leapt down on to the platform.

Rushing up to one of the porters, he tapped the man on the shoulder.

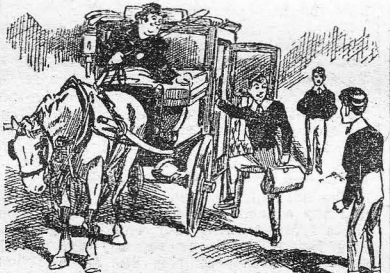
"I say, will you see to my luggage?" he panted.

The man leisurely turned his head.

"Eh? Wot luggage?"

"I've got nine pieces!"

"I don't know nothin' about your blessed pieces!" growled the porter. "Wot sort of pieces?"



Teddy Grace clambered into the hack. "Good-bye, you fellows," he said. "Hope you have a good time on the road!"

"There's a trunk, a portmanteau, a couple of suitcases, a gladstone bag, three small—"

"Eip!"

"If they're not taken off this train at once, they'll go on to Windsor!" said Teddy, in desperation. "And I want them to be put on the Waterloo train. Buck up! I'll make it worth your while!"

The porter moved off in the direction of the luggage-van. But he was too late.

The train had moved on. It was a branch line train, bound for Staines and Windsor.

Teddy Grace wrung his hands in despair.

Some of the luggage had already been thrown out on to the platform. Raby's bicycle was there, and Teddy's own portmanteau. The rest of the stuff had remained on the train, and was now being borne away to Windsor!

The porter took possession of the portmanteau and the bicycle.

"Is this wot you call nine pieces?" he growled.

"Ass!" snorted Teddy Grace. "The other seven have gone on to Windsor, and they were destined for Waterloo! I shall have no end of a job to get them back. Anyway, you can put this bike and portmanteau on the London train."

The porter obeyed. Teddy himself got on the train, feeling worried beyond measure.

He had started off from Rookwood with

nine pieces of luggage in his custody. He now had only two. The rest was on the wrong train.

On reaching Waterloo, the only thing he discovered was his own portmanteau.

Raby's bicycle, for some unknown reason, had been taken off the train at Wimbledon.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" gasped Teddy Grace. "Never again do I travel with other fellows' luggage!"

"You must remember, sir," said the guard, "that at holiday times these little mistakes are bound to arise. In the ordinary way, all your luggage would have come through to Waterloo without mishap. But as it is—"

The guard shrugged his shoulders.

"How on earth am I going to recover all this luggage?" asked Teddy Grace.

"I suggest that you send a telegram to the station-master at Windsor, and another to the station-master at Wimbledon, asking for the stuff to be sent on to Waterloo without delay."

"And hang about here until it comes?"

"That's the only way, sir."

Teddy Grace spent a dismal afternoon. Whilst Jimmy Silver & Co. were gaily enjoying their charabanc trip, Teddy was waiting and watching on Waterloo Station. And Waterloo Station is not exactly the cheeriest spot to spend a few hours.

At last all the luggage came safely to hand.

There was further excess to pay, and Teddy Grace growled as he parted with another five-and-sixpence. But he consoled himself with the reflection that Jimmy Silver & Co. would have to foot the bill.

No sooner had the luggage been deposited in the cloak-room than Jimmy Silver and his chums arrived. They found Teddy Grace in a state of nervous collapse.

"Great Scott, Teddy!" gasped Lovell. "What's wrong?"

"I've had a terrible time," was the reply. "Never again do I undertake to be saddled with anybody else's luggage."

"You mean to say that there was a hitch?" said Jimmy Silver.

"You fellows are jolly lucky not to have lost your luggage for ever! It's been wandering about all over England. And, by the way, Silver, there's a little bill here which I should like you to settle."

This was Teddy Grace's "little bill":

To—	£	s.	d.
Tipping Porter at Coombe Station ..		9	
Tipping Porter at Woking Junction ..		6	
Tipping six Porters at Waterloo, at 6d. per head ..	3	0	
Cost of taking luggage on train ..	6	9	
Further excess (owing to the idiotic blunders of the railway company) ..	5	6	
Special bicycle ticket for Raby's machine ..	5	2	
Light refreshments at Waterloo, whilst awaiting the return of luggage which had gone astray ..	1	4	
One bottle of ammoniated quinine (necessitated by catching chill owing to hanging about) ..	1	0	
Total ..	1	4	0

Jimmy Silver looked at the bill, and then at Teddy Grace, and finally at his chums.

It was finally decided to have a "whip round" in order to pay the bill. And Lovell was more than justified in asking the question:

"Who said it would be cheaper to go to town by charabanc?"

CYCLING NOTES!

By FATTY WYNN.

It is not true that the last time I sat on the saddle of a bike the whole thing collapsed under my weight. Although I look a bit hefty, I'm really quite a light and nimble fellow. Matter of fact, I'm thinking of competing for the St. Jim's fly-weight championship.

Grundy of the Shell is having his bike re-tired. Grundy is such a reckless rider that it is high time he himself "retired"!

The last cycle-race at St. Jim's was won in excellent style by Ralph Reckness Cardew. Being an "old top," Cardew is always a useful man on a "spin"!

Baggy Trimble had a bath the other day. Don't faint, dear readers! It was merely an oil-bath for his new bicycle!

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was in difficulties recently, trying to unscrew a nut on his machine. Was Gussy referring to himself when he made the remark, "What a fidgetful nut!"

Hints on the care and maintenance of machines will gladly be given by David Wynn at a fee of one penny per hint. Don't let your bike rust and stagnate this winter. Send it along to me for overhauling!

P.-c. Crump has reported Figgins to Mr. Ratcliff for dangerous riding in Wayland. It is certainly beyond the limit!

Bernard Glyn is at work on a new invention. It's a sort of cycle-plane, which will be able to take unto itself wings at a moment's notice—perhaps! Glyn doesn't see why bicycles shouldn't be able to vanish into thin air. They do sometimes—when Baggy Trimble's on the borrow!

The next meeting of the St. Jim's Cycling Club takes place on Saturday. There will be a spin to Brighton, with lots of intervals for refreshment. That, at least, ought to Brighton things up!

STOP PRESS.

The Editor of the Companion Papers has asked me to mention that he is giving twelve postcard portraits of the most popular fellows at Greyfriars in the "Magnet." Naturally, I am among the chosen twelve. Get this week's copy of the "Magnet Library," which gives full particulars how you can obtain these splendid cards. Don't forget your Uncle Bill's portrait is there. The names of the other fellows are: George Wingate, Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent, Hurree Singh, the late Arthur Courtney, Horace Coker, Vernon-Smith, Lord Mauleverer, and Mark Linley. Just go to your newsagent at once and buy the "Magnet."—W. G. B.

