

SPECIAL SCHOOL, WILD WEST, AND ADVENTURE TALES INSIDE !

Week Ending
May 19th,
1923.

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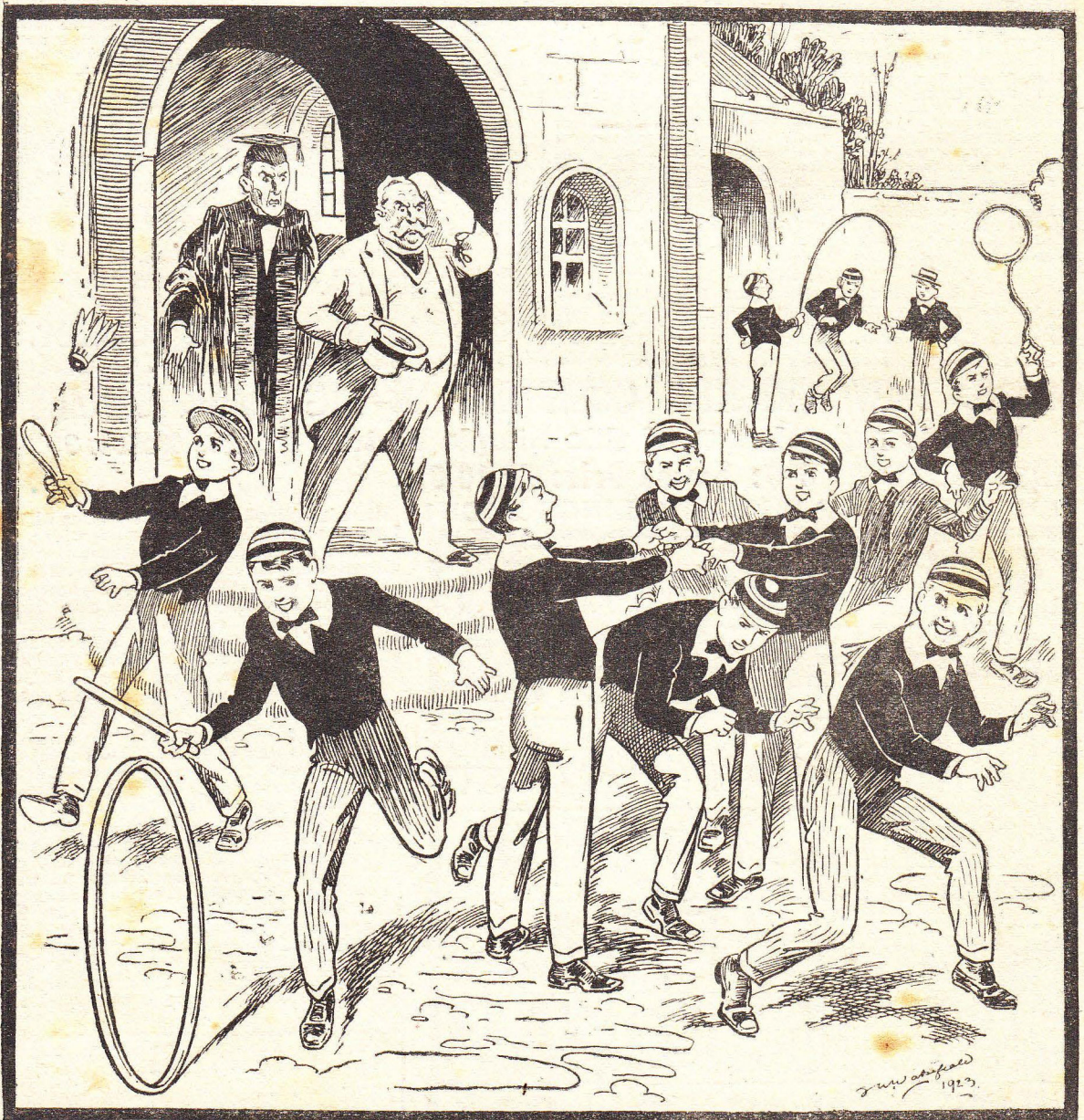
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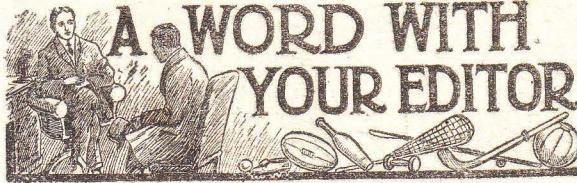
W. W. Woodfield
1923

CRICKET BARRED—SO ROOKWOOD TAKES TO OTHER GAMES !

(An Amazing Incident from the Long Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., Inside.)

2 Don't be backward in coming forward—order next week's Bumper Issue NOW!

Here's a Topping Bumper Programme for Next Week's Issue, Boys!



"IN ANOTHER'S NAME!"

There is another ripping treat in next week's story of Greyfriars in the POPULAR. The story bears the above intriguing and a bit mystifying title, and it rightly heads the list for next Tuesday in the good old POPULAR—the paper that is ever there when wanted, which is always. The plain fact is that the POPULAR with its varied programme, and its budget of stories giving scenes from all the schools, is in such tremendous demand nowadays that it gets sold out right away. Hence the need of ordering your copy well in advance. But as to the coming Greyfriars yarn—it is superb! We know something about Sir 'Arry; he is a mysterious new boy to the school, and everybody has been on the tiptoe of expectation to know what in the world he was doing, and why, also wherefore. Well, you will find the key to the riddle waiting for you next week. It is altogether a neat little problem, in which borrowed plumes figure prominently.

"THE REBELS' TRIUMPH!"

There is some exciting news about Cedar Creek next week. The battle royal between the supporters of Gunten, and Frank Richards and his doughty band has been fierce and furious. How does it turn out? The title shows this pretty plainly, though considering the rights and wrongs of the dispute it may seem a bit offside to dub the defenders of the Backwoods School rebels. Of course, there had to be a stand-up fight against oppression of a particularly offensive kind. Gunten has played a low down game all through. If he had triumphed there would have been intense dissatisfaction all round, not merely at Cedar Creek! But that's unthinkable. Justice had to be vindicated. We can look forward to more cheery days at the good little establishment which is run so ably by Miss Meadows.

"TAKEN IN!"

Suppose a cricket team fades into thin air! It is a big supposition but the amazing event is recorded in dramatic style in next week's story of Rookwood. There is stupefaction at Greyfriars over this uncanny business. No wonder! Where's the missing

team gone? You will see something of what happens next Tuesday. This kind of happening queers the pitch. Actually it was a kind of shipping order in abduction, and plotters and conspirators move mysteriously through this astounding tale of cricket and kidnapping. Mind you read it!

"BAGGY TRIMBLE'S WIRELESS CONCERT!"

You are sure to be interested in the coming story of St. Jim's. The pivot of the whole thing is found in a certain shortage of the ready Baggy suffers from. He must have money. This is nothing new, but the situation is extra urgent. So it gets into Baggy's thick head that he might raise the wind by enlisting the services of a "few sound waves," and giving a concert. The radio stunt for ever! He cannot manage this alone. It will interest you to see how the whole business pans out. The yarn has some exciting moments, and any amount of fun in it. Baggy and his fellow-conspirator are out to raise the wind, but in these cases there is always a whirlwind harvest to be reckoned for. Don't miss the details of this reckoning. They are most noteworthy.

A SPECIAL SEASIDE NUMBER.

What are the wild waves saying? This old query has never been satisfactorily answered, but Bunter makes a valiant effort to repair the omission in his forthcoming issue of the famous supplement. The porpoise takes the sea in hand. The mighty deep is treated of from the holiday and fisherman's point of view, and the whole thing is very bright and cheery. We are right on the doorstep of summer these days, and lots of people are making seaside plans. If they want any hints concerning Father Neptune's element where the mermaids live, and the ozone supplies come from, let them just make sure of next week's POPULAR. They will be surprised and gratified by the spirit of the supplement; plenty of pep in it, to say nothing of salt, which is only right, the deep sea being under consideration.

"THE OUTLAW KING!"

Our dashing serial of Robin Hood and Guy Fitzfugh & Co. makes further strides next week. You will be thrilled by the happenings at Kenilworth. At this venerable castle the contemptible John is entrenched, but he meets a bit more than he bargained for when a mysterious knight—"Sir Nameless"—rides gallantly into the lists. John's champions get unseated, just like unpopular Members of Parliament. The story is more and more captivating with each week.

THE CRICKET COMPETITION.

Kent XI. comes under survey next week in the smartest little problem we have had yet.

Your Editor.

GRAND NEW CRICKET COMPETITION—BIG CASH PRIZES!

What is the Solution of this Simple Picture-Puzzle Below?

FIRST PRIZE £5 0 0: Second Prize £2 10 0:
TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH!

What You Have To Do.

Here is a splendid Cricket competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a history of the Yorkshire C.C. in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Yorkshire" Competition, POPULAR Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, MAY 24th, 1923.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now 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. The Editor reserves the right to put all together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be accepted as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Gem," "Magnet," and "Boys' Friend," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.



I enter Yorkshire Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name

Address

P

THE NEW HEAD OF ROOKWOOD!

Though Dr. Chisholm is a very stern master, he is respected by all at Rookwood, but Dr. Snaslem, the temporary Head, is a man of quite another stamp—he is a bully and tyrant, and the school realise that they are in for stormy times when he makes his dramatic arrival!



A Great Story of the famous Chums of Rookwood School!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Tubby Brings News!

"IT'S up to us," said Jimmy Silver firmly.

"Eh?"

"It'll be doing those Modern asses one in the eye, too."

"What?"

"The old Head's not such a bad sort, you know."

"What the—"

"Of course, he whacks us now and again, but even then he's hurting himself more—he tells us so himself, you know—and that's very consoling."

"Ha, ha! Yes, but what—"

"And now the old chap's going away, and won't be back for a month. Therefore—"

"What delightfully fresh news!" murmured Lovell, with heavy sarcasm.

"Therefore," pursued Jimmy Silver, ignoring Lovell's remark, "it's up to the leaders of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood—that's little us—to give the old Head a good send-off."

Jimmy Silver paused and nodded thoughtfully.

In point of fact, Jimmy Silver had been silent and thoughtful ever since tea had begun.

It was such an unusual thing for the cheerful skipper of the Fourth at Rookwood to be silent and thoughtful for long, that the other three members of the Fistical Four were beginning to be quite concerned.

And then he had suddenly startled them with the above remarks.

But now the secret of his thoughtful frown and silence was out, the suspense was ended.

Arthur Edward Lovell picked up his cup again, Newcome cut himself a slice of cake, and Raby tackled his chunk of bread anew.

"You see," proceeded Jimmy Silver, "as you fellows know, the Head's been seedy for some time, and—"

"He knows we know, and yet he's telling us," murmured Lovell.

"And," went on Jimmy, with a Hunnish glare at Lovell, "now the doctor's ordered him a rest, and the Board of Governors has granted him a month's leave, and he goes to-morrow. Now, as I say, it's up to us, as the flower of Rookwood, so to speak, to give him a good send-off. It'll buck him up no end."

"Jolly good idea!" said Arthur Edward Lovell heartily.

"Hear, hear!"

"Then that's settled!" exclaimed Jimmy, with satisfaction. "We'll get to know what time he's going, and we'll do it. Outside, porpoise!"

Jimmy Silver roared out those last two

words in no uncertain tone as a fat face poked round the door.

As a matter of fact, Tubby Muffin, the owner of the face, usually was met with that request whenever he entered other fellows' studies at Rookwood.

He was so used to it that he never by any chance acceded to the request, unless it was accompanied by the additional persuasion of a boot.

And this occasion was no exception to the rule. Tubby rolled in and blinked excitedly at the Fistical Four.

"I—I say, Jimmy, old pal—" he began breathlessly.

There was an unusual note of urgency in Tubby's voice.

But Jimmy Silver & Co. were not impressed.

"Outside!" roared four voices in unison.

"But—but, I say, it's important!" protested Tubby excitedly. "I came rushing here to tell you that the Head's decided to go to-night, after all. But I'm blessed if I do now—no, not if you go on your bended—"

"Eh? What's that? The Head is—" gasped Jimmy eagerly. "So the Head's going to-night, is he? What time, you thumping—"

"I—I say, who told you?" gasped Tubby Muffin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Some silly, jabbering idiot's told you!" said Tubby, in disgust.

"Never mind; you'll miss seeing the Head off, and serve you jolly well right! Wouldn't you just squirm if you knew that Tommy Dodd and his crowd of Modern rotters were standing waiting for the Head's car when I came away? But I'm hanged if I— Here—what—wow!"

Tubby Muffin smote the floor with a terrific thump, as, only stopping to snatch their caps, the Fistical Four swept like an avalanche over his podgy person and vanished through the doorway.

Tubby Muffin's "important," news had turned out important, after all.

In fact, there wasn't much doubt that to Jimmy Silver & Co. the news was most important.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The New Head!

"BUCK up!" urged Jimmy Silver, dashing down the passage. "My hat! Fancy those Modern worms thinking of the wheeze, too! I'll bust Tubby for this!"

At top speed the Fistical Four dashed out into the quad and across to the gates.

Then Jimmy Silver gave a shout. Grouped around the entrance-gates to the

drive leading to the Head's private house was a swarm of juniors.

"Modern worms!" growled Lovell.

"Never mind; we're in time!"

"Hallo! My hat! Classical bounders!" came Tommy Dodd's voice, as the Fistical Four dashed up. "Here, what do you Classical rotters want? Hop it!"

"Same to you, old nut!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully.

Then, as the Modern juniors crowded round the Classical Four, looking war-like, Jimmy held up his hand.

"Peace, my infants! This is no time for strife!" he said. "Tommy Dodd, I'm surprised at you!"

"Why, you Classical dummy—"

"Why, you—"

"Look out!" yelled Tommy Cook warningly. "Here's the car!"

Amid a loud tooting of the horn, Dr. Chisholm's car drove slowly down the drive and turned through the gates.

"Hip, pip, hurrah!" shouted Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Hip, pip, hurrah!" shouted Tommy Dodd & Co.

As the car passed the juniors, Dr. Chisholm's face, pale and thin, appeared at the window.

The Head of Rookwood certainly did not look well.

He gave the juniors a kind smile, nevertheless.

Then the car vanished down the road.

Tommy Dodd turned to Jimmy Silver when the car had gone.

"You—you ass!" he exclaimed breathlessly. "What the dickens did you want to yell like that for? The Head'll think you cheered because he was going!"

Jimmy Silver snorted.

As a matter of fact, Jimmy Silver was feeling extremely exasperated.

His great wheeze had not turned out such a tremendous score as he had anticipated. Certainly they had given the old Head a good send-off, but the fact that the Modern juniors had also thought of the wheeze, and had got there first, quite took the gilt off the gingerbread.

"You—you—well, my hat! You cheeky ass, Tommy Dodd!" he ejaculated at last.

"Why, you yelled harder than anyone yourself. As if the Head wanted to be yelled at by an inky crowd of Modern worms! Why—"

"That's it, Jimmy! Cheek, I call it!" exclaimed Lovell warmly. "You Modern rotters, don't know your place! Blessed if—"

"Why, you Classical worms—"

"Why, you Modern chump—"

"Sure, an' mop 'em up entirely!" came Tommy Doyle's excited voice.

"That's it, whop the cads!" yelled Tommy Cook. "Sock into 'em!"

4 Wonderful scenes at the Kenilworth Tournament in next week's serial!

There was a rush of Modern juniors. "Buck up!" yelled Jimmy Silver. There followed the trampling of many feet on the gravelled drive, and the sound of sundry grunts and the roar of voices.

In less than a minute, Jimmy Silver & Co. and Tommy Dodd & Co., locked in deadly embrace, were waltzing about, pounding each other vigorously. Lovell lay stretched on a flower-bed inside the gates, with Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle sitting on his head. Raby and Newcome were completely invisible, though a writhing mass of Moderns in the gateway indicated their possible whereabouts.

The Fistical Four were over-matched by long odds, but they put up a terrific resistance, nevertheless.

The scrimmage was at its height when an interruption occurred.

Amid a loud toot-toot, Dr. Chisholm's car, evidently returning from the station, turned in at the gates.

"Look out!" yelled a voice, warningly, followed by the jarring of brakes.

The combatants separated with startling suddenness, and jumped to one side to allow the—as they imagined—empty car to pass.

But the car stopped, and a frowning face, surmounted by a rusty silk hat, appeared at the window.

A face with a hooked-nose and small, glittering eyes it was—a face one would have looked at twice, and liked less at the second look than at the first.

"My hat!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

There was a sudden hush as the hooked-nose gentleman descended from the car with a thunderous brow.

"Boys!"

The voice was authoritative, it was also grating and decidedly unpleasant to hear—more like the croak of a cornercrake, as Raby said afterwards.

"Boys," exclaimed the gentleman, glaring around at the dishevelled juniors, "what does this disgraceful riot mean—this disgusting brawl?"

Silence.

"You, boy, answer me at once!" demanded the stranger harshly, singling out Jimmy Silver. "What is your name, and to what Form do you belong?"

Jimmy Silver grinned.

The hook-nosed gentleman's autocratic manner and thunderous frown did not frighten the cheerful Jimmy in the least.

He hadn't the faintest idea who the unpleasant stranger was, but he certainly had no intention of answering his overbearing questions—not in the way the stranger desired, at any rate.

"Answer me!" demanded the beaky gentleman, his thin lips closing with a snap. "At once!"

"Certainly, sir!" chuckled Jimmy Silver. "My name is Norval; on the Grampian Hills—"

Smack!

The beaky gentleman's flat palm met Jimmy Silver's face with a crack like a pistol shot, sending the astonished junior spinning across the drive.

Apparently the hook-nosed gentleman had a somewhat hasty temper.

Jimmy Silver picked himself up from the gravel, his face white and his eyes gleaming.

"Possibly, now you are acquainted with my methods of discipline, you will answer my questions, boy, without further insolence. Your name and—"

The harsh, grating tones ceased as the rustle of a gown was heard, and Mr. Greely came whisking down the drive.

He frowned portentously at the juniors, and turned, with a bow, to the hook-nosed gentleman.

"Dr. Snazlem, I presume!" he exclaimed in his booming tones.

The rusty-looking stranger ignored the question and eyed Mr. Greely up and down in a manner that made the Fifth Form-master's complexion turn pink.

"You're Greely, I suppose?" he snapped.

"Ahem! My name is Greely," said Mr. Greely stiffly. "I have been deputed by Dr. Chisholm to meet you and introduce you to Rookwood, sir. Unfortunately, Dr. Chisholm has had an urgent call, and has been obliged to depart much earlier—"

"I am quite aware of that!" interrupted Dr. Snazlem rudely. "I had a few moments' conversation with Dr. Chisholm at the

station, and he acquainted me briefly with the situation. Whatever the reason, however, I consider Dr. Chisholm's action, in hurrying away before I had arrived to take up my duties as temporary headmaster, inconsiderate and injudicious in the extreme."

"My hat—a new Head!" whispered Lovell excitedly.

Apparently the whisper reached Mr. Greely, for he turned with a start, as if he had forgotten the presence of the juniors.

"One moment, sir—Boys," he exclaimed angrily, "go indoors at once! How dare you stand there in that impertinent manner! Go!"

"Stop!"

Dr. Snazlem's tone was vicious, and his eyes glittered. "I arrived here," said the stranger, "to find these boys in the midst of a disgraceful orgy of ruffianly brawling—they were fighting like savages, sir. Indeed, I wondered if I had been appointed to take charge of a den of hooligans, instead of a public school. It appears to me that discipline at Rookwood is extremely slack, Mr. Greely."

"Indeed, sir! Then I must beg to differ in opinion!" exclaimed Mr. Greely, with some spirit. "This—this brawling, as you call it, is merely the result of good-humoured rivalry between the Classical and Modern houses at Rookwood. It is harmless, and whilst I deplore—"

"Do you actually suggest—do I understand, Mr. Greely, that this hooliganism is a regular occurrence at Rookwood?" demanded Dr. Snazlem, in shocked surprise.

Mr. Greely coughed.

"Then, if that is the case, I shall certainly make it my business to put an end to this—h-m—rivalry, as you call it, Mr. Greely. You will kindly make it your duty to cause any case of—h-m—rivalry to be brought to my notice immediately. That is my command, Mr. Greely!"

And, turning his back on the master of the Fifth Form, the new headmaster stamped angrily along the drive towards the Head's house.

Looking somewhat agitated, Mr. Greely followed him, apparently forgetting the juniors.

"My—my hat!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd excitedly. "A new Head, by gum! And a fire-eater at that! What price Greely?"

"Well, I'm blessed!"

"What a sell!"

Jimmy Silver rubbed his head woefully, his usually cheery face red and angry.

"He's a cad—a rotten, ruffianly brute!" he exclaimed warmly. "Oh, dear, he nearly knocked my blessed head off!"

There was a buzz of excited voices as the juniors proceeded indoors.

In fact, there was a buzz of excited voices all over Rookwood that evening.

The appointment of a stranger as temporary Head during Dr. Chisholm's absence came as a tremendous surprise to the school as a whole.

They had naturally expected Mr. Greely, who was the senior master at Rookwood, to take over the reins of government.

And now the question was settled, and the new headmaster had arrived, there was much discussion and speculation as to the possible result of his administration.

But to the juniors, Classicals and Moderns alike, who had already made the Head's acquaintance, there was nothing but gloomy foreboding of trouble ahead, especially if his determination to put an end to the rivalry between Classicals and Moderns was adhered to.

For it was as impossible to stop the incessant rows between the juniors of the two sides of Rookwood as to stop the sun from shining, or the rain from falling.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Not Cricket.

CRASH! "My hat! You ass, Jimmy Silver!"

"Now you've done it," Tommy Dodd!"

"The Head's window, too! Oh, dear!"

At the bottom of the steps on the Modern side of Rookwood, clad in spotless flannels, stood Tommy Dodd, gazing aghast at the awful thing he had done.

At the bottom of the steps on the Classical side of Rookwood, also clad in

spotless flannels, stood Jimmy Silver, gazing equally aghast at the awful thing he had helped to do.

It had all happened quite suddenly and quite unexpectedly.

Jimmy Silver had, in the exuberance of high spirits, flung the challenge—in the form of a cricket-ball—across the quad.

And Tommy Dodd had accepted the challenge by making a mighty swipe at the whizzing sphere with the bat he carried. Then—crack!—came the sound of good bat meeting ball.

And—crash!—came the sound of breaking glass as the ball disappeared through the sacred window of the headmaster's study.

Hence the horrified remarks of Moderns and Classicals as they waited for the storm to break.

There was a sudden hush as the window opened with a vicious slam, and the face of Dr. Snazlem appeared.

"Boys, come here at once!"

There was a wealth of concentrated fury in the command.

Classicals and Moderns moved gloomily across the quad, and stopped beneath the Head's window.

At that moment Mr. Manders came rustling up with a thunderous frown.

"Mr. Manders, will you see to it that not one boy moves until I come?"

The window closed with a slam, and Dr. Snazlem's face vanished.

Mr. Manders' eyes gleamed; he was not in the least likely to allow a boy to move.

A minute of silence, and the new Head appeared down the Classical steps, a cane in hand, and a fierce glitter in his eyes.

"Hold out your hand, boy!"

The command was addressed to Lovell, who happened to be nearest.

Lovell hesitated, then his hand went out slowly.

Swish, swish!

"Now the other hand!"

Swish, swish!

"Now the next boy!"

There were groans of pain and murmurs of anger as each of the juniors present went through the same punishment in turn.

The cuts were cruel and vicious, and the juniors, though as they were, had turned white with pain.

Not once did the new Head mention the broken window, nor did he demand the name of the culprits. And a low murmur of anger went up at the rank injustice of it all when at last the Head stopped, breathless.

"Mr. Manders?"

"Sir?"

"You will be good enough to take charge of this dangerous sporting paraphernalia."

"H'm! Certainly, sir!"

Sullenly the juniors handed over bats, balls, and balls to Mr. Manders, who fumbled with the unfamiliar objects gingerly—as if he expected them to go off.

"Boy," said Dr. Snazlem, turning to Jimmy Silver, "as you were armed with those dangerous weapons, I presume your intention was to play that brutal game of football this afternoon?"

Jimmy Silver's look was sulphurous as he faced the new headmaster.

Even the cheerful Jimmy was far too angry to see any humour in Dr. Snazlem's little mistake.

"We were going to play cricket, sir," he muttered through clenched teeth.

"Ah! An equally foolish and dangerous game, as that broken window will testify," observed Dr. Snazlem. "This barbarous passion for sports and games is, in my opinion, the canker-spot in public school life, and is as debasing as it is time-wasting. What is your opinion, Mr. Manders?"

"Ahem! I quite agree with you, sir," exclaimed Mr. Manders, with a spiteful glare at the astonished juniors. "I have held that opinion for some years."

"Ah! I'm glad to hear it, Mr. Manders, for, as it is my firm conviction that this unhealthy craving for sport is at the root of the deplorable slackness in discipline at Rookwood, I not only intend to discourage sport in any shape or form during my stay at Rookwood, but"—Dr. Snazlem glared around—"I most emphatically forbid the Lower School, at least, to participate in games of this description in any form whatsoever from this moment.

