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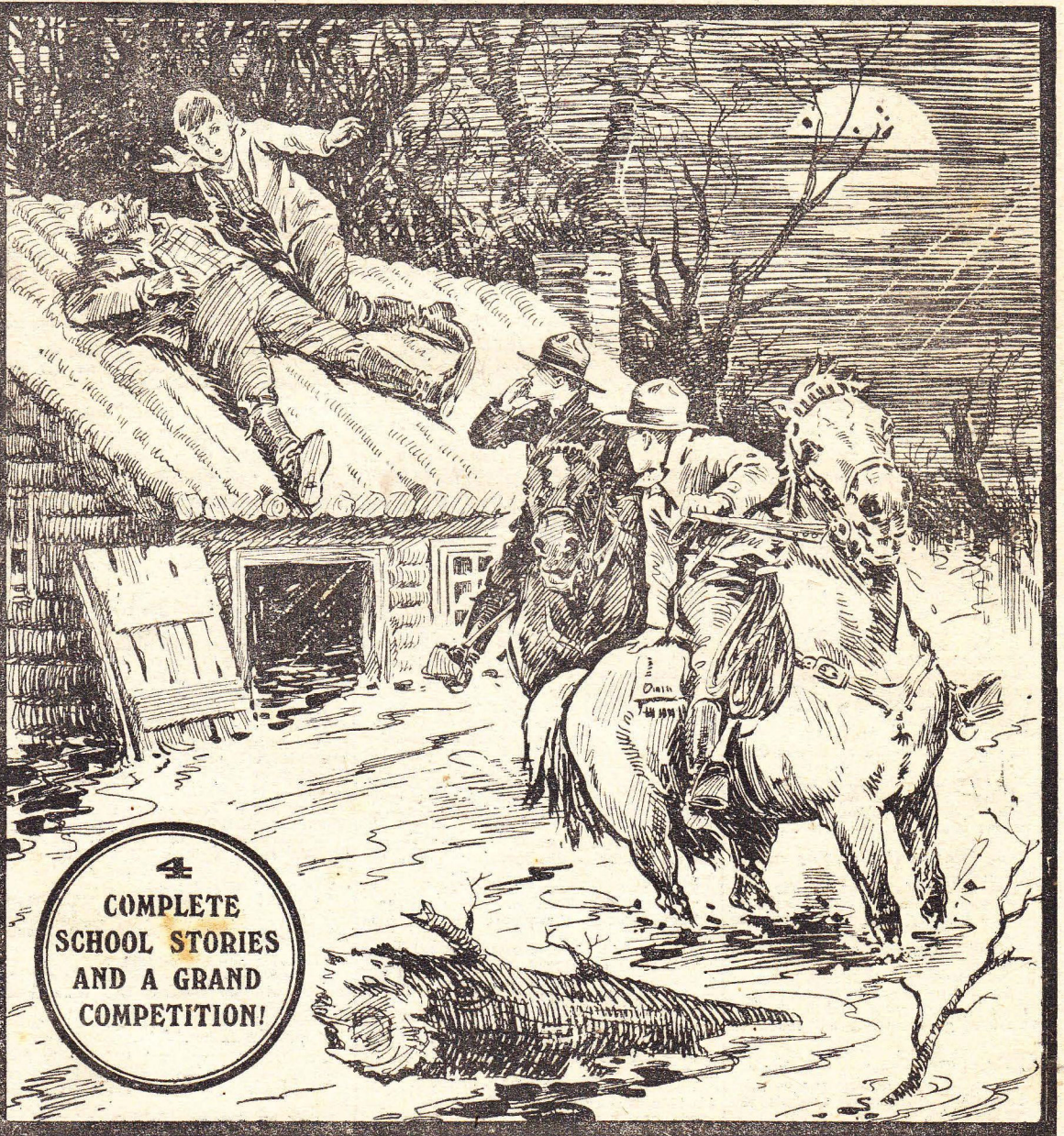
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# The POPULAR 2d

GREATLY ENLARGED.

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4  
COMPLETE  
SCHOOL STORIES  
AND A GRAND  
COMPETITION!

## CAUGHT BY THE FLOODS!

(A Dramatic Episode from the Long Complete Story of Frank Richards & Co. Inside.)



## 2 The Brightest and Best Annual of the Year is the "Holiday Annual"!

FOR THE FIRST TIME FRANK RICHARDS EXPERIENCES THE DANGERS OF THE CANADIAN BACKWOODS FLOODS!



A Grand, Long, Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS' Schooldays in Canada.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

(Author of the famous tales of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, appearing in the "Gem" Library).

### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

#### Beauclerc's Father.

66 **A** THAW, and no mistake!" said Bob Lawless.

"Too much of a good thing!" Frank Richards remarked, rather ruefully.

It was after breakfast at the Lawless Ranch, and time to start for Cedar Creek School.

Frank and Bob looked out upon the drenched plain and the weeping trees, as the Kootenay "hand" brought their ponies round.

The snow was melting in the Thompson Hills, and the rain had come with the melting of the snow.

Every creek and stream was swollen, and the Thompson River rushed between its banks in a turbid, yellow flood.

Snowshoes were not wanted any longer. Indeed, Bob Lawless remarked that a swimming-costume would be more useful.

But Bob grinned good-humouredly as he slipped on his "slicker."

Bob's cheerful spirits were not to be damped by bad-weather.

Frank Richards put on his oilskin coat. The cousins mounted, and rode away down the wet trail in the rain.

"There'll be a small house at Cedar Creek to-day, I guess," remarked Bob. "Some of the kids won't come. I reckon there will be floods in the Thompson Valley if this goes on."

The timber was weeping as they entered the forest trail.

The chums halted at the fork in the trail, where they were accustomed to meeting Vere Beauclerc on his way from Cedar Camp to the school.

"Hallo! The Cherub's not here!" exclaimed Bob.

He scanned the branch trail that led away through the timber towards Cedar Camp.

But there was no sign of Vere Beauclerc. "Beau's usually here before us," remarked Frank.

"I guess we'll wait." But the son of the remittance-man did not come in sight, and the cousins turned their ponies into the trail, to ride towards the camp and meet him.

"I guess we'll have to hustle to make up for this!" said Bob. "But the Cherub will be mounted this morning, now he's got a geegee. Where the dickens can he be?"

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Frank Richards was puzzled, too.

The schoolboys rode on till they came in sight of the shack outside Cedar Camp, where Vere Beauclerc lived with his father, the remittance-man.

They wondered whether there was any trouble at their chum's home.

Lascalles Beauclerc had lately received his remittance from the Old Country, upon which he lived, and the chums knew—as all the section knew—how Mr. Beauclerc was accustomed to spend it.

It was only too probable that he had been "on a bender" the previous night, and likely enough he was 'ill in the morning.

Frank Richards glanced towards the creek, which flowed within a stone's throw of the shack.

The stream was rushing swiftly, and upon it was borne blocks and chips of ice not yet melted.

The water had overflowed the banks where they were low, and the draining-trench on the clearing was overflowing.

"I don't like the look of that, Bob!" Frank remarked uneasily. "If the water rises much more the shack may be flooded."

"I guess it's been flooded before," assented Bob. "That was before I knew Beau, but I heard that they had had to clear out into the camp for a week in the autumn rains once. But where the thunder is the Cherub? We shall be thumping late, at this rate, and Miss Meadows will be wild!"

The cousins dismounted, and Bob crashed his riding-whip on the half-open door of the shack.

There was an exclamation within. "Father! Thank Heaven you've come!" Vere Beauclerc threw open the door from within.

At the sight of his chums a shade of disappointment overspread his handsome face. Evidently it was his father he had expected and hoped to see.

"You fellows!" he exclaimed, a flush creeping into his pale cheeks.

Frank Richards compressed his lips a little. He could see that Beauclerc had not been to bed.

Undoubtedly the remittance-man was upon his accustomed "bender," and had not come home for the night.

His anxious son had stayed up for him, but he had waited in vain.

"We've come for you, you duffer!" exclaimed Bob. "Don't you know it's high time we were at school!"

"I—I'd forgotten school!" stammered Beauclerc.

"Better tell Miss Meadows that!" grinned Bob. "For goodness' sake yank out your geegee and get a move on!"

"I—I—" "Popper not come home?" asked Bob.

"No," answered Beauclerc, his flush deepening.

"You look a bit yellow about the gills, Cherub. You've been sticking up all night."

"I—I was afraid of an accident!" muttered Beauclerc. "My father has been delayed, and—and the floods are out near the camp."

Bob's face became as grave as Frank's. He understood.

The remittance-man's vagaries did not, as a rule, interfere with his son's habits.

Often and often the boys had been sound asleep in the shack when the wastrel came zigzagging home from the camp.

But, with the floods out, there was danger for anyone tramping the trails under the influence of the potent fire-water sold at the Red Dog Saloon.

The chums could guess in what anxiety the Cherub had passed the long night, listening to the splashing of the rain and the swirl of the rushing creek.

"But you'll have to come to school, Cherub," said Bob, after an awkward pause. Beauclerc shook his head.

"You can ask Miss Meadows to excuse me to-day," he said. "I can't go."

"But—" said Frank. "I can't!" said Beauclerc. "You fellows get off—you'll be late. I'm sure Miss Meadows will excuse me. Anyway, I can't go. Good-bye!"

"Hallo! Here he comes!" A figure came in sight among the spruces, moving with an unsteady step towards the shack.

Beauclerc's face lighted up. He was his father.

Mr. Beauclerc was wet and muddy from head to foot, and looked as if he had passed a considerable portion of the night on the trail.

His face was reddened, his eyes heavy, and his uncertain gait showed that the influence of the fire-water was still strong upon him.

"We'll vamoose now, Cherub. You come on," said Bob hastily.

The chums rode away quickly, feeling that



Beauclerc would not want them to meet his father in his present state.

Beauclerc hurried to meet the remittance-man.

He gave the wretched man a helping hand into the shack.

Lascalles Beauclerc sat down heavily on a bench, and blinked at his son.

"Wharrer doing here?" he asked thickly. "Yought to be at school, you young yagabond!"

"I waited for you, father."

"Stuff'n nonsense! Get off with you!"

"Can I do anything for you, father?"

"Wharrer mean? Get off with you!"

The wretched man fired up angrily at the hint that he needed looking after.

Without a word the boy left the shack, a deep and angry grumbling following him.

He led his horse from the adjoining shed, and rode down the trail after his chums.

Frank Richards and Bob were half-way to the school when they heard a clatter of hoofs behind them, and Vere Beauclerc came up.

"Hallo! Here you are, Cherub!" exclaimed Bob, with forced cheerfulness. "Now put it on, and we may be in time yet."

Beauclerc nodded without speaking, and the three chums rode on to Cedar Creek School together.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

At School.

THE post-wagon from Thompson, with a crowd of boys and girls in it, drove up to the school as Frank Richards & Co. arrived there.

There was mud on the wheels up to the axles.

Kern Gunten was driving. Chunky Todgers grinned at the chums from the crowd in the wagon.

"Hallo, you fellows got through?" he called out.

"Looks like it," answered Bob.

"There's water out on the Thompson trail," said Dick Dawson. "Gunten's had to collect us up in the post-wagon, and here we are. Did you ever go to school like this in England, Richards?"

"No," said Frank, laughing. "Its fun, isn't it?"

"Well, it may be; but it's jolly wet."

Schoolboys and schoolgirls crowded out of the wagon.

Attendance at Cedar Creek was not quite full that morning.

But there was general cheerfulness as they dried and warmed themselves at the blazing log fire in the lumber school.

"You galoots won't get home to-night, I reckon," remarked Eben Hacke, as he kicked mud from his big boots. "Folks in Thompson say that the creek is rising. The snow's melted on the divide."

"Oh, we'll get home all right!" said Bob. "I've ridden through a foot of water before this."

"It won't be a foot—it will be a yard," said Hacke. "How's the creek looking at your shebang, Cherub?"

"It's rising," said Beauclerc.

"You'll be flooded out agin, I calculate, like you were last year," said Hacke. "I guess you'll have to swim home."

Kern Gunten chuckled.

"Ripping for Old Man Beauclerc, if he happens to be full of fire-water," he remarked.

Beauclerc turned fiercely on the Swiss.

Only Kern Gunten was rotter enough to make any allusion, in the presence of the remittance-man's son, to Lascalles Beauclerc's unenviable reputation.

But before Beauclerc could speak, Bob Lawless had taken the Swiss by the back of his collar.

Gunten sat down on the floor with a heavy bump, and a loud yell.

"You silly coyote, what are you up to?" he shouted furiously.

"Keep your sneaking tongue between your teeth, you worm!" answered Bob Lawless savagely. "Let a chap's father alone. The Cherub don't throw it at you that your popper is a swindling storekeeper—and he is, I guess!"

Gunten scrambled to his feet.

Miss Meadows entered the school-room at that moment, and the schoolboys went to their places.

Beauclerc did not glance at the Swiss; his brow was very thoughtful.

He was thinking of the shack, and of the rising creek close to it.

He paid more attention that morning to the rain than to Miss Meadows.

After morning school most of the pupils collected in the wide porch to look out.

There was little to do out of doors.

The rain was coming down steadily, and they could hear the foaming of the creek beyond the timber.

"It's still rising," remarked Bob Lawrence. "Lucky we've got the wagon to go home in. There'll be deep water at the dip of the trail."

Bob Lawless tapped Beauclerc on the arm, as he stood at some distance from the rest, with a moody brow.

"Cheer-ho, Cherub!" he said. "Put a smile on, you know!"

Beauclerc smiled faintly.

"I'm thinking about the shack," he said. "It's only too likely there'll be a flood."

"And you're anxious about your truck?" asked Bob.

"I haven't much there to be anxious about, in the way of property. But—but my—"

"Your father will get off to the camp if there's a flood, surely!"

"I—I suppose so."

"Not much supposing about it, I should reckon!" said Bob, with a stare. "He won't stay in the shack to be drowned!"

"Of course not," assented Beauclerc. But the deep shade did not lift from his brow.

Bob Lawless joined Frank, who was in the school-room, looking out of a window.

"What's the matter with the Cherub, Franky?" asked the rancher's son, in perplexity. "He can't be afraid his popper will be caught in the flood if the creek cuts up rusty, can he?"

"I suppose it's possible," said Frank slowly.

"But there's rising ground all the way from the shack to Cedar Camp, and he's only got to walk his chinks."

Frank hesitated.

"Well?" said Bob.

"You remember the state he was in when we saw him this morning, Bob. I—I'm afraid Beau fears he mayn't be in a state to walk his chinks, as you call it."

Bob whistled expressively.

"But—but—" he said. "But—By gum, it's a rotten hard life for the Cherub, Franky! If—if the man wasn't the Cherub's popper, I guess I'd feel like laying a cowhide round him!"

Frank Richards laughed.

Bob's ideas were always drastic; but it was very doubtful whether the cowhide would do the remittance-man any good.

Afternoon lessons were cut short that day for the pupils who had a distance to travel home.

It was earlier than usual when Frank Richards & Co. came out of the lumber schoolhouse and fetched their horses from the corral.

In a downpour of rain, with their "stickers" round them and the oilskin caps drawn down over their ears, the three chums rode away from Cedar Creek.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Flood.

SPASH! "By gum, it's wet!" grinned Bob Lawless.

Where the trail dipped it was flooded, and the schoolboys rode through a foot of water, till they reached the higher ground beyond.

Dim light came through the leafless branches over the trail.

Rain-clouds were lowering over the whole sky.

At the fork of the trail, Vere Beauclerc drew in his black horse, Demon.

Demon was the savage animal the Cherub had tamed, and which Mr. Lawless had insisted upon making him a present of.

"Good-bye, you fellows!" called out Beauclerc.

"Hold on!" said Frank. "We'd better ride a way with you, Cherub. I want to see you're safe."

"No need—"

"Rot!" said Bob Lawless emphatically. "I guess we're going to sashay all the way to the shack, Cherub. I reckon it's most likely under water by this time. The creek's over its banks in a dozen places."

Beauclerc hesitated.

"Here comes somebody who can tell us," said Frank Richards, as a horseman came in sight on the branch trail.

The three schoolboys waited at the fork for the rider to come up.

As he came closer, they recognised Poker Pete of Thompson.

The chums were on the worst of terms with that sportive gentleman, but Bob Lawless called to him as he came within range.

"Hold on a minute, Poker Pete! You've come from Cedar Camp?"

"I guess so!" snapped the sport, without drawing rein.

"How's the creek at Beauclerc's shack?"

Poker Pete halted then, and grinned as he looked at the schoolboys.

"I've just come from the shack," he answered. "The creek's over the bank, and spreading fast. I guess you won't get through. I rode through two feet of water to get away."

"You've been at the shack?" exclaimed Beauclerc, his eyes glinting.

"I guess so!"

Beauclerc did not need the telling what Poker Pete's business there had been.

The sport had been relieving the remittance-man of his cash at the noble games of poker and euchre.

"Is my father there?" Beauclerc asked quietly, repressing the angry scorn he could not help feeling for the rascally sport of Thompson.

"Didn't he leave when you did?" exclaimed Frank.

"Nope!"

"But if you rode through two feet of water the shack must be flooded!"

"You've hit it!"

"But why—"

Poker Pete laughed, with utter unconcern for the bitter anxiety of the remittance-man's son.

"I guess Old Man Beauclerc had taken a little too much aboard," he said. "I warned him to get to the camp, and he offered to fight me. I guess he's pretty wet by this time."

"He may be drowned!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Oh, I reckon he'll crawl on the roof when the flood wakes him up!" answered Poker Pete coolly; and he rode on, grinning.

Bob gripped his riding-whip hard.

He was greatly inclined to ride after the sport and lay the whip about his shoulders.

Vere Beauclerc, without speaking to his chums, dashed away at a gallop down the dusky trail.

His chums followed him at once.

Swiftly as Beauclerc rode, his chums kept pace with him.

"By gum, it's deep!" exclaimed Bob in dismay, as they reached the steep slope of ground near the shack.

The trail from that point ran on under water, and the flood was deeper as they progressed.

It was impossible to ride fast here, and they had to slacken almost to a walk.

In the last glimmer of daylight they sighted the shack at last.

The scene presented to their eyes was very different from that of the morning.

The creek, no longer confined within its banks, was spreading in a flood over the low land.

Water flowed and swirled round the shack, and it was up to the level of the little window.

The door was swinging open in the flood, and water swirled into the building, and a bench could be seen floating within.

With a white, set face Beauclerc rode on through the swirling waters towards the hut.

His father was there, helpless, in the midst of the swirling flood. What might not have happened to him already?

At the door he threw himself from his horse, sinking nearly to the armpits in water as he plunged into the shack.

"Father!"

It was a cry of misery and fear that rang in the ears of his chums, and in their hearts.

"Father!"

There was no answer to the call.

Beauclerc plunged in, reeling in the swirl, and stared wildly round the flooded hut in the dusky light.

"Father!"



The remittance-man was seated at the table, his head leaning forward on his arms. The water was nearly at the level of the plank table, swirling round him as he sat. On the table were cards, scattered as they had been left, and a few coins.

Beaulerc caught the remittance-man by the shoulder and shook him.

"Father!" he muttered huskily.

He lifted the man's head, and saw a dull, unconscious face.

The miserable man was plunged in so deep a sleep that even the water flowing round him had not awakened him.

Half an hour more and the flood would have been over him, and Lascelles Beaulerc would have been drowned like a rat in a trap.

He lurched heavily as his son drew him upright.

But for the schoolboy's grasp he would have slipped from the chair into the water.

Frank Richards and Bob peered in at the door.

"You've found him, Beau?"

"Yes," muttered Beaulerc huskily.

"Not—not—" stammered Frank.

"No," he is alive. Only—only"—Beaulerc's tongue stumbled—"only—only he's ill—unconscious."

"I—I see!" muttered Frank. It was not necessary for him to be told the nature of the wastrel's illness.

"Get him out," said Bob. "You can hold him on your horse, Cherub, and carry him to the camp; and we'll help."

"Right!"

Beaulerc raised the unconscious man to his feet.

But carrying him in the swirling water was a task beyond his powers.

Bob Lawless plunged in and helped him, while Frank Richards held the three horses.

By their united efforts the insensible remittance-man was got out of the shack and placed upon the black horse.

Beaulerc mounted behind him, holding him upright in the saddle and bearing his weight.

"Can you manage like that?" asked Frank dubiously.

"I've got to. It's the only way."

That was clear, but it was very doubtful whether the double-loaded horse could struggle through the flood.

It had to be chanced, and the three schoolboys pushed their steeds out into the water.

A good half-mile lay before them till the higher ground was reached, and the water was swirling in whirling currents.

Before twenty yards had been covered the black horse stepped into a gopher-hole, hidden by the water, and stumbled heavily.

There was a loud splash as Vere Beaulerc and the remittance-man fell together into the flood.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### In Deadly Peril.

"HELP!" Beaulerc was swimming now, supporting his father.

The black horse, with a loud whinny of terror, disappeared in the swirl of waters, swimming for safety, and vanished in a few moments in the gloom.

Frank Richards whirled round his pony towards his chum, and caught the remittance-man by the collar, dragging his head up.

"I've got him, Beau!" he panted.

Beaulerc found his feet in the water, standing submerged nearly to the shoulders.

The swirl of the flood would have carried him off his feet, but he clung to Frank's saddle.

Holding on with one hand, he dashed the water out of his eyes with the other.

His face was white now.

Half floating, half supported by Frank Richards, the remittance-man hung beside the pony, still unconscious.

"Back to the shack!" breathed Beaulerc. "We can never get through this! I've lost my horse, too!"

"The gee will be all right," said Bob. "He'll get out. But you won't see him again till to-morrow, that's a cert!"

"Back to the shack!"

The chums plunged away to the hut again. It was only too evident that the insensible man could not be taken away through the wild waters.

But they did not enter the hut.

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Vere Beaulerc clambered to the roof, and his chums helped him to drag up his father after him.

There, for the present, they were safe, though for how long there was no telling, for the water was rising fast.

Mr. Beaulerc was laid on the sloping roof, and Beaulerc looked down at his chums.

"Get off, you fellows!" he said. "If it's left much longer you'll never get through on horseback!"

"But you—"

"I'm staying with my father!"

Frank Richards set his teeth.

There were only two horses now, and it was plain that Beaulerc and his father could not be taken away on them.

It was not easy for the riders to save themselves, as it was, in the whirl of waters. "You can ride to the camp and get out a canoe," said Beaulerc. "There's no other way. Don't lose a minute! Heaven knows whether you'll get through alive!"

"I—I guess it's all that can be done!" said Bob Lawless grimly. "Wait till we come for you, Cherub! We won't lose a tick!"

Beaulerc's lips trembled.

"I—I'm sorry I've got you into this, you fellows," he muttered. "You shouldn't have come with me. I didn't think of the danger."

"Bust the danger!" growled Bob. "We shall get through O.K. If only the shack holds till we get back! Come on, Franky!"

Glady enough the chums would have taken Beaulerc with them to share their chance, but they knew he would not even think of deserting his father.

But as they moved away their hearts were heavy with fear for him.

They had a fight before them to get out of the flood, and if they failed it meant drowning and death—and still more certain death to the chum they left on the roof of the lonely shack.

But even if they won through it was doubtful if they could return in time to save him.

The shack was a flimsy structure, and might be swept away bodily in the flood; and, in any case, the water was evidently rising to a higher level than the roof.

Before the night was old the shack would be under at least three of four feet of water.

The sudden melting of the snows had swollen every stream.

The accumulated waters of the divide were rushing down to find their level on the plains, and on all sides low-lying land was flooded.