THE POPULAR.—No. 147.

Jogging Along the Highway!

By JACK BLAKE.



The joys of the open road are many and wonderful

I don't claim to be making a strikingly original statement. Others discovered the joys of the open road long before I did. Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, and George Borrow. These men revelled in "the great out of doors," and their enjoyment was reflected in their writings.

There is precious little romance connected with railways and other modern innovations. But the King's highway conjures up all sorts of romantic events.

Never do I trudge along the Rylcombe road on a dusky winter evening without picturing to myself Dick Turpin, mounted on Black Bess; or without remembering the exploits of such lawless and fearless persons as Claude Duval and "Sixteen-stringed Jack."

The days of the highwaymen, the galleys, and the coaches and fours are gone. Sometimes I almost wish they would come back—just for a month or so, anyway. What glorious adventures the St. Jim's fellows would have then! Fancy the Head being held up by an armed highwayman on the road to Wayland! Fancy Arthur Augustus D'Arcy being stopped on his return from the tailor's, and relieved of his fancy waistcoat and about sixteen hatboxes!

Although much of its romance has fled, however, the open road is still tremendously attractive. Whether you race along it on a motor-bike, or skim it on a "push-bike," or whether you make use of Shanks' ponies, you always find much to interest you.

I think I prefer a walking tour to almost anything else. Whenever I go tramping over hill and dale I always become imbued with the spirit of the song:

"When you're jog, jog, joggin' along the white road,
With your luck all upside down—
Well, you don't much care if you're on the right road
When you're bound for Nowhere Town.
I'm just as happy in the byways,
My ways, wheresoever I may be;
For there's no friend waiting along the highways
For a vagabond like me!"

Not that I'm a vagabond, of course (although Gussy frequently calls me one). But I've got the roaming spirit, the wanderlust, and nothing suits me better than a good long tramp through Sussex—always provided I've sufficient money on me to indulge in light refreshments "whenever I feel so disposed," as Taggles would say.

Footer is a topping game, but one tires even of that.

Variety is the spice of life. And how can you better vary your strenuous games of

(Continued at foot of column 3.)

.. A .. Nightmare Journey!

By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

I caught the train at Waterloo,
(Two thousand others caught it, too!).

My body, when we reached Vauxhall,
Was squashed against the carriage wall.

With much confusion and compunction
We jolted into Clapham Junction.

My corn was trodden on; I squealed,
The train then halted at Earlsfield.

I scarcely felt a nimble don
When we arrived at Wimbledon.

The lights went out, and all was dark,
A sleepy voice exclaimed, "Raynes Park!"

Oh dear! My breath was nearly gone
As we steamed into Surbiton.

"Gimme some water, quick! I'm choking!"

I panted when we came to Woking.

And when we got to Guildford Town
I felt depressed, and done, and down!

I really think—don't you yourself?
I need a carriage to myself.

I am so corpulent, you see,
I take up room enough for three.

And, should a crowd get on the train,
I suffer agony and pain!

If only I were slim and nimble
It would be different.

BAGGY TRIMBLE.

(You should always do the same as me, Baggy—insist on travelling in the cattle-van. There isn't such a crowd, and it's much cheaper, too!—Ed.)

Jogging Along the Highway!

(Continued from column 2.)

footer than by setting out on a twelve or fifteen mile tramp?

There are many who will disagree with me, I know. The "halt, lame, sick, and lazy" have no use for country walks. A fellow like Baggy Trimble, for instance, would curl up at the mere suggestion of a long tramp!

But then I should never think of inviting Trimble to share my pilgrimage.

"Let me have men about me that are fat," says Shakespeare. I can't admire his taste.

Let me have fellows about me that are slim and chock full of energy! They can appreciate the joys of the open road, whereas the fat fellow prefers to snooze on his study couch.

In conclusion, raising my glass of foaming ginger-pop to my lips, I drink to the joys of the open road!

[Supplement IV.]

Dr. Chisholm's Secret!

(Continued from page 8.)

Hun in this study. Let's chuck him out!"

"What!" exclaimed Lattrey.

Peele threw open the door.

"Get out!" he said. "The proper place for you is Prussia. You're not stayin' in this study, anyhow. You make me sick. Go to the Head, if you like—or go to the dickens! Get out!"

"I won't! I—"

"You will!"

Peele and Gower collared their study-mate; and Lattrey, struggling fiercely, was whirled to the door. He landed in the passage with a crash.

"Now come back, an' you'll get some more," said Peele, between his teeth.

The door slammed on Lattrey.

With a face white with fury the cad of the Fourth limped away.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.
Woeful Sportsmen!**

JIMMY SILVER & CO. were rather amused.

It was the day after Lattrey's sentence had become known. It had leaked out that Lattrey's father was coming down that day to see the Head hear his explanation, and to take his son away with him.

Lattrey was facing the music with brazen coolness.

He turned up to morning lessons, as usual, and was impertinent to Mr. Bootles in class several times. His idea appeared to be that he might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb.

Mr. Bootles was very tolerant towards him, however. He disliked caning a fellow who was to be turned out of the school in disgrace that day.

Lattrey gave his Form-fellows scowling looks of defiance, and he rejoiced in the dismay of the nutty brigade.

Jimmy Silver & Co. could not help being a little amused by the unconcealed uneasiness of Smythe and his friends.

Adolphus Smythe's face was a study. His friends shared his apprehensions. They repeated to one another that if the expelled junior betrayed them, he had no proofs to offer.

But that was only very cold comfort.

After morning lessons the nuts gathered in a dismal group in the quadrangle, and the Fistical Four observed them there—with smiles. The loftiness of the nutty brigade was gone; the glory had departed from the House of Israel, so to speak.

Lattrey joined the worried group under the beeches. There was a sardonic grin on his hard, thin face. He was enjoying the flutter he had caused in the nutty dove-cote.

"Well, what are you fellows goin' to do?" he asked.

"What can we do?" mumbled Adolphus.

"Some of you have got relations on the Governin' Board. The Head would be bound to listen to them. You can get them to act."

"It's impossible."

"It's my only chance," said Lattrey coolly. "I'm not in a position to let any chances slip."

"Oh, you cad! You worm!"

"You sneakin' traitor!"

"Hard words break no bones, dear boys. If you can't save me you can go down along with me. Some consolation in that for me."

"We can't speak to our relations for you, Lattrey," mumbled Adolphus. "It would be like identifyin' ourselves with you, an' backin' you up. Besides, it wouldn't do you any good. They'd take no notice."

"All the worse for you."

"Look here, Lattrey—"

"I want 'Yes' or 'No,'" said Lattrey.

