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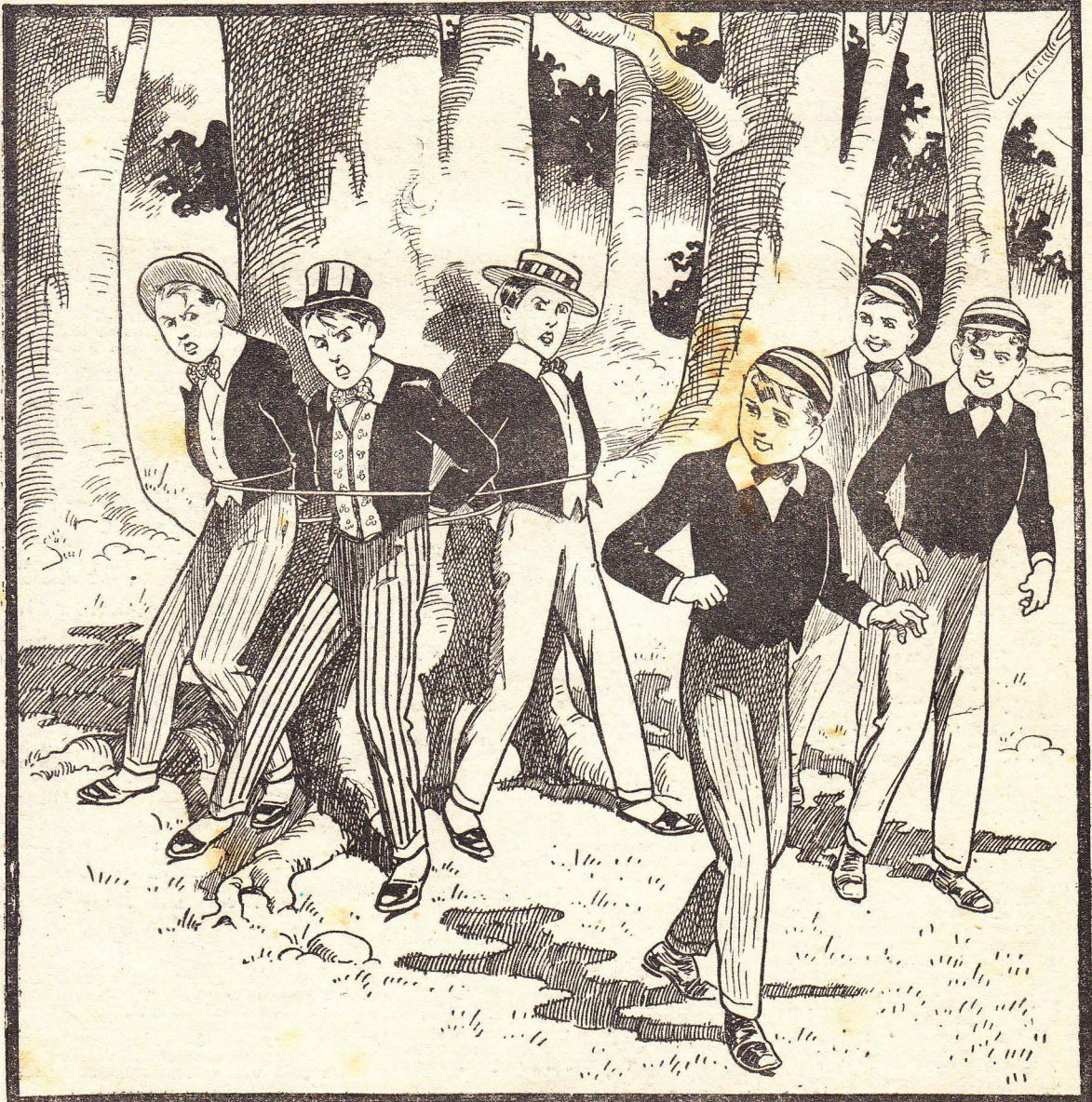
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The POPULAR 2^D

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WHY THE "NUTS" DID NOT PLAY CRICKET FOR ROOKWOOD!

(A Stirring incident from the Thrilling Yarn of Jimmy Silver & Co. inside.)

TROUBLE FOR THE NEW SKIPPER!

In bad odour as he was with the Fourth at Rookwood, some people would not have expected Morny to get the support of Jimmy Silver—But Jimmy is a sportsman, true blue, and he lets personal predilections go overboard when it is the question of duty to his school and skipper!

BACKING UP MORNINGTON!

Jimmy Silver to the Rescue!



This is one of the best cricket stories ever written and deals with a match between Rookwood and Greyfriars.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Morny's List!

"JIMMY—"

"Oh, buzz off, Tubby!" said Jimmy Silver crossly. Jimmy Silver was dabbing his nose with his handkerchief in the end study. There were stains of crimson on the handkerchief. And Jimmy was not in his usual sunny temper.

But Tubby Muffin of the Classical Fourth did not buzz off. He rolled into the study instead.

"I say, Jimmy—" he persisted.

"Roll away, barrel!" said Lovell. "Can't you see that you're superfluous, Tubby? The charms of your fascinating society have palled. Roll away!"

Tubby did not heed.

"I want you to lend me your bat, Jimmy!" he said.

Jimmy Silver stared at the fat Classical over the crimsoned handkerchief. His nose was feeling rather painful.

"My bat?" he exclaimed.

"That's it!"

"What the thump do you want a bat for at nearly bed-time?" demanded Jimmy.

"I don't want it to-night, of course. To-morrow, I mean," explained Tubby Muffin. "You won't want it, as you're not playing at Greyfriars to-morrow, Jimmy. I've sold my bat—I sold it to Jones minor, you know, when I was stony last week. Of course, I never foresaw that I should be asked to play in the junior eleven to—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You never asked me to play for Rookwood when you were junior captain, Jimmy," said Tubby Muffin reproachfully. "I offered my services more than once, and you always refused. It's different now Mornington's captain. Morny knows a good man when he sees him."

Jimmy Silver & Co. stared at the fat junior.

They could not speak for a moment.

Tubby Muffin, as a member of the junior cricket team, took their breath away.

Tubby was a great man in his own line; he was the very best customer at the tuck-shop; he was the best cook in the Fourth Form, and what he didn't know about frying sausages wasn't worth knowing. But as a cricketer Tubby did not shine. As a cricketer he was probably more hopeless than even Smythe of the Shell.

"You in the junior eleven!" ejaculated Arthur Edward Lovell, at last.

"You!" howled Raby.

"You!" stuttered Newcome.

"Oh, my only bat!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Morny must have gone fairly off his rocker, I think!"

Tubby Muffin blinked indignantly at the Fistical Four. He could not see anything surprising in his inclusion in the Rookwood junior team.

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"The fact is, Jimmy, Morny's a better skipper than you ever were!" he said. "He's giving me a chance. You can cackle if you like, but you'll see! You wait till I'm knocking up runs at Greyfriars to-morrow!"

"Oh dear!"

"But I want you to lend me your bat, Jimmy! Of course, I can't knock up runs without a bat."

"Nor with one, you howling ass!" exclaimed Lovell. "I'd like to see you facing the Greyfriars bowlers! Has Morny gone potty? First he puts Smythe and Howard and Tracy in the team—three born idiots. Now he's picked out the fattest chump in the Fourth—"

"Look here—" roared Tubby, in great wrath.

"Greyfriars will have something to chortle over to-morrow!" snorted Lovell. "They had some comic cricket when Smythe took a team over. Morny's team will be funnier than Smythe's, at this rate! What is Rookwood cricket coming to?"

"I suppose Morny's potty!" growled Jimmy Silver.

"You silly ass!" roared Tubby Muffin. "You're ratty because Morny punched your nose; that's what's the matter with you, Jimmy Silver. Serve you right if he'd licked you! He would have if Erroll hadn't interfered! Yah!"

"Oh, dry up, fathead!"

"I'll borrow a bat somewhere else," said Tubby Muffin; "I won't have yours now if you offer it! Yah!"

And he rolled out of the end study in a state of great indignation.

Jimmy Silver dabbed his nose again thoughtfully. Mornington's knuckles had landed there an hour before with painful effect. Jimmy Silver had been resolved to keep on good terms with the fellow who had taken his place as junior skipper, but it had not worked out like that. Mornington had made a bad beginning, and he was already in bitter conflict with the former skipper.

"Well," said Lovell, with a deep breath, when the fat Classical was gone, "this takes the cake, and no mistake! I'm jolly glad we're not in the eleven! Greyfriars will cackle themselves to death over this match!"

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"Morny's in a fix, of course," he said. "He's determined to play Smythe and Howard and Tracy, which means throwing away the match. Every other fellow has resigned from the team in consequence, except his own chum, Erroll, and Morny must make up an eleven somehow, if he's going over to Greyfriars at all."

"And what's he playing Smythe & Co. for?" hooted Lovell. "Because he promised them places in the team for voting for him at the election! A dirty trick!"

"Rotten!" growled Raby.

"Caddish!" snorted Newcome.

"It was rotten enough," agreed Jimmy Silver. "But Morny doesn't seem to think

so. He looks on it as an electioneering trick. It wouldn't do for this study—"

"I should jolly well say not!"

"But Morny's a queer fellow, and he never meant to put those silly asses into a good match. It's really an accident that the Greyfriars match comes off to-morrow. He can't get any good man to play, with Smythe & Co. in the team, but he's got to make up the number. But fancy falling back on Tubby Muffin!"

"I dare say he's put up a new list by this time!" growled Lovell. "It ought to be interesting to read. Let's go down and see."

"That's a good idea."

The Fistical Four left the end study and went downstairs. They found a good many juniors gathered before the notice-board, upon which was the list of players for the Greyfriars match in Morny's elegant hand. The comments that were being passed on the list were very emphatic.

"Look at this!" said Conroy, as the Fistical Four came up. "What do you think of this merry menagerie?"

Jimmy Silver read down the list.

It ran:

"Mornington, Erroll, Smythe, Tracy, Howard, Muffin, Leggett, Townsend, Topham, Peele, Lattrey."

"My only bat!" said Jimmy Silver, almost overcome.

The list contained two names of cricketers—Mornington and Erroll. The rest were hopeless cases. Mornington had evidently been driven to desperation by the resignations from his team. He had filled the places anyhow he could, and the result was deplorable. So far from being fit to play Greyfriars Remove, the team was not "class" enough to stand up to an eleven chosen from the Second Form.

"Well, that puts the lid on!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, with a snort. "That's the skipper you've changed Jimmy Silver for! My word! I hope you're pleased with him now you've got him!"

The Rookwood fellows certainly were not looking pleased!

"This won't do!" said Jimmy Silver abruptly.

"You can't help it," said Raby. "You can't interfere, Jimmy. Let the silly ass make a fool of himself. He will be booted out of the captaincy for this, anyhow, and that will be to the good."

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

He did not want to see Mornington "booted" out of the captaincy, though many of the fellows did not give him credit for his good wishes towards his successful rival.

"Something's got to be done!" he said.

"Br-r-r!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver walked away, leaving an excited crowd commenting on the remarkable cricket list. Jimmy Silver was thinking deeply. He wanted to save Rookwood from a crushing defeat at Greyfriars, and he wanted to save Morny, if he could, from

the results of his obstinacy and folly. But that was a big problem, even for the astute "Uncle James," of Rookwood.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Jimmy Silver to the Rescue:

"MORNY, old man!" Valentine Mornington was pacing to and fro in his study, when Erroll came in, closing the door after him.

Morny was looking angry and perturbed. He was quite conscious of the bad break he had made in beginning his career as junior captain of Rookwood. He was aware, too, that he had made matters worse instead of better by his fight with Jimmy Silver in the end study. Everything seemed to be going wrong for Morny, and his feelings towards the late junior captain were bitter enough.

He stopped his restless pacing and looked round sullenly as Erroll came in.

"Well?" he snapped.

Erroll took no notice of his savage tone. His patience seemed inexhaustible in dealing with his obstinate and willful chum.

"I've just seen the fellows looking at your list, Morny."

"What are they saying?"

"They don't like it, of course."

Mornington sneered.

"I didn't expect they would! It's all Jimmy Silver's doin'." He determined that I sha'n't make a success of it as captain."

"You know I don't agree with you there, Morny."

"Hadn't you better desert me, like the rest, and back up Jimmy Silver," broke out Mornington, bitterly and scornfully. "I shouldn't be surprised if you did."

"I think you would be surprised, Morny; and you know I sha'n't do it, anyhow. It won't be pleasant to play in such a team; but I'm sticking to you, of course. If you're determined to keep on like this—"

"What can I do?" exclaimed Mornington savagely. "Jimmy Silver set the example of standing out of the team. The other fellows followed it. Even the Modern fellows did. I'm left to make up a team the best way I can, and nobody who can play cricket will come into it. Do you want me to go over to Greyfriars to-morrow with a team of two—"

"You must take a full team, of course."

"Then how am I to make it up without playing those duffers, if the cricketers boycott the team?"

"By doing the right thing, Morny," said Erroll quietly. "The trouble began by your putting Smythe and Howard and Tracy into the eleven. They can't play cricket, and everybody knows they can't. It's asking for a licking to play them. Cut them out!"

"I can't!"

"If you dropped them, as you know you ought, the other fellows would come round, and Jimmy Silver would be the first. You can't expect him to play in a match he knows must be a defeat, because you persist in putting in three silly fools who don't know a wicket from a wicketkeeper."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"You know why I put them in!" he snapped. "I promised them places in the next match for their votes at the election. I was fixing up a fag match for to-morrow, so that I could keep my word without any damage being done. Then Wharton offered to replay the match to-morrow—the one Smythe mucked up by his trickery last week. I was forced to accept Wharton's offer, and we're booked to play Greyfriars. I've got to keep my word to Smythe, and play him and his friends."

"You oughtn't to have made such a promise."

"It's easy enough to say that. I know it as well as you do, and I'm sorry I did it, if you come to that. But I've done it now, and I can't break my word. Do you advise me to do that?"

Erroll was silent for a moment.

"Couldn't you make some arrangement with Smythe, and buy him off somehow?" he asked.

"I've tried."

"And he refuses?"

"Yes. He's jolly glad to pin me down. The silly fool thinks he can play cricket, and he's dead set on figuring in the Greyfriars match."

"It's a rotten position," said Erroll, after a pause.

"I know it is. But we had a chance of winning, even carrying three passengers, if the other fellows had backed up."

"You couldn't expect them to, under the circumstances. And there wasn't a chance, Morny. The match will be touch and go, anyway. With three hopeless duds in the team we haven't an earthly!"

Mornington grunted.

"Still, the fellows ought to have backed up," he said. "Jimmy Silver said he was going to support me as captain. This is how he's doing it, hang him!"

"I can't blame him. You put three fumbling fools into the team, for a reason you can't explain in public. No wonder all the decent fellows clear out of it."

"Go it!" said Mornington bitterly. "Pile it on!"

"I don't want to do that. But—I wish you'd let me give you some advice, Morny."

"I'd be glad if you would. But it's no good preaching at me. What's done can't be helped."

"Suppose you go to Jimmy Silver?"

Morny rubbed his nose.

"I've been to him already!" he said grimly.

"That was a silly thing to do, Morny—you pitched into Silver for nothing at all. It was your own fault, not his, that everything's gone wrong. Go to Jimmy Silver, and put it to him frankly—tell him you're in a scrape, and ask him, as a friend, to help you out of it."

Morny set his lips.

"After punching his nose an hour ago!" he said.

"Never mind that. He will do the best he can for Rookwood, if not for you."

"I'm not going to humble myself to him."

Erroll looked impatient.

"Look here, Morny, you're in the wrong, and you ought to own up to it," he said.

"You can't take that team of prize idiots over to Greyfriars to-morrow, just to satisfy your silly pride."

Mornington started.

"This was unusually plain language from his patient chum."

There was a tap at the door in the pause that followed, and Jimmy Silver looked into the study.

Mornington gave him a grim look.

"Come in," he said, with a sneer. "Have you come to finish that little affair that Erroll interrupted in your study? I'm ready!"

Jimmy Silver gave him a cold, quiet look.

"I haven't come here to row with you, Mornington," he said. "If you're in that temper, I'd better go, and nothing said. But—"

"Don't go," said Erroll quickly. "We were

just speaking of you, Jimmy. I think you ought to help Morny out of the scrape he's got into."

"I'm willing."

Mornington compressed his lips. He was trying to overcome his savage temper, but he found it hard.

"Well, if you can do anythin', I'll be glad," he said ungraciously. "I'm in a scrape, no mistake about that. I don't want to take a team of duds over to Greyfriars to-morrow. But what's to be done? Everybody else has cleared out of the eleven—including yourself."

"You're still determined to play Smythe & Co.?"

"I've got to. I've promised the cads. You needn't tell me I'd no right to make such a promise, for such a reason. I've had that from Erroll a dozen times. Besides, I know it," Morny paused a moment.

"Look here, Silver, I know it was a rotten trick, baggin' votes at the election by such methods. I did it carelessly, without thinkin'—never meanin' to let Smythe into a match that mattered. I know I oughtn't to have done it. I wouldn't do it over again. But it's done. I can't break my word to the rotters; an' you wouldn't advise me to do that?"

Jimmy Silver's face softened a little.

A confession of wrong-doing from the lofty Morny was rather unexpected; and Jimmy knew it cost him a good deal to make it.

"Well, I've been thinking the matter over," said Jimmy Silver slowly. "You mayn't believe it, Morny, but I really wish you well, and I'd like to see you make a success of your job. I think I can help you."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Erroll.

Mornington looked at the late junior captain very curiously.

"If you mean that—" he began.

"I shouldn't say it if I didn't mean it."

"Well, go ahead, then."

"It all hinges on Smythe & Co.," said Jimmy. "I'm not going to preach. We'll let it go that you've landed yourself to play them. But if they play, the match is a goner. No good anybody else going over to Greyfriars with them to gather up a trumping licking. But if those three fools would stand out—"

"They won't!"

"They might be persuaded to."

"I've tried that," said Mornington impatiently.

"Leave it to me, then," said Jimmy Silver. "I think I can persuade them to see reason on the subject."

"My hat! You must be a giddy magician, then!"

"Leave it at that," said Jimmy Silver. "I'll speak to the fellows, and get them to join up again. You can depend on Lovell and me, and the other fellows will come round when they know Smythe & Co. are not in the team. You can rely on that."

Morny drew a deep breath.

"But they won't stand out, and I can't turn 'em down," he said.

"Leave that to me, I tell you. Now, we've got to get off early to-morrow," said Jimmy.

"Smythe & Co. have permission to leave early, as members of the team. They'll start with us. On the way, I'm going to use my eloquence on them, and I'm certain I can persuade them to see reason. We shall have to get leave for three extra players to go as reserves. That's easy enough. And now, Morny, draw up a fresh list, for goodness' sake, and put it on the board before the fellows talk themselves into a fit."

Morny grinned faintly.

"You're asking me to leave a lot to you, he said, "and you're not explainin' very clearly. I don't believe Smythe will give in for any consideration whatever."

"I guarantee that."

"You've got some hold on the rotter, do you mean?"

"You'll have to leave all that to me. But I answer for it that if you're willing to do so, I'll see that you reach Greyfriars with a good team."

Morny laughed.

"I can't do better than accept that offer, Erroll," he said.

"Jump at it!" said Erroll.

"Well, I'll jump at it, then," said Mornington. "Done, Jimmy Silver!"

"Right-ho!"

Jimmy Silver left the study, and Morny knitted his brows in deep thought.

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VAL MORNINGTON.

The New Cricket Skipper of the Fourth.

"Hansom's Mistake!"—A Rollicking Tale of Rookwood Next Week!

"He must have some hold over Smythe," he said slowly. "Smythe wouldn't let up simply for bein' asked."

"You can trust him, anyway."

"Oh, yes; I suppose so."

Just before bed-time there was a new list on the board—which caused fierce indignation in the fat breast of Tubby Muffin. Muffin's name no longer adorned the list, and Tubby was no longer in need of Jimmy Silver's bat, with which to knock up centuries at Greyfriars. There were other indignant duds as well as Reginald Muffin. But nobody heeded them or their indignation.

The new list gave satisfaction. There were fourteen names in it. Jimmy Silver had induced the cricketers to join up again, on the assurance that Smythe & Co. would be standing out. Smythe & Co.'s names still figured in the list, making it up to the unusual total of fourteen, which was rather a puzzle to all who read it.

For Adolphus Smythe, consulted on the subject, loudly declared that he hadn't the faintest intention of standing out, and Howard and Tracy heartily concurred.

"But Silver says you're going to stand out!" Conroy told them.

"Silver's an ass!" was Smythe's reply.

Whereupon the Australian junior hurried back to Jimmy Silver.

"Smythe says he's still in the team!" he announced.

"His name doesn't do any harm on the board, does it?" asked Jimmy.

"Not if he doesn't play to-morrow."

"Well, he won't play to-morrow."

"He says he will!"

"Let him!"

"Look here, you're sure of it, Jimmy Silver?"

"Quite!"

"Blessed if I understand this game!" said Conroy, in perplexity.

"You'll understand to-morrow."

"Oh, all right!"

And so the matter ended for that night.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Perplexing Position!

MORNY'S face was clouded the next morning in class.

He was worried. Erroll's advice and his own common-sense led him to rely upon Jimmy Silver to rescue him from the scrape he had fallen into. But he could not see light. Jimmy Silver, certainly, was not the kind of fellow to "talk out of his hat." But it really looked as if Jimmy had been talking out of his hat this time.

Classes did not last long for the cricketers that morning. The members of the junior team had leave to quit classes early, on account of the long journey to Greyfriars, and leave had been given for three reserves to go with the rest.

At eleven o'clock fourteen fellows came out of the Form-rooms and prepared for the journey.

There was Morny, Erroll, Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, Conroy, Van Ryn, Selwyn, Tommy Dodd, Cook, and Doyle, and Smythe, Howard, and Tracy.

The nuts of the Shell looked self-satisfied and supercilious as usual.

Evidently they had, so far, no intention of standing out of the Greyfriars match.

Mornington looked at Jimmy Silver.

"All ready!" said the latter cheerily.

"Are we all startin'?" asked Morny.

"Why not?"

"Look here, Jimmy Silver," said Mornington, sinking his voice, "I'm relying on you, an' you know it. If you're pulling my leg—"

"I'm not!"

"You said that Smythe & Co. are standing out?" muttered Mornington. "I can't turn them down, and you know it! But if they play at Greyfriars, the other fellows won't!"

"That's so."

Mornington knitted his brows.

"Are you makin' a fool of me?" he muttered fiercely.

"No."

"Well, I suppose I've got to see it through, as I've agreed," said Morny. "I don't understand what you've got up your sleeve, Jimmy Silver."

"That doesn't matter. Let's get off."

Fourteen juniors walked down to Coombe

to take the train for Latham Junction, where there was a change.

Smythe & Co. walked with the rest.

The party was very silent; most of the fellows were more or less perplexed by the strange state of affairs.

Only Jimmy Silver, Lovell, and Raby seemed quite placid.

Jimmy Silver's chums were evidently in his confidence, and had faith in the persuasive powers he intended to exert upon Smythe & Co. before they arrived at Greyfriars.

It was a bright and sunny morning, glorious weather for cricket, and Jimmy Silver & Co., at least, were in great spirits.

The cricketers turned into the short cut through the wood. Jimmy Silver looked at his watch as they walked along the leafy footpath.

"You're taking the tickets, Morny?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Cut ahead and take them, then. There may be a crowd, and we don't want to risk losing the train. If we lose the connection at Latham, we're dished."

Morny glanced at him.

"Does that mean that you're goin' to jaw to Smythe now?" he asked in a low voice.

Jimmy Silver smiled.

"Well, yes," he said, also in a low tone. "I'd rather everybody didn't hear what I've got to say to Adolphus. It's private—in fact, very private."

"You've got some hold on the cad, and you're goin' to make him give in!" muttered Morny.

"I'm not going to explain. You've agreed to leave it to me."

"Oh, I'll leave it to you fast enough, if you can induce that fool to let up on me, and keep out of the team, and I'll be your debtor for life into the bargain!"

"Done!" said Jimmy.

"Come on, Erroll!" called out Mornington. "We'll get ahead and see about the tickets."

"Right-ho!" answered Erroll.

The two chums quickened their pace, and soon disappeared in the windings of the footpath.

Jimmy Silver & Co. sauntered on in a more leisurely way.

Smythe and Howard and Tracy were chatting to one another; the rest of the party had nothing to say to them.

Adolphus was expatiating on the game he intended to play at Greyfriars, rather enjoying the restive looks of the other fellows as they heard him.

"We stop here!" said Jimmy Silver suddenly.

Adolphus Smythe glanced round.

The juniors had reached the middle of the wood, and there certainly seemed nothing to stop there for, so far as Adolphus could see.

"What are we stoppin' for?" asked Smythe.

"For you, my dear infant!"

"I'm not stoppin'!"

"Your mistake! You are, old bird!" answered Jimmy Silver cheerily. "And he put his arm through Smythe's. 'This way!'"

Adolphus struggled.

"Let go, you fool!" he shouted.