Frank looked back in the deepening gloom as he rode away with his chum, his heart like lead.

From the roof of the half-submerged hut Vere Beaulerc waved his hand, and then he disappeared from sight.

"Come on, Frank!"

"I'm with you, Bob!"

The chums were heading for Cedar Camp. But the trail had vanished from sight under the whirling waters, and only by the branches emerging from the stream could they pick their way.

Again and again the horses stumbled and plunged under, and they were drenched, but each time they righted and kept on.

As the darkness thickened and the rain fell more heavily, the lights of Cedar Camp came in sight at last in the distance.

Never had a sight been so gladdening to their eyes.

Those twinkling lights through the rainy gloom shone like beacons of hope.

"Look out, Franky!" yelled Bob.

He dragged his horse aside, splashing; but Frank Richards was not so quick.

The darkness blinded him, and he did not even see the danger till a second too late.

A great log, whirled along by the flood, crashed into his horse, and the animal went sprawling and plunging over.

Frank Richards found himself struggling in the water, head under.

He came up, gasping, and struck out for his life.

A hand grasped his collar, and dragged him up.

"Bob!" he panted.

"Hold on, Franky!"

Frank clutched wildly at his chum.

From the darkness came a distant squeal, the last he heard of the pony.

Bob Lawless dragged him up, and Frank slid upon the horse, behind his chum.

"Hold on to me," said Bob.

"My pony—"

"Hold on, you duffer!"

Bob Lawless rode on, with Franky behind, Frank's pony had vanished, whether swimming or drowned, he could not tell.

Bob, with a grim face, forced his horse onward towards the lights of the camp.

They came out on the high ground at last, and the horse squelched on through rain and mud.

"We're out of it, Franky," said Bob, in a low voice. "Thank goodness, it's not got so far as the camp! But—but the Cherub—"

"Hurry!" muttered Frank.

But hurry was impossible. The exhausted horse, double-laden, could only proceed at a crawling pace.

Frank dropped to the ground as soon as he had recovered himself a little, and walked beside the horse.

Fatigued, almost worn-out, the chums arrived in Cedar Camp.

But there was no time for resting. Within ten minutes of their arrival they were in a birch canoe, and the lantern in its prow gleamed out over a wild waste of waters as they paddled up the creek.

It was slow work against the current, and every moment masses of driftwood or broken ice whirled round the canoe.

A dozen times their lives seemed to hang by a thread.

But their arms never rested as they paddled the canoe on through the darkness, scarcely heeding the dangers that beset them at every stroke of the paddle.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

##### In the Shadow of Death.

DARKNESS lay round the lonely shack, in the midst of the swirling flood.

Silent, pale, but calm, Vere Beaulerc crouched on the sloping roof

close by the ridge, holding on to his unconscious father, lest by a movement the remittance-man should slip from his precarious refuge.

From the darkness came only the gleam of foam on the wild waters that rushed and hissed round the submerged shack.

Sometimes, from the distance, came a dull roar of a falling tree, washed out of the crumbling bank of the creek.

Past the shack, under the eyes of the schoolboy, floated torn branches and drift logs, and chunks of ice from the late freeze.

And still the water was rising, fed by the heavy flow from the slopes of the divide, and by the torrents of rain that turned every gully into a cataract.

Higher it crept, till it was at the eaves, and splashes invaded the shaly roof upon which Vere Beaulerc guarded his father—the father who, with all his faults and weaknesses, had never lost the love and respect of his son.

Higher and higher, like a wild animal creeping on its prey, with a dull, sullen murmur that sounded like a threat.

Beaulerc watched it as if fascinated. There was grim death for him in the rising waters, unless rescue came soon.

There was a long, shuddering sigh in the gloom, and Vere Beaulerc's grasp tightened upon his father's coat as he looked at him.

The insensible man was coming to himself.

Lascelles Beaulerc's eyes opened, and he stared upward strangely, stupidly.

He put his hand to his head and groaned.

"What—what is this?" he muttered. "Who is there?"

"Father!"

"Vere! It is you! What has happened?"

"There's a flood from the divide, dad."

"Oh, gad!"

The remittance-man lay silent for some minutes, trying to collect his dazed wits.

He sat up at last, and only his son's grasp kept him from rolling off the roof.

He started violently as he saw the white gleam of water licking at the edge of the roof.

"By gad!"

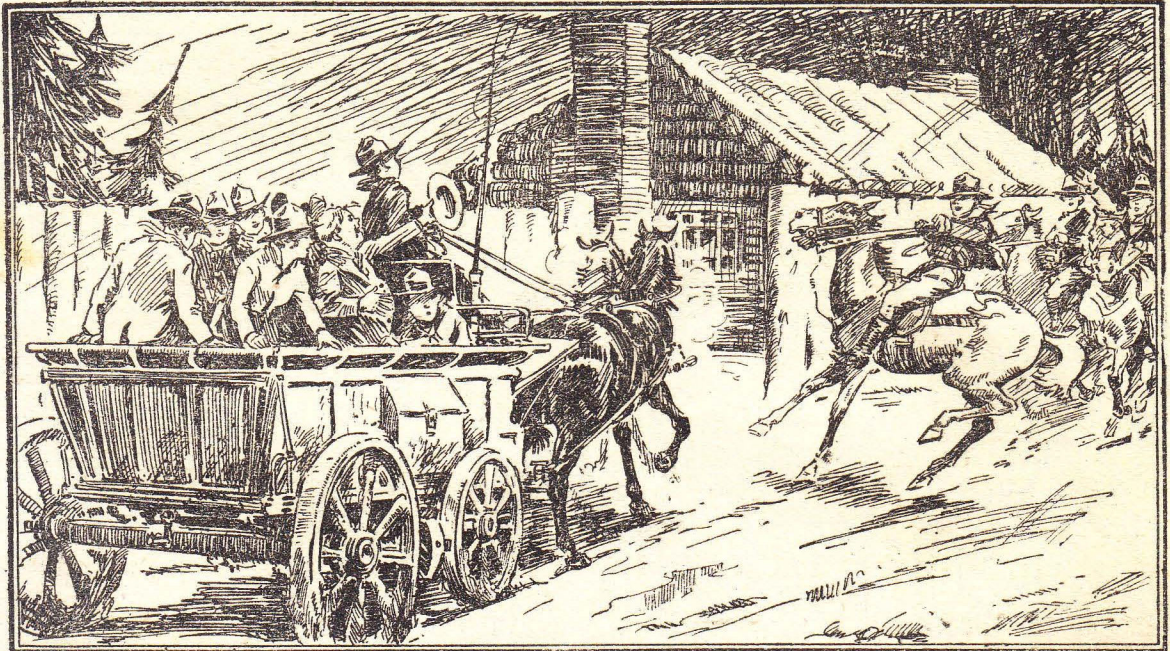
The sense of his peril was borne into his dizzy brain, and it had a sobering effect on him.

He shuddered violently, but, to Vere's relief, the dazed look faded out of his face, and intelligence dawned in the heavy eyes.

His grasp sought the ridge of the roof, and he was able to hold on now.

His other hand went to his head again. His head was aching and throbbing.





**FLOODED OUT!**—The post wagon from Thompson, with a crowd of boys and girls in it, drove up to the school as Frank Richards & Co. arrived there. "There's water out on the Thompson trail," said Dick Dawson. "Gunten had to collect us up in the wagon!" (See Chapter 2.)

"Vere! Where did you find me?"  
 "In the shack, father."  
 "I was—was—must have been asleep!"  
 "Yes," said Vere quietly.  
 The remittance-man's face was red for a moment.

Even the wastrel of the Thompson Valley was not quite lost to a sense of shame.  
 "When you came home from school?" he asked, after a pause.  
 "Yes. I came early."  
 There was an ominous movement of the roof.

"Under it the waters were beating, and round it the currents swirled.  
 Vere Beauclerc knew what the tremble meant, but he did not flinch.

At any moment the flimsy building might yield to the fierce pressure of the flood, and whirl headlong into the foam.

"Good heavens!" muttered Lascelles Beauclerc. "Vere, my dear boy, you should have gone—you should have saved yourself and left me!"

"I was not likely to, father," said the boy, with a faint smile. "We are not lost yet, dad. My friends came home with me, and they are gone to Cedar Camp for help. Any minute they may come."

"Lawless and Richards?"  
 "Yes, dad."  
 "They—they have seen me?" The white, wretched face reddened again.

"They helped me get you here, dad," said Beauclerc. "My horse was swept away. They will get back with a canoe as soon as they can."

"A canoe!" muttered the remittance-man. "What craft could live in this flood? They will not come—they will not try to come!"  
 "They will come," said Beauclerc confidently.

"Vere," muttered Lascelles Beauclerc, "you will obey me! And—and I have never told you before, my boy, but I have heard from my brother about you. He has asked about you, and if you care to go to him in the Old Country the way is open. I—I could not think of parting with you." His voice trembled a little. "I have been a bad father to you, Vere, but—but I cared for you, my boy, Heaven knows! After—after it's all over you will have a home and friends—better than this. The letter from—"

"Hark!" exclaimed Vere, starting up on the roof, his heart beating wildly.

Faintly, from the darkness of the night, came a distant "Hallo!"

"They are coming!" shouted Vere joyfully. The remittance-man raised himself upon one elbow, and stared into the darkness. Like a will-o'-the-wisp, a light danced on the troubled waters in the distance.

"The canoe!" exclaimed Vere. He shouted back:

"Bob! Frank! This way! Hallo, hallo!" An answering shout came from the waters. Vere Beauclerc watched the dancing light reflected on the waters, and shouted again and again.

The gleam of light came from the lantern in the bows of a birch canoe, and soon he could make out the little craft, with two occupants sturdily paddling.

Bob Lawless guided the canoe, with what seemed miraculous luck, amid the logs and uprooted trees, and it drew nearer and nearer.

The chums had followed the creek from the camp, till they came to the flooded area, and then they had to turn off among the tree-tops to reach the shack.

With all Bob's skill, it was doubtful if they would have found the submerged shack in the darkness, but for Beauclerc's shouting.

"That's the Cherub!" exclaimed Bob, in great relief, as Beauclerc's voice rang over the waters. "Give him a yell, Franky!"

The chums shouted as they paddled, and Beauclerc called back.

The light danced on the water as the birch canoe approached the shack, winding among the trees.

"Here we are, Cherub!"  
 "Thank Heaven!" panted Beauclerc.

He slid down the roof, and Frank Richards grasped him, and helped him into the canoe.

Mr. Beauclerc followed.

He was utterly weak and spent, and once he had let go his hold he slid helplessly, and would have rolled into the flood, but for the quick grasp of his son and Frank Richards.

The birch canoe rocked, as the remittance-man was dragged into it.

"All O.K.!" grinned Bob, who was all smiles now. "Thank goodness we found you, Cherub! We've been paddling round for you, I can tell you, till we heard your shout."

"The shack's going!" muttered Frank.

There was a grinding crash as the roof of the shack collapsed, and water bubbled up below.

The canoe shoved away.

"A near thing!" said Beauclerc quietly.  
 "Near enough!" said Bob. "But a miss is as good as a mile! Let her go, Franky! We've got to get to the ranch sharp. The popper and mopper will be no end anxious by this time."

"To the ranch?" he exclaimed.  
 "You bet!"  
 "But—"

Beauclerc glanced at his father, who had sunk into the bottom of the canoe, only half-conscious now. The boy's face flushed painfully.

"My dear man," said Bob, "your popper's got to be taken into shelter, and so have you! You're going to dig with us at the ranch for a bit. We can get into the ranch creek with the canoe, at the Red Bluffs. Give way, Franky!"

"What-ho!" said Frank.

The canoe glided away through the flood, threading a path among the trees, over the trail where the schoolboys had ridden that morning.

Beauclerc said no more. His father had not spoken.

It was an hour later that the canoe, leaving the flooded low land behind, reached the ranch creek at Red Bluffs, and was paddled up the stream against the rushing current.

A hundred yards from the ranch-house the canoe stopped, and Frank and Bob jumped ashore, and Vere Beauclerc helped his father out.

Through the rain, still falling heavily, they tramped up to the Lawless Ranch.

A light was burning in the porch, and Rancher Lawless was anxiously watching there.

He uttered an exclamation of relief at the sight of them.

"Here we are, popper, safe and sound!" said Bob cheerily. "Mr. Beauclerc's been flooded out, so we've brought you some guests, I guess."

"They are very welcome!" said the rancher. "Come in, Mr. Beauclerc! Take Vere to your room and give him a change of clothes, Bob."

And Frank Richards and Bob marched their chum into the ranch.

THE END.

(There will be another grand Backwoods story next Tuesday. See page 27.)

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A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO. BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME!"



## 6 The Brightest and Best Annual of the Year is the "Holiday Annual"!

VERNON-SMITH, THE BOUNDER OF GREYFRIARS, MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARS ON THE DAY OF HIS EXPULSION FROM THE SCHOOL! WHERE HAS HE GONE?



A Magnificent Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., and the mystery surrounding the disappearance of the Bounder.

By FRANK RICHARDS

(Author of the Famous School Tales of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, appearing in The "Magnet" Library.)

### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

All Together!

"ALL together, mind!" said Harry Wharton.  
"Right-ho!"  
"Quelchy will be here in a minute. You know what you've got to do. When—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter! When I begin, you all back me up—"

"But, I say—"

"Sit on his head, somebody! Now, you can leave all the talking to me," went on Harry Wharton impressively, looking around upon the excited faces in the Remove Form-room. "I'll pitch it to him like a Dutch uncle. But you're to back me up, to show Quelchy that the whole Form is in it."

"Hear, hear!"  
There was a thrill of excitement in the Remove Form-room at Greyfriars.

The juniors had come in a little early for afternoon lessons, and Mr. Quelch, the Form-master, had not arrived yet. When he did arrive, something in the nature of a surprise was awaiting him.

There was something "on" in the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form of Greyfriars.

One member of the Form was absent from his place. It was Vernon-Smith, the junior who was called the Bounder of Greyfriars. A "bounder" he undoubtedly was, and he had been unpopular enough in his Form, and the rival and enemy of Harry Wharton & Co.; and yet, curiously enough, it was Vernon-Smith, the Bounder, who occupied now the thoughts of the whole of the Remove. It was the Bounder about whom Harry Wharton and his friends

were concerned just now, to the exclusion of everything else.

For the Bounder was under sentence of expulsion!

That morning the sentence had been pronounced in the Head's study; that afternoon the Bounder was to leave Greyfriars for good!

Undoubtedly, Vernon-Smith had, in his time, done many things for which he fully deserved to be expelled from the school. Most of the fellows were agreed upon that. But, as Bob Cherry put it, the chopper had come down at the wrong moment.

For the Bounder just then was the hero of the hour. Was it not the Bounder who had played up like an International in the footer match with St. Jim's, and had pulled the game out of the fire with a really wonderful goal on the very stroke of time? After that, whatever the Bounder had done, one duty seemed clear to Harry Wharton & Co.—it was up to them to rally round Smithy, and save him if they could.

Harry Wharton had thought it out over dinner, and had planned this little demonstration in the Form-room. He reasoned it out that Mr. Quelch couldn't possibly be wholly impervious to public opinion in the Form. When he found that the Remove rose as one man to demand pardon for the Bounder, surely he was bound to take some notice? At all events, that was what the juniors hoped. There was a footstep in the passage outside. Harry Wharton raised his hand

"He's coming! All together, remember!"

"I say, you fellows," persisted Billy Bunter, "you'd better leave the talking to me. My opinion is— Yow-ow!" Bunter-broke off with a yelp as Johnny

Bull's heavy hand descended upon him.

"Ow, Bull, you beast!"

"Shurrup!"

The Form-room door opened.

Mr. Quelch strode in with rustling gown. The Form-master's severe face was a little more severe than usual. His expression was not promising, and some of the juniors felt their hearts sink a little. But Harry Wharton & Co. did not flinch. The Form rose to their feet as Mr. Quelch entered, and Harry Wharton started:

"If you please, sir—"

"If you please, sir—" chimed in the whole Remove.

Mr. Quelch stared at them.

"What is it?" he exclaimed. "What is the matter?"

"About Smithy, sir!" said Wharton.

"About Smithy, sir!" chimed in the chorus.

"What!" Mr. Quelch frowned, as he began to understand. "Really, Wharton—"

"If you please, sir, we want to ask you to go easy with poor old Smithy!" pursued Wharton, affecting not to see the Form-master's frown, or his gesture for silence. "We know he disobeyed orders, sir, and—and broke bounds, and gave you a lot of trouble, sir. We're all sorry for it!"

"Very sorry, sir!" came the chorus.

"But he did it with a good motive, sir. We should have been beaten at St. Jim's if the Bounder—I mean, if Vernon-Smith hadn't got there to play in the match. We should have been beaten to the wide!"

"Beaten hollow, sir!"

"Smithy saved the match, sir!"

"Of course, he did wrong. If he were flogged, sir, we wouldn't mind."

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"FOUND—AND LOST!"

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"Not a bit, sir!" chorused the Remove.

"But we think it's rather hard that poor old Smithy should be sacked, sir—I mean, expelled—when he was really trying to do his best for the Form. If you'd seen him take that goal at St. Jim's, sir—"

"It was a ripping goal, sir!"  
"Right on the stroke of time, sir," said Wharton enthusiastically, heedless of the Form-master's frown and raised hand. "He charged the goalkeeper right in, sir, ball and all, and it was less'n a minute to the whistle—"

"Wharton!"  
"We know he was wrong to break bounds, sir, and give you a chase after him, and—the other things he did. We don't excuse them, sir—"  
"Oh, no, sir—not at all, sir!" came the chorus.

"We think that if he were punished some other way, sir, and not expelled, it would meet the case, if you would be so kind, sir!"

"So very kind, sir!" came in a roar.  
"We should take it as a great and special favour to the Form, sir—"

"A tremendous favour, sir—"  
"And we'd look after Smithy, and see that he behaved himself in future, sir—"

"Wharton! Silence! Do you hear? Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "How dare you deafen me in this way?"

"We—we didn't mean to deafen you, sir," said Wharton, faltering a little. "But—but we should like you to know how the Remove feels about the matter, sir. We all feel that Smithy is getting it too thick for what he did."

"Much too thick, sir!"  
"We don't want him to be expelled. Anything else—"

"Yes, anything, sir!"  
"Any old thing!" said Bob Cherry.

"Will you be silent?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Now, listen to me, my boys!" He raised his hand again. "You have no right to speak in this way, and you deserve to be punished for impertinence. But I do not wish to be severe with you. I do not wish you to feel that your Form-fellow has been treated with undue severity. You are all aware of what Vernon-Smith did. He was under detention, and he left the school against my strict orders. I brought him back, and overlooked what he had done; and he broke out again, and fled. I followed him a great distance, and he intercepted a telegram sent by me—which is an offence against the law. He bribed a cabman to lose me in a lonely place, so that I had my long journey for nothing. If such conduct were pardoned, there would be an end to all order and discipline in the school. It is impossible to pardon Vernon-Smith!"

"But, sir—"

"I have considered the matter very carefully. I understand that you are sorry for your Form-fellow, and I am willing to credit you with the best intentions in speaking up for him. But if you reflect upon the matter, you will see that what you ask is impossible. Vernon-Smith's record, ever since he has been in this school, has been very bad. This time he has gone too far for pardon. I thought the matter out seriously before I demanded his expulsion. The headmaster fully agrees with me that there is nothing else to be done!"

"But, sir—"  
"I have made this explanation," said Mr. Quelch severely, "in order that you may understand that Vernon-Smith has not been condemned hastily, and that it is utterly useless to make any appeal in

his favour. The subject will now be dropped!"

"But, sir—"  
"Silence! We shall now proceed with lessons!"

"If you please, sir—"  
"Yes, sir, if you please—"

Mr. Quelch's lips tightened.  
"The next boy who speaks will be caned!" he said.

"Oh!"  
The Remove sat down. There was evidently nothing more to be said after that. They sat with grim looks while lessons proceeded.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.**

**Mr. Vernon-Smith Says "No!"**

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. were looking glum as they came out of the Form-room after lessons. They had tried—and they had failed.

There was no chance for the Bounder. That afternoon his father was to come and take him away—and Greyfriars would see the last of him.

Harry Wharton had never dreamed for a moment that he would feel so much concern about the fate of his old rival and foe. Had it happened at a time when he was at daggers drawn with the Bounder, when the latter was seeking to oust him from his position as captain of the Remove, it would have been different, certainly. But the Bounder seemed to have changed so much lately—he had played up in the footer match like a real sportsman—and his defiance of authority in the school, for the purpose of getting to that match, much as it angered the masters, appealed to the juniors by its very daring and recklessness.

Almost to a man, the Remove would have taken any steps to save the Bounder from the fate his recklessness had brought upon him; but it seemed that there was nothing to be done. The appeal to Mr. Quelch had failed, and in an hour or two more Greyfriars would know the Bounder no longer.

"It's rotten!" said Bob Cherry. "The rottenest part of it is for Smithy to get it in the neck like this, just when he seems to have turned over a new leaf and become a really decent chap."

"That's the worst of it," Wharton agreed. "Quelch is as hard as iron. I suppose he's right, from his point of view."

"And the Bounder will have to go!" said Frank Nugent.

"I suppose so."

"His pater is coming in the car to fetch him away, I hear," Johnny Bull remarked. "I fancy we shall see Smith senior in a tantrum. He will be waxy."

"I'm afraid that won't make any difference to the Head."

"No. Smith's pater isn't the most tactful of men, either," said Bob Cherry. "He's more likely to ruffle the Head than to soothe him."

The Co. went up to the Remove passage to look for Vernon-Smith. He had been ordered to keep in his study until his father came. Wharton knocked at the study door.

"Come in!"  
The clear, cool, metallic voice of the Bounder was as firm as ever.

Vernon-Smith was seated in his arm-chair, with a cigarette between his lips, smoking.

He nodded coolly to the juniors through a little cloud of smoke.

Wharton's expression changed. The rule against juniors smoking was a very strict one at Greyfriars; and yet, even with the sentence of expulsion pro-

nounced upon him, the Bounder was a bounder still.

"Did you put it to Quelch?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Yes."  
"And what did he say?"

"He shut us up."  
"I expected that. He's hard as nails."

The Bounder chuckled. "Well, I did lead him a dance, that's certain. Fancy the old bird hopping about in the muddy fields, looking for the road, after the cabby planted him there!"

"You don't seem very downhearted about it," said Harry.

"I'm not downhearted. I've got it in the neck; but I'm not going to whine," said Vernon-Smith, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"You'd better put that cigarette away," said Nugent uneasily.

"Why? I'm sacked. They can't do anything else to me. May as well smoke a last fag." But the Bounder threw it into the grate as he spoke. "I'm not finished yet, though. My pater is coming here, and he may be able to get round the Head. I've telegraphed the whole business to him. He won't let me be sacked if he can help it."

"I hope he'll be able to make some difference," said Wharton. "I'm afraid the Head won't listen to him, though."

"Even then—"  
The Bounder paused.

"Well, what then?"

"I'm not gone yet," said Vernon-Smith coolly. "I've got great sticking powers, you know. I said that I'd play in the St. Jim's match, in spite of Quelch, and I did it, didn't I?"

"Yes, you did; but—"

"And I'm not gone yet. If I can manage it, I'm not going. I'm not going to be marked for life with the disgrace of expulsion from school, if I can help it."

The juniors stared at him blankly.

"But how can you help it?" asked Wharton. "You can't stay after the Head says you are to go."

The Bounder smiled.

"There was a time when Bob Cherry was sacked, and he wouldn't go—"

"That was different." Wharton could not help a hardness creeping into his voice. His chum Bob Cherry had certainly been "sacked" on that unfortunate occasion, but it was due to a plot of the Bounder, and the truth had come out at last. "Bob was innocent of what was said against him, and you're not."