"Taken In!"—a Topping Tale of the Rookwood Chums—Next Week!

"That is my command, Mr. Manders! And now would you be good enough to bring those—h'm—articles to my study? And I will take immediate steps to make this order known to all concerned."

And Dr. Snazlem, after another threatening glare around, whisked indoors.

Mr. Manders followed more slowly, with bats and stumps sticking from him like pins in a pincushion.

They left behind them the silence of utter stupefaction.

Jimmy Silver & Co., Tommy Dodd & Co., Classicals and Moderns alike, stared speechlessly after the departing tyrant of Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver was the first to recover his voice.

"Well, my word!" he stuttered, taking a deep breath. "What a—what a Prussian!"

And that was all Jimmy Silver had time to say then, for there was a sudden rush of curious juniors from every corner of the quad.

Dozens of juniors on their way out to the playing-fields had watched from a safe distance—the little drama, and now were curious to know what it all meant; and the heroes—or, rather, victims—were soon the centre of a buzz of excited voices.

But the excited buzz soon changed to howls of wrath and groans of dismay.

And great was the consternation, and great was the wrath, of the Lower School at the news.

Slowly the excited throng broke up into little groups, gloomily discussing the extraordinary decision of the new headmaster.

Jimmy Silver was looking quite unlike his usual cheery self as he wandered with his chums disconsolately towards Big Side.

The recent brutal and unjust caning was bad enough, but the prospect of a future without cricket was, to the captain of cricket, almost too appalling to contemplate.

A big match was in progress between the Rookwood and St. Jim's senior elevens, and Big Side was unusually crowded, for, Little Side being deserted, most of the Lower School were there, their gloomy faces sadly out of keeping with the bright sunshine of that April afternoon.

"Hallo! Rookwood's bagged first innings!" grunted Jimmy Silver, gazing moodily across the smooth, green turf dotted with fanned figures. "Old Bulkeley's batting, too— Oh, well hit, sir!"

Nothing seemed to be worrying the skipper of Rookwood, for he was on the top of his form, and did practically what he liked with the St. Jim's bowling.

And as they watched, the spirits of Jimmy Silver & Co., keen cricketers all, gradually revived.

"My hat! Look!" exclaimed Raby suddenly. "The Head and old Manders! Talk about birds of a feather! Surely the rotters haven't come to see the match!"

"More likely come to stop it!" remarked Lovell moodily. "Looks to me, though, as if it's only old Manders showing the old beast round."

Jimmy Silver frowned thoughtfully.

"My hat! Look at his chivvy! Ever seen such a bad-tempered looking rotter?" he exclaimed. "Blessed if I can understand it! Fancy a brute with a temper like his, placed in charge of a public school like Rookwood! Where on earth have the Governing Board dug the beast up, I wonder? I'm hanged,— Look out, here the rotters are!"

There was a sudden hush.

Dr. Snazlem, engaged in earnest conversation with Mr. Manders, approached and stopped a few yards away.

"Scandalous! Disgraceful!" came Dr. Snazlem's harsh, grating tones. "It passes my comprehension, Mr. Manders, how the authorities of any school can permit this reckless waste of time and energy in such barbarous pursuits."

"It is indeed scandalous, Dr. Snazlem," agreed Mr. Manders. "This unhealthy excitement cannot fail, in my opinion, to exercise a demoralising influence upon the—"

Mr. Manders paused, and frowned blackly as a loud roar went round the field.

"Well hit, sir! Good old Bulkeley! Good man!"

"Savages!" ejaculated Dr. Snazlem.

"Positively dangerous!" exclaimed Mr. Manders. "That boy—surely that ball will hit him!"

At mid-off Darrel was slowly backing away, his hands outstretched, his eye on the ball dropping towards him.

"Well caught— Ah—ah!"

The delighted roar from the St. Jim's supporters changed to a groan as Darrel fumbled the catch, and the ball dropped.

"Fortunately, the boy stopped it with his hands!" exclaimed Dr. Snazlem. "What an exceedingly brutal game! That boy might have been severely hurt."

Dr. Snazlem's remarks, funny as they were, passed unheeded. All eyes were on Bulkeley, who faced the bowling again.

But Dr. Snazlem did not intend them to remain in ignorance of the situation.

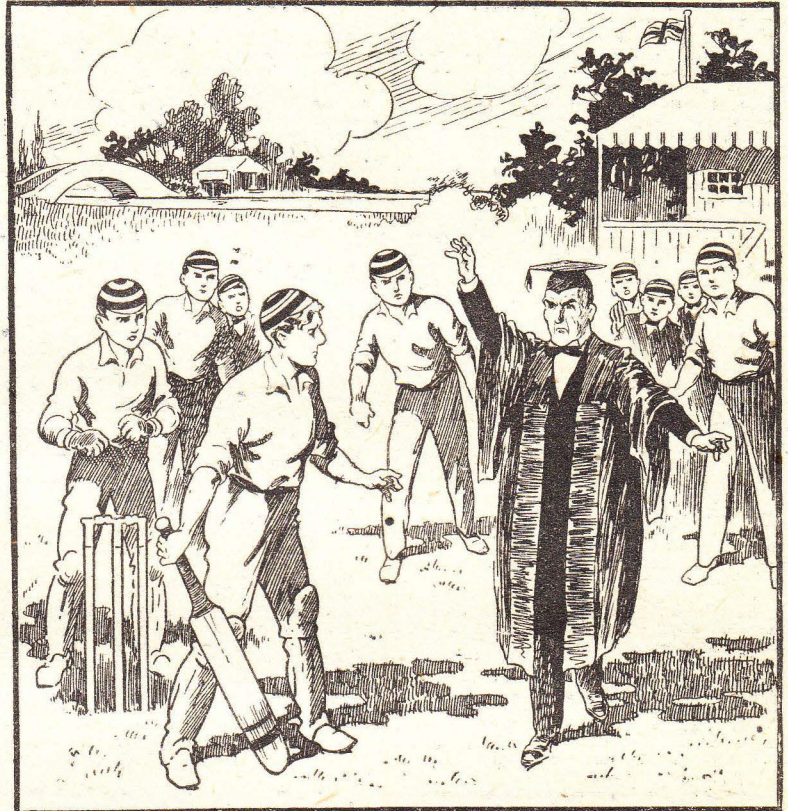
With gown whisking behind him in the breeze, he stalked grimly on the field of play, his hand raised aloft.

"Stop, I command you!" he thundered. "I forbid this game to continue!"

A murmur of amazement rippled round the field.

Bulkeley left his position at the wicket and crossed to meet the new Head.

"Sir?" he questioned, in utter bewilderment.



THE TYRANT STOPS THE MATCH! With gown whisking behind him in the breeze, Dr. Snazlem stalked on the field of play, his hand raised aloft. "Stop, I command you!" he thundered. "I forbid this rough game to continue!" (See Chapter 3.)

Bulkeley was playing the game of his life, and the Rookwood score rose steadily. Crack!

"My hat! That's a boundary!" exclaimed Lovell, his eyes on the soaring ball.

"Hallo! Look out!"

The juniors scattered. Dr. Snazlem's eyes were fixed, as if fascinated, on the tiny sphere dropping with ever-increasing velocity towards him.

Then, with a sudden gasp of alarm, he jumped backwards.

Thud!

The ball struck Dr. Snazlem's chest with a thump, and the astonished headmaster sat down with a bump.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"That's done it!"

A sudden awful silence descended on the field.

All eyes were turned towards the spot as Mr. Manders grimly helped the headmaster to his feet.

Dr. Snazlem's appearance was awful in its savage ferocity.

"Scoundrels! Assassins!" he stuttered, his face white with passion. "A deliberate and unparalleled outrage!"

Out on the field the players prepared to proceed with the game.

Apparently, from the distance they did not see, nor did they realise, the state of affairs.

Dr. Snazlem pointed dramatically schoolwards.

"Go!" he commanded furiously. "Leave the field! Go to your room at once!"

"But—but, sir, the match? What I—"

"Go!" thundered Dr. Snazlem. "How dare you bandy words with me, boy! Had I the power, I would expel you instantly for this unprecedented outrage! Go!"

With bowed head and white, set face, the captain of Rookwood left the field.

For a fellow of his position, the humiliation of such a scene was bitter in the extreme.

A deep murmur of sympathy for the Rookwood captain went up from Rookwood fellows and visitors alike.

Angry and mutinous glances from seniors and juniors followed Dr. Snazlem and Mr. Manders as they left the field together.

Slowly the astounded spectators dispersed amid a clamour of excited voices.

Never had such an astonishing scene been witnessed on a field of sport in all the long annals of Rookwood School—or St. Jim's either, for that matter.

The St. Jim's contingent boarded their brake and departed towards the station, full of sincere sympathy for Rookwood, and thankful that St. Jim's did not possess such a headmaster.

And that evening there appeared upon

How the Rookwood Cricket Eleven Was Kidnapped!

the notice-board in the Big Hall a curt order, signed by the new headmaster, which was received by the entire school with incredulity and wrath:

"Cricket forbidden for seniors and juniors, without exception, until further notice."

Cricket was banned at Rookwood!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver's Wheeze!

"GENTLEMEN—" "Hear, hear!" "Gentlemen—" "On the ball! Go it, Jimmy!"

"Gentlemen—" "That's us, you know!" remarked Tommy Dodd, with pride. "He means us!" "Gentlemen!" roared Jimmy Silver again, glaring hungrily at the humorous Tommy Dodd. "Look here! Will you silly asses shut up, 'an' let me go on?"

"Silly asses, he's calling us now!" murmured Tommy Dodd.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Jimmy Silver glared round in extreme exasperation.

Jimmy Silver was mounted on the rickety old table in the end study on the Classical side of Rookwood.

That famous apartment was crowded almost to suffocation with the leading lights of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, both Classicals and Moderns.

It was, briefly, an extraordinary meeting of the Fourth Form of Rookwood, called by Jimmy Silver, to discuss the grave and unusual state of affairs at that famous seat of learning.

And Jimmy Silver was in the chair—or, rather, on the table.

But though he had been addressing the meeting for fully five minutes, he had only got as far as "Gentlemen!" in his opening speech, owing to the frequent interruptions.

Hence Jimmy Silver's exasperation. "Gentlemen," began Jimmy Silver once more, hopefully—"gentlemen and fellows. This meeting has been called at my instigation—"

"Good word, that!" "At my instigation," repeated Jimmy, with a glare, "to discuss the unprecedented—"

"Ahem!" "Go it, Jimmy!" "—state of affairs at Rookwood."

"Hear, hear!" "Since Dr. Chisholm went away," continued Jimmy Silver, "there has been nothing but trouble at Rookwood."

"Shame!" "The new headmaster appointed, Dr. Snazlem—"

"Groan." "—has turned out a rotter, a tyrant, and a ruffian!"

"Loud groans." "He has forbidden cricket—cricket, mind you—to be played at Rookwood!"

"Shame!" "Then why should we stand it?" demanded Jimmy Silver. "Why should we let old beaky-nose have all his own way? The masters and the Sixth have tried to reason with the old beast, and failed. It's the Fourth's turn now! To-morrow, gentlemen, is a half—"

"Go it!" "But before to-morrow we've got to think of a way to make the old tyrant sit up and realise that Rookwood fellows are not worms, to be trodden upon. Something must be done, and done quickly. Therefore, if any fellow present has any ideas or suggestions to make, let him not be backward in coming forward. 'Nuff said!"

"I—I say, Jimmy, old pal—"

Tommy Muffin pushed his way excitedly towards the table, a fat grin on his face.

"Hallo! Who's let that fat ass in?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver irritably. "Buzz off, Tubby! We're too busy to listen to your cackle."

"But, I say, Jimmy—such a lark!" observed Tubby, with a fat chuckle. "Who do you think's coming here to-morrow?"

"I don't know, and I don't care!" roared Jimmy Silver. "Shove off, you—"

"But, look here—it's about the cricket!" exclaimed Tubby excitedly.

"Then, in that case, let's hear it. Go ahead, you fat chump, and cut it short!"

"THE POPULAR.—No. 226.

"I've just heard the news!" gasped Tubby breathlessly. "Old Colonel Blundell's coming to-morrow. Fancy that! Colonel Blundell! He, he, he!"

"Oh, Colonel Blundell—he, he, he!—is coming to-morrow, is he?" said Jimmy Silver sarcastically. "You crass ass! What's that got to do with cricket, fat-head?"

"Lots!" said Tubby, with a fat chuckle. "You fellows know what a sporty old boy he is. Chaps say he only comes here to see the matches, 'an' not to visit the Head at all. Well, won't it be a sell for him when he hears there's no cricket match to watch! 'An' won't he just be ratty! He, he, he! I bet he'll kick up a frightful shindy with—"

"You—you ass!" breathed Jimmy Silver wrathfully. "Worrying us with potty news like that. For goodness' sake, sit on that fat idiot, someone. Blessed if—"

Jimmy Silver paused, his youthful brow wrinkled thoughtfully.

"My hat! Yes, I believe it could be worked!" he exclaimed aloud suddenly. "I say, you chaps, blessed if that fat porpoise hasn't put me on the very wheeze we want. Tubby is quite right—"

"I always am!" observed Tubby Muffin complacently, tapping his forehead.

"Brains, you know." "Shut up, you fat ass!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "As I was saying, you fellows, Tubby is quite right about old Blundell. Besides being an old Rookwooder and a member of the governing body, the old colonel is a keen upholder of all manly sports—especially cricket. Remember the old buffer? Always quoting that old gag about the battle of Trafalgar being won on the playing-fields of Eton!"

"What about Waterloo?" grinned Lovell. "But we know all that. Buck up with the wheeze!"

"I'm coming to that—ass! Well, like our friend Tubby, I also think the old colonel will be not a little ratty to learn that cricket is banned at Rookwood—in fact, I shouldn't be surprised if he didn't kick up a fuss about it."

"Quite likely," grinned Mornington. "Go on, old top!"

"Well, I think it's a pity to let the old chap depart without seeing a game of some sort. So my idea is, that we provide a game—in fact, quite a number of games—for the old chap to see. We—"

"You potty fathead!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd witheringly. "Isn't cricket banned?"

"Well, there are lots of other games he can see. Marbles, frinstance! He could see Morny and Eroll playing marbles!"

"Eh?" "Or Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook playing battledore and shuttlecock!"

"Wha-what?" "Or Conroy and Pons playing hopscotch!"

"Why—"

"Or Tubby Muffin, and Raby, and Newcome, and Lovell, and Dawson playing kiss-in-the-ring. Why, there are plenty of games—"

"Well, of all the potty, dotty lunatics—" ejaculated Lovell warmly. "Mad—hopelessly mad!"

"Not a bit of it!" said Jimmy Silver calmly. "It sounds silly, I know; but that's the idea. It could easily be worked. We could have a whip round, 'an' some of us could sneak over to Coombe and buy all the toys and games in the village for the purpose. An'—"

"But what good would it do? You ass! What's the object of it, fathead?" roared Tommy Dodd.

"Simply this. Old Colonel Blundell is bound to be ratty about cricket being banned; but when he sees Rookwood has taken to playing kids' games, like a blessed infants' school, why, he'll simply rave. Old Blundell will make Snazlem reconsider his decision, or I'm mistaken. Besides, even if it doesn't work the oracle, it'll be a tremendous lark, and holds possibilities for lots of fun. Anyway, that's the wheeze."

For a full minute there was a painful silence whilst the captain of the Fourth's extraordinary wheeze gradually soaked into the brains of the meeting.

"By gad, you're right, Jimmy!" exclaimed Mornington, suddenly breaking the silence. "I also see possibilities in the wheeze. My hat, blessed if I don't! What—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Rather! It's great!" gasped Conroy.

There were murmurs of delighted approval all round the room.

"That'll do, then," remarked Jimmy Silver, with satisfaction. "Remember, it's a Fourth wheeze, and we'll work it on our own. An' now let's put our heads together and work the details out."

And for the next hour a continuous buzz of excited voices and spasmodic roars of laughter floated from the direction of the end study on the Classical side of Rookwood.

Whether the result of Jimmy Silver's gigantic wheeze would have any effect upon Dr. Snazlem's decision in banning sports at Rookwood remained to be seen.

But there was certainly little doubt that the carrying out of that wheeze would provide no end of fun to cheer the sorely-tried and jaded spirits of Rookwood on the morrow.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Wheeze That Won!

"LOOK out! Here the beggars come!" Jimmy Silver made that exclamation in an excited whisper as he scudded along the passage the following day after dinner.

Jimmy Silver was doing a bit of scouting.

He was coming from the direction of the headmaster's study, and as the door of that sacred apartment opened just then, and two gentlemen emerged, it was fairly plain that they were the two "beggars" so irreverently referred to by Jimmy Silver.

One of the gentlemen was Dr. Snazlem, temporary headmaster of Rookwood School.

And the other, a short, portly gentleman of decided military bearing, with a very red face and fierce white moustache, was evidently Colonel Blundell, Dr. Snazlem's expected visitor, and an important member of the governing body of Rookwood School.

"You chaps ready?" went on Jimmy quickly. "They'll be here in two ticks!"

"All serene!" murmured Lovell softly. "You buzz off, old nut!"

Jimmy Silver "buzzed off," leaving Lovell, Raby, and Newcome crouching down in the passage.

The two gentlemen approached slowly. Colonel Blundell was talking somewhat excitedly.

"Extraordinary! Bless my soul! Cricket forbidden at Rookwood—eh?" the old colonel was spluttering. "By gad! What's the old school coming to—eh? Never heard such nonsense, Snazlem! By thunder!"

Dr. Snazlem coughed.

"Ahem—I—er—regret your disappointment, my dear colonel," he explained, somewhat coldly. "I was reluctantly compelled to take that step, as discipline at Rookwood was extremely lax. I firmly believed—"

What Dr. Snazlem firmly believed, the juniors and the visitor were not destined to hear, for the Head stopped speaking suddenly and glared along the passage as if he could scarcely believe his own eyes.

Apparently he had just become aware of a group of juniors crouching in the passage.

But Lovell, Raby, and Newcome didn't appear to be aware that they were observed—they seemed to be too absorbed in an exciting game of marbles to notice anything.

"Boys," thundered Dr. Snazlem, "how—how dare you play that childish game of marbles in a public passage! Take five hundred lines, the three of you! Scandalous! Scandalous!"

Colonel Blundell's white moustache fairly bristled.

"Bless my soul! What's that? Marbles? Rookwood boys playing marbles?" he gasped, in astounded surprise. "Good heavens! Boys, cannot you find a more manly game to play than—than marbles? By gad!"

"P—please, sir, we're not allowed to play rough games like cricket, sir!" announced Lovell meekly.

Dr. Snazlem's eyes gleamed.

Colonel Blundell snorted angrily. "By gad!" he almost groaned. "The old school's going to the dogs! Never—"

Colonel Blundell's eyes almost started from his head.

From the passage ahead came a sudden

shuffling of feet, and Jimmy Silver, puffing like a steam-engine, sailed into view.

In Jimmy Silver's hand was a piece of string, and on the other end of the string was a toy train.

"Boy!" thundered Dr. Snazlem. Jimmy Silver stopped, and the train stopped also.

"Boy," shouted Dr. Snazlem furiously, "are you mad, or is this a piece of astounding impudence—an unparalleled insult to your headmaster?"

"P-please, sir, I'm playing at trains!" murmured Jimmy Silver meekly.

"Wha-what?"

"P-please, sir, as cricket is forbidden, I—I've taken up engineering!" explained Jimmy Silver.

"That," said Dr. Snazlem, in a grinding voice, "is enough, boy! You will come to my study at six to-night, when I will deal with this—your insolence!"

And, giving the tin train a savage but undignified kick, that sent it tinkling along the passage, the furious headmaster strode on.

Colonel Blundell, almost exploding with indignation, followed him.

Jimmy Silver & Co. also followed, cautiously and expectantly.

Dr. Snazlem reached the doorway, and was about to descend into the quad, when he stopped suddenly, and gazed helplessly outside.

And no wonder; for never, perhaps, had the old quad presented such an animated and extraordinary scene as it did at that moment.

Cricket being banned, the young gentlemen of the Fourth Form at Rookwood had apparently found other games to play at.

The ancient quad resembled the girls' side of an elementary school playground, rather than the august quadrangle of a public school.

Some of the juniors certainly were spinning tops and playing marbles and other exciting boys' games.

But the majority were enthusiastically engaged in the games that are dear to the hearts of the younger girls.

Here and there were sturdy Fourth-Formers playing hopscotch or skipping-rope.

Others were trotting around, cheerfully trundling wooden hoops.

And quite a number, armed with battle-axes, were chasing the elusive shuttlecock with tremendous energy.

But the star turn was undoubtedly being enacted in one corner of the quad, where Tommy Dodd and a crowd of Modern youths were busy playing "oranges and lemons."

Dr. Snazlem's face was black as the waters of Styx with rage as he gazed upon the scene.

"This—this is unbelievable!" he gasped, at length. "This is the most astounding and gigantic insult I have ever been subjected to!"

"By gad! By gad! By gad!" the colonel was ejaculating, with the rapidity and force of pistol-shots.

Then, quite suddenly, Colonel Blundell's face underwent an astounding change.

He seemed to become aware, for the first time, of the rows of laughing faces of seniors and juniors framing the windows overlooking the quad.

Then, with astounding suddenness, he doubled up and roared with laughter.

It was evident he had remembered just then that he had been a boy himself once, and realised that this was nothing but a gigantic jape.

But apparently Dr. Snazlem had no such remembrance, nor had he, like the visitor, a sense of humour.

"Colonel Blundell," he ejaculated angrily, "I—I am surprised—this unseemly hilarity—"

Dr. Snazlem paused as Mornington of the Fourth, who had the nerve of a whole regiment, came up just then, mopping his eyes with a handkerchief.

"P-please, sir," said Mornington, "that—booh—boo-boy over there's ta-taken my b-b-ball from me! Boo-hoo!"

Dr. Snazlem glared speechlessly at Mornington, his face working spasmodically.

Then suddenly a fit of ungovernable rage seemed to sweep over him; and—

Smack! Smack! Mornington went spinning against the wall, and slipped helplessly on to the ground.

The sound of the vicious smacks was heard all over the quad.

There was a sudden silence, followed by a low murmur.

Severity was not unknown at Rookwood; but brutality—and in a headmaster—was decidedly new.

Colonel Blundell's laughter ceased abruptly, and his face was grim and serious as he helped Mornington to his feet.

Mornington looked dazed, and his face was white as chalk.

"Dr. Snazlem, I—I—"Colonel Blundell's voice trembled with indignation—"I am ashamed, disgusted! Your action, sir, was brutal—ruffianly in the extreme! That poor boy—"

Dr. Snazlem's face was a mixture of rage and apprehension.

"Sir," he stammered, "that boy was insolent—more than insolent! I—I admit I lost my—my temper, but—but—"

"Lost your temper!" thundered Colonel Blundell. "Headmasters have no right to lose their tempers, sir!"

"Colonel Blundell! You—you forget yourself!" stuttered Dr. Snazlem. "This—this scene before the boys! I—I—"

The glance of the old Rookwooder was one of scorn and contempt.

"Then, Dr. Snazlem, I request an immediate interview in private!" he exclaimed, with grim determination.

The discomfited headmaster hesitated;

then, with face red with mortification, he led the way indoors.

When they had gone, a murmur of subdued excitement filled the quad.

The Fourth-Formers, with one accord, dropped their games and trooped indoors discussing the astonishing affair almost in whispers.

The astounding and sudden ending to Jimmy Silver's great wheeze left them scared and breathless.

Instinctively the juniors turned their steps towards Big Hall, which was soon buzzing with excitement and seething with the wildest rumours.

Jimmy Silver being the indirect cause of the whole thing, was the centre of interest and excitement.

Although it was nearly six o'clock, Jimmy Silver made no attempt, nor had he any intention, after what had happened, to keep his appointment with Dr. Snazlem.

The excitement in Hall reached fever-pitch as Bulkeley was seen coming from the Head's study.

Pushing his way through the throng, he pinned a slip of paper on the notice-board.

There was an immediate rush of juniors to the spot, as the captain of Rookwood strode away with a grim smile on his face.

The notice was brief, and in Dr. Snazlem's handwriting:

"The recent restrictions placed upon outdoor sports at Rookwood are hereby cancelled," read Jimmy Silver aloud. "Well, I'm blessed! What—"

Jimmy Silver paused speechlessly for a moment.

Then, suddenly, as the meaning of it became apparent, a tremendous cheer went up that echoed all over Rookwood.

"Hurrah for little us!" yelled Jimmy Silver wildly. "We've won the day!"

All that evening, and part of the next day, a feeling of subdued excitement and expectancy hung over Rookwood.

Then, about six o'clock in the evening, Tubby Muffin rushed into the junior Common-room, his fat face ablaze with excitement.

"He's gone!" he yelled breathlessly.