"This way!" repeated Jimmy coolly. He drew Adolphus, in spite of his resistance, off the footpath into the wood, much to the surprise and indignation of the dandy of the Shell.

Lovell had taken Howard's arm, and Raby performed the same service for Tracy.

In the grip of the three chums, the nuts of the Shell were led off the path, wriggling and loudly expostulating, and the rest of the party stared at the scene in blank astonishment.

"What on earth's this game?" demanded Conroy.

"Leggo!" yelled Smythe. "I'll punch you, Jimmy Silver!"

"You'll lose the train!" called out Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, we'll soon be after you!" said Jimmy Silver. "We're going to have a heart-to-heart talk with Smythe. We're going to urge him to stand out of the team, for the sake of the side."

"I won't!" yelled Adolphus.

"Well, we'll see what eloquence will do. You other fellows keep on. Tell Morny we're coming in time for the train."

"Oh, all right!" said the amazed Conroy. The cricketers walked on, while Adolphus

Smythe & Co. struggled in vain in the grasp of Jimmy Silver & Co. In a few minutes Conroy and the rest were out of sight.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver's Way!

JIMMY SILVER watched the cricketers out of sight along the footpath, still keeping an iron grasp on Adolphus' arm.

Then he turned to Adolphus, with a smile. "Now we're going to have a little talk!" he remarked.

"Let go my arm!" roared Adolphus.

"I'd rather keep hold, if you don't mind," smiled Jimmy Silver. "You see; you might bolt. You're such a slippery customer!"

"But I do mind!" snapped Adolphus.

"Same thing, old nut; I'm keeping hold!"

"You cheeky cad—" began Tracy.

"Keep that ass quiet, Raby! Knock his head against a tree!"

"What-ho!" grinned Raby.

Bump!

"Yooop!" roared Tracy. "You rotter! Ow!"

"Now, Adolphus—" "I'm not goin' to talk to you!" said Smythe fiercely. "I know what you want, and there's nothin' out!"

"Let's have it doin'!"

"I'm goin' on, I tell you, and if you don't let go my arm, Jimmy Silver, I'll punch your head!"

"Punch away!" answered Jimmy cheerily. "I'd just as soon thrash you before I talk to you!"

Smythe of the Shell clenched his hands, but he unclenched them again. He had no chance in a fistie encounter with the chief of the Fistical Four, and he knew it. He had tried that before, and the results had been too painful.

"Oh, you rotter!" he mumbled.

"I'm quite at your service!" smiled Jimmy Silver. "Are we going to have a talk or a fight first?"

"I—I don't mind talkin' to you, hang you!" mumbled Adolphus.

"That's better! Now, the matter stands like this. About a week ago you dished us over the Greyfriars match. You spoofed us into getting into a motor-car, and sent us wandering, while you took a team of born idiots to Greyfriars to play as the Rookwood junior team. They walked all over you, as anybody but a born idiot might have expected."

"Look here—"

"Wharton's offered to play the match over again now he knows the facts, and the offer's accepted. You've got the cheek and impudence to stick yourself in the team, after the exhibition you made a week ago on the same ground! You've pinned down Morny on a rotten promise he made you at the election. Now, I put it to you, Smythe, that this isn't playin' the game."

"Rats!"

"I request you, as a decent chap, to stand out of the team, as Morny isn't in a position to turn you down. Leave the match to fellows who can play it."

"Rot!"

"Will you stand out?" "No!" howled Smythe. "An' now let me go, you rotter!"

"Do you fellows say the same?" asked Jimmy, glancing at the angry faces of Howard and Tracy.

"Yes!" said Tracy at once.

"Just the same, word for word!" growled Howard.

"And now let us go, and get after the fellows!" said Adolphus. "You're only wastin' time, Jimmy Silver! I told you there was nothin' doin'!"

"That's your mistake, Adolphus. I've given you a chance to do the right thing. As you won't, you'll be made to!"

Jimmy Silver fumbled in a pocket with his left hand, and drew out a coil of thin but strong cord.

Smythe & Co. stared at it.

For the first time a suspicion of Jimmy Silver's little scheme dawned upon them.

"Wha-a-at's that for?" stammered Adolphus.

"That's for you, old bird!"

"Why, you—you—"

Jimmy Silver looped the cord round Adolphus' wrists. At that the dandy of the Shell began to struggle again. An iron grip

on his neck forced him to his knees in the grass, and there was a loud rap as his head came into contact with the trunk of a tree. "Yaroooh!"

"Better take it quietly, Smythey! You've got to take it, you know!" said Jimmy Silver, with deadly earnestness.

"Ow, ow!" Adolphus made no further resistance. He had to give in, and he did not see any use in getting a thrashing first.

Jimmy Silver tied his wrists together securely, and then ran the cord round the tree-trunk and tied it there.

Tracy and Howard watched that proceeding with dire apprehensions, aware that their own turn was coming.

But Lovell and Raby held the Shell fellows fast, and there was no escape for them.

Having finished with Smythe, Jimmy Silver turned to his comrades.

"Look here—" began Tracy furiously. "Enough said! Give me your paws!"

"I won't!" howled Tracy.

"Knock his head, Raby! He wants another!"

Bump!

"Ow! Yow! Stoppit!"

"Have another, old nut?" asked Raby affably.

"Yow-ow! No! Oh!"

Tracy's hands were tied together, and then to the cord on the tree where Adolphus Smythe stood, with a scowling countenance.

Howard was the next victim, and he did not venture to resist.

In a couple of minutes he was secured with his nutty pals.

Jimmy Silver & Co. grinned as they looked at them. The three nuts of the Shell were standing round the tree, secured by the cord round the trunk. There was no escape for them. Jimmy had done his work too well for that.

Certainly, they could call for help; but they had been taken off the footpath into the wood, and the path was not much frequented. It was not likely that help would come to the hapless nuts.

"I think they'll do!" remarked Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You horrid rotters!" groaned Adolphus. "You're not goin' to leave us here like this! You dare not!"

"I rather think we do!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "Try to imagine that you're playing at 'Babes in the Wood,' old top!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've asked Newcome to give you a look-in after lessons," continued Jimmy Silver. "He will come along presently, and let you loose—after dinner. When it's too late for you to bump along to Greyfriars, you know!"

"Oh, you rotter!"

"Don't call me names when I've been so good to you!" said Jimmy Silver reproachfully. "I've asked Newcome to bring you some sandwiches, as it won't be safe to let you loose in time for dinner."

"Hang Newcome!"

Adolphus Smythe was evidently not in a grateful mood, in spite of Jimmy Silver's thoughtfulness.

"Well, ta-ta, old beans!" said Jimmy Silver. "I hope you'll have a good time studying Nature's beauties, and all that! Come on, you fellows!"

The chums of the Fourth turned away and walked back to the footpath, followed by wrathful yells from Smythe & Co.

They did not heed the yelling of the hapless nuts.

"Uncle James" was not likely to be turned from his purpose by the objections of the nutty pals of the Shell.

In a cheerful mood, the three Fourth Formers trotted along the footpath, and arrived in the village.

"Lots of time!" remarked Jimmy Silver, glancing at the station clock. "Hallo! Here's Morny!"

Valentine Mornington was waiting for them at the entrance to the station, with a cloud upon his brow. He stared at the three juniors, evidently surprised to see them arrive without Smythe & Co.

"Where's Smythe?" he ejaculated, as they came up.

"Staying behind," answered Jimmy Silver carelessly.

Mornington drew a deep breath.

"You—you've persuaded him?" he stammered.

"Yes."

"And—and Howard and Tracy?"

"The whole merry family! They're standing out of the match, and everything in the garden is lovely!"

"Blessed if I know how you managed it! Smythe was dead-ston on playing at Greyfriars. You must have a hold on him somehow."

"Well, I had a hold on him, certainly!" said Jimmy Silver, with a grin. "You don't know what a persuasive chap I can be, too, when I begin. After a little argument they yielded the point, as I thought they would. Let's get in, Morny; the train's nearly due."

They went into the station.

"Feeling merry and bright—what?" he asked, with a smile.

Mornington smiled and nodded.

"Toppin'!" he said. "I don't know how you worked it to get me out of my scrape, old fellow, but I'm no end obliged! And—and"—Morny paused, and lowered his voice—"I'm sorry we had that trouble in your study last evenin', Silver! It was my rotten temper! I'm sorry!"

"All serene!" answered Jimmy cheerfully.

"And—and about that election bizney," said Mornington, colouring. "I really acted without thinkin' much in bribin' Smythe & Co. to vote for me. I really didn't realise at the time that it was a low-down trick. It didn't make any difference to the result, as it happens, as you stood out of the election. But—but I wish I hadn't done it: it wasn't playing the game, an' I know it. I'd like you to believe that, Silver."

"Of course I believe it," answered Jimmy.

"It's jolly good of you to back me up



BOWLED AND CAUGHT SILVER!—Jimmy Silver sent down the next ball. Smack came the bat, and the ball flew. Then the bowler was seen to spring into the air, and there was a faint "click" as the ball rested in his palm. "Caught and bowled Silver!" cried Lovell. (See Chapter 5.)

Mornington was still in a puzzled mood, but his handsome face was very bright now. It was a very cheerful party of cricketers that crowded into the train for Latham. And most cheerful of all was Valentine Mornington, looking forward eagerly to the match in which, for the first time, he was to figure as captain of Rookwood juniors.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Morny's Match!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" The powerful voice of Bob Cherry of the Greyfriars Remove greeted the Rookwooders as they poured from the train at Courfield.

Bob Cherry and Wharton and Hurree Janset Ram Singh had come to meet the cricketers at the station.

"Jolly glad to see you chaps!" said Harry Wharton, as he shook hands with Jimmy. "The last match was rather a joke, but there will be a different sort of game this time."

"The differentfulness will be terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh—a remark that made the Rookwooders smile.

"It will!" said Jimmy Silver. "By the way, you know Mornington—he's our skipper now. Is that your brake?"

"That's it! Tumble in!"

In a few minutes the cricketers were rolling away cheerily to Greyfriars School.

After a hospitable lunch they repaired to the cricket-ground.

Jimmy Silver clapped Mornington on the shoulder.

in this way, considering that I've bagged your job, in a way!" muttered Mornington. Jimmy Silver laughed.

"All serene!"

"Wharton's ready for you, Morny!" chimed in Erroll.

"Right-ho!" said Morny.

He tossed with Wharton for the innings. It fell to Rookwood to bat first, and Mornington opened with Jimmy Silver at the other end.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh bowled the first over for Greyfriars.

The dusky junior was at the top of his form, as he soon showed. Morny knocked away a couple of balls, and then one for 2 runs. But the fourth ball whipped his leg stump from the ground.

Morny's face was a study as he looked down at his wrecked wicket.

"How's that?" sang out half a dozen voices. "Out!"

Morny seemed to gulp something down. It was cruel luck, at the beginning of his innings. He suppressed his feelings as he came back to the pavilion with his almost unused bat.

"Man in, Erroll!" he muttered.

"Hard cheese, old chap!" muttered Erroll.

"It's all right. Get in!"

Erroll went to the wicket.

Mornington stood looking on with a clouded brow. The Greyfriars bowlers seemed in great form, and their field was very much on the alert. Rookwood wickets went down rather fast. Erroll put up 10 runs, and Jimmy Silver the same number; but after them there was a "procession." There were

There is a Top-hole Yarn of Jimmy Silver & Co. in This Week's "Boys' Friend."

no "duck's eggs" scored for Rookwood, but there were several ones and twos. All down for 36 was the result after quite a brief innings.

"Better luck next time!" Jimmy Silver remarked to his skipper. "Keep smiling!"

Mornington nodded without speaking. Greyfriars batted well. Jimmy Silver, the champion bowler of the Rookwood team, did well; but the other bowlers did not seem quite up to the form of the Greyfriars bats. Harry Wharton & Co. totalled 56 for their first innings.

"Oh, my hat!" was Arthur Edward Lovell's comment.

Jimmy Silver and Erroll were put on to open the second innings for Rookwood.

This time the bad luck came Jimmy's way, and he was caught out by Frank Nugent for 4 runs.

Erroll was dismissed for 8. Lovell was keeping his end up, when Mornington came in to join him.

Then there was a turn of the tide, exemplifying once more the glorious uncertainty of the great summer game.

Four, and four more, from Morny, brought cheers from the Rookwooders. Hurree Singh tackled his wicket in vain, and it was tackled in vain by Nugent, Squiff, Linley, and Wharton.

Other bats came and went; but Mornington remained "set" at his wicket, piling up the runs.

Erroll watched him with a smiling face. He rejoiced more in his chum's success than he would have rejoiced in any triumph of his own.

"Good man!" said Jimmy Silver heartily. "Oh, good man! There he goes again—they can't touch him."

"That was a narrow squeak!" remarked Conroy, as Morny got back to his wicket, a second before it crashed under a rapid throw from the field.

"Not out!"

"A miss is as good as a mile!" said Jimmy Silver. "A batsman who never takes chances never gets anything."

"Bravo, Morny!"

It looked as if Morny was set for the rest of the innings; and so it turned out. There were 40 runs to his credit when Rookwood were all down for 85—Morny not out.

Then there was an adjournment for tea.

After tea came the Greyfriars' second innings, with Wharton and Bob Cherry at the wickets. Mornington and his men went into the field, and Jimmy Silver was given the ball for the first over.

"Mop 'em up, old chap!" said Mornington; and Jimmy Silver smiled. Complete cordiality reigned now between the old rivals of the Fourth Form at Rookwood.

But Jimmy did not succeed in "mopping" them up in the first over. The Greyfriars' innings opened well, and runs piled up. It was Conroy who took Bob Cherry's wicket, by way of a start. Wharton was joined by Squiff, and the two of them made the running at a great rate.

The Rookwooders looked serious when the score stood at 30 for one wicket down. Greyfriars wanted only 35 to tie, with a heap of wickets in hand to do it with, and Bob Cherry was heard to remark that they would do it "on their heads."

At that point Morny caught Wharton out, and his place was taken by Vernon-Smith, who began with a four. There was a cheer from the Greyfriars crowd. Six more for the over made the Greyfriars fellows remark that it was all over bar shouting, and the Rookwooders were rather inclined to agree with them.

"For goodness' sake give them gyp, Jimmy!" said Mornington, as he slung the ball to Jimmy Silver for the next over.

"I'll do my best, old chap."

"Put your beef into it. We're beaten to the wide if you fail us."

Jimmy Silver nodded; he knew that. With nine wickets in hand, Greyfriars wanted only 25 to tie. But again there came a turn of the tide. Jimmy Silver was in great tettle now. Squiff went down, and then Tom Brown, and then Linley, and loud cheers from Rookwood greeted the hat-trick. But Jimmy Silver was not finished yet. Two more wickets fell in the over, only 5 runs being scored.

Mornington clapped Jimmy on the shoulder as the field crossed over, his eyes glistening.

"Great, old chap!" he said joyfully.

"Simply great! I wish I could give you the next over, by gad!"

"Seven down for 45!" remarked Arthur Edward Lovell. "We may do it yet, with luck. Go it, Morny!"

Mornington was bowling now. Vernon-Smith's wicket fell, and the Bounder of Greyfriars went out. There were 5 runs in the over; eight down for 50! Then Jimmy Silver had the ball again.

All eyes were on Jimmy as he went on. Greyfriars wanted 15 to tie, 16 to win, and they had two wickets to do it with. Jimmy's manner was very quiet, but there was a gleam in his eyes.

Mornington watched him anxiously.

Upon his old rival depended whether his first match was a win or a defeat; and the difference meant a great deal to Mornington.

"Bravo!" he almost gasped, as the wicket fell.

"Nine down!" chortled Lovell.

Frank Nugent stole a single run for Greyfriars. Then he hit the ball to the boundary for a 4! 55! There was a breathless hush on the field as Jimmy Silver gripped the round red ball again.

Whiz!

Smack came the bat, and the ball flew. Then the bowler was seen to jump, and run, and spring into the air, and there was a faint "click" as the ball rested in his palm.

Mornington gave a yell of delight as Jimmy Silver held up the ball, hot from the bat.

"Caught and bowled Silver!" roared Lovell. "Hurrah!"

"Bravo, Jimmy!"

"Rookwood wins! Hurrah!"

Mornington rushed across to Jimmy Silver, and smote him on the shoulder with a mighty smite.

"Good man! Good man!" he gasped.

"The goodness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a dusky grin. "It was touchful and goful, but the esteemed Silver had snatched victory from the jaws of defeat."

"Bravo, Jimmy Silver!"

"Good man!"

Rookwood had won by 10 runs! Morny's first match was a success, and he owed it to his old rival. It was Jimmy Silver who had snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

"How did it go?"

That was the question a score of voices asked, as the Rookwood cricketers returned in the summer dusk.

"My dear chaps, how could it go?" smiled Jimmy Silver. "We won, of course. What with Morny's batting, and—ahem!—somebody else's bowling—"

"Swank!" grinned Newcome. "What did you beat them by? An innings?"

"Not quite."

"Fifty runs?" asked Oswald.

"Less than that."

"How many, then?"

"Ten!" said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "But ten was as good as a hundred, under the circumstances. Has Smythe come home?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, they're home," chuckled Newcome. "I let 'em loose after dinner, the dear boys. They seemed in a bad temper about something."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Smythe says he is going to thrash you and Morny—"

"The dear man," said Morny. "What does he want to thrash me for?"

"He didn't like being tied to a tree."

"Tied to a tree!" yelled Mornington. "Was that how you persuaded him not to come to Greyfriars, Jimmy?"

"That was it."

"Oh, gad!"

"The only way, as the chap says in the play," said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "As we beat Greyfriars by ten runs, Morny, you can calculate how many they would have beaten us by if Smythe & Co. had been there. But if he wants to thrash us, we'd better go and be thrashed. Come on!"

And Morny and Jimmy Silver repaired to Adolphus Smythe's study. But on their arrival there, it transpired that Adolphus had changed his mind about the thrashing—which was a very fortunate circumstance for Adolphus.

THE END.

(There will be another splendid story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next Tuesday, entitled "Hanson's Mistake!" Do not miss this gripping yarn of Rookwood, boys!)

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THE WHEEZE THAT STARTLED ST. JIM'S!

When Aubrey Racke and Crooke, the Cads of the Shell, commenced their great tea-gardens at St. Jim's they expected the money to pour in showers into their till—but several unforeseen things happen, putting a new complexion upon matters!



THE ST. JIM'S TEA GARDENS!

A fine story of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's—and a certain profiteer
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Racke's Ruse!**

"TWENTY deck-chairs—"
"Eh?"
"Half a dozen tables—"
"What?"
"And a tea-urn. Also, an ice-cream freezer, if you've got one for hire."
Aubrey Racke of the Shell was talking on the telephone. Mr. Reilton was out, and Racke had taken French leave to use the Housemaster's phone.
Crooke and Mellish hovered in the doorway of Mr. Reilton's study, and they punctuated Racke's telephonic instructions with murmurs of amazement.
"You'll send them up to St. Jim's this afternoon?" Racke went on. "Good! Tell your men to bring 'em on to the cricket-field."
Racke rang off, and rejoined his cronies in the passage. Crooke and Mellish glanced at him curiously.
"What's the little game?" asked Crooke. "Who were you speaking to on the phone, Racke?"
"The Universal Supply Stores, over at Wayland."
"Why are you hiring tables and deck-chairs?" inquired Mellish.
"Curiosity, thy name is Mellish!" said Racke, with a chuckle. "I'll tell you what the wheeze is. I'm going to run a tea-garden."

"A what?"
"A what?"
"Which?"
"Getting deaf in your old age?" asked Racke. "I said a tea-garden. It's the very thing for St. Jim's in the summer. I'm going to run the show at the far corner of the cricket-field. When fellows get thirsty, or peckish, they won't have to fag all the way to the tuckshop. They can simply stroll across to my tea-gardens, and get anything they like to eat or drink."
"My hat!"
Crooke and Mellish gazed at Aubrey Racke in growing wonder. The notorious Aubrey had played many parts in his time, but he had never set up in business as the proprietor of a tea-garden.
"But—but what's the idea of starting a tea-garden?" stuttered Crooke. "You're not doing it solely for the benefit of the community, so you needn't pretend you are."
Racke gave a cynical chuckle.
"I'm doin' it chiefly for my own benefit," he admitted. "There's money in it, my sons—big money."
"But you don't want money!" protested Mellish. "You're simply stuffed with money, as it is."
Racke gazed at Mellish almost pityingly.
"I never yet met a chap who didn't want money, however much he might have had already," he said. "Even a millionaire doesn't object to becomin' a multi-millionaire. In fact, it's a case of the more you have, the more you want."

"So you're hoping to make a giddy fortune out of this tea-garden stunt?" said Crooke. "Not exactly a fortune," said Racke. "But it ought to yield a very decent turnover."
"Why not make a limited company of it, and take us into partnership?" suggested Mellish.

Racke's cynical chuckle was heard again. "I'm goin' to make a very limited company of it," he said. "In fact, it's goin' to be limited to myself!"
"Well, I call that downright mean!" said Crooke.
Racke looked thoughtful as the trio strolled out into the bright sunshine of the quad.
"Tell you what I'll do," he said. "I'll engage you two fellows as waiters. No salaries, of course—"

There was a howl from Crooke. "No salaries! What do you think we're going to work for, then—nix?"
"You will be entitled to free meals," said Racke generously.

"Oh, good!"
That concession put quite a new complexion on things. Crooke and Mellish had no objection to waiting at table, so long as they could have a good tuck-in at intervals.
Aubrey Racke was very enthusiastic on the subject of his new scheme. Racke's father was a profiteer, and he had made profiteering pay; and Racke intended to follow in his father's footsteps. He had a business brain—so he thought, anyway—and he hoped to make quite a mint of money out of his tea-gardens.

The term "tea-gardens" was rather a misnomer, for there were no gardens in the far corner of the cricket-field. A number of buttercups grew there, and a sprinkling of daisies. Racke therefore felt justified in calling the place a garden.

Racke was still holding forth to Crooke and Mellish when a motor-van drew up at the school gates.

"Here's my stuff!" said Racke. "Must have cost you a small fortune to hire that little lot," said Crooke, glancing at the pile of folding-tables and deck-chairs which was stacked in the van.
"On the contrary, I'm gettin' the things dirt cheap," said Racke. "Let's give the man a hand, and help him carry the paraphernalia along to the—hem!—tea-gardens."
"Everything's 'ere, sir," said the carman, touching his hat. "Tables, deck-chairs, tea-urn, ice-cream freezer, an' setra an' so on! Where will you have 'em took to, sir?"
Racke reached down one of the folding-tables from the van, and bade Crooke and Mellish follow suit.

"This way," said Racke.
The trio proceeded towards the cricket-field, the carman staggering along in the rear with the heavy tea-urn.

Tom Merry & Co. were playing cricket at the nets. They looked on with interest, not unmingled with curiosity, as the procession came into view.
"Hallo! Our friend Racke's convertin'

himself into a beast of burden!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "Where's he taking that table, I wonder?"

"And what's that tea-urn for?" asked Tom Merry.

"Looks like a picnic," said Manners. "Racke's giving an open-air feed to his pals."

"Did you ever know Racke to give anybody anything?" said Tabbot, with a laugh. "There's more in this than meets the eye. Racke's got some stunt or other up his sleeve."

The juniors gave up their cricket, and watched Racke & Co. at their work. The tables and the tea-urn were deposited in the far corner of the field, and then fresh consignments were brought. Finally, no less than six tables and a score of deck-chairs were set out on the grass.

It really began to look as if Manners' theory of a picnic was correct. But presently Racke came into view with a notice-board, which he proceeded to fix into the turf. Painted on the board, in green letters, were the words:

"THE ST. JIM'S TEA-GARDENS!
Aubrey Racke (Proprietor)."

Like the prophets of old, Tom Merry & Co. were amazed with a great amazement.

"Tea-gardens, by Jove!" exclaimed Manners. "Well, it's not a bad wheeze. But where's Racke going to get all his supplies of grub from?"

"Ask me another!" said Tom Merry.

"Dame Taggles won't bless Racke, for setting up in opposition to her," said Harry Noble.

"Oh, she needn't worry," said Lowther. "If I'm anything of a prophet, Racke won't get much custom. He'll charge steep prices—a shilling a sardine, for instance."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You'd think Racke had quite enough tin without trying to make more," said Manners. "Still, it's just the sort of greedy thing Racke would do."

"Well, we won't condemn his tea-garden before we've tried them," said Tom Merry. "That wouldn't be cricket. We'll patronise them this afternoon, or as soon as Racke chooses to open them to the public, and then, if the grub's good and the prices are reasonable, we'll go again."

"The grub will be all right, but the charges will be all wrong," was Lowther's prediction. Tom Merry called to Racke as the latter was passing.

"Bainy stunt of yours, these tea-gardens," he said.
Racke bowed graciously.

"Very kind of you to say that, Merry," he drawled. "I can count on your patronage, of course? Then I shall be able to put on my notice-board: 'By special appointment

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"Making Things Lively!" A Great Story of St. Jim's School Next Week!

to the captain of the Shell." There's just room for it, in small letters."