"Yes, I know that. All the same—"

He paused again.

"You've got some scheme in your head for staying on, although you've been sacked?" asked Nugent.

"Yes, if my pater fails to influence the Head."

"Not much good counting on that," said Johnny Bull. "The Head won't listen to him for a moment. He's got his back up quite as much as Quelch."

"Well, we shall see."  
Toot, toot, toot!

It was the sound of a motor-car in the Close. The Bounder rose lazily to his feet.

"That's my pater!" he said.

The junior stepped to the study window. Outside the School House a large motor-car had stopped, and from the car a somewhat stout gentleman in a silk hat was descending. They knew him by sight. Samuel Vernon-Smith, the millionaire financier—the man who had piled up an immense fortune in speculation on the Stock Exchange, by methods which, it was hinted in many quarters, would not bear the popular—No. 130.

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the closest investigation. Samuel Vernon-Smith was one of those peculiar products of this modern age who toil not, neither do they spin, yet who have a marvellous gift of annexing wealth created by others.

The juniors caught a glimpse of the millionaire's face as he passed into the house, and they saw that it was red and frowning. Samuel Vernon-Smith had evidently arrived at Greyfriars in a very bad temper.

"I must go down," said the Bounder.

He hurried out of the study, and the juniors followed him. Quite a crowd had gathered in the hall to see the millionaire come in. Samuel Vernon-Smith had visited Greyfriars before, and the fellows knew him well by sight. That he was purse-proud, overbearing and ruthless in his dealings, they all knew. And there was a considerable amount of speculation among the fellows as to whether Mr. Vernon-Smith would succeed in overruling the Head, and getting his son's sentence rescinded.

"Oh, so there you are!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith gruffly, as his son came forward to greet him. "A pretty pickle you are in now, ain't you?"

"I'm sorry, dad."

"Lot of good that is!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Sacked—by gad!—expelled, by Jove! You ought to be flogged, sir!"

"I'm willing to be flogged instead; but the Head doesn't seem to see it," said Vernon-Smith, with a smile.

"Look here, you're not going," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, heedless of the curious ears that heard all that he said. "Do you see? No son of mine is going to be expelled from school. I won't have it!"

"But—"

"Nonsense! I tell you I won't have it! Where's the Head?" demanded Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I've come here to see the Head."

Trotter, the page, came forward, and Mr. Vernon-Smith was conducted to the Head's study.

Dr. Locke had been expecting him, and he had given orders that the millionaire was to be shown in immediately he arrived.

The door of the Head's study closed upon Mr. Vernon-Smith, and the fellows in the hall were left in a buzz of excitement.

"I'd like to hear the old boy jawing the Head!" chuckled Coker of the Fifth. "I'm afraid it won't be any good, Smith, you young rascal!"

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders. It was curious, but of all the fellows, Vernon-Smith seemed the least concerned by what was passing. He had all at stake—and yet his coolness was not diminished, and his hardy nature did not flinch. With all his faults, the Bounder of Greyfriars was game to the backbone, and when he had to answer for his sins, he had plenty of courage to face the music.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### A Stormy Interview!

**D**R. LOCKE, the Head of Greyfriars, wore a worried look as Samuel Vernon-Smith, the millionaire, was shown into his study.

The Head of Greyfriars had had dealings with Mr. Vernon-Smith before. He knew his overbearing character, and the quiet, scholarly old gentleman dreaded the interview. And at one time, too, their association had been far from

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pleasant, for Mr. Vernon-Smith, among his many financial activities, had a large interest in a certain moneylending firm—and at one time Dr. Locke had been in the grip of that firm. The debt was paid, the unpleasant incident was closed for ever; but it had left an unpleasant memory behind, and it required all the good old doctor's old-fashioned courtesy to make him urbane to the millionaire financier and moneylender.

And it would not have been pleasant, under any circumstances, to interview the parent of a boy sentenced to be expelled. The parent could not be expected to view the matter in the same light as the headmaster of the school.

Samuel Vernon-Smith probably would be able to find excuses for the Bounder's conduct, where Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch could find none.

The Head rose, with his polite bow, and shook hands mechanically with the millionaire.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Vernon-Smith! I am sorry for the news I was compelled to send you. This is not a pleasant visit for you, I fear."

"Far from that, sir!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith grimly.

"I am sorry. It would really have been better for your son to be sent home, as I wished, without this visit, which must be exceedingly unpleasant to you. However, when you wired to me that you preferred to come here for him—"

"I came here more to see you Dr. Locke, than to fetch my son away. I still hope that it will not be necessary to remove my boy from the school."

Dr. Locke compressed his lips. "I thought that I had made myself quite clear," he said coldly. "Vernon-Smith has been expelled for bad conduct."

"But matters can generally be arranged," urged the millionaire. "I don't say the boy hasn't done wrong—I dare say he has. If you say he has, I'm willing to admit that you are the best judge. But so severe a punishment—"

"Not a whit too severe!" said the Head warmly.

"Think of the harm it will do him," said Vernon-Smith. "I may send him to another school, but what public school of any standing will admit him when it is known that he has been expelled from a school like Greyfriars? It is a stigma that will cling to him all his days."

"He knew the risk."

"It is not as if he had done anything actually wicked—stealing, or anything like that," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "As I understand it, he has been guilty of disobedience, defiance of authority. I don't deny that he is obstinate and wilful. But surely a flogging—"

"He has been flogged several times without the slightest result in changing his character."

"What exactly has he done?"

"It is hard to say what he has not done. He has had a bad record all the time he has been at Greyfriars, and several times he has been forgiven and allowed another chance. This time it is impossible. He was guilty of a trick upon the German master here, and another lad told about him. He assaulted that lad in a brutal manner, and for that offence he was sentenced to detention. One afternoon he was allowed freedom from detention to play in a football match, and instead of doing so, he played a wretched trick upon the German master. Yesterday he wished to be freed from detention again on the plea of another football-match, and it was refused. He broke bounds and fled. He was caught and brought back,

and then he escaped from the room he was confined in, climbing over the roof at the risk of his life."

The millionaire grinned involuntarily. It was quite evident that he was not at all displeased by this account of his son, though he affected to deplore it.

"That was plucky, you will admit, sir?"

"It was pluck misplaced!" said the headmaster coldly. "If he had fallen and been killed, what would you have said?"

"Oh, he can take care of himself! But after that?"

"After that he seized another boy's motor-bicycle by force and fled upon it. His Form-master followed him to the school where the football-match was being played. He sent a telegram to the headmaster of that school. Vernon-Smith intercepted it."

"The young rascal!"

"Then he bribed a cabman to take Mr. Quelch into a lonely place, under pretence of driving to the school, and to lose him there."

"What resource!"

The millionaire uttered those words involuntarily with a subdued chuckle. But he became grave again immediately as he caught the doctor's frigid look.

"And that is all?" he asked.

"That is all!" said the Head. "I think it is enough. To allow him to remain at the school would be weakness after what he has done. It would be subversive of all discipline and order. I am sorry, but he must go."

"Then I shall conclude, sir, that there are personal reasons at the bottom of this—a personal dislike of my son—founded, I suppose, upon our former dealings," said the millionaire harshly.

"You may conclude what you like, sir," said Dr. Locke tartly. "It does not seem to me useful in any way to continue this interview."

"There is an appeal from you, Dr. Locke, to the board of governors."

"The board of governors would not be likely to override my decision. If they knew the circumstances, they would be far more likely to condemn my leniency in allowing Vernon-Smith to remain here after so many former offences."

"I ask one more chance for my son!"

"I am sorry, very sorry, that I cannot grant it. My decision is irrevocable," said the Head. "Mr. Quelch demanded this sentence, and I fully concurred. To change my decision would be an insult to him."

"May I see Mr. Quelch, and make some attempt to arrange matters to his satisfaction?"

"I will not allow you to insult my colleague with offers of money, if that is what you mean."

The millionaire clenched his knuckly hand.

"Then it comes to this, that you are determined to send my son away in disgrace from this school?"

"I have no choice in the matter." "Very well, sir, it is in your power; but you have not finished with me. Do you know that I could buy up Greyfriars School, lock, stock, and barrel, without missing the money, if I chose?" the millionaire exclaimed savagely.

The Head's lip curled.

"I have no doubt you could if Greyfriars were for sale, but it is not!"

"Once more I repeat I am willing to agree to any terms, but I cannot consent for my son to be driven from school in disgrace."

"I can only adhere to what I have

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said, Mr. Vernon-Smith. I really think I had better bid you good-afternoon."

Mr. Vernon-Smith glared at the doctor from under his beetling brows, his eyes gleaming, his jaw squarer than ever. But in the scholarly face, with its rim of white hair, he read a firmness quite equal to his own. The last word had been said, and Mr. Vernon-Smith knew that it was useless to say more.

"Very well, sir," he said thickly; "but you will hear from me again!"

He strode out of the study, and closed the door with a slam. Dr. Locke sank into his chair almost limply.

"Thank goodness that is over," he murmured; and his face quite brightened up at the thought that in a few minutes more he would be relieved of the Vernon-Smiths, father and son.

He listened for the sound of the motor-car in the Close. He could not settle down to any occupation until his disturbing visitor was gone. But there was no toot from the motor-horn—no grinding of wheels on the gravel. The minutes passed, and still there was no audible indication of the departure of Mr. Vernon-Smith.

Why did he not go?

Ten minutes—surely that was enough, if the expelled junior had his belongings ready packed, as had been ordered. Was the Bounder saying farewells so long? The Head felt vaguely uneasy.

Suddenly, without a knock, the door of the study was flung open. Mr. Vernon-Smith, flushed and angry, appeared.

Dr. Locke started to his feet. His anger flashed up at this new intrusion.

"Sir, what is the meaning of this? What—"

"Where is my son?"

"What?"

"My son cannot be found! Where is he?" demanded the millionaire harshly. "What trick is this you are playing?"

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**The Vanished Schoolboy!**

"WHERE is my son?"

Dr. Locke gazed blankly at the millionaire.

Of all the reasons he had thought of to account for the delay in the millionaire's departure, certainly this was the last that would have occurred to his mind. There was no reason, so far as Dr. Locke knew, why Vernon-Smith should not be found. The question took him utterly by surprise.

"Your son!" he exclaimed at last.

Mr. Vernon-Smith brought a large-sized fist down upon the Head's writing-table with a concussion that made the ink dance in the well.

"Yes, sir. What trick is this?"

"Trick!" exclaimed the Head indignantly.

"I saw my son for one minute when I arrived here," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Now, apparently, he cannot be found. Where is he?"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the Head sharply. "Of course he can be found. I will order him to be found at once. I suppose he is in hiding somewhere, in order to give more trouble—a thing he delights in."

Mr. Vernon-Smith looked at his watch.

"I can remain a quarter of an hour, at the furthest," he said. "I have to appear at an important City function this evening. You have said that I am to take my son away. I am ready to do so. He is here, in your charge—produce him. If he is not produced in a quarter of an hour, I go without him!"

"You will certainly not go without

him," said the Head, puzzled and extremely annoyed by this new development. "He shall be found in less than a quarter of an hour."

"I will wait."

Mr. Vernon-Smith sat down.

Dr. Locke hurried out of the study. In the passage and the hall a crowd was gathered, most of the fellows talking at once. The buzz died down as the agitated headmaster appeared.

"Boys, do you know where Vernon-Smith is?"

"No, sir."

"When did you see him last—any of you?"

"He was here when his pater came, sir," said Coker, of the Fifth. "He seems to have disappeared since then."

"We've looked in his study," said Temple, of the Fourth. "He ain't there. And he's not in the Close."

"Nor in the gym," said Bob Cherry.

"Nor in the Cloisters," said Harry Wharton, who had gone thither to look for the vanished Bounder.

"Nor anywhere we've looked, sir," said Tom Brown.

"He must be found," said the Head, frowning. "His father must leave to keep an appointment in a quarter of an hour, and the boy must go with him. Pray oblige me by looking for him!"

"Certainly, sir."

"I say, you fellows, we may as well go and look along the river," Billy Bunter remarked, loud enough for the Head to hear.

Dr. Locke gave quite a jump.

"Bunter! What did you say, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter blinked at his headmaster through his big spectacles. He was very pleased at having made an impression.

"I said we might look along the river, sir."

"And why?" asked Dr. Locke sternly. "What reason have you to suppose, Bunter, that Vernon-Smith may be found in the neighbourhood of the river?"

"I—I thought he might have drowned himself, sir."

"What!"

Bunter jumped in his turn. The Head's voice was terrifying.

"Shurrup, you fat duffer!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"How dare you make such a wicked and ridiculous suggestion, Bunter?" thundered the Head.

Bunter backed away in alarm.

"I—I say—I mean—it occurred to me, sir," he stammered. "I saw Smithy march off after his father came, sir, and he was looking simply desperate. And—he said this morning, sir—he said—he said—"

"What did he say?"

"I—I won't tell you, sir, if—if you don't want to hear."

"Tell me at once, Bunter!"

"Well, sir, he said— You're sure you won't mind, sir?"

"I order you to tell me immediately, you stupid boy!" said the Head, breathing hard.

"Yes, sir. That alters the case, sir. He said that old Quelch would be sorry for having driven him to what he was going to do, sir."

"How dare you speak of your Form-



WHERE IS THE BOUNDER?—Suddenly the door of the study was flung open, and Mr. Vernon-Smith, flushed and angry, appeared. Dr. Locke started to his feet. "Sir, what is the meaning of this? What—" "My son cannot be found! Where is he?" demanded the millionaire harshly. "What trick is this you are playing?" (See Chapter 3.)



master in that disrespectful manner, Bunter?"

"B-b-but you ordered me to tell you what he said, sir," stammered Bunter. "Of course, I never allude to old Quelch as old Quelch, sir. The Bounder said old Quelch. I'm always very careful, sir, to speak respectfully when I mention old Quelch myself."

"You stupid boy! Be silent! Boys, pray look for Vernon-Smith. I shall be very much obliged if you can find him."

The crowd rushed off in search of the Bounder. They wanted to oblige the Head, and they were very curious to learn what had become of Vernon-Smith. Some of the fellows, indeed, were inclined to put faith in Bunter's suggestion, that the Bounder had done something madly reckless and desperate. But many more were of the opinion that it was a trick of some sort—one of those tricks the Bounder was famous for. Everybody knew that he was determined not to leave Greyfriars if he could help it, and his disappearance at this moment was probably a "dodge."

All the same, a large number of the fellows made their way down to the river. Harry Wharton's face was dark and clouded. Was it possible—The dark thought forced itself into his mind as he stood on the landing-raft, and gazed upon the shining, murmuring waters of the Sark.

The Bounder had been in a desperate and reckless mood—his punishment was heavy, and he had felt it to be unjust—and perhaps he had feared to go home. For, strong as his father's affection was for him, the millionaire would certainly be exasperated at the "mucker" his son had made, and the homecoming of the expelled junior would be decidedly disagreeable.

And the terrible word "suicide"—what a disgrace for the school that had cast him forth—for the master who had refused to pardon him! It was possible—barely possible—that the Bounder, wrought up to a pitch of excitement and malice, had done that rash deed!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Can you see anything, Bob?"

Bob Cherry was dashing along the towing-path.

The other fellows dashed after him. Bob bent down in the half-submerged rushes by the river's edge, and drew out a cap—a Greyfriars cap. It was wet through, floating in the water, and caught in the rushes.

Bob held up the drenched cap, dripping with water. A hush fell upon the juniors as they looked at it.

Bob turned it over, and pointed silently to the name written inside the cap.

"It's the Bounder's!" muttered Wharton.

"Vernon-Smith's!"

With a chill at their hearts, the juniors stared at the river, growing dim and dusky in the September evening.

Where was the Bounder?

Could those glimmering waters tell a tale of tragedy—of a desperate plunge—a white, upturned face staring unseeingly as it floated away?

"Good heavens!" muttered Nugent.

There was nothing else to be seen. But that drenched and dripping cap seemed to tell its own tale.

"It's impossible!" muttered Bulstrode. "Impossible! Smithy wouldn't be such a fool!"

"Sure, and there's the cap entirely!"

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NEXT  
TUESDAY!

"FOUND—AND LOST!"

said Micky Desmond, through his chattering teeth.

"Better take it to the Head!" said Bob, in a low voice.

"I suppose so, but—"

"He can't have done it," said Nugent, as the juniors turned back towards the school. "It is a trick. We all know the Bounder. He's playing this dodge to make the Head sorry he sacked him."

"I hope so," said Wharton.

"You don't think—"

"I'm blest if I know what to think!"

The juniors returned silently and gloomily into the Close. Coker of the Fifth met them as they came in.

"Found anything?" he asked.

"This," said Bob, holding up the cap. Coker turned quite pale.

"Oh crumbs! Where?"

"In the river."

"Better take it to the Head!"

They went to the School House. Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, stopped them as they came in. His eyes were on the drenched cap at once.

"Is that Smith's?" he asked.

"Yes."

"You found it—"

"It was caught in the rushes—in the river."

Wingate compressed his lips.

"I believe it is a rotten trick," he said.

"But come to the Head."

Three or four of the juniors went with Wingate to the Head's study. Other fellows had come in from various directions—with no news of the Bounder. The search was evidently useless. If the Bounder was still living, he was well hidden. Wingate and the Removites entered the Head's study. Dr. Locke was there, sitting grimly silent. Mr. Vernon-Smith had lighted a big cigar. Dr. Locke looked up, and his gaze seemed to become frozen on the drenched cap. He did not need to ask whose it was, or where it had been found.

"Well, where is my son?" demanded Mr. Vernon-Smith, rising to his feet. "Time's up—I must go!" Then his gaze fell upon the cap. He grasped it from Bob Cherry's hand, and looked at it, and read his son's name inside it. He turned a startled gaze upon the Head.

"What does this mean, Dr. Locke?" he demanded.

"I know no more than you do," said the Head. "Your son has deliberately chosen to absent himself. That is all I can say."

"We found this in the river, sir," said Bob.

"Did you see my son?"

"No, sir!"

"This is his cap," said the millionaire. "Here is his name written in it. Dr. Locke, if anything has happened to my son, those responsible shall pay dearly for it!"

"Pray moderate your language, sir," said the Head angrily. "The person responsible for your son's misconduct is the father who has allowed him to grow up wilful and headstrong. I do not believe what this would imply—I think it is a trick, sir—a miserable trick on the part of your son, to cause more trouble than he has caused already."

"I trust that will prove to be the case," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "But the fact remains that, after demanding that I should take my son away, you have failed to hand him over to me. For what happens while he is in your charge, you are responsible. Kindly let me know by telegraph as soon as he is found!"

And the millionaire strode from the study.

Five minutes later, the zip-zip-zip of the motor-car was heard as it drove out of the old gateway of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith's father was gone. But where was Vernon-Smith?

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

##### No News!

THAT evening there were hushed voices and serious faces in Greyfriars School.

The sudden vanishing of Vernon-Smith, and the mystery that surrounded it, cast a gloom upon all the school.

No further trace of him had been discovered—though the search had gone on. That he was not within the walls of Greyfriars seemed pretty certain, for the school had been searched from top to bottom. Gosling, the porter, and Trotter, the page, and most of the boys, had hunted high and low. Even the ruined tower had been searched, from the vault underneath to the topmost room, where the stars winked in through the crevices in the shattered old walls. Even the crypt under the old chapel had been explored. But there was no sign of the Bounder.

He had gone, apparently—he might be staying in the neighbourhood, perhaps; unless—unless—and that dark thought lurked in every mind—unless he was lying cold and still amid the dark waters of the Sark.

But there were many arguments against that. A fellow in a wild pitch of hysterical excitement, beside himself, might have done such a foolish thing. But the fellows all remembered that the Bounder had been perfectly cool and self-possessed.

Then, again, his father evidently did not believe that anything serious had happened—even the most important business appointment would hardly have taken Mr. Vernon-Smith back to London if he had believed that it was possible.

And if Mr. Vernon-Smith was satisfied that nothing had happened to his son, there was no need for anyone else to be alarmed.

And yet—There was a "yet." The Bounder was a peculiar fellow; and the thing best known about him was that one never really knew what he might do next.

"He's sure to turn up to-morrow," said Bolsover major. "He's not ass enough to do a thing like that, you know. Most likely he's gone home, after playing that trick, to score off the Head and old Quelch."

"Then we shall hear about it to-morrow," said Wharton.

"I hope we shall," said Nugent. "I can't think anything's really happened."

And the school went to bed that night without any further news of the Bounder.

The Head had already communicated with the police, and if nothing was heard of Vernon-Smith in the morning, a general search was to be made.

And in the morning, nothing was heard.

Early in the morning a telegram came for the Head from Mr. Vernon-Smith; but it was not to give news of his son. It was to inquire whether he had been found.

After morning lessons, the juniors saw Inspector Lucas from Courtfield come into the School House, and he remained some time with the Head.

They heard later that the river had been dragged in several places.

(Continued on page 25.)

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



IN SPITE OF ALL THE TROUBLE WHICH ARISES AMONG THE ST. JIM'S JUNIORS, THE SAINTS WIN THE FIRST FOOTBALL MATCH OF THE SEASON!



# TROUBLE IN THE CAMP!



A Splendid Long Complete Tale of TOM MERRY & CO., The Chums of St. Jim's.



:: By ::

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Drastic Measures!

"WHERE'S Brooke?" Tom Merry's face was flushed with annoyance as he asked the question.

Football practice had commenced at St. Jim's, and a score of juniors had assembled on Little Side, clad in shorts and jerseys.

Dick Brooke, the day boy, was not to be seen.

Tom Merry frowned, and repeated his question.

"Where's Brooke? Does anybody know?"

"Are you addressin' me, dear boy?" drawled Cardew of the Fourth.

"Not you in particular. But if you know where the fellow is, say so."

Cardew shrugged his shoulders.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" he murmured.

"You're rather pally with Brooke," said Tom Merry, "and I thought you might know where he was."

"I don't keep a check on his goin' out an' his comin' in," said Cardew.

"Well, this is the third time he's cut footer practice," said the captain of the Shell. "I'm jolly annoyed about it."

"You look it, dear boy!"

Tom Merry certainly did.

On two occasions Dick Brooke had failed to turn up to practice. He had been severely cautioned each time, and now he had transgressed again.

Dick Brooke was down to play in the first match of the season—against Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were a very smart set of footballers, and it was essential that every fellow in the St. Jim's team should put in plenty of practice.

Tom Merry was very angry to think that Dick Brooke had disobeyed his orders.

"I'll give him ten minutes to turn up!" he said grimly.

"And if he doesn't?" queried Jack Blake.

"I shall drop him from the eleven."

"Oh!"

There was a strong chorus of disapproval.

Dick Brooke was a very popular fellow. His schoolfellows didn't wish to see him dropped from the team. True, this was the third time he had cut practice, but then, he must have had very good reasons for so doing.

"Wouldn't it be fairer to hear what Brooke has to say before you drop him from the eleven?" said Figgins.

Tom Merry frowned.

"There's no excuse for Brooke," he said. "I've cautioned him twice. If he's not here in ten minutes, he sha'n't play against Rookwood."

A loud murmur of disapproval arose. The juniors felt that Tom Merry was acting in a rather unreasonable and high-handed manner.

The minutes passed, and Dick Brooke failed to put in an appearance.

At length Tom Merry glanced at his watch.

"Time's up!" he said shortly.

"Brooke's name is coming off the list."

"Then you can take mine off as well!" said Cardew heatedly.

"What?"

"If Brooke doesn't play, I sha'n't!"

