

ANOTHER TOPPING FREE GIFT INSIDE!

# The POPULAR

EVERY TUESDAY.  
Week Ending  
August 7th,  
1926.  
How Series.  
No. 393.

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393



THIS GRAND  
STAND-UP  
CUT-OUT of  
J.M. Gregory  
(AUSTRALIA)

FREE  
*Inside!*

6 Splendid  
Stories in  
THIS NUMBER!

Read "Patsy" Hendren's Great New Cricket Story To-day!

## A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

All about next week's Free Gift Issue.

### OUR FREE GIFTS!

I T need but a quick glance at the shoals of letters that flooded into my office this morning, to see how much our wonderful

Free Gifts are appreciated. Not just one letter pronounced the opinion that our stand-up figures are the finest that have ever been given away, but dozens of them. One letter said: "I am a great follower of cricket, and my interest has been doubled by the fact that the Australians are over here. I wanted a souvenir of this great cricket year, and thought of cutting out newspaper photos of my heroes, but that is not necessary now, for I can collect your Free Figures of the men who are battling for us in the Tests."

That is certainly the idea: collect 'em! If you have been getting the POPULAR since the beginning of the presentation, you will now have FIVE PHOTOS in your collection, that is counting to-day's grand Gift of J. M. Gregory, the wonderful Australian bowler. There are THREE MORE Free Figures to come before we finish these gifts.

This week's Free Gift is one of the best, showing Gregory in his terrifying attitude, or rather his fighting attitude. When our batsmen see this fine bowler like this, they prepare to guard their wickets with tremendous care. When Gregory bowls, the batsmen have to be extra wary.

Next Tuesday's Free Gift will be that of W. R. Hammond. Hammond plays, as you know, for Gloucestershire, and he is a really splendid batsman. He is still a young man, and he has a great career before him. But for illness, he would undoubtedly have figured in the present series of Test Matches. The county he plays for is well-known for "bringing out" young cricketers, and making them into big personalities in the cricket world. Hammond is one of the young stalwarts who is developing under their guidance. You will never forgive yourself if you miss the grand stand-up photo of

him, which will be given away in next week's special Gift Issue.

### STAND THEM UP!

Last week I gave you a few clear instructions about the cutting of the green base of your Free Figures to form the stand. It is perfectly simple, but I think it might be well to repeat those instructions this week for readers who have not seen them.

Take the photo in your hand, and on the extreme left of the green base you will see a black line marked "Cut." Cut along this line from the top DOWNWARDS to within an eighth of an inch of the bottom of the base. On the extreme right of the base there is another vertical line marked "Cut." This time you cut along the line UPWARDS, stopping short of the top of the base. Now bend the stand back at the dotted lines and interlock the cuts into one another. You have now formed a firm stand for your figure.

### DOUBLE YOUR COLLECTION!

Do you know that our grand Companion Paper, the "Magnet," is giving away Free Gifts of famous cricketers as well as this paper? If you want to double your collection of stand-up figures, buy the "Magnet" every week. This paper commenced their presentation at the same time as the POPULAR, and the "Magnet" Free Gifts now number five, including this week's Figure of the famous Jack Hobbs.

### NEXT WEEK'S STORIES!

Here are a few details of next Tuesday's grand stories:

An additional note of appreciation in the letters from my readers this morning, was extended to the wonderful New Cricket Story "Palsy" Hendren is writing. It came as a great surprise to every reader. They knew of

"Pat's" tremendous cricket work, some had followed his prowess for years, but not one guessed that this famous sportsman could write a really first-class story. Now they know that he is as good with the pen as with the bat. Every cricket enthusiast is following the story with great keenness, and looking forward to every instalment. Next week's instalment of "THE TEST MATCH KID!" will be as thrilling as ever. You must not miss it!

There will be the usual three complete school stories in next week's number. One of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, which deals with the Pistical Four's exciting holiday tramp; a long rollicking tale of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, and another stirring tale of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, dealing with their strange quest into the Yukon. The next old-time romance of Robin Hood and his Merry Outlaws, is greater than ever, and you will enjoy reading the complete Nature story.

### SPECIAL HOLIDAY OFFER!

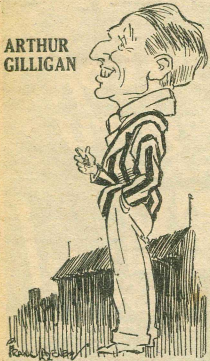
At this time of the year, when thoughts turn to the summer holidays and grand excursions, one of the most important items in the luggage to be taken away is the camera. Few people now-a-days do not understand photography or are without a camera when they set out for the vacation.

As an extra-special holiday offer in our weekly competition "GOOGLIES"—which will be found below—I am offering, next week, seven topping cameras as prizes. These cameras are really wonderful, and they are made by the famous Kodak Company. Each camera will take a photo measuring 2 1/2 by 4 1/2—roll films being used. This special offer will only be for two weeks, that is during the height of the holiday season, and if you wish to win one of these topping film cameras, make a point of entering the contest next week.