"He's just gone, you chaps!"

"Ass!" said Jimmy Silver. "Who's gone, fathead?"

"Old Snazlem!" gasped Tubby fervently. "Fancy that! I spotted him going through the gates in the Head's car, with all his blessed luggage on top! Hurrah!"

And Tubby rushed away to spread the news to all and sundry. It was very soon apparent that Tubby Muffin's news was true.

Mr. Greely, swelling with importance, was seen in occupation of the Head's sacred chair, in the Head's sacred study.

And it soon became known for a certainty that Dr. Snazlem had indeed gone, and that Mr. Greely was to take over the reins of government until Dr. Chisholm should return.

"Only what I expected, by gad!" said Mornington, when he heard the news. "Either old Blundell's insisted on the old brute resigning, or else he's called a meeting of the governing body and got the beast booted out. Anyway, the beggar couldn't very well stay at Rookwood after that shindy in the quad before everybody, so it's all the same."

But, whatever the true version was, the Lower School, at least, never knew—nor did they care much now.

One of Mr. Greely's first acts, as temporary Head, had been to cancel the orders relating to the extra hour on lessons, and "gating" of the Lower School.

Two days later Dr. Chisholm returned. He looked a great deal better, and had evidently resolved to forgo the rest of his holiday rather than risk the possibility of further troubles arising at Rookwood, owing to his absence.

The tyrant of Rookwood had gone—for good. And once again King Cricket reigned supreme at the old school.

THE END.

(There will be another topping, long, complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., entitled: "Taken In!" in next week's bumper issue.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 226.

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The Team That Went Astray—and Lost the Match for Rookwood

8 A Ripping 16,000-word story of the Chums of St. Jim's in this week's "Gem!"

Many weird boys have arrived at GREYFRIARS since the great seat of learning was turned from a monastery into a public school—but none so strange as Sir 'Arry, the boy from the farm. He is a cheerful and plucky fellow, and is liked by all who meet him—but there is something mysterious behind his bright manner—a secret!



One of Billy Bunter's "titled relatives" arrives at Greyfriars—or so Billy declares. A grand story of school life, complete in this issue.

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Bunter's Titled Relation!

"A REAL live baronet!" said Billy Bunter impressively. Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, spoke very impressively indeed; but the fellows he was speaking to did not seem to be greatly impressed. To Harry Wharton & Co., perhaps, even a "real live baronet" was not so awesome a personage as to William George Bunter.

The Famous Five of the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars—were getting their bikes ready for a spin. Billy Bunter stood in the doorway of the bike-shed, very nearly filling it with his ample figure.

"A real, live, genuine baronet!" Bunter repeated, blinking indignantly at the juniors through his big spectacles.

Harry Wharton yawned, Bob Cherry sniffed, and Johnny Bull snorted. Frank Nugent went on pumping up his tyres. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was filling his lamp. He went on filling it. Not one of the Co. showed the slightest interest in Billy Bunter's impressive communication.

"His name is Beauclerc," went on Bunter. "Sir Harry Beauclerc. Sounds nobby, doesn't it?"

"Oh, rats!" said Bob Cherry. "He's coming into the Remove," said Bunter. "Most likely he'll arrive at Greyfriars to-morrow. We don't have a baronet come into the Remove every day, you fellows. And he's rich!"

"Bow-wow!"

"And, as a matter of fact, he's a sort of distant relation of mine," continued Billy Bunter. "The Bunter's are connected with the Beauclercs by marriage. My grandfather's second cousin's aunt married the uncle of the fifth baronet's—"

"Coachman?" asked Bob Cherry. "No, you ass!" said Bunter, as the juniors chuckled. "My grandfather's second cousin's aunt married the uncle of the fifth baronet's—"

"Groom?"

"You silly fathead!" roared Bunter. "Certainly not! She married the uncle of the fifth baronet's second uncle—I mean, second cousin."

"Finished!" said Nugent, rising to his feet. "I'm ready!"

"So this chap Beauclerc is really a relation

of mine," said Bunter. "The Bunters are connected by marriage with most of the nobility. I shall call this chap Cousin Harry when he comes here. I'm going to take him under my protection as he's a relation. You see, his education has been neglected, as he was never expected to succeed to the title; he was really a poor relation of the Beauclercs—but five or six people kicked the bucket one after another, and so he came into the title and the property—or, rather, he will, when he comes of age. An old lawyer Johnny is looking after him, and he's going to send him to Greyfriars to be licked into shape."

"You seem to know all about it!" growled Bob Cherry. "I've never heard of the chap."

"I happened to hear the Head talking about it to Mr. Quelch," Bunter explained. "As it chanced, I had stopped to button up my shoe-lace—I mean, to tie up my boot—under Mr. Quelch's window, and the window was open, so—"

"Duck up with that lamp, Inky!" said Harry Wharton. "We haven't too much time to get to Lantham!"

"The buckupfulness is terrific, my esteemed chum!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"You might listen to a chap!" sniffed Bunter. "I don't see that you need be jealous of me because one of my titled relations is coming to Greyfriars. I call it mean!"

"Oh, scab, you fat duffer!" snapped Bob Cherry. "Don't come and tell me what you hear under people's windows, you prying eavesdropper!"

"It was quite by accident, of course. I hope you fellows don't think I would listen. But, as I was saying, this chap, being my relation in a way, I think it's up to me to look after him," explained Bunter. "When he arrives to-morrow, I'm going to take him in tow, have him in my study, and stand him a feed, and so on. The unfortunate thing is that I happen to be out of funds for once, owing to a disappointment about a postal-order. That is really what I want to speak to you fellows about!"

"Oh, we knew that!" said Bob Cherry, taking his machine off the stand. "Whatever way you begin, you always end the same way."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"The esteemed lamp is now finished," remarked Hurree Singh, jamming it upon

his bicycle. "I am ready, my august chums!"

"Clear out, Bunter!"

"But, I say, you fellows," exclaimed Bunter, without moving out of the doorway. "Of course, you see the position, don't you? Here I have a titled relation coming to Greyfriars, and I want to look after him, and I happen to be broke—"

"You'll be broke, too, if you don't get out of the way of my bike!" growled Bob Cherry. "Do you want me to wheel it over you, fathead?"

"Hold on, you know. There's no hurry about that cricket match at Lantham—you can see a silly cricket match any day. What I want you fellows to do is to lend me a quid—or a couple of quid if you can manage it. I will settle up immediately my postal-order arrives, and— Yaroooh!"

Bob Cherry's patience was exhausted. He wheeled his bike out, and it came into violent contact with Billy Bunter's fat person. Bunter pitched to one side, and Bob passed out of the bike-shed with his machine. Bunter leaned on the doorpost and gasped.

"Grooh! You silly ass— Ow! Lock out!"

Harry Wharton's bike bumped into the fat junior, and he staggered and sat down outside the doorway. Wharton grinned and wheeled his machine on.

"Look here!" roared Bunter. "I— Yab, oh! Don't wheel your bikes over me, you silly asses! What the thump— Ow!"

Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were wheeling their machines out, and as Bunter was sprawling directly in the way, they had to go over him. The tyres left tracks of dust on Bunter's jacket and trousers, and Johnny Bull gently and playfully planted a boot on Bunter's chest as he passed. Then the Famous Five wheeled their machines away towards the school gates, leaving Bunter gasping.

"Ow! Beasts!" stuttered Bunter, sitting up, dusty and dazed. "Yah! Rotters!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter scrambled to his feet, red with rage. He set his spectacles straight upon his fat little nose, and rolled after the juniors.

"I say, you fellows—"

The Famous Five quickened their pace, and Bunter had to trot to keep up with them. They went down to the gates with a

What is the Secret of the Amazing New Boy of the Remove?

rush, mounted their machines in the road, and pedalled away, leaving Billy Bunter standing in the gateway and glaring after them.

"Beasts!" snorted Bunter, as the Famous Five disappeared down the long white road. "Yah! Rotters!"

And William George Bunter turned back disconsolately into the Close. He blinked round in search of his study-mates, Peter Todd and Alonzo and Dutton. He was anxious to impart to them the great news that his titled relation was coming to Greyfriars.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Spill on the Road.

HARRY WHARTON & CO. pedalled merrily along the road to Lantham. They had a long ride before them—well over twenty miles—but they were keen to see the county match there.

The County were playing Yorkshire, and the Greyfriars chums wanted very much to seize the opportunity of seeing the famous northern players. They did not expect to get more than two or three hours on the cricket-ground, but it was worth the ride. It was a sunny afternoon in early summer, and just the weather for a long spin.

They swept through the old High Street of Friardale in a bunch. Several Highcliffe fellows were lounging outside Uncle Clegg's tuckshop in the High Street, and they turned their glances superciliously upon their old rivals of Greyfriars.

Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, had lately sported an eyeglass, and he languidly adjusted it in his eye to stare at Harry Wharton & Co.

Bob Cherry grinned as he noticed it. As the Greyfriars cyclists swept by the group of Highcliffians Bob Cherry swerved towards them, so that he almost ran into Ponsonby. Ponsonby jumped back in alarm, startled out of his superciliousness, and as he did so Bob reached over and caught at the eyeglass.

His grasp closed on it and the cord snapped as he rode on waving the monocle triumphantly in the air.

Ponsonby gave a yell of rage. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gadsby. "He's got your monocle, Pon!"

Ponsonby jumped out into the road, and shouted furiously at the humorous Bob: "Give me my eyeglass, you rotter!" But the Greyfriars juniors swept on, laughing, and disappeared from the infuriated eyes of Ponsonby, eyeglass and all.

"A capture from the enemy!" grinned Bob, as he slipped the monocle into his pocket. "Ponsonby won't stare at us again through a giddy monocle in a hurry! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I'll send it back to him by post, with a label attached," Bob Cherry chuckled. "I don't want to keep his blessed window-pane! What asses some chaps are! If he hadn't had it in his eye he might have seen that I was going to pinch it."

The juniors rode on, laughing. They were in high spirits. The miles flew under the racing tyres. They came at a good speed over the crest of Lantham Hill, and then the descent lay before them—three miles down on the free-wheel.

"Now, top speed!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "I'll race you fellows into Lantham!"

And he went down the hill like a rocket. After him went the others, pelting along, strung out one after another. Bob Cherry disappeared round the first bend. Harry Wharton fell behind in the race. The hill was a steep one, and there were several bends, and Wharton had discovered that his brake was loose. His four chums disappeared down the hill at top speed, vanishing fast from sight.

"Blow the thing!" muttered Harry, as he tested his brake. "I ought to have looked to it, but I didn't! I hope I sha'n't meet anyone, by Jove!"

The "plunger" had recently been broken, and removed for adjustment, and Wharton had not had time to replace it before starting out that afternoon. So he had only one brake on his machine, and it was out of order. He jammed it on, but its grip was slight, and hardly impeded the machine.

He kept it on, however, as much as he could, to reduce the speed of his descent,

for in case of necessity, he could not have stopped.

His comrades, whose brakes were reliable in case of need, were going at top speed, and they were already more than half a mile ahead of him and drawing further away with every minute.

Wharton whizzed on down the hill, and in spite of the pressure of the brake, the machine gathered speed at every turn of the wheels.

He could only hope that he would meet with nothing that would make it necessary for him to stop. His hope was ill-founded, as is generally the case when a cyclist trusts to luck instead of looking after his machine.

Half-way down the hill was an abrupt turn, and on the left the road was bordered by a duck-pond. On the right was a stone wall. And in the road, just where it turned sharply, two market-carts were passing one another, filling up the road from side to side.

On the stone wall a lad with a sunburnt face was sitting, reading a book. He looked up as the cyclist came dashing down the hill, and shouted to Wharton.

"Look-out! Put your brake on!" Wharton had his brake on as hard as it would go, but it made no difference—the grip was too slight. He came whizzing down like an arrow.

The junior's face went white. In a few seconds he would dash either into a cart or into a team of horses, and at the speed he was going the collision would be terrible.

The only resource was to turn the bike into the pond on the left, for he could not stop. The two carters saw him, and shouted to him.

But Wharton came on like lightning; he could not help it.

The sunburnt lad on the wall jumped down in alarm, waving his hand to Wharton. Evidently, he guessed that there was something wrong with the bicycle now.

"The pond!" he shouted. "Quick! I'll 'elp you!" Wharton had already decided to chance the fall into the pond—it was the only chance of escaping a fatal collision.

He swerved to the left as he swept down, and the machine tore across the belt of grass that sloped down to the water, and the next second Wharton was whirling over. The wheels caught in the straggling bushes growing along the water's edge, and the machine turned almost a complete somersault, and Wharton went head first into the pond.

There was a loud quacking of startled ducks as the cyclist and the cycle plunged into the water.

The water was shallow, and Wharton, hurled into it head first, shot downward like an arrow, and his head, crashed upon the bottom.

For a moment only his feet were visible, and then they went under, and then the junior rose to the surface, struggling feebly. The crash had half-stunned him, and after a feeble stroke or two he sank under again.

It would have fared very ill with the captain of the Greyfriars Remove had there not been help at hand.

But the sunburnt lad had already dashed down to the pond, and without waiting a second, he plunged into the water.

As the almost unconscious junior floated up again, the lad grasped him, and kept his head above water.

Wharton caught at him blindly. "All serene!" muttered the boy. "Hold on! I've got you!"

And, keeping Wharton's head above the surface, he struck out for the bank, and dragged him through the mud upon the grass.

Wharton sat down in the grass, exhausted.

His chums were almost at Lantham by that time, quite unconscious of his accident. They had been far out of sight when it happened. The two carters stared at Wharton for a minute or two, and then stolidly went their way. The Greyfriars junior sat up in the grass, gasping. His rescuer stood before him, running with water. Wharton dashed the wet from his eyes.

"Thanks!" he stammered. "You—you pulled me out?"

The sunburnt lad nodded and smiled. "Yes, I'll try to get your jigger out, if I can."

The bicycle was sunk in shallow water near the margin of the pond, and the lad succeeded in dragging it out. By that time Wharton had recovered himself a little. He staggered to his feet.

"Thanks!" he said. "You're awfully good! Why, I should have been drowned if you hadn't come in for me!"

"Jolly lucky I was 'ere!" said the stranger, good-naturedly.

"You've made yourself jolly wet," said Wharton regretfully. "I'm sorry!"

"Oh, that's all right! What's wrong with your jigger?"

"The brake's out of order. I ought to have seen to it before I started, but—I was a careless ass!" said Wharton frankly. "Jolly lucky for me you happened to be here! I'm awfully obliged to you!"

"Oh, that's all right! You're going to ride again?" asked the lad, as Wharton picked up his machine.

"No, I'll wheel it down the hill, and ride again on the level," he said. "I can get dry in the sun, I hope. But you—"

Wharton could not help looking curiously at the stranger. He was a well-built, good-looking lad of about Wharton's own age. He had just picked up his book, which he had dropped when he ran to the rescue, and Wharton could not help seeing that it was a copy of Virgil's *Æneid*—in the original. On the margin of the open page were a profusion of pencil-marks. The lad was very plainly dressed, not to say shabby. Harry could not help thinking it odd that a lad, evidently of poor condition, and who dropped his "h's," should be reading Virgil in Latin. Of course it was no business of his, but it made him interested in the lad.

"I'm waitin' 'ere for the gov'nor," said the lad, looking up the road. "Ah, 'ere he comes! Good-afternoon, sir!"

"Good-afternoon, and many thanks!" said Harry; and he pushed his bicycle out into the road.

A lad of about fifteen was coming down the road—evidently the "gov'nor" to whom his rescuer referred. Wharton gave him one glance. He was a handsome lad, with an expression of petulant ill-humour marring his face, and very well-dressed. He glanced at Harry, and there was a supercilious curl to his lip that made the Greyfriars junior take a dislike to him on the spot. Wharton, wet and muddy from his plunge, certainly looked rather a lamentable object. He flushed a little, and wheeled his bicycle away down the hill, and lost sight of the two.

Half a mile further on he met Bob Cherry, who was coming back to look for him. Bob uttered an exclamation at the sight of his muddy chum. In the hot sun Wharton's clothes were drying, but the mud was caked over him, and his hair was thick with it, and he had lost his cap.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Bob. "What the dooce—"

"I've had a spill," Wharton explained. "Brake out of order."

"Well, I thought something must have happened to you, so I came back," said Bob. "The others have gone on to the cricket-ground. Lucky you didn't break your neck! You've been in the pond?"

"Yes," said Wharton grimly. "And I should be there now if a country kid hadn't jumped in and pulled me out!"

"My hat!" "Never mind. All's well that ends well," said Harry. "I shall have to get cleaned up in Lantham before I go to the match; and buy a cap, too. I should like to see that kid again. He was a jolly good sort. But I suppose I never shall."

The captain of the Remove was far from guessing just then how soon he was to see his rescuer again, and under what curious circumstances. He mounted his machine, and the chums rode into Lantham together, Wharton's muddy appearance drawing many rude remarks from the youthful inhabitants when they came into the town. But a quarter of an hour later they were on the county ground, and in the keen excitement of watching Yorkshire bat, Harry Wharton almost forgot about his perilous adventure.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Two Voices.

BOB CHERRY looked at his watch at last.

"Must clear off, I suppose," he remarked. "No chance of seeing the end of the Yorkshire innings. We haven't

got too much time to get back before calling-over. That blessed hill goes upwards, you know, going back!"

And the chums of the Greyfriars Remove reluctantly made their way off the County Cricket Ground. Yorkshire were batting and going strong; but there was no arguing with the fact that the juniors had to be in by dark, and they had a long ride before them.

"Well, the match won't finish to-day, anyway," said Frank Nugent. "We'll see the rest of it in the papers. Come on!"

They had put up the machines near the cricket-ground, at a cycle-shop, where Wharton's brake had been repaired, while they watched the match. He found his machine ready for him, and, having settled the bill, wheeled it out. The five juniors mounted, and rode out of Lantham.

They covered the ground at a good rate until they came to the hill where Wharton's accident had happened. There they put on their lowest gears, and rode slowly, till the hill became too steep for riding at all; and then they dismounted, and walked the machines up the road.

The sun was setting in the west in a blaze of crimson and gold. On the slope of the hill the juniors paused to look down over the woods stretched at their feet, as it were, with mile on mile of green meadows beyond.

Harry Wharton gave a little start. On his left was the stone wall bordering the road, where his rescuer had been sitting reading "Virgil" when he came down the hill on his runaway bike that afternoon. Suddenly, from the other side of the stone wall, there came a voice. And Wharton recognised the voice. It was that of the sunburnt lad who had plunged into the pond for him.

"It's impossible! It's a mad idea! I'd do anything for you that I could, but wot's the good of askin' that?"

A more cultivated voice, in passionate tones, replied:

"You must! I tell you I want you to!"

"But I tell you I should never be able to do it. I ain't like you!"

"You're more fitted for it than I am, kid! You like all that rot—'Virgil' and the rest. You're always mugging over some silly book! I hate it!"

"You oughtn't to 'ate it. Arter wot's 'appened, you ought to try to make up for lost time."

"You needn't tell me what I ought to do. Because I treat you familiarly, as a friend, I don't want you to start preaching at me!"

"I didn't mean to."

"That's the go. I tell you I won't go! Old Lazenby can say or do what he likes, but I won't go!" The passionate voice rose. "I'll clear off somewhere first! I tell you I won't stand it! I've always had my way, and I mean to have it now! It's quite easy. Old Lazenby is ill, as it happens, and he's left it to Mr. Holt to send me there. Well, I know he will agree."

"E won't!"

"He will do anything I ask him. In fact, he has already agreed."

"Oh! Not really?"

"I've told him that if he doesn't, I shall ask Lazenby not to renew the lease of his farm."

"You—you wouldn't be 'ard like that?"

"But I would, if I don't have my way. Do you think I'm going to be under that old lawyer's thumb? I'll show him! I tell you it's quite easy! I've got all my outfit—everything here—and while you're gone I shall be amusing myself my own way. I have plenty of money now."

"You mean 'orses and races?"

"Never mind what I mean. I suppose I can do as I choose, without asking your permission?"

"Of course you can; but—"

"I tell you—"

The speakers were invisible to the juniors—the stone wall was between—but the voices came clear and distinct in the still, evening air. Harry Wharton & Co. had no wish to play the eavesdropper, and as they heard the voices they had begun to wheel their machines up the steep road again; but as they went they heard the voices still. But at this point they passed out of hearing.

"That's jolly queer!" said Harry Wharton. "I couldn't see those chaps who were talking," said Bob Cherry; "but one of them I should take for a howling cad, and I'd like to punch his head!"

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"He looks it, too, if he's the fellow I think," said Harry. "The other one—the one who drops his 'h's,' is the chap who pulled me out of the pond."

"My hat!"

"I know his voice again," said Harry. "He was a very decent chap. He was waiting for a fellow he called his guv'nor, and a supercilious-looking blighter came along—just the kind of fellow who'd speak like that, from his looks. Looks as if the kid was in some kind of trouble with his governor. I'd like to punch the fellow's head!"

"Just what I felt like," said Johnny Bull. "That's the effect his voice had on me. I wonder what he wants the kid to do? Something shady, I should imagine."

The juniors could not help wondering a little. Harry Wharton, especially, was naturally interested in the lad who had perhaps saved his life. That his governor wanted him to do something the lad was disinclined to do was evident, and Harry felt a strong desire to punch the head of the young governor. But it was, of course, impossible to think of chipping in, in the affairs of complete strangers. He did not expect ever to see either of them again.

At the top of the hill the juniors remounted their machines and rode on to Greyfriars. They reached the old school just as the sun was disappearing behind the Black Pike, and Gosling the porter was coming down to lock the gates. They wheeled their machines in, grinning cheerfully at Gosling, who would have been better pleased if he had had an opportunity of locking them out.

The juniors put up their bicycles, and called in at Mrs. Mible's tuckshop for supplies for tea.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Sir 'Arry!

THE next day it was known that Sir Harry Beauclerc was coming to Greyfriars.

As he was coming into the Lower Fourth Form, a good many of the Remove fellows were naturally interested.

Born tuff-hunters like Billy Bunter were impressed by the mere circumstance that the new boy was the owner of a title. Skinner and his friends were still more interested by the fact that he was rich. And the information Bunter had obtained concerning the boy baronet made many of the juniors curious about him. They wondered whether he would drop his 'h's, and eat with his knife. Where he was coming from, too, was a matter of interest.

Bunter, who had probably been at a key-hole once more, in spite of his recent caning, announced that the boy's guardian was ill, and would not be coming to Greyfriars with him. The baronet would come over by himself from the farmhouse near Lantham, where he had been living. He had lived on Holt Farm for years, doing very much as he liked, without any of the training that was now considered necessary for him in his new position. So Billy Bunter declared—and Harry Wharton & Co., when they heard that, were a little startled. For they remembered that curious talk they had heard on the hill the previous evening, on the way home from Lantham. The stone wall by the Lantham Road was the border of Holt Farm, they knew that. And Harry Wharton wondered whether one of the two boys he had seen might possibly be the young baronet who had been brought up so roughly.

"Probably he'll come in a motor-car," Billy Bunter remarked. "I wish Quelchey would tell us. I'd like to meet him on the way, as he's my cousin."

"Not your brother yet?" asked Bolsover major, in surprise; and there was a laugh.

"We'll see what the giddy baronet says about Bunter's relationship," chuckled Bob Cherry. "We'll watch Bunter fall on his neck—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course, it's barely possible that he may not have heard of our relationship," Billy Bunter remarked. "It was some time back. You see, it was my great-grandfather who married the third cousin of the eighth baronet's uncle—"

"That would make you his aunt, wouldn't it?" asked Skinner.

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

Harry Wharton & Co. went down to the nets after dinner, but a good many of the

juniors waited about in expectation of the baronet's arrival. Coker of the Fifth was also adorning the School House steps. Coker had heard of the expected baronet, and Coker's opinion was that the new kid would probably put on side. In that case, it was evidently the bounden duty of Coker of the Fifth to put him in his place, and make him understand that, baronet or not, he was simply and purely a blessed fag. Coker felt that it was up to him to impress that upon the baronet's mind promptly, at once. Bolsover major, the bully of the Remove, had similar intentions. Quite a crowd of fellows were waiting for the baronet, when the station hack from Friardale drove into the school gateway, and a boy was spotted inside, in Etons and a silk hat.

"Here he is!" shouted Skinner.

The hack drove right on to the School House, and stopped. Billy Bunter rushed forward and opened the door.

A good-looking, well-built lad, with frank and honest blue eyes, looked at him from the interior of the old hack.

"Sir Harry Beauclerc?" asked Bunter, taking off his cap.

"The new kid—eh?" called out Bolsover major.

"Yes," said the stranger.

"Lemme help you out, Sir Harry," said Bunter, reaching out a fat hand.

"Thanks! I don't want any 'elp," said the new boy.

There was a general grin as the "elp" fell upon the ears of the gathered juniors. It was clear enough at the start that the boy baronet's education had, indeed, been neglected.

The lad jumped lightly from the hack.