"Neither shall I!" said Figgins.

And Kerr and Fatty Wynn backed up their leader, as in duty bound.

Tom Merry gave a gasp.

"This—this is sheer mutiny!" he exclaimed.

"Call it what you like," said Figgins, "but you're not going to have matters all your own way, Tom Merry. Give Brooke a chance to explain his absence before you chuck him out of the team."

"He's got no excuse to offer."

"How do you know?"

"If he had any good reason for cutting practice he'd have given it before, when I cautioned him."

"But it might have been some domestic maitah that he was afraid to speak about," suggested Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Rubbish!"

"If you chawctewise my wemarks as wubbish, Tom Mewwy—"

"Oh, dry up, Gussy!"

Tom Merry found himself surrounded by a sea of hostile faces. Trouble of a serious nature was brewing in the ranks of the St. Jim's footballers, unless Tom Merry climbed down and altered his decision concerning Dick Brooke. But Tom could be as obstinate as a mule on occasion, and he was not likely to do that.

"I'll take no excuse from Brooke," he said, "and that finishes the matter. Now we'll get on with the practice. Where are you going, Blake?"

Jack Blake strolled away without replying. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed him.

Tom Merry's brow grew dark with anger.

"What's the little game?" he demanded.

"We want fair play for Brooke," said Figgins, "and we're not going to kick a football again until we get it! Come on, you fellows!"

And the New House players followed Blake and D'Arcy. Cardew also strolled away.

Tom Merry stood dumbfounded. He had had some surprising experiences in his time, but this fair! took the wind out of his sails. It was wholesale desertion. And all because he had dropped Dick Brooke from the team!

Three fellows remained loyal.

Monty Lowther, Manners, and Talbot remained on the field.

Tom Merry shouted after the renegades to return, but Lowther caught his chum by the arm.

"Leave them alone, Tommy," he said. "They'll jolly soon come to their senses. They're a bit excited, that's all. Brooke happens to be a popular hero, you know."

"Popular hero or not, he must pay the penalty if he doesn't turn up to practice!" said Tom Merry angrily. "Those fellows must be potty to desert the team like this. How do they suppose we're going to lick Rookwood?"

"There's still four of the old brigade left," said Manners. "We can fill up with reserves."

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A NEW LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S. BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE WONDER TEAM!"





**WELL PLAYED, SAINTS!**—Dick Brooke went racing down the field with the ball at his toes. He cleverly tricked three men in succession, and then passed the leather to Tom Merry. Tom made no mistake with his shot. He sent in a brilliant first-time effort, which had the Rookwood goalie beaten all the way. "Hurrah! Well played, St. Jim's!" (See Chapter 3.)

"And get licked by about tea to nil!" said Tom Merry bitterly. "This sort of thing makes a fellow feel like resigning from the captancy."

"Don't do that, for goodness' sake!" said Talbot, in alarm. "That will only make bad worse. We don't want to start the season in a state of hopeless chaos."

"No jolly fear!" said Monty Lowther. "Let's keep the flag flying, Tommy. Those silly duffers will soon come round."

But the rebellious footballers did nothing of the sort.

Tom Merry and the three fellows who had remained loyal started to practise. They hoped that the other members of the eleven would cool down and come and join them. But the time passed, and Figgins & Co. and Jack Blake & Co. remained absent.

Tom Merry was in very ill-humour as he tramped off the field. His three chums tried to console and cheer him, but their efforts were futile.

"Those fellows are a beastly lot of traitors!" he snapped. "Fancy leaving the team in the lurch just because I couldn't see my way clear to play a slacker in the eleven!"

"They'll all come back," said Manners, "if only—"

"Only what?"

"If only you'll play Brooke."

"I'm not going to play him, and that's final!" said Tom Merry. "A fellow who cuts practice three times running against orders must expect to be dropped."

"Well, unless you change your mind THE POPULAR.—No. 190.

NEXT  
TUESDAY!

"THE WONDER TEAM!"

about playing Brooke, Tommy, the merry mutiny will go on," said Monty Lowther.

"Let it!" growled Tom Merry.

Talbot went along to his own study, and the Terrible Three proceeded to theirs.

Manners and Lowther bustled about and prepared tea. But Tom Merry ate with a poor appetite.

The mutiny which had broken out in the team worried him almost to distraction. He was wondering what sort of a side he would be able to put in the field against Rookwood. It would not be a representative side by any means. And the odds were that St. Jim's would be badly beaten.

There was a tap on the door of Study No. 10.

"Come in, old fruit!" called Monty Lowther.

It was Dick Brooke who entered. He looked steadily at Tom Merry, who returned him an angry glare.

"I say, Merry, I hear you've dropped me from the eleven," said Brooke.

"That's so," said Tom Merry coldly. "This is the third time you've cut practice. I've no use for slackers."

Dick Brooke flushed.

"You might have given a fellow a chance to explain before you struck his name off the list," he said.

"There can be no excuse," said Tom Merry. "Footer practice ought to come before everything."

"Will you let me explain now?"

"No, I won't. You can get out!"

In a cooler moment Tom Merry would never have spoken thus. Above all things, he was fair-minded. But the

rebellion which had broken out had angered him intensely. Besides which, he did not honestly think that Dick Brooke had a decent excuse to offer.

The day boy clenched his hands, and it looked for a moment as if he would strike Tom Merry. But he stifled the impulse, and, turning on his heel, strode out of the study.

When Brooke had gone, Monty Lowther shook his head gravely.

"Day by day in every way the position gets blacker and blacker!" he said.

"Looks as if the Rookwood match will be a giddy fiasco!" grunted Manners.

"Oh, dry up!" said Tom Merry irritably. "I feel that I've done the right thing in dropping Brooke from the team, and I'm going to stick to my guns."

"We'll back you up, Tommy lad!" said Monty Lowther. "The more we're up against it the harder we'll play; and there's just a chance that we shall send Rookwood home with their tails between their legs, after all!"

But Tom Merry, reflecting that there would be only four members of the regular team playing, and seven reserves, did not share his chum's optimism.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Tom Merry's Discovery.

NEXT morning, the following announcement was posted up on the school notice-board:

#### "NOTICE!"

"We, the undersigned, hereby refuse to play for St. Jim's in the match against Rookwood, unless, in the meantime, Dick Brooke is reinstated in the eleven.

"GEORGE FIGGINS.

JACK BLAKE.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY.

DAVID WYNN.

GEORGE FRANCIS KERR.

RICHARD REDFERN.

RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW.

"Our decision in this matter is final."

The announcement created a big sensation.

Those seven fellows were fine footballers. Where would St. Jim's be without Fatty Wynn in goal, and Figgins and Kerr at full-back?

Redfern would be sorely missed in the half-back line, and Blake and D'Arcy formed a fine wing.

Cardew was an uncertain quality. Sometimes he played well, and sometimes he didn't. In any case, he had not been a "certainty" for the team. His position was first reserve. But Tom Merry could not even fall back upon Cardew now.

"Faith, an' what's goin' to happen now?" ejaculated Reilly, of the Fourth.

"Tom Merry will alter his mind about playing Brooke. He'll reinstate him, and then the rebellion will be over," said Harry Noble.

That was the general opinion.

But the day of the Rookwood match drew nearer and nearer, and the captain of the Shell remained adamant.

Saturday dawned at length. And the situation was still the same.

The seven footballers were on strike, and they were determined to remain on strike—unless Dick Brooke was brought back into the team at the eleventh hour.

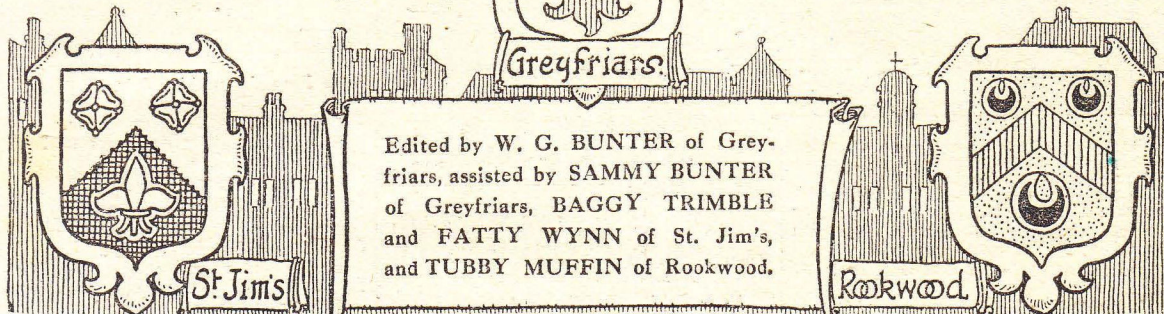
Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, were due to arrive after dinner. They would come, they would see, they would

(Continued on page 17.)

A NEW LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S.  
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



# BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY



## IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By BILLY BUNTER.

My Dear Readers, A Special Romance Number should reely appear in the spring, when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. Still, I don't think it will be altogether out of place in the autumn. In fact, it autumn make a good number. (Eggscuse the pun.)

That brilliunt young story-teller, Dicky Nugent, has contributed a powerful love story to this issue. It is entitled, "The Jellus Lovers." Dicky called it "The Jellus Sooters," first of all, but I hezzitated to publish it under that title, in case my readers thought it was a story about chimbley sweeps!

As you doubtless know, dear readers, I'm a very romantick sort of fellow. Not one of those dull, heavy, stodgy chaps without an imagination.

I don't want you to run away with the idear that I've fallen in love. Oh dear, no! I'm much too busy to think of doing that. But I've got a krittical eye for a pear of rosy cheeks, and a beautiful head of bobbed here.

I feel certain that this Special Romance Number will make a wide appeal. Quite apart from Dicky Nugent's story—for which I had to pay him the sum of four-pence-halfpenny—there are some ripping contributions in this issue. It is, in fact, the finest number of my WEEKLY which has appeared since last week!

When Harry Wharton sees what a splendid number this is, he will turn green with envy. He will also yell-oh! And he will have a pink fit, and be purple in the face, when he finds he has been done brown by his rival editor. Yes, the outlook will be black, and Wharton will see red, when this issue is placed in his hands! (What do you think of the colour scheme in this paragraff. Ripping, isn't it?)

I will now leave you, dear readers, to enjoy this number to the fool. And I remain, for wheel or whoa,

Yours sinseerly,  
BILLY BUNTER.

## SONNET TO SYLVIA STIGGENS!

(The Blue-eyed Beauty of the Bunshop)

By Lord Mauleverer.

When to the bunshop I repair,  
I see a damsel hovering there  
With rosy cheeks and auburn hair—  
My Sylvia!

She brings me tea that's freshly brewed,  
She's never angry, vexed, or rude.  
She never tells me I intrude—  
My Sylvia!

She fetches me some topping cakes,  
The sort of things that mother makes.  
But oh! they give me pains and aches—  
My Sylvia!

Whene'er I ask for eggs and ham  
She never brings me strawberry jam!  
Nor does she ever tell a cram—  
My Sylvia!

She tells me I'm a handsome lad,  
Admits my presence makes her glad.  
She much prefers me to a cad—  
My Sylvia!

Her hair is thick and black and long,  
Her will-power (like her tea) is strong.  
She makes my life one grand sweet  
song—  
My Sylvia!

I call and see her every day,  
To pass an idle hour away.  
I leave a bob beneath the tray.  
My Sylvia!

And sometimes, when she wants to go,  
I take her to the picture-show.  
I hold her hand in mine, you know!  
My Sylvia!

Nice girls are scattered everywhere,  
I meet them often, I declare  
But not a damsel can compare  
With Sylvia!

THERE WILL BE ANOTHER  
POEM BY DICK PENFOLD  
NEXT WEEK

Look out for it!

## IS ROMANCE DEAD?

A Number of St. Jim's Fellows State Their Views!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY:

No, dear boys! Romance is still alive and kicking. Only the other day I lost my heart—the thirteenth time I've lost it this term! I saw such a topping girl waiting for a train on Rylcombe Station. She happened to drop her handkerchief, and it fluttered down on to the metals. I dived for it like a shot, heedless of the approaching train. I might have lost my life, but I didn't care. I meant to restore that handkerchief to the fair damsel at all costs. I succeeded—just in the nick of time, for the train was nearly on me—and the young lady dropped me a delightful curtsy. She also smiled her sweetest smile, and I went back to St. Jim's walking on air. I have not seen the damsel since, but I hope to renew the romance very shortly.

BAGGY TRIMBLE:

Is romance dead? Not a bit of it! Only this morning I reeseved a billy-doo—I believe that's what they call it—from a member of the fair seeks. It ran as follows:

"My dear Bagley.—I consider you are the most handsome and charming boy in all St. Jim's. I candidly confess that you have set my heart on fire, and not even the united efforts of the Wayland Fire Brigade can put it out.

"Will you send me a full-face photograph of yourself, that I may keep it with my most treasured possessions!

"Your ardent admirer,

"SYLVIA."

I showed that letter to Tom Merry, and he said, "Don't you know who 'Sylvia' is, fat-head? It's Monty Lowther! He sent you that letter for a jape!"

But I believe that billy-doo is perfectly genuine. Don't you, dear readers?

GERALD KNOX:

Romance is as dead as a doornail. There's none of it nowadays. I offered to take Miss Marie Rivers for a charabanc ride, and she turned and snubbed me.

JACK BLAKE:

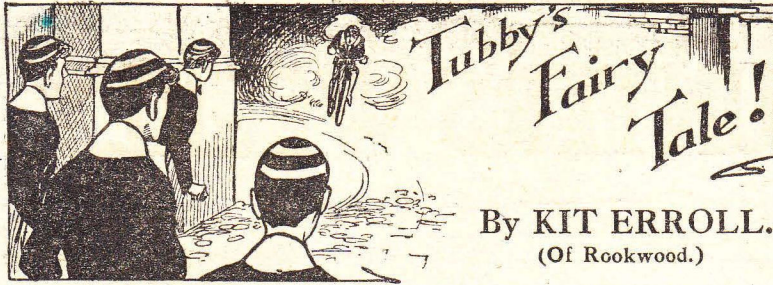
In days of old, when knights were bold, we had romance in plenty. But now each boy gets all his joy from Ballantyne and Henty! Romance exists in books alone, but not in life itself. And my conviction is, I own—Romance is on the shelf.

THE POPULAR.—No. 190.

Supplement I.]

WHO SAYS MORE SPECIAL NUMBERS? THERE'S ANOTHER NEXT WEEK!





By **KIT ERROLL.**  
(Of Rookwood.)

**J**IMMY SILVER & Co. were chatting in the school gateway when Kit Conroy rode up on his bike.

Conroy was pedalling furiously. He was flushed and excited.

"Young man in a hurry!" remarked Lovell. "Anything wrong, Conroy?"

"Yes. The Latcham cinema is on fire!"

"My hat!"

"I was blazing like a giddy furnace when I came away," said Conroy. "They've summoned the fire-brigade, but they'll never get the flames under in time."

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked very grave.

"No loss of life, I hope?" said Newcome. "I couldn't say," said Conroy. "The place was packed, but I think everybody managed to get out by the emergency exit. Hope so, anyway."

"There were no Rookwood fellows at the cinema, were there?" said Jimmy Silver anxiously.

"Yes. There was Tubby Muffin!" cried Raby, his voice quivering with excitement. "Tubby told us at tea-time that he was going to the pictures. Don't you remember?"

ber?"

Jimmy Silver turned pale.

"I—I hope he's safe!" he muttered.

"Trust Muffin to look after his own safety!" said Conroy, with a scornful curl of the lip.

Jimmy Silver turned to his chums.

"Let's get our bikes and go over to Latcham right away!" he said.

"Right you are, Jimmy."

"You'll be too late," said Conroy. "You'll only see the tail-end of the fire, anyway."

But Jimmy Silver & Co., alarmed for Tubby Muffin's safety, set off in hot haste for the town of Latcham.

When they reached the cinema, they found that a devastating fire had practically gutted the building.

The High Street was thronged with excited people.

"It must have been an awful blaze!" remarked Lovell, with a shudder.

"Yes, rather!"

The Rookwood juniors elbowed their way through the press of people.

"I say, you fellows—"

Jimmy Silver & Co. stopped short, with exclamations of relief. The voice which hailed them was the familiar voice of Tubby Muffin.

"Thank goodness you're safe!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"It was a close shave," said Tubby Muffin.

"I was sitting near the exit when the fire broke out, and I could easily have got out."

"Then why didn't you?" asked Lovell.

"Why didn't I? Because I'm not a selfish fellow, of course! I let everybody else get out first. And I stayed in the cinema to keep order, and control the panic, you know."

"Great Scott!"

The juniors stared in astonishment at their plump schoolfellow.

Tubby Muffin was the last person in the world whom they would have thought capable of controlling a panic.

"If ever a fellow deserved a gold medal for bravery, I'm that fellow!" went on Tubby Muffin. "When all the audience was hot and bothered, and rushing all over the shop in a mad panic, I was as cool as a cucumber. I shouted out, 'Keep your heads! There's no danger. File out in an orderly manner, and you'll be quite safe.'"

"I don't believe you!" said Jimmy Silver bluntly.

"Oh, really, Silver—"

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"I can't imagine you keeping cool in a crisis of that sort, Tubby," said Newcome.

Tubby Muffin pretended not to hear Newcome's remark.

"I made everybody file out of the cinema in an orderly procession, he said, "and I waited till last. Of course, by that time the fire was at its fiercest. I received terrible burns all over my body—"

"Why, your togs are not even scorched, you fat fibber!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"But my flesh is! You ought to see my arms. They're like lumps of roast pork!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How on earth could your arms have been burnt without your togs suffering?" demanded Raby.

"Ahem! I—I nipped back to Rookwood and changed my clothes."

"You couldn't possibly have got back to Rookwood in the time!" said Jimmy Silver sternly. "Besides, we've been standing in



When Jimmy Silver & Co. reached the cinema they found that a devastating fire had practically gutted the building.

the school gateway, and we should have seen you come in. We'll give you a jolly good bumping for telling all these fibs! Collar him, you chaps!"

Tubby Muffin was whirled off his feet, and he landed on the pavement with what a novelist would describe as a sickening thud.

Bump!

"Ow!"

Bump!

"Wow!"

Even after the severe bumping he had received, Tubby Muffin still persisted in his version of what had happened at the cinema.

But when the local paper appeared next day, Tubby was shown up in his true colours.

There was a detailed report of the fire, and one of the paragraphs ran as follows:

"The audience behaved itself very well in the crisis, with one exception. A plump schoolboy from Rookwood became panic-stricken, and his wild shrieks of terror seemed likely to cause a general panic. Fortunately, however, this was averted."

"Muffin behaved like a beastly funk!" growled Lovell. "I knew he was romancing when he gave us his version of the affair. Shall we give him another bumping?"

"I fancy the circulation of this paragraph will punish him enough," said Jimmy Silver.

And Jimmy, as usual, was right.

## A SHATTERED ROMANCE!

By **Tubby Muffin.**  
(Sub-Editor.)

Once I loved a maiden fair,  
But she did deserve me;  
Topping girl, with golden hair,  
Ah! What made her leave me?

When I told her I possessed  
Pots and pots of munney,  
The damsel never let me rest.  
She called me "Sweet" and "Honey."

Once I took that maiden fair  
To the picture-pallis;  
It was ripping, I declare,  
To sit and chat with Alice!

When she found I couldn't pay,  
Jove, there was a shindy!  
Instead of feeling bright and gay,  
I became quite windy!

"Reginald," she said to me,  
"You have told a whooper.  
You are not wealthy, I can see,  
In spite of your silk topper!"

"You don't possess a penny-peace,  
Your purse has nothing in it.  
Our friendship, Reginald, must cease  
From this very minnit!"

"Alice! Don't be so severe!"  
I urged her and implored her.  
"I shall reseeve some time next year  
A shilling postle-order!"

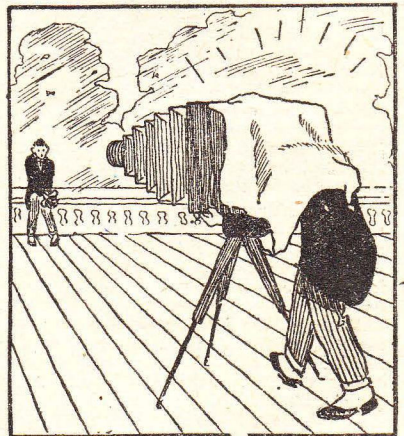
But Alice rose and slapped my face  
With hartiness and vigger;  
Then she walked swiftly from the plaice,  
A proud and horty figger!

I wandered back to Rookwood School,  
Romantick dreams all shattered;  
I felt a silly, lovelorn fool  
Whose hopes had all been scattered.

Once I loved a maiden fair,  
But she did deserve me;  
Though I'm plunged in deep despare  
No one will believe me

## PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE.

By **George Kerr.**



**HARRY MANNERS,**  
Family Photographer.

[Supplement II.]

**THE FINEST PRESENT YOU CAN MAKE YOUR CHUM IS—**





# THE JELLUS LOVERS!

EDITOR'S NOTE.—This powerful human romance, with a thrill in every line, and a punch in every paragraph, has been specially written for "Billy Bunter's Weekly" by that rising young novelist, DICKY NUGENT.

**F**AIR HELEN—sweet seventeen and never been kist—wandered out on to the lawn in the pail moonlight.

She had been dancing, and the atmosphere of the ball-room had become hot and stuffy.

"I will seek some shady bower, where I will sit in piece for a few moments," she mermered, in her dullsitt toans.

Let us take a good look at Fair Helen as she crosses the lawn. Her bewty is best described in the words of the poet Short-fellow:

"Blew were her eyes as the fairy facks,  
Her cheeks like the dorn of day."

Of course, it was only natcher that such a sweet damsel should be eagerly sought after by the young men of the district.

She had two really prominent suiters. One suiter didn't suiter, and the other suited her down to the ground; but he was a poor, struggling poet, and could not afford to marry.

The suiter who didn't suiter was a sleek-headed skoundrel named Sam Slick. He had pots and pots of munney—he was reputed to be a millyunaire several times over—but he was an ugly, leering broot—a man to be feared. Fair Helen was never "at case" when reseving his "attentions."

But Oliver Ode, the poet, was a fine fellow. If only he had been able to sell some of his poetry, he would have married Helen on the spot.

Our heroine found a sekluded bower, and sat alone with her thoughts. She shuddered when she thought of Sam Slick. She gave a little thrill of delight when she thought of Oliver Ode.

How hansom Oliver was! How diferent from Sam Slick, who had a face like a boot!

If only Oliver could earn enuff munney to have the banns put up! Ah!

Suddenly there was a stelthy tread on the grass, and the figger of a man loomed up in the moonlight.

It was Sam Slick!

Fair Helen shrank back like a startled fawn.

"Ah, here you are!" cried Sam. "I have been waiting for a chance to speak to you alone. Don't look so terrified, dear girl! I wish to ask you a queschun."

"Don't!" mermered Helen faintly.

"But I will, and must!" The speaker's hand closed round the girl's trembling fingers. "As you know, Helen, I fell in love with you at first site. Egsept for the wart on your nose, and the scar on your cheek, you are a perfect egg-sample of English bewty! Helen"—his voice became horse with egsetment—"will you marry me?"

"Never!"

Sam fell on all fours, and grovelled in the grass at her feet.

"Will you marry me?" he reptected.

"Never!"

Sam rose to his feet. His whole manner changed. He was no longer pleading, but aggressif.

"You will marry me!" he cried.

"I won't!"

"You will!"

"I won't!"

"You shall!"

"I sha'n't!"

"I'll make you!"

"You won't!"

"I'll shake you!"