"No!" said Smythe desperately. "I'd rather be sacked myself than ask my uncle to chip in for you an' tell him you're my friend an' a peck of lies to make out you're not the filthy cad I know you are. I can't do it!"

"That's enough!"

Lattrey walked away to the School House.

Smythe & Co. went into the House, and hung about the end of the corridor on which the Head's study opened. They were anxious to know the worst as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Lattrey had presented himself in Dr. Chisholm's study.

The downfallen cad of the Fourth fully intended to do his very worst. It was a pleasure to him to make other fellows suffer as well as himself, though they had never harmed him.

But the malevolent fellow had a surprise and a disappointment in store for him. Dr. Chisholm gave him a cold look of inquiry.

"I did not send for you, Lattrey. I do not require you here until your father comes. You will be called."

"I have something to tell you, sir," said Lattrey.

"You may speak."

"I think you ought to know, sir, that I'm not the only chap who has done some things against the rules. I've had pals," said Lattrey bitterly. "There's fellows in the school now who—"

Dr. Chisholm raised his hand.

"Have you come here, Lattrey, to make accusations against your school-fellows?" he asked sternly.

"I've come to tell you the truth, sir. You ought to know—"

"I decline to listen to a single word, Lattrey. I cannot trust you, and I cannot place the slightest faith in any accusation you might make. I fear that you are malicious and unscrupulous enough to desire to involve others in your own punishment. You may go!"

"But—but I—"

"Not a word more, Lattrey! Leave my study!"

Utterly taken aback, crushed by the cold contempt in the headmaster's look and voice, Lattrey slunk out of the study.

The bitter disappointment and chagrin in his face did not escape Smythe & Co. as they saw him. He gave them a furious look in passing, and Peele caught him by the arm.

"You've told—" he began.

"Let me go!" snarled Lattrey.

He wrenched away his arm, and tramped away. Adolphus Smythe & Co. looked at one another uncertainly.

"I—I—I think it's all right," said Smythe at last. "The Head won't listen to him. Of course, he couldn't, when you come to think of it. A fellow like that would say anythin', an' the Head knows it."

"Good old Head!" murmured Tracy.

The nuts were still feeling a little doubtful, but the dreaded summons to the Head's study did not come.

It was clear at last that the cad of the Fourth had not been listened to, and Smythe & Co. were relieved, with an exceedingly great relief.

Adolphus was quite chippy after dinner, and he passed Lattrey in the quad with a lofty glance of contempt and an elevated nose.

And if any fellows had felt sympathy towards Lattrey in his downfall his last malicious action would have destroyed it. There was not a fellow at Rookwood now who would not be glad to see him go.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Lattrey Says "No!"

THAT'S the johnnie!" remarked Jimmy Silver.

"Lattrey, senior," smiled Lovell.

"Well, he looks like it!"

It was just before afternoon lessons when the station hack rolled in at the gates of Rookwood, and a visitor alighted.

He was a man of middle age, with a hard, cold, sharp face, and eyes that seemed like points of steel. Lucas Lattrey, the head of the firm of Lattrey & Co., inquiry agents, was not a prepossessing gentleman to look at.

There was a good deal of likeness between his hard face and that of his son. The juniors easily recognised him, and they recognised, too, that Lattrey of the Fourth was a chip of the old block.

The bell called the juniors in to lessons as Mr. Lattrey arrived. They trooped off to the Form-rooms, but Lattrey stayed behind to speak to his father in the porch before he was shown in to the Head.

Mr. Lattrey gave his son a hard look. "So you are in disgrace here, Mark," he said.

His voice was cold and hard, like his face.

"Yes," muttered Lattrey uneasily. "I—I— It wasn't so bad, but—"

"Your headmaster tells me you are to leave. I have been asked to come here to-day and take you away with me."


"Can't anything be done, pater?" asked Lattrey in a low voice. "I—I don't want to go. I've done nothing, really. It's all humbug. You won't think it's so jolly bad when the Head tells you."

Mr. Lattrey set his thin lips.

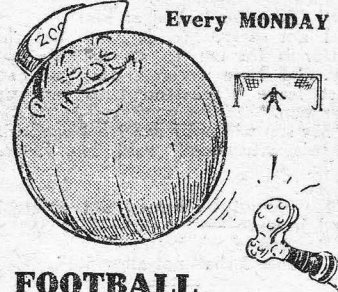
"You will not go," he said. "But I warn you to be careful, Mark. If I can save you this time it may not happen that I can do the same again."

"I shall be jolly careful after this!" muttered Lattrey. His face was brighter. "You think you can manage it, pater?"

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ComicCuts 

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**FOOTBALL
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**FIRST-CLASS FOOTBALLS
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"I hope so."
"Oh, good!" Lattrey set his teeth.
"Some of the fellows will be surprised, I think. They want me to go, hang them! I—"
"Go in to your lessons, Mark."
"Yes, father."

Lattrey went into the Fourth-Form room, his step lighter and his face almost smiling. Mr. Bootles gave him a glance, but made no remark on his being five minutes late.

He was not likely to stay long in the Form-room, anyway. Mr. Bootles understood that he would be sent for by the Head, and when he left the Form-room to obey the summons he would not come back.

All the Fourth knew it, and they were surprised at the new expression on Lattrey's face.

They could see that his father's coming had "bucked" him very considerably, and they wondered. Any other fellow at Rookwood would certainly have found an interview with his father under such circumstances very disconcerting indeed.

But Lattrey had confidence in his father. Mr. Lattrey did not look on matters as most of the fellows' fathers did. He was not of their kind, and his few words had caused the disgraced junior to hope for the best.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lattrey had been shown into the Head's study. Dr. Chisholm was there, expecting him.

The Head shook hands with his visitor, and the gentleman from London seated himself. It was a painful enough interview to the Head. The task of explaining a boy's rascality to his father was not a pleasant one.

But it was his duty, and he did not shrink from it. Neither did Mr. Lattrey show the emotion most fellows' fathers would have felt at such a time.

"I understand from your letter that you have a serious complaint to make of my son, sir." Mr. Lattrey's voice was sharp and businesslike. "You wish me to take him away from Rookwood. That is a very serious matter. It was not agreeable news to me, Dr. Chisholm."

"I can quite understand that, and I sympathise—"

"Yes, yes; but if my son is turned out of this school under a cloud, sympathy will hardly lighten such a blow. In a word, what has he done?"

The Head compressed his lips a little, and proceeded to explain.

Mr. Lattrey did not interrupt him once.

He sat bolt upright in his chair, his hands resting on the handle of his umbrella, his eyes fixed upon Dr. Chisholm with a steady and somewhat disconcerting gaze.