He was extremely well dressed, his Etons well cut, a light and elegant overcoat hanging on his arm. He paid the driver, and the hack rolled away, and the new boy looked about him, seeming a little timid under so many staring eyes.

"You don't know me, Harry," said Bunter. The new boy looked at him.

"I don't remember you," he said. "Who are you?"

"I'm Bunter—William George Bunter—a relation of yours," Bunter explained.

The new boy started and coloured.

"A—a relation of mine?" he stammered.

"Yes; you're Harry Beauclerc."

"Yes," said the new junior very slowly.

"I'm 'Arry Beauclerc."

"Sir 'Arry!" murmured Bolsover major, with a chuckle.

"Ow do you do, Sir 'Arry?" asked Bulstrode.

"I 'ope you are hall right?" said Coker of the Fifth humorously.

"Har you quite well this 'ere arfternoon?" inquired Ogilvy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The new boy seemed somewhat disconcerted by the laughter. It was a little intimidating to find himself suddenly in a crowd of well-dressed fellows, all of them staring at him, and most of them laughing. The colour flushed more deeply into his sunburnt cheeks.

"Don't you take any notice of them, Harry," said Bunter protectively. "I'll look after you. You can call me Cousin Billy."

"I—I didn't know he—I—I mean, I—I didn't know I had a cousin 'ere!" the new boy stammered.

"No; perhaps you haven't heard of me," said Bunter. "My grandfather—"

"Oh, cheese it!" exclaimed Bolsover major.

"My grandfather married your uncle's aunt—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're cousins—really second cousins," explained Bunter, taking the new boy's arm. "You stick to me; I'll look after you. I'm jolly glad to see you here. I want you to share my study with me."

"You're very kind," faltered the new boy. Bunter was not a particularly desirable-looking acquaintance, perhaps; but the new boy was probably glad to find a friend at all in the strange school. It was evidently a surprise to him to discover a cousin at Greyfriars; but equally evidently he was inclined to admit Bunter's preposterous claim. That alone was a proof that he was as green as grass, in the juniors' opinion.

"So you're the baronet, are you?" demanded Coker of the Fifth, planting himself before the new boy in a majestic attitude.

"Yes, please," faltered Sir Harry Beauclerc.

"Well," said Coker, wagging a big forefinger at the timid junior, "while you're here,

you've got to understand that you're just a rag, and you've not got to put on any side or cheek. Do you savvy?"

"Yes, sir."

The "sir" quite mollified Coker, though it made the juniors grin.

"Well, that's all right," said Coker graciously. "You remember that, and you'll get on all right."

"Thank you, sir."

Coker gave him quite a friendly nod, and walked away. He confided to his chums, Potter and Greene, that the new kid was quite civil, and knew his place, and was, in fact, quite different from the rest of the cheeky Remove.

When the great man of the Fifth had departed, the juniors gathered round the new boy. Some of them wanted to ask him questions, and some were inclined to rag him. Sir 'Arry, as he was already named, seemed very nervous, and was quite at their mercy. He did not know the "ropes" in the least, and was decidedly timid.

But before Bolsover major and his friends could begin the gentle process of ragging, Trotter, the page, came out of the House with a message from Mr. Quelch. The Remove master had seen the new boy's arrival from his study window.

"Mr. Quelch wants to see you, sir," said Trotter. "This way."

"I'll take you to him, cousin Harry," said Bunter.

"No, you won't," said Skinner. "I'll take Beauclerc in. Don't you believe that fat rotter, Beauclerc! He's not your cousin at all."

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"We'll all take him in," grinned Bolsover major. "I suppose you know it's a rule here, you new kid, that new boys have to be carried into the Form master's study?"

"I—I didn't know—"

"Well, you know now," said Bolsover. "Lend a hand, you fellows!"

Bolsover and Skinner and Stott all grasped the new junior together, swept him off his feet, and rushed him into the house, and down the passage to the Form master's study.

Billy Bunter rushed after them.

"Look here, you let my cousin alone!" roared Bunter. "I won't have my cousin bullied! Put him down at once, you rotters!"

"Put his collar off and ruffle his hair, and shove him into Quelch's study," chuckled Bolsover. "It's all right, Beauclerc; new boys always have to go in like that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let him alone!" bellowed Bunter. "If you rag my cousin, I'll call Mr. Quelch!"

Bunter's roar was quite audible in the Form master's study, as Bunter intended it should be. The study door opened suddenly, and Mr. Quelch looked out. Bolsover & Co. halted suddenly, with the wriggling new boy in the air in their grasp, his arms and legs flying wildly. Mr. Quelch looked at them grimly.

"Well?" he said, in acid tones. "What does this mean?"

"Oh!" gasped Bolsover.

The juniors let go Beauclerc as if he had suddenly become red-hot. Beauclerc sprawled down, and throwing out his arms to save himself, he caught Bolsover round the neck, and brought him with a crash to the floor. The bully of the Remove roared as he bumped down. Beauclerc staggered dazedly to his feet.

"Come into my study, Beauclerc," said Mr. Quelch kindly.

"Yessir!" gasped the new junior.

He passed into the study, and Mr. Quelch regarded the raggers sternly.

"You are aware, Bolsover, and you others, that I do not approve of the custom of tormenting new boys," he said. "Each of you will take a hundred lines, and bring them to me by tea-time. Now go!"

And they went, very much disconcerted.

"Ask Master Wharton to come here, Trotter," said Mr. Quelch, and he went into his study after the new boy, and closed the door.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise.

HARRY WHARTON was at the wickets when the page came in search of him. The Remove cricketers were practising. On the following Saturday afternoon there was a fixture with

Redclyffe School, and Wharton was keeping his team hard at work at the nets.

"Master Wharton!" called out Trotter.

"Oh, go and eat coke," said Bob Cherry.

"Can't come now."

"Mr. Quelch wants Master Wharton," said Trotter. "Which the new boy has come, sir."

"Oh, rats!" said Bob crossly. "Wharton, you're wanted. Give me the bat."

"Oh, blow!" said Harry; and he handed the bat to Bob, and followed Trotter out of the field. "What does Quelch—I mean, Mr. Quelch—want me for, Trotter?"

"I think it's about the new young gentleman, sir," said Trotter. "He's in Mr. Quelch's study with 'im, Master Wharton."

"So he's come. What is he like?"

"Looks a werry nice young gent, sir," said Trotter grinning.

Wharton understood the grin. The new junior was evidently something a little out of the common. As Wharton was captain of the Remove it was probable that the Form master had something to say to him concerning the new boy, and Wharton groaned inwardly at the prospect of being called upon to act the part of dry-nurse towards some queer new kid. However, he was good-natured, and in any case it was not possible to refuse anything requested by his Form master. The requests of a Form master are like the invitations of Royalty, and amount to commands.

Wharton tapped at Mr. Quelch's door. He was, as a matter of fact, somewhat curious to see the new boy, though he felt some dismay at the possibility of the "queer kid" being planted upon him to take care of, and, above all, apprehensive that the fellow might be assigned to No. 1 Study.

"Come in!" called out the Remove master.

Wharton entered. A boy was standing at the Form master's table. His back was towards Wharton, and the Remove captain noticed that he was very sturdily-built. Something in the lines of the athletic figure seemed somehow familiar to him.

Mr. Quelch, who was sitting at his table, gave Wharton a genial nod.

"This is the new boy, Sir Harry Beauclerc, Wharton," he said. "Beauclerc, this is Wharton, the head boy of your Form!"

The new boy was turning, and he looked at Wharton.

Wharton held out his hand good-naturedly. Then, at the same moment, the two boys uttered an exclamation.

"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton, as his eyes scanned the good-looking, sunburnt face before him. "It's you!"

"You here, too!" exclaimed the new boy. Mr. Quelch looked astonished. The two boys shook hands heartily.

"What is this?" asked the puzzled Form master. "You are not already acquainted with Beauclerc, Wharton?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Indeed, that is very curious. I understood that he had no acquaintances at Greyfriars."

"I met him yesterday, sir," Wharton explained. "I had a spill on my bike, on Lantham Hill, and pitched into the pond. I should very likely have been drowned, only this chap, Beauclerc, happened to be there, and he jumped in, and fished me out!"

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch. "That is very curious."

"I didn't know he was Beauclerc, then," said Harry. "He didn't tell me his name. I never thought I should see him again. I'm jolly glad you've come to Greyfriars, Beauclerc."

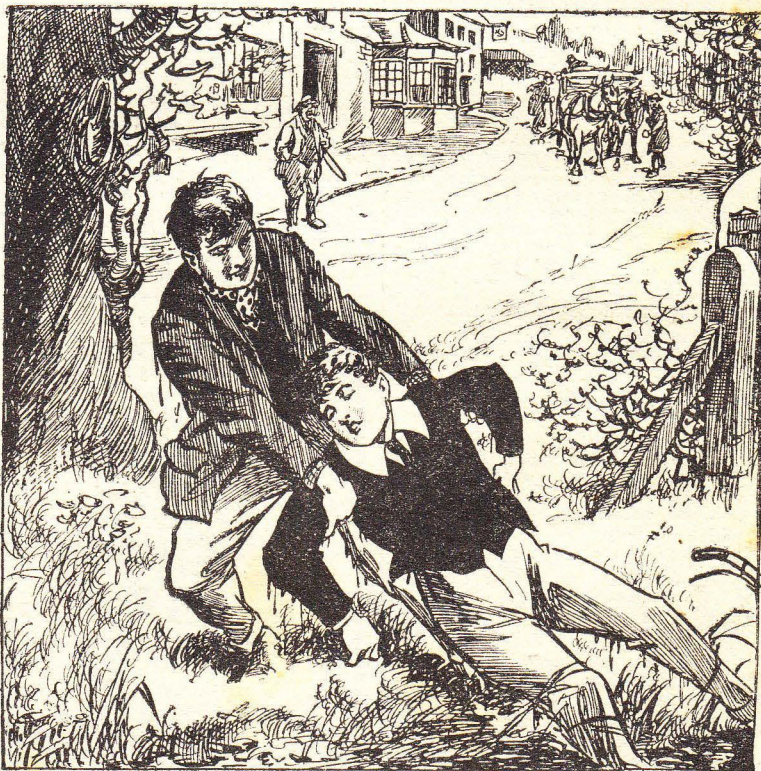
"I'm glad, too, Master Wharton," said the new junior.

Mr. Quelch smiled, evidently very pleased. "I am glad of this, Wharton," he said. "I sent for you to introduce the new boy, and to ask you to befriend him a little. But that I need not ask now. Under the circumstances, I am sure that you will do everything you can for him."

"Most certainly, sir," said Harry heartily. "I'm not likely to forget in a hurry what he did for me yesterday."

"That wasn't nothing, sir," said the new junior.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Quelch. "Beauclerc, you have several things to learn here, as



As Harry Wharton, almost unconscious, floated up to the surface of the water again, the stranger grasped him, and kept his head above water. "All serene!" muttered the boy. "Hold on! I've got you!" And keeping Wharton's head above the surface, he struck out for the bank, and dragged him through the mud upon the grass. (See Chapter 2.)

well as your lessons, and Wharton will explain them to you better than I can. I am very pleased, indeed, that you are already friends. But you must not call Wharton "Master Wharton" or address any of the boys as sir. You call the masters sir, but not the boys. You must remember that."

"Yes, sir!"

"Your early training seems to have—ahem!—left something to be desired, considering the position you are now called upon to fill," said Mr. Quelch, coughing a little. "But you will soon fall into the ways of the school, I am sure. Wharton, as there are only two in No. 1 Study—yourself and Nugent—I was thinking of placing the new boy there. I trust that this will be agreeable to you."

Whether it was agreeable to Wharton or not, there was nothing for him to do but to assent. Ever since Bunter had been got rid of from No. 1 Study, Wharton and Nugent had had it to themselves, and they had hoped to keep it to themselves. But, as a matter of fact, Wharton did not object to this new addition. He liked the new boy, and he was anxious to do anything he could for him. It was only too clear, at a glance, that Beauclerc was not quite fitted now to holding his own among the Remove fellows, and in Study No. 1 it would be possible for Wharton to look after him a little.

"Certainly, sir!" said Wharton cordially. "I'd like to have him in my study, sir, and I know Nugent will like it, too, as soon as I tell him that this is the chap who fished me out of the pond yesterday."

"Very good!" said Mr. Quelch. "You will, I am sure, do everything you can to initiate Beauclerc into the ways of the school. His education has been somewhat neglected, owing to certain unfortunate circumstances, and though he has had the benefit of a tutor's coaching now for some months, he has much to learn. If you can help him in any way to take his proper place in the class—"

"I understand, sir. We'll do our prep together, and I'll do everything I can."

"Thank you very much, Wharton! I am obliged to you," said Mr. Quelch majestically. "You may go now. Go with Wharton, Beauclerc."

And the two boys left the study together. "I say, I'm jolly glad you've come here," said Harry cordially, when they were in the passage. "We generally chum up with fellows who are in the same study, you know, and I think we shall get on all right—what?"

"I'm sure I 'ope so, sir," said Sir 'Arry. Wharton glanced at him curiously. The boy's education had been neglected, yet it was very curious that the neglect should have been so very extreme. Surely it was very odd that a lad who was even distantly connected with a rich and titled family should have been brought up in such neglect. Wharton wondered what position he had been in during his early years.

"You mustn't call me sir, Beauclerc," said Harry.

The boy coloured. "I—I forgot!" he stammered. "It ain't easy to get out of old 'abits, sir—I mean, Wharton!"

"You used to live on Holt Farm?" Harry asked.

"Yes, 'cept when I was workin' in Lantham," said the new junior.

"You worked in Lantham?" asked Harry. "Yes, I—I— Beauclerc flushed crimson, and caught himself up. "I—I'd rather not talk about that now, sir. That's all over!"

"Yes, of course it is," said Harry. "Come up and look at the study. By the way, have you had dinner?"

"Yes, I 'ad it before I came. Shall I be going into the class this afternoon?" asked Beauclerc nervously.

"Yes, when the bell goes."

"You—you wouldn't mind if I am with you?" asked Beauclerc diffidently. "I—I feel a bit scared."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"That's all right. You'll soon get over that," he said comfortingly. "That's only because you're new here. But you shall sit next to me in the Remove, certainly. I'll fix it with Nugent to have you between us. Nugent's the chap who shares Study No. 1, you know. Here's our quarters."

They had come up into the Remove THE POPULAR.—No. 226.

passage while they were talking, and Wharton opened the door of No. 1. Beauclerc looked round the study with great interest.

"Looks comfy, don't it?" he remarked. "Yes, rather!" said Wharton, with some pride. "It's really the best study in the Remove, excepting Lord Mauleverer's. Mauly's a millionaire, and he's fitted up like a giddy sybarite, you know! But we're all right here. Hallo, here's Nugent!"

Frank Nugent came into the study. He glanced rather curiously at the new boy, and his face fell as he guessed what his presence in the study implied.

"This is the new kid Beauclerc, Nugent," said Wharton. "He's going to share the study with us."

"Oh, my hat!" said Frank. "He's the chap who pulled me out of the pond yesterday," added Wharton.

"By Jove, is he?" said Nugent, cordial at once. "Give us your fist, young 'un. Jolly glad to make your acquaintance, and we'll make you welcome in the study."

"I—I don't want to make anybody uncomfortable 'ere," said the new junior, flushing. "If you don't want me 'ere I—I can go into another study."

"But we do want you," said Harry. "Oh, yes!" said Nugent, shaking hands with him. "Certainly! I didn't know you were the chap who fished Wharton out, you see. I'm jolly glad to have you in the study, honest Injun. By the way, this isn't the first time I've heard you speak. I seem to know your voice. Why, of course. If this is the chap who fished you out of the pond, Wharton, he's the chap who was talking on the other side of the wall on the Lantham road yesterday afternoon when we came by."

"Just so!" said Harry. "Well, I haven't met you before, but I've met your voice," said Nugent, laughing. "I thought I knew it when you began to speak." A strange, troubled look came over the new boy's face.

"You—you 'eard me speaking?" he asked. "Yes."

"When was that?" "Yesterday afternoon, as we came back from Lantham," Nugent explained, "we were wheeling our bikes up the hill, and we stopped near the stone wall there to rest a minute, and we heard you talking on the other side of the wall to another chap. Why, what on earth's the matter with you?"

The new boy's face had gone deadly white. He staggered back, and caught at the corner of the table with one hand to support himself, his eyes fixed upon Nugent with a wild and frightened stare.

"You—you 'eard me!" he stammered. "Are you ill?" exclaimed Wharton, springing towards the new boy, fearing for the moment that he was about to faint. The new junior gazed at him a moment, wildly, and then sank into the study armchair, and covered his face with his hands.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Somewhat Mysterious.

NUGENT and Wharton stared blankly at the new junior.

They were utterly amazed. The cause of Beauclerc's emotion was a mystery to them.

"What on earth's the matter?" Nugent exclaimed at last, breaking the awkward silence. "We didn't hear you say anything that mattered, so far as I remember. If you were discussing secrets, we didn't hear them."

Harry Wharton's brows knitted a little. Back into his mind came what he had heard. It was this boy, Beauclerc, who had been urged by the other to do something—something the juniors did not know the nature of. It was evidently that which Beauclerc feared the juniors had overheard.

Nugent understood that, too, after a moment's thought, and he exchanged a very queer look with Harry.

Wharton clapped the new junior on the shoulder.

"It's all right, Beauclerc," he said quietly. "I can see now there's some secret that you were talking over with that chap, whoever he was."

The new junior's hands dropped from his face. There was surprise and relief in his look. His features were still working with some strange emotion.

"You don't know who 'e was, that other chap, then?" he asked.

"No; how should we?"

"But you said that you 'eard—"

"We heard a few sentences, by accident," Wharton explained. "But, of course, we didn't listen to you. As soon as we heard you talking we moved on, only as it was slow wheeling the bikes uphill, we heard a few sentences. That was all. We hadn't any intention of hearing anything, of course."

Beauclerc rose to his feet, the relief only too evident in his troubled face.

"You didn't 'ear it all, then?" he asked.

"We only heard that the other fellow was asking you to do something, and you didn't seem to want to do it," said Harry.

"But wot it was—"

"We don't know—anything about that."

"Nothing at all," said Nugent.

"I see. It—it's a sarter secret," stammered Beauclerc. "I can't tell you—"

"We don't want you to," said Harry shortly. "We're not inquisitive. And it's no business of ours."

"But—but if you knowed, you wouldn't care to be friends with me, p'raps," said Beauclerc miserably.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Harry. "We know you're the right sort. What we heard showed us that the other fellow was asking you to do something against your will. That's all. I dare say it was something shady, and I hope you didn't do it, whatever it was."

"But s'pose I did?"

"Well, if you did, I hope it was nothing wrong," said Harry, very gravely. "It would be rotten if you let that fellow lead you into wrongdoing."

"Tain't wrong," said Beauclerc. "I mean, it don't do no 'arm to nobody. Nobody's a penny the worse for it, and it pleased 'im. And 'e's been my friend ever since we was babies."

Wharton looked puzzled.

"Well, if it's something that hasn't done anybody any harm it can't be very wrong," he said. "It's jolly mysterious, but I don't see why you should let it worry you, if nobody's harmed by it."

Beauclerc brightened up.

"That's 'ow I looked at it," he said, more cheerfully. "I didn't like the idea, but he wanted it very much, and there was no 'arm."

"Well, I suppose it's over now, so don't think anything more about it," said Wharton lightly. "If the chap's a friend of yours I won't say anything against him, but I can't help saying that you're just as well away from him."

Harry Wharton and Nugent let the matter drop there, although they felt there was something mysterious about Sir 'Arry.

But they were soon to be set thinking again!

THE END.

(There will be another grand story of Greyfriars next Tuesday, entitled: "In Another's Name!" Order your copy early.)

.....

"THUNDERFIRE"

The
Mystery
Chief



If you enjoy a real live thrilling yarn of adventure among Redskins in the great Wild West, a story that leaves you breathless with excitement, then you should read "Man of the North" in this week's COMIC LIFE (now on sale). Don't miss it. There are many other stirring tales and a heap of comic coloured pictures in this issue. Buy a copy TO-DAY.

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.....

Sir 'Arry is a Fine Chap! He's Here Again Next Week!



Supplement No. 121.

Week Ending May 19th, 1923.

EDITORIAL!

By BILLY BUNTER.

MY DEAR READERS,—Many of you are millionaires. I know this for a fact. I have only to go through my postbag and I find letters from readers telling me that they have been to the cinema, or hired a boat on the river, or had a good feed at a country farmhouse. Only a millionaire could afford such luxuries. I know, to my sorrow, that I can't afford them!

Then, again, when a fellow signs his letter "Bill Rockefeller Smith," or "Reggie Rothschild," or "Sammy Shekels," it's clear proof that that fellow is rich beyond the dreams of avaris.

Do you ever pause and reflect, all you bloated millionaires, that there are

fellows less fortunate than yourselves—fellows who are plunged into the deep, dark abyss of poverty?

Hear am I, seated at my study table, without a penny to bless myself with. Can I go to the cinema? Can I afford to hire boats on the river at eighteenpence an hour? Can I stroll into a country farmhouse and order a sumptuous feed of new-laid cream and clotted eggs? I only wish I could!

For years I have been waiting for my ship to come home; but I fear it must have foundered in the Spanish Mane. Anyway, that ship is as far off as ever—and so is my long-eggpected postal-order!

In my pathetic plight, I said to myself, "What about a Special Poverty Number of my 'Weekly'?" It will make these millionaires sit up and take notice. Tears will well to their eyes, and lumps will come to their throats, when they read of the misfortunes of their stony-broke brethren. And possibly they will get up a subscription on behalf of a poverty-stricken porpus.

So hear we are with our Special Poverty Number. You will find nothing whatever to larf at in this issue. It is—a most sollum production, dealing with a sollum subject. How can anyone be so hartless as to larf?—Your "stony" pal,

YOUR EDITOR.

IT is possible to squeeze quite a lot of enjoyment out of life even if your pocket-money is reduced to a tanner a week.

Enjoyment isn't measured by the amount of money a fellow gets. Racke of the Shell is simply rolling in riches, but he isn't the happiest fellow at St. Jim's. I only get five bob a week pocket-money, yet I'm the merriest mortal alive!

My tailor's bills are always paid by the pater, so there's nothing to worry about in that direction. The five bob a week that I receive is pocket-money pure and simple, and I'll show you how it's spent:

	s.	d.
Three snacks a week at the tuckshop, at 6d. per snack...	1	6
Sum set aside each week for purchase of cricket-bat	1	0
Postage-stamps	...	6
Purchase of Companion Papers...	...	10
Set aside for subscriptions to various clubs, and for odd expenses	...	1 2
Total	5	0

HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH POOR!

BY MONTY LOWTHER, (of the Shell, St. Jim's),

The "odd expenses" include visits to the cinema, the theatre, and so forth. These visits are very few and far between, but that only makes them all the more enjoyable.

Live within your means, and you'll be as happy as the day is long. The words of Wilkins Micawber, of immortal memory, still hold good: "Annual income, £20; annual expenditure, £19 19s. 11d.—result, Happiness. Annual income, £20; annual expenditure, £20 0s. 1d.—result, Misery."

I don't think I've quoted it quite correctly, but you can see what the dear old bean means. Spend less than you earn, and everything in the garden will be lovely. Start getting goods at the tuckshop on tick, and you'll finish up in the workhouse!

I claim to be much happier than Aubrey Racke. Why? Simply because he can buy anything he wants; and when a fellow can do this, he jolly soon exhausts all his pleasures. If Racke wants a bicycle, or a gramophone, or a camera, he can have them; but they are

only the playthings of an hour.

He soon wearies of them, and suffers from a surfeit of selfish pleasures.

Personally, I never chant that well-known chorus:

"When I get some money
I'll be in the Upper Ten;
When I get some money—
When, when, when, when!"

I don't care the toss of a button for the Upper Ten, and I've no ambition to shine in high society.

I do not envy the bloated millionaires. I'd rather have good health and a good digestion than a fat balance at the bank.

Besides, I always reflect that there are fellows who are worse off than myself—fellows whose allowance of pocket-money is limited to a tanner a week. Most of them "carry on" with smiling faces. You don't hear them grumbling and grouching. They have learned the precious secret of how to be happy though poor!

Try and work out a list as I do, every week, and you will find how you can share the happiness of the poor. There's no charge made, by the way, for all these useful tips.

THE POPULAR.—No. 226.

Supplement 1.]

"Billy Bunter's Weekly" Keeps You in Roars All the Week!

IF I WERE RICH?

What some of our
would do if they came

Rookwood Contributors
into a fortune.

TUBBY MUFFIN:

The first thing I should do if I came into tons of munny would be to buy an aeroplane. Not one of those things that go by clockwork when you wind it up, but a real aeroplane. I should go for a joy-ride one fine morning and never come back. I should fly to a country where I could get plenty of grub. Scotland would be my destination, because it's the Land of Cakes! By the way, why don't they call Ireland the Land of Donnuts?