"You won't!"

Sam Slick pained for an instant to get his breath back after that battle of words.

"Look here, Helen!" he said at length. "I am determined that you shall marry me. Nothing shall stand in my way! You have everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by linking your life with mine. I am a man with pots and pots of munney—"

"Keep your hateful munney!" she flashed back at him. "I would not marry you if you were a walking Mint! I hate you—I loathe the very site of you!"

"I gather from your remarks," said Sam, "that I have a rival in the field."

Helen blushed, and said nothing.

"Am I right?" demanded Sam.

She hung her head.

"I know I am right!" he cried angrily.

"That long-haired poet, Oliver Ode, has been trying to queer my pitch! But I will soon get the better of him. You are in my power!"



Oliver Ode jumped off his masheen, and stood face to face with his deadly rival. "At last!" he muttered. "We meet, man to man!"

Then, before she could realise the skoundrel's intensions, Fair Helen found herself gathered up in his arms and hustled away towards a motor-car which stood waiting near by.

Helen was bundled into the car without seremony, and she heard Sam Slick say to the driver:

"Take us to the nearest registry office!"

Helen screemed for help, and Sam clapped his hand over her mouth.

"Be silent, you saucy minks!" he hist.

"You are in my clutches, and you will have to marry me now, whether you like it or not!"

"Cad!" she spluttered.

He larfed.

"Broot!" she gurgled.

He larfed again.

"Kidnapper!" she panted.

And once more his mocking larf rang out. The car was set in motion, and it went wizzing along the country lanes.

Fair Helen hoped and prayed that her scream for help had been heard.

As a matter of fact, Oliver Ode, who had been prezent in the ball-room, had heard it. And Oliver started off in pursoot without delay.

Unfortunately, our hero did not possess a car. Not even a motor-bike. All he had was a very ancient push-bike, which was only fit for the scrap-heap

Oliver pedalled as he had never pedalled in his life before. He bent his head over the handlebars, and you couldn't see him for dust.

"They've gone to the registry office, I'm certain of that!" he panted. "Shall I get there in time to save her? Shall I—shall I?"

Would he? Could he? Did he? Didn't he? He rushed on at breakneck speed.

Fortune favored him.

Sam Slick's car, owing to careless driving, had come to greef in a ditch.

Sam and the driver had been badly broozed, but Fair Helen was unhurt.

Oliver Ode jumped off his masheen, and stood face to face with his deadly rival.

"At last!" he muttered. "At last we meet, man to man! This will be a fight to a finish! Put up your fists!"

"I—I can't fight!" stuttered Sam Slick. "I've got a weak hart."

"Come on, you craven cur!"

There was no escape for Sam. Reluctantly, he pulled off his coat.

The two rivals for the hand and hart of Fair Helen stood face to face in the moonlight.

Oliver Ode was a grate fighting-man. Being a boxer, he often sent poems to "Punch." But so far not one of them had been accepted.

Oliver shot out his right.

Biif!

Sam Slick staggered back with his right eye closed.

Oliver shot out his left.

Biif!

Sam Slick staggered back with his left eye closed.

Oliver shot out both fists together.

Biif! Thnd!

Sam Slick went down for the count. He lay like a log. He was stunned, dazed, insensible, and unconshus.

Oliver, the gallent victor, turned to his lady love.

"This broot won't worry you again, in a hurry!" he said. "He'll have to go into dock for repairs."

"Oh, Oliver!" mermered Helen, nesslering into his arms. "You are indeed a noble and a shivvalrous knight! After what you have just done, I would marry you to-morrow—if only you were a rich man!"

Oliver smiled.

"I am rich already, my dearest," he said.

"Rich beyond the dreams of avarris!"

Her eyes sparkled.

"I knew nothing of this!" she cried. "Tell me all about it!"

"By this evening's post," said Oliver. "I reseved a letter, telling me that one of my poems had been accepted by the 'Weekly Wonder.'"

"Oh, how splendid!"

"A check came with the letter—a check for half-a-crown," said Oliver jubilantly. "We shall now be able to marry, and take a cottage in the country."

"Oh, Oliver! Shall we go and get married this evening?"

"Impossible, dear hart! Sam Slick evidently overlooked the fact that it is against the law for a marriage seremony to be performed in the evening. But the knot shall be tied to-morrow morning. Come, Helen! Let us return to the dance."

With her arm linked in his, they wandered off down the moonlit lane.

Now we will leave them, dear readers, to dream their dreams of future bliss.

Perhaps, if we are lucky, they will send us a peace of wedding-cake!

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Supplement III.]

—A COPY OF THE "HOLIDAY ANNUAL"! NOW ON SALE!



## THE COMPLETE KRICKETER!

By Billy Bunter.

**I**f there is one fellow at Greyfriars who is kwalified to talk about kricket, that fellow is Me!

Did not my grate-grate-grand-father play for Glostershire? Was not my grandfather the kaptin of the Strolling Players? And haven't you heard that my pater, in his youth, skippered the Paradise Alley eleven?

I come of a wonderful kricketing family. I was born, as you might say, with a kricket-bat in my hand, and stumps in my mouth.

Now, dear readers, I will proseed to give you a bit of advice on the sujeckt of kricket.

There are people who will talk to you about stile. "Stile," they will tell you, "is everything. You can't get over it."

All this sort of talk is bosh, balderdash, and bunkum. You don't want stile. All you want to do is to face the bowler with a fearless grin, and hit out blindly at the ball. Nine times out of ten it will go to the boundary.

All these pretty strokes—these leg-glides, and late cuts, and what not—may be very speektacular; but it's the blind swipe that gets the runs.

Hit out at anything and everything. Chastise the bowling. Slog the ball just as hard as ever you can. Then you can call yourself a good kricketer.

I am not a member of the Remove eleven—more's the pity. Jellus of my grate reputation, Harry Wharton refuses to give me a show.

It may interest you to know, however, that the other day there was a match between the "Greyfriars Herald" and "Billy Bunter's Weekly." It was a farce. We skittled the "Herald" team out for a total of 7 runs; then we went in and scored 244 for three wickets. My own score was 120 not out.

People often come to me and say, "What a ripping kricketer you are, Billy! I only wish I was half as good!" I promptly take them in toe, and give them lessons at five bob a time, with the rezult that they soon become almost as proficient as myself.

The grate thing to remember is this. Never studdy stile. Never studdy polish or fine S. Just hit out soundly and savvidgely at everything that comes your way, and you are bound to make runs.

"Hit hard, and hit often." That motto should be posted up in every pavilion.

But alas! Most players sacrifice everything to stile. Run-getting is the last thing they seem to think about.

This is a trooly shocking state of affairs. The sooner players take a leaf out of my book, and model themselves on me, the better it will be for English kricket!

I am hoping that the Selection Committee will invite me to play for England this year.

(It is only right that this artikle should appear in my Special Romance Number, bekwase, don't you see, I am romancing!—Ed.)

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## A FEW "ROMANCES!"

By Baggy Trimble.

Sub-Editor.

I have never told a wopper.

\* \* \*

I am trew and just in all my deelings. And I am as upright as a Guardsman on parade. I am also as honest as the day, and as cool as the night. I am known to all my friends as "Truthful Trimble."

\* \* \*

I am not a glutton. Over and over again I have refused second helpings in the dining-hall. Other fellows are eternally stuffing, but I always keep a strong rain on my appetite. Never let it be said that I am a pig or a porpus!

\* \* \*

I never, never lissen at studdy keyholes. I konsider it is a shocking and a degrading habbit. Noddy can ever accuse me of being a Paul Pry or a Peeping Tom.

\* \* \*

I am the champion atherlete of St. Jim's. I will undertake to walk, run, swim, box, shoot, jump, bat, bowl, kick, leap, or eat, against anybody. Those who wish to take up this challenge should let me know at the earliest possible moment.

\* \* \*

I never brag about my acheevements. Bragging is shocking bad form. I always hide my light under a bushel, and I am most modest konserning the things I can do.

\* \* \*

I have never fallen in love. Once, when riding a borrowed bicycle, I fell in a ditch—and I don't want to fall in anything else, thank you!

\* \* \*

I am a wonderful eggspert at kooking. I can cook anything, from a frog to a toad-in-the-hole. My chopps and stakes are first-rate, and my stews are of such eggcellent kwalitty that they never land me in the soup! One of these days, I hope to have soop-ream charge of the school kitchen.

\* \* \*

I am far and away the finest jernalist on the staff of "Billy Bunter's Weekly." People only buy this paper for the purpuss of reading my brilliunt kontributions.

\* \* \*

I am the finest skoller St. Jim's has ever produced. (And the biggest fibber into the bargain.—Ed.)

\* \* \*

I have had many requests, from well-known weekly papers, to write stories and artikles, at the rate of ten pounds per thousand words. I don't not know weather I shall do them as I am so very busy on my regular stuff for the "Weekly." However, if I get a stupendous offer, something like one hundred pounds for a hundred words I shall probably accept.

*Baggy Trimble*

## HEART-TO- HEART TALKS!

By Monty Lowther.

(Of St. Jim's.)

"Figgy" (New House).—I was very distressed to get your letter, my sorrowing brother. You seem to imagine that cousin Ethel scorns you because you came out for a duck's egg the other day. But cheer up, my chum! Duck's eggs will happen in the best regulated kricket teams. When football starts and you put the ball through your own team's goal cousin Ethel will probably smile and pat you on the back! Girls are contrary creatures, you know!

"Grumpy Grundy" (School House).—I was amused to get your letter, in which you say, "I offered my hand and hart to the young lady who plays the piano at the picture-pallis, and she refused to have anything to do with me." I must say the fair damsel showed excellent taste!

"Gloomy Gussy" (School House).—Alas, my poor brother! You seem to have had a vory sorry time of it. It appears that you togged up in all your finery, and you went to tea with Miss Marie Rivers. Instead of being favourably impressed by your appearance, she went into shrieks of laughter! She told you that you looked like a canary in your fancy waistcoat, and she declared that when she looked at your necktie she was in danger of becoming colour blind. Just like a girl, to pass such caustic comments! I sympathise with you in your affliction, my dear brother, and will give you a little verse to cheer you up. Repeat it a dozen times, morning and evening.

"I met a little cottage girl,  
She was eight years old, she said;  
The boy stood on the burning deck  
Whence all but he had fled.  
It was the schooner Hesperus  
That sailed the wintry sea;  
The shades of night were falling fast,  
Way down in Tennessee!"

"Woeful Wally" (Third Form) writes: "Romance is dead! There is no such thing nowadays. Being the Third's smartest artist, I drew a pickcher of a pretty girl on my blotting-pad. It was a reely ripping sketch, but Mr. Selby, who is no art kricket, declared that I had disfiggered the blotting-pad, and he gave me a hundred lines."—Hard lines, indeed!

"Romantic Reddy" (New House).—Thank you, my chum, for letting me see your million-word love novel, which you tell me has taken you several terms to write. I followed the careers of the hero, the heroine, and the hundred and ninety-nine villains with keen interest. I am sorry Billy Bunter can't find space for your novel in his "Weekly." It would make a big sensation. Miss Ethel M. Dell will have to look to her laurels!

"Broken-harted Baggy" (School House) writes: "I am a rejeckted sooter, wallowing in despare." You are also wallowing in ignorance, for you can't spell for toffee!

[Supplement IV.]



**TROUBLE IN THE CAMP!**

(Continued from page 12.)

conquer. That was the prevailing opinion.

In the morning, Tom Merry had occasion to cycle over to Wayland.

He had just completed an issue of "Tom Merry's Weekly," and he took the contributions over to the printing-office, which was also the headquarters of "The Wayland Gazette."

On stepping into the office, Tom Merry had quite a shock.

Seated on a high stool in his shirt-sleeves, scribbling away as if for a wager, was Dick Brooke!

The colour came into Brooke's face when he saw Tom Merry.

For a moment, the captain of the Shell stood stock-still in surprise. Then, without a word to Dick Brooke, he passed through into the printing-office.

Mr. Bates, the printer, greeted him cordially.

"Good-morning, Master Merry! What can I do for you?"

"I've brought the 'copy' for my 'Weekly,'" said Tom. "Here you are."

"Thank you. I'll get it set up in type right away."

Tom Merry handed over the manuscript.

"I notice there's a St. Jim's fellow at work in the newspaper office next door," he said.

"That's so. Master Brooke always comes along on half-holidays, and in his spare time, to give us a hand."

"Why?"

It struck Tom Merry as being so strange that Dick Brooke should be working in a newspaper office, that he could not help feeling inquisitive.

Mr. Bates answered the junior in a low tone.

"Between ourselves, Master Merry," he said, "Master Brooke has got trouble at home. His people happen to be up against it financially. So he has taken a spare time job here, in order to help them out."

"My hat!"

"Of course, it's rather rough on Master Brooke," said the sympathetic Mr. Bates. "He has to miss his football practice, and lots of other pleasures, through coming here. But it's tremendously good of him to assist his people in this way. Don't you agree?"

"Y-e-e-s," faltered Tom Merry.

He was astounded by what he had heard. He also felt ashamed.

This, then, was the explanation of Dick Brooke's failure to turn up at footer practice! He was slogging in a newspaper office, in order that his people might make ends meet at home.

Tom Merry felt a cad for having dropped Brooke from the eleven, without having given him a chance to explain.

"I must see Brooke about this!" he exclaimed. "You've given me this information in confidence, Mr. Bates, but I really must have a jaw with Brooke about it. I've done him an injustice."

Mr. Bates nodded assent, and Tom Merry stepped into the next room.

Dick Brooke stopped writing, and looked up inquiringly.

"I owe you an apology, Brooke," said Tom Merry quietly. "I slanged you for not turning up to practice, but I didn't know the circumstances."

Brooke smiled.

"I was going to explain—"

"I know. But I didn't give you the

chance. I was an unreasonable beast. Will you forgive me?"

Dick Brooke held out his hand at once.

"Of course!" he said. "I ought to have told you at the beginning that I shouldn't be able to turn up to practice, because of this. But I—I didn't care to run the risk of my home affairs being bandied about the school."

"I quite understand," said Tom Merry. "Will you turn out this afternoon, Brooke?"

"I'm out of practice," said Brooke, with a smile.

"Never mind. You'll soon find your form."

"I'll play with pleasure," said Dick Brooke.

"Good! I'll put your name down on the list, and then this matiny will be over."

It really looked as if everything would end happily, after all.

But when Tom Merry returned to St. Jim's—Dick Brooke walked beside him, while he pushed his bicycle—he found that dinner was over, and that Figgins, Blake, and the others had gone out for the afternoon. They had taken a hamper of tuck, and gone on a picnic excursion to some unknown destination.

"Well, I'm jiggered! That's fairly done it!" groaned Tom Merry.

"It has, and no mistake!" said Brooke.

"It would be no use trying to find those fellows. We don't know which direction they took."

"So I shall have to play reserves, after all," said the captain of the Shell.

"Yes. You'll need six. But there's plenty of talent knocking around, you know," said Brooke confidently. "Clive will be glad of a game, and so will Levison and Noble and Reilly. Add Lawrence and Owen, of the New House, and you've got quite a decent team."

"Not nearly so good as our regular eleven."

"That's true. But we've got to make the best of a bad job. We may not lick Rookwood—that's rather too much to hope for—but we'll give 'em a jolly good run for their money!"

Dick Brooke's cheery optimism was infectious.

Tom Merry, who a few moments before had been almost in despair, now began to take fresh heart.

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"I'll round up the six fellows you mentioned," he said, "and ask them to turn out."

He went along to Clive's study. Clive and Levison were there.

"I want you two to play this afternoon," said Tom Merry.

Levison and Clive shook their heads.

"Not unless Brooke's playing," said Levison.

"He is."

"Oh, good! Then we'll turn out."

Noble and Reilly also consented to play. So did Lawrence and Owen, of the New House.

Tom Merry had just got his team together, when Jimmy Silver & Co. arrived. They had to come by motor charabanc from Rookwood, and they were looking very cheery and confident.

"Here's to the first match of the season!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, as he shook hands with Tom Merry. "We're out for scalps to-day. What sort of a team are you putting out?"

"It's like the curate's egg—good in parts," said Tom Merry. "I'm afraid we shall badly miss Fatty Wynn in goal. Lawrence is playing in his place."

"Splendid!"

"For you—yes. But not for poor us. However, let's cut the cackle, and come to the hosses."

The rival elevens wended their way to the football ground, where a goodly crowd had assembled. The first match of the season was always a big attraction.

It was not a boisterous crowd, however. The St. Jim's fellows stood silent and subdued on the touch-line. On all sides it was agreed that the Saints would be beaten by a big margin, for their team was only a shadow of what it should have been.

In the actual eleven, though, there were several optimists. Dick Brooke was one, and Monty Lowther was another.

"We'll fight to the bitter end," said Monty. "And if we don't come through with flying colours, I'll digest my Sunday topper! Have you spun the coin, Tommy?"

"I have," said Tom Merry, "and what's more we've won the toss. We'll play with the wind."

"And not with the 'wind-up,' as the crowd seems to think!" chuckled Lowther. "There goes the referee's whistle. Come on!"

The scratch St. Jim's eleven sprinted on to the field.

"Lambs going to the giddy slaughter!" remarked Racke, of the Shell, who was looking on.

But whether the Saints would be slaughtered that day remained to be seen.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**

"Bravo, Brooke!"

"PLAY up, St. Jim's!"

It was only a half-hearted cry that arose—not a thunderous shout.

Nobody seriously thought that St. Jim's had a dog's chance.

When the ball was kicked off, it was Rookwood that got away with it.

Dazzling forward play was seen.

Silver, Lovell, and Newcome, the three inside-forwards, indulged in a brilliant bout of passing. Although the wind was against them, they worked their way towards the St. Jim's goal.

A few yards out, Jimmy Silver trapped the ball, and then shot with all his might.

Crash!

The ball cannoned against the crossbar

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A NEW LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S'S.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

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**“THE WONDER TEAM!”**



of the goal, and rebounded into play. Tom Merry drew a deep breath of relief.

"Thought our number was up that time!" he muttered.

Rookwood again attacked, swarming like bees round the St. Jim's citadel.

Lovell tried a lightning ground-shot, which would have beaten most goalkeepers.

Lawrence dived for the ball, and prevented it in the nick of time from going over the line.

"Well saved, sir!"

It was a save of which Fatty Wynn himself might well have been proud.

Lawrence kicked the ball clear, but the Rookwood forwards were soon worrying him again.

The St. Jim's backs—Owen and Reilly—were weak. They were not a patch on the usual pair, Figgins and Kerr. And it was this weakness that threatened disaster for the Saints.

And yet twenty minutes had elapsed before Rookwood got through.

Mornington, their outside-right, sent across a perfect centre. Newcome got his head to it, and the ball whizzed in like a pip from an orange.

Lawrence could not have stopped that effort. No goalie could.

"Goal!"

"First blood to Rookwood!" drawled Aubrey Racke. "This is the beginning of the end!"

Mellish, standing at Racke's elbow, nodded.

"There'll be another goal in a few minutes. You see," he said.

And so there was. But it wasn't a Rookwood goal.

The St. Jim's forwards got going at last.

Dick Brooke went racing down the field with the ball at his toes. He cleverly tricked three men in succession, and then passed the leather to Tom Merry.

Tom made no mistake with his shot. He sent in a brilliant first-time effort, which had the Rookwood goalie beaten all the way.

"Hurrah!"

"Well played, St. Jim's!"

With the score at one goal each, play became keen and thrilling. Rookwood had the bulk of it. They had to contend with a strong wind, but they were always the better side.

However, their luck was out.

Twice Jimmy Silver struck the cross-bar, and a little later Lovell actually netted the ball; but he was ruled off-side.

Half-time arrived without any addition to the score.

On the run of the play, Rookwood should have been leading by a big margin.

"We've got the wind in our favour next half, thank goodness!" said Jimmy Silver.

"And if we don't bag at least three more goals, we ought to be jolly well ashamed of ourselves!" said Lovell.

"I fancy we shall win, with plenty to spare," was Newcome's light-hearted comment.

Play was restarted at a fast and furious pace.

Tom Merry swung the ball across to Dick Brooke, who by this time had found his true form.

Away went the St. Jim's day-boy like a flash of light. A Rookwood defender loomed up to intercept him, but Brooke cleverly swerved round his opponent, and raced on towards goal.

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NEXT TUESDAY!

Then came disaster.

Brooke was travelling at top speed, and before he could steady himself, he crashed into one of the goalposts.

It was Brooke's head that actually struck the post. And of the two, the post was the harder.

Brooke collapsed, and rolled over on the ground. He was dazed by the force of the collision.

Instantly the referee blew his whistle for the game to be suspended, whilst the players gathered round the fallen junior.

Dick Brooke's face was very white, and an ugly bruise was forming on his forehead.

"Rough luck, old man!" muttered Tom Merry. "Would you like us to carry you off?"

With a great effort, Brooke got to his feet.

"I shall be all right in a minute!" he muttered.

"You—you're going to play on?"

"Of course!"

# The Greyfriars Parliament!

—:—

A Splendid New Feature starting in the

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Further Particulars in Page 27.

When the crowd saw that Dick Brooke intended to resume, in spite of his injury, they cheered him to the echo.

Most fellows, after sustaining such an injury, would have left the field—at any rate, for a time. But Brooke knew that the temporary absence of a player would mean a terrific handicap for St. Jim's. And he forced himself to play on.

The game went all in favour of Rookwood, after this.

Jimmy Silver & Co. got fairly into their stride, and they bombarded the home goal. Lawrence was for ever fist-ing-out shots.

But presently there came a shot which he could not fist out. He couldn't even get to it. It was from the foot of Jimmy Silver, and, the ball came crashing into the net at a speed which defied resistance.

"Goal!"

"Two to one for Rookwood!" chattered Aubrey Racke, and one would have thought he was a Rookwood supporter, from his triumphant tone.

After Jimmy Silver's grand goal, the ball hovered about in midfield for awhile.

Tom Merry & Co. were playing in the teeth of a gale, and they found it difficult to make progress.

Seven minutes to go, and Rookwood still in front. They looked like adding to their lead, too, when Tommy Dodd sent in a fast, rising shot. But Lawrence, although hustled by a crowd of players, managed to grab the ball and get it away.

The seven minutes dwindled down to five, and the five to three.

Spectators began to leave the ground, under the impression that it was all over.

Then came a last desperate rally on the part of the St. Jim's forwards.

Talbot, who had been playing far below his usual form, at last asserted himself. He took a pass from Levison, and fired in a wonderful shot.

Crash!

The ball struck one of the uprights, and rebounded into play. Quick as a panther, Talbot pounced upon it again, and this time he drove it into the corner of the net.

It was a grand equalising shot. And the crowd yelled its approval.

"They've made a draw of it, after all," said Racke, looking rather disappointed. "I was rather hopin' that Rookwood would win handsomely."

Alas for the hopes of the treacherous Aubrey!

In the very last minute of the game Clive took the ball from the toes of one of the Rookwood backs, and passed it out to Dick Brooke.

Brooke was away in a flash. A couple of opponents were hard at his heels, but he beat them for pace, and then, pausing for just an instant to steady himself, he sent in the best shot of the match.

The Rookwood goalie made a frantic clutch at the ball, but it eluded his eager grasp, and whizzed into the net.

The spectators were almost too amazed to cheer.

It was as if the age of miracles had returned.

Not only had St. Jim's drawn level in the closing stages, but they had gone one better, and forced a win—a victory on the post.

The crowd stood for a moment as if stupefied.

Then the cheering came—burst upon burst of it, volley upon volley.

"Hurrah!"

"Bravo, Brooke!"

"Jolly well played, St. Jim's!"