"If the grub's good and the prices moderate, we'll become regular customers," said Tom Merry. "But if there's any profiteering, Racke, you'll get it in the neck!"

"Yes, rather!"

"You'll find my terms very reasonable," said Racke. "As for the grub, I'm gettin' it from Harvey's, in Wayland. They are the best pastycooks for miles around. I'm expectin' the first consignment this afternoon, an' then we'll get to business."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "Give us a signal when tea's ready, and we'll come over and sample it."

The juniors went on with their cricket, and Racke went on with his preparations.

Another motor-van arrived at the school shortly afterwards with a consignment of cakes and pastries on board. There were also some blocks of ice which had come from the ice factory in Wayland.

Racke made the ice-cream himself. He declared that he was a perfect genius in the art of making ice-cream.

"I'm goin' to do 'em in two flavours—vanilla—an' strawberry," he confided to Crooke and Mellish. "When the fellows have sampled my ices they won't want any more of Dame Taggles' custard-powder. Do you think you can make the tea, Crooke?"

"I'll have a shot at it," said Crooke obligingly.

"Well, don't put too much tea in, for goodness' sake! That tea's the cheapest I could get, but we don't want to be extravagant with it. If you're lookin' for a job, Mellish, you can lay the tables. I'm hopin' to start servin' in an hour."

The preparations proceeded briskly. Racke's tea-gardens had sprung suddenly into being, taking St. Jim's by surprise, and causing quite a sensation.

Whether the tea-gardens had come to stay, however, remained to be seen.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A "Roaring Trade."

"GENTLEMEN," said Monty, "tea will now be served."

From the far corner of the cricket-field Aubrey Racke waved beckoning arms.

Tom Merry & Co., who had been at practice all the afternoon, were parched and famished. In the ordinary way they would have gone to their studies for tea, but they had decided to give the new tea-gardens a trial, and the cricketers moved off in a body towards the laden tables.

Everything certainly looked very inviting. There were cakes and pastries of every description, and the crockeryware was spotlessly clean.

A score of fellows seated themselves at the tables. And Crooke and Mellish stood in the offing, so to speak, with napkins over their arms, after the manner of waiters in a restaurant. They waited respectfully for Tom Merry & Co. to give their orders.

They had to wait a long time. Tom Merry & Co. had a price-list to digest before they thought of digesting anything more substantial. And that price-list made them gasp.

"Well, of all the profiteering concerns!" hooted Manners. "Just look at this, you fellows! Pot of tea for one—eightpence!"

"Roll and butter—sixpence!" shouted Harry Noble.

"Cakes fourpence each! And they're only twopence over at Harvey's!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Comrade Racke wants to get rich quick," said Monty Lowther. "His high teas may be all right, but his high prices are the giddy limit!"

Crooke and Mellish still hovered respectfully in the offing.

"Give your orders, gentlemen!" said Crooke.

But no orders were given. The cricketers were hungry and thirsty, and the sight of the food tempted them sorely. But they didn't intend to pay eightpence for a pot of weak tea which Crooke had brewed. Neither did they propose to pay double price for cakes and pastries.

Aubrey Racke, having finished making the ice-cream, came towards the tables.

"What's the delay?" he asked. "Trot out your orders, gents. We're at your service, you know."

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Tom Merry looked grim.

"You'll have to revise your price-list before you can hope to get any customers, Racke," he said. "I thought profiteering was a thing of the past, but apparently it isn't."

"Eh? What's wrong with my prices?" demanded Racke.

"They're much too steep. Sixpence for a roll and butter is unheard of, and tea at eightpence a pot doesn't appeal to us. Only a mug would pay such fancy prices. You're a swindler, Racke! That's straight from the shoulder!"

It was much too straight from the shoulder for Racke's liking. A scowl came over the face of the proprietor of the St. Jim's Tea-Gardens.

"My prices are quite reasonable," said Racke angrily. "You forget that I have to pay carriage on all this stuff. It comes over from Wayland by motor, and the charges are pretty stiff."

"So are yours!" growled Manners, rising to his feet. "Come along, you chaps! Let's go and get our grub from the tuckshop, as usual!"

Things were not working out quite so well as Racke had anticipated.

Instead of being rushed off his feet by clamorous customers, he hadn't a single customer to serve.

"Looks like being a wash-out," observed Crooke. "Afraid you'll have to cut down your prices, Racke."

"I'll do nothing of the sort!" snapped the incensed Aubrey.

"But you'll get no customers—"

"Oh, they'll come to their senses by and by," said Racke. "When the tuckshop's closed, an' it's too late to go down to the village, they'll be only too glad to come to my tea-gardens."

Mellish took a survey of the horizon to see if any customers were approaching. There were none. Tom Merry & Co. were retreating in the distance, and that was all.

"There doesn't seem to be anything doing," remarked Mellish, "so I'm going to have my tea."

"Same here!" said Crooke.

And they sat down at one of the tables and started stuffing.

Racke looked on in a state of simmering

fury. But he could say nothing. It was part of the arrangement that the two waiters should be supplied with free feeds.

Crooke and Mellish were hungry, and the dainty cakes fairly melted in their mouths. They cleared one dish between them, and then started on a second. This was more than Racke could stand.

"Go easy!" he almost shrieked. "You'll eat up all the blessed stock if you go on like that!"

"We're entitled to a feed!" mumbled Crooke, with his mouth full.

"Yes, but not to an orgy. There's bound to be some more customers along presently, an' if you go and wolf all the cakes—"

Racke paused.

From the adjoining meadow came a sudden and a mighty roar. And then there was a crashing sound, as of a fence being trampled down.

Racke turned quite pale.

"It—it's that blessed bull!" he stammered. Crooke and Mellish jumped to their feet in alarm. They were familiar with the animal known as Bertie the Bull. It was Monty Lowther who had thus christened him.

Bertie was a big, blustering, bellowing animal, who took a frenzied delight in breaking out of his meadow and interrupting cricket matches or charging round and round the playing-pitch. Bertie had never yet tossed a St. Jim's junior, but he was quite capable of it.

Neither Racke, Crooke, nor Mellish was of the stuff of which heroes are made. They looked on with widely-staring eyes while Bertie the Bull continued to batter down the fence.

"Run for it!" panted Crooke.

"No time," said Racke breathlessly. "The brute will be through in a couple of ticks."

There was a tree handy, and Mellish had already darted towards it. He shinned up it with the agility of a monkey, and it was not until he gained the topmost branch that he permitted himself a deep breath of relief.

Racke and Crooke lost no time in following Mellish. They scrambled up the tree, and they were not a second too soon, for Bertie the Bull, having made short work of the fence, came charging on the scene.

The laden tables seemed to attract Bertie. He charged into the midst of them, causing tremendous havoc.

Tables and chairs went flying. There was a crash and a clatter of crockeryware. The tea-urn was overturned, and it rolled in the grass. Cakes and pastries were scattered to the four winds of heaven. And the roaring of Bertie the Bull, while this work of destruction went on, was truly terrifying.

Racke, clinging for dear life to one of the branches of the tree, groaned aloud as he surveyed the scene of destruction.

"All my stock gone West!" he muttered. "Confound that brute! Why don't they chain him up, or somethin'?"

Bertie the Bull was thoroughly enjoying himself. Not so the three juniors perched in the tree. They wondered how long it would be before they had a chance of descending to terra firma.

Tom Merry & Co. had come back to the cricket field, and they stood watching the scene of devastation—from a safe distance.

"Smashing up the happy home, by Jove!" said Monty Lowther. "It's a sorry start for the St. Jim's tea-gardens!"

"Racke's lost his stock—and his temper, too, I'll bet!" chuckled Manners.

"What about getting Bertie back to his meadow?" said Tom Merry.

"Any volunteers for the job," asked Lowther. "Don't all speak at once!"

They didn't. The juniors were not funks; at the same time, they were not foolhardy enough to wish to get to close quarters with Bertie. To be tossed in a blanket would have been a pleasant experience compared to being tossed into mid-air by the playful Bertie.

"Let's find Kit Wildrake," suggested Talbot suddenly. "He's the only fellow who can tackle a job of this sort."

The juniors set off in search of the boy from the Wild West.

Kit Wildrake feared no animal, and he quite relished the task of capturing Bertie the Bull and taking him back to his own pastures.

Wildrake brought a lasso with him, and strolled across to the far corner of the field, where Bertie was making merry.

SOMETHING TO SHOUT ABOUT!

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It was a breathless moment. The bull roared at Kit Wildrake, and lowered his head in a significant manner.

The junior slung the lasso and secured his quarry at the first attempt. Then he led Bertie back into his own meadow, while the rest of the juniors started to reconstruct the shattered fence as well as they were able.

Racke & Co. came down from the tree when the danger was over. They, too, had some reconstruction work to do. The "tea-gardens" had been completely wrecked, and it took Racke and his cronies the better part of an hour to get things shipshape again.

The first day's business had been far from satisfactory. No money had been taken, and the whole of the stock had been ruined. Aubrey Racke, however, intended to "carry on." He reflected that a bad beginning sometimes makes a good ending; and he sincerely hoped this would be so in the case of the St. Jim's Tea-Gardens.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Shattered Hopes!

AUBREY RACKE did no business during the next few days. But he lived in hopes. There was a match with Rookwood on Wednesday afternoon, and Racke happened to know that Dame Taggles was closing the tuckshop and taking an afternoon off.

Tom Merry & Co. were not aware that the dame intended to close, so they did not bother about laying in supplies.

The Rookwood eleven arrived at the appointed time, brimful of confidence and good spirits.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were always welcome visitors to St. Jim's. They were good fellows and good sportsmen.

"We're going to win this afternoon," said Jimmy Silver. "I feel it in my bones."

"Funny thing," said Monty Lowther, "but I've had a feeling in my bones all day that you're going to lose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry was fortunate enough to win the toss. He elected to take first knock, and the St. Jim's batsmen, who were in fine fettle, played ducks and drakes with the Rookwood bowling.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were given three hours' hard leather-chasing. And when the St. Jim's innings at last came to a close they were weary and worn, but not sad. The Saints had made 175—a very good score; but it did not daunt the visitors.

"We shall all feel like hitting up centuries as soon as we've had some tea," said Jimmy Silver. "I see you've got all the grub ready," he added, pointing in the direction of Racke's tea-gardens.

Tom Merry frowned.

"We're not feeding there," he said. "Come along to the Common-room, and we'll get in supplies from the tuckshop."

It was at this juncture that Baggy Trimble of the Fourth dropped a bombshell.

"I say, you fellows," he said, rolling up to the cricketers, "the tuckshop's closed!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Dame Taggles is taking the afternoon off," went on the fat junior. "There's a big card in the window with the word 'Closed' on it."

"Well, that's fairly done it!" groaned Tom Merry. "There's no time to send down to the village for supplies."

"In any case, the village shops close on Wednesday afternoons," said Manners.

"Then there's nothing for it but to patronise Racke's so-called tea-gardens," said the captain of the Shell. "Come on!"

It was with great reluctance that Tom Merry led the way to the laden tables. But the visiting team had to be entertained, and it would have been churlish to send them empty away.

Racke grinned when he saw the twenty-two cricketers approaching.

"We're in for a busy time," he remarked. "I knew they'd have to come here. There's nowhere else where they can get grub. Look at the expression on Tom Merry's chivvy! Anybody would think he was going to a funeral!"

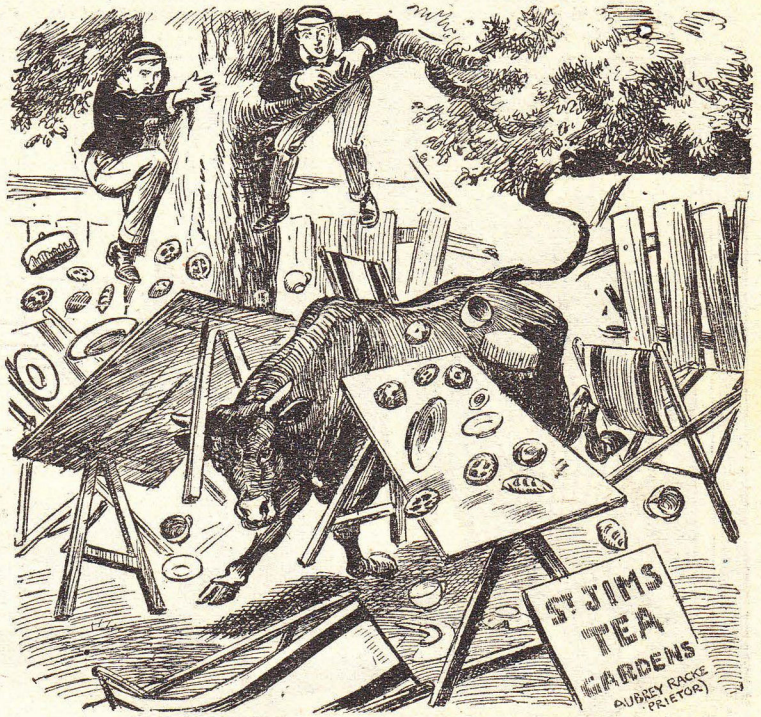
Tom Merry drew Racke aside.

"We want tea for both elevens," he said, rather curly. "Are you prepared to reduce your charges?"

"No jolly fear!" said Racke.

"But your prices are much too steep!"

Racke shrugged his shoulders.



AN UNEXPECTED AND UNWELCOME VISITOR! "Run for it!" yelled Crooke as the bull made for the fence. The two Shell juniors scrambled up the tree, and they were not a second too soon, for the bull had charged clean through the fence and had sent the tables and chairs flying in all directions. (See Chapter 2.)

"If you're not satisfied, you can go elsewhere," he said, knowing full well that there was nowhere else for the cricketers to go.

The two elevens seated themselves at the tables. Crooke and Mellish attended to their requirements, which were many and various.

The tea which Crooke had brewed was so weak that it could scarcely support itself in the pot. But the sandwiches and the cakes and pastries were all that could be desired.

The cricketers were hungry, and they did full justice to the good things.

Tom Merry & Co. were footing the bill, which was likely to be a very hefty one. But they had to bear it, though it was hard to grin.

Aubrey Racke was having the time of his life. His supplies were being rapidly consumed. Business was booming, and for the first time since the tea-gardens were opened, Racke's face wore a happy smile—the smile of a prosperous profiteer.

Crooke and Mellish were rushed off their feet by the demands of the customers.

"Doughnuts this way!"

"More tarfs here!"

"Dozen strawberry ices, please!"

At last the feed was over, and Racke, counting up the takings, found they amounted to exactly five pounds. Had his prices been fair and reasonable, he would have taken only half that amount.

"Good business!" chortled Racke, rubbing his hands together. "I knew I should make these tea-gardens pay! My stock only cost me a couple of quid, and I've taken five!"

"Three pounds profit!" gasped Crooke. "I say, Racke, I consider the waiters are entitled to a share of that!"

"Hear, hear!" said Mellish.

"What you consider," said Racke, "doesn't count! I'm the proprietor of this concern, and I pocket the profits."

Crooke and Mellish scowled, and consoled themselves with having a good tuck-in.

Meanwhile, the match proceeded merrily. Rookwood made a gallant reply to the Saints' formidable total. They managed to compile 150, and were thus beaten by 25 runs.

Jimmy Silver was the hero of the innings. He had scored 90, not out.

Tom Merry & Co. saw their guests off, and the rival teams parted, with cheery handshakes, in the school gateway.

As the St. Jim's cricketers walked back to the building, Harry Noble came forward with a suggestion.

"I've been thinking about this money-making stunt of Racke's," he said. "We paid him a fiver for the tea, and I happen to know that his stock only cost him two pounds. He's made a profit of three quid, whereas ten bob would have been a fair profit."

"Well, what about it?" said Tom Merry.

"I suggest that we allow Racke to keep his ten bob profit, and make him hand over the remainder to some charity."

"My hat!"

"A jolly good wheeze!" said Talbot heartily.

Everybody thought so, too—with the exception of Aubrey Racke.

That evening the money-grabbing Aubrey was marched over to Wayland by a crowd of juniors, and made to hand over the sum of two pounds ten shillings to the Cottage Hospital, which was sorely in need of funds.

It nearly broke Racke's heart to have to part with so much money. But there was no alternative. Tom Merry & Co. insisted upon justice being done.

On the way back to St. Jim's Racke felt very sore. He was not satisfied with small profits. He wanted to make big money out of his tea-gardens. And he realised that this would be impossible, in view of the action of Tom Merry & Co.

There were two courses open to Racke. He could either keep his tea-gardens going at a small profit, or he could pack up. And as a small profit did not appeal to Aubrey, he decided on the latter course.

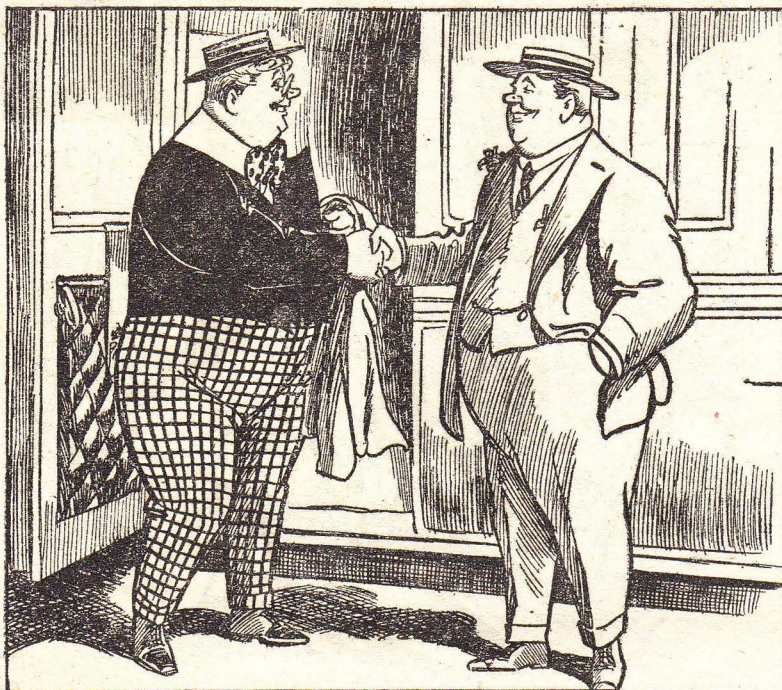
("Making Things Lively!" is the title of next Tuesday's grand St. Jim's story by Martin Clifford. Do not miss it, but order your copy in advance!)

THE BUNTER MYSTERY!

What is the matter with Billy Bunter? That is the question which is being asked up and down Greyfriars. Bunter has changed from a duffer and slacker into a decent and plucky fellow. The Chums of the Remove are mystified—they cannot understand it at all. But they would have been still more surprised had they known the truth!

A GALLANT HERO!

BILLY BUNTER'S COUSIN!



**A Topping, Long,
Complete Tale of
Harry Wharton & Co.
of Greyfriars School,
BY
FRANK RICHARDS.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.**In Deadly Peril!**

HARRY WHARTON, captain of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, looked very pleased with himself as he came off the cricket pitch.

The Remove were playing an eleven from the Upper Fourth—Temple, Dabney & Co.—and the old rivals of Greyfriars were always in grim earnest on such occasions.

Wharton's eleven had put up a century, and the clock in the old tower showed half-past three as the captain of the Remove came off.

"Only half-past three!" he observed. "There's plenty of time to get Temple & Co. out. They won't get a hundred runs, or anything like them. Then we'll cut off to Cliff House to tea."

Bob Cherry nodded. His face wore a smile which looked as if it never would come off. Tea at Cliff House, with Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn, was always a great event with the cheerful Bob.

"Talking about cutting—I wonder if Bunter has cut off to Margate?" he said.

Frank Nugent shook his head. "The silly ass wouldn't dare," he commented. "Quechy heard him call him a beast, and, naturally, Quechy was ratty. He told Bunter he'd get a flogging if he broke detention. I heard him."

"The headfulness was terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur; "but the surprisefulness would not be great if that fatful chump cut, all the same."

There was an exclamation from Nugent. "Man in! Temple and Dabney are opening the Fourth's innings," he said. "Come on, you chaps."

And the Remove eleven fled away to the pitch, and Billy Bunter was forgotten. Harry Wharton tossed the ball to Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. The dusky junior took it with a grin.

"Hat-trick!" said Wharton, as if there was no doubt about the dusky youth being able to supply the required article.

"I will do my honourable and ludicrous best!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

And Inky went on to bowl.

Temple received the first over; or, rather, he received the first ball of the first over—he did not "live" longer than that. His bat swept the empty air, and there was a

THE POPULAR.—No. 230.

clack; and he looked down in dismay at the wicket. The middle stump was out of the ground, and the wicket had a toothless look.

"How's that?" chirruped the Remove. And Coker of the Fifth, who had kindly condescended to umpire, grinned and said: "Out!"

Fry came in, as Temple disconsolately carried out his unused bat. Fry remained for just one ball, the middle stump again performing an acrobatic feat. And Fry went bootless home; or, at least, runless. Then Scott came in, and Scott slogged at a ball which was not there, and his off-stump reclined on the ground. Then the Remove roared.

"The hat-trick! Hurrah!"

"Good old Inky!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh smiled. He was a bowler of renown in the Lower School at Greyfriars, and the Fourth Form batsmen could not stand against him. Temple, Dabney & Co. were looking very blue. This was even worse than they had expected.

"Blessed if I think we shall ever beat those Remove beasts!" Temple growled.

"They have the deuce's own luck!"

"Oh, rather!" growled Dabney. "Always seem to have a lot of flukes in their favour," Fry remarked. "You saw how my wicket went!"

"Was that a fluke?" growled Temple. "Yes, it was," said Fry warmly. "What did you think it was?"

Temple grunted, and did not reply to the question. He had thought that it was good bowling and bad batting, but he did not say so.

"Well caught!" shouted the Removites, as Harry Wharton's hand closed on the ball, after three runs had been taken.

"Four down for three!" grunted Temple.

"Pretty prospect!"

And the Fourth Form batsmen, after that, went in like lambs to the slaughter.

It was the dearest wish of Temple's heart to give the Lower Fourth a sound licking on the cricket-field; but it seemed that his dearest wish was never to be realised. If it was a succession of "flukes" that favoured the Remove, certainly their luck was phenomenal—those "flukes" never failed them. And when the last Fourth Form wicket went down for a total of forty-six runs, the Removites smiled.

Temple, Dabney & Co. walked off the ground frowning.

Harry Wharton & Co. left it smiling. "Poor old Temple!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Those chaps think they can play cricket, you know. Queer fancies chaps have sometimes, don't they?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton looked at his watch. "It's only taken an hour," he remarked. "Plenty of time to change, and we can have a stroll round by the cliffs going to Cliff House."

"Right-ho!"

The Famous Five and Hazeldene were going to Cliff House School to tea. Hazeldene's sister Marjorie was hestess on the occasion. The Form match had ended unexpectedly early, owing to the collapse of the Fourth.

"No good getting there too early," Hazeldene remarked. Marjorie and Clara are out for a drive this afternoon, and they won't be in much before tea-time. We can take it easy."

The chums of the Remove changed from their flannels, and strolled out of the school gates in the golden afternoon. They were in great spirits after their easy victory over the Fourth Form.

"Bunter's gone out," Bob Cherry remarked. "I looked in the Form-room. I was going to stand him a consolation feed in the study; but he's bolted."

Harry Wharton looked grave. "The fat duffer!" he said. "He'll be flogged, as sure as a gun. Quechy won't let him off."

"I wonder he had the nerve," said Bob, puzzled. "It isn't like Bunter to run risks like that. But he'll get it in the neck, as safe as houses."

"The neckfulness will be terrific," agreed Hurree Singh. "It is not usual for Bunter to act so pluckily."

The Famous Five could not help feeling puzzled. However much Bunter wanted to have an afternoon at Margate, it was extraordinary that he should "bolt" with the certainty of being rewarded with a flogging. Billy Bunter was far from being of the stuff of which heroes are made; and more courageous fellows than the Owl of the Remove might have hesitated to face such consequences.

The juniors followed the lane down to the sea, and turned upon the cliff-path. Wide and blue the bay stretched before their eyes as they gained the top of the cliffs, and wide and blue beyond it lay the open sea, dotted

Further Surprises for the Chums of the Remove Next Week!

with white sails. Looking inland from the cliffs, they could see the long, white road from Courtfield to the fishing-village of Pegg.

They paused on the high rocks, and looked away over the green countryside, and the long, dusty road. Bob Cherry uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
 "What is it?"
 "Look!"

Bob raised his hand to point. A vehicle had come in sight on the white road; so far away that they could not recognise who was in it, though they dimly made out two figures in the open trap. The vehicle was dashing along the road at a terrific speed.

"The duffers!" said Hazeldene. "They'll have an accident if they're not careful!"
 "The horse is running away," said Bob.
 "By Jove! So it is!"

The juniors gazed breathlessly at the distant lower road. In the still, clear air, the faint tattoo of swift hoofbeats came to their ears from afar. They were too far away to think of rendering assistance; between them and the nearest point of the road lay three hundred yards of precipitous rocks. Long before they could have reached the lower road the runaway trap would have come whirling past. They gazed at it, spell-bound. It was rapidly coming nearer, in a couple of minutes to pass beyond their vision, shut off by the further cliffs.