He was evidently paying careful attention to every word the Head uttered. When the tale was finished, he gave utterance to a sound resembling a grunt.
"And is that all, sir?"

"That is all, Mr. Lattrey."

"You relieve my mind very considerably," said Mr. Lattrey, with an inflexion of sarcasm in his voice. "I had feared worse from your letter. It appears that my son played a trick upon a boy he disliked—an ill-natured and malicious trick, I grant. It seems that this boy was among those who sent him to Coventry, which amounts, in some sort, to provocation. Surely, sir, a flogging would be a sufficient punishment for my son."

"If that were his only offence, I might consider so," said the Head. "But he has already been flogged for transgressing the laws of the school in the most

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flagrant manner. He has associated with card-sharps and wastrels—"

"That seems to indicate some laxity in the governing of the school."

"Sir!" exclaimed the Head, colouring.

"That is how it appears to me, at all events."

"It is not possible. Mr. Lattrey, to institute a watch upon boys. I should be very sorry to see the German system of spying and tale-bearing instituted in an English school. The boys are, to a large extent, upon their honour. There is a general supervision, of course. In most cases the boys can be relied upon. Boyish escapades can be forgiven, or lightly punished. If it becomes known that a boy betrays vicious tendencies, he is especially noted—and corrected. If he persists, he leaves the school. His parents are the proper persons to take charge of him in that case."

"But—"

"Lattrey, I am sorry to say, has chosen the wrong course, and in spite of warnings and punishments has persisted in it. His latest action shows a degree of cunning and duplicity almost alarming in one so youthful. He simply cannot remain among boys whom he may corrupt." The Head paused. "I am sorry, sir, to wound your feelings by speaking thus of your son, but you have left me no choice."

"You need not mind my feelings," said Mr. Lattrey, unmoved. "It is, in fact, hardly a question of feeling. I have my son's interests at heart, naturally, and my own. The discredit of being turned out of Rookwood will cling to him—it will reflect upon me. I desire to avoid that if possible."

"I regret that it is not possible."

"Any other punishment, however severe—I shall not raise the slightest objection."

"No punishment will meet the case, sir. There is only one course open to me—to remove Lattrey from the school."

There was a long pause. Mr. Lattrey rose from his chair, walked to the window, and stood staring out into the quadrangle for some minutes, his brows wrinkled.

Dr. Chisholm waited patiently. He was anxious for the disagreeable interview to end, but he was considerate. He spoke at last.

"I will send for your son now, Mr. Lattrey."

Mr. Lattrey turned round from the window.

"There is no hurry for that," he said.

"Dr. Chisholm, I have thought the matter out, and I cannot consent to my son being turned out of Rookwood."

"What?"

"I cannot consent!"

Dr. Chisholm looked at him.

"I am sorry, Mr. Lattrey, but that matter is for me to decide," he said icily. "I have decided, and your son must leave Rookwood with you this afternoon."

"My son will not leave Rookwood with me this afternoon!" said Mr. Lattrey coldly.

"Sir!"

"He cannot be turned out of Rookwood because—"

"Because of what, pray?"

"Because I shall not allow it!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Brought to Terms!

DR. CHISHOLM rose to his feet. Mr. Lattrey's unexpected words had given deep offence. There was a flush in the doctor's cheeks, an unexpected sparkle in his eyes. His face was set and grim.

"It is useless to prolong this interview, Mr. Lattrey," he said freeing. "I have my duties to attend to!"

"Kindly hear me out," said the gentleman from London, unmoved. "I regret to have to utter the words I am about to utter, sir, but you have left me no choice. Frankly, I cannot allow my son to be expelled from Rookwood. He has acted badly, I admit. But—"

"There is nothing more to be said, Mr. Lattrey!"

"There is a great deal more to be said, Dr. Chisholm. My son is not the only person at Rookwood in need of charitable forbearance. There are others here, sir, who have secrets to keep."

"Your son attempted to make some malicious accusation against his school-fellows," said the Head, with a scornful curl of the lip. "I declined to listen to him, and I decline to listen to you upon the same topic, Mr. Lattrey."

Mr. Lattrey smiled slightly.
"I am not referring to my son's school-fellows," he said. "I know nothing about them, and care nothing."

"You are surely not referring to any member of the school staff, sir!" exclaimed the Head, with great indignation.

"I was referring to yourself, sir!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You, sir, have a secret to keep—a secret involving the honour of your name and your position in the school!" said Mr. Lattrey, in a voice like steel. "I am perfectly well acquainted with the fact."

Dr. Chisholm's face was crimson.

"Sir!" he stammered. "How dare you! Are you out of your senses, Mr. Lattrey? How dare you!"

"Do you deny the fact?"

"I have not the slightest intention of bandying words with you on that subject or any other, Mr. Lattrey! I request you to take your leave!"

"I shall take my leave when my business here is concluded. If you wish the story of your brother's disgrace to become the talk of Rookwood School, you have only to say so!"

Dr. Chisholm sank back into his chair as if he had received a blow in the face.

The angry and indignant flush faded from his cheeks, leaving him deadly pale, and looking strangely old and worn.

"My brother!" he said, in almost a whisper. "My brother!"

"Your brother Oliver, sir!"

"What do you know of my brother Oliver? How can you know anything of him—you, a stranger to me almost?" muttered the Head huskily.

"I know the secrets of many people to whom I am a stranger," said Mr. Lattrey calmly. "You are aware that I am the head of a firm of private inquiry agents—in other words, of detectives. During twenty years, sir, many secrets have come to my knowledge in the course of my work. There are men holding their heads high in this country whom I could ruin with a word. Secrets are as safe with me as with a lawyer—it is my profession to know everything and to say nothing."

"But—but—"

"The story of your brother's disgrace has been known to me for years," said Mr. Lattrey. "The whole particulars came to my knowledge during the investigation of another matter with which your brother was slightly connected. The whole history is pigeon-holed at my office, set aside to be used if there should ever be occasion to use it."

There was something like fear in the glance the Head cast at the cold, emotionless face of the professional spy.

"It does not seem to me possible that you know what you claim to know," the Head said at last. "But granting your knowledge, how does that affect the matter of your son? He cannot remain at Rookwood."

"He must remain at Rookwood, sir," said Mr. Lattrey quietly. "I have known your secret for years, and have kept quiet for professional reasons. There is a saying that one good turn deserves another. Take a more lenient view of my son's offence, and give him another chance, and you may depend upon my silence permanently."

"And if I do not?"
 "Then I shall speak, necessarily. It will be to my son's advantage if I let it transpire that I took him away from Rookwood of my own accord, because I have discovered the disgraceful associations of his headmaster."