Flushed and radiant with their success, Tom Merry & Co. trooped off the field.

Tom Merry was in great spirits.

In spite of the handicap of having to play six reserves—in spite of all the trouble which had arisen in the St. Jim's camp—the Saints had won the first match of the season.

Much of the credit belonged to Dick Brooke. And the popular day boy was the guest of honour at a magnificent spread which took place that evening.

The fellows who had resigned from the team were also present at the spread. Peace was proclaimed between them and their skipper, and harmony took the place of discord in the ranks of St. Jim's footballers.

THE END.

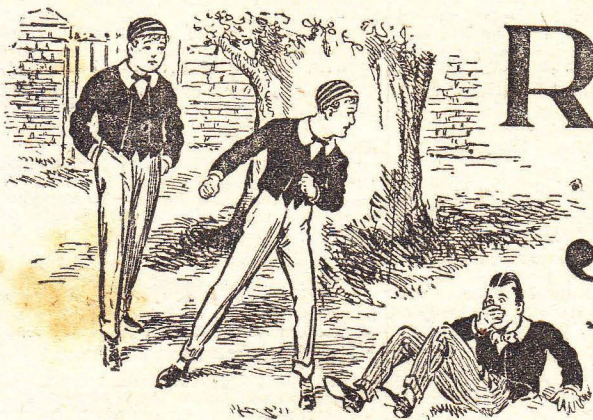
(There will be another long complete story dealing with the adventures of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, in next week's issue.)

A NEW LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S. BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"THE WONDER TEAM!"



WITH AN INCRIMINATING PHOTOGRAPH IN HIS GRASP, JOEY HOOK HOLDS ALGY SILVER UNDER HIS THUMB, UNTIL MORNINGTON THINKS OF A WAY OUT OF THE DIFFICULTY!



# ROUGH JUSTICE!

A Splendid Long Complete Story dealing with the Adventures of JIMMY SILVER & Co., at Rookwood School.

By OWEN CONQUEST

(Author of the Famous Tales of Rookwood, now appearing in the "Boys' Friend.")

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### "Uncle James" Is Worried.

"SILVER!" Mr. Bootles, the master of the Rookwood Fourth, spoke very severely.

Jimmy Silver coloured.

"Yes, sir?"

"You are not paying attention, Silver!" said Mr. Bootles impressively. "You are not thinking of your lessons! You are wasting time!"

"Oh, sir!"

"You will kindly devote your attention, Silver, to the lesson, and cease turning your head to stare across the field. I am surprised at you!"

"Ye-es, sir," stammered Jimmy.

Mr. Bootles shook his head at him portentously, and let the matter drop. But two or three fellows glanced curiously at Jimmy.

Jimmy Silver certainly seemed in an uneasy frame of mind that morning.

Instead of devoting his whole attention to the valuable instruction he was receiving from Mr. Bootles, as he ought to have done while in class, he was allowing his eyes and his attention to wander.

The Fourth Form were in class in the school meadow, near the big oak-tree—their usual place while the school was under canvas, and lessons were taken in the open air.

In the distance the school buildings were still undergoing extensive repairs at the hands of the workmen.

The Third Form, under Mr. Bohun, were at some little distance, in a pleasant and shady spot, and it was towards the Third Form that Jimmy Silver's eyes wandered.

His cousin, Algy Silver, was there, and Jimmy was aware that the youthful Algy was in hot water.

That was not an uncommon experience for Algy of the Third, but on the present occasion he was in hotter water than usual.

More than once Mr. Bohun's voice had been heard across the intervening space, addressing Master Algy in tones of wrath.

Hence Jimmy's inattention to Mr. Bootles, and the total lack of interest he displayed in the enthralling topic of deponent verbs.

Algy had just been called out before the Third, and Mr. Bohun was handling his cane.

That was a matter of supreme indifference to Mr. Bootles and most of his class, but it worried Jimmy Silver.

"Never mind the kid, Jimmy, you ass," whispered Arthur Edward Lovell. "You're getting Bootle's rag out!"

"A licking won't hurt him!" murmured Raby, on Jimmy's other side.

"Might do him good!" suggested Newcome. Jimmy was silent.

Across the sunny fields came the sound of the cane.

Swish, swish!

Jimmy Silver looked round again. He could not help it.

He was worried about his cousin Algy. The fag was going back to his place, squeezing his hands, with a scowling face.

"There's something up with Algy this morning," murmured Jimmy. "I noticed him last night, too."

"Bother Algy!" grunted Lovell.

"Silver!"

Jimmy Silver jumped as Mr. Bootles' voice boomed at him in wrathful tones.

"Yes, sir?" he stammered.

"You are staring about you again, Silver!"

"W-w-was I, sir?"

"You were, Silver! I have warned you before. Come out before the class, Silver!"

Jimmy Silver reluctantly obeyed.

The Fourth Form master, being entirely ignorant of Jimmy's concern for his cousin, and, indeed, quite oblivious of Algy's existence, was naturally wrathful.

He fixed a stern look on the flushing junior.

"Silver, I am very displeased with you! You are head boy in my Form, and you are setting a very bad example."

"I—I am sorry, sir!"

"Why, you are staring about you even while I am speaking to you!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, in exasperation. "Really, Silver, this is too much! You will stand there, under my eyes, for the remainder of the lesson, and if you stare about you again I shall cane you!"

Jimmy Silver, with a crimson face, stood where he was placed, with his back to the distant Third Form.

The Fourth-Formers grinned at him.

It was a new experience for the captain of the Fourth to be stood in a corner like a naughty fag, and not a pleasant experience.

Poor Jimmy's face became so crimson that it looked as if it was on fire, and his discomfort was greatly increased by the grinning of his Form-fellows.

Townsend and Topham, and Peele and Gower, grinned and whispered to one another, and even his own chums seemed highly entertained.

The lesson proceeded, but Jimmy's ears were busy in listening to the sharp voice of Mr. Bohun, which came from behind him.

Mr. Bohun was addressing Silver II, once more in angry tones, and as the swish of the cane followed Jimmy looked over his shoulder.

The unfortunate Algy was going through it again, with a scowling face and gleaming eyes.

"Silver!" thundered Mr. Bootles. Jimmy jumped.

He spun his head round at once. The Form-master's eyes had fallen on him while he was staring over his shoulder, and Mr. Bootles was really angry now.

He took up his cane.

"This is beyond all toleration, Silver!" he exclaimed. "I can only believe that it is deliberate impertinence! Hold out your hand!"

Mornington jumped up in his place.

"Mr. Bootles—"

"You may sit down, Mornington!"

"Yes, sir; but Silver's cousin is getting caned over yonder; that's why Silver is looking round," said Mornington.

"Oh!" said Mr. Bootles.

He lowered the cane, and glanced across at the Third Form.

Mornington sat down.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Bootles. "Is that the cause of your distraction, Silver?"

"Ye-es, sir!" stammered Jimmy, redder than ever.

"H'm! Ahem!" said Mr. Bootles, not unkindly. "I will excuse you this time, Silver; but you must pay attention. You may go back to your place."

"Thank you, sir!" said Jimmy.

He sat down again in great relief, and with a grateful look to Mornington.

Jimmy Silver was glad when lessons were over that morning.

And directly the Fourth were dismissed Jimmy hurried away to look for his cousin Algy.

But he looked in vain.

The scapegrace of the Third had disappeared immediately Mr. Bohun dismissed the Third, and Jimmy did not succeed in finding him.

He came back to dinner with the Fourth with a worried look.

His chums, Lovell and Raby and Newcome, wore expressions in which exasperation was curiously mingled with resigned patience.

Family affection was all very well, they considered; but they considered also that "Uncle James" was overdoing it.

With chummy frankness they did not conceal the fact that they were fed up with Algy.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon, and the Fistical Four had planned a "rag" on the Modern Juniors to improve the shining hour, but Jimmy did not look much in a humour for a rag now.

After dinner Jimmy Silver was starting off by himself, evidently with the intention of looking for Algy when Lovell & Co. encircled him.

"No, you don't!" said Arthur Edward Lovell grimly.

"I'll see you later," said Jimmy.

"Not in the least. You'll see us now!"

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**ANSWERS**  
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NEXT TUESDAY!

"HONOURS EVEN!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD. BY OWEN CONQUEST.



answered Lovell. "We've got a rag on for the afternoon and we're fed up with the merry Algy. Let him rest."

"I'm rather worried about him," said Jimmy seriously. "Don't play the goat, old chap. I must see him!"

"Is this the first time a fag has ever been kicked at Rookwood?" asked Lovell sarcastically. "He was checking old Bohun—I could see that."

"I want to see him."

"What about ragging the Moderns?" demanded Raby.

"Both the Moderns!"

"And both us, too, I suppose?" demanded Lovell warmly.

"Yes, bother you!" assented Jimmy Silver; and he hurried away, leaving his chums greatly exasperated.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Under His Thumb.

**B**UMP!

Jimmy Silver heard that sound as he came through the archway into Little Quad.

Jimmy had learned from Tubby Muffin that Algy had been seen going there, and he was following when he heard that bump. He came suddenly on the scene.

Algy Silver was standing with his fists clenched, and a flame of anger in his face, and at his feet, on the grass, sprawled Bertie de Vere of the Third.

"That's for you!" said Algy, as Jimmy Silver came up. "That's what you've been asking for. Now cut, or I'll give you another!"

"You rotter!" mumbled the nut of the Third, as he sat up, dabbing his nose with his fingers.

"Cut, I tell you!" snapped Algy. "You landed me in this trouble, you worm, and I'm fed up with you!"

Bertie de Vere rose slowly to his feet, and, with a glance of malice at Algy, and a scowl at Jimmy Silver, he walked off.

"Hallo, Algy!" said Jimmy, not displeased by the scene he had just witnessed.

Bertie de Vere's friendship had done Algy no good, and it looked as if it was emphatically at an end now.

"Hallo!" grunted Algy gruffly.

"I've been looking for you, kid," said Jimmy Silver. "What's the trouble, kid?"

"Nothin'."

"You were in hot water this morning with your Form-master."

"Yes, bother him!"

"You must have checked him, Algy. Bohun isn't a bad-tempered man."

Algy snorted.

"Well, I did cheek him," he answered.

"I was worried, if you want to know, and I was more than fed up with his rot. He took it out of me, though," added Algy, rubbing his hands reminiscantly.

"I don't see why you should be worried."

"You wouldn't."

Algy quickened his pace, heading for the gates.

Jimmy Silver quickened his steps also, keeping with him, and they went out into the road together.

There Master Algernon halted.

"Hook it!" he said laconically.

"Where are you going, Algy?"

"Can't you guess?" said the fag sarcastically. "It's a half-holiday. I'm goin' to paint the town red, play the giddy goat, and have a merry time, you know."

He laughed bitterly, and, to Jimmy's surprise and horror, the laugh suddenly ended in a sob.

"Algy!" exclaimed the captain of the Fourth.

"Oh, let me alone!" panted Algy. "I've got to go. Joey Hook will be expectin' me at the Bird-in-Hand. I've got to go."

"You can't go, Algy," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I won't let you, for one thing. But what do you mean by saying that you've got to go?"

"Because it's true. Do you want to see me sacked from Rookwood?"

"No, of course not."

"Then you'd better not interfere with me this afternoon."

Jimmy stared at his cousin in dismay and perplexity.

He was aware that under the guidance of Bertie de Vere, Algy had been guilty of a good deal of recklessness, not far removed THE POPULAR.—No. 190.

from rascality, and he had feared that it was something of the sort that was troubling the fag now.

But the expression on Algy's face showed that matters were worse than he had supposed.

"Tell me what's the matter, Algy," he said at length. "If you're in a scrape, you know I'll help you out of it. I've done so before."

"I know you have, Jimmy," said the fag, in a softer tone. "But you can't help me this time. I'm fairly treed. It's partly your fault, too."

"My fault?"

"Yes, in a way. Still, it's really because I was a fool, and I've got to pay for it. I don't know what the pater will say when I'm kicked out of Rookwood." The fag's voice trembled. "What a silly ass I've been!"

"You're not going to be kicked out of Rookwood, Algy," said Jimmy Silver. "Tell me about it, and we'll see what's to be done. How do you mean that it's my fault?"

"Well, I shouldn't have gone to the Bird-in-Hand that day with Bertie only you were jawing me!" said Algy sulkily. "I really did it only for a lark. You remember, a couple of weeks ago—"

"I remember. But that's all over."

"Tain't! You know that worm Peele, of your Form, followed us there, and took a snap of us with his camera when we were playing cards with Hook in the arbour."

"I made him give me the photograph and the negative, too, and destroyed them both," said Jimmy. "That's all right."

"It ain't all right, I tell you!" said Algy impatiently. "There was another photograph. Peele gave one, or sold it, to Joey Hook."

"Oh!"

"That rotten sharper kept it!" said Algy. "It's a photograph of him and me and Bertie, playing cards together in the arbour. But you've seen it, so you know what it's like. I'd chucked up Bertie and Hook, too, and all that rot, and now the beast knows there's nothing more to be got out of me he's cut up rusty. He met me in the lane yesterday, and showed me the photograph. He's blacked out De Vere, so that it won't do him any harm—Bertie's still thick with him. But that photo is enough to get me kicked out of Rookwood if he shows it to the Head. And he threatens to."

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy.

"I'm under his thumb!" groaned Algy. "Of course, I never suspected he was such a beast, or I'd never have gone near him. But—but he's got me down now. He's offered to take ten pounds for the photograph. Where am I to get ten quids from? I haven't got ten bob!"

Jimmy Silver was silent in utter dismay.

"So long as I keep friendly he's going to keep it in his pocket-book, he says," went on Algy. "If I desert an old pal—that's how the beast puts it—he's going to send it to the Head. He expects to see me this afternoon, with Bertie. I've jolly well thumped Bertie, anyhow! I wish I could thump Hook!"

"My hat!" said Jimmy.

"I've got to go," said Algy. "I don't want to go—I suppose you can see that now—but if I don't—"

Jimmy was silent, almost aghast.

He had supposed Peele's ill-natured trick with the camera to be over and done with, but it had cropped up again in the most unexpected manner.

One of the tall-tale photographs was still in existence—and in Joey Hook's hands.

Jimmy understood that the needy sharper was feeling resentment at being thrown over, as he would regard it, by the wretched fag whose pocket-money he had been accustomed to annex.

Mr. Hook had given Peele of the Fourth a half-crown for that photograph.

It was worth much more than that to him.

"The man's an utter rotter!" said Jimmy, at last.

"I know that now."

"I don't think he would send that picture to the Head, Algy. It's illegal for him to play cards with your money, and he would be giving himself away."

"Lot he would care!" growled Algy. "He knows, anyhow, that I daren't let the Head see it. It would finish me here!"

Jimmy was silent again.

He knew that only too well.

It was not much use to tell Algy that he

might have expected his rascality to land him in a scrape, and that he ought not to have expected honourable dealing from a professional sharper.

Algy knew all that; and "I told you so!" was no solace.

"Well, got anything to say before I go on?" jeered Algy.

"You'd better not go," said Jimmy. "Keep away from that den, anyhow."

"And quarrel with him? Catch me riskin' it!"

"That photograph's got to be got back somehow!" muttered Jimmy. "It's all rot his asking ten quids for it. That's ridiculous! We couldn't raise such a sum of money! That awful swindler! But—but I—"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome came out at the gates, and approached the cousins.

"Leave it to me, Algy!" said Jimmy hurriedly. "I'll do what I can! I'll go and see the brute, and see if I can make terms with him."

"You can't!"

"I'll try. I'll get what tin I can, and I dare say he will take a couple of pounds for the rotten photograph. It's not worth anything of the sort. Leave it to me, kid, and promise you won't go near the place till I've seen him, at least."

Algy hesitated.

"Well, all right," he said. "You can try it if you like. It won't be any good!"

"We shall see about that."

Algy nodded, and walked away as Lovell & Co. joined their chum.

The fag was looking less harassed and worried now.

He had found some relief, at least, in placing his trouble on stronger shoulders than his own.

"Well, Jimmy?" grunted Lovell.

"I've got to go somewhere," said Jimmy Silver. "You can rag the Moderns without me, old scout. Lend me some tin."

"How much?"

"All you've got."

"Oh crumbs!"

Jimmy Silver's chums gave him very peculiar looks.

But the Fistical Four were a good deal like the Early Christians in money matters, and what one had all had.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome turned out their cash.

It did not amount to a large sum. The financial resources of all three, pooled, came to twenty-seven shillings.

"I can make it up to two quid!" remarked Jimmy thoughtfully.

"So you want two quids?" asked Raby.

"Yes."

"What for?"

"To chuck away, old chap! I'll square this next week! I can do it."

"You needn't square it at all, and you know it!" growled Lovell. "Never mind about that. But—"

"Oh, give him his head!" said Newcome resignedly. "Algy's in a scrape, and Jimmy's got to fish him out. You needn't tell us, Jimmy. This is what comes of having a merry sportsman for a relation!"

"Br-r-r!" came from Lovell.

"It isn't exactly that!" said Jimmy, colouring. "Algy's played the goat, but—but it's because he's chucked it up that he's in a scrape now. Under those circs, a chap's bound to stand by him."

"Bless Algy!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver nodded to his chums, and walked away up the road towards Coombe.

Lovell & Co. went to look for the Moderns, to cheer themselves up by ragging Tommy Dodd, not in a very merry mood, however.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### "N. G."

**J**IMMY SILVER had started for Coombe at a rapid pace, but he slowed down after a time, and his footsteps grew more and more lagging as he approached his destination.

His slow pace dropped into a slower one, and finally into a halt, as he came in sight of the public-house.

He glanced up and down the road, colouring with vexation at the knowledge that he was acting secretly and surreptitiously. Secrecy was foreign to his frank nature.

But it was very necessary to be secret now.



He made up his mind at last, but he did not approach the public-house directly. Instead of that, he crossed a field, and dropped over a fence into the inn garden. He remembered that Algy had told him of having met Mr. Hook in the arbour, and he thought it possible that he would find the sharper there.

That was a good deal better than asking for him at the house.

He came through the neglected garden, and found himself outside the arbour, over which honeysuckle was clambering thickly.

There was a sound of voices within. He recognised the thick, beery tones of Mr. Hook, which he had heard before, and started a little at the voice of Smythe of the Shell at Rookwood.

Adolphus Smythe was evidently on the "ran-dan" that afternoon.

Jimmy Silver hesitated. He hated being there at all, and he had an intense dislike to letting any Rookwood fellow see him there.

"Well, I'm makin' it a quid, Mr. Hook!" rattled on the drawing tones of Smythe of the Shell. "Put it on for me, old sport!" "Cert'nly, Master Smythe!"

"Same for me, Hook!" This was Tracy's voice. "Put a sov on Monkey Brand for me, and chance it!"

"I'm your man, Master Tracy!" "May as well be goin'," yawned Smythe. Jimmy Silver was still hesitating outside when the two Shell fellows of Rookwood came through the drooping honeysuckle.

Smythe started as he saw him, and Tracy grinned.

"You!" ejaculated Smythe. "By gad, we're makin' discoveries!" grinned Tracy. "Never knew you were a visitor here, Silver!"

"I'm not!" snapped Jimmy angrily. "You're here!" said Tracy, with a chuckle. "My dear man, don't think I blame you—life's short. Why shouldn't it be merry?" "I tell you—"

"I'll give you a tip, my boy!" said Smythe condescendingly. "Put your money on Monkey Brand for Saturday. He'll win; take my word for it!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" growled Jimmy Silver savagely.

It was the last drop, as it were, added to his cup of bitterness, that these two shady young rascals should see him there and conclude that his business at the Bird-in-Hand was the same as their own.

"Polite, I must say!" yawned Adolphus. "Come on, Tracy!"

The Shell fellows went their way, and Jimmy Silver stepped into the arbour.

Mr. Hook was making some entries in a little book, and he glanced up at Jimmy's entrance.

"Afternoon, sir!" he said quite civilly. "Good-afternoon!" said Jimmy, with an effort. It was necessary to be civil to Mr. Hook, though he was feeling very far from civil. "I—I've called about—about some—some business of my cousin Algy."

"Sit down, sir!" said Mr. Hook. "Master Algy with you?"

"No."

"I was expectin' that pleasant young gent this afternoon," said Mr. Hook. "Nice young feller, your cousin, sir!"

Jimmy made no reply to that.

He did not sit down, but remained standing before the seated sharper, trying not to express in his face the scorn and disgust he was feeling.

"Algy has told me—" he began. "Oh, that little matter of the fotygraft?" said Mr. Hook, genially helping him out.

"Yes."

"Pretty picture it makes, sir—quite lively and interesting," said Mr. Hook. "Like to see it? I've got it ere."

He opened a fat pocket-book, and took out a photograph, holding it up for Jimmy Silver to see, being very careful, however, to keep it out of reach of a sudden snatch.

Jimmy glanced at it.

It was a copy of Cyril Peele's photograph of Algy at the Bird-in-Hand, and he had seen one before.

The others had been destroyed, but the one that remained in existence was enough to bring Algy Silver into disgrace and punishment if it was shown in Rookwood School.

The photograph represented Algy, Bertie de Vere, and Mr. Hook playing cards together in that very arbour.

But Bertie de Vere had been blacked out,



**THE ONLY WAY!**—Joey Hook clawed open the pocket-book, clawed out the photograph, and fung it at Jimmy Silver. "Make sure it's the goods," murmured Mornington. "I've got a flash-lamp here!" The light glittered on the photograph for a moment. Jimmy Silver drew in a deep breath as he saw it. (See Chapter 5.)

and Mr. Hook's own face in the picture was smudged over.

Jimmy knew the reason of that. The photograph, as it stood, was sufficient evidence against Algy; but Mr. Hook did not want to risk betraying De Vere, and he did not wish to show himself as a man who played cards for money with schoolboys.

"Good fotygraft—what?" said Mr. Hook, smiling. "Young Master Peele's very clever with his camera, I do say"

He restored the photograph to his pocket-book, replacing the same in his inside-pocket.

It was clear that he regarded it as valuable, and meant to be very careful with it.

"I understand that you want to sell that photograph," said Jimmy quietly.

"Not at all, sir"

"What? Algy said—"

"Quite a mistake," answered Mr. Hook calmly. "I don't want to sell it. I'm willing to part with it as a favour. I ain't anxious."

"Oh!" said Jimmy

"Bless your heart!" said Mr. Hook. "I'd much rather keep that there fotygraft as a souvenir, I'm that fond of Master Algy!" Jimmy compressed his lips.

"What will you take for it?" he asked.

"Ten pounds."

"Of course, that's absurd!"

"Is it?" said Mr. Hook "Well, I ain't anxious to sell. I'll keep it."

"I suppose you gave Peele something for it?" said Jimmy Silver.

"Naturally! Master Peele don't give things away, even a fotygraft," said Mr. Hook. "I give Master Peele a 'arf-crown for it."

"Then I should think you'd be glad to get five shillings for it."

"What an ideal!" smiled Mr. Hook.

"Look here," said Jimmy, "I'll give you a pound!"

Mr. Hook yawned

There was a pause.

Jimmy's cheeks flushed, and his eyes gleamed with anger

"I could give you two pounds, Mr. Hook," said Jimmy Silver at length. "That's all the money I've got, and I've had to borrow from my friends to raise it."

"Couldn't think of taking money from you, sir, as you're so 'ard up," said Mr. Hook calmly. "Keep your money in your trouser-pocket."

"Will you let me have that photograph for two pounds?"

"No," said Mr. Hook. "I won't!"

Jimmy Silver clenched his hands hard.

"It's no good to you," he said. "You can't use it. What good would it do you to get my cousin into trouble at the school?"