"They're women in the trap. No, girls!" muttered Bob Cherry, his face blanching.

Hazeldene uttered a hoarse cry.
 "Marjorie!"
 "What!"
 "It's my sister!"
 "Good heavens! Marjorie and Clara!"
 The juniors' faces were as white as death now.

Clatter, clatter, clatter!
 The wild hoofbeats rang nearer and nearer. The horse was utterly out of control. They could make out now Clara Trevlyn holding the reins, dragging on them with all her strength, but in vain. Marjorie Hazeldene was sitting beside her, her face white and set. The trap rocked as it sped over the terrific speed. At any moment it might have been overturned or dashed against one of the trees by the wayside.

And the juniors groaned as they remembered that there was an abrupt turn in the road just ahead, and there it was almost certain that the runaway would come to grief. As in a horrible vision they seemed to see the two girls tossed from the trap, to fall crushed—perhaps under the wheels, perhaps under the lashing hoofs of the runaway.

And they could not aid. They knew they could not; but they dashed recklessly down the cliff towards the road, falling, stumbling, but rising to dash on again. But they knew they would be too late. The runaway trap would pass the bend long before they could reach it. It was passing now. In a moment more it would vanish from sight—but in that moment a figure suddenly leaped from the roadside, and a pair of hands grasped at the horse's head.

The juniors stopped, their hearts thumping. Whoever it was that had leaped at the head of the runaway horse was taking his life in his hands. If he had missed his grasp he would have fallen under the lashing hoofs, under the swiftly-rolling wheels—to death! But he had not missed his grasp. He was hanging to the reins now, dragged on by the rush of the horse; and the staring eyes of the juniors noted a heavy, fat form in Etons—a form that seemed familiar, and whose weight told quickly upon the horse, dragging the runaway's head low. Just as it was passing the bend the trap slowed down, and the juniors panted with relief. The runaway was stopped.

"They're saved!" panted Bob Cherry.
 "But—but did you see him? Did you see him?"

"Yes. It was—"
 "Bunter!"

The horse, slowed down but still moving, had passed the bend, and the trap was out of sight; but the juniors knew that all was safe, unless the brave rescuer himself had been injured. They scrambled down to the road like fellows in a dream. It seemed like a dream—incredible, impossible—but yet it was true; for in that fat form clinging to the horse's head, as it whisked out of sight, they had recognised Bunter!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Complete Change!

"HERE you are, Billy!"
 Billy Bunter stepped from the train on to the crowded platform in the station at Margate, and a youth of his own age and size came hurrying forward to meet him.

Bunter blinked at him through his spectacles.

"Here I am, Wally," he said as they shook hands—fat hands that matched very well.
 Wally Bunter, Billy's cousin, was clad in light clothes, with a straw hat on the back of his head. He did not wear glasses, and his face, though very fat, was much healthier in hue than Billy's. Otherwise, the two cousins were exactly alike. Had Wally Bunter been in Etons, and adorned with a pair of large spectacles, it would have been impossible to distinguish him from the great William George. Seen together, perhaps, Wally Bunter's healthier look would have been noticed, but that was all.

"Jolly glad you were able to come," said Bunter's cousin in a hearty and cordial manner. "This way out. Let's get on the front."

"I'm a bit peckish," said Bunter as they left the station.

Wally Bunter grinned.
 "Same as old Billy!" he remarked. "Well, I could eat something myself. It's two hours since I had dinner, and I've only had a German sausage, and some tarts, and a cake, and a few apples and nuts since then. Come on; we'll have a feed first, and then look round—what?"

"Jolly good idea!" said Billy heartily.
 "And I've got a jolly good thing to tell you, too!"

"Good! I'll hear it over the feed."
 And the two Bunters were soon sitting down to a feed, to the strains of a brass band, with a view of the sands and innumerable bathers.

For the first ten minutes Bunter did not speak a word. He was devoting himself to the feed; so was his cousin, for that matter. They were evidently alike in tastes as well as in appearance. And Wally Bunter, though Billy had described him as a poor relation, seemed to be flush with money on his holiday. He ordered good things recklessly, and the good things disappeared at a rate that astounded the waiter.

"I've got a jolly good idea," said Billy Bunter, when the first edge of his tremendous appetite was taken off. "I—"

"Have some more pie?" said Wally hospitably.

"Thanks, I will! How long are you down here for, Wally?"

"Only till Monday," said Wally, with a sigh. "You're a lucky beggar, Billy, to be at Greyfriars. I've got to go back on Monday to the old grind. I'm in Have & Hookit's office, now, you know, while you're lazing about at school."

"Tain't all lazing," said Bunter. "I have to grind, too. My Form master is a tartar. The beast actually detained me this afternoon, and I shall be licked for bolting!"

"I wouldn't mind that if I could be in your place."

Bunter blinked at him.
 "That's what I've been thinking of, Wally. Why shouldn't you be in my place?"

Wally stared.
 "Eh? How could I be in your place."
 "I mean for a time. I've been thinking of it to-day. It's a jolly good idea. You've often told me how you'd like to be at Greyfriars."

"So I would," said Wally, with a nod. "I wouldn't mind the Form work. And the chances you get of playing cricket, too. I'm a good cricketer, but I don't get your chances at the game. Pity we can't change places. You're good enough to grind for old Hookit, and I should do your school more credit. Have some of these tarts."

"Thanks! I don't suppose you'd like Greyfriars any better than I do, if you had to be there," said Billy. "But why shouldn't you try it?"

"How can I try it?"

"That's my scheme," said Bunter eagerly. "You're just like me—"

"Am I?" said Wally, apparently not taking that remark as a compliment.
 "Exactly like," said Bunter, "except that

you don't wear glasses. It's really the glasses that give me my distinguished look."

"Your what?" gasped Wally.
 "My distinguished look!" said Bunter firmly. "You know, sometimes when you've put on specs for a joke, you've been taken for me."

"Well, that's true," Wally admitted, somewhat reluctantly. His resemblance to the great William George was evidently not a thing he felt especially proud of.

"In the same clothes, and with a pair of specs, nobody could tell you from me," said Bunter, tucking into the tarts.

"They could if they saw us together," said Wally.

"But they won't see us together."
 "What the deuce are you driving at?" asked his cousin, in astonishment.

"It's the scheme I've been thinking out," grinned Bunter. "I thought of it as soon as you wrote me you were on a holiday. Look here, I'm fed up with Greyfriars—simply sick of Virgil, and Cæsar, and vulgar fractions, and things—fed up to the chin with Greyfriars, and Quelchy, and lessons, and everything! What I want is a holiday."

"You get jolly long holidays."
 "But I want one now. Now, you want to go to Greyfriars—you'd like even to go for a time, and see what it was like."

"I jolly well would, but it's impossible."
 "Quite easy. All you've got to do is to change clothes with me—"

"What!"
 "Put on a pair of specs—"

"Eh?"
 "And go, back to Greyfriars instead of me!" concluded Bunter triumphantly.

"M-m-my only hat!" stammered Wally, in utter astonishment. "Are you off your rocker, or is the ginger-beer getting into your head?"

"It's as easy as rolling off a form!" urged Bunter. "I've thought of this for your benefit, of course—purely for your benefit! You want to see what it's like at Greyfriars, and I offer you the chance of changing places."

"But—but they'd spot me—"
 "They wouldn't!"

"They'd spot you, anyway, in old Hookit's office, as soon as you started mucking up the books!" said Wally.

"I only mean for a few days," said Bunter hastily. "I wasn't thinking of going to your silly office. I mean as long as your holiday lasts, of course. You go to Greyfriars as me, and I stay here as you. We'll both have a good time. You want to sample Greyfriars—well, go and sample it. I want a holiday at Margate—well, here I am!"

"You—you want to bag my holiday!"

"Don't put it like that, please. I've thought this out entirely for your benefit. I shouldn't have thought of it, only I'm only such a good-natured and—and philanthropic chap," said Bunter. "Of course, I shall get a holiday; but I need it, you see. I'm quite run down with—with overwork."

"You must have changed your habits, then."

"Oh, don't be funny! It's your one and only chance of going to a public school, even for a few days," said Bunter. "Pass the tarts."

Wally Bunter passed the tarts, but he had left off eating, himself. He was looking very thoughtful. It was true that he had often envied his cousin at Greyfriars, and wished very much to experience what public school life was like. The proposal astonished him at first, but the more he thought about it the better he liked it. A few days at Greyfriars, especially if he had a chance of playing cricket there, would be happier for him than his holiday at Margate. It would be a "lark" that would make the other junior clerks open their eyes when he related it later in Mr. Hookit's office.

"Don't you think it's a jolly good idea?" asked Billy Bunter, with his mouth full. "Of course, I've thought of it entirely on your account."

Wally grinned. He knew how much of that to believe. Billy Bunter wanted a holiday, and wanted to shirk school work for a few days, if he could do so safely. And he was willing to make use of his poor relation for the purpose.

"If I was bowled out?" said Wally slowly.

"You wouldn't be. You've got lots of nerve."
 "But I don't wear glasses."
 "I'll lend you some."

"But I couldn't see through them."
"Easy enough to get spectacles with plain glass," said Bunter. "You could see through them all right."

"Well, that's so; but—I don't know any of the fellows there," said Wally. "I've never visited you there, and so—"

"All the better. If they'd seen you we shouldn't be able to work this scheme. You'll soon pick up the fellows' names. There's a photograph of the Remove eleven in my study—No. 7—with the names on it. You can look at it and post yourself that way about the fellows. Besides, I'll give you full information about the place and the chaps. You'd only have to be a bit careful, that's all."

"Your young brother would know me."
"Sammy's in the Second Form. He doesn't have anything to do with the Remove," said Bunter. "Why, I sometimes don't even see him for a week! The Forms keep to themselves. I don't bother myself looking after a fag in the Second."
"Blessed if I don't chance it!" said Wally.

"Good! I'll come to your lodgings with you; we'll change clothes there, and you can buy a pair of specs as we go in, and that's all that's needed. You can use my things at Greyfriars just as, if they were your own. I'll do the same with yours here. I suppose you'll be able to lend me a quid or so? I happen to be short of money—"

"Ahem!"
"Of course, I couldn't stay here without any money in my pocket; though, of course, you will settle the bill at your lodgings, same as if you stayed there yourself," said Bunter calmly. "You'll get some lessons at Greyfriars for nothing; and you're always mugging over books, so you'll like that."

"Good enough!" said Wally. "It's a go!"
"You'll have to catch an early train, though," said Bunter. "The late train doesn't go as far as Courtfield. You'll get to Courtfield about half-past five, and I recommend you to hang about a bit and go in just before calling-over. Then you'll hear the names of the fellows called before they have a chance to talk to you."

"Blessed if you ain't getting quite brilliant!" said Wally admiringly. "Well, if it don't work, they can't eat me!"

And Wally having settled the bill for that little feed, they repaired to his lodgings, which were not in the most fashionable part of the town. Billy Bunter turned up his fat nose a little as he was taken into a barely-furnished room with a wide outlook over roofs and chimneys.

"It's all right. You won't be indoors much, you know," said Wally.

Bunter grunted.
"All serene!" he said. "I suppose I must put up with it. Buck up and change! You mustn't lose that train. I'll come and see you off."

When the train started Wally Bunter sat in it, in Billy's Etons, which fitted him as if they had been made for him, and with a pair of unaccustomed spectacles adorning his fat nose. Billy Bunter stood on the platform, clad in light tweeds and swinging a cane, and feeling exuberantly satisfied with himself and things generally. They shook hands through the carriage window.

"Good-bye, and good luck!" grinned Billy. And as the train rolled out of the station, Billy Bunter strolled away, to sun himself on the sands and twirl his cousin's cane, and generally to play the "seaside bouncer." And Wally Bunter, with some misgivings in his breast, but a determination to see the queer adventure through, rolled away towards Courtfield, to taste his first—and last—experience as a Greyfriars fellow.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Bunter!

"MARJORIE!"
"Safe?"
"And—and Bunter!"

Harry Wharton & Co. came with a rush round the bend in the road. The trap had stopped. The horse, trembling in every limb, was standing quietly enough now, with a fat hand grasping the bit.

Marjorie and Clara were out of the trap, standing in the road, pale and shaken, as the chums of the Remove came tearing up. "We—we saw you!" panted Bob Cherry. "We were too far off to help! Oh, you might have been killed!"

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"I—I thought we should be!" said Marjorie Hazeldene, with trembling lips. "The horse was frightened by a motor and ran away, and Clara couldn't hold him in! I—I thought we should be killed!"

"I think we might have been, but for—for Bunter!" said Miss Clara. "It's—it's Bunter! I—I never thought Bunter would do a thing like that!"

Even with the horror of the danger they had so narrowly escaped fresh upon them, the two girls could not help feeling astonished that their rescuer was Bunter. No one had ever given Bunter credit for so much pluck, and certainly not for such quick decision and prompt action in the hour of peril. It was amazing, and Marjorie and Clara, as well as the Famous Five, found it difficult to believe their eyes.

"Thank goodness, you're all right!" said Wharton, with a deep breath of relief. "It gave us a horrible shock! And we couldn't help you, though we came as fast as we could. It's all right, Hazel." Hazel came panting up last. "They're safe."

"Marjorie, old girl, you're all right?"
"Yes, thanks to Bunter!"
"Bunter! My hat!"

The fat junior, who was holding the horse's head, grinned at them. He released one hand to lift his cap to the Cliff House girls.

"This gee-gee's all right now," he remarked. "But I'll look after him for you, if you like. I've got plenty of time before I get to Greyfriars. I'll drive you where you're going, if you'd like me to."

"Oh, rats!" said Hazel. "You can't drive for toffee, Bunter! I'll look after the horse."

"Just as you like."
"Bunter, old man," said Harry Wharton, "you're a giddy hero! I—I must say I'm sorry for some of the things I've called you!"

Wally Bunter—for, of course, it was Wally Bunter—blinked curiously at the Greyfriars juniors through his big glasses. He could see by their caps that they belonged to Greyfriars. And he knew who the girls were, having just heard their names mentioned, and having heard about them from Billy. And Wally Bunter smiled to himself. Here were six juniors and two girls who knew Billy Bunter well, and they had taken him for Billy without a moment's doubt. It was a lucky meeting for him. It was a proof on the spot that his little game at Greyfriars was a perfectly safe one.

"And I'll say the same!" said Bob Cherry. "Give us your paw, Bunter!"

Bunter gave him his "paw." Bob Cherry wrung it with a wring that made the fat fellow wince.

"Ow! Don't break my blessed fingers!"

Bob laughed.
"You're a giddy hero, Billy—you are, really! Blessed if I knew you had it in you!"

"The blessedness is terrific!" said Hurree Singh. "Also I withdrawfully take back the esteemed names I have applied to you, my worthy Bunterful chum!"

"Oh, don't mench!" said Wally airily.

"Are you hurt?" asked Marjorie.

"Not a bit. Only rather a twist in the arm, but it'll pass off."

"I don't know how to thank you!" said Marjorie.

"Blessed if I do, either!" said Clara, in her boyish way. "You're a brick, Bunter, and no mistake—a regular brick! It was jolly plucky of you!"

"Oh, don't mench!"

"You haven't gone to Margate, after all?" asked Nugent.

"Yes, I—I was at Margate this afternoon. I had to come by the early train," said Wally Bunter. "I—I left my cousin there."

"You'll have to look out for Quelchy when you get in."

"Who's Quelchy?"

"What!"

"I—I mean, I don't care for Quelchy!" stammered the fat youth. "I—I— Blow Quelchy!"

"Oh, Quelchy will be all right!" said Johnny Bull. "We'll tell him about this, and after that he can't flog Bunter for breaking bonds this afternoon. He couldn't! Blessed if I understand you, Bunter! I never thought you were a plucky chap. But to break bounds, knowing you were going to get a flogging for it—"

"Oh, the rotter!" exclaimed Wally. He was thinking of his Cousin Billy. He

understood easily enough why Billy had risked that flogging. It was no risk, as he was sending his cousin to Greyfriars to take it in his place.

"Oh, Quelchy isn't a rotter!" said Johnny Bull, who, of course, could not guess the fat youth's thoughts. "Naturally, he was wild at your calling him a swindler this morning, and he'll be wild at your clearing off when he detained you for the afternoon. But when we tell him about this—"

"Don't tell him," said Bunter. "I don't want to make capital out of having performed a little thing like that. If there's a licking, I can stand it."

The Famous Five almost fell down. Was this Bunter—Bunter, who boasted and swanked without limit and without cause? Bunter did not want to make capital out of having performed a really heroic action! They were simply astounded.

"Well, this beats the band!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "We shall tell Quelchy, of course. I say, Marjorie, may Bunter come along with us?"

"Why, of course!" said Marjorie. "You will come to tea at Cliff House, Bunter?"

"What-ho!" said Wally Bunter emphatically.

His likeness to his cousin, was not simply outside. He was blessed with an appetite and a love of good things that was quite equal to that of William Geard.

"I'd better drive," said Hazeldene. "Get in, and the chaps can walk."

"I'd rather walk, too," said Marjorie. "I don't want to get into the trap again after that."

"Same here!" said Miss Clara.

"Right-ho! Then you can drive, if you like, Bunter."

"Good egg! I'm a dab at driving!"

"Rats!"

But Wally Bunter proved as good as his word. He took the driving-seat and the reins, and the horse obeyed him quietly. Harry Wharton & Co. walked down the road to Cliff House with the two girls, and Bunter followed with the trap at a walking pace. He did not know the way to Cliff House, but, of course, it was necessary to keep his ignorance of local topography a secret. Marjorie and Clara had quite recovered from their fright by the time they reached Cliff House School.

"The trap has to be taken back to the Anchor," said Miss Clara.

Bunter looked round him. He could see the Anchor at the end of the village street.

"Right-ho! I'll take it," he said.

And the trap dashed away in great style.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "I never knew Bunter could drive like that! Bunter's coming out, and no mistake!"

"Well, he always said he could drive," Hazel remarked. "I never believed him. But after what he's done to-day, blessed if I wouldn't believe anything!"

"It seems rather ungrateful to seem so surprised at it," said Marjorie. "But—but I could not help feeling surprised. I'm afraid we haven't done Bunter justice."

"Never mind; give him a good feed and make it up to him," said her brother cheerfully. "That's the best way of showing gratitude to Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wally Bunter returned in a few minutes, and they went up the path of Cliff House School together. And when they were seated round the tea-table Bunter showed promptly enough that the exciting experience had had no effect whatever on his appetite.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Extraordinary!

HAD the Owl of the Remove been able to see his cousin at that moment it is probable that he would have been willing to exchange the delights of merry Margate for Wally's place at the tea-table at Cliff House. For Bunter—Bunter the Second—was the hero of the hour, and that would have been a novel and delightful experience to William Geard. And the feed was excellent, too. Miss Penelope Primrose, the headmistress of Cliff House School, had been told of Bunter's heroism, and the good old lady, after overwhelming him with compliments and gratitude for rescuing her dear pupils, had made substantial contributions to the tea. Bunter simply revelled in jams and preserves and cakes, and he showed a stowing capacity

(Continued on page 16.)



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Week Ending June 16th, 1923.

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By **BILLY BUNTER.**

MY DEAR READERS,—During the poetry lesson this morning I came across two tender and tuching lines which have stuck in my memmery.

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Don't you think, dear readers, that these words apply to the undersined? I am a really wonderful fellow in every way, yet noboddy eggsept myself seems to recognise the fact. My numerus good kwallities are wasted on the desert air.

Look through the pages of "Who's Zoo," and you won't find the illustrious name of William George Bunter. Look through Wisden's Kricket Almanack, and hear again the name of W.G.B. is conspik by its ab, to put it briefly. Glanse through your histery books, and you will find no mention of me.

It is all wrong, of corse. Give onner where onner is dew, that's what I say. As a leader, I've got Oliver Kromwell and the Duke of Wellington beaten to a frazzle. As a writer, Bill Shakespeer isn't in the same street with Bill Bunter. As a Paul Pry, the Peeping Tcm of Coventry can't compare with me. And as a cook, I've got Mrs. Beeton beaten.

And yet, the trajjick fact remains that my stirling kwallities are not appreciated. Like the flower in the poem, I was born to blush unseen, and I waste my sweetness on the desert air.

I am sorry to strike a sad note this week, but I feel my position very keenly, as the pedestrian said when the steam-roller passed over him. I don't like being left out in the cold. A really grate person like me ought to have a volume of "Who's Zoo" all to himself. But there! With all this personal jellussy and faveritism going on in the Greyfriars Remove, it isn't serprizing that I have to take a back seat.

Yours sinseerly,
YOUR EDITOR.

Supplement I.]

THE REWARD OF VALLER!

By **TUBBY MUFFIN.** (Sub-Editor.)

THE other day I saved an old gentleman's life. I steered him across the village street, so that he would not be run down by the traffick. And there was lots of traffick about at the time. There was a bicycle, a male-cart, two hoops, and a glider.

When I had steered the old gent safely to the opposite pavement he turned and thanked, me with the tears streaming down his cheeks.

"That was an act of valler and shivalry on your part, my boy," he said, "and I should like to show my appreciation of it. My name is Sir Timothy Judkins, and I live at the big white house called the Gables, on Coombe Common. Would you care to come and have dinner with me this evening?"

Did I decline? Did I start making eggscuses? No jolly fear! The prospect of a dinner at a wealthy old gentleman's house rarely made my mouth wate.

I was at grate panes to dress myself up in my Sunday best and make myself look as smart as possibul. I spent half an hour in brushing my togs, and another half-hour in getting a perfect parting, right down the middle of my napper. I wore a pear of silk spats, and I carried

white gloves and a walking-stick. I walked to Coombe Common on my heels, so that I shouldn't get my toes dirty.

A very skinny-looking butler opened the door to me, and after releeving me of my hat and coat, and seterer, he escorted me into the dining-room.

Sir Timothy Judkins was alone. He greeted me with a brite smile.

"Come in, my dear boy!" he said. "Eggscuse me not getting up to shake hands, but I've got the roomatticks crool bad. They are just going to serve the first corse."

This consisted of a plate of thin soup, which was nothing more or less than culled water.

The second corse was what they call horse doovers. It was half a sarden, with a tiny bit of chopped sallad.

I bolted the horse doovers in one mouthful, and waited for the joint to arrive. But it never came. Sir Timothy pointed out to me that he was a vegetarian. He couldn't stand meat at any price, he said. Would I object to having a little chopped parsley

It was the most mornful, mellankolly, mizerable meal I had ever sat down to. After the chopped parsley we had some spinnidge. And after the spinnidge we had some sparrow-grass. I don't hold with these vegetarian dishes!

One brazzil nut apeace konklooded the hansom spread; and I was so faint and fammished for want of good nurrishing food that I could hardly walk back to Rookwood.

COMICAL COKER!

By **GEORGE GUNN**
(Of the Fifth.)

Coker swaggers to the wicket
With a lordly grin;
Thinks he's simply great at cricket,
Means the fnatch to win.

"Play up, Horace!" bellows Blundell,
"For we're in a fix;
When the bowler starts to trundle,
Smite him hard, for six!"

"That's all right," says Horace Coker,
Marching to the crease;
"I will give this bowling joker
Not a minute's peace!"

"Is the worthy Coker ready,"
Hurree Singh inquires;
Coker nods and stands quite steady,
Inky runs, then fires!

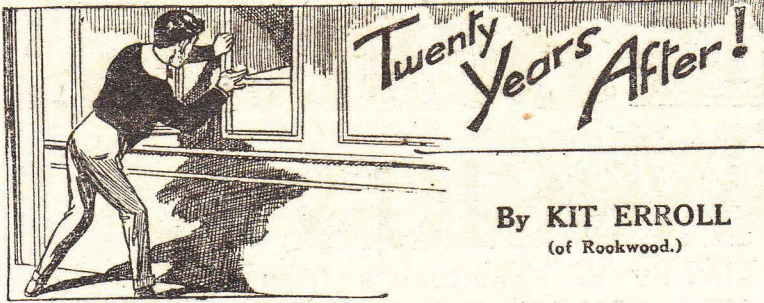
Down the pitch the ball comes shooting
With a mighty rush.
Leg and middle stumps uprooting,
Coker starts to blush!

"Oh, my hat! He's wrecked my wicket!"
Coker cries with awe;
"Most unlucky bit of cricket
That I ever saw!"

Horace hoped to make a million,
Made a "blob" instead;
Totters back to the pavilion,
Face is flaming red.

"You will never make a Jessop!"
Blundell almost screams;
"All you're fit for is to mess up
All our winning dreams!"

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

"I'VE made a discovery!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, bursting into the junior Common-room at Rookwood.

We looked up eagerly from our books and chess-boards.

"What is it, Jimmy?" asked Lovell. Jimmy Silver was looking somewhat dusty and dilapidated.

"I've just been grubbing around in the punishment-room," he explained.

"What on earth for?" asked Raby in surprise.