"Good heavens!" muttered the Head. "I am sorry to express myself thus. Dr. Chisholm. But, naturally, I consider the matter wholly from the point of view of the advantage of my own family."

"Do you understand what this is, Mr. Lattrey? This use you are making of your knowledge—it is called blackmail by law, and punishable by imprisonment."

"As there are no witnesses present that does not affect me," said Mr. Lattrey calmly. "It remains for you to decide, sir, whether you will show some consideration to my son, and merit consideration at my hands."

There was a long silence. Dr. Chisholm raised his head at last.

"So far, I have only your statement that you know what you claim to know," he said. "You do not expect me to take, unsupported, the word of a black-mailer."

A slight flush crept into the detective's cheeks. Even his cool, hard self-possession was penetrated a little by the bitter contempt in the headmaster's voice.

But his voice was quiet and unmoved as he answered:

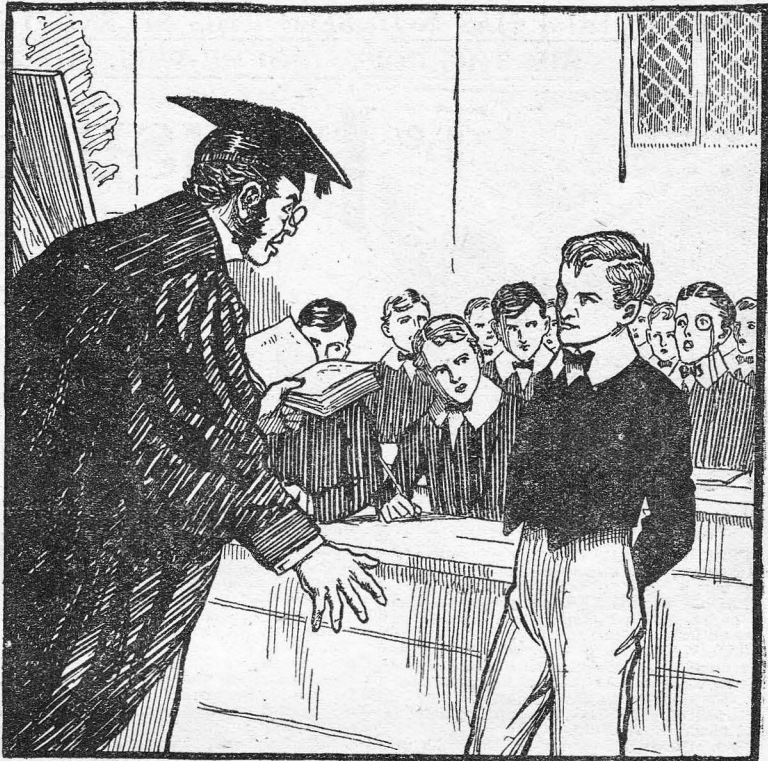
"I will repeat what I know, if you need convincing," he said. "Your brother, Oliver, was once at Rookwood. He was so much younger than you that he was in the Sixth Form here when you became headmaster. He was guilty of reckless follies, and you sent him away from the school, hushing the matter up as much as possible for the credit of your name."

The doctor winced.
 "He went from bad to worse, but he had the grace to assume another name, so that his conduct did not reflect upon his family. When the South African War broke out he joined the Army as a private, and was in several battles, and in the march on Bloemfontein. He was granted a commission for gallantry in the field, and was known as Lieutenant Smith—the name he had taken."

The Head was silent.
 "Shortly afterwards he showed that he was quite his old self. He was found out in treacherous traffic with a German agent on the enemy side, was tried by court-martial, and sentenced to death as a traitor. He escaped on the night before the morning fixed for the execution, and disappeared from the knowledge of men. Only one officer knew of his real identity, and he sent the news to you."

Dr. Chisholm's head had sunk upon his breast.

"Such, sir, is the history of your brother, once a Rookwood boy," went on the detective coldly. "Gambler and rascal in his schoolboy days, loafer and tout on the racecourse in early manhood, traitor to the flag when wearing the uniform of his country! That, sir, is your secret. You know how best your



Lattrey came quietly into the form-room, and crossed over to Mr. Bootles' desk. The Form-master almost dropped his book when he saw him. "Lattrey, what are you doing here? I understood that you were leaving Rookwood!" he said. "Did you really, sir!" answered Lattrey calmly. (See Chapter 5.)

position here would be affected if the facts became generally known."

"How do you know all this?"
 Mr. Lattrey shrugged his shoulders. "It was once my duty to investigate a certain affair in connection with the German spy system in South Africa. I came in contact with the German agent with whom your brother had had dealings. From that source, and others, I learned the facts. They could easily be proved. A brother-officer of Lieutenant Smith is now in England—a Captain Erroll, who has a son at this school. He went to British Honduras after the Boer War, but returned to take part in the Great War. He knows the facts, but does not know that Lieutenant Smith was your younger brother."

The Head sat silent.
 "I am sorry, Dr. Chisholm, but you have forced me to this," said Mr. Lattrey. "Give my son another chance, and I am as silent as the grave."
 Dr. Chisholm did not speak.

Mr. Lattrey waited quietly. He knew that he was successful, that the Head of Rookwood dared not face the shame and humiliation that he was threatened with.

The Head spoke at last.
 "I—I must have time to think!" he muttered. "This—this is an unexpected blow. I had deemed that miserable story dead and gone. I never dreamed that it would rise up against me like a ghost in the past. If your son shows some promise of reform I—"

"I shall speak very seriously to my son," he said. "I can answer for it that he will be more careful in the future."
 "Then I will send for him."

"Thank you, Dr. Chisholm!" said Mr. Lattrey.

He had won.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at Lattrey when the school-page came to the Form-room to call him to the Head's study.

Lattrey gave them a vaunting look, and left the Form-room.

Nobody in the Classical Fourth expected to see Lattrey again. But a quarter of an hour later the door of the Form-room opened.

Lattrey came quietly in and crossed to his place. Mr. Bootles almost dropped the book in his hand.

"Lattrey!" he ejaculated.
 "Yes, sir?"
 "What—what—what are you doing here?"

"I have returned for lessons, sir."
 "But—but I understood that you were leaving Rookwood this afternoon with your father, Lattrey!"

"Did you really, sir?" said Lattrey calmly.

"Do you mean to tell me, Lattrey, that you are not leaving Rookwood?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles.

"It appears not, sir."
 "Bless my soul! You may sit down, Lattrey."

Lattrey sat down.
 The Fourth Form was in a buzz of astonishment. There was a quiet, sarcastic smile upon Mark Lattrey's face.

The black sheep of the Fourth had another chance. It remained to be seen what he would make of it.