"I don't fancy it'll come to that, Master Jimmy Silver. If it does, it will be bad for Algy."

"You've broken the law in gambling with him, and that photograph would give you away as well as Algy," said Jimmy desperately. "If Dr. Chisholm saw it, he would very likely have you prosecuted."

"I don't reckon I could be reckerisned in that there fotygraft, seeing as I've smudged out the phiz," said Mr. Hook. "I'm chancing it, anyway. If Master Algy don't stick to a old pal, that there fotygraft is going to his 'eadmaster; and you can bet your Sunday socks on that!"

"Oh, you rotter!" panted Jimmy Silver, his anger and scorn getting the upper hand for a moment.

"Better langwidge, please!" said Joey Hook threateningly. "I ain't taking any lip from you, young feller-me-lad! Like me to call the potmar and 'ave you chucked out!"

Jimmy controlled his temper with an effort.

"You won't take less than ten pounds?" he asked, as calmly as he could.

"I won't take that now!" answered Mr. Hook deliberately. "I'll take twelve. The price 'as gone up owing to you calling a gentleman names. Tell Master Algy that, and tell 'im that the price goes up a couple of quid every time I get any 'igh-and-mighty lip!"



Jimmy's eyes glittered. There was nothing more to be done, and it was hard to keep his hands off the sharper. He turned and left the harbour. Mr. Hook smiled as he lighted a cigarette.

Jimmy's anxiety to regain the photograph had simply confirmed him in his belief that he could get his own price for it, and poor Jimmy had done more harm than good by his visit.

The captain of the Rookwood Fourth was not feeling happy as he left the inn garden and walked away by the towing-path towards the school.

He had felt that his visit would be useless, and it had proved useless, or worse.

But what was to be done? Lovell & Co. greeted Jimmy Silver with curious looks when he returned to Rookwood.

Jimmy met them at the tent they shared in the school encampment, and his first proceeding was to hand back to them the money he had borrowed that afternoon. It was of no use to him now.

"What does that mean?" asked Lovell. "N.G.," answered Jimmy.

"You're looking chippy, I must say!" "I'm not feeling chippy!" said Jimmy Silver dispiritedly. "I'm blessed if I know what's going to happen!"

"Algy, of course?" "Yes!" growled Jimmy. "Don't jaw now, for goodness' sake! I've got enough worry!"

"Don't jump down a fellow's throat, old nut!" answered Lovell amicably. "I was going to ask what the trouble was. Perhaps we could help."

"You couldn't. I'll explain, if you like. Of course, it's to be kept dark."

"That's understood. Pile in!" Jimmy Silver explained, and his chums drew long faces as they listened.

They did not feel so concerned about the sportive Algy as his cousin did; but they were sorry for the reckless fag, whose folly had landed him in this.

"Well," said Lovell, with a whistle, "it does look as if the young ass is landed at last. He will have to toe the line, Jimmy. Hook can simply kybosh him if he chooses to let the Head see that photograph!"

"I know. But—but he can't toe the line. I can't let him. He sha'n't go near the Bird-in-Hand again if I can prevent him. He doesn't want to, either."

"But Hook—" "I must think of something!" said Jimmy, in desperation.

The Fistical Four were very grave at tea that afternoon.

Lovell & Co. were concerned for Jimmy, if not for Algy.

They rather wondered that the fag had not put in an appearance to learn the result of Jimmy's visit to the sharper.

Doubtless he had thrown the matter off his mind now that Jimmy had taken it in

hand, leaving his cousin to get him out of his scrape, as the dutiful Uncle James had done before.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Morny's Plan.**

**J**IMMY SILVER answered "adsum" to his name as Mr. Bootles called the roll, and as soon as calling-over was finished he hurried away.

He wanted to be alone to think. But as he went back through the dusk towards his tent Mornington of the Fourth sauntered after him and joined him.

Jimmy went into his tent without observing the dandy of the Fourth, and Morny followed him in.

"Hallo! Enjoyin' the merry twilight?" asked Morny.

"I—I won't ask you in just now, Morny," said Jimmy awkwardly. "I—I've got a bit of a problem to think out."

"My dear man, I know that, and I've come to help you think it out. Two heads are thicker than one, you know."

"Oh!" said Jimmy, in surprise.

He was not overpleased to find that his trouble was observed by others as well as his chums.

He was very friendly with Morny now; their old disagreements were quite over.

"No, don't say what you're thinkin'," said Morny lightly. "I'm not goin' to mind my own business."

"I—I wasn't—" "My dear man, I've chipped in because I think I can be of use," said Mornington.

"No business of mine, but I've a pretty clear idea what's the matter, and it's very likely I can help you out. I've been there, you know."

"You know?" stammered Jimmy.

"Well, I've had my eye on the merry Algy several times, and I noticed your weird antics this mornin'. Don't tell me anythin' if you don't want to, but if you like I dare say I could help. Algy's in trouble with some merry old friends of mine that I never speak to now. I can guess that much."

Jimmy paused.

Naturally, he did not want to confide Algy's shady secrets to anyone, but it struck him as very probable that Morny could help him in the present emergency.

Mornington had once been hand-in-glove with the "merry blades" of Rookwood, and had been a very valuable acquaintance of Joey Hook and the sporting gang at the Bird-in-Hand.

Certainly the one-time backguard of the Fourth was more suited to deal with such people than Jimmy Silver was.

"You're jolly good!" said Jimmy, at length. "I'll tell you, Morny, and if you can help me I'll be no end grateful! You know those rotters better than I do. But—but I don't know what's to be done."

"I'll give you my opinion, anyhow." And Jimmy plunged into explanation, Mornington listening quietly, the dusk in the tent hiding the half-mocking expression upon his handsome face.

"You see, it's jolly serious!" Jimmy wound up.

"No doubt about that," agreed Morny. "Serious enough for Algy if the Head ever sees that entertaining photograph. Sure it's the only one in existence?"

"Oh, yes!" "You didn't think of tryin' to bag it when the brute showed it to you?"

"I couldn't!" "I suppose Hook keeps it pretty safe?"

"Yes; in a pocket-book in an inside pocket. Naturally, he would keep it on him, and safe," said Jimmy. "Not that there would be much chance of getting it from his quarters at the Bird-in-Hand, even if he left it in his room."

Mornington wrinkled his brows thoughtfully.

"He's askin' twelve pounds for a rag of a photo he gave Peele half-a-crown for!" he remarked. "Of course, that's why he bought it of Peele—he saw a chance of gettin' your merry cousin under his thumb. He's in low water financially, and he can't afford to part with any source of income in these hard times. You want to get hold of that photo?"

"Of course!" "You'd be justified in takin' it by force if you could, as he's only usin' it for black mail!"

"I wish I had the chance!" answered Jimmy, setting his teeth. "I'd give him half-a-crown, though, as he gave that to Peele for it."

"I'd give him a black eye! But suit yourself. I think it could be worked," said Mornington. "Suppose you asked him to meet you at a distance from the Bird-in-Hand, and—"

Jimmy shook his head.

"He wouldn't do it! I could only have one motive for asking him to meet me, and he would smell a rat at once!"

"He would," agreed Mornington.

Jimmy Silver looked disappointed.

He had hoped, from Mornington's manner, that the dandy of the Fourth had something practical to suggest.

"Of course, there's nothing doing," said Jimmy. "Keep dark what I've told you, anyway, Morny."

Mornington laughed.

"But there's something doin'!" he answered. "Hook wouldn't take two steps from his pub to meet you, Silver, but he would go a long way to meet me!"

"You don't have anything to do with him now."

"Quite so; but he would jump at the chance of renewing the acquaintance," answered Mornington coolly. "He would come along to-night if I asked him. He would jump at the chance with both feet!"

"But—but you couldn't—" "I could!"

"But would you?" asked Jimmy, in surprise. "There's no reason why you should bother about my cousin, and take risks for him."

"None at all! And as it's not a duty I feel inclined to do it!" answered Mornington, laughing. "Suppose I get a word with the brute—without mentionin' you or Algy in any way, of course."

"It's too late to-night."

"Easy as winkin'," answered Mornington. "The merry workmen have been gettin' on with the repairs while we've been under canvas. The telephones have been finished, and it's easy to walk into the rooms, as the doors and windows are all open, so far. Bootles was usin' his telephone to-day—"

"I know. But—" "And after dark there's nobody yonder," said Morny, with a nod in the direction of the school buildings. "Easy as fallin' off a form. I'll phone to the cad."

"But—but—" "I'll ask him to walk along to the school camp," grinned Mornington, "and we'll meet near the tents after lights-out. He will be as pleased as Punch. When he comes along we'll have a little friendly talk with him about the photograph—what?"

Jimmy stared at Mornington.

It was a reckless scheme, and quite in keeping with Valentine Mornington's reckless character.

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**NOW ON SALE!**



"My hat! Just the game I should enjoy, cleanin' out that swindlin' rascal who used to clean me out such a lot!" said Morny. "I'll get Erroll to take a hand in dealin' with him, and you can be there with your pals. My dear man, we'll talk to Joey Hook like a whole family of Dutch uncles, an' persuade him to do the just and righteous thing—what?"

"I—I suppose it might work—"  
 "Like a charm!"  
 "If—if you like to take the risk, Morny, we'll try it. But it's risky for you. Suppose you were spotted ringin' up the Bird-in-Hand?"

"Leave that to me! Is it a go?"  
 "Yes," said Jimmy Silver slowly.  
 "Done, then!"  
 Mornington sauntered out of the tent, leaving Jimmy Silver feeling comforted. Morny was smiling as he walked away into the darkness.

After call-over the juniors were supposed not to leave the camp, and Morny had to be careful.  
 But he moved quietly among the tents, and vanished across the quad towards the deserted school buildings, where the workmen had long since knocked off.

It was dark in the buildings, and dangerous, too, for lumber lay about in the gloom, and there were still gaps in some of the floors.

But Morny seemed like a cat in the dark, and he reached Mr. Bootles' old study in the School House.

The telephone was there, and he was aware that the instrument was now in working order.

With perfect coolness, standing there in the dark, with the wind blowing in at the open window, Morny took the receiver from the hooks, and called up the number of the Bird-in-Hand.

Morny was enjoying himself; the wild scheme he had laid was after his own heart.

The idea of "taking in" the sharper who had often fleeced him in the old days made Morny chuckle as he waited for his number.

It was a barman that answered from the Bird-in-Hand, and Morny asked to speak to Mr. Hook.

He had to wait a couple of minutes, and then the beery tones of Joey Hook came along the wires, inquiring what was wanted.

Mornington laughed softly.  
 "It's little me!" he explained.  
 "An' who's me?" grunted Hook.

"Don't you know an old pal, Joey?" asked Mornington reproachfully.

"By gum! Is that Morny?"  
 "The very same!"

"Werry kind of you to ring me up, Master Morny," came the sharper's beery voice, oily now as well as beery. "Long time since I've 'eard from you, sir. Anythin' I can do for you in my line, old pal?"

"I want to see you, Hook. I can't get out; the beaks are rather watchful. I've a rather old reputation, you know!"  
 Mr. Hook chuckled hoarsely.

"Could you come along and see me?" asked Mornington calmly. "You know the school's under canvas now, and it's easy enough to slip out of a tent."

"I'd be very pleased and honoured, sir."  
 "It's a go, then. By the way, what do you think of a gee for the race on Saturday afternoon—the three o'clock? Heard anythin' special?"

"That I 'ave, Master Morny," answered Joey Hook eagerly. "A tip straight from the stable—straight from the 'orse's mouth, sir! I can tell you—"

"I shall have to ring off," interrupted Mornington hurriedly. "I'm usin' one of the school telephones, you know."

"My eye!"  
 "It's a bit risky. You'll come along?"  
 "Wot-ho!"

"You know the place where the big oak-tree grows by the school wall?"  
 "I know it, sir; passed it many a time."

"Come there, then, and I'll be there—ten o'clock, say. I have to leave it till well after lights out."

"I'm your man, sir! Rely on me!"  
 "Done!"

Mornington rang off.  
 In the bar of the Bird-in-Hand Joey Hook stood himself a drink, in his satisfaction at the return of the strayed sheep to the shady fold.

Valentine Mornington picked his way out

of the shadowed building, and cautiously returned to the school camp.

A figure loomed up before him in the gloom as he reached the tents.

"Mornington!" It was Bulkeley's voice. "You've been out of bounds!"

"Only to the buildings, Bulkeley," said Morny meekly.

"I know that, and you know it's forbidden. You might have broken a limb there, you young ass!"

"I didn't, as it happens."  
 "Take fifty lines. It will be the cane next time!" said the prefect.

"All right, Bulkeley."

Mornington went on to his tent, smiling. He did not mind the imposition. He was thinking of his appointment with Joey Hook, and of the surprise that awaited the sharper, and that thought gave him much satisfaction.

Before bed-time there was a consultation in Jimmy Silver's tent, in which Morny and Kit Erroll and the Fistical Four took part, Tubby Muffin being forcibly excluded from his quarters for the occasion.

And all was arranged when the Fourth Form turned in, and, needless to say, Jimmy Silver did not sleep when he laid his head on the pillow at "lights-out."

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Only Way.

"Q U I E T !"  
 Jimmy Silver whispered the word.

There was a dim glimmer of starlight over Rookwood School, and the lines of white tents loomed up spectre-like.

In some of the tents, occupied by seniors, the lights still burned.

The Fistical Four, half dressed, had crept quietly out of their tent, leaving Van Ryn and Tubby Muffin asleep.

By the oak-tree in the school meadow they were joined by Erroll and Mornington.

Kit Erroll was grave and quiet, Morny was smiling in a sardonic way.

It was no new experience for Morny to be up after lights-out, though he had lately dropped his old ways.

"Here we are!" murmured Erroll.

"All serene," whispered Mornington. "Ten minutes yet to the merry appointment. Keep out of sight till I call you, remember."

"Right-ho!"

The juniors crept away in the gloom.

At a spot where an oak-tree overhung the wall, Jimmy Silver & Co. clambered over, and Mornington stepped out into the road alone.

It was close on ten o'clock when there were heavy footsteps in the road, and a fat, squat figure rolled into view in the gloom.

Mr. Hook had arrived, bringing a whiff of tobacco and whisky with him.

He peered at the junior standing there by the wall, and halted.

"Hallo, old top!" said Mornington cheerily. "Glad to see you agin, Master Morny!"

said the sharper, in an oily voice. "Might be safer to get a bit farther off—what?"

"Oh, this is all right; we're a good two hundred yards from the camp," answered Mornington carelessly. "Now, about business, Joey."

"Right-ho, Master Morny—business!" said Joey Hook. "I tell you, my boy, I've got a tip for Saturday's race that's worth something. I tell you—"

"Never mind that for a minute. I've got somethin' else to speak about."  
 "Go it, sir."

"Young Algy Silver's photograph, old nut." Joey Hook started.

"Wot do you know about that, Master Morny?" he asked.  
 "Everythin', old scout. That's why I telephoned to you," answered Mornington coolly. "I want you to let me have that picture, Joey."

A very ugly look came over the sharper's face, and he blinked oddly at Morny in the shadows.

"I don't understand this, Mornington," he said. "You said as how you 'ad business with me—"

"So I have—and that's it. I'm open to give you a quid for that picture."  
 "Well, it ain't goin' at the price," said Mr. Hook sourly. "And if that's all you've got to say to me—"

"I'll make you another offer," said Mornington coolly. "I'll give you half-a-crown."

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Joey Hook. "A man ain't likely to take a 'arf-crown after refusin' a quid, I s'pose?"

"That's where you make a mistake, Joey. You gave a half-crown for that picture, and you're goin' to sell it at the same price. And you can thank your stars that you're not sent to prison, into the bargain, for the blackmailin' rotter you are!" Mornington gave a sudden, low whistle. "Now, then!" The sharper started back, with a startled oath.

As Mornington whistled five shadowy forms started out of the darkness, and before Mr. Hook quite knew what was happening he was collared by as many pairs of hands and borne backwards into the road.

Bump!  
 Joey Hook opened his startled lips for a yell, but a scarf was crammed over his mouth at the same moment, and the yell died away in a suffocated gurgle.

He struggled frantically, but it was unavailing.

Every limb was held in an iron grip, and the scarf was jammed into his mouth till he was thoroughly gagged.

"Bring him along," said Morny quietly.

Mr. Hook found himself dragged up from the road and carried across, and into the trees on the other side, where the peculiar scene was safe from chance observation.

He stared wildly at his captors, but in the gloom he could not make them out.

He could guess pretty accurately, however, that Jimmy Silver was one of the party.

The sharper was bumped down on the ground, still held.

Jimmy Silver bent over him.  
 "You're going to give me that photograph now, Mr. Hook," he said quietly. "It's my turn now. Will you give it to me?"

The sharper could not speak, but he shook his head furiously.

"I'll give you half-a-crown for it," said Jimmy. "I suppose it's your property, in a way, and I shall pay for it—as much as you paid. Will you hand it over?"

Another furious shake of the head.  
 "Then you'll be bumped till you do," said Jimmy.

"Why not take it?" said Mornington.  
 "I'd rather he gave it to me."

"Well, it will be amusin' to bump the brute! Give it to him, dear men, and don't mind how hard you hit the ground!"

Bump!  
 To his utter amazement and wrath, Mr. Hook found himself lifted from the ground and jammed down on it again with a jam that knocked nearly all the breath out of his beery body.

It was a new experience for the sharper, and not an agreeable one.

He gurgled and gurgled wildly, with the scarf jamming his mouth.

"Will you give me the photograph now, you scoundrel?" muttered Jimmy Silver.  
 Mr. Hook nodded his head frantically.

He understood that the bumping was to go on till he yielded the point—and he had had enough.

His right hand was freed, and he groped for the pocket-book.

He clawed it open, clawed out the photograph, and flung it fiercely at Jimmy Silver.

"Make sure it's the goods," murmured Mornington. "I've got a flash-lamp here."

The light glittered on the photograph for a moment.

It was the "goods," as Mornington expressed it.

Jimmy Silver drew a deep, deep breath of relief as he tore the photograph methodically into fragments and still smaller fragments, and ground them into the dust under his heel.

"That lets Algy out!" grinned Lovell.  
 Jimmy Silver took a half-crown from his pocket and placed it in Mr. Hook's fat hand.

"There's your money!" he said.  
 Mr. Hook came nearly to hurling the coin in his face, but he wisely refrained. Besides, a half-crown was a half-crown.

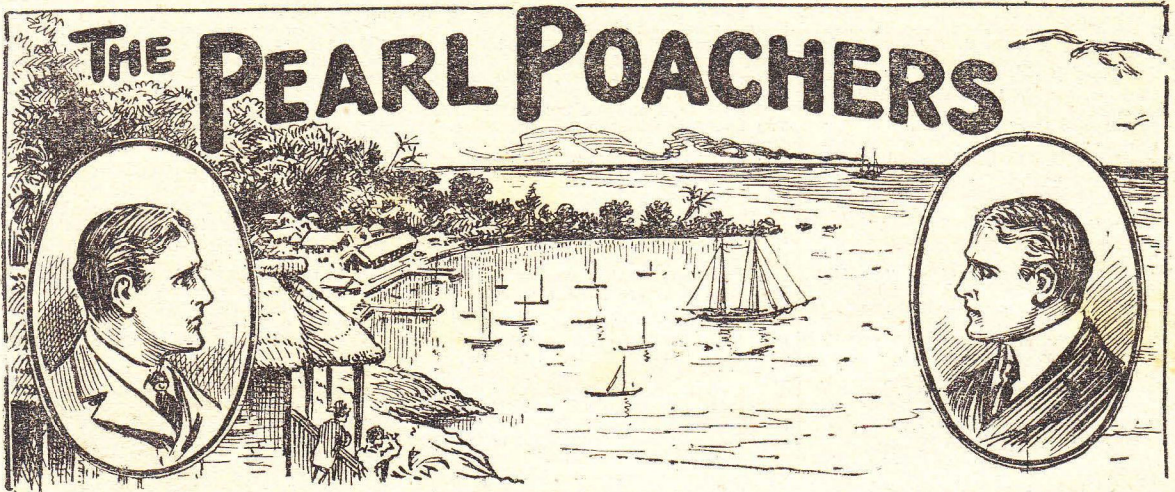
The photograph was worth nothing excepting as a means of blackmail.

"Now you can go!" said Jimmy Silver. "Your teeth have been drawn, you blackmailing rascal! Let me see you near Rookwood again, and I'll show you what my upper-cut is like!"

(Continued on page 28.)  
 THE POPULAR.—No. 190.



THE MOST POWERFUL STORY OF ADVENTURE IN THE SOUTH SEAS EVER WRITTEN!



A Grand New Serial, introducing Ferrers Lord, the Millionaire Adventurer, Ching Lung & Co., and the Daring Pearl Raider, Harper Blaise, the Terror of the South Seas.

By **SIDNEY DREW.**

(Author of "Gan Waga's Island.")

#### INTRODUCTION.

A meeting between Bruce Donelan and Harper Blaise, the mysterious pearl raider, takes place in the manager's bungalow on Ferrers Lord's pearling-station the day before the arrival of the millionaire. Donelan, the manager of the station, is struck by the amazing resemblance between Ferrers Lord and Blaise, and he unfolds a daring scheme for raiding the strong-room on board the Lord of the Deep. Blaise is to impersonate Ferrers Lord, and get away in the yacht, after taking the thousands of pounds of pearls and gold from her.

When the Lord of the Deep arrives at the pearling-station, Ferrers Lord is kidnapped, and Blaise takes his place and sets sail on the millionaire's yacht for Gan Waga's Island. Unaware of the impersonation, Rupert Thurston and Prout go with him.

Soon after the departure of the Lord of the Deep Ching Lung, with Hal Honour and O'Rooney, arrives on the prince's yacht. They hear of the daring scheme from Jimmy, the black, Donelan's servant, and detain the rascally manager until they are able to find Lord.

Sharkfin Billy, in command of Blaise's big motor-launch, follows Ching Lung & Co., and torpedoes them. Unable to protect themselves against the fire of Sharkfin Billy's vessel, they run ashore in the lagoon of an island, on which they afterwards discover Ferrers Lord. Meantime, Donelan disappears. The Chinese crew desert Ferrers Lord & Co., and they find themselves in a very tight corner.

Ferrers Lord & Co. abandon the yacht, and in a small motor-launch make their escape round the back of one of the islands. Almost before they are out of sight, Sharkfin Billy and his crew of filibusters attack the stranded yacht and board it.

Whilst cruising about, attempting to find a safe hiding-place, Ferrers Lord & Co. come up against the raider, deserted, save for Donelan, whom they find lying unconscious with a bad attack of fever. They take possession of the vessel.

Meanwhile, on board Ching Lung's yacht, Sharkfin Billy discovers that his nondescript crew of pirates have found the wine cupboard.

(Now read on.)

#### An Interrupted Supper!

THERE were only seven men in the saloon of the yacht when Sharkfin Billy entered, for the rest had been just sensible enough to crawl or stagger to the cabins and find comfortable beds in preference to lying on the hard floor. They were so sound asleep that the explosion of a bomb would not have awakened them just then, so Billy had no difficulty in disarming them. Then, lighting a candle, he made a tour of the cabins and collected all the weapons he could find.

"Now, you dogs, you can go as crazy as you like, but I've got you tamed!" he grunted. "Wonder what's happened to Donelan! If he croaked, it will only make an agreeable difference on the right side, for he'll want a big share out of the stunt, and me and Harper Blaise won't mind cutting that up between us."