TEDDY GRACE:

I can't imagine myself being rich. It would be rather rich if I was! If I suddenly inherited a million of money I hardly know what I should do. I fancy I should put it in the bank for the time being, whilst I formed plans for the future. Imagine the expression on the face of the bank manager at Latcham when I pushed a million pounds across the counter and said, "Place this small deposit to my credit, please!"

TOMMY DODD:

There's not the faintest, slightest, remotest chance of my becoming rich, so why ask absurd questions. I must continue to struggle along on half-a-crown a week pocket-money, bemoaning my sad fate, and envying the idle rich.



THE HEAD:

If I were rich I should go into retirement, and make way for a younger man to rule Rookwood School. But alas! Miracles do not happen nowadays, and I am not sanguine enough to suppose that the pathway of my life will suddenly become paved with gold.

ALGY SILVER:

If one of my pet uncles eggspired, and left me a million Russian roobles (eighteenpence in English munny), I should be thoroughly reckless, and buy a new humming-top!

DICK OSWALD:

The first thing I should do if I came into a fortune would be to take a trip round the world. I am passionately fond

of travelling, and there are lots and lots of places and people I should love to see. On my return to England I should buy an old-fashioned country mansion and settle down to a quiet life. My chief hobbies would be butterfly-catching and rearing artichokes. But the chances against my ever becoming wealthy are about a billion to one!

CYRIL PEELE:

If I suddenly inherited the sum of five thousand pounds I should give four thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine pounds to charity, and stand Tubby Muffin a feed with the odd quid. This will show you what a fine, generous-hearted fellow I am.

MACK (the school porter):

If I was to come into a fortune I'd throw up this menial job, and go to London and move in swell society. If possible, I should buy a title. It's very handy to have a handle to your name. I should own a dozen cars and a racing stud, and live in grand style. No more carrying trunks and sweeping doorsteps for me! As the Marquis of Mayfair, I reckon I should make a big stir. But then, what hopes have I got of coming into a fortune? Dreams, idle dreams! Once a porter always a porter. So I must bend my back to the daily task, and banish these here fond fancies.

THE IDLE RICH!

BY SAMMY

BUNTER (Sub-Editor.)

WHY should some fellows have more pocket-munny than others? Why should some fellows be nursed in the lap of luxury while others are plunged into the ruff seas of poverty?

It isn't fare—as the tram conductor said when he was offered a button instead of a penny.

Take the case of Tubb of the Third. He gets five bob a week pocket-munny. I only get a tanner—and that duzzent always turn up promptly. The result is that I have to work for my living by fagging for Loder; whereas young Tubb, being one of the idle rich, never has to soil his hands.

Tubb can afford to live in grand stile. He has just bought himself an eighteen-carrot gold tie-pin, and he's so proud that he won't walk out with anybody else on Sunday. And he's got himself a new pocket-knife, and one blade really cuts.

Tubb can lounge and loaf about in the Close, while I'm skrubbing floors and



washing up teethingings. Tubb can stroll into the tuckshopp and toss a tanner on to the counter with a lordly air, and order a bag of boof's-eyes. Tubb can live the life of a bloated millionaire, while I'm pinching and scraping to make ends meet.

Again I ask, is it fare? And Echo answers, "No, it jolly well isn't!"

I think every fellow ought to get an equal amount of pocket-munny, say,

five pounds a week. Then there would be no cause for complaint.

I mentioned my views to my pater when he was hear last, and what do you think he did? Why, he gave me a sounding bocks on the ears, and told me to scrap all these revvolutionary notions—that's what he called them. He also threatened to reduce my pocket-munny from a tanner a week to fourpence-half-penny.

Is this justiss? Is it fare play? No, it's rank turranny!

Of course, if the boot was on the other foot, and Tubb got a tanner a week pocket-munny, while I got five bob, I shouldn't have another word to say on the subject.

Down with the Idle Rich—that's my war-cry. And I don't care if Tubb reads these words, and asks me to meet him in the Jim. I mean to be true to my principals.

[Supplement II.]

You Cannot Beat Our Funny Supplement for Humorous Stories!



Being Kind To Bunter!

BY TOM BROWN.



CHARITY begins at home—began Bob Cherry. "And a stitch in time saves nine," said Harry Wharton. "And evil communications corrupt good manners," chimed in Frank Nugent. "And it's a long lane that has no silver lining," misquoted Hurree Singh. Bob Cherry glared at his humorous chums.

"What are you chucking those moudy proverbs at me for?" he demanded. "Well, you started it," said Wharton. "We thought it was a new game." "Dry up!" roared Bob Cherry. "As I was saying, charity begins at home, and I think we ought to give Bunter a helping hand."

"Bunter!" ejaculated Wharton, in surprise. "He doesn't want help, surely?"

"Yes, he does! He's got to go to London to-morrow, to see a specialist. He's getting so jolly stout lately that the Head's beginning to get alarmed, and wants Bunter to be examined by a giddy specialist, to make sure there's nothing wrong with him."

"The Head's worrying about nothing," growled Johnny Bull. "Bunter's all right. It's gluttony that's made him so stout!"

"Anyway, Bunter's got to go to London to-morrow," said Bob Cherry, "and it isn't very nice, being mauled about by a specialist—having his chest thumped, and his ribs prodded, and goodness knows what. I'm sorry for poor old Bunter. And I'm still more sorry for him because he hasn't the money to pay his fare to town!"

"But surely the Head will pay it?" said Nugent.

Bob Cherry shook his head. "Bunter's going up to town for his own benefit, so he's got to foot the bill," he said. "And he's stony broke! I know that for a fact. Of course, we're not in love with Bunter, and we regard him as a fat pig and all the rest of it; but, dash it all, when a fellow's hard up—"

"You think we ought to have a whip-round on Bunter's behalf?" said Wharton. "Exactly!"

Thus charity began at home—home being Study No. 1 in the Remove passage, where the Famous Five were at tea.

Billy Bunter was very much on the rocks, and he would need money for his excursion to town. And since the Head did not seem inclined to finance the expedition, the juniors felt that they ought to lend a hand. So they had a whip-round for Bunter's benefit, and it realised fifteen shillings. Scarcely had the money been collected,

when Bunter himself appeared in the doorway. The fat junior was looking very miserable.

"I say, you fellows," he began, "I've got to go up to town to-morrow, to see a specialist!"

"We know all about that," said Wharton. "Well, does the Head expect me to walk to London? I'm broke to the wide!"

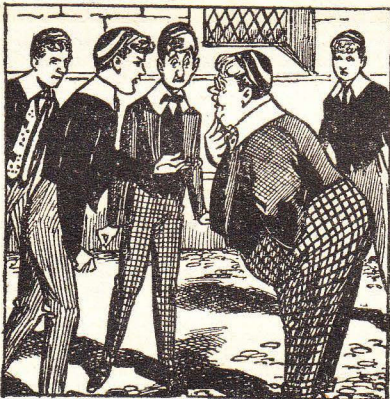
Harry Wharton handed over the money which had been collected.

"Here you are!" he said. "We knew how you were fixed, and we had a whip-round for you! This will pay your fare to London."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter. And his little round eyes glistened.

"You've got Bob Cherry to thank for this," said Wharton. "It was his idea!"

Bunter thanked Bob profusely, pocketed the fifteen shillings, and rolled out into the passage. He hadn't gone a few yards when



Bunter was instantly surrounded by a crowd of his schoolfellows. "You can give us back our money now," said Bob Cherry.

he bumped into Peter and Alonzo Todd, and Tom Dutton.

"We've been hunting for you everywhere, porpoise," said Peter Todd. "Look here, we know all about your trip to town, and we knew you were broke, so we've had a whip-round for you, and it realised fifteen bob! Here you are!"

Six half-crowns were dropped into Bunter's palm. He took them like a fellow in

a dream. After expressing his eternal gratitude, he rolled on his way.

The brilliant idea which had occurred to Bob Cherry had occurred to Peter Todd also. Bunter hoped that it would occur to a few more fellows. And his hopes were realised.

The poverty of William George Bunter, and his impending trip to London, formed the main topic of conversation in several junior studies that evening. And no less than four different sections of Removites organised a whip-round for Bunter's benefit. In each case, the fat junior received fifteen shillings. And he did not think it necessary to mention to the donors that he had already received money from other sources.

"I'm in luck's way, and no mistake!" muttered Bunter. "I'll pop round to the tuckshop before it closes!"

Fortunately for Bunter, there was nobody else in the shop when he arrived. He perched himself on one of the high stools at the counter, and ordered plentiful supplies of tuck. Then he proceeded to enjoy himself.

It did not occur to Bunter that he was acting dishonourably. He was too stupid to see the utter cupidity of his conduct.

Bunter enjoyed a first-rate feed at the tuckshop. Like the brook, he would have gone on for ever, had not Mrs. Mimble insisted upon him clearing out at closing time.

"Let me have a dozen jam-tarts to take away with me, ma'am!" said Bunter.

Next morning, Billy Bunter garbed himself in his best suit, and prepared for his trip to town.

The fat junior was making his way down to the school gates, when the window of the Head's study opened suddenly, and Dr. Locke looked out.

"Are you going, Bunter?" he called out.

"Yes, sir!"

"Just wait a moment, my boy! I propose to give you your railway-fare. It slipped my memory yesterday!"

Unfortunately for Bunter, quite a crowd of fellows overheard the Head's remark.

The Head passed a pound note through the window, which he then closed, and withdrew.

Bunter was instantly surrounded by his schoolfellows.

"Now that the Head's given you your fare," said Bob Cherry, "we'll have our fifteen bob back!"

"And we'll have ours!" said Peter Todd.

"Same here!" said Tom Redwing and Vernon-Smith, in chorus.

"Ditto likewise!" chimed in Dick Russell and Donald Ogilvy.

"What!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Have all you fellows given Bunter money?"

"Yes!"

"Great pip! Then he must have netted three pounds—the fat fraud! Turn out your pockets, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Despite his protestations, Billy Bunter was made to disgorge his resources. These amounted to two pounds only. One pound had been expended overnight at the tuckshop. So each section of good samaritans received ten shillings back, instead of fifteen.

Then those good samaritans fell upon William George Bunter, and bumped him with great vigour and heartiness on the flagstones. And a long, long time will elapse before they again try the experiment of Being Kind to Bunter!

THE END.
THE POPULAR.—No. 226.

TO THE GREYFRIARS POSTMAN!

BY DICK PENFOLD.

Postman, haste! and bring with thee
Fat remittances for me,
Sent me by the titled swells
Who patronise West End hotels.
Uncle Jack and Uncle Joe,
Both are millionaires, you know,
Surely Uncles Ted and Tony

Are aware that I am "stony"?
But the postman shook his head.
"Nothing doing, sir," he said.
"Two for Stoop, and one for Stott,
And for Wharton quite a lot.
But ne'er a one for Master Penfold.
My sympathy's increasing tenfold.
P'raps you'll get a cheque to-morrow.
Meanwhile, you must beg and borrow."
Postman! Great is my confusion.
You're a snare and a delusion.
Here am I, without a stiver,
Simply pining for a "five."
Yet you shake your grizzled pate,
And utter words I simply hate.
Six for Squiff, for Mauly ten,
But never a one for poor old Pen!

Supplement III.]

BOB KENRICK, the best boy cricketer in Britain, has been wrongly persecuted by his schoolfellows, but at last the clouds roll by—the secret of the new boy's strange manner is revealed—and he is once more placed on the high pedestal of popularity!

KENRICK for St. JIM'S! By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
A Very Special Occasion.**

WHICH the 'Ead wants to see Master Merry at once!"

Toby, the page, delivered this ultimatum.

The Terrible Three were at tea in their study when Toby's shining buttons glittered at them from the doorway.

"Any idea why I'm wanted, Toby?" asked Tom Merry, getting to his feet.

"Not the foggiest notion, Master Merry. The 'Ead didn't see fit to take me into 'is confidence."

"Ha, ha!" chuckled Monty Lowther. "Methinks you're about to be called over the coals, Tommy. Better barricade your bags with a cushion, in case of emergency."

"Rats!" Tom Merry looked rather uneasy as he left the study. A summons from the Head was always full of grim possibilities.

Tom could not think of any particular escapade which might have come to the Head's knowledge. He thought he had been quite a model boy for the past few weeks. All the same, he could not help feeling uneasy.

But the Head's smile, when Tom Merry entered the sacred apartment, was disarming. "Ah! Come in, Merry!" said Dr. Holmes. "I wish to speak to you on the subject of to-morrow's cricket match."

Tom Merry looked frankly astonished. The junior eleven happened to be playing Rookwood on the morrow—it was to be a whole day match—and Tom Merry could not help wondering why the Head had condescended to take an interest in junior cricket. He stood mute, waiting for the Head to continue.

"To-morrow's match," Dr. Holmes went on, "will be watched by a distinguished visitor. His Grace the Duke of Loamshire will be my guest for the day."

"My hat!" muttered Tom Merry. The Head stared. "I quite fail to understand that reference to headgear, Merry."

"Aheh! That was merely an exclamation of surprise, sir," said Tom, blushing.

"Oh! Well, to continue. The Duke of Loamshire is, as you are doubtless aware, a member of the Marylebone Cricket Club, and a very prominent personage in the world of sport. There has been a good deal of correspondence in the 'Morning Star' recently on the subject of public school cricket. Many writers declare that our public schools are degenerating—that the

standard of play is not what it was. And the Duke of Loamshire is making a tour of the various schools, to watch senior and junior fixtures, and to write a report on what he has seen. I trust, therefore, that you and your schoolfellows will give a good account of yourselves to-morrow, in the match with Rookwood."

"You can rely on us, sir!" said Tom Merry quickly.

The Head smiled. "I personally do not agree with the critics," he said. "There is always a number of disgruntled persons who are fond of telling us that the country is going to the dogs—that we are losing our prestige in sport and commerce. So far as the game of cricket is concerned, I trust your display to-morrow will give the lie to this assertion. The Duke of Loamshire will watch the game very closely, and it behoves you and your comrades to give of your very best, and to make a good impression. I thought it only right to warn you in advance of the duke's visit. That is all, Merry. You may go."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom. And he hurried back to his study with the news. "How many?" asked Manners, as his chum came in.

"Eh? How many what?" "Strokes, your chump!"

Tom Merry burst out laughing. "I haven't been licked," he said. "The Head merely sent for me to say that the Duke of Loamshire's coming here to-morrow, to watch the match. He's going to write a report on public school cricket, so it's up to us to play like giddy Jessopa."

Tom Merry poured himself out a fresh cup of tea, and walked with it to the window. Suddenly his face clouded over. "Wherefore that fearsome frown, Tommy?" asked Lowther.

Tom Merry simply snorted. But his chums, joining him at the window, saw the reason for his frown.

A good-looking junior had just come in at the school gates. He was in flannels, and he carried a cricket-bag. He crossed the quad with an athletic stride.

"The return of the traitor!" said Monty Lowther. "I suppose he's been piling up runs for Wayland Wanderers this afternoon."

"Mean cad, to desert his own school and play for a professional side!" growled Manners.

If looks could have killed, Bob Kenrick, the subject of the juniors' scrutiny, would have promptly expired in the quad.

Kenrick of the Shell was anything but popular. He had come to St. Jim's with the

reputation of being the best boy batsman in the country. He was a cricketer to the finger-tips, born and brought up in the county of Hampshire, which has produced so many great cricketers.

Only once had Bob Kenrick demonstrated his ability to the St. Jim's juniors. He gave a lively exhibition, which resulted in one of Taggles' windows being broken, and a ball being hit clean over the school wall.

Then, to Tom Merry's dismay, the new boy had declined a place in the eleven. He preferred to go off and play for a professional team.

One afternoon Kenrick had been restrained by force from going over to Wayland. Tom Merry & Co. made him turn out for the School House against the New House. On this occasion Kenrick had been clean bowled without scoring, and most of the fellows believed that he had failed on purpose. Hence the unpopularity of Bob Kenrick, who was cut dead by everybody except his study-mate, Talbot.

Even as the Terrible Three watched from their window, Talbot joined the new boy, and fell into step with him.

"How many did you make, Kenrick?" he asked.

"Forty, not out." "By Jove, you're piling up some scores for Wayland! Only the other day you got seventy odd."

Kenrick laughed modestly. "It was weak bowling rather than good batting," he said.

And then the voices of the pair died away, as they passed into the building.

Tom Merry's frown deepened. "I can't understand Talbot taking that fellow up," he said. "Everybody else regards Kenrick as a rank outsider. But Talbot—"

"Oh, he always likes to be a champion of the oppressed," growled Manners. "Blow Kenrick! And bother Talbot! Let's come and have a knockabout in the quad."

Manners picked up a bat, and led the way from the study.

The news that the Duke of Loamshire was coming to St. Jim's did not take long to spread.

Baggy Trimble was one of the first fellows to hear it. And when Baggy heard a thing, it soon became public property.

Baggy spread the story, with variations. First it was the Duke of Loamshire who was coming, then it was the Prime Minister, and eventually the entire Royal Family was supposed to be coming.

There was great excitement among the members of the junior eleven.

This was the last chance they would have of putting in some practice, and they all assembled in the quad, and played cricket until sundown.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Starting Revelations!**

SISTER ANNE, Sister Anne, do you see anyone coming?
The cricketers were about to pack up, when Monty Lowther asked that breezy question.

"A tall, slim-looking young man had just entered the school gateway.
"A stwanganah, bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"I suppose it isn't the Duke of Loamshire, by any chance?" said Jack Blake.
Tom Merry shook his head.

"The duke's quite an elderly gent," he said, "and this fellow's not much more than twenty."

The juniors eyed the stranger curiously. As he drew nearer, they were surprised to see how pinched and drawn his features were. He looked as if he had been roughing it in the backwaters of life. But his clothes were good and well cut. It was apparently a new suit he was wearing.

The stranger paused. His gaze rested on the group of St. Jim's cricketers.
"Is Kenrick here, please?" he inquired.

"No, he isn't," said Tom Merry, rather curly.

"Well, can you tell me where I shall find him?"
Talbot came forward quickly.

"Are you Kenrick's brother?" he asked.
"Yes."

Tom Merry & Co. looked surprised. They had not connected the emaciated face of the stranger with the healthy, ruddy countenance of Bob Kenrick. But Talbot had seen a similarity about the eyes.

"I've good news for Bob," said the visitor.
"I shan't need to be a burden to him any longer. I've just got a job—a splendid job, too!"

Talbot seemed to comprehend, but the others didn't.
"Do you mean that you've been out of work?" asked Tom Merry.

Kenrick's brother nodded.
"I've been up against it—hard!" he said.

"I've tramped the country for weary weeks in quest of a job. I should certainly have gone under but for Bob's help. Bob's been a perfect brick to me!"

"I'm glad somebody approves of him," said Tom Merry dryly. "We don't. We're not on speaking terms with him at present."

A pained look came over the visitor's face.
"Why is that?" he asked.

"Your brother has behaved like a cad and a traitor," said Tom Merry. "It's not a nice thing to say, but it's the truth. I suppose you know that your brother's a tip-top cricketer?"

"Yes."
"Well, instead of giving his services to his school, he has chosen to go off and play for a team of paid pros."

"Great Scott! Hasn't he told you why?"
"No."

"Then I'll tell you! It was to help me that Bob played for a professional team."
"My hat!"

"Every penny he earned at cricket was sent to me," went on Kenrick's brother.

"You'd hardly believe how Bob has pinched and scraped for my sake. That's Bob all over. He's always shouldering other people's burdens. He's a brother in a thousand."

"Hear, hear!" said Talbot warmly.
Tom Merry spun round upon Talbot.

"You knew this?" he asked. "You knew that Kenrick was playing for Wayland simply to help his brother?"

"Yes."
"Then why didn't you tell us?" shouted Manners.

"I was bound in honour not to."
Tom Merry & Co. were thunderstruck. They could see everything clearly now. They could understand why Talbot had not joined in the general hostility towards the new boy.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in tones of distress. "Kenrick's not a wottah, aftah all, deah boys. We've misjudged him. We thought he was playin' for a professional team in ordah to line his own pockets."

"And all the time he was sending the money to his brother!" ejaculated Blake.
"Why on earth didn't he explain?"

"He didn't explain," said Talbot, "because

he didn't want to pose as a Good Samaritan on an out-of-work brother. I urged him to put himself right in the eyes of the school, but he wouldn't. He confided the story to me, and made me solemnly promise to let it go no further. But I'm jolly glad the truth's out now."

"Same here," said Tom Merry. "It's a stroke of luck, Kenrick's brother turning up like this."

"We owe Kenrick an apology, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus. "We've called him a twaitah, an' goodness knows what. An' we shall have to make it up to him now."

"Yes, rather!"
At that very moment Bob Kenrick came down the School House steps. He uttered a cry when he caught sight of his brother.

"Jack!"
The older fellow smiled at the look of bewilderment on the face of his younger brother.

"It's all serene, Bob!" he said cheerfully, taking the junior's hand in a tight grip. "The clouds have rolled by, and I'm on my feet once more."

"You've found a job?"
"Yes. I've been engaged as a private secretary to the Duke of Loamshire."

"The Duke of Loamshire! Why, he's coming here to-morrow! How, in the name of all that's wonderful, did you get to know him?"

"He stopped me on the road yesterday, in his car," explained Jack Kenrick. "He was on the way to London, but he'd lost his bearings, and he asked me to direct him. We got jawing, and his Grace seemed interested in me, and he dragged out of me the story of my vain search for employment. I told him I could do shorthand, and work a typewriter, and all that sort of thing, and he fixed me up with a job straight away. He gave me the money to get some new fogs, and I decided to come along to St. Jim's at the first opportunity, and tell you the good news. It all seems like a dream to me. Down and out one minute—private secretary to a duke the next! That sort of thing often happens in fiction, but jolly seldom in real life."

"The duke's a sport!" said Bob Kenrick heartily. "I suppose he could see that you'd had a good education, and were just the man for him. Are you staying here, Jack?"

"Yes. I'm putting up down in the village

until the duke goes back to-morrow night. Then I'm to accompany him to London. And now, Bob, I want to try and tell you how grateful I am for all you've done for me...."

"Shush!" said Bob hastily. "I don't want these fellows to know."

"Too late!" chimed in Tom Merry. "Your brother's already told us, Kenrick."

"An' we considah you are a weal bwick!" said Arthur Augustus, with enthusiasm.
"Hear, hear!"

Bob Kenrick flushed.
"I—I'd rather you hadn't told them, Jack," he stammered.

"Nonsense! You've hidden your light under a bushel long enough, and been misunderstood by your schoolfellows, it seems. They couldn't understand why you went off to play for a team of pros. But they know now. And now that I'm fixed up in a good job, there will be no need for you to play for Wayland any more. You're free to play for St. Jim's."

Tom Merry went forward, and held out his hand to Bob Kenrick.

"I want to apologise for giving you such a bad time, Kenrick," he said. "In fact, we all want to apologise."

"And if you'll give us a jolly good kicking all round, we'll call it square!" said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Bob Kenrick laughed. He was very happy now. No longer was he shunned by the school—a modern Ishmael, with his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him. The clouds had rolled by for Bob Kenrick, as well as for his brother Jack.

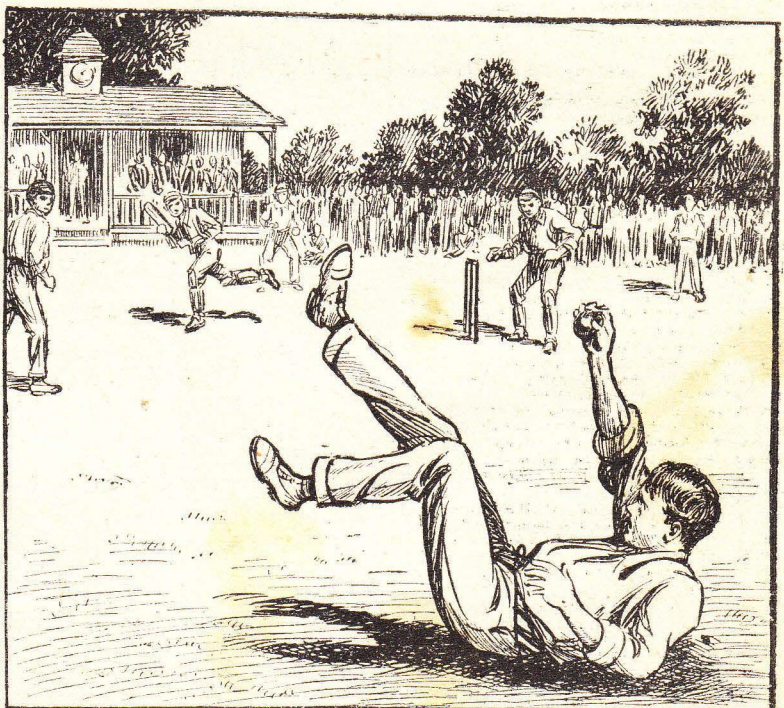
"It's quite all right, you fellows," said Bob. "Not knowing the facts, you couldn't be blamed for judging me as you did."

"We called you some hard names," said Tom Merry remorsefully.

"What of that? It's all dead and done with now."