THE END.

(Look out for another long, complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., entitled "A Bone of Contention!" next week.)

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

GAN WAGA, an Eskimo, who belongs to the crew of the yacht, and who is ever on the look-out to play japes on his shipmates. Greatly attached to Ching Lung.

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

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

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

They are detained, but escape, after many exciting adventures. In the underground passages of the Schloss Schwartzburg, where they have been imprisoned, they discover a great treasure which Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies.

Thurston & Co. return to the yacht, where Ferrers Lord has been waiting for them.

The yacht returns to England again, and Ferrers Lord & Co. set about building a new aeroplane.

Honour, who has been working three whole days and nights on the new helicopter, leaves off, and comes aboard the submarine. Gan Waga, the Eskimo, is on the deck with a hosepipe.

"Would you like a lovely sluiceness, Hal?" he asks the engineer.

(Now read on.)

The Third Trial!

HONOUR set the electric pump going at a moderate speed, and Gan sluiced him down. Dropping the nozzle, the Eskimo went to inspect the other side of the conning-tower. The sight he saw there made him snigger. Rupert Thurston and Ching Lung were reposing there. The Eskimo went back for the hosepipe, and dragged it along behind him. He levelled the nozzle at the sleepers, but the trickle that came out of it did not please him.

"Laziness a norful bad habit!" reflected Gan Waga. "It ought to be stopped. Old Hal, he say nothings, and ifs I get away quickness they never know who done it. I sorryful to make yo' wetness, Chingy, but it not good to let yo' oversleeps yo'self. Dears, dears! The butterful fine weather will soon change."

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NEXT
FRIDAY!

"A BONE OF

The engineer had gone, and except for the sleeping pair Gan Waga was alone on deck. He waddled to the electric pump, turned it full on, and went overboard, scarcely causing a ripple. Rising, he grasped the submarine's buoy-chain, shook the water out of his ears, and listened.

Gan Waga had wedged the nozzle of the hose between two convenient stanchions, and Rupert Thurston was right in the line of fire. The hissing torrent hit him, and washed him against Ching Lung. The grinning Eskimo could see nothing, but he could hear their astonished and angry shouts. Over and over they went, and rolled down the slight slope of the deck, followed by their pillows and blankets, till they were brought up by the rail.

Blinded and battered and half choked, they grasped the rail and crawled in opposite directions till they were clear of the gushing jet. A pillow burst, scattering feathers over the pool like snowflakes. Gan dived, and swam for the steps. He was up them and into the friendly shelter of the lift like a shadow.

"Ho, ho, hoo! Ha, ha, haa!" he laughed. "I not often play a jokeses on my butterfuls old Chingy, but I nots able to stand laziness. There's only one good thing in laziness, yo' nots wear yo' boots out so quick. Ho, ho, hoo, ho-o-oh! A light searches. Well, ifs that don't take the bun-factory."

They were looking for someone with a searchlight, flashing the range on the water round the submarine. This suggested to Gan Waga that he was suspected.

"It a wonderness thing," he thought, starting the lift on its upward journey, "but it not matter what happens, they always snuffspects me. Dears! I never was morer hungrifuls. I have lotses and heapsses of sausages, and then some fish and some eggs and bacons and marmalade."

Gan had no idea of the time, but when he reached the garden and looked seawards a bank of mist still obscured the low sun. Aboard the yacht they were stoking, and a cloud of smoke rising from her funnel hung above her in the almost breathless air. The sentry at the gate gave the Eskimo a sleepy nod.

Gan Waga padded up the steps of the house, and tried the front door, only to find it locked and barred. All the lower windows were shuttered.

"What a laziness crowd," said Gan Waga, in great disgust. "They all laziness excepts me and Hal. I get angry soonfuls."

He made his way round to the back of the house, and began to bang on the knocker. The hammering awoke someone, and a man put his head out of an upper window. Gan, though still indignant, was slightly mollified to recognise the person who did the looking. "Cheerio, old dears!" cried Gan Waga. "Yo come along quickfuls and cook my sausages, fo' I wants my breakfast!"

"What? Are you balmy? Breakfast at five o'clock in the morning!" roared the cook. "Go back to bed and eat coke!"

He was a bad-tempered man, and shut down the window with a crash. Gan walked down to the pond, and rested afloat among

the lilies, smoking a cigar, for he had a clever trick of being able to keep his cigars and matches dry, no matter how wet he was himself. And possessing the patience of his race, and reflecting that he would eat twice the quantity of sausages for having been kept waiting, he closed his little beady eyes and went to sleep.

He was the only one to appear at breakfast, and though he was treated with politeness, Gan fancied he could detect a pained look in the eye of the manservant who attended to his wants. In the cavern they were busy. The platform had been towed clear of the helicopter, so that she could be lowered into the water for her tests. There was no one aboard. Her first test was an automatic one. She floated quite evenly.

"What are you going to do now, Chief?" asked Ching Lung. "Aren't you going to man her?"

"Presently," said the millionaire. "She has more weight on her now in lead ingots than the weight of her crew. This is the descent test without her helicopter working—another of Honour's devices that were not fitted to the other machines, and rather luckily so, considering what happened to them."

"Lift her!"

Hal Honour waved his hand, and the wire hawsers tightened and began to run through the pulleys. The shadowy helicopter was drawn slowly upwards towards the roof. All faces were upturned. Through a pair of small binoculars the engineer viewed her carefully. He passed the glasses to Ferrers Lord.

"Every poison has its antidote, and every cure its disease, Ching," said the millionaire, with a laugh. "Honour, who invented the invisible dope, has also invented a lens that makes the dope almost useless. She's as flat and even as you could get her with a spirit-level, Honour, so let her go."

The engineer pressed the electric switch that had been arranged to release the clutches at the same time to the tiniest fraction of a second. All the clutches gave except one. A cry of consternation and dismay broke from the lips of the men on the platform. Instead of descending gently, the helicopter swayed violently to the left, tearing her wing clear away as she struck the rocky wall, and the rest of her breaking free, nose-dived into the lake, and sank in ten fathoms of water.

For an instant Hal Honour stood on the swaying platform with folded arms and bowed head. Then he raised himself erect and laughed.

"No matter," said the indomitable engineer. "Carry on!"

The Ham that Went Home Again!

IT almost looked like treachery, that there was a spy in the camp, and that the failure of the clutch to open was not due to misfortune or accident, but to pure design. But Honour knew his workmen, and was confident that they were all loyal, and not to be bribed. Such a disaster would have taken the heart out of most men, but it did not dispirit the engineer, but only spurred him on to further energy

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

and effort. Misfortune is a bitter foe to fight, but he was determined to fight on and win. Two minutes after the accident he was down with the divers to inspect the damage.