"Oh, I like exploring gloomy old places like that, and looking at all the initials and names that have been carved on the walls. And I like to picture all the fellows who spent their last night at Rookwood in the punishment-room, under sentence of expulsion."

"But what have you discovered?" inquired Newcome.

"A sliding panel in the wall."

"My hat!"

"It was quite by accident," said Jimmy Silver. "I was tapping the wall, and it sounded hollow at one part. Then I found that there was a sliding panel, opening into a recess about a foot square."

"Was there anything in the recess?" I asked.

"Yes; a diary." Jimmy Silver held up a dusty little book for inspection. "This is the diary of a fellow named Harcourt. He was sacked from the school in 1902."

"Great Scott!"

"At least, he was sentenced to be sacked. But he didn't wait for the final scene in Big Hall. He escaped from the punishment-room during the night and ran away."

Jimmy Silver handed over the diary for our inspection. The last entry in it ran as follows:

"March 1st.—This is my last night at Rookwood. The Head declares that I was the ringleader of the recent rebellion, and he has ordered me to the punishment-room, where I am making this entry by candlelight. In the morning I am to be publicly flogged and publicly expelled—perhaps! I sha'n't wait for the sentence to be carried out. I shall make a rope of sheets, and escape. I've a sporting chance of breaking my neck; but if I dodge this calamity I shall make tracks for Southampton and stow myself away on a vessel bound for America. They say that Tony Harcourt is a failure—that he will never come to any good in the world. I mean to give the lie to this. If I get clear away, I shall go to America and make my fortune. I am leaving this diary behind in the secret alcove, the existence of which is known only to me. Years hence some Rookwood explorer may discover this diary. By that time I may

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be dead and forgotten, or alive and famous. Who can say? The school clock is now chiming the hour of midnight. I must push forward with my plans for escape."

We read that entry with interest and amazement.

"What a find, by Jove!" said Mornington. "An echo of the Great Rebellion of 1902!"

"Wonder if Tony Harcourt was really the ringleader?" asked Conroy.

"He doesn't say," said Jimmy Silver. "He seems to have been pretty well despised according to this account. They all prophesied he would come to no good."

"Did he get clear away?" asked Van Ryn.

"He must have done. Now I come to think of it, I've heard Old Boys say that



"Your property, Mr. Harcourt, I believe!"
said Jimmy Silver.

Harcourt was the only runaway from Rookwood who was never recaptured."

"He'd be a man of about thirty-five by now," said Lovell. "Wonder if he's made good?"

The same wonder was in the minds of all of us.

We were perusing some of the other entries in that twenty-year-old diary when Tubby Muffin rolled into the Common-room.

"I say, you fellows, there's an Old Boy just come down, awfully decent sort. He tipped me half a crown for carrying his bag up from the school-gates."

"No wonder he's a decent sort," said Jimmy Silver, laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In the midst of our laughter the door of the Common-room opened once again, and a tall, athletic-looking man strode in. He seemed to bring with him a breath of the prairie.

"Same old Common-room," he said, glancing round. "There haven't been many alterations since my day."

"When did you leave, sir?" asked Raby, regarding the newcomer with interest.

"In 1902."

"My hat! Then I expect you remember a fellow called Harcourt?"

The Old Boy nodded.

"I remember Tony Harcourt quite well," he said. "A queer sort of fellow. He was sentenced to be sacked, but he ran away from the school overnight. They sent out search-parties, and informed the police, and raised no end of a hue-and-cry; but Harcourt gave them the slip, and got away to America. Stowed himself away on an outgoing liner."

"Why did you say he was a queer sort of fellow, sir?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Well, he was. He didn't exactly cover himself with glory when he was here. He was a young rebel—always up in arms against tyranny and oppression. He tried to abolish fagging, if I remember, and he was hated by the prefects on that account. Everybody predicted that he would end his days in prison."

"And did he?" asked Lovell a little breathlessly.

The Old Boy smiled.

"Harcourt made good," he said briefly. "He's now a millionaire, and on the staff of the American ambassador in this country."

"My hat!"

The Old Boy took out a silver cigarette-case, and abstracted a cigarette.

Jimmy Silver's keen eyes noted the initials that were engraved on that case. They were "T.H."

Jimmy turned to me with a twinkle in his eye.

"Hand over that diary, Erroll," he said. I did so, and Jimmy Silver presented the dusty, dog-eared little book to the Old Boy.

"Your property, Mr. Harcourt, I believe?" he said quietly.

There was a gasp from the assembled throng. The Old Boy gasped, too.

"So you've discovered my identity—and my diary?" he said. "Thank you, kid. I shall treasure this little book as a reminder of twenty years ago."

ST. JIM'S LIMERICKS!

A foolhardy fellow named Clampe
Once biked after dark with no lamp.

In a nasty, deep ditch

He managed to pitch,

And he found that the water was damp!

The two pet aversions of Scrope

Are icy cold water and soap.

We squirted the hose

From his crown to his toes,

And now he is clean, let us hope!

When cycling, a fellow called Manners

Was punctured, and lost all his spanners,

He took his machine

To a cheery old bean,

Who mended the tyre for two tanners!

A light-fingered fellow named Crooke

From the library borrowed a book.

Baggy Trimble drew near

To pry and to peer,

And to look at the book that Crooke took!

[Supplement II.]

Screamingly Funny Story from the Pen of Dicky Nugent Next Week!



By Harry Manners.

(of the Shell, St. Jim's.)

"YES," said Baggy Trimble, "I've saved so many lives, at one time and another, that I've quite lost count of them!"

Baggy was sprawling in a deck-chair on the beach at Bognor, where he was spending the day. It happened to be a whole holiday at St. Jim's, and Baggy had managed to raise sufficient funds for a flying visit to the seaside.

Baggy's audience consisted of two members of the fair sex. They were quite young girls—aged about twelve or so—and they wore school hats. They had seen Baggy Trimble riding on a donkey, and had been vastly amused by his clumsy antics. They had got into conversation with the fat junior, and were now sitting on the sands at his feet, while Baggy was "telling the tale." The names of Baggy's companions were Doris and Dulcie.

"You must be a wonderful boy if you've saved so many lives that you can't reckon the number," said Doris.

Baggy smiled. "There's nothing really wonderful about it," he said modestly. "When a fellow sees another fellow in danger, it's up to him, if he's got a ha'porth of courage, to go to the rescue."

"Do you mean to say you are always rescuing people from blazing buildings, and all that sort of thing?" asked Dulcie.

Baggy nodded. "I've saved a good many lives that way," he said. "But it's saving people from drowning that I excel at most. Last summer I happened to be bathing at Richmond, and the sea was rather rough—"

"But Richmond isn't on the coast!" protested Doris.

"Ahem! I meant the River Thames, of course," said Baggy. "The river was awfully rough at the time, and I saw a fellow coming along in a punt. He hadn't the foggiest notion how to use a punt-pole, and while he was leaning over the side of the punt, a great billow came and knocked him overboard as clean as a whistle. What did I do?"

"Can't say," said Dulcie. "You know best."

"Well, I whipped off my coat, and kicked off my shoes, and took a header into the swirling waters. The waves were mountain-high—"

Doris and Dulcie exchanged sly winks. They might have been very young, but they were not green. They knew that Baggy Trimble was romancing.

"What are you girls giggling about?" asked Baggy irritably.

"Were—were we giggling?" stammered Doris.

"Yes; you were!"

"Sorry! Go on with your fairy-tale."

"It isn't a fairy-tale!" said Baggy indignantly. "I always tell the truth!"

"A plump edition of George Washington!" murmured Dulcie.

They were thoroughly enjoying Baggy's narrative. And as they sat and gazed up at him they wondered how the fragile deck-chair managed to withstand his weight.

"Where had I got to?" said Baggy.

"Oh, I know! The waves were mountain-high, but I didn't hesitate. I took my courage in my hands—"

"Was it very heavy?" asked Doris demurely.

Baggy frowned. "I wish you wouldn't keep making silly interruptions," he said. "As I was about

to remark, I plunged into the foaming torrent and struck out with strong, swift strides—I mean, strokes—towards the drowning girl."

"But you said it was a fellow!" said Dulcie.

"Did I? Well, it happened so many years ago that I've forgotten the sex of the person I rescued."

"Many years ago?" echoed Doris.

"Why, you said just now that it was last summer!"

Baggy Trimble flushed. Fabricators should have long memories; otherwise they will contradict themselves a dozen times in as many minutes. Baggy had already tied himself up in knots, as it were, and he deemed it wise to switch off that topic on to another.

"I'm rather hazy about what happened at Richmond," he confessed. "But let me tell you about the family I rescued at Blackpool, will you?"

"Go ahead!" said Doris cheerfully.

So Baggy plunged into his new narrative. "I was sitting in a deck-chair at Blackpool, just like I'm doing now," he said, "when I suddenly heard a chorus of shrieks ring out over the water. I looked up from the book I was reading, and saw that a boat had overturned. There had been five people in that boat—three youngsters and their parents—quite a family party, you know. Not one of 'em could swim a stroke. Did I sit there and let them drown before my eyes?"

"Shouldn't be surprised," said Dulcie.

"Oh, really, you know— It's nothing to be sarcastic about. It was a thrilling and a terrible moment. I sprang to my feet, tore off my coat, and—"

Baggy Trimble paused. In the midst of his recital, a startled cry rang out.

Gazing out to sea, Baggy and his two companions saw that a boat had capsized some distance out. An inexperienced youngster had failed to handle her successfully, and this was the result. The boy was now struggling in the water, and a bubbling cry for help escaped him.

Doris and Dulcie grew pale. They turned instinctively to Baggy Trimble.

"Here's a chance for you to add to your long list of rescues," said Doris.

Baggy looked very sheepish. At first, he remained in his deck-chair. Then he thought he had better do something by way of bearing out the stories he had been telling of

his wonderful exploits. So he rose slowly to his feet and started to peel off his coat. He unbuttoned it very slowly, and he was slower still in taking it off.

"Quick!" panted Dulcie.

"Leave it to me," said Baggy Trimble, in a voice which shook a little. "I'll soon have the fellow safe and sound on shore. Saving life is child's play to me. Just let me take off my boots—"

This operation seemed likely to take Baggy about ten minutes. He struggled for some time with a knot which he either could not or would not untie.

If the drowning youngster had had to depend on Baggy Trimble he would not have stood much chance of regaining the shore alive. Fortunately, however, a boatman had witnessed the catastrophe, and he was soon rowing strongly towards the boy.

The youngster was taken on board the boat and brought ashore, and he was little the worse for his ducking.

Baggy Trimble uttered an exclamation of annoyance.

"What did that boatman want to interfere for?" he growled. "Just as I was going to the rescue, too!"

"You were a mighty long time about it!" said Doris scornfully. "We think you're a fraud and a coward, and we don't want to speak to you any more! Come, Dulcie!"

And she took the arm of her girl chum, and they sauntered away together, leaving Baggy Trimble to feel thoroughly ashamed of himself—if, indeed, he was capable of a sense of shame.

MY HOLIDAY CHOICE!

By Dick Penfold.

Some fellows flock to Plymouth Sound,
Others inhale the grand aroma
Which every summer may be found
At Cromer.

Some love to stroll on Southsea Shore,
Where sand and shingle may be stamped
on;

Others go bathing by the score
At Littlehampton.

Some chaps prefer a sheltered spot,
Where tide or tempest never tricks 'em;
That's why you always find a lot
At Brixham.

Some revel in the Isle of Wight,
Where nothing seems to tire or bore
'em;
And some bathe daily (and by night)
At Shoreham.

Bob Cherry, who's a fearless sort,
Also a gay and reckless rover,
Says you can get no end of sport
At Dover.

And Vernon-Smith has made a vow
Which he is quite resolved to act on;
"Good-bye," says he, "I'm off right now
To Clacton."

But I prefer another place,
Which seems a proper and a right 'un;
There I shall revel, romp, and race—
At Brighton!

THE POPULAR.—No. 230.



The girls turned instinctively to Baggy. "Quick, here's a chance to rescue another person!" cried Doris.

Supplement III.]

There's Another Batch of Funny Stories and Articles in Next Week's Supplement!



"Billy Bunter's Cousin!"

(Continued from page 12)



that made even the fellows who knew the Owl well open their eyes.

"Margate air gives you a jolly good appetite, don't it?" Bunter remarked, as he started on his eleventh helping of cake, and they were large helpings.

"But you haven't had much Margate air," said Nugent. "You couldn't have been there more than a couple of hours at the outside."

"Ahem! No! Exactly!" stammered Wally, realising that he had nearly given himself away. "Quite so! Isn't this cake ripping? Excuse me speaking about it, Miss Marjorie, but it really is ripping."

Marjorie smiled.

"I am glad you like it, Bunter."

"Oh, it's topping! I wish old Scrubb could see me now."

"Who's that?" asked Bob.

"Eh? I—I mean—a chap I know!" stammered Bunter, unable to explain that he was alluding to Mr. Hookit, his employer in London. "It's awfully good of you to have me here, you know. What a slice of luck my meeting you, wasn't it?"

"It was for us," said Marjorie, smiling. Marjorie simply couldn't understand Bunter. As a rule, the slightest kindness to the fat junior made him assume familiar manners, and made it necessary to freeze him unmercifully. But now, any amount of kindness was not having that effect on him. He was cheery and jolly, but not in the least familiar, and the two girls marvelled at the change. Really he seemed quite like another person, not the same Bunter at all!

He had taken his glasses off and laid them beside his plate, but he seemed to see very well without them. As a matter of fact, they worried him, as he was not accustomed to wearing spectacles. The juniors thought he looked better looking without them—in fact, they all noticed that he did not look nearly so flabby as usual to-day. Apparently the short trip to Margate had done him a great deal of good.

"Let Bunter give us a ventriloquist turn," said Bob Cherry, as they finished tea. Billy Bunter was a famous ventriloquist, and as a rule he was only too eager to give a sample of his wonderful powers; and Bob generously thought that after what he had done that afternoon he was entitled to all the lime-light he liked.

"Certainly," said Marjorie, at last. "We shall be very pleased if you will, Bunter."

"What-ho!" said Miss Clara cordially.

Bunter stammered.

"Oh, I—I'm not in form for that!" he said awkwardly. "I—I really can't!"

"Oh, pile in!" said Hazeldene. "You're generally jolly keen to give a show."

"Yes; don't be coy," said Bob Cherry.

"Go it, Bunter! Give us the dog in the chimney!"

"I—I really can't!" stammered Wally, speaking the solid truth. "I—I—another time. The fact is, I—I've made such a jolly good tea—ahem!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you don't really feel inclined—" said Marjorie.

"No; excuse me. Another time I'll be glad. Say next week," said Bunter.

"My hat! Aren't you going to get over this feed till next week?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I'll have a bit more cake," said Wally. "This is simply ripping cake! I always did have a good appetite, especially for cake."

"Miss Primrose has a cake for you to take home with you," said Marjorie, as she helped Bunter liberally.

"Oh, my word! She is a brick, isn't she?" said Bunter.

And when the juniors left Cliff House, Wally Bunter carried a huge parcel under his arm—a cake of tremendous size as a present from Miss Primrose. Marjorie and Clara bade them good-bye at the gate, again thanking Bunter for his noble services. But the fat junior made light of the matter.

Harry Wharton looked at his watch as they walked down the lane.

"I'll make it more!" said Wharton, adding a shilling. "Bunter, old man, you will kill us if you keep on like this. I sha'n't be able to bear much more!"

The Co. marched on, leaving the old fellow with one hand full of coppers and small silver, while he munched the cake. They regarded Bunter with sidelong glances as they walked on. It seemed like a dream. They were getting used to the idea of Bunter as a heroic rescuer. But to see him hand his

"We shall have to step out for Greyfriars, or we'll be late for calling over," he said. "Shall I carry your parcel, Bunter?"

"You're awfully good," said Bunter, handing it over. "It weighs a good bit. I say, Miss Primrose is an old dear, isn't she?"

The juniors agreed.

"That's a jolly big cake," went on Bunter. "We'll whack it out for supper—what!"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

The juniors gasped out those ejaculations. For Bunter to propose "whacking out" anything in the eatable line was too much. They began to wonder whether they were dreaming.

"I say, Bunter, you're not ill to-day, are you?" murmured Frank Nugent.

"Ill! No! Why?"

"You—you don't seem quite yourself."

Bunter looked rather alarmed.

"Don't I? What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing! Only you've changed somewhat."

"Don't I look just the same as usual?" asked the fat junior uneasily.

"Oh, yes, you look just the same!"

Wally drew a breath of relief. For a moment he had feared that the imposture had been "spotted."

"Then what's the difference?" he asked.

"Well, you—you seem to have improved, and—and it's rather sudden."

"Elp a pore man, young gents!" said a rusty voice as the juniors passed the stile in Friardale Lane. A little shabby old man was seated there, and he held out a hand towards the Greyfriars fellows as they passed. He looked a deserving object of charity, and the Co. halted, and began to feel in their pockets for coppers.

"I'm 'ungry, gentlemen," said the old fellow. "Ain't tasted a bite to-day."

"Oh, I say, that's simply awful!" said Wally Bunter, with a shudder. "Here, have some of my cake!"

He took the parcel from Wharton, whipped it open, and gashed through the huge cake with his pocket-knife. He handed half of it to the old man. The latter received it with thankful astonishment, and the way he piled into it showed that his claim to be hungry was well-founded. He demolished the cake faster than Bunter himself could have done it. Bob Cherry felt as if he were going to faint.

"Bunter!" he gasped.

"Hallo!"

"You must be ill—I know you're ill!" said Bob gaspingly. "Either seriously ill, or going off your rocker. Must be one of the two."

"I don't see it," said Wally Bunter. "The poor old chap's hungry. Look how he's tucking into it!"

"It's the first time you've ever cared a rap whether anybody was hungry or not."

"Is it?" exclaimed Bunter wrathfully. "Why, you— He remembered himself in time. "Well, never too late to mend, you know."

"You've taken a long time starting to mend, but I must say you're going it now you've started," said Johnny Bull.

"Like the cake, old chap?" asked Bunter, watching the beggar as he devoured the toothsome delicacy.

"Yes. Thank you, young gentlemen! May you never want!" mumbled the mendicant, with his mouth full.

"Have the rest of it," said Bunter. "You can shove in your pocket what you don't eat. And here's a tanner for you; sorry I can't make it more!"

"I'll make it more!" said Wharton, adding a shilling. "Bunter, old man, you will kill us if you keep on like this. I sha'n't be able to bear much more!"

The Co. marched on, leaving the old fellow with one hand full of coppers and small silver, while he munched the cake. They regarded Bunter with sidelong glances as they walked on. It seemed like a dream. They were getting used to the idea of Bunter as a heroic rescuer. But to see him hand his

cake to a beggar—that was the climax. That wanted even more getting used to.

"I suppose we're awake?" Bob Cherry murmured.

The juniors really doubted whether they were dreaming. Bunter was really a little too much for them that afternoon. The sight of Gosling closing the gates made them break into a run, and they passed in before the amiable Gosling had time to lock them out, and hurried into Hall for calling-over.

Some of the fellows were surprised to see Bunter and the Famous Five on such evidently good terms. Peter Todd greeted the fat youth as they came into Hall.

"You fat ass!" he exclaimed.

"Eh? What's biting you?" said Bunter.

"Loder's reported you to Quelch for breaking bounds this afternoon. Quelch will have you flogged, and serve you jolly well right."

Bunter sighed.

"I didn't expect that—"

"Didn't expect it!" exclaimed Peter. "Why, he warned you that if you cleared out this afternoon you would be flogged!"

"Ahem! Yes; all right. Can't be helped."

Mr. Quelch entered the Hall at that moment to take the roll-call, and the juniors took their places and were silent.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter on the Warpath!

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!"

Bunter should have replied "adsum" to the calling of his name, but he was not used to the manners and customs of Greyfriars yet. Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows, and glanced at him. His eyes looked almost as if they would burn a hole in the fat junior.

"Ah! You are there, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir!"

"You went out this afternoon in direct disobedience to my orders, Bunter!"

"I'm sorry, sir," said Bunter meekly.

"Very probably," said the Remove master dryly. "After roll-call you will go to my study, Bunter. I shall take you to the Head, and report you for a flogging."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Quelch finished calling the roll. Bunter paid a great deal of attention to the Remove fellows, who answered as their names were called. He was memorising the names. Calling-over finished, the boys crowded out of the Hall. The Famous Five kept with Bunter.

The fat junior was rather at a loss. He had to go to Mr. Quelch's study, and he hadn't the faintest idea where it was.

"We're coming with you, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "We're going to tell Quelch about what you've done this afternoon."

"Don't!"

"Rats! It's only cricket!"

And the Famous Five marched Bunter off to the Form-master's study. Wally Bunter was glad enough to be guided there. Mr. Quelch looked a little surprised when he came in, and found a crowd of juniors waiting him instead of one.

"What do you boys want here?" he asked, frowning.

"I think we ought to tell you something, sir," said Wharton. "Bunter broke bounds this afternoon, we know, but—"

"It is useless attempting any excuse for him, Wharton, if that is what you are thinking of. You may leave the study. Bunter, follow me!"

"But we think you ought to know, sir," persisted Wharton. "If Bunter hadn't been out this afternoon, Marjorie Hazeldene would have been killed, or badly injured, and Miss Trevlyn, too!"

"What!"

Harry Wharton hurriedly explained the circumstances of the rescue. Mr. Quelch listened with growing amazement. He looked very sharply at Wharton, but he knew the captain of the Remove would not lend himself to a deception to save Bunter from punishment. But, knowing Bunter as he did, the story was decidedly surprising.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch, when Wharton had finished. "This is very—ahem!—very curious. I should hardly have believed that Bunter was the lad to act in the heroic way you have described, Wharton!"

"It surprised us, sir," confessed Wharton. "I thought I was dreaming when I saw Bunter jump at the horse!"

"Yes, rather!" said Bob.

"The ratherfulness is terrific," said Hurree Singh. "The surprisefulness of myself was truthfully great!"

Mr. Quelch paused. "This does not, of course, affect Bunter's conduct in disobeying my commands," he said. "But I feel that I must take it into consideration. You appear to have acted in a very brave manner, Bunter."

"Any chap would have done it, sir," said Bunter.

"Perhaps so; but it was very brave indeed, all the same. Under the circumstances I shall not report you to the Head for a flogging. I cannot, however, allow your conduct to pass unpunished. I shall cane you!"

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Quelch took a cane from his table. Swish—swish! Twice it came down on Bunter's fat hands, and the junior wriggled. But he bore his punishment very quietly, and the Removites, who were accustomed to hearing Bunter yell wildly at the slightest hurt, were more and more amazed. Then the Remove master dismissed them.

A crowd of Remove fellows met Bunter as he came out. Hazeldene had spread the story of the rescue, and the fellows were all curious to see Bunter. They stared at him as if he had been some wild animal fresh from the Zoological Gardens.

"Here's the noble rescuer!" chirruped Skinner.

"Begad! I think you acted rippingly, Bunter!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Were you asleep when you did it, my dear man?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I believe it!" said Snoop. "Tain't like Bunter. They made up that yarn to get him off the flogging."

"It's true!" said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, tell that to the Marines!" said Skinner contemptuously. "Do you mean to tell us that that fat rotter risked his life for anybody? He wouldn't risk his little finger! He's the biggest funk in the school!"

"Who's a funk?" demanded Wally Bunter. "You are!"

"I'll jolly soon show you whether I'm a funk!" said Bunter, whipping off his spectacles and sliding them into his pocket. "Put up your hands!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Put up your hands!"

"My only hat!" gasped Peter Todd, staring at his fat study-mate in blank astonishment. "You must be dotty, Bunt! What do you mean?"

"I mean I'll lick any chap who calls me a funk!"

"M-m-my word!"

"You fat chump!" snorted Skinner. "I could knock you into the middle of next week, and I will if you stick your fat paws near my face. Take 'em away! You are a funk—a rotten funk—and a fat prize pucker, too! Yow, ow!"

A fat finger and thumb had closed suddenly on Skinner's somewhat long nose, and gripped it like a vice. Skinner yelled with anguish.

"Grooh! Gerrooogh! Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Am I a funk?" demanded Bunter.

"Grooh! Yes, you are! Yow-ow! Leggo, and I'll lick you!"

Skinner struck out furiously. Bunter guarded with his left with a skill that made the astonished spectators open their eyes, still keeping an iron grip on Skinner's nose.

"Well, this beats the giddy band!" gasped Peter Todd. "Where is Bunter getting his pluck from? Blessed if I knew he had any!"

"He—he's been hypnotised, or something, I think!" gurgled Johnny Bull. "He's given a cake to a beggar as we came home—a thundering big cake!"

"Impossible!"

"Fact!"

"No, no; tell us an easier one!" said Peter Todd. "I can't swallow that! You dreamed it!"

"It's true!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Then he's ill—or mad—or hypnotised, or something!" said Peter Todd, with conviction.

"Groogh!" Skinner got his nose away at last. It was crimson, and there were tears of rage in Skinner's eyes. "Now I'll smash you, you fat frog!"

"Come on!" said Bunter, putting up his hands quite scientifically.