"Will you play for us to-morrow?" asked Tom Merry eagerly.

"Delighted!" said Bob Kenrick, with a smile. "But you must let me use my own bat this time. I got a duck's egg before, because you made me use an ancient beaver of a bat that had a yard of binding trailing from it."



A BOUNDARY CATCH! Lovell tore along the boundary-line like an express train as the ball soared into the air. It came down as the Rookwood felder flashed up, and Lovell reeled to the ground as he clutched the ball!
"Oh, well caught, sir!" (See Chapter 3.)

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a very happy family that gathered together in the junior Common-room on the eve of the great match with Rookwood.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
Good-bye to St Jim's!

EARLY next morning the Duke of Loamshire arrived in his car.

Shortly afterwards there were other arrivals, Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood turning up in a motor charabanc.

Rookwood had brought over their very strongest eleven, and they were confident of victory. St. Jim's were equally confident. So somebody was going to be disappointed!

Manners had been dropped from the St. Jim's eleven to make way for Bob Kenrick. Manners didn't mind a bit. He had not yet got into form, and he realised that Bob Kenrick was streets above him as a cricketer. Jimmy Silver shook hands with Tom Merry in the quad.

"Here we are!" he said gaily. "Complete with our Jessops and our Trumplers and our demur bowlers!"

"You'll need them!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "We happen to have a youthful prodigy in our team."

"Who's that?"

"Fellow called Kenrick."

"Not that chap that all the newspapers have been going mad about?"

"The same."

Jimmy Silver gave a low whistle.

"Wish you wouldn't spring these shocks on a fellow on the morning of the match," he grinned.

The Rookwooders had already breakfasted, and now they rested for an hour before going into action on the cricket-field.

It was a bright, sunny morning. The pitch had been rolled in readiness, and it looked very green and fresh and inviting.

All St. Jim's turned out to see the match. And when the Duke of Loamshire came strolling towards the pavilion, deep in conversation with the Head, a loud cheer of welcome greeted him.

The duke lifted his top-hat in acknowledgment of the ovation.

"I am hoping we shall see a good day's sport, Dr. Holmes," he said.

"I am sure we shall, your Grace. These boys take their cricket very seriously. They throw themselves heart and soul into it."

"Who is that curly-headed youngster on the pavilion steps?"

"Oh, that is Tom Merry, the captain of our side."

"He's a well-set-up lad, by George! So is the boy he is talking to."

"That is Kenrick—a new boy, who has taken the cricket world by storm."

The duke regarded Bob Kenrick with interest.

"He must be the brother of my secretary," he said. "I remember Jack Kenrick telling me he had a young brother here. I shall be interested to see how he shapes."

Kildare of the Sixth placed a couple of deck-chairs in position for the Head and his guest. They made themselves comfortable, and waited for the match to start.

Jimmy Silver won the toss.

"We'll bat," he said promptly.

It was a good wicket, and Rookwood had everything in their favour. Yet they started badly.

Whether it was the presence of Bob Kenrick in their ranks, or whether it was the excellent bowling of Fatty Wynn, St. Jim's seemed to dominate the game.

Although Monty Lowther had said that he would be nervous in the presence of the Duke, he brought off a wonderful overhead catch at square-leg, which got rid of Jimmy Silver.

"Hurrah!"

"Well held, sir!"

Jimmy Silver had only made 3; Lovell, who followed him, had his middle stump uprooted by Fatty Wynn before he could score.

Tommy Dodd and Tommy Doyle tried to bring about a rise in Rookwood stock. But they were never really happy against Fatty Wynn. Aided largely by luck, they scraped a few runs together, but they could not get going properly.

The fieldsmen began to close in—a sure sign that they were on top.

The long and short of it was that Rookwood were skittled out within the hour. And they had only managed to make 35!

It looked as if St. Jim's had a very easy task. But when it came to their turn to bat, behold, they fared just as disastrously as their opponents!

The bowling of Mornington and Erroll was like an exhibition of wizardry. Erroll was very fast; Mornington was full of tricks.

Wickets fell rapidly. Only Bob Kenrick could make anything of the Rookwood bowling. And even Kenrick could not do very much, owing to the clever way in which Jimmy Silver had placed his field.

No matter in which direction Kenrick hit the ball, a fieldsmen was always there to pounce upon it.

St. Jim's were all out before lunch. Like Rookwood, they had made 35, so it was a tie on the first innings. Bob Kenrick had carried his bat for 17 not out!

The Duke of Loamshire was not disappointed by what he had seen.

Judged by the batting alone, the play had certainly been disappointing. But the bowling and fielding had roused the Duke's enthusiasm to a high pitch.

"Keen as mustard, by George!" he exclaimed.

The lunch interval brought solace to the heart of Fatty Wynn, who had been dismissed for a "big round nought." Fatty was no great shakes as a batsman. It was as a bowler that he excelled.

An amazing change came over the game after lunch. In the morning, the bowlers had had everything their own way. Now it was the batsmen's turn.

Jimmy Silver & Co. piled up the runs at an alarming rate. They meant to show the Duke of Loamshire that they were better batsmen than their first innings had suggested.

Most of the runs were obtained off Koumi Rao's bowling. But even Fatty Wynn came in for severe punishment at times. Jimmy Silver sent him to the boundary twice in succession.

Tom Merry began to look grim. This sort of thing wouldn't do at all. Tom himself relieved Fatty Wynn, and put Bob Kenrick on to bowl at the other end.

It was a good move, for Kenrick soon got Jimmy Silver caught at the wicket.

But the Rookwood score stood at 70 for one wicket. The retiring batsman had made 40.

Rookwood carried on the good work. The three Tommies—Dodd and Doyle and Cook—gave the bowlers any amount of trouble.

Wickets fell at prolonged intervals. But it was not until tea-time that Rookwood were finally disposed of. In their second venture they had compiled 190, so that Tom Merry & Co. were faced with the formidable task of getting 200 runs to win. And they hadn't overmuch time to do it in, either.

"Methinks, we are doomed, dished, and done!" said Monty Lowther glumly. "Unless, of course, you and Kenrick get a century apiece, Tommy!"

"Some hopes!" said Tom Merry. "Still, we'll make a fight of it. We won't stonewall, and play for a draw. Lots of teams do it, I know, but it isn't sporting. We'll go all out to get the runs, and if we fail—well, we'll go under fighting!"

After tea, the teams entered upon the really exciting stage of the match.

Tom Merry, and Bob Kenrick went for the bowling "baldheaded!" They took risks, but that was unavoidable. Risks had to be taken, if St. Jim's were to have a sporting chance of pulling through.

The score rose rapidly. Hard and hurricane hitting soon took it to 50. And Tom Merry and Bob Kenrick were still together.

The bowling of Erroll and Mornington was made to look like very ordinary stuff. Erroll had lost his terrific pace; and the wiles of Mornington were wasted upon Tom Merry and his partner. They continued to hit merrily.

Hopes rose high among the spectators. Every boundary hit was vociferously cheered; and once, when Bob Kenrick landed the ball at the feet of the Duke, there was a positive howl of applause.

With the score at 60, Tom Merry was caught on the boundary-line. Lovell had to tear like an express-train for the catch, but he got it, reeling to the ground as he hugged the ball to his chest.

"Oh, well caught, sir!"

"Well played, Merry!"

Jack Blake hurried in as Tom Merry hurried out. For every minute was precious. Blake didn't wait to play himself in. He

went for the bowling at once, and he badly mistimed a slow one, and was stumped.

Talbot followed on, and he helped Bob Kenrick to take the score to 100. The batsmen ran for everything, and they had very narrow squeaks of being run out.

When the hundred was reached, a lightning throw-in by Jimmy Silver knocked down Talbot's wicket. "The Toff," as he used to be called, had played gloriously.

Figgins followed Talbot. He hit up a lively dozen, and was clean bowled by Teddy Grace, who had relieved Erroll.

Then the game veered right round in favour of Rookwood, three more wickets falling without any addition to the score.

Teddy Grace performed the hat-trick by having bowled Figgins, Kerr and Lowther with successive balls. And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was run out in attempting the impossible.

And now Dick Redfern joined Bob Kenrick at the wicket.

Reddy was a sort of emergency man. He could generally be relied upon to get his side out of a tight corner. And he did so now.

He tackled the bowling fearlessly and confidently, and spoilt Teddy Grace's wonderful analysis.

And all this time, Bob Kenrick had remained undefeated.

The school clock struck seven. Stumps were to be drawn at half-past. Forty runs were still required to give St. Jim's the victory.

Jimmy Silver, a good general, brought back Erroll and Mornington, refreshed by their long rest.

Morny and Erroll bowled with all the skill and vigour at their command. But they couldn't shift Dick Redfern. And they couldn't shift Bob Kenrick. This worthy pair battled on like heroes, fighting against the clock.

Presently there was a mighty roar. Not to celebrate the winning hit, but to signify that Bob Kenrick had reached his century.

But the other mighty roar was not long in coming.

With five minutes to go before the drawing of stumps, Bob Kenrick rallied his failing energies, and drove the ball to the railings.

It was the winning hit.

St. Jim's had defeated Rookwood by three wickets!

There was a big surprise for the school that evening.

The Duke of Loamshire had been so impressed by Bob Kenrick's display that he decided to engage him as a cricket coach to his two young boys.

"Of course, this appointment will in no way interfere with Kenrick's education," said the Duke, when he put the proposition before the Head. "The boy will live with me, and he will have a special tutor. It will be rather novel, having two brothers in my employ—one as private secretary; the other as cricket coach to my boys."

"Have you spoken to Kenrick on the subject, your grace?" asked the Head.

"Yes. And he is willing. It is rather a wrench for him to leave St. Jim's, just as he was settling down, but the new life affords him every opportunity for rapid advancement. That boy, Dr. Holmes, will play for England one of these days!"

"I feel sure of it," said the Head. "We shall all be sorry to lose him; but I will not stand in the way of his new appointment. If his guardian raises no objection—"

"You can leave that to me," said the Duke, with a smile.

And so it came about that St. Jim's bade farewell to the brilliant boy cricketer who that day had played his first and last game for the old school. The last fellow to wring Bob Kenrick's hand, in the school gateway, was Talbot.

"I shall miss you most awfully, though we haven't known each other long," said Talbot. "Perhaps we shall meet again, in that vague period known as 'one of these days.'"

"I'm sure we shall!" said Bob Kenrick, with a smile. "And I shall always feel grateful to you as the one fellow who stood by me when I was down. Good-bye, Talbot!"

And Britain's best boy cricketer passed out of the school's history for ever.

THE END.

(You will shriek with merriment when you read next week's St. Jim's story. See the Chat.)

BESIEGED IN THE LUMBER SCHOOL!

The CHUMS OF CEDAR CREEK are still holding out against the rascally Mr. Gunten and the school authorities, — but they cannot keep the invading foe at bay for long. Supplies run short, and one by one the defenders are called away to their homes. Frank Richards & Co. find themselves in a desperate position!



A Great Story of the Barring-Out at Cedar Creek School.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing.

KNOCK!
The butt of a riding-whip crashed on the door of the schoolhouse at Cedar Creek.

Three heads were put out of a window at once—those of Frank Richards, Bob Lawless, and Vere Beauclerc.

It was Old Man Gunten who was rapping at the door.

The fat Swiss storekeeper of Thompson Town looked round, glaring at the three smiling faces.

Frank Richards nodded genially. "Good-morning, Mr. Gunten!" he said affably.

A snort was Old Man Gunten's reply. He was not in an affable mood.

"You've come along to tell us that you're giving in?" asked Bob Lawless.

"You young rascal!"

"Eh?"

"You young villain!"

"Dear me!" said Bob, unmoved. "Is that the kind of manners you learn on the School Board, Mr. Gunten? You ought really to chuck it up, and come to school instead. We'd teach you manners here."

"I've come to talk sense to you young scallywags!" shouted Mr. Gunten.

"Why don't you begin, then?"

"This foolishness has been going on long enough!" exclaimed the storekeeper. "It's got to come to an end!"

"We're ready when you are," said Frank Richards. "You know the terms. Let our schoolmistress, Miss Meadows, come back, and it's all over. Until then we hold Cedar Creek School against all comers!"

"Hear, hear!" came a shout from within the lumber schoolhouse.

"You're wasting your time, Mr. Gunten," said Vere Beauclerc. "You ought to know by this time that we're not giving in."

"I guess I know how you stand," said Mr. Gunten, with a scowl. "You've got no food there."

"You can send us some, if you like. We'll pay spot cash!" suggested Bob Lawless.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Old Man Gunten did not look as if he would be likely to send provisions to the rebels of Cedar Creek, even for spot cash.

"What's going to happen to you if you stay there without food?" he snorted.

"Probably we shall get hungry," replied Bob. "It seems probable, to me. What do you think yourself?"

"Now, look here!" said Old Man Gunten, unheeding Bob's remark and the chuckle that followed. "I'm willing to be reasonable. Miss Meadows can't come back. She has been discharged by the board of trustees."

"By you!" said Frank.

"Your new headmaster, Mr. Peckover, has been duly appointed by the board."

"Which means you!"

"But I've spoken to him, and he agrees to let you off unpunished if you return to your duty at once," said Mr. Gunten.

"Nothing more will be said about this affair, on condition that you stop this nonsense at once."

"Rats!"

"What!" roared the unhappy trustee.

"Bosh!"

"You young rascals!"

"Go home!" said Bob cheerfully. "Go home and think it out again, Mr. Gunten. Second thoughts are best, you know."

"Mind, you won't get any food till you give in!" said Mr. Gunten savagely. "I've got a dozen men watching the school, and any kid who comes out will be roped in at once, thrashed, and sent home!"

"How kind of you!"

"If you stick there you'll starve!" roared Mr. Gunten.

"What a weight on your conscience if we do!" said Bob. "Still, your conscience is pretty tough, isn't it, Mr. Gunten?"

Mr. Gunten seemed on the verge of an attack of apoplexy.

He had given the rebels of Cedar Creek time enough, as he thought, to come to their senses.

But there was certainly no sign of surrender on the part of Frank Richards & Co.

They were "on strike" until Miss Meadows was reinstated at Cedar Creek, and they intended to make it a fight to a finish.

"As a matter of fact, they were encouraged by Mr. Gunten's visit and by his offer, which was a great concession—from his point of view.

It looked as if the chairman of the board of trustees was getting alarmed at the length to which the school strike had gone.

"Any more remarks to make?" asked Bob Lawless, as the storekeeper stood silent, nonplussed. "If not, good-bye!"

"For the last time!" said Mr. Gunten. "Look here, you'll all be let off. Isn't that good enough for you?"

"Nix!"

"Then you can stick there and starve!" roared Old Man Gunten; and, shaking his fat fist at the smiling faces at the window, he strode back to his horse.

As he led the animal out of the gateway in the school fence a rough-looking man joined him there.

It was Four Kings, the leader of the "Red Dog crowd" of Thompson.

Mr. Gunten spoke a few words to the ruffian, and then mounted and rode away down the trail.

Four Kings remained lounging in the gateway, smoking his pipe.

Cedar Creek School was evidently being

carefully watched, and undoubtedly it was costing Mr. Gunten a good many dollars.

And the end of the affair seemed more and more doubtful to the Swiss storekeeper as it was prolonged day after day.

Old Man Gunten was not in a happy mood as he trotted home to Thompson.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Desperate Venture.

FRANK RICHARDS closed and barred the window-shutter as the storekeeper departed.

The garrison of Cedar Creek were always on the alert, watching for a possible attempt to rush their stronghold.

The Red Dog men, however, seemed to be contented to remain watching the school, to "bag" any fellow who ventured outside.

They had attacked once and had been defeated, with the help of the cattlemen from the Lawless Ranch; and Billy Cook, the foreman of the ranch, had warned Four Kings & Co. that if they attacked again they would have him to deal with.

That warning was quite enough for the Red Dog crowd, who had been severely handled by the cowboys on the previous occasion.

But matters were growing serious for the rebels besieged in the lumber school.

The last of their provisions had almost gone, and how to obtain fresh supplies was a serious problem.

The garrison had been reduced day after day, as fellows were called away by their parents. The latter, while disapproving of Mr. Gunten's proceedings, could not quite approve of a schoolboy strike.

There were now only seven fellows in the garrison—Frank Richards, Bob, Beauclerc, Eben Hlacke, Yen Chin, and two others.

But seven were enough to hold the fort, unless Four Kings tried his device again of "smoking out" the defenders; but that he did not dare to do.

Starving them out, however, though slower, was a sure method.

"I guess it looks a bit serious," Bob Lawless remarked, as Frank barred the shutter. "Of course, we're not giving in."

"No fear!" said Frank emphatically.

"If we don't, Old Man Gunten must!" remarked Vere Beauclerc. "You can see that he's getting anxious. I shouldn't wonder if the authorities have taken some step already, and he knows of it. If they send a man here to investigate, Mr. Gunten would like the trouble over before he comes."

"It won't be over," said Eben Hlacke. "But what the thunder are we going to do for grub?"

"No glubbee to eatee," remarked Yen Chin dolorously.

"Oh, we can gnaw our belts, if it comes to that!"

"We've got to make a break," said Frank. "We've tried it after dark, and we were stopped, and jolly nearly nabbed. We shall have to make another attempt to-day."

Bob Lawless nodded.

"It's risky," he said.

"But what else is there to do?"

"Nothing," agreed Bob. "We've got to chance it and run the gauntlet. But, mind, if two of us go out, and get roped in, the rest are to hold out, all the same."

"That's settled."

Bob Lawless reflected.

It was not an easy task to get through the watchers outside the school, though he did not believe that they numbered a dozen.

In fistical combat the schoolboys were no match for the burly rustlers, and if they were caught their return to the school would be impossible.

It was a knotty position, but it was pretty clear that the attempt had to be made.

Bob Lawless made up his mind, and he gave his instructions to his followers.

Bob and Frank climbed out of an upper window to the roof of the schoolhouse, where it was possible to drop to the ground behind the buildings.

At the same time, Beauclerc and Hacke slid from a window into the playground in front.

There they were in full view of Four Kings, smoking in the gateway.

The ruffian sighted them at once as they came towards the gateway, as if intending to make a sudden rush through.

He gave a shrill whistle, and three or four men came running up to join him.

Beauclerc and Hacke paused half-way to the gates, and Four Kings waved his pipe at them.

"Kim on!" he called out mockingly.

The two schoolboys came on, but paused again, and there was a chortle from the group of ruffians in the gateway.

All their attention was given to the two, as Bob had guessed would be the case.

Meanwhile, Bob and Frank had dropped from the schoolhouse roof at the back, and, hidden by the buildings from the sight of Four Kings & Co., they were scudding for the fence on the other side of the playground.

They reached it and clambered over.

Outside there was no sign of a watch.

"I guess we'll do it," muttered Bob. "Drop and chance it, Franky, and run as if you had a bull buffalo behind you."

"Right-ho!"

They dropped from the fence, and ran for the timber.

In a couple of minutes they were among the trees.

From the roof of the schoolhouse Yen Chin was watching, and as the two comrades disappeared into the timber the little Chinese climbed back into the house.

A minute later his pigtailed head was put out of the lower window, and he signed to Beauclerc and Hacke.

They retreated to the schoolhouse at once, followed by a roar of laughter from Four Kings, who concluded that they had given up the idea of making a rush through the gateway.

"All serene," asked Beauclerc, as he reached the window.

Yen Chin nodded and grinned.

"Alee light! Flanky and Bob gonee."

"Good!"

Beauclerc and Hacke climbed in, and the shutter was closed and barred again.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless were on their way to Cedar Camp, through the forest, and their comrades at the school could only wait and hope for the best.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Getting a Lift.

"HERE we are!"

Bob Lawless spoke in terms of great satisfaction as he and his chum came at last in sight of Cedar Camp.

They had had a long tramp through the forest, but they were strong and fit, and the miles had fleeted fast under their feet.

They had seen nothing of Four Kings and his comrades, who were still under the impression that they were within the besieged schoolhouse.

They were glad enough to see Cedar Camp.

THE POPULAR.—No. 226.

"Good luck!" said Frank Richards. "We've done the first half of the job, anyway, Bob."

"And we'll do the rest," said Bob cheerily.

They entered the Hotel Continental—the log hotel at which Frank Richards had stopped when he first arrived in the Thompson Valley, to join his uncle in Canada.

The first proceeding was to order a square meal, having arrived at dinner-time, when the habitués of the Continental were sitting down to their midday repast.

After that important preliminary they proceeded to the camp store, where they made their purchases.

There had been a "whip-round" at Cedar Creek for cash, and they were well supplied with dollars, which they laid out to the best advantage.

Provisions of all kinds were stacked into their haversacks, which were decidedly heavy by the time they had finished.

"I reckon it will be a hefty job getting this lot back," remarked Bob Lawless, as they left the store. "We've got to do it, though. We may get a lift on the trail as far as the timber."

They started out of the camp, keeping their eyes open for any passing vehicle.

There were two miles of trail ahead of them before they reached the forest, and a lift would have been very welcome.

A quarter of an hour later there was a rumble of wheels behind them.

Bob looked round quickly.

"By gum! It's the post-wagon!" he exclaimed.

"Kern Gunten!" shouted Frank.

They stopped in the trail.

The post-wagon was driven by Kern Gunten, the son of the Swiss storekeeper, who was postmaster of Thompson.

Gunten gave a start as he saw his two former schoolfellows standing by the trail, waiting for him to come up.

He whipped up the horse, evidently not being desirous of stopping to speak to them.

Bob Lawless jumped into the middle of the trail.

"Halt!" he called out.

"Stand aside!" shouted back Gunten.

"Halt, I tell you!"

Kern Gunten did not heed.

He drove right on, and it looked for a moment as if the rancher's son would be dashed aside by the horses.

But Bob Lawless stepped to one side in time, and caught one of the horses, Frank Richards catching at the other.

The two animals were dragged to a halt. Kern Gunten gripped his whip hard, as if thinking of using it on the chums of Cedar Creek, but he refrained.

Now that the wagon was stopped that proceeding was a little too risky.

It would certainly have been followed by painful results for the Swiss.

He glared down at the schoolboys in the trail.

"What do you want?" he snapped.

"We want a lift as far as the timber," answered Bob.

"You won't get it."

"Your mistake," answered Bob Lawless cheerily. "Jump in, Franky!"

"What-ho!" said Frank.

Gunten snarled.

"So you're out of school," he said. "My popper thinks you are still in the school-house."

Bob pointed to the two stacked haversacks in the wagon.

"Lit out for grub," he answered.

"You'll get bagged as you go back. Four Kings is on the watch for you, and four or five other galoots."

"We're chancing that."

"I guess they'll be feeding on the grub you've been buying," grinned Gunten, restored to good-humour by the thought, as he drove on the wagon.

The heavy post-wagon rattled on down the trail.

"Where do you want a lift to?" grunted Gunten.

"As far as Old Man Beauclerc's shack."

"I'm not going half the way. I turn off on the southern trail, along Cedar Creek. You know that."

"You can go out of your way a bit for us," said Bob coolly. "These haversacks are rather hefty, and we want all the lift we can get."

"I can't turn out of the way for you!" roared Gunten.

"You can try," grinned Bob. "We'll see that you succeed."

"Look here—"

"If you'd been a bit more civil, we wouldn't have made you—now we will!" said Bob. "That'll be a lesson to you in manners. You need it."

Gunten gritted his teeth, and drove on.

"You'll get it in the neck at Cedar Creek," he said, after driving on in silence for some time. "The superintendent's coming."

"Oh!" said Frank Richards. "Who's that?"

"The school superintendent from Kamloops," said Gunten. "He's coming up the valley to investigate into the affair at the school. Miss Meadows has seen him about it. You'll get turned out of Cedar Creek for a cert, you two; you're the ringleaders. And I shall come back when Mr. Peckover gets in as headmaster," he added, with a sneer.

"Mr. Peckover isn't in yet," said Frank. "The superintendent will bring you to your senses, I reckon," said Gunten.

"He may bring your popper to his!" suggested Bob Lawless. "Anyhow, we're not giving in, if they bring along the whole Board of Education of British Columbia. You've been turned out of the school, Gunten, for jolly good reasons, and that's why your popper got Miss Meadows sacked, and a new Head appointed. But he won't work the raffle. You turn off here, kid," added Bob, as the wagon rumbled on to the fork in the trail.

"I don't turn off," said Gunten doggedly. "I calculate you do!"

Bob Lawless gripped the wrist of the Swiss, and Gunten surrendered with a fierce scowl.

The post-wagon turned off on the trail towards the timber.

Gunten reluctantly drove on till the Beauclerc shack came in sight—deserted now, as Vere Beauclerc was at Cedar Creek, and his father, the remittance-man, was absent from home.

Near the shack the wagon stopped, and Frank jumped out, Bob tossing the haversacks to him, and then following.

"Thanks for the lift, Gunten!" called out Frank with a smile.

"Hang you!" was Gunten's reply.

He pulled the horses round, and drove off to get back to the Cedar Creek trail, leaving the chums to tramp into the timber.