Then Sharkfin Billy thought of something to eat. He found his way to the cold-room and looted a chicken and some carrots, onions, and potatoes. He soon had the galley fire going and the pots simmering, but he had a long time to wait while the chicken was cooking, so he went on deck to find a wet mist that obscured both islands and sea. Had it been less dark, he might have pulled round the raider to see that all was well.

THE POPULAR.—No. 190.

NEXT  
TUESDAY!

"Donelan will have to chance it," he grunted. "We never asked him to come and saddle himself on us and then croak up. If he'd been well he might be a bit of use to me, but a sick man ain't anything but a nuisance on a tough job like this. If he's croaked, he's croaked, and that's the finish of it!"

Billy did not know the time for he could not see the stars to make a guess at it, for the yacht's chronometers had run down and he had forgotten to wind his watch.

The ruffian was not a bad cook. He spread a cloth on the galley table, carved the boiled chicken, opened some champagne, and sat down to the feast. He had just raised the first morsel to his lips when the door of the galley was pushed open and a man entered. Sharkfin Billy's one eye grew round and glossy and the hands that held the knife and fork went up above his head.

"Good-evening, Billy," said the visitor. "A pity to disturb you while you are so pleasantly engaged, but kindly put down that knife and fork."

As Billy obeyed, Ferrers Lord lowered his automatic pistol. There was a quiet smile on his lips as he walked towards the table.

The startled pearl-thief was rising to his feet when a sign from the millionaire caused him to sit down again!

"Keep up your hands, you insufferable rascal and answer my question. Have you

heard from Blaise?" said the millionaire sternly.

"Not for donkey's years!" growled Billy. "Not from the start of it, almost. I never can remember dates, so I can't tell you. It seems a long time ago."

"He told you that all was going well with him aboard my yacht, I suppose?" asked the millionaire.

"Oh, yes, he reckoned he'd pull off the stunt, boss," answered Billy. "He could pull off anything he tackled, could Blaise; anything in the acting line. It ain't at his end that the spoof will go bust. May I have a drink of water, boss, my throat's burning?"

The millionaire nodded, and Billy's hand went swiftly towards the glass decanter of water, but Ferrers Lord was quicker. There was a flash, a report, and a crash of breaking glass as a bullet from the millionaire's automatic pistol splintered the decanter into fragments. Blinded by water that had been dashed into his face and with blood dripping from his cut hand, Sharkfin Billy staggered to his feet, spluttering.

"Silence, you treacherous dog!" cried Ferrers Lord. "You are lucky if you have not lost your other eye. You intended to hurl the decanter at me, but you were slightly too late. Up with your hands again and do not lower them an inch. If you can see, you have got off well, for your hang-dog face might have been cut to pieces."

At that moment Barry O'Rooney entered the galley, and Barry was chuckling.

"Some of the spalpeens are just awake, sor," said O'Rooney.

"Search that fellow, O'Rooney!"

"Sure, he's a little arsenal," said Barry, as he relieved the prisoner of a brace of automatic pistols and several clips of cartridges. "We didn't find as much as a knife on the rest of the crush when we rounded them up. Let's put this rope on you, Billy, for you're a soight more, dangerous than the rest!"

The millionaire lit a cigarette and watched Barry truss up Sharkfin Billy's wrists and ankles and push him against the bulkhead.

"Now you just sthay there, bhoy, and kape noise and quiet," he said, with a grin. "Shall O' lock him up in a cabin, sor, for he's a slipperly kind of woid baste?"

"We'll keep them together, and this place will do as well as any other," said the millionaire. "Tell Mr. Honour so, and bring them down. How many are there?"

"Fifteen or sixteen, sor, and all as helpless as dead cats. Oi think Oi'll give Billy a corner away from the others, for Oi don't thrust little William."

The burly engineer arrived carrying a prisoner under each arm, and he dumped them on the galley floor without any cere-

A NEW LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S.  
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"THE WONDER TEAM!"



money. At last they were all brought down, dazed and maudlin, and as yet incapable of realising the true state of affairs. There was contempt and disgust in the millionaire's eyes as he looked at them.

"And never a scrap that crush bailed in without wan bit of a Barney," said Barry O'Rooney regretfully, for Barry loved a fight and this had been too easy.

"They've made a sweet mess of my yacht, Chief," said Ching Lung. "The saloon is in such an intolerable condition that it's quite impossible to use it."

"Hadn't you bargained for that, Ching?" "I suppose I had, but it's even worse than I expected. Mirrors and furniture smashed, and the chairs and couches ripped up. They're not men but beasts, and it's hateful."

"We'll make them clean up some of the mess to-morrow," said Ferrers Lord. "And after all, the damage they have done is only a trifle that money can put right. We shall have a busy time looking after these fellows, and perhaps they would be safer ashore than here, but we'll decide that at daylight. Where's Mr. Honour?"

"Gone to pat on some more electric light, sor," answered Barry O'Rooney. "He tould me we'd soon have plenty of ut."

As he spoke, the failing lights of the galley brightened perceptibly, and presently they were going at their normal strength. Then the engineer, pipe in mouth, returned.

"We're thinking of how to dispose of these rascals, for it would be madness to give them a chance to turn the tables on us again, Honour," said Ferrers Lord.

"How long?" asked the man of few words. "Till we go out to meet the Lord of the Deep. That is a difficult question to answer. Perhaps sixteen days or even twenty. She may not be able to get away from the island, for it the foggy time, and we have known for there to last for a week at a stretch. We shall have to be very watchful."

The engineer ran his blue eyes over the curious collection of prisoners, and Honour had only one remedy for keeping men out of mischief.

"Work!" he said. "Leave it to me!" There was a look of wonder in Sharkfin Billy's eye when the millionaire bathed and bandaged his cut hand. It was so badly cut that Billy would not have to work for some time to come, even if Honour found employment for the others. When daylight came, Ching Lung found the weapons in his bath-room and told the millionaire.

"That was a wise precaution on Billy's part," said the millionaire. "Put them away safely, for unless these fellows can handle weapons they won't be dangerous if properly watched. That tireless fellow is still at it. What's this for, Honour?"

Hal Honour passed on his way to the galley, carrying a couple of buckets of water.

"Work!" he answered, with a grim smile, and vanished into the galley.

He came out, followed by a couple of wet, dejected-looking Chinamen, and set them to clean up the saloon. They were very sick and sad, but there was no help for it.

The next day Hal Honour had them all well, and working at the hand-pumps. They were sullen and scowling, but they obeyed. "No work, no food," was the engineer's motto. At night they were marched back to the galley, tied up, and locked in. A threat to drop a smoke-bomb through the porthole if there were any trouble kept them quiet. Sharkfin Billy had been put ashore

with some provisions, with instructions to show himself whenever he was asked for. He took up his quarters in one of the dugouts, but promptly appeared when a shout came through the megaphone.

"Bedad, we'll get the ould yacht off the reef, ather all!" said Barry O'Rooney. "Hal has got his hands now, and no wages to pay barring grub, and no union to say how many hours a day they've to work. They're a poor sort of crowd to work; but, bedad, we've got them safe, and he'll kape the spalpeens busy!"

Gan Waga climbed over the side, after swimming from the raider. The vessel was anchored at the head of the creek, with her gun trained on the yacht. They had her crew safe enough, as Barry had said. Gan Waga reported that Donelan was better, and that Ferrers Lord was sending him ashore for Sharkfin Billy to nurse him.

"Not much of a catch in that for Donelan!" said Ching Lung. "I wouldn't care to be nursed by that one-eyed rogue, for the sight of him would kill me dead!"

"Ut won't kill Donelan dead, or the Chafe wouldn't send him, sor," said Barry O'Rooney. "The Chafe has particular reasons for keeping Donelan alive and not letting him slip out of ut so easy. He's mapped out a long, healthy job for that blatherskite, loikewise wid no pay attached to ut except his victuals. He'll go to that oisland of yours, Gan, the wan wid the lovely oisland, and help to get gowld for the Chafe instead of pinching ut for him, so Donelan won't doie just yet, bhoy."

Sharkfin Billy was not overjoyed when a comfortable mattress and bedclothes were sent ashore—at least, he was not overjoyed when he was informed that these comforts were not intended for himself, but for Bruce Donelan. Ferrers Lord came with the sick man. The dugout was hot and stuffy, but not so hot and stuffy as the raider, which resembled a furnace when the sun blazed down on her, for she was unprovided with electric fans or serviceable ventilators.

"I'm putting this man in your care, Billy, for you have nothing to do, and I have no time to waste on him. He is on the road to recovery, and should improve steadily. If he does not improve I shall know whom to blame and to punish. He knows what's happening, and I shall learn from him how you treat him. Give him a dose of this medicine every two hours, and if any special food is sent it is for him, not for you. You have fallen into a very bad corner, and when I punish I have a very heavy hand."

"Though you've got me, you needn't kick me, boss!" growled the one-eyed pearl thief. "By thunder, I'm a rotten sort of nurse, nohow, and if Donelan pays in his checks I reckon it would be dirty work to turn round and blame me! If I've got to do it, I'll do the best I can, but it's a stunt clean outside my line."

"You have got to do it," said the millionaire grimly. "You would be doing much harder work if you had not damaged your hand. I'm cleaning up the reef and atolls of such blackguards as you, so be warned. I want Donelan alive and well, as I want you alive and well, so it's your business."

"A queer sort of business, to get a man well to hang him, boss!"

"I'm not confident that they will hang you, piracy being a rare crime nowadays," said Ferrers Lord. "Whether you are hanged or not is for me to decide. Salute, you dog!"

Sharkfin Billy hesitated, glared, then lifted

his bandaged hand to his forehead. He remained in that attitude till the millionaire had stepped into the petrol-launch, and then went into the dugout to curse Donelan and the millionaire and Harper Blaise and his own vile luck. The sick man opened his eyes.

"We're beat, then, Billy?" he asked feebly.

"All the way, unless something wonderful turns up," answered Sharkfin Billy. "We thought they'd cleared for the reef, but the cunning rotters were only lying doggo, and watching us all the time. There was a lot of wine on board, and we got it. They were all beat except me when they came back, and Lord nailed me when I weren't looking. A terror of a man! I spied one chance, and thought I'd knock the teeth down his throat; but he shot too quick and straight, and that's why my paw is wrapped in these rags. He's got the rest of the crowd sweating at pumps and hammering to tinker up the yacht and get her afloat, and I hope they'll never do it!"

"But how did they get hold of Blaise's craft, Billy?"

"Because the thought of loot fetched everybody out of her!" replied Billy, with an angry oath. "They were playing on that card, and they won. The biggest stunt on earth has gone crash, and I wish you'd never put it into Blaise's head, and I would've been satisfied with the pearls, for we've lost them now! A tiger of a man! And, by thunder, it was worked so easy that I could almost cut my throat for not guessing the trick! Fancy us walking like chickens on board the yacht. I wondered why Lord and that crew had left so sudden like. Never a word, and we jist walks in!"

Bruce Donelan put a wasted hand to his white face and shivered. He was not perfectly clear in his head, or he would have foreseen what the other man knew.

"But Blaise may dodge him yet, Billy."

"You perfect mule!" said Sharkfin Billy. "It must be the fever talking, for I always allowed you had a good quality in brains. Lord knows every wrinkle and twist of the game, and he's got Harper Blaise corked and bottled the same as me and you. Blaise will wireless our boat to come out and meet him, and Lord will get that wireless and go. He'll meet Blaise right enough—and, by thunder, it will be some meeting for Harper Blaise! Now dry up and go to sleep, for if you don't get well, Donelan, I don't know what the hound ain't going to do to me! And I saluted him, by thunder—I saluted him! Me, as never saluted a man in my life! That bites me worse than snakes!"

Presently, when Bruce Donelan had fallen into an uneasy sleep, Sharkfin Billy felt a craving for tobacco. He found his empty pipe in his pocket, but not a match or a grain of tobacco, so he went to the edge of the water, and hailed the yacht through his cupped hands, asking somebody to show a leg. Gan Waga, who was smoking a cigar, looked over the side. Billy was a heavy smoker, and he shouted to Gan Waga that he wanted some tobacco, and Gan put the request to Hal Honour.

"No!" said the engineer gruffly.

"Nothing doings, Billy!" cried the Eskimo. "Mister Honour, he say so, Billy. Yo's gets no tobacco. Very sorriness, and all that! Yo' gotted to be a non-smoker, Billy!"

The man raved all the way back to the dugout and for ten minutes afterwards. Half an hour later the craving for a pipe became desperate.

*(You must not miss reading the next long instalment of our wonderful serial of adventure in the South Seas in next week's issue of the POPULAR.)*

There will be a Splendid, Long, Complete School Story, dealing with the thrilling adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars, with the salvage seekers, entitled:

# "THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

By FRANK RICHARDS,

In Next Week's Bumper Issue of THE "MAGNET" LIBRARY.



**THE DISAPPEARANCE OF VERNON-SMITH!**

(Continued from page 15.)

But nothing was found. "I wish he'd turn up," said Wharton restlessly.

But wishing was useless. The juniors went in to afternoon lessons still in a state of uncertainty. That day Harry Wharton & Co. had other matters to think of, as well as the Bouncer. The morrow was Saturday—and on Saturday afternoon there was a football match to be played by the Remove. The Remove eleven were going over to Redclyffe to play the junior team there.

It was an important fixture—from the Remove point of view—and Harry Wharton had been feeling keenly how unlucky it was that the Bouncer would be gone and unable to play. Since the Bouncer had turned over his new leaf, Wharton had come to depend on him as a right-hand man in the team. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, one of the forwards, was still in sanatorium with a cold. It was annoying enough that the Bouncer should be lacking, but the uncertainty as to his fate made matters worse. With the possibility that a grim tragedy was hanging over the school, the juniors, or some of them, at all events, felt that they could not put their hearts into the game.

"But we've got to play!" said Bob Cherry, when the matter was discussed in Study No. 1 that evening. "We can't scratch with Redclyffe at the last moment because the Bouncer has cleared out in an original manner."

Wharton shook his head.

"I wasn't thinking of scratching," he said. "Only I feel rotten about it. Smithy played up so jolly well for us at St. Jim's—and it's bad enough to leave him out, anyway. Of course, he can never play for Greyfriars again, wherever he is. But to think that he may be—it's impossible—it takes the heart out of a chap."

"I feel that, too—but we've got to beat Redclyffe if we can."

"We'll do our best."

"They're a strong team," said Harry thoughtfully. "The fact is, we've been a bit ambitious with our fixtures this season—the new ones are, some of them, a bit above our weight, unless we're in our toppest form. I was depending on the Bouncer—there are precious few junior teams with a winger like Smithy. Now he's gone we shall have to play without him, of course, but it's a flaw in our giddy armour."

The juniors went up to the dormitory that night in a down-hearted mood.

For more than twenty-four hours, now, Vernon-Smith had been missing; excepting the cap in the rushes, nothing had been found.

After dark, somehow, it seemed more probable than during the day that something tragic had occurred—that the Bouncer lay sleeping his last sleep deep in the treacherous waters of the Pool.

Wharton could not help thinking of it as he lay in bed that night; and he could not sleep.

He stirred and turned restlessly in his bed, and he heard the hour of midnight strike before he closed his eyes and kept them closed.

THE END.

(There will be another long, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, in next week's issue.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 190.

**"SILHOUETTES"**

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**WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.**

Here is a splendid opportunity for you to win one of these generous prizes.

On this page you will find six silhouettes, each showing a person doing something, and what you have to do is to write in the space under the picture the exact action portrayed. Thus, No. 1 is obviously "SAWING." All the actions can be described in one or two words, but not more than two words.

When you have solved this week's picture puzzles, keep them by you in some safe place. There will be six sets in all, and when the final set appears you will be told where, and when, to send your efforts.

You may send as many complete sets of efforts as you please.

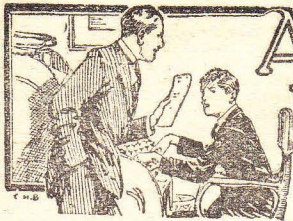
The FIRST PRIZE OF £25 will be awarded to the reader who succeeds in submitting a set of solutions exactly the same, or nearest to, the set of solutions in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. No competitor will be awarded more than one share of the prizes.

This competition is run in conjunction with "Boys' Friend," "Gem," and the "Magnet," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

It must be distinctly understood that the decision of the Editor is final and binding.





# 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 TUESDAY!

For the next issue of the POPULAR—which will make its appearance on Tuesday next—I have in preparation a splendid batch of stories, which I am sure will receive a cordial reception at the hands of my reader-chums. There will be the usual four long, complete school stories, which are the finest tales of their kind on the market to-day.

The first long, complete school story will deal with the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars, and will be entitled:

### "FOUND—AND LOST!" By Frank Richards.

In this week's splendid story of Greyfriars you will have read about the mysterious disappearance of Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of the Remove. Next week's story tells us how Harry Wharton discovers the whereabouts of the Bounder. In helping the Removites out of a fix, Vernon-Smith is caught by the Head; but the capture is only a temporary affair. A short way from the school the Bounder makes another daring bid for liberty—and is lost again.

There will be another splendid, long, complete story, dealing with the school-days of Frank Richards & Co., in the Backwoods of Canada, entitled:

### "THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME!" By Martin Clifford.

When Vere Beauclerc receives an offer of a home in the Old Country with his wealthy relations, the chance of going to a grand old English public school, and a life of pleasure, he is not overwhelmed with joy. He has come to love the Western life, the rolling prairies, and the free, yet hard life, of the West, and he does not want to exchange them for a lazy, wealthy life in England. He does not want to leave his two very loyal chums—but! There is a "but." Does he take this chance of a lifetime? You will read all about it in next week's grand story of the Backwoods.

The third long, complete school tale will be about Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, under the title of

### "THE WONDER TEAM!" By Martin Clifford.

There is great excitement at the school when it becomes known that the Red Rovers, an unconquerable team of young footballers, are to pay St. Jim's a visit. And the subsequent unforeseen incidents which happen following the appearance of the Red Rovers go to make a splendid and thrilling story.

The fourth magnificent, long, complete school yarn is about Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood. The story is entitled:

### "HONOURS EVEN!" By Owen Conquest.

The alterations of Rookwood are completed at last, and the fellows resume their old places in the class-rooms, cor-

ridors, and studies. Jimmy Silver & Co. decide to celebrate the occasion with a bumper spread, and invite their old rivals, the Modern juniors, Tommy Dodd & Co., over on the Modern side, also come to the conclusion that they must celebrate, and decide to invite Jimmy Silver & Co. to their spread. Neither party will accept the other's invitation, and you may be sure there is a battle royal between the two old parties on the matter.

\* \* \*

There will, of course, be the usual four-page supplement in the centre of the paper, which, Billy Bunter tells me, will be a Special Shopping Number. Needless to say, it will be practically all about "grub," and who knows more about grub than Billy Bunter, the fat Owl of the Remove? You can expect some screamingly funny features in next week's "Weekly."

The next instalment of our amazing serial of adventure, "The Pearl Poachers!" will be as thrilling as ever, and there will be the second part of our new and simple competition, "Silhouettes," in which big money prizes are offered.

That is the nature of next week's bumper programme of stories, and if you want to make sure of next week's issue, take the old advice—that is, go to your newsagent's to-day, and order your copy!

---

### THE "HOLIDAY ANNUAL."

There is still a chance of your securing a copy of this wonderful volume of stories

and pictures if you go to your newsagent's NOW and buy a copy. This year's "Annual" is selling even quicker than last year's, and orders are coming in every moment from all over the country. The reputation of the "Annual" is wide-world spread, and that this will be a record year for the "Annual" there is no doubt whatsoever.

### THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT.

Why should not Greyfriars have a Parliament? And why should not readers of the "Magnet" take part in the deliberations of the assembly? The answer to both these questions can be summed up in the words—No reason at all. That's why the "Magnet" is starting the Greyfriars Parliament and offering money prizes to readers for the best speeches sent in. If you look at "Magnet" Chat this week you will see all about the new scheme. It is a topping scheme. I know you will admit that much, once you have cast your eagle eye over the details. The Greyfriars Parliament has been set going by the big men of the Remove, but they do not mean to keep the good thing to themselves. Readers are invited to send in paragraphs in the form of speeches, about sports, hobbies, new bike wheezes, and general subjects, and those paragraphs which are used in the "Magnet" will be handsomely paid for, as is only reasonable, since Members of Parliament are always paid for the work they do. The Greyfriars Parliament will prove a real help, I know. It is a serious affair, and has been established to assist fellows in their sports and pastimes. There will be straight talks about amateur magazines, football, stamp collecting, and, in short, everything that appeals to the sportsman and the chap with a hobby. So just watch the "Magnet" for further particulars of a feature which will provide interest for everybody.

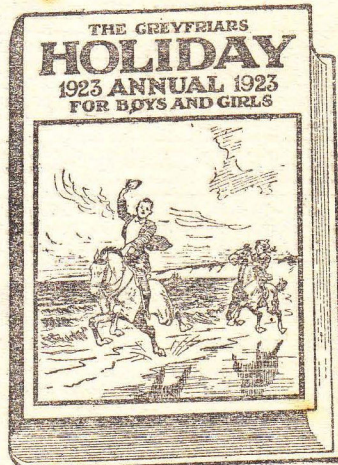
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**"ROUGH JUSTICE!"**

(Continued from page 23.)

"Good-night, Hookey!" murmured Mornington. "I'm afraid I sha'n't be able to use that tip straight from the horse's mouth for Saturday. Chin, chin, old chappy, and let Rookwood alone in future!"

The scarf was jerked away from Mr. Hook's mouth, and the juniors disappeared into the darkness. They were in their tents by the time Joey Hook had finished gasping and struggled to his feet.

The sharper leaned against a tree, panting, and poured out a stream of oaths.

Algy of the Third was no longer under his thumb. His proof was gone.

Any accusation from a person of Mr. Hook's character would not have been even listened to without convincing proof, to begin with.

In a bitter, savage mood the sharper tramped away down the road to Coombe, "done" for once, after his long experience of "doing" others.

Jimmy Silver had good news for cousin Algy the next morning.

The fag gasped when he heard what had happened, but he brightened up very much. The shadow that had impended over him was lifted, and he could breathe freely again.

"Oh, good—good!" said Algy. "Good man,

Jimmy—and Morny, too! I say, that beast Hook must be feelin' awfully wild!"

"You won't speak to him again, Algy?"

"No jolly fear!" said Algy emphatically.

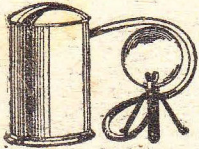
"If he speaks to me I'll punch his nose! And, speakin' of that, I'll go and punch Bertie's nose now!"

Jimmy Silver laughed as the cheery Algy hurried away to look for his one-time chum. Jimmy debated a good deal in his mind whether that high-handed dealing with Mr. Hook was justified. It had been the only way of dealing with an unscrupulous rogue, and that, he felt, was its justification.

THE END.

(There will be another splendid long complete story of Rookwood in next week's issue. Look out for it!)

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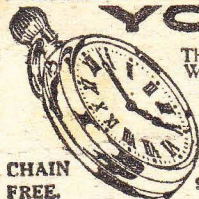


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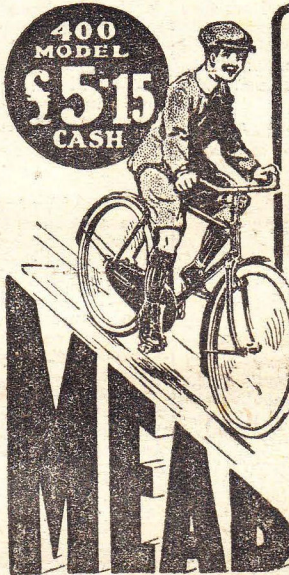
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