Skinner came on with a rush. He was half a head taller than Bunter, and at any time he could certainly have licked the Owl of

the Remove without the slightest difficulty; but he met with the surprise of his life now.

The fat junior stood up to him grimly, knocked away his driving fists, and replied with a left and a right, and a left again, that sent Skinner spinning. He came down on the floor with a loud bump, and a gasp that was like air escaping from a badly-punctured tyre.

"Get up and have some more!" chortled Bunter.

"Ow Ow! Ow!"

"Go for him, Skinny!" roared Bolsover major. "Go for him! You can lick him easily enough!"

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"Skinny thinks he has had enough!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner sat up dazedly.

"I—I—ow—was—was that a horse that kicked me," he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover major helped him to his feet. Skinner stood very unsteadily on his pins. His nose was swelling, and one of his eyes was already assuming a darker hue. Bolsover major urged him to go in and win. Skinner declined, without thanks.

"I—I—I've had enough!" he gasped. "I think I'm dreaming, or else that fat beast has gone mad suddenly! Ow, my nose! Yow, my eye! Ow, ow!"

And Skinner retired hastily to bathe his nose and his eye. They both needed it. And the crowd dispersed, marvelling.

There was only one topic in the Remove that evening—the astounding change that had come over Bunter. He had risked his life to save somebody else, he had given away a cake to a beggar, and he had licked Skinner! And he was perfectly modest about it all, and not showing the slightest signs of "swank"!

After that, as Bob Cherry remarked, he had only to start telling the truth, and the proof would be clear and conclusive that the age of miracles was not past.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

What's the matter with Bunter?

PETER TODD came into his study in the Remove passage, and he grinned as he saw Bunter there. The fat junior was studying very attentively a large framed photograph on the wall—a photograph of the Remove cricket eleven. He looked round as Peter came in and blinked.

"Hallo!" he said.

"I want to speak to you, Bunter," said Peter.

"Go ahead!"

"What do you mean by it?"

"Eh?"

"You know what I mean. The way you've been coming out to-day. Have you been only pretending all this time to be a rotter and a sneak? If so, what have you been doing it for?"

Wally Bunter chuckled. His cousin Billy had often told him that he was the most popular fellow in his Form at Greyfriars. Wally was learning now the estimation in which the voracious William George was really held by his Form-fellows.

"Well," said Peter, "what have you got to say?"

"Nothing," said Bunter cheerfully. "Only don't be an ass!"

"Deaf?" asked Bunter. "Don't be an ass! That's all. I've been looking at this photograph. Is that you in the picture, or that other chap who's just like you?"

Todd stared at him.

"You know it is I," he said. "You know Alonzo doesn't play cricket. What are you getting at?"

Bunter coloured. He had put his foot into it again. He realised that it behaved him to pick his way very carefully at Greyfriars, if the imposture was not to be discovered.

"I don't see why I shouldn't play cricket for the Form," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you chuckling at?"

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Todd. "You've



BUNTER THE HERO!—A figure leapt from the roadside as the trap dashed by, and a pair of hands grasped at the horse's head. Harry Wharton & Co., could not see the features of the rescuer but they instantly recognised the plump figure, dragging at the horse's head. It was Bunter of the Remove! (See Chapter 1.)

surprised us enough for to-day; but I suppose you're not going to ask us to believe that you can play cricket, too!"

"I'm a jolly good player!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "I could play your silly head off, anyway," said Bunter. "That chap Wharton's cricket captain in the Remove, ain't he?"

"You know he is, fathead!" "Yes, I—I mean I know he is. Well, I'm jolly well going to ask him to play me."

"You've asked him often enough," grinned Peter. "I fancy you'll be declined with thanks, as usual. Now, leave off talking rot and get on with your prep."

"My—my prep!" "Yes, fathead! And don't forget that you've got to go to Mr. Lascelles this evening."

"Mr. Lascelles?" faltered Bunter. "Have you forgotten he's giving you extra mathematics, because you're such a silly dummy at them?" demanded Peter.

"Yes—no! But—" "By Jove, you've left it late!" said Peter. "Lascelles will be here to fetch you if you don't cut off!"

"Oh, let him come!" "Ass! He'll report you to Quelch!" "Let him rip!" said Bunter.

He would have been glad to "cut off"; but as he did not know where the mathematics master's study was, and had never even heard of Mr. Lascelles before, and did not know him by sight, it was not of much use starting out to find him. He preferred to wait till Mr. Lascelles came for him. He did not have to wait long. There was a tap at the door, and the handsome face of the mathematics master looked into the study.

"Bunter! Are you here?" "Here I am, sir!"

"You have forgotten your extra tuition this evening," said Mr. Lascelles pleasantly. "I have heard of your conduct this afternoon, Bunter. I congratulate you on having acted in such a really plucky manner. Come along!"

Bunter followed the mathematics master.

He guessed that this was Mr. Lascelles. The latter gentleman looked at him very curiously when they arrived in the study. Mr. Lascelles had had a far from high opinion of Bunter, and the story of his heroism had astonished the mathematics master as much as the rest of Greyfriars. And Mr. Lascelles was to be still more astonished in the course of the next half hour.

He had always known Bunter as very obtuse and a slacker, and he had not known how much of his obtuseness to set down to nature, and how much to humbug. He concluded now that it was all humbug, for Bunter "wired into" the maths lesson with a keenness that astonished him.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Lascelles, at last. "You are getting on so well, Bunter, that it will not be necessary for you to have extra tuition after this. I trust this will last. I shall know in future that you can learn if you choose, and I shall expect you to do so."

"Thank you, sir!" said Wally Bunter demurely; and he took his leave.

He chuckled as he thought what was in store for William George when he returned to Greyfriars. If Mr. Lascelles expected Billy to keep up to the mark set by Wally, the unfortunate Billy had a high old time in store for him. Billy Bunter had intended to "land" Wally with a flogging; but he would find himself "landed" with worse than a flogging. But that was William George's own look-out.

Bunter the Second returned to Study No. 7, and found the two Todds and Tom Dutton at work there at their preparation. He found the original Bunter's books, and sat down at the table. Wally had much more taste for learning than his cousin, and was something of a "swot" in his leisure hours. Billy had sometimes condescended to tell him about the things he learned at Greyfriars, and Wally, who would have given a very great deal to be in Billy's place at school, had learned from him all he could. What he knew of the school work stood him in good stead now; but he realised that he was in

danger of "putting his foot in it" at every moment, and he watched the other juniors working, to get the "hang" of it.

"Want some help, Billy?" Peter Todd asked good-naturedly, when he had finished.

"Thanks! I'd like you to help me, if you will," said Bunter.

"Of course I will, fathead!" And Peter Todd piled in and helped Bunter, and found him unusually intelligent, and yet seemingly unacquainted with small details of things that William George knew perfectly well from custom. Peter looked at his fat study-mate very queerly several times.

"I suppose you haven't lost your memory, Bunter?" he asked, when preparation was finished.

"No! Why?" "Then I suppose you've been pulling my leg," said Peter. "I won't lick you for your cheek, in consideration of your having turned up trumps this afternoon, but don't do it any more." And Peter shook a warning finger at the fat junior.

"I won't," said Bunter, only too pleased that Peter suspected nothing more than that his study-mate had been pulling his leg. "I say, are you going to have any supper? Do you fellows have supper here?"

"Eh?" "I—I mean, what is there for supper?" "There's cold pie," said Peter. "You can get it out of the cupboard while I get the plates. Make yourself useful."

"Certainly!" Bunter served the pie, and the hungry juniors sat down to supper.

After the meal they descended to the Common-room. A buzz greeted the appearance of Bunter. The wonder he had caused had not yet died away.

There was likely to be more wonderment still, so long as Wally Bunter remained at Greyfriars!

(You must not miss reading "The Big Bunter Mystery" by Frank Richards, a wonderful tale of Harry Wharton & Co. and Wally Bunter at Greyfriars in next week's grand issue.)

What You Have To Do.

Here is a splendid Cricket competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find the history of the Essex Cricket Club. 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 "Essex" Competition, POPULAR Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, June 21st, 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 add 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 regarded as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

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

I enter the POPULAR "ESSEX" Competition and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

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STORMY TIMES AT CEDAR CREEK!

Frank Richards & Co., all agree that Mr. Peckover, the headmaster of the new backwoods school, is an out and out "outsider," when he causes the chums to be unjustly punished. That is why they visit Hillcrest after school hours to get their revenge!

MR. PECKOVER'S REVENGE!



CATCHING IT HOT!

The Adventures of Frank Richards and Co., of Cedar Creek School.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Black Ingratitude!**

PECKOVER, by gum!" There had been a heavy fall of snow in the Thompson Valley, and the Cedar Creek trail was thick with the white flakes.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless were trudging through the snow towards Cedar Creek School, when Bob suddenly halted.

Ahead of the two schoolboys on the trail a fur-clad figure had come in sight.

It was Mr. Peckover, the headmaster of Hillcrest School, with his fur-coat turned up round his chin, the flaps of his cap drawn down over his ears, and little more of his face showing than his long, thin, red nose.

But the chums of Cedar Creek knew that nose.

Mr. Peckover's head was bent against the keen wind that blew from the snowy slopes of the Rocky Mountains in the far distance. He was coming towards the Cedar Creek fellows, but he had not seen them.

"Dear old Peckover!" said Bob Lawless, with a grin. "And there's plenty of snow handy, Franky."

Frank Richards laughed and shook his head.

"Not good enough, Bob," he answered. "He will come along to Cedar Creek and complain if we snowball him."

"But it's too good a chance to be lost!" urged Bob. "The old bird hasn't seen us, and we can take cover, and snowball him as he moseys by."

"But—" "He can't come yarning to Miss Meadows if he doesn't see us," urged Bob. "And he's asked for it, hasn't he? Isn't he down on us, nice as we are?"

"Yes; but—" "Don't but, old chap; get into cover, and get some snowballs ready."

Bob Lawless was evidently determined. The chums of Cedar Creek had had many rubs with Mr. Peckover, and they had no love for the headmaster of Hillcrest.

And really it did seem too good a chance to be lost.

"Oh, all right!" said Frank. "But—" "Hallo!" ejaculated Bob suddenly.

Mr. Peckover was about a dozen yards away now, but with his head still bent and his eyes on the trail he had not seen the chums of Cedar Creek, so far.

But all of a sudden, as he came abreast of a thick patch of spruce beside the trail, Mr. Peckover gave a wild jump.

From the spruce thicket a snowball had whizzed with deadly aim, and it landed fairly on the sharp red nose of the schoolmaster.

There was a sudden howl from Mr. Peckover as he jumped.

"My hat!" exclaimed Frank Richards in astonishment. "Who was that? There's somebody in the timber!"

Whiz, whiz! Crash!

From the spruce whizzing snowballs came thick and fast.

It was evident that there was an ambush beside the trail, and Mr. Peckover had walked into it.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless stared on at the scene.

Their snowballs were not wanted. Mr. Peckover was fairly dancing as the shower of missiles came pelting from the thicket, smiting him hip and thigh.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob. "Yaroooh!"

Whiz, whiz, whiz!

The snowballers were still invisible; the thick spruce hid them from sight.

But their aim was deadly. Snowballs smashed all over Mr. Peckover as he yelled and jumped and dodged.

He lost his footing suddenly in the snow and rolled over.

Then there was a sound of crashing in the thicket as the unseen snowballers fled through the timber—still unseen.

"Who the dickens are they?" exclaimed Frank Richards. "Not Cedar Creek chaps, I think."

"I guess not!" chuckled Bob Lawless. "Look there!"

He pointed through an opening in the timber.

From where they stood the chums could see three figures darting among the leafless trees in full flight.

"Dicky Bird!" exclaimed Frank.

"And Blumpy and Fisher!" grinned Bob.

"Hillcrest chaps—pelting their own merry headmaster, too! Peckover doesn't seem popular with his pupils."

In a moment or two Dicky Bird and his comrades vanished into the forest.

On the trail, Mr. Peckover was still rolling in the snow, gasping and snorting.

"Let's give the old bird a hand up!" said Bob Lawless good-naturedly.

Mr. Peckover was really in need of assistance.

He had rolled into a drift beside the trail, and nearly disappeared from sight.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless ran towards him.

From the snowdrift a capped head and a red nose emerged.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" came from the half-buried schoolmaster.

Bob Lawless grasped Mr. Peckover by the shoulder, and Frank Richards seized his arm.

They dragged together, and the angular gentleman was pulled out of the drift.

He landed gasping in the trail.

"Ow! Oooooop!"

"All right now, sir!" said Bob Lawless, suppressing his merriment. "Set him on his tootsies, Franky!"

"Up with you, sir!" said Frank Richards cheerily.

The chums of Cedar Creek had quite forgotten their original intention of snowballing Mr. Peckover themselves.

Certainly he looked as if he was not in need of any more snowballing.

He was smothered with snow from head

to foot, and looked a good deal like Father Christmas as the chums set him on his feet. He gasped and spluttered breathlessly.

"You young scoundrels!"

"What!" ejaculated Frank.

"You young rascals!"

"Well, I like that!" said Bob Lawless.

"Is that what you call thanks for helping you out of the drift, Mr. Peckover?"

"I—I—I— You young villains!"

Mr. Peckover glared round wildly for his stick, which he had dropped when he rolled over.

Frank Richards picked it up and handed it to him.

The moment the angular gentleman grasped it he brought it across Frank's shoulders with a sounding whack.

Frank gave a yell.

"Why—what—you—"

"You young rascals!" shouted Mr. Peckover furiously. "I will thrash you within an inch of your lives! You—you dare to snowball me!"

The two schoolboys dodged.

"But we didn't!" yelled Bob. "We ran up to help you! It was somebody in the timber who snowballed you."

"Don't tell me falsehoods!"

Slash!

"You silly old duffer!" shouted Frank.

"Keep off, you fathead! I tell you it was— Oh, my hat!"

Instead of keeping off, Mr. Peckover rushed on, with his stick flourishing in the air.

He was under the impression that it was the Cedar Creek chums who had snowballed him, and their denials were of no use. Mr. Ephraim Peckover was not of a trustful disposition.

Frank and Bob dodged the stick with some difficulty, but Mr. Peckover was not to be denied.

He pressed on, the stick lashing out, and he would certainly have done some damage with it had not Bob rushed in and butted.

Bob's head smote the schoolmaster on the centre of his fur-coat, and fairly bowled him over.

He staggered back, and sat down in the snowdrift from which the chums had rescued him a few minutes before.

"Yooooop!"

Mr. Peckover's head and feet showed above the drift; the rest of him was out of sight.

"My hat! I've a jolly good mind to give him some of his own stick!" exclaimed Frank Richards wrathfully. "Leave him there, anyway!"

"You bet!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Help!" yelled Mr. Peckover.

But the chums were not disposed to render further help.

They tramped on down the trail, leaving Mr. Peckover to sort himself out at his leisure.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Called Over the Coals!

MISS MEADOWS frowned. Cedar Creek was at afternoon lessons, when there came a loud knock at the door of the big school-room.

The door was flung open, and Mr. Peckover strode in.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless exchanged a quick look.

"After us, you bet!" murmured Bob. "You fellows been ragging Peckover?" asked Beauclerc in a whisper.

"No; but he thinks we have." "By gum! He looks wrathful!" murmured Chunky Todgers.

Mr. Peckover looked exceedingly wrathful as he strode down the school-room towards Miss Meadows.

"Miss Meadows—" spluttered the unexpected visitor.

"Really, Mr. Peckover—"

"I have come to lay a complaint before you, madam!" snorted Mr. Peckover.

"This is neither the time nor the place, sir! You are interrupting my work!" said Miss Meadows coldly.

"Two boys in this class, madam, have assaulted me!" shouted Mr. Peckover.

He stared round the class, and pointed a bony forefinger at Frank Richards and Bob Lawless.

"Those two young rascals, Richards and Lawless!" he exclaimed.

Miss Meadows set her lips.

"Pray calm yourself, sir! Richards and Lawless, step out before the class!"

Frank Richards and his Canadian cousin stepped out obediently.

The eyes of all Cedar Creek were upon them.

"The two schoolboys were quite cool.

Mr. Peckover was very far from cool.

"Richards! Lawless! You have—" began the schoolmistress.

"Not at all, Miss Meadows!" said Frank quietly.

"You do not deny Mr. Peckover's statement?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"The boy is lying!" thundered Mr. Peckover.

"These two young rascals threw snowballs at me on the trail between this school and Hillcrest, and caused me to fall into a drift!"

"This is very serious, Richards!" said Miss Meadows, frowning. "If you have done this—"

"But we haven't, Miss Meadows," said Frank Richards earnestly.

"Did you meet Mr. Peckover on the trail?"

"Yes; but—"

"Kindly tell me what happened, then."

"I have told you what happened Miss Meadows!" thundered Mr. Peckover. "And I demand the instant and severe punishment of these two young rascals!"

"If they are guilty of assailing you, sir, they will be punished; but, naturally, I shall hear their account first," said Miss Meadows tartly.

"They will utter falsehoods—"

"We shall do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Frank Richards indignantly. "And only a cad would say so."

"Wha-a-at!" spluttered Mr. Peckover.

"You hear him, madam?"

"Silence, Richards!"

"He has no right to call us liars, ma'am," said Frank.

"Tell me what occurred," said Miss Meadows, with a worried look.

"I repeat that I have told you, madam, that—"

"Allow Richards to speak, please, Mr. Peckover."

Mr. Peckover snorted, but he gave Frank a chance to speak.

Frank explained what had taken place on the trail, Mr. Peckover punctuating his remarks with a series of scornful sniffs.

Miss Meadows' brow cleared as she listened.

"Did you see the persons who snowballed Mr. Peckover, Richards?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Who were they?"

"I—I'd rather not mention their names, ma'am," stammered Frank. "Mr. Peckover has no right to come here for information."

"The boy is lying!" thundered Mr. Peckover. "It was he and his companion who threw the snowballs at me!"

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"I do not believe Richards is capable of lying," said Miss Meadows quietly. "It appears that you did not see who threw the snowballs."

"I saw these boys throw them!" shouted Mr. Peckover.

"Oh! You are sure?"

"I am positive, madam."

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Frank.

If Mr. Peckover had seen who threw the snowballs, he would certainly have been aware that Dicky Bird & Co. were the culprits, and he would not have come to Cedar Creek to look for them.

Mr. Peckover was, in fact, not speaking the truth.

Miss Meadows looked very troubled.

Mr. Peckover's statement was positive on one side, and that of Frank Richards and Bob equally positive on the other.

The class looked on breathlessly, wondering what the schoolmistress' decision would be.

"You—you are sure that you actually saw these boys throw the snowballs, Mr. Peckover?" asked Miss Meadows slowly.

"I have said so, madam," answered the master of Hillcrest.

"And you, Richards and Lawless—"

"We deny it, ma'am," said Frank Richards steadily. "Mr. Peckover is not telling the truth."

"He is telling lies!" said Bob Lawless bluntly.

The Hillcrest master trembled with rage.

"You hear them, madam?" he stammered. "This is the language your boys use towards me!"

Miss Meadows made a gesture.

"Allow me to speak, Mr. Peckover. Richards, I should be very sorry to doubt your word, but Mr. Peckover says positively—"

"He is not speaking the truth, ma'am."

"You say that you saw who threw the snowballs?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Then you must give me their names, Richards."

Frank and Bob exchanged a troubled look.

It did not occur to Miss Meadows that the Hillcrest master had been snowballed by his own pupils, upon whom terrific punishment was certain to fall if Mr. Peckover learned the facts.

The chums of Cedar Creek did not intend to betray Dicky Bird & Co. That was impossible.

But it was impossible, too, to explain their motive for withholding the names.

Miss Meadows' brow grew sterner as they hesitated to speak.

"I am waiting, Richards!" said Miss Meadows ominously.

"I—I—" stammered Frank.

"I infer, Richards, from what you say, that Mr. Peckover was snowballed by some of the town boys," said Miss Meadows.

"There is no reason whatever why you should not give their names and clear yourself."

"There is a reason—"

"What is it?"

"I—I—"

"Well?" exclaimed Miss Meadows impatiently.

"I can't give the names," said Frank desperately. "There is a reason, but I can't explain it."

"That's so!" said Bob Lawless. "But you know that we are not liars, Miss Meadows."

"I certainly thought so, Lawless," said the schoolmistress sternly. "But if you refuse to take a perfectly easy method of clearing yourselves, I must alter my opinion. For the last time, will you answer my question?"

Silence.

"Are you satisfied now?" asked Mr. Peckover, with a sneer.

"I am satisfied," said Miss Meadows, frowning. "Richards and Lawless, as you have nothing to say, I assume that Mr. Peckover's statement is correct, and I shall punish you severely."

Frank and Bob did not speak.

They did not blame Miss Meadows, who could scarcely take any other view; but their feelings towards Mr. Peckover were almost homicidal.

"I will witness the punishment, Miss Meadows," said the Hillcrest master, his thin lips setting hard.

"There is no objection to that, sir."

Miss Meadows took the pointer from her desk.

The next few minutes were very painful to the two chums. But they bore the infliction without a sound.

Miss Meadows felt that it was a time to be severe; and though such punishment was seldom administered at Cedar Creek, the schoolmistress could be severe when she thought it necessary.

Frank and Bob squeezed their hands hard as they went back to their places.

Mr. Peckover, with a glimmer of satisfaction in his eyes, left the school-room, and lessons proceeded at Cedar Creek.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Yen Chin Chips In!

YOU galoots are a pair of jays, and no mistake!"

That was Eben Hacke's opinion, delivered in the playground, when Cedar Creek was dismissed after lessons.

"Awful duffers!" remarked Chunky Todgers. "You ought to have spun a better yarn than that!"

"What do you mean, you fat idiot?" growled Bob Lawless.

Bob's temper was not at its best just then.

"Well," said Chunky sagely, "I guess you ought to have told the truth; but if you were going to spin a yarn, you should have spun a likely one."

"I calculate so," said Hacke.

"You silly chumps!" exclaimed Frank Richards angrily. "It wasn't a yarn; it was the frozen truth."

"Then why couldn't you give the names?" asked Chunky Todgers incredulously.

"Because they were Hillcrest chaps, you fat duffer!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Chunky.

"I guessed that," said Molly Lawrence. "I guessed it at once, Frank."

"You've got some sense, Molly!" said Frank. "I was afraid old Peckover would guess it. But he's an old chump!"

"My hat!" said Beauclerc, with a whistle. "Who were they, then, Frank?"

"Dicky Bird and Fisher and Blumpy."

"Phew!" said Eben Hacke. "Old Peckover would have skinned them alive if he'd known!"

"That's why we didn't tell him, ass!"

"You took a licking instead," said Tom Lawrence.

"Well, what could we do?" grunted Bob. "Ugly ole Peckover tellee lies!" remarked Yen Chin, the Chinese.

"Yes."

"Vellee badee man!" said Yen Chin. "Vellee wicked tellee lies!"

"Well, you ought to know all about it, Yen Chin," said Bob Lawless. "You never tell anything else."

"Yen Chin good Chinese," said the Celestial. "Me vellee solly Missee Meadee tinkee Flanky tellee whoppee. Me makee all light."

"How can you make it all right, you silly heathen?" growled Frank.

Yen Chin grinned.

"Me clevee Chinese—oh, yes! Me makee all light!"

"Rats!" grunted Frank.

The chums of Cedar Creek sat in the porch to fasten on their snowshoes for the run home.

Yen Chin disappeared into the house.

Frank and Bob were in a glum humour, and Vere Beauclerc was sympathetic.

The caning had been severe, but the effects of that were wearing off.

But to be condemned by Miss Meadows for having spoken falsely was harder.

They valued the good opinion of the Canadian schoolmistress.

"It's rotten!" growled Frank. "We can't explain; and Miss Meadows will think badly of us. I'm going to scalp Peckover somehow."

"I guess we'll make him sit up!" growled Bob vengefully. "I reckon he ought to be lynched! I suppose he believes it was us; but that's no excuse for telling thumping lies!"

Yen Chin came gliding out of the house with a grin on his yellow face.

"Ole Flanky—" he began.

"Oh, don't worry!"

"Miss Meadee wantee speakee to Flanky and ugly ole Bob."

"Is that a message, you blessed heathen?" exclaimed Bob.

"Oh, yes! Missee Meadee tellee me tellee you."

"More trouble!" growled Bob. "Come on,

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Frank! We're up against it to-day, and no mistake!"

The chums kicked off their snowshoes, and went into the house.

The door of Miss Meadows' sitting-room was open, and they presented themselves there with glum faces.

Miss Meadows, somewhat to their surprise, gave them a kindly glance as she beckoned them to enter.

"I have just been told something," the schoolmistress began.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob.

"It appears," said Miss Meadows gravely, "that, contrary to my belief, you were speaking the truth this afternoon when Mr. Peckover called here."

"We were, Miss Meadows," said Frank.

"It did not occur to me then that you might have some boyish chivalrous motive for concealing the names of the persons concerned in attacking Mr. Peckover. Is it the case, Lawless, that the persons referred to belonged to Mr. Peckover's school?"

Silence.