"Poor old Hal is going through it badly, Ching!" said Rupert Thurston. "He rather reminds me of a toy I had as a kiddie—a cardboard figure, with a weight at the bottom. The harder you knocked it down, the quicker it got up again and stood on its feet. If the old helicopter is badly wrecked, I shall be sorry!"

"After such a bump and a dive, it can't have done itself much good," said Ching Lung. "It's impossible to tell what the Chief feels about it, unless he likes to tell you, for he never betrays his feelings. They're not unlike in some ways, the Chief and Hal, both men of iron!"

"If this hasn't postponed our appointment with the professor and Goltzheimer, I'll not complain," said Rupert Thurston.

"How do you know we have an appointment with Von Kreigler and General Goltzheimer? Are you just guessing that?"

"Just guessing, old chap—only guessing," said Thurston. "I'd like to bet that if the Chief has made the appointment, we shall keep it punctually. And what about that

insane pet of yours, Gan Waga? This sort of thing will have to be put down with a firm hand. I don't like cold, wet japes!"

"Yet you don't forget to smile when he gets a jape home on Maddock, Prout, or O'Rooney. I didn't like it myself, and I'll give the humorous rascal a severe talking to when he has the pluck to show us his snub nose! Of course, it must be stopped. I'll reason with the japeful blubberbiter, Rupert."

"And take a good thick strap with you! Gan will understand any kind of reasoning that has a nice leather strap behind it," said Thurston.

The prince laughed. He knew that Rupert Thurston bore no malice for his drenching, though it had been extremely unpleasant at the time. It had evidently dawned upon the Eskimo that there was trouble in store for him. At the house Ching Lung learnt that Gan had devoured an enormous breakfast, and swallowed a bottle of salad-oil to wash it down. The cook also reported that a small keg of butter and a whole uncut boiled York ham had disappeared mysteriously from the pantry. Barry imparted this information to the prince.

"Bedad, they just love Gan Waga downstairs in the kitchen!" said Barry. "They'd

loike to fill him full of skewers and carving-knives and toasting-forks! He was banging at the dure afore foive o'clock in the morning, and yelling at the cook to come down and froy him sausages for breakfast, the darlint! And now he's away wid a big of butther and a twelve-pound ham. Och, he's the thafe of the world, that same Eskimo!"

Gan Waga's disappearance did not disturb Ching Lung. He knew that Gan would not venture down the steps at the risk of slipping and breaking his short neck, for, except over icebergs and snow-ridges, the Eskimo was a poor climber. The state of the tide made no difference to him. However high the water might be above the entrance to the cavern, Gan could dive through its dark jaws. He was well provisioned, and it was very probable that he had swum out to sea to spend a quiet day alone, and that he would return when he thought his little escapade with the hosepipe had blown over.

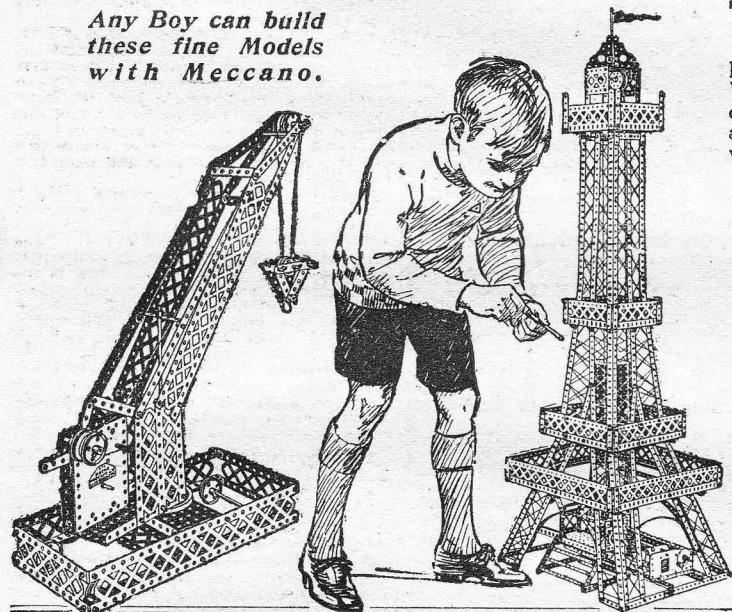
The prince wirelessed to the yacht, but the answer came from the operator that the Eskimo had not been seen on board.

"And, bedad, ye won't see him fill he's licked the last scrap of butther off the bottom of that kig, and chawed the last

(Continued on the next page.)

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THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!

(Continued from previous page.)

morsel of fat off the hambone the thafe pinched!" said Barry O'Rooney. "Och, Oi wish the ould say-sarpen would come along and swaller him whole, the oily spalpeen! Ut's murther! Oi never see a foiner ham than that, Dom, so juicy and pink, and the fat parrt loike lovely mother-o'-pearl—the colour, Oi mane—and all breadcrumbed, and a noice pink rosette round the knuckle-end. The thafe of the world! The cook had promised to cut us off a pound or so in stoices for supper, and now that can'te-devouring whale of a haythin Eskimo has looted ut and bolted away to say! Oi could have wrote a poem about that ham!"

"By honey, why don't you write a poem about Barry O'Rooney, and then swallow it and choke yourself?" growled Prout. "Blow you and Gan Waga, and the ham, too!"

He had just come up from the bottom of the pool after a couple of hours' hard work fixing lashings to the foundered helicopter, and was tired.

"Quite right, Tom; shut him up!" said Ching Lung. "He'd talk both the hind legs off a brass dromedary, and give it several more humps than Nature gave it! How does she look?"

"Not so bad, sir!" answered Prout. "She smashed her floats as well as her wing, that's why she sunk. We'll soon have her up, and know what the damage is. I've been stoopin' and crawlin' and pullin' and haulin' for more than two mortal hours, and though I don't mind talkin' sensible business to a sensible gentleman, I don't want no ham and no Eskimos from anybody with a brogue as thick as his head! What's that thing Dexter's got?"

Another of the divers had just come to the surface, and was helped up the ladder to

the deck of the submarine. He threw down a parcel wrapped in a macintosh.

"I don't know what it is, Tom," said the diver, when O'Rooney had removed his helmet. "I picked it off the gangway of the helicopter."

They looked at the parcel with some doubt. It was bound round with string quite neatly. "Bedad, it may have been washed in from outside," said Barry O'Rooney. "Pr'aps there's a human head in it, or some such joyful thing! Human heads ain't so bad when they're on necks, some of 'em, but for my part Oi don't care for thim loose!"