"I guess that lift has saved us some trouble," remarked Bob Lawless, as they plunged into the shadow of the forest.

"Only two miles to the school from here if we cut through the timber; and I guess I know all the trails."

The two schoolboys shouldered the haversacks, and started on their tramp.

They tramped on cheerily, despite the weight of their burdens and the difficult nature of the ground.

As they entered on the last half-mile, Bob Lawless suddenly halted in the midst of the thick timber.

"Hallo! What's that, Franky?" he exclaimed, holding up his hand.

From the depths of the timber, in the direction of the school, there came a sudden cry.

It was a cry that told of surprise and pain mingled, and it was followed by silence.

The chums looked at one another.

"Somebody hurt!" said Frank Richards, in a low voice.

Bob Lawless wrinkled his brows.

"I guess it's some galoot in trouble," he said. "Those Red Dog toughs are around, and they may have—" He paused.

"Franky, we ought to be moseying back to Cedar Creek as fast as we can hump it; but—"

"But if that's somebody in trouble—"

"I guess we've got to give him a look in," said Bob. "Shove the bags in the thicket here; they'll be safe till we come for them. Come on, Frank!"

The haversacks were hastily thrust out of sight in the green thicket, and the chums of Cedar Creek hurried on through the timber as fast as the underwoods allowed, in the direction of the cry they had heard.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
A Pilgrim and a Stranger!**

A LOUD, rough voice reached the ears of the schoolboys as they hurried on. It came from ahead of them, where a trail ran through the wood, which they could already see through the openings of the trees.

"Take it easy, old gent! I guess you're going to get hurt if you cut up a rumpus! You hear me yalp!"

"You scoundrel!"

"Take it easy, pard! I ain't going to hurt yer, but I calculate you are going to pony up your dust."

"Give him a sockdologer on the cabeza, as a warning, Dick!" came another rough voice—the voice of Four Kings, the leader of the Red Dog crowd.

Frank Richards and Bob came to a sudden halt where the thickets still screened them from the trail.

As they looked out from the trees, a startling sight met their gaze.

A man in "store-clothes," well-dressed, and evidently a stranger in the section, was lying on his back in the trail, and Euchre Dick had a brawny knee planted on his chest, pinning him down.

Four Kings stood beside them, holding a lasso, the loop of which was round the fallen man's body.

Evidently the stranger had been "roped in" by the two ruffians, and in falling he had uttered the cry which reached the ears of the schoolboys in the timber.

Four Kings knelt beside the fallen man, and began to turn out his pockets.

Frank and Bob Lawless exchanged a troubled look.

"We can't let them rob that galoot, Franky!" muttered Bob. "Look here, we've got to chip in! Get hold of a club, and we'll wade in, and I reckon we shall take them by surprise, and we'll have a chance of downing them."

Frank Richards nodded. He was prepared to take the risk.

It was easy enough to obtain bludgeons by breaking off stout branches and whittling them with their pocket-knives.

At length Frank Richards drew a quick, deep breath.

"Ready!" he whispered.

"Come on!" muttered Bob.

He led the way with a rush, Frank Richards following him like a shot.

The sudden dash took them out of the timber and into the middle of the trail before the rustlers could take the alarm.

Euchre Dick gave a sudden shout as he spotted them, but it was too late.

He reeled back from the man he was kneeling on as Bob's bludgeon smote him across the head.

Four Kings, still on his knees, spun round, catching at the knife in his belt as he did so, and at the same moment Frank Richards struck him full and square.

The heavy bludgeon crashed on the ruffian's head, and Four Kings dropped in the trail like a log.

He did not move again.

Euchre Dick had fallen, but he leaped up, backing away and clutching at a weapon, but both the schoolboys were upon him, lashing out fiercely, well aware of what would happen if the rascal succeeded in drawing his pistol.

Bob's blow caught him 'on the shoulder, and a second later Frank Richards struck him on the head, and Euchre Dick fell into the grass.

He lay there and howled, with his hands up to guard his head.

"Let up! I pass!" he yelled. "Pass, pardners! Let up!"

"Get the rope—quick, Franky!" panted Bob.

Four Kings lay unconscious, but he was already showing signs of returning to himself, and there was not a moment to waste.

Frank Richards caught up the loose end of the lasso and bound Euchre Dick's wrists together.

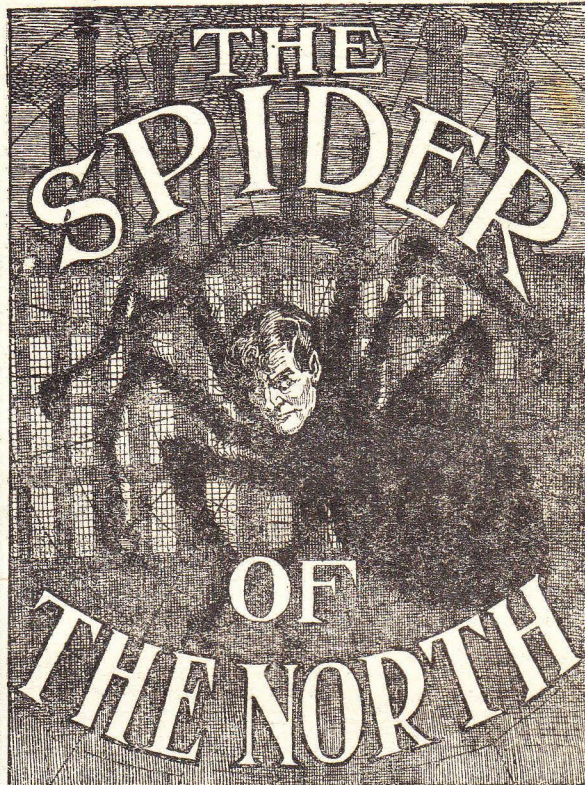
Then he turned to Four Kings and dragged his hands together, while Bob Lawless bound them securely.

"Our game!" gasped Bob.

The stranger was sitting up in the grass, blinking at the schoolboys through his glasses dazedly.

Bob Lawless relieved him of the loop of

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the lasso, and Frank helped him to his feet.

Bob picked up his hat and handed it to him.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the stranger, taking the hat. "Bless me! I—I—I guess I'm under an obligation to you, my lads. You came along very luckily for me."

"We had some luck, too, sir," said Frank Richards, smiling. "If we hadn't taken those rotters by surprise they would have handled us pretty severely."

"You took a great risk, too, my boy!"

"All's well that ends well," said Frank. "Here's some of your things, sir. I think that's the lot."

He gathered up the stranger's belongings, which Four Kings had laid in the grass as he abstracted them.

Four Kings had come to his senses now, with a terrific headache and a furious temper, and he was struggling with the rope on his wrists.

But he could not get loose, and he sat in the grass and poured out a stream of savage oaths.

"Stow the chinwag!" Bob said.

And Four Kings, who did not want another tap, promptly "stowed" it.

The stranger restored his purse, watch, and other belongings to his pockets, and dusted his hat and replaced it.

He was rather a good-looking gentleman, and the schoolboys liked his looks.

He had recovered his breath now and his equanimity, though he was still feeling the effects of the bump on the hard trail.

"I am very much obliged to you, my boys," he said. "You have saved me from being robbed, and perhaps from ill-usage. I should like to know your names."

"Frank Richards, sir."

"Bob Lawless."

"You belong to this part of the country?"

"Yes; the Lawless Ranch, down the valley," said Bob.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you belong to Cedar Creek School, I suppose?"

Bob Lawless nodded, with a smile. "Yes, we're Cedar Creek chaps," he said. The stranger looked at them very attentively.

He was manifestly interested in the circumstance that they belonged to the school, though the chums could not guess why.

"Aire you going to let a galoot go?" growled Euchre Dick.

"You can go as soon as you like," answered Bob. "I dare say your pards will untie you when you find them. Vamoose!"

"I guess I can't mosey along like this."

"I guess you'll have to," said Bob, "and if you don't mosey along at once I'll help you with my boot!"

The two ruffians, cursing, disappeared into the timber, with their hands still bound.

"We've got to hustle, sir," said Bob. "You're all right now?"

"Yes, certainly. But where is the haste?" asked the stranger, looking at him sharply.

"We've got to get back to the school."

"For your lessons?"

"Ahem! Not exactly."

Bob hesitated a moment, and then went on:

"There's a bit of a shindy in our school now, sir, and those rustlers who tried to rob you are up against us."

"It's a barring-out," explained Frank Richards, with a grin. "Old Man Gunten, the chairman of the trustees, has sacked our schoolmistress, and we're not having it. So we've gone on strike, and we're holding out."

"Yet you are here—"

"We had to get out to get in some provisions. Old Man Gunten is trying to starve us out."

"But what have those ruffians to do with it?"

"Mr. Gunten is employing them to down us," explained Bob. "We've got to get in before they get back to the rest of the gang and warn them that we're out of school. We've got our bags near here. Good-bye, sir!"

Don't Miss "The Rebels' Triumph!"—Next Week!

"One moment. Is Mr. Gunten, a school trustee, actually employing ruffians of that type against the schoolboys?"

"Yes, rather!" said Frank. "We've had more than one tussle with them already. But we must get off, sir."

"I will come with you a little way," said the stranger. "I am very much interested in this."

"Just as you like, sir."

The two schoolboys hurried into the timber, the stranger accompanying them, and the two haversacks were taken up again.

Then they started for Cedar Creek at a good pace, the man in "store-clothes" still keeping them company.

His interest in the affair at Cedar Creek rather puzzled the two schoolboys, but they had no objection to telling him the story.

On the way to the school he learned the whole history of the expulsion of Kern Gunten, and of the exciting events that had followed.

He put a good many questions to the two chums, all of which they answered frankly enough.

But no time was lost on the way, in spite of the "chin-wag," and they came in sight of the school at last.

"Must leave you here, sir," said Bob Lawless. "We've got to get in over the fence. Better keep clear of the trail, or you'll fall in with those rustlers again. They're watching the school."

"Thank you, my boy!"

"If you're heading for Thompson, you can cut through the timber and strike the trail further along," added Bob.

"I came from Thompson," said the stranger, with a smile. "I was going to Cedar Creek when I was stopped by those rascals."

"To the school?" exclaimed Frank Richards.

"Yes; but on consideration, I shall return to Thompson now. My name is Macfarlane," added the gentleman, smiling again—"Dr. Macfarlane. You will probably hear my name again."

And with that he left the surprised chums. "Blest if I quite make that galoot out, Franky," said Bob Lawless. "Ever heard of Dr. Macfarlane?"

"Never, that I know of."

"He seems jolly interested in our school. What on earth could he have been coming there for?"

"Friend of Miss Meadows, perhaps; and he mayn't have known what was on at the school," remarked Frank.

"If he's staying in Thompson, I guess he's heard; it's the talk of the valley. But never mind him—come on!"

Very cautiously the two chums quitted the timber, and approached the fence at the back of the school enclosure.

Nothing was to be seen there of the Red Dog crowd, and they reached the fence safely, and the haversacks were dragged over it, and the two schoolboys followed.

They cut across the playground to the schoolhouse.

A window at the back was open ready, and Vere Beauclerc was there, waiting for them.

"Here we are again!" grinned Bob Lawless. "Take in the loot, Cherub."

"Good luck!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

The haversacks were handed in, and Bob and Frank followed, and the window was closed and barred.

Bob and Frank had run the gauntlet successfully, and within five minutes the hungry garrison of Cedar Creek were enjoying a hearty dinner.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. In the Neck.

CRASH! Bob Lawless jumped up. It was a terrific concussion on one of the barred windows, and it made the bars creak and groan.

"Hallo! They're coming!"

THE POPULAR.—No. 225.

Dinner was not yet finished, but the schoolboys jumped up from the meal in hot haste.

Outside the voice of Four Kings was heard in savage tones.

"Hang them! I tell you I don't keer ten cents for the cowboys—hang them! I'm going to smash up that young hound Lawless, I tell you!"

Crash!

Crash, crash!

Bob Lawless coolly unbarred the shutter, and it flew open under the next blow of the Red Dog rustler.

A furious, bearded face glared in at the opening.

Four Kings scowled fiercely at the seven schoolboys, gathered there with cudgels in their hands to meet him.

"Oh, there you are, young Lawless!" he snarled. "You got back, hay?"

"Looks like it!" smiled Bob. "Have you dropped in to see me, old man? Step right in! Don't stand on ceremony!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Four Kings hesitated a moment, remembering his former experiences at that window; but he was too enraged to hesitate long.

He made a sudden plunge at the window, and his head and brawny shoulders came through.

Bob Lawless had a rope ready in his hand. As the ruffian's head came in, he made a rapid cast, and the noose descended on to Four Kings' shoulders.

It was drawn tight in a second, and the loop tightened round the rustler's throat, and Four Kings gave a gasping yell.

"Hang on!" yelled Bob.

The schoolboys pulled on the rope, and Four Kings gasped and spluttered, his face as crimson as a beet.

He clutched at the window-frame with his hands, and held on, gasping.

"Let up!" he spluttered.

Bob shook his head.

"Can't let up!" said Bob. "Hanging's too good for you, Four Kings, but this is a chance too good to be lost. Are you ready?"

"Grooogh!"

"You're bound to come to it sooner or later, you know," said Bob.

"Gurrgh!" came from the unfortunate rustler. "Let up! Grooogh! Let up, and I guess I'll mosey along. Grooogh!"

He clutched at the rope round his neck, but it was tight, and he could not loosen it.

"Let up!" he pleaded, all his ferocity gone now. "Let a galoot mosey along! I cave in! Let up, gents!"

"Well, you ought to be hanged, you know," said Bob Lawless, with an air of consideration. "May as well be sooner as later."

"Pullee lopee," grinned Yen Chin. "Me pullee, hangee nicee-nicee! Velly funnee hangee ole lascal!"

And the Chinese caught hold of the rope and pulled in good earnest. Frank Richards grasped him and yanked him back in time.

"You young ass!" he gasped. "Do you want to kill the man?"

"Me wantee killee," answered Yen Chin cheerfully. "Velly funnee killee ugly ole lascal, oh, yes!"

To judge by the terrific expression on Four Kings' face he did not think it funny.

"Let up!" he groaned. "I'll mosey! Let up!"

"You can vamoose," said Bob. "Keep that potty Chinese back, Franky!"

"Bettee killee—"

"Shut up! You can mosey along. Four Kings; but if you put your ugly cazebe in here again, we'll rope you in, and keep you tied up for keeps! Mind that! Now absquatulate, and you can cut the rope when you're at a distance."

Four Kings, glad of the permission, backed away from the window to the full length of the lasso, watched by the grinning garrison.

His own comrades were grinning, too.

Four Kings fumbled for his knife and opened it, and cut through the rope, sawing through it as fast as he could.

Bob Lawless gave him a jerk or two as a reminder to hurry up, and at last the rope parted, leaving the ruffian with the loop still about his neck.

He was grabbing at it savagely when Bob closed the shutter and barred it again. The schoolboys returned to their interrupted dinner, without being further troubled by Four Kings.

Over the meal Bob Lawless and Frank related their adventures in the timber and the meeting with the galoot in "store-clothes."

Eben Hacke interrupted them at the name of the stranger.

"What did you say he called himself?" he exclaimed.

"Dr. Macfarlane," answered Frank.

"Did he come from Kootenay?"

"Blessed if I know; but he was a stranger in this section," said Frank. "He came along to-day from Thompson."

"I guess I can tell you who he is," said Hacke, with a chuckle. "Didn't you say Gunten told you the school superintendent was coming up to-day?"

"Yes."

"That's the galoot! I guess I know the name—my popper knows him," said Eben Hacke. "That pilgrim you clipped in to help is the school superintendent who's coming up to investigate our affair here."

Frank whistled.

"That accounts for his being so keen to hear all about it," he said. "My hat! Well, he's heard our side of the story now, at all events. I fancy Old Man Gunten will have been pitching him a rather different yarn, and he was coming here to inquire for himself. I wonder how it will turn out?"

All the garrison of Cedar Creek were wondering that, and they hoped for the best. But however it turned out, one thing was certain—there was no surrender for Frank Richards & Co.

THE END.

(You simply must not miss next week's thrilling, long, complete story of the famous Chums of Cedar Creek School, entitled: "The Rebels' Triumph!")

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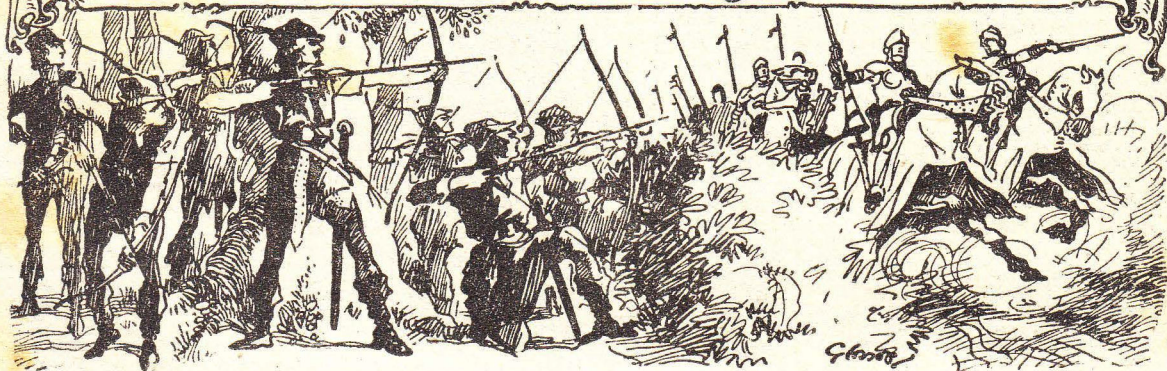
Twenty-three competitors, with three errors each, divide the ten prizes of 5s. each. The names and addresses of these prize-winners can be obtained on application at this office.

SOLUTION.

Football was played in Luton a long time before the Luton Club was formed. The town put into the field the first professional eleven that the south of England had ever known. The pay of each footballer was two-and-six a week. During the past few years Luton has not shone brightly.

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Introduction.

GUY FITZHUGH, the young ward of KING RICHARD CŒUR DE LION, who has been placed under the guardianship of SIR HUMPHREY DE BRIONNE, a tyrannical Norman baron. ROBERT OF ROUEN, a gallant man-at-arms serving under the black banner of Sir Humphrey. ISOBEL and SWEYNE THE HARPER, wandering minstrels, Guy's first friends. ROBIN HOOD, the leader of the outlaws. FRIAR TUCK, a jolly monk, who is a member of the band of foresters. The ABBOT OF MERLY, brother of Sir Humphrey, one of Guy's greatest enemies.

The Road of Adventure.

Guy FitzHugh, unable to tolerate the tyranny of his guardian, Sir Humphrey, makes his escape from the grim Norman castle, and, hotly pursued by the baron's retainers and men-at-arms, flies into the forest of Sherwood. He outwits the pursuers, and wanders forth alone for adventure. Riding through the forest, he comes upon a small band of foresters whom, he discovers afterwards, are members of the famous outlaws under the leadership of the immortal ROBIN HOOD. Knowing their master is one who will help the oppressed, they take FitzHugh before him. Robin Hood is impressed by Guy, and the boy joins his band.

News that the usurper Prince John—brother of the King of England, and his train of rascally followers, are at the abbey of Merly, reaches Robin's ears, and the outlaw decides to make all haste to the abbey with the intention of relieving the earl of some of his ill-gotten gains.

John is feasting in the banqueting hall, and terrifying the monks with his threats to hang every one of them, when the window opens and in dashes Robin Hood and his merry men.

"Be seated, tyrant!" he cries.

(Now Read On.)

How Robin Hood Turned King John from Merly Abbey—and Guy reveals his Identity to the Monks!

"I BADE ye be seated, Earl John," said the outlaw, in a tremendous voice, "and if you do not instantly obey me, you shall be as full of arrows as a pincushion is of pins! Down, you scurvy dogs! At last you have met one who does not fear you!"

Like all cruel men, John was a coward at heart, and he sank back on to the abbot's soft cushions, which seemed to him just then to be stuffed with thorns.

"Now, I say again," continued Robin Hood, "if I see a hand go to a sword-hilt, or so much as a mouth open, this hall shall be turned into a shambles! The massacre of the Jews at York shall be as nothing to it! Have no fear, monks!"

And he turned to the frightened brothers, who, between John's wasters and Robin Hood's outlaws, began to think that the end of all things had come.

"I like you not, shavelings; but the Mother Church shall not be robbed while Robin Hood can raise a hand to protect her! You, Gerald of Canville"—and he pointed to a Norman baron who sat at John's right hand—"you who held Lincoln for King Richard, and think it no shame to proclaim yourself John's man, take up that gold and silver plate with your own proud fingers, for thou shalt carry it back to its cupboard like any menial!"

At these words Gerald of Canville's squire—a hot-headed young man with a high colour—sprang from his seat and cried:

"Out swords! Shall we suffer ourselves to be affronted in this wise?"

Robin's eye flashed, and, bending his bow, he loosed the string, and a long arrow feathered itself in the squire's throat.

"This is to show you that Robin Hood is a man of his word!" said the outlaw, calmly drawing out another arrow and fitting it to the string.

The squire fell backwards over the form from which he had risen, and sank with a great crash on the rush-strewn floor, as a groan of horror burst from the lips of his companions.

"Read that lesson aright," said Robin, "or the same fate is in store for all of you! Now, Gerald of Canville, do as I bid thee, or, by the bones of the saints, thou

art dead meat for the carrion-crows!"

The archers in the gallery, at a sign from Robin, had removed the noose from the prior's neck, and now supported him in their arms.

The half-dozen ruffians who had been in such haste to do Earl John's bidding, stood, with terror in their faces, in the grip of the sturdy foresters; and, seeing that they were all of the common sort, and that the world would be well rid of them, Robin said sternly:

"Let those varlets taste of the leap they had planned for the prior! Over with them, neck and crop!"

And in an instant the six men were plucked from their feet and hurled down on to the floor of the hall.

John writhed in his seat, and clutched the arms of the abbot's chair. His face grew purple, and he foamed at the mouth.

Meanwhile, bursting with fury, Gerald of Canville had risen to his feet, and shook his fist at the bold forester.

"Thou shalt have a heavy reckoning for this one of these days, Robin Fitzooth!"

"Keep your breath to cool your own porridge!" retorted Robin, who, in spite of his triumph, knew that his own hand and that of John's were equally matched in strength, and that he must not allow them to recover their courage.

It would have been an easy matter to have slain the prince where he sat; but he was the King's brother, notwithstanding. The abbey must be rid of him at all costs, and the sooner the better. And, bidding Will Scarlet unbar the outer door, Robin advanced three strides towards the baffled tyrant, still keeping his arrow pointed towards the breast of his red surcoat.

"Ride forth, Earl John," he said sternly,

"for I doubt me that I can keep my young men in hand much longer. Ride forth, and go thy way to plunder and oppress the helpless; but remember when you meet Robin Hood you meet your match. Ho, there! Horses for Earl John and his rapsallions; but keep them well covered, my merry men, lest they scheme treachery!"

The torches were flickering, and the moon had passed beyond the great window at the end of the hall, and those crestfallen men rose slowly to their

feet, and took their way out in single file.

Earl John was the last to leave the hall, and as he passed Robin he made as though



Friar Tuck disables the retainer and takes his horse.

Trapped by the Robbers—Guy FitzHugh's Peril! See Next Week!

he would have spoken; but his passion choked him, and he could only turn upon him a glare of vindictive hatred, and toss his clenched fists high above his head in impotent rage.

Then, closely attended by the foresters, ready at a word from Robin to loose their death-dealing flight into the midst of them, prince, barons, squires, and varlets climbed into their saddles, and dashed out under the gateway with a great thunder of hoofs.

Not until they had passed the plantation did Robin sign to his men to unbend their bows; and then, bidding Will Scarlet close the gate and shoot the bolts well home, Robin strode back into the hall, and, flinging himself into the chair that John had vacated, smote his thigh, and led the ringing peal of laughter which floated far out on to the night until it reached the ears of the still galloping horsemen.

"Marry, Master Prior," said the outlaw, when the mirth at last subsided, "we have saved your neck to-night, and in your gratitude remember that our throats are dry, for 'tis thirsty work bearding belted earls; and I trow we have not heard the last of this business! 'Twere as well, for your safety, as well as our own, that we tarry here for a few days, and I instal thee, Friar Tuck, as lord of this fair monastery during our stay. Thy quarter-staff shall be thy crozier, and I warrant me the brothers will have no fault to find with thy gentle rule."

Among all those monks, Brother Gregory, the porter, was the only one whose eyes twinkled at Robin's words, for, in truth, the glittering pile of costly plate that still lay upon the table seemed to them in as much danger at the hands of the outlaws as it had done a short half-hour before.

But Robin quickly reassured them, and, bidding them take away their treasures, seated the prior on his left hand and Friar Tuck on his right, and set to work upon the food which they had brought from the kitchen in all eagerness to propitiate their strange protector.

In the meantime, Guy and the harper had disappeared; and when Robin made inquiry for FitzHugh, Allan-a-Dale came behind his chair and whispered some words in his ear.