"You need not hesitate to speak frankly," said Miss Meadows. "Mr. Peckover is not here now, and I have no intention of acquainting him with what you tell me."

"Oh!" said Bob. "In that case, Miss Meadows, we'll give you the facts fast enough. It was some Hillcrest chaps who snowballed him. We couldn't give 'em away to their headmaster, ma'am."

"Their names?" said Miss Meadows. "In confidence, of course," she added quickly.

"Bird, Fisher, and Blumpy," said Bob, without hesitation.

Miss Meadows pursed her lips.

"I understand now," she said.

"I hope you believe us now, Miss Meadows," said Frank Richards. "I know it looked suspicious our not giving their names; but now you know the reason—"

"I fully believe you, Richards, and I am sorry you have been punished; but at the time you left me no alternative."

"Oh, that doesn't matter, ma'am!" said Bob. "We're not made of putty—I mean, we don't mind a bit. But we didn't want you to think we were liars."

"I do not think so, Lawless, and I am very glad that you have been set right in my eyes. Mr. Peckover was—ahem!—mistaken. No doubt, in the excitement of the moment, he fancied that he had seen you throw the snowballs."

The schoolboys had their own opinion about that, but they did not utter it.

They had a suspicion, too, that Miss Meadows shared their opinion.

"You may go," said Miss Meadows.

"Good-bye, my boys!"

"Good-bye, Miss Meadows!"

The chums walked out in great spirits.

"But how the dickens did Miss Meadows know?" exclaimed Bob, as he sat down in the porch to put on his snowshoes once more.

Frank shook his head.

"Blessed if I know, Bob! She said she had been told something."

"Allee light, oh yes?" Yen Chin grinned into the porch.

"Yes, it's all right, heathen," grinned Bob Lawless, laughing.

"What me tellee you?" grinned Yen Chin.

"Me makee all light, what you tinkee? Yen Chin good old lascal—oh, yes!"

Frank Richards uttered an exclamation.

"You told Miss Meadows, Yen Chin?"

The Chinese nodded.

"Me tellee," he answered. "Settee ole Flanky light, you bet! Chinee velly good boy."

"You young ass!" exclaimed Bob. "As it happens, Miss Meadows isn't going to tell Peckover; but she might have—"

"Nevee mindee; allee samee."

"You blessed heathen, you might have got Dicky Bird lagged by old Peckover! I've a jolly good mind—"

"All's well that ends well," interposed Vere Beauclerc, with a laugh. "It's turned out all right, Bob."

"Well, that's so," admitted Bob. "All the same—"

"Bob Lawless ugly ole lascal!" exclaimed Yen Chin indignantly. "Velly unglateful. Go and choppee-chippee!"

"Well, I guess I'm obliged to you, as it turns out," said Bob. "But if it had led to Dicky Bird being lagged I'd have roped you, heathen, and that's a cert!"

"Bob Lawless velly ugly!" was Yen Chin's reply as he walked away.

Bob laughed.



A LICKING FOR TWO!—"I am satisfied," said Miss Meadows, frowning. "Richards and Lawless, as you have nothing to say, I assume that Mr. Peckover's statement is correct, and I shall punish you severely." The next few minutes were very painful to the two chums. (See Chapter 2.)

"I guess I'm glad we're all O.K. with Miss Meadows again," he said. "But all the same, we're going to make Peckover sorry for telling lies and getting us into hot water."

"We are!" said Frank Richards emphatically.

And Vere Beauclerc nodded assent.

The three chums were of one opinion in that matter, and as they glided homeward through the dusk and the snow they were thinking of ways and means for making Mr. Peckover, of Hillcrest, duly sorry.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Looking for Trouble!

FRANK RICHARDS & CO. did some thinking on the following day, and their thinking was by no means on the subject of their lessons.

They were thinking of Mr. Peckover.

Their rivalry with Dicky Bird and the other fellows at Hillcrest was quite of a good-natured kind, but they did not feel good-natured towards the Hillcrest headmaster.

But how to "go for" Ephraim Peckover was rather a perplexing problem.

They decided that it had to be done, but the "how" remained a problem, and it was not quite settled when lessons were over for the day.

The snow was still thick on the trails, and the chums had come to school on their snowshoes.

After lessons the trio glided out at the gates together, cheerily enough in the keen, frosty air.

"This way!" called out Bob, as they started.

He slid off into the Thompson trail, which led in the direction of Hillcrest School for some distance.

His chums followed him.

"Not going to Thompson?" asked Frank.

"Nope; Hillcrest!" answered Bob briefly.

"The Hillcrest fellows will be gone home."

"All the better; the coast will be clear," said Bob. "I guess it's Peckover we're going to see."

"But—" began Frank.

"We're going to make the rotter sit up for telling lies about us!" said Bob. "It's got to be did."

"But how?"

"We sha'n't find out how by going home. Let's get to Hillcrest, and then we'll see."

"Oh, all right!"

The three chums moved rapidly along the thickly-snowed trail, and turned off into the path to Hillcrest.

They were not long in coming in sight of the new school.

The snow was falling in light flakes, and the high fence of the school enclosure was tipped with white, as well as the roofs of the buildings.

Dusk was deepening over the woods.

From the roofs of Hillcrest a column of smoke rose from a chimney, and was lost in the dusk of the evening.

The gates were closed and locked.

Frank and Beauclerc looked rather humorously at their determined chum. So far as they could see, there was "nothing doing."

"We're going in," said Bob.

"But—"

"Peckover lives there in the schoolhouse, and there's only the man-of-all-work, and his wife as well," said Bob. "Nothing to be afraid of."

"Yes; but—"

"Chuck off your snowshoes and follow your leader, old scout, and not so much chin-wag!" said Bob, who had evidently made up his mind.

"Oh, all right!"

The boys took off their snowshoes outside the fence, and, with Bob, leading the way, they climbed the high fence and dropped down inside.

It was easy enough to approach the house unseen in the gathering dusk, and with the thick snow deadening the sound of their boots.

As they moved on towards the house they were unaware of the fact that four faces rose over the fence from the outside and looked after them.

Dicky Bird, Fisher, Blumpy, and Watson,

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the chums of Hillcrest, were the four, and they were grinning.

"Dear little innocent kids," murmured Dicky Bird. "They don't know they've been spotted! They've a lot to learn at Cedar Creek!"

His comrades chuckled. "But what the thunder are they doing here?" asked Watson. Dicky shook his head.

"I give that one up," he said. "I guess they're after us, but they ought to know that school's closed before this time. Come after me, and keep quiet."

Dicky Bird dropped down inside the fence. His companions followed him, falling silently into the thick snow.

Meanwhile, Frank Richards & Co. had reached the log schoolhouse, utterly oblivious of Dicky Bird's proximity.

The three chums had raced along the trails on their snowshoes, and they had not observed the Hillcrest fellows in the dusk of the woods, but they had been observed themselves.

For the present they were blissfully unaware of that fact.

"Well, now we're here, Bob," said Frank Richards, "what's the game?"

Bob Lawless pointed to a lighted window. "That's the Peckover's sitting-room," he said. "Use your peepers, and you'll see his rascally old cabeza."

Frank looked towards the window. The blinds were not yet drawn, and in the lamp-light within Mr. Peckover was to be seen.

He was warming his hands at a log-fire, and occasionally taking up and sipping from a glass that stood on a table near him.

"That's the rotter!" agreed Frank.

"Get some snow together," said Bob in a whisper. "I'll sling a pebble at the window, and you can bet Peckover will open it and look out. Then you fellows can—"

A chuckle interrupted him.

"Good egg!" said Frank.

"Keep in cover, though; we don't want to be spotted, and another visit made to Miss Meadows."

"You bet!"

Keeping in the shadow of the wall, Bob Lawless crept towards the lighted windows, with several small pebbles in his hand.

Clink, clink, clink!

The pebbles rattled on the window. Mr. Peckover, within, gave a sudden jump, strode to the window, and threw it wide open.

He put out his head and peered round in the dusk.

"Who is there?" he shouted. "How dare you! Who—what— Yarooooop!"

Whiz!

Two big snowballs flew together from Frank Richards and Vere Beaulere.

In the deep dusk they were invisible to Mr. Peckover; but the latter was a good target against the lighted room.

Crash! Smash!

One of the snowballs burst on Mr. Peckover's nose and the other on his chin.

He spun back into the room as if he had been smitten by cannon-balls instead of snowballs.

Bump!

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a yell from the shadows, as the schoolmaster was heard to fall on the floor within.

There was a wild yell from Mr. Peckover. He staggered dazedly to his feet.

As his head showed above the level of the window-sill, three snowballs whizzed in, and smashed upon his head and shoulders.

"Oh! Ah! Gooooop!"

Nearly blinded by snow and crimson with rage, Mr. Peckover rushed to the open window.

Whiz, whiz! Crash!

Snowballs fairly rained on him, and he staggered back from the window.

He did not show himself there again, but caught up a heavy stick, and rushed for the door.

"I guess this is where we vamoose!" chuckled Bob Lawless.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was evidently time to be gone.

The three avengers rushed for the distant fence, to get back to the outer world and their snowshoes.

And there were three gasps of surprise and dismay as they ran into a group of shadowy forms, and were seized on all sides.

"Look out!"

"Down 'em!" chortled Dicky Bird. "Sit on their necks!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And in a second Frank Richards & Co. were on their backs in the snow, with Dicky Bird and his comrades pinning them down.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Awful Luck!

"O OW!"

"Oh!"

"Gruurg!"

"I guess we've got you!" chuckled Dicky Bird, as he planted his knee on Frank Richards' chest, driving him deeper into the snow.

"I guess so!" grinned Fisher.

"Let up!" panted Bob Lawless. "How the thump did you come here, you galoots? I reckoned you were gone home."

"We were going, when we spotted you on the trail," grinned Dicky Bird; "and we came back to see what your game was."

"You jays!" panted Bob Lawless. "Let up! The old jay will be after us in two ticks!"

Dicky Bird looked round in the gloom.

There was a sound of hurried footsteps trampling in the snow.

"By gum! We'd better bunk!" he exclaimed breathlessly.

It was too late to "bunk."

Mr. Peckover, in a towering rage, was rushing on the scene. He had heard the sound of voices, and it guided him in the dusk.

Even as the Hillcrest fellows jumped up from their prisoners the master was upon them.

Mr. Peckover rushed at top speed into the group, laying about him with his stick.

Frank Richards & Co. were still gasping breathlessly in the snow; but Dicky Bird and his friends had jumped up, and they came in for the furious lashes of the stick.

In the deep gloom Mr. Peckover could not see who the boys were; but he could see them well enough to lay on with the stick.

There were wild yells on all sides.

Dicky Bird & Co., yelling wildly, scattered, and ran for the fence.

"You young rascals!" panted Mr. Peckover. "You—you—"

He broke off, with a howl, as his ankle was seized, and he was jerked over.

The Hillcrest master plumped into the snow.

"Hook it!" panted Bob.

Frank Richards & Co. scrambled away, and fled for the fence.

But Mr. Peckover was up in a second, and, stick in hand, rushing in hot pursuit.

Dicky Bird & Co. had reached the fence, and scrambled over hurriedly, falling on hands and knees in the snow without.

They did not stop there, but leaped up and vanished into the gloom.

The chums of Cedar Creek were not so lucky.

They reached the fence, with the Hillcrest master raging only a few yards behind them.

They jumped desperately, and caught the top of the fence, and dragged themselves up.

Before they could reach the top, however, Mr. Peckover was below them, and his stick came into active service.

Whack, whack, whack!

The unfortunate chums were remarkably well placed for punishment as they hung on the fence; and Mr. Peckover did not spare the rod.

Whack, whack, whack!

Frank Richards & Co. struggled desperately to pull themselves over the fence.

They succeeded at last, and the final lashes of the schoolmaster's stick landed on the palms.

Frank and Bob and the Cherub rolled over, and landed in the snow outside, gasping and groaning.

They had been through it with a vengeance.

They rolled in the snow, and groaned, too breathless and smarting to go anything else for a minute or two.

But the sound of bars being removed from the gate aroused them. Mr. Peckover, apparently, was not satisfied yet.

He was coming out to get to close-quarters again, stick in hand.

Frank Richards staggered to his feet.

"Bolt!" he gasped. "The beast is coming out! Oh, dear!"

The three schoolboys snatched up their snowshoes, and, without staying to put them on, fled for the trail.

They put on a good burst of speed, and Hillcrest and its master were soon a good distance behind. Then they slacked down, breathlessly.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Frank. "You ass, Bob—"

"Yow-ow-ow!" groaned Bob. "It would have been all O.K. but for those Hillcrest rotters turning up! Ow, ow!"

"Hallo, here they are!"

Four grinning faces loomed up for a moment in the gloom.

"Enjoyed your visit?" chuckled Dicky Bird.

Then the Hillcrest fellows vanished, chuckling. Frank Richards & Co. were not feeling inclined for pursuit.

They put on their snowshoes, and travelled. They had had enough for one evening.

"Bob, you ass—" groaned Frank.

"Bob, you duffer—" mumbled the Cherub.

To which Bob Lawless' only reply was:

"Ow, ow, ow, ow!"

THE END.

(Another real good yarn of Frank Richards & Co., the merry chums of Cedar Creek School, entitled "Mr. Peckover's Guests!" in next week's bumper issue.)

Result of "WEST HAM" Competition.

In this competition no competitor sent in a correct solution of the picture. The first prize of £5 has therefore been divided between the following two competitors whose solutions contained one error each:

JOHN HOGBEN,
35, Bournemouth Road,
Folkestone.

MISS M. G. REDDING,
Butler Street,
Astwood Bank,
Nr. Redditch.

So many competitors qualified for the third grade of prizes that division among them of the prizes offered was impracticable. The second prize of £2 10s., and the ten prizes of 5s. each, have therefore been added together and divided among the following twenty-three competitors whose solutions contained two errors each:

W. Sidwell, 15, Broadmead Road, Folkestone; C. H. Harrison, 86, Walsingham Street, Walsall, Staffs; N. Willis, "Whelford," Leckhampton, Cheltenham Spa; James King, 29, Fore Street, Westbury, Wilts; Frances Ashworth, 131, Burnley Road, Padiham, Lancs; G. A. Withers, Station Road, Harby, Lincoln; J. Hooper, 27, Morgan

Street, Barry Dock, Glam; Bernard Wallis, 14, Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol; J. de Gruchy, Market Street, Woodstock, Oxon; Alice Taylor, 53, Flaxby Road, Darnall, Sheffield; T. Topping, 62, Ivor Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham; L. Bachelor, 19, Kettering Road, Levenshulme, Manchester; Cyril Danny, 11, Mildenhall Road, Clapton, E. 5; Alfred Carr, 70, Bargate, Boston; J. W. Chapman, 50, Pembrey Road, Llanelli, S. Wales; H. E. Oxenham, 3, Colwith Road, Hammersmith, W. 6; N. D. Snaith, 51, Park Street, Kendal; C. Ayres, 9, The Walk, Birdwell, Nr. Barnsley; A. Lawton, 78, Rose Street, Hanley, Staffs; May Gunn, 15, Waverley Park, Edinburgh; W. S. Village, 41, Empress Road, Derby; Harry Morgan, 27, Victoria Road, Folkestone; J. Ellis, 197, Easton Road, Bristol.

SOLUTION.

The history of West Ham is like that of various other famous football clubs. A steady rise from a humble start. Progress is their motto. They have put up a remarkable fight for the English Cup this season, and outlasted some far better clubs, including the well-known Spurs.

Don't Miss Next Week's Roaring Backwoods Tale on any Account!

THE IMPRISONED MONK!

In which FRIAR TUCK finds himself in a very perilous position. But with his quarter-staff he fights his way to freedom. Of the whereabouts of the rest of the band he is absolutely ignorant . . . had they been captured when the soldiers of the Earl had set upon him, or had they escaped through the town to safety?

BETWEEN TWO FIRES!

But with his quarter-staff he fights his way to freedom. Of the whereabouts of the rest of the band he is absolutely ignorant . . . had they been captured when the soldiers of the Earl had set upon him, or had they escaped through the town to safety?



The Tale With a Thrill in Every Line!

Introduction.

GUY FITZHUGH, a young ward of King Richard Cœur de Lion, unable to tolerate the tyranny of Sir Humphrey de Brionne any longer, has made his escape from the castle of his rascally guardian, fled into the forest of Sherwood, and joined the great band of outlaws under the leadership of ROBIN HOOD. Here he meets many friends—Allan-a-Dale, Friar Tuck, Will Scarlet, and two wandering minstrels, Swexne, the harper, and Isobel.

About this time King Richard had been imprisoned in Normandy when returning from a crusade into the Holy Land, and Prince John had become master of Merry England by underhand means. John is hated by many, but none like him less than ROBIN HOOD THE OUTLAW.

Many times the prince's men-at-arms have come into conflict with the merry men of Sherwood, and many times they have been defeated. But a day comes when John's great following turn the tables on the outlaws, and the foresters are driven into the woods, to seek shelter in their secret hiding-places. But John is not satisfied with this; he kidnaps MAID MARIAN and ISOBEL, the minstrel, and takes them to KENILWORTH with him, where he is to hold a tournament, and where he hopes to trap Robin Hood.

When Robin hears the news he sets forth, masquerading under the title of Sir Nameless of Cumberland, with Guy FitzHugh and one or two other trusty men, and follows the prince to Kenilworth. At the great tournament Robin Hood challenges the prince's champions, defeats them, and is proclaimed victor of the lists. John is infuriated by the downfall of his men, and he sends out spies to find out the identity of the Nameless Knight.

The foresters are walking back from the lists when a messenger from one of the champions stops them.

Now Read On

The Betrayal!

AN esquire, in the livery of Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook, overtook them as Little John spoke.

"Ah, my masters, well met! I see you bear the colours of the Nameless Knight. I pray you direct me to his lodgings, for I bear a message from my master, Sir Geoffrey."

"Yonder it stands," said Little John. "And if you will but tarry here a moment I will acquaint him with your errand."

In another moment Little John drew the curtain aside and beckoned; and the squire, passing in, found the Nameless Knight, stripped to his shirt, but still wearing his helmet, reclining upon a couch of skins, his deep chest heaving tumultuously after his exertions.

"Well, my good fellow, and what does Sir Geoffrey want with me?" said Robin. "I trust he has taken no hurt from my somewhat rough usage?"

"No; he fell lightly," said the squire, drawing forth a paper from his wallet. "He bade me bring you this, and bid you, if you be not too exhausted, to dine with him at his lodging in the town."

Robin took the paper, broke the seal, and as he read it those about him saw his face change. There was a moment's pause, and then, bidding Guy give the man a gold piece for his pains, the outlaw rose.

"Convey my greetings to good Sir Geoffrey," he said, "and tell him I will be with him as soon as I have washed away the traces of combat."

He spoke cheerily enough, but the moment the man had gone his face changed.

"We are in great danger," he said, handing the paper to Friar Tuck; "but, thank Heaven, there is one true man in yonder company upon whom we may rely! Read, friar, in a low voice, so that the others may hear. And get ye to the tent door, Little John, for there must be no eavesdroppers."

The friar, whose jovial face had now

assumed an expression of the greatest concern, read the following lines.

"Greeting, Sir Nameless, though I think I could give you the title you have a right to bear! If you are the man I think you, come with all haste to me. And if I am right in my surmise, you will find that Geoffrey de Rushbrook has not forgotten. Warn your followers to prepare for instant flight, and have your swiftest horse ready saddled, for you will need it."

"By the mass, this is serious," said Friar Tuck.

"Quick, Guy, help me to dress; and you and Allan-a-Dale must follow me to Sir Geoffrey's lodging!" said Robin Hood.

In spite of the remonstrance of Friar Tuck and Little John, Robin clad himself in a complete suit of Lincoln green, threw a long mantle over his shoulders, and in a few minutes took his way towards the little town of Kenilworth, avoiding the main thoroughfare, and passing round behind the tents and booths.

As he approached the hostelry where the three vanquished knights had their lodgings, he saw Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook standing in the doorway with an anxious look on his face, and as his eyes fell on the outlaw, a gleam of recognition came into them.

Laying a finger on his lips, he turned into the inn, and, striding up the staircase, entered a room on the first floor whose windows overlooked the garden. His first action was to shoot the bolt, and then, turning round, he laid his hand on the outlaw's shoulders, and pressed him into a seat.

"If you would sleep to-night with a head upon your shoulders, Robin Hood, listen to what I have to tell you; and, by my hall-dome, I must be brief! Do you remember one Whitsuntide, three years ago, when a certain knight, whose horse had fallen lame, was beset at a ford by some broken soldier? The ford was swift, and daylight almost spent, and it was like to have gone hard with him, had not a bold archer sprung from the bushes and loosed his arrows so fast and true that half the scoundrels floated away dead or the current, and



Friar Tuck's fight for liberty in the banqueting-hall of Kenilworth Castle!

THE POPULAR.—No. 230.

On the Track of the Litter with the Blue Curtains!

the other half turned tail. I took a vow that if ever it were in my power to repay that service, Geoffrey de Rushbrook should not be found wanting. Know you one Barford, a forest reeve, a burly man enough, with a red beard, yet having eyes that look two ways at once, which I hold ever to be a bad sign?"

"By the rood, I know him well; and he knows me!" said Robin, with a short laugh. "But tell me more, Sir Geoffrey."

"In short," said Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook, "Barford has revealed you to Earl John, who has sworn that he will not let you escape him this time. Even now his men are mustering to surround your tent; and, what is more, I heard him give orders to Sir Roger FitzPeter to set forth in the instant for London with your fair lady and the girl that we saw last night. Now, that is all, but 'tis enough. If you want money, it is at your disposal. If 'tis a good horse that shall carry you safely out of danger, you may take your pick of mine in the stable below. I have sent my page on an empty errand to the castle. He is a shallow-pated lad, greedy for news, and when he returns we shall hear all that is going forward."

While he was speaking, hurried footsteps were heard on the stairs, and, without ceremony, when Sir Geoffrey had drawn the bolts, the door was thrown open, and Guy, followed by Allan-a-Dale, bounded into the room.

"Fly!" they cried. "Here come the men-at-arms, guided by Redhand, the robber, who, it seems, saw you come thither. 'Tis no use attempting to gain the street. They are not thirty yards off. You can hear the trampling of their horses now!"

Robin made three strides to the window, which looked over the garden of the inn. The shutter was open, and the curtain drawn aside; and, measuring the distance to the ground—which was not great—he lowered himself to the full extent of his arms and dropped, just as a stern voice at the door of the inn rang above the trampling of hoofs and the clash of arms, crying:

"Dismount, and surround the hostelry, in the name of Earl John, and if any man should attempt to leave the building, cut him down without mercy!"

How the Band Found Themselves in Great Peril!

ROBIN alighted on his feet, and darting across the half yard, half garden, disappeared into the stable—a low building, built of wooden beams and sun-baked clay. A long row of horses was tethered to the manger, and the first that Robin set eyes on was a shapely black, with one white hind foot. A saddle stood upon its back, and it wanted but a moment to spring towards it and draw the girth tight. He had already unfastened the reins, which had been tied to the rack, when a voice from the dimness of the stable cried out:

"Ho, master! What do you there? A horse-thief—a horse-thief!" And, snatching up a pitchfork, a burly groom ran full tilt upon Robin, who had barely time to slip round the horse's head to escape the sharp wooden prongs.

There was not a moment to be lost. Already he could hear the clamour of many voices in the inn, and though he had Sir Geoffrey's permission to take the best steed in the stable, Robin remembered that he must not give the generous knight away to a varlet who might betray him. Whatever was to be done must be done with speed of light, and, stooping down, the nimble outlaw sprang under the belly of the horse, and before the man could utter a cry he was seized by the throat and flung violently among the other horses, which reared and lashed out with their hoofs in terror.

Robin had gained breathing-time, and, quieting the black horse with a soothing word and a pat of his strong hand, he led him through the low doorway and vaulted into the saddle.

Casting a glance at the inn, he saw the faces of Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook and the two lads at the window, lively concern visible on their features; and as he raised his arm he saw another sight, that told him he was none too soon.

Redhand, the robber, and Bob Harelip—who knew the inn, no doubt, by prowling about it after dark with the hope of picking

up anything they could lay their hands on—after guiding the soldiers to the door had run through the passage into the yard, and raised a great shout as they saw the well-known Lincoln green emerge from the stable.

As luck would have it they were immediately beneath the window of Sir Geoffrey's room, and as Robin turned the horse's head towards the garden, which was bounded by a low fence, he saw Guy clamber on to the sill, and drop plump upon the neck of Bob Harelip, both figures coming to the ground with great force.

"Brave lad!" cried Robin to himself, as the black horse answered to the pressure of his knees and took the fence like a bird. But he did not see Guy bound to his feet like an india-rubber ball, and seize Redhand by the skirts of his tattered garments as he sped towards the door to raise the alarm.

In his haste to accompany his master, Guy had left his sword in the pavilion, and was armed only with a dagger, thrust into his girdle; but this he drew, and smote Redhand with the massive hilt so true a blow upon the side of his shaggy head that the rascal dropped senseless within a foot of the inn door.