"If Dexter found it on the gangway, it couldn't have been washed in," said Ching Lung. "Besides, the string looks quite fresh."

Nobody seemed to be in any great hurry to open the mysterious bundle.

"By honey, I know what it is!" said Prout. "It's the cook's old yellow cat. He told me that it was mangy, and had taken to thieving, so he was going to drown it."

"And I presume he wrapped it up in water-proof stuff so that the poor thing wouldn't get wet while it was drowning!" said Ching Lung. "Your intelligence, Prout, is as amazing as your beauty! Let us investigate this deep mystery inside the macintosh. Who has a knife handy?"

As the prince was cutting the string a fat figure clad in soaked pyjamas edged round the coning-tower. His beady eyes were wide and eager, and he extended two clutching hands. He crept nearer and nearer. Having severed the strings, Ching Lung threw off the wrappings, and held up the contents of the bundle.

"Great flat-irons and brass fenders!" roared Barry O'Rooney. "Ut's our ham!"

"No, it notes; it my hams!" shrieked the voice of Gan Waga. "Chingy, it my hamses! I losted it, Chingy!"

Ching Lung tossed the ham to him, and Gan Waga caught it, and tucked it under his arm like a Rugby football. There was no one to chase him, except O'Rooney, for their lead-sole boots kept Prout and the other diver chained to the deck. Gan Waga waddled his best. They went round the

submarine twice, and then a despairing glance over his shoulder told the Eskimo that his only chance of evading capture was to fling himself into the arms of his old and faithful friend, the sea.

"How'd up, Gan!" shouted Barry, guessing his intention. "For the love of Moike, don't damage the beautiful thing. O'll take half, and, honour bright, Oi won't lay a finger on ye! Ut's worse than murther to souse that swate lump of pig in the dirtly salt water. Have a heart, bhoy, and don't spoil ut!"

The Eskimo stopped, with one hand on the rail ready to vault over it at the first sign of treachery or foul play.

"The fatness halves fo' me, then!" said Gan Waga, who was getting breathless, and for once was ready to parley. "Yo' gives me the fatness halves, hunk?"

Gan Waga did not object to ham flavoured with sea-water. He had intended treating himself to a little picnic out at sea, but he had been unlucky. Having lost the ham when swimming across the lake, he had sadly decided that he had not provisions enough to last the day, so he had eaten the butter. This, on top of a gorgeous breakfast, had made him languid. At the moment he did not want the ham to eat, and he was not in a mood to do more running and swimming.

"Yo' get backs a bits," he said. "Yo' cant's touch me, Barry, fo' I gotted my fingers crossed. The fatness halves, yes? No panky-hankiness, hunk?"

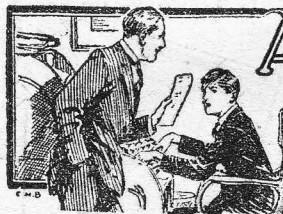
"Me broth of a fat bhoy, O'll be as fair as fair," said Barry eagerly. "Come down below, blubberboiter, and O'll cut ut through and saw the bone."

"All rightness!" said the Eskimo. "I not wants mine just yetness, so I trusts yo'! I come fo' my shares at supper-times, and no cheats!"

Gan Waga gave Barry the ham, and Barry turned it over and over admiringly, and then carried it below.

"By honey, I never saw the Eskimo do a thing like that afore!" said the steersman. "He must be ill!"

(Another instalment of our grand serial in next week's issue.)



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!

I am pleased to be able to announce another splendid budget of stories for our next issue, which will appear, as usual, on Friday.

The first grand long complete school story is of Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars, entitled:

"THE SCHOOLBOY DOMESTICS!"
By Frank Richards.

In this story we hear further of the adventures of the Greyfriars fellows as a result of Billy Bunter's behaviour when he made it appear as if Dibbs had been responsible for the stolen articles from the store-room. In short, Harry Wharton & Co. become domestics, for the staff goes on strike! Needless to say, there is great fun!

The second complete school story will concern the adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, and is entitled:

"A BONE OF CONTENTION!"
By Owen Conquest.

This tells us how Dr. Chisholm's nephew comes to Rookwood, and there is a terrible battle between the Moderns and the Classics on account of this youth. The battle ends in a surprising manner, and the discoveries of the rival Houses give them the impression that the black-eyes and bruised noses have been unnecessarily earned!

THE POPULAR.—No. 147.

NEXT FRIDAY! **"A BONE OF CONTENTION!"**

There will also be another four-page supplement, and a grand instalment of our serial. Readers will be well advised to order a copy of next week's "Popular" in advance.

SPECIAL NOTE.

Readers who are interested in the Greyfriars stories will be more than interested in the POSTCARD PORTRAITS which our companion paper, the "Magnet" Library, is offering. Get a copy of this week's "Magnet" Library, and read all about it!

A FOOTBALL TO BE WON!

I am again offering a grand match football and ten prizes of Five Shillings each in connection with

"POPLETS" COMPETITION NO. 41.

Examples for this week are as follows:

Cause and Effect.	Rather Funny
Appearing Too Soon.	When—
Soft Jobs.	In Form-room.
The Last Straw.	Not Advisable When—
Moves with Times.	Stirring Events.
Asking too Much.	In Public Eye.
	Couldn't be Better.

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. 41, 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 November 17th.

RESULT OF "POPLETS" COMPETITION, NO. 33.

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.

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- W. Packham, 49, East Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey;
- Leslie Webb, 108, Bruin Street, Leicester;
- Charles Marshall, The Cottage, Gasworks, Branksome, Bournemouth, W.;
- Herbert Purvis, 28, Warnton Street, Bepton, Liverpool;
- Harry W. E. Thom, 26, Ruvigny Gardens, Putney, S.W. 15;
- D. White, 82, Lowfield Street, Dartford, Kent;
- J. Whiteley, 34, The Grove, Hammersmith;
- F. W. Henton, 87, Blantyre Road, Wavertree, Liverpool;
- Edward Mitchell, 5, North Shore Street, Campbeltown, N.B.

Your Editor,

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

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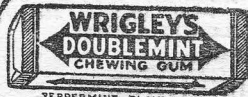
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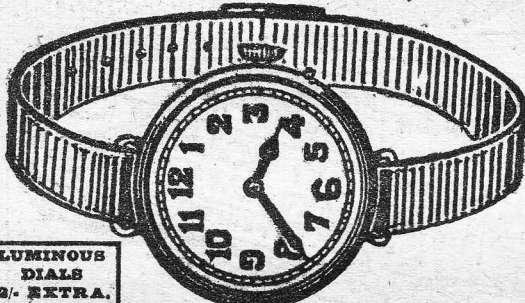
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