Robin started.
"By the rood, 'twas well thought of!" he said. "Thou shalt presently lead me to the spot. Old Swayne hath a nose like a ferret, and I doubt not will discover some strange things. But 'twere well the monks should not know what liberties they take with Abbot Anselm's parchments. Meanwhile, bid the men keep strict watch. There are Daneholme Castle, Longmanhurst, and half a dozen other places within a short ride, where John may gather nigh upon a thousand men to his back. And we must not be taken unawares. And now, good brothers, ye can all to your beds again. No harm shall befall you while we are here. As for my fellows, they can crouch around the fire until morning. But have a care how you meditate any treachery against us. I would as soon trust an adder in the grass as a black monk!"

The brothers shuffled away, anxious to hold council among themselves upon that strange business. And when they had gone Robin made a sign to Allan-a-Dale, who led him to the abbot's chamber, where they found Guy and the harper seated upon the floor, pouring over the contents of the carved coffer by the light of a candle.

'TREACHERY AFOOT!



Holding their breath, Robin Hood and Guy crept to the half-open door, and their hands tightened on their daggers as they listened to the conversation inside. "By the bones of St. Peter," the abbot was saying, "We have those outlaws trapped now. I will send messengers after the earl to return. Robin Hood will not escape me this time!" (See page 26.)

documents that concern our young friend here?"

"Nay," said Guy sadly, "they are not to be found. The abbot must have taken them with him to York for some purpose. But no matter; they would avail me nothing for two years, and not at all if I once came within the baron's grip."

The boy rose from the floor, stiff with long bending over the documents, and as his eyes glanced at the window he uttered a low cry.

"Look, Robin—look!" he said. "Here come a band of horsemen as numerous as the leaves in the forest! They are well-nigh at the bridge now!"

And everyone, running to the casement, looked out, and saw a huge column of men coming on at a fast trot towards the abbey. Their lances and spears quivered like reeds in the wind, and the first red flush of morning showed them John riding at their head, attended by a group of more than a dozen sturdy companions, who showed by the devices on their shields and surcoats that they were some of the powerful barons who garrisoned the castles in the vicinity of Merly.

"I did not think we should be disturbed so soon," said Robin. "But 'tis clear we must fly, for though we could hold these walls for a couple of hours, or even more, when our arrows failed us we should be at

their mercy. Know you of any retreat way of leaving the monastery?"

"Only by the posterns in the wall itself," said Guy; "though I did hear when I was a scholar that there is a passage underground. Shall I seek out Brother Gregory, who is the best-hearted of all the monks, save only that he be somewhat given to gluttony? I warrant me, if he be not yet abed, that I will get the secret out of him."

"So do, boy," said Robin. "But make all haste, for, failing that, we must sally forth through the gateway, before the enemy is at the gateway, unless, I' faith, we would ornament the battlements with our dead bodies, a style of architecture I never yet had fancy for!"

Guy ran quickly down into the church, hurried to the gateway, and found the stalwart monk in the porter's lodge.

"Ah, child," said the monk, "art not yet abed? For myself, I am as weary as the Seven Sleepers."

"Supposing, brother," said Guy, sitting down on the edge of the monk's cot—"supposing Earl John were to return, and we were not here to defend you, have you no secret way of escape?"

"Yes, of a surety," replied the porter, yawning; "there is the passage that leads from the foot of the high altar to the abbey mill, by the waterside yonder."

"Ah, I know you told me there was one," said Guy. And then he stopped, knowing that he had unwittingly betrayed himself, as the monk looked sharply at him.

Brother Gregory was very wide-awake now, and, barring an egress with his huge figure, as he planted his back against the lodge door, he placed a hand on each hip, and looked down at the boy.

"Ho, ho, young rogue!" said the porter. "Your voice hath a most familiar ring in my ear, as I said to Brother Edmund not an hour ago. Come, out with it! Who art thou?"

Guy lay back and laughed. He did not care for all the monks in Christendom with Robin Hood at his back, and, forgetting all about the approach of imminent danger, he cried aloud:

"What! Have you forgotten Guy Fitz-Hugh so soon?"

Brother Gregory uttered an exclamation that would have earned for him a long penance had the sub-prior been there to overhear it, and raised his great hand with astonishment; but, though the sub-prior was at that moment far away in the city of York, other ears caught Guy's speech and the porter's exclamation.

Brother Edmund, who had come upon some errand, had just reached the lodge door, and now pausing, drew himself into the shadow of the wall, and listened greedily.

"Well, well, Master Guy," exclaimed Brother Gregory, "'tis indeed a strange meeting, and well for you that our Father Abbot is not here!"

What more he might have said died away on his lips, for a great clatter of horsemen sounded from the gateway, followed by a stern summons to open.

"'Tis Earl John come back again!" cried the porter. "Now we are indeed lost!"

"Nay, not so!" said Guy, springing up. "Naught but a battering-ram will break that stout door open, and here comes Robin and the rest of my brave companions."

Above the din rose the clear voice of the outlaw calling his men, and bidding the monks hasten to strike a blow in their own defence.

"We shall want every arm within these walls," said Robin. "Let us to the top of the wall, and you shavelings bring baskets of stones and anything you can lay your hands on. Let me see but a man of you skulking, and he shall be soundly scourged. You do not deserve aid, if you do not help to defend."

The wall that surrounded the abbey was battlemented like that of a castle, and, springing up a flight of stone steps, the outlaws, fitting their arrows as they ran, took up their positions and awaited their leader's command to suddenly stand erect and fire upon the men-at-arms below them.

John, when he rode away, had left watchers by the riverside, and they had told him the outlaws were yet within the abbey. The clamour upon the door was like

Of Certain Happenings in a Secret Passage, and What Robin Hood and Guy Overheard at the Abbot's Door.

SWEYNE, the harper, stretched both his hands forth as Robin entered, and his withered cheeks glowed with an unwonted colour.

"By the bones of King Alfred," cried the old man, "there is matter here for Richard's own eyes! Not only do the Baron de Brionne and his black-hearted brother, the abbot, conspire with John, but there are letters here from Philip of France, and a foul plot is clearly revealed. They scheme to keep Richard prisoner in Austria until such time as Philip shall have invaded our Norman dominions and John has been firmly seated on the English throne."

"Say you so?" said Robin. "Then must you convey these papers to the hands of Archbishop Longchamp. But what of the

thunder, but Robin waited until all his men had taken position, then, with a whistle, he suddenly appeared over the parapet against the light of dawn, and a volley of clothyard shafts winged down into the masses of dismounting horsemen in front of the gate.

Yells rose on the air as twenty of John's followers fell wounded, and nearly a dozen were killed outright. The rest dragged their horses past the gateway, thus gaining a momentary shelter, and those among them who had bows strung them and kept their eyes on the battlements.

John's surcoat had been pierced by an arrow, and, absolutely quivering with rage, he ordered three horsemen to ride down to the village and bring back all the ladders they could find.

"By the bones of my father," he yelled, in a voice that could be heard within the abbey, "there shall be such a hanging in this place as no man hath ever seen, and the abbey shall pay me two thousand marks for this outrage!"

Now, it happened that Guy had left his bow just inside the church door, and as he sped thither to get it, he saw a stream of black figures flying up the aisle. The monks, anxious only for the safety of their own skins, had abandoned the contents of their house to the outlaws, all save Brother Gregory, the porter, who was already upon the wall beside Robin Hood.

Guy trembled with indignation, and called upon the monks to stay; but as his shout echoed through the church it only served to increase their cowardly terror.

One by one they disappeared, and as Brother Edmund closed the stone slab behind him, Guy turned and ran with his news to Robin, whom he found hurrying down from the wall, followed by the band.

"We must try the postern before they surround the walls!" cried the outlaw. "We are only human, and fifty arms, strong though they be, can do little in the long run against a thousand."

"As for the postern," said Brother Gregory, "'tis broad daylight, and our flight will be seen before we have gone twenty yards. There is a better way, bold Robin, and I care not if I show it to you, for you be a man after my own heart."

Then Guy told how the monks had fled, and Brother Gregory fell into a most unmonkish fury, and thereby incurred much penance hereafter.

"We will give those curs a lesson!" he cried, as he reached the altar, and, stooping, he raised a large slab of stone, so artfully set in the pavement that none would have suspected its use. "Now, Master

Outlaw," said he, "let your men descend; 'tis dark as the tomb, but the way is straight. 'Twill serve my brethren justly right if they think that Earl John's followers are upon their heels."

Little John was the first man to spring through the opening, and, followed by the rest, they raised such a clamorous shout of vengeance that the terrified monks fled like hares, pummelling each other unmercifully, as each man struggled to pass the one in front of him.

"Stay with me, friend Guy," said Brother Gregory. "These are wild times, and it may be useful to you to know how to raise this stone."

They paused a moment before they descended, Robin Hood remaining with them, and the abbey echoed with the thunder of heavy blows upon the door of the great gateway, John's men having found a piece of timber which they were using as a battering-ram.

By this time the monks had reached the far end of the passage, which led them to the cellar of the mill, and there they were overtaken by the outlaws, who rated them soundly for their cowardice. There they were joined a little later by Robin and Guy, and when Brother Gregory had unlocked the trapdoor that led to the ground floor of the mill, Robin bade the rest stay where they were, while he and Little John, with Guy and Allan-a-Dale, went up to reconnoitre.

From the mill they could see the abbey gate, and as they peeped through the wooden shutter a cry of triumph arose, and they knew that the gate had been forced, for John's followers, leaving their horses without, poured in and disappeared.

"By the rood," cried Robin, laughing, "we are putting the earl's temper to a severe tax! He will be beside himself when he finds the abbey empty. I should marvel little if he burnt it to the ground in his rage. And now we must consider what is best to be done," he said, as three horsemen galloped past the mill, bearing two rough ladders with them. "We have a secure hiding-place here, and can leave it, if we wish, at nightfall. But how say you, Little John? If the earl tarries at the abbey, would it not be good sport to keep those fat monks on short commons as punishment for their ingratitude? The village folk will sell us food enough, and we can dole it out to them a spoonful at a time."

Little John grinned until his fat sides ached; but Will Scarlet put an end to the mirth as he stood by the shutter gazing

at the long lines of horses outside the gateway.

"If it is a question of food, Robin," he said, "we had best lay in a supply quickly. They can never quarter all those men and beasts in the abbey itself, and some of them will be sent down hither. Then we may whistle for our victuals."

After a short consultation it was agreed between them that Brother Gregory, the porter, whom they had every reason to believe they could trust, should go at once into the village to procure supplies, and when Brother Gregory was summoned from the cellar beneath he at once assented. It was not long before he returned, bearing a huge basket containing bread and other eatables, and with him came half a dozen village churls bearing more.

By this means they laid in provision enough for three days. And it was indeed well they did so, for scarcely had the villagers departed than a troop of mounted men came riding down from the abbey, and proceeded to take up free quarters among the cottagers.

"'Tis almost a pity," said Robin, "that we did not go while there was a chance. We are prisoners now, and we must make the best of it."

And so it fell out that, while John and his barons were revelling in the abbey, and marveling what could have become of the monks and all that rich store of plate—which, by the way, they had taken care to deposit in the secret passage—the unfortunate brethren were cooling their heels in the gloom of the vault beneath the mill, an imprisonment which lasted for two whole days, since Earl John showed no signs of leaving his comfortable lodgings.

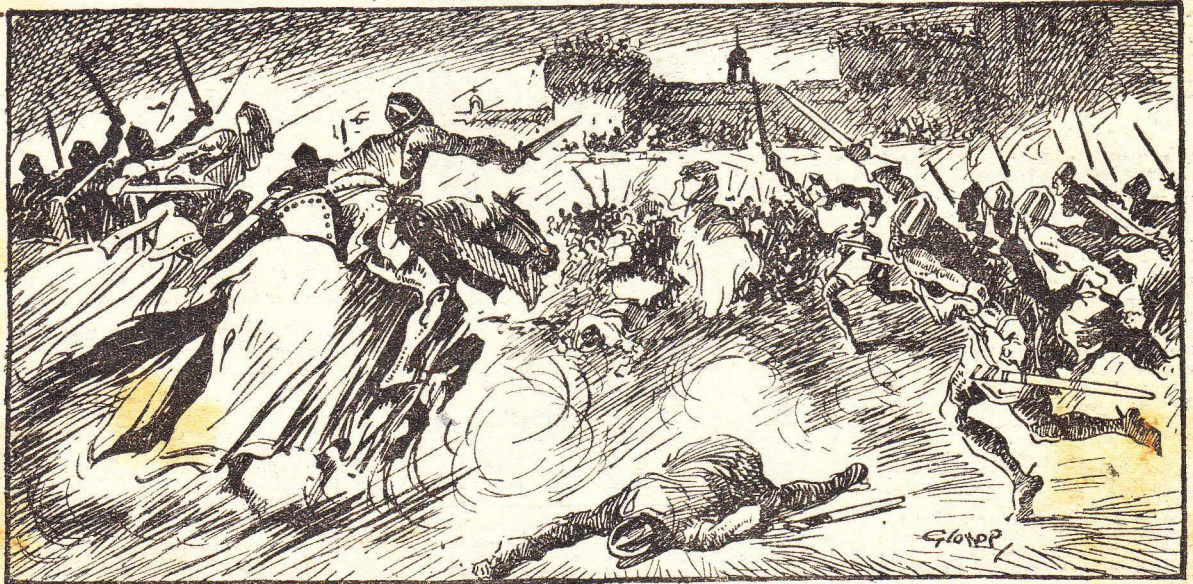
There was another cause of misery for the monks, and that was hunger, for Robin read them a severe homily upon the evils of gluttony, and doled out one small slice of dry bread per man morning and evening for those two days.

He made no exception in favour of Brother Gregory, the stalwart porter, who was bidden to come into the mill and draw his companions' rations; but while there Brother Gregory was allowed to eat his fill, not without a warning wink from Robin, which Brother Gregory fully understood, and returned with interest.

Now, it chanced that Brother Edmund, the same who had discovered Guy's identity when he listened at the door of the porter's lodge, fell sick on the afternoon of the second day.

His illness was partly real and partly exaggerated, for Brother Edmund was

THE BATTLE OF MERLY ABBEY!



A volley of arrows winged down from the battlements into the masses of dismounting horsemen in front of the abbey gate. Men fell thick and fast, and a cheer broke from the defenders. Prince John's surcoat had been pierced by an arrow, and he retreated quivering with rage. (See page 24.)

nursing a plan in his own mind, that plan being to betray their captors to Earl John himself.

He implored so hard to be allowed to ascend out of the cellar and breathe the fresh air, that the outlaws let him up, and leaning against the shutter, his fat cheeks very pale and flabby, Brother Edmund set his wits to work to discover some means of getting out of the mill and back to the abbey again.

The outlaws paid little heed to him, nor did they see the start he gave just about the time of vespers, when, in the ordinary course of events, the abbey bell would have been set tolling.

Horsemen rode down to the bridge, coming from the northward, and as they mounted the slope towards the abbey, Brother Edmund recognised Abbot Anselm and his party, returning sooner than they had anticipated from York.

"Ho, ho!" thought the fat monk, drawing his cowl closer round his face, "Now is the matter simple. I will wait until those rascally outlaws slumber, then I will steal back along the passage, and, gaining the church, tell the Father Abbot all about it. 'Twill be easy then to take them all in the trap."

When at length, tired of the sight of the black figure standing before the shutter, Robin ordered the monk back into the vault again, Brother Edmund descended, and, without demur, and shuffling along in his sandals, sat down at the end of the row of brethren, almost in the mouth of the passage itself.

No one else had seen the abbot's arrival, and no one knew that within half an hour of his return John had ridden forth, leaving the abbot in a terrible state of mind at the disappearance of his monks and the great disorder in which he found the monastery.

He believed that they had fled before the outlaws, and that the outlaws, in turn, had fled at the approach of Earl John; but when he examined the coffer in his own room, and found that the contents had been rifled, Abbot Anselm flung himself into his chair and groaned aloud.

"Now we are all indeed undone!" he cried. "Pray Heaven that Richard ends his days in his German prison, for if he comes back, and those papers have fallen into wrong hands, the whole conspiracy will be revealed!"

He was sitting huddled up, with his hands and face working convulsively, and one solitary candle shedding a wavy light over his apartment, when a low tap sounded on the door—a tap repeated three or four times before the abbot heard it, and told the visitor to enter.

He sprang to his feet with a bound, as the door was pushed open; for Brother Edmund it was who glided noiselessly in, holding up both hands with a gesture expressive of the utmost secrecy.

The Outlaws Escape in Disguise, and Fall in with Sir Humphrey de Brienne.

DURING those two days of enforced imprisonment, Swayne the Harper had been very busy. He sat in a corner of the room in the mill, poring over the documents he had carried away from the oak coffer.

Pretty Isobel sat beside him, and Guy FitzHugh lay full-length at her feet, sometimes chatting gaily with her, sometimes helping the old man to decipher some difficult passage in the Latin manuscript.

Swayne's eyes glowed with an almost feverish brilliancy as the abbot's secrets grew clearer and clearer to him, and the outlaws, who had a great respect for the old man, talked in low voices as they waited impatiently for the time when they could leave the irksome restraint of the mill and its cellars.

Not long after Brother Edmund had been ordered down the ladder, his heart throbbing with the treachery he meditated, Swayne the Harper smote his open hand on the floor, and a look of bitter disappointment passed over his fine, old face.

"What ails thee, good Swayne?" said Robin. "Hast come to some knot thou canst not unravel?"

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"Nay; 'tis worse than that!" said the harper, twining his fingers in his white beard. "The most important writing of them all I have left in the abbot's chamber. I did but glance at it, and thought I had placed it with the others. It was a list of all the barons and men of importance who are pledged to uphold Earl John against his brother, duly set forth in the handwriting of Abbot Anselm himself."

"Possibly you have dropped it in your haste. We will search the secret passage," said Robin.

"No. I remember now, alas, that I laid it in the window!"

"Well, that is soon mended!" said Guy, jumping to his feet. "Let me go back, good Robin. I know every inch of the abbey, and can steal up to the abbot's chamber with no more noise than a mouse."

"Thou shalt do so, Guy," said the outlaw; "but I will also go with thee, as I would fain see what is happening there. Little John, with a dozen of our companions, shall remain under the moving-stone to succour us, should it be necessary."

And so it came about that Guy and Robin Hood raised the slab in front of the high altar not long after Brother Edmund had stolen through the opening and swung the stone noiselessly back into position.

There was not a sound in the abbey; no burst of revelry reached their ears as they waited and watched.

TRAPPING THE MONKS!



The silent figures ranged themselves in a circle about the abbot and his two companions. Suddenly one of the monks threw back his cowl—which was a signal for all the others to do the same. Little John seized Abbot Anselm by the throat, and the other two were quickly made prisoners. (See page 27.)

"'Tis strange!" muttered Robin. "The night is young, and the earl and his men are not wont to seek their couches so soon. Come, let us make haste to the abbot's chamber; afterwards, when we have found the parchment, we will seek the cause of this mysterious silence."

Little John, Will Scarlet, and the others whom Robin had chosen, stationed themselves beneath the revolving slab, keeping it open a few inches, in case of necessity, and, walking on tiptoe, Guy and Robin stole to the little doorway that led to the abbot's chamber.

It was well they preserved the utmost caution, for scarcely had they reached the head of the passage at the top of the stairs than they heard the sound of voices.

"That is the abbot's voice!" whispered Guy. "See, there is a light burning in his room, and the door is ajar."

Holding their breath, they crept to the half-open door, and their hands tightened on their daggers as they listened to the conversation within.

"By the bones of St. Peter," cried the abbot, "thou hast done well to come, Brother Edmund, but I would thou hadst come sooner. Barely had I left my saddle than Earl John rode away in haste, with his entire following. Someone had brought news that the outlaw and his band had been seen crossing Stavely Ford, but it seems the earl has gone on a fool's errand."

The abbot had risen from his chair, and was pacing backwards and forwards up and down the room.

"Out upon it! We must do the business somehow!" he cried. "The knight, Sir Roger FitzPeter, carries at the village still, having quarrelled with John over their cups. He hath thirty men-at-arms at his back, and we can find another score. Meantime, I will send mounted messengers in hot haste after the earl, and also to meet my brother Sir Humphrey, who returns to-morrow. By the rood, Robin FitzOoth must be a wizard if he escapes from this snare!"

"But, first of all, father," said Brother Edmund, "there are the brethren below."

"That will be your mission," said the abbot. "You must return and warn them. When the rogues are sunk in slumber, let them steal forth one at a time. We will then place weights upon the stone before the altar, while Sir Roger FitzPeter makes good the other end of the passage. Go now, Brother Edmund, and send Tancred to me; he is a very proper man to go about this business."

The abbot laughed aloud—for the first time since his meeting with Robin Hood in the forest—and they could hear him rubbing his fat hands in an ecstasy of delight.

Robin Hood touched Guy on the shoulder, and, stealing backwards, with their hands still on their daggers, they rounded the corner of the passage, and reached the church in safety.

As they approached the stone, Little John and his companions raised it, and, springing lightly into the passage, Robin told them quickly all that they had overheard.

"Now, my merry men," said the outlaw, "we will play a merry prank upon this fat shaveling. 'Twill be some little time before the monk comes hither to warn the rest. Meanwhile, we will strip the brethren ourselves, and put on their garments to hide our Lincoln green. Speed thee, Will Scarlet, into the mill, and mark well what Sir Roger FitzPeter does when he receives the abbot's message."

The secret passage rang with uproarious laughter as the outlaws, with scant ceremony, unfrocked the captive monks, and, putting on the black robes, hid their bows beneath them and pulled the cowls well over their faces.

Then Robin Hood set Little John and Right-hitting Brand to wait for Brother Edmund, who, suspecting nothing, came down the steps with his bare feet, and was stealing along towards the spot where he had left his companions, when he was suddenly seized and pinned against the wall. Scarcely had they loosened his girdle and possessed themselves of his gown, leaving him to shiver piteously in the damp chill of the passage, than Robin and the others came towards them at a quick pace.

"All goes well," said the outlaw. "The men-at-arms from the abbey have joined with FitzPeter's followers, and they now surround the mill on all sides. You must

be spokesman, Friar Tuck, and now walk as reverently as you can, and take care to hang your heads low enough, until we have got Master Abbot himself in our hands."

Abbot Anselm paced to and fro close to the revolving stone. He hugged himself with his long arms, and rocked backwards and forwards in an ecstasy of delight; and, standing a few paces away, their eyes fixed on the slab, were the almoner and the sub-prior.

Suddenly the slab moved, and from the dark cavity there issued a procession of silent figures, each man having his chin sunk forward upon his chest, as if filled with humiliation. They came quickly one after another, and ranged themselves in a circle about the abbot and his two companions.

Suddenly one of the monks threw back his cowl—which was the signal for all the others to do the same—and Abbot Anselm of Merly realised that his troubles were by no means at an end.

Little John seized him by the throat; Allan-a-Dale and Much made prisoners of the sub-prior and the almoner, and the abbot sank fainting to the floor as he heard the outlaw order his men to bring up the treasure-chests, which had been deposited for safety in the secret passage.

"Get water, some of you, and bring that fat fool to his senses," said Robin. "This time we will not treat him as gently as we did in the forest. Let each man take as much silver and gold as he can carry about his person without incommoding himself, and when that is done the abbot shall taste the joys of true monastic seclusion in those vaults below there."

When Abbot Anselm came to his senses, it was to feel himself dragged unceremoniously to the edge of the opening, where Allan-a-Dale delivered a sounding kick, which made him spring into space and fall heavily upon the sub-prior and the almoner, who had been treated in the same fashion, and were just then picking themselves painfully up. Then the stone closed, an oaken vestment-chest was dragged across it, and Robin Hood strode down the church until he reached the porter's lodge.

"If aught befalls us," he said, "we must make our way singly or in groups to the White Oak once more. Do not cast aside these garments until we are on the other side of the river, and then you can away with them as soon as you like."

Sweyne the Harper and Isobel went with them, and Friar Tuck, who was the last to leave, was locking the wicket on the outer side, when the clatter of hoofs sounded, coming from the direction of the village.

"Stay, brother!" cried the man—one of Sir Roger FitzPeter's servants, who carried a boar-spear in his hand. "My master bids thee lie to the abbot, and tell him that most unaccountable noises are heard under the mill floor—great hammering and shouting, and voices, piteous enough, entreating to be let out."

Friar Tuck bent over the key, under the pretence of unlocking the door, but in reality that he might the better pick up his quarter-staff, which he had placed in the corner. The man, suspecting no treachery, took off his steel cap, and wiped his forehead with the back of his hand, when all at once the friar wheeled round and sprang upon him, brandishing his terrible weapon.

Three blows descended on the man's bare head quick as lightning. With a low groan, the retainer reeled back in his saddle and slipped to the ground, and Friar Tuck deftly caught the bride of the horse.

The man lay where he fell, and the friar, tucking up his skirts—for he was now doubly encumbered with a black frock and a brown one—started off after the outlaws, the horse trotting beside him.

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