"Quick, boy!" cried a voice behind him, as Allan-a-Dale sprang from the window in his turn; and, running like deer, they gained the end of the stable, and disappeared from Sir Geoffrey's sight.

"Whither now, Allan?" panted Guy. "Ask no questions, but follow me!" cried the young outlaw.

And, following his example, Guy vaulted over the fence of the adjoining garden, just as twenty men-at-arms turned into the little by-lane which divided the two houses.

"Our heads must save our heels now, Guy," said Allan-a-Dale grimly, "for to run another yard would be madness. Luckily, we have not been seen. We'll mingle with the crowd outside, and make our escape that way."

They passed through the house, the inhabitants of which had, fortunately for them, run out into the street to find the cause of the tumult; for a great mob of people had followed the men-at-arms, and filled the thoroughfare from side to side.

"'Tis lucky I have money in my pouch," said Guy. "As soon as it is published abroad that the Nameless Knight of Cumberland was Robin Hood there would be folk enough to recognise me as his squire in this green velvet doublet. Let us make all speed to that dealer in frippery from whom I purchased my first disguise. He has a great store of garments of all sorts, and we can pick and choose to our own liking."

As they turned the corner of the lane of tents that led to the dealer's booth, a great concourse of townfolk met them, all shouting and clamouring loudly, and in their midst marched a dozen soldiers, surrounding a prisoner, while another score pressed back the crowd with the shafts of their brown bills, calling:

"Room, varlets—room, in the name of Earl John!"

"By the rood," said Guy, "this is indeed a bad business!"

For the prisoner was none other than Friar Tuck. The friar was struggling and expostulating violently.

"Gramercy, you shall suffer for this, you dogs!" bellowed Friar Tuck, still keeping up his character as the mock Abbot of Plumpton. "'Tis an insult to the Church. What is the world coming to that an abbot should suffer this humiliation before the common people? Take your knuckles out of my neck, you son of Belial, else will I crack thy skull for thee!"

"Nay, now, Father Abbot," said one of the billmen, "'tis thine own fault if we must use thee roughly. An' thou be what thou say, the earl will release thee—though, by my blade, it looks black against thee!"

It took the united efforts of the twelve men to get the burly prisoner along. But in a few moments escort and prisoner had disappeared, but not before Friar Tuck had seen the two startled faces of the lads, and had bestowed a meaning wink upon them.

"He keeps up a good heart," said Allan-a-Dale, "but I know his soul is sore within him. Heavens! If Earl John hangs our chaplain our firesides will be sad enough o' winter nights, for no one has such rich store of tales and songs and merry jests as the friar."

Terribly crestfallen at this misadventure, they reached the frippery stall, and, holding up a gold piece between his finger and thumb Guy walked boldly within, and was received with an obsequious bow by the Jew who owned it.

"And what is your pleasure, gentles?" said the old Jew. "Ah, you young bloods, what fine games are you playing that you must needs disguise yourselves so often?"

"I suppose you have heard of King Solomon," said Guy. "He was generally accounted a wise man, and it will be all the better for you if you imitate his wisdom and keep your mouth shut."

The Jew trembled, for at that time the race to which he belonged suffered the most terrible persecutions, being subject to wholesale massacres, even at the instigation of King Richard himself.

"And now," said Guy, assuming a tone of authority, "I want a suit such as young gentlemen of small fortune might wear, and another for my servant here."

"I have the very thing," said the dealer; and he drew forth a cloth tunic of deep purple fringed with grey minever. It had a tippet of the same colour, worked along its edge with a border of tarnished embroidery, to which he added purple hose, and boots of yellow leather.

These Guy put on, and spying through the curtain of the booth a vendor of hawks and kestrels not far away, he bought a strong leathern glove for his right hand.

Allan-a-Dale was soon provided for with jerkin and hose of brown, and after Guy had paid they went across to the dealer in birds, where Guy purchased a young Welsh hawk, with hood and bells, and then they turned their steps in the direction of the town.

Listening eagerly for news, they learned that the outlaw had not been taken, and they were soon bargaining with a countryman who had horses to sell—the bailiff of some neighbouring thane, who had brought a drove to Kenilworth in the hopes of disposing of them to some of the gentry.

It was afternoon before they had completed their purchases, which made serious inroads upon the contents of Guy's wallet; but at last they were mounted, and rode through the throng, which still hummed like bees, discussing the surprising sequel to the day's doings, in search of some quiet spot where they could talk over which was best to be done.

Not a trace did they see of any member of the band. The outlaws had got speedy wind of their master's betrayal, and had vanished from sight as mysteriously as they had come.

"Let us into the fields a little way, Allan," said Guy. "Here we may attract attention. And, to say truth, my head reels with all this bustle."

Ere they had reached the outskirts of the crowd, which gathered in groups to talk over this strange thing that had happened, a mounted herald, with a gay tabard, attended by two men-at-arms, came up at a swift trot from the direction of the castle, and, sounding upon his trumpet, cried:

"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Let all honest lieges and peaceable citizens attend to the proclamation of the most gracious Earl John! Whereas it has been strangely discovered that the famous outlaw, Robin Fitzooth, has dared to affront the Court and the noble lords and barons here assembled, be it known that any man who shall harbour or conceal him shall lose his right hand, and any knowing where he is hidden, who shall not instantly declare it, shall be scourged until he is dead!"

Then followed a description of the crimson mantle which bold Robin had last been seen wearing, and which had not been found, as Allan-a-Dale had thrust it into an oak chest in Sir Geoffrey's room, when it fell from Robin's shoulders as he leapt from the window.

With faces of apparent unconcern, Guy and his companion sat on their horses in the centre of the crowd, listening to the herald's bombastic words; but as he moved away to repeat his proclamation in another place, Guy started involuntarily, for, winding down the slope from the castle gates came a strong body of horsemen, and in their midst the lads caught sight of something that set their hearts beating violently.

Swaying and swinging from side to side as the cavalcade came on was a horse-litter, hung with blue curtains, and with eager eyes

they watched the glittering escort as it quickened its pace, and disappeared in a cloud of dust on the road to Warwick.

How Friar Tuck Fought in a Dungeon, Played Quarter-staff in a Hall, and Sang at a Banquet!

FRIAR TUCK sat upon the ground, with his back against the cold stone and his eyes vainly endeavouring to get accustomed to the darkness that surrounded him. The air was dank and chill; his nostrils were filled with the odours of rotting straw and the foul indescribable stench of a prison, for Friar Tuck was in the deepest dungeon beneath the keep of Kenilworth Castle.

It was a large stone vault, into which no daylight ever filtered. Now and then the oppressive silence was broken by a low groan or the rattle of a chain, and, though he could not see them, he knew that the dungeon was tenanted by several other prisoners besides himself.

A deep sigh, which had been repeated several times not far away from him, at length attracted his attention, and, leaning on his right hand, he turned his eyes in the direction of the sound.

"You are an older inhabitant of this place than I, my good friend," said the friar, "seeing that I have been here but a few hours. Tell me, I pray thee, may one look for supper, for I am getting most wondrously hungry?"

A dry, unamiable laugh, broken by a hacking cough, came out of the darkness from the man he had addressed.

"A few hours, you say?" replied the unfortunate prisoner. "Know ye how long I have been chained to this pillar—how long I have endured cold and hunger, and all the noisome reptiles that live in this vault?"

He did not wait for the friar's reply, but went on in a low, frightened, hopeless voice—a voice that alternately thrilled with impotent rage and sank to a whisper in terror, lest it might be overheard.

"It is eight years since they dragged me here. I was a young man then, and full of hope, with a longing for life; now I am

old and grey I doubt not, and all I wish for is to die! You will wish to die before you have been here long!"

And the burly friar felt his heart grow cold as he listened to the utter despair in the voice of the unseen speaker.

"And what was your crime?" he said, after a moment's pause.

"I had a dog," was the reply, "who had more courage than we poor churls, and dared to bark at the baron as he rode by. My lord thought it fine sport to trample the poor beast to death under his horse's hoofs, and when I, scarce knowing what I did, sprang forward to save it, I all unthinkingly laid my hand upon the hilt of my knife. That was my crime. 'Seize him!' said the baron. And he pointed with his hand to the keep that towers above this dungeon, and here they brought me, and 'tis eight years ago!"

Friar Tuck drew a sigh well-nigh as deep as that of the wretched man's, and the corners of his wide mouth drooped.

"And what is your crime?" asked the prisoner in his turn.

"My crime is the outcome of such deeds of tyranny as you have just told of," said Friar Tuck. "My crime is that I prefer the freedom of the greenwood to the yoke of the noble."

"Then we are like to be companions until one or other of us dies!" said the voice in the darkness. "There is no hope for any who come into this place until they are dead!"

"Humph!" said the friar to himself. "I must admit it is not a very hopeful outlook. I only hope that Robin and the rest have escaped!"

"Hark!" said the voice. "They are coming! Do you hear them?"

There was not a sound in the vault, but long acquaintance with that terrible prison made men's ears sharp. And presently there was a grating noise of bolts drawn back, and a door was swung open, admitting the light of two or three torches, which showed the headpieces of a band of soldiery, who dragged half a dozen miserable figures in

their midst, and hustled them roughly into the dungeon.

Friar Tuck scanned them anxiously, with a quickening of the heart; but, though to his great relief he saw they were none of the band, he recognised Redhand, the robber, and Bob Harelip among them, while the rest, from their unkempt, ruffianly appearance, were evidently their companions in crime.

These were the men for whom he had lain in wait by the roadside on that evening when he encountered Guy, and there was a deadly feud between the honest outlaws and the band of Redhand, the robber.

"To your kennels, dogs!" said one of the soldiery roughly, bestowing a brutal kick on Bob Harelip, which made the scoundrel writhe.

One of the men-at-arms, bearing a pitcher of water and a hunk of coarse bread in his hands, strode over to the place where the friar lay, holding the torch high above his head.

"Here is your provender, monk!" he said. "And be not greedy, for this must last ye two days! You will have time to think over your sins before you are brought to Earl John, who will give ye short shrift enough, I warrant!"

He placed the pitcher on the ground, and tossed the bread into the friar's lap, and then, turning on his heel, strode to the door, where his companions stayed.

The vault boomed dully as he pulled the portal to and clanged the bolts into their sockets, and, lifting the pitcher to his lips, the friar drank a long draught. As for the robbers, they crouched on the floor in a group, and at first there was silence among them; but presently they began to whisper among themselves. The glare of the torch had been sufficient for them to recognise their ancient enemy, the fighting friar, who had soundly trounced them on more than one occasion, and, miserable as was their own case, the villains instantly began to plot for vengeance.

"Art sure 'tis he?" whispered Bob Harelip. "For myself, I saw but the skirt of a churchman's robe."

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY!



As Guy FitzHugh and Allan-a-Dale turned the corner of the lane a great crowd of townsfolk met them, all shouting and clamouring loudly, and in their midst marched a dozen soldiers, surrounding the struggling figure of Friar Tuck. (See page 24.)

THE FIGHT IN THE CELLS WITH THE ROBBERS!



Stooping down, Friar Tuck seized one of the prostrate robbers by the ankles, and whirling him round and round, mowed the enemy down as they sprang at him. The dungeon rang with shouts, and the noise brought the guard. The door was flung open and in strode the men-at-arms. (See this page.)

"Didst ever know me make a mistake, Bob Harelip?" snarled Redhand angrily.

"Yes, curse you!" replied his companion hoarsely. "You made one to-day when you got us all taken and lodged here. Remember, 'twas thou that freed Barford, the forest reeve. Would that we had left his bones to whiten in the wood, as ours will do on the gibbet!"

"Hush, fool! We are not dead yet," said their leader. "And I, for one, shall die the easier if I first have my revenge on Friar Tuck. You have your knives; let us wait till he sleeps, and then fall upon him. None can say that we did it."

Friar Tuck, with his huge arms crossed upon his chest, was listening grimly to the whisperings from the darkest corner. His heavy breathing was loud and regular, and he sat quite motionless.

Suddenly, at a little distance upon his left hand, a faint noise fell upon his ear, as though someone was dragging himself slowly towards him across the mouldering straw litter that rotted on the floor of the vault. He listened. The sound came nearer.

"Ho," thought the friar, "now, what is this? I am too old a bird to be caught napping!"

And, having noticed during the few moments that the torch cast its wavering light over his corner of the dungeon, that a round pillar supported the roof a short stride from him on his right side, he gathered his legs noiselessly under him, and, rising to his feet with all the instincts of a true forester, stepped lightly towards it, clenching his mighty fist.

He was not wrong. Scarcely had he gained his new position, when he heard a low cry of exultation, and recognised the voice of Redhand, the robber. He could not see his hand before his face, but he knew that half a dozen men had precipitated themselves on the very spot where he had been lying, and were stabbing it furiously with their knives.

The cry of exultation instantly gave place to one of baffled rage as the robbers discovered that, instead of the portly form of

the friar, their whittles buried themselves to the hilts in the clay of the floor; and then it was that, with a mighty roar, Friar Tuck sprang among them. It was all guesswork, but he had judged the distance well; his sandalled feet came in contact with the head of a man just rising to his knees, his fist, flung out at random in the darkness, met the jaws of another, and, stooping down, he seized one of the prostrate robbers by the ankles, and, whirling him round and round in lieu of a better weapon, mowed the murderers down as they sprang to their feet.

The dungeon rang with shouts and furious yells, and echoed to the friar's deep bellow, until, flinging the robber far away from him, he stepped back to the shelter of the pillar to take his breath after his almost superhuman exertions. As he did so, the clang of the bolts was heard again, the door was flung open, and for the second time that night the noisome dungeon reflected the glare of torches as the men-at-arms strode clanking in.

"Come forth, monk!" cried one of them. "We are to carry you before Earl John sooner than we thought, and take care that you struggle not as you did when we brought you hither!"

Behind him bristled a forest of glaives, for, warned by his previous resistance, the men had come well armed and to the number of twenty or more.

"How now, what is here?" cried their leader, holding his torch low as he stumbled over the body of one of the robbers. "What, knives, are ye not satisfied with a free lodging and food fit for the king's table, but ye must fight with each other? Why, by the mass, the man is dead!"

"And little loss if he be," said Friar Tuck, coming forward. "They set upon me when they thought I slept, but, by my halidome, I have given good account of the knives!"

"This must be seen into later," said the men-at-arms. "There is that above that will brook no delay. Now, Sir Monk, thou seemeth a right hard hitter, and in some thought I am sorry for ye. But wilt come peaceably?"

"Ay, marry, that I will!" said Friar Tuck, assuming a boisterous cheerfulness he was very far from feeling; and, gathering round him with their weapons in readiness, the soldiers marched him from the dungeon, barred the door behind them, and conducted him up a winding stone staircase, so narrow that it seemed like a shaft of a well. The torches gave a red, uncertain light, and filled the air with pitchy fumes, and with surprising abruptness the staircase ceased, giving on to a small stone landing that led directly into the banqueting-hall.

For a moment Friar Tuck's eyes blinked with the sudden transition from darkness into light, for a great fire burned at one end of the hall, and the glare of fifty torches showed Earl John and his boon companions revelling as they had done on the night before the tournament. It was the same chamber in which the Nameless Knight had sat at the earl's right hand, and the company was the same, with one omission. Sir Humphrey de Brionne had been sorely hurt in his encounter, and lay in an upper chamber attended by the leech.

"If I am to die," thought Friar Tuck, "at any rate they shall never boast that I showed fear."

And, holding his head high, he strode up to the table, and with his feet wide apart, and his arms crossed upon his capacious chest, confronted Earl John, a magnificent specimen of herculean manhood in his furred abbot's robe and shaven crown.

"Your Grace has sent for me," said Friar Tuck, the corners of his mouth twitching. "It is, as I suppose, that you have discovered the error that has been made, and would do redress for the gross affront that has been put upon Mother Church in my poor person."

He spoke so boldly, and in so loud a voice, that Earl John flung his head back and laughed.

"Gadzooks, the insolence of these shavelings passes all belief! Knowest thou not, man, that you will hang to-morrow for an outlaw? Come, rogue, we know thee to be no abbot, but a certain renegade monk of Fountains Abbey, called Friar Tuck, the stoutest handler of the quarterstaff

betwixt London Bridge and the Scottish border."

Friar Tuck gazed at the row of faces in the vain hope that he might discover, at any rate, one friend in court, and as he did so, his heart gave a sudden jump, for, standing at the end of the table, he spied one of the prince's pages with his arm round a bundle of quarterstaves.

"Ho, ho!" thought the friar to himself. "There is something going forward! I must be wary."

"Come, rascal," cried the earl, "out with it! Thou art Friar Tuck, I tell thee!"

"If your Grace tells me so, 'tis not my place to contradict you."

"You admit it, then?"

"Nay, I admit nothing," said the friar, "until I know the cost of the admission. To save my neck I would willingly admit that I was Saladin himself!"

"Well, I will keep thee in suspense no longer, leaving that for the hangman presently. Sir Gerald of Camville fancies himself mightily with the quarterstaff, and wagers his best horse that he could overthrow Tuck, the outlaw."

Gerald of Camville leaned across the table and laid his hand on the earl's sleeve.

He had been scrutinising the man before him, and perhaps began to doubt his own powers.

"Unless this be Friar Tuck, I fight him not!" said Sir Gerald. "The man is a giant."

"Giant or not," said Friar Tuck, with a merry chuckle, "I am he whose comb you wish to clip, and I am willing to meet you if thou hast stomach for the fray!"

"Well spoken, friar!" cried Earl John. "And since no man fights without hope of some guerdon, if thou beat Sir Gerald I will grant thee three more days to live!"

Friar Tuck's eyes twinkled as he heard these words. Much might happen in three days. And, somewhat reluctantly, Sir Gerald of Camville rose to his feet, revealing a spare, sinewy frame that promised great activity, and no little physical strength.

At a signal from John the page came forward, and the two combatants proceeded to select their respective weapons.

The friar balanced each staff in succession in his mighty hand until he came to one that met with his approval, and he had taken up his place a few yards from the table long before Sir Gerald had satisfied himself.

Then the knight ungirded his sword, and the pair faced each other.

"Hold one moment, Gerald of Camville!" said Friar Tuck. "I am somewhat rough in my play, and few men have met me but they have gone away with broken heads!"

"I stood up to fight thee, not to hear thee preach!" said Sir Gerald of Camville, whose anger rose at the sight of the laughing mouth and twinkling eye of his opponent.

"As you will," said the friar, "only 'tis death for we of the common sort to raise hand against a noble, and I do not wish my three days to be curtailed."

As he spoke, Sir Gerald made a sudden cut at him, which the friar warded off by a twist of his wrist, giving the knight an ugly prod in return that did not improve his temper.

Friar Tuck now retreated slowly, acting entirely on the defensive until he had reached the end of the table, and by that time, having thoroughly learned all that Sir Gerald could do with a quarter-staff, and finding there was a great deal he could not do at all, the friar gave a loud roar that made all the company start, and began to pursue Gerald of Camville in his turn.

His quarterstaff played like lightning about the head and shoulders of the knight, who backed step by step, warding off the blows with great difficulty.

It was evident to the spectators that the friar was playing with his adversary as a cat plays with a mouse.

"Now will you give me the better, man?" cried Friar Tuck.

"I will give thee a cracked pate, thou saucy shaveling!" said Sir Gerald, suddenly bringing his hand down the staff and launching a vicious blow at the friar's temple.

Up went the brawny arms, and the iron-shod weapon rang on the friar's staff with a force that would have shivered it in twain had it not been well-seasoned ash, and for one second the friar's bushy eyebrows drew together above his nose.

"Now, Gerald of Camville, I have played thee long enough; but mark you, Earl John, that is the last blow Sir Gerald will strike

to-night. Look to it, Sir Braggart, that thou trip not over aught among the rushes, for you are going to run faster than you have done for years, and that backwards!"

Then began the most extraordinary exhibition of quarterstaff that any had ever witnessed, for Friar Tuck, his arms whirling like the sails of a mill, chased Gerald of Camville twice round the table, raining upon him a constant succession of light blows delivered on every part of his frame, and never twice in the same place.

A third time would they have made the circuit of the board, but the knight had had enough, and was just on the point of saying so, when one of the dogs, of which there were several in the hall, chose that unfortunate moment to bolt from beneath the table with a large bone in his jaws, pursued by half a dozen of his friends.

With a terrific yell Gerald of Camville was carried off his feet, sat on a deerhound, and got badly bitten, whereupon the whole company laughed until their sides ached.

When the discomfited knight had picked himself up, and the dogs had been duly driven to the other end of the room, Earl John pointed to a vacant chair, and bade the victor be seated.

"By my father's bones, thou art a burly knave!" laughed the earl. "Push the wine-jar towards him!"

"It seems almost a pity, your Grace, to hang a man like me," said Friar Tuck, looking along the table with a comical expression on his huge mouth.

"Marry, and if thou wert not Robin Hood's man," said the earl, "thou shouldst not hang. Still, thou hast won me a good horse to-night, and in return you shall have four days to live instead of three!"

"I would there were some other services I could render your Grace," said the friar. "I might win a year or two back, at that rate."

The knights and barons were lavish in their praise of the friar's skill, and bending over the table, toasted him, and it chanced that the seat he had taken was next to Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook.

Earl John's good humour, however, speedily changed, and he sat there biting his nails, for the affront that Robin Hood had put upon him rankled very deep.

Now, Friar Tuck was a wily man, and out of the corner of his eye he saw the change in the earl's demeanour, and knew that it boded no good to himself.

Presently he noticed a strange thing. Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook placed his goblet to his lips, put it down again almost untasted, and, watching his opportunity, emptied its contents on to the rushes beneath the table.

As he did so, he threw a swift glance at the friar, and motioned to him to do the same.

Friar Tuck instantly understood his meaning. Already several of the guests were sleeping with their heads upon the board.

Then Friar Tuck lifted up his voice and trolled out a lusty ditty with a chanting chorus, which the rest took up, until the hall rang with the din.

Again the glasses were charged, Friar Tuck and Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook alone drinking sparingly, and the friar, having warmed to his work, rattled off story after story, and sang song after song, until it wanted but a short hour of midnight.

Earl John himself had succumbed to sleep at last, and lay huddled up in his chair. A short, thick-set baron immediately in front of the friar was the only other man of the party awake, and already his head had begun to nod.

Friar Tuck toasted him again and again, pretending each time to drain his horn to the bottom, and then, as the torches began to burn low, he saw his vis-à-vis let his goblet fall among the rushes, and, crossing his arms on his chest, he sunk his head forward, and passed into the land of oblivion.

"Now, man, you have a quick brain," said Sir Geoffrey de Rushbrook. "I have done all I can for you for the sake of your leader. Canst devise some means to pass the castle gate?"

(There will be another long, thrilling instalment of our wonderful serial next week. Do not miss it!)

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This new Bunter is fresh and lively as the morning. Wherefore this extraordinary metamorphosis? Read next Tuesday's story. You will be considerably enlightened. It is amazing! Here we have the changed Bunter raking in the compliments, winning admiration galore!

"MR. PECKOVER'S GUESTS!"
By Martin Clifford.

The past of Peckover would most likely prove interesting. Mr. Peckover, of the Backwoods, figures in a bright and refreshing manner in next week's story of Cedar Creek. Of course, the worthy gentleman did not bring it off when he essayed to become head of Miss Meadows' establishment. Frank Richards & Co. were not taking any! For all that, Peckover has his points. He has found the spirit of sportsmanship out West. The new yarn does everybody credit, including the author.

"HANSOM'S MISTAKE!"
By Owen Conquest.

Look out for a particularly cheery Rookwood tale next week. You will find it all there in the Popular, and I feel pretty sure when you have sampled the yarn you will admit it to be one of the most interesting and sparkling narratives we have ever had from Rookwood concerning Jimmy Silver and his pals, while the slight error laid to the account of the aforesaid Hansom will be noted with deep interest.

"MAKING THINGS LIVELY!"
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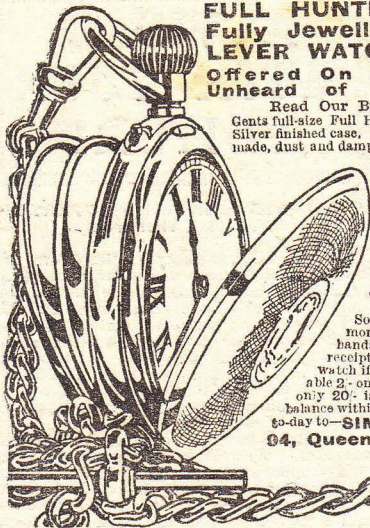
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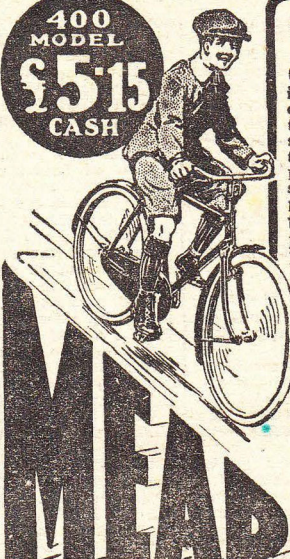
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