For this week's contest in the "Googlies" competition, I am offering the following prizes: First prize, £2 2s., and six 10/6 as second prizes. But next week you will have the chance of winning either a first prize of £2 2s. or one of the second prizes (seven in number) of a "POPULAR" FILM CAMERA.

YOUR EDITOR.

ARTHUR GILLIGAN



## OUR WEEKLY COMPETITION!

A Five Minutes Contest!

# "GOOGLIES"

FIRST PRIZE

£2 2s. 0d.

Six Prizes of

10/6 Each.

This is a simple, fascinating competition in which everyone can join. All you've got to do is to round off the unfinished verse printed on the right, here. Remember that your last line must scan with the first two. Don't try and be too clever—a simple but forceful line is what is wanted.

To the sender of the "last line" which, in the Editor's opinion, is the best, will be awarded the useful money prize of £2 2s. To each of the six next best, prizes of 10s. 6d. will be awarded.

### DIRECTIONS:

When you have thought out a really good last line, fill in the coupon below, IN INK, taking

care to sign your name and address clearly and post it to:

"Popular" "Googlies" No. 5,

Gough House, Gough Square,

London, E.C. 4 (Comp.),

so as to reach that address not later than Thursday, August 12th, 1926.

You may send in as many attempts as you like, but each effort must be written, IN INK, on a separate entrance form as provided here. It is a distinct condition of entry that the Editor's decision must be regarded as final.

Employees of the proprietors of the POPULAR may not compete.

Without Arthur Gilligan's aid  
The fortunes of Sussex would fade  
In alliance with Tate  
He's a bowler first-rate.

Example last line:

Lion-hearted, and never dismayed.

## POPULAR "GOOGLIES" COMPETITION. NO. 5. FREE COUPON.

I agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and binding.

LAST LINE .....

Name .....

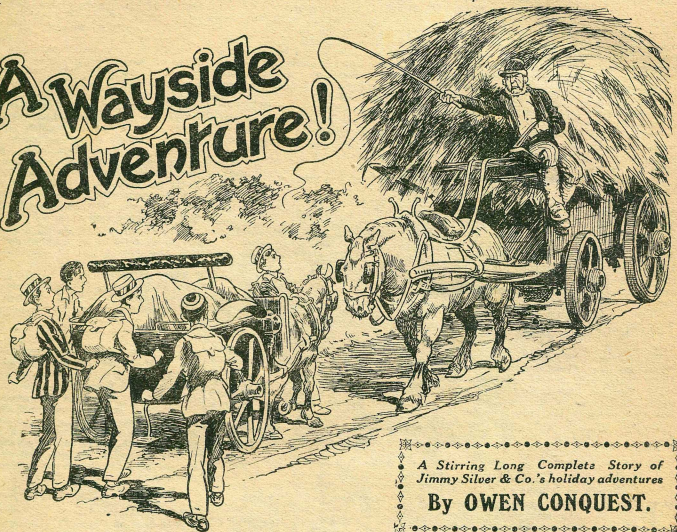
Address .....

Closing Date, Thursday, August 12th, 1926.

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**ROOKWOODERS ON THE ROVE!** Fortune favours the brave, the saying goes, and it certainly favours Jimmy Silver & Co., in their first adventure on tramp!

# A Wayside Adventure!



A Stirring Long Complete Story of Jimmy Silver & Co.'s holiday adventures  
**By OWEN CONQUEST.**

### THE FIRST CHAPTER. Trouble on the Road!

"IT'S a giddy block in the traffic!" said Jimmy Silver.

The Rookwooders grinned. There was not much "traffic" in that narrow, sunken lane on the borders of Sussex and Kent—in fact, Jimmy Silver & Co. had not had the slightest expectation of meeting any vehicle there.

The lane was not only narrow, but the earth was banked up on either side to a height of several feet, with hedges at the top of the steep slopes up to the fields.

Along the lane the Rookwood holiday traps were cheerfully wending their way when a farm-cart came in sight ahead.

Jimmy Silver was leading Trotsky, the pony, with the little baggage-cart thumping over the ruts behind Trotsky's whisking tail. Arthur Edward Lovell walked on the other side of Trotsky. Baby and Newcome and Putty Grace strolled along beside the cart.

Narrow as the lane was, there was plenty of room for the Rookwood outfit. But the farm wagon ahead, coming towards them filled the lane from side to side, the hubs of the wheels brushing against the ferns and nettles on the banks.

The wagon had turned suddenly out of a field gate—the fat, ruddy man who was driving it calmly taking possession of the whole road, without a glance ahead to see whether the way was clear.

A few minutes more and the Rookwood outfit would have passed the gate, leaving a free road for the wagon. Now the road was completely blocked for them, and also for the farmer, for there was no room for either party to pass the other.

"Halt!" said Lovell. Jimmy drew Trotsky to a stop. Trotsky was always very obedient at such moments. It was in moments of starting that Trotsky revealed the fact that he had a will of his own.

But the wagon did not stop. It came rumbling on, as if it would overwhelm the little baggage-cart with its bulk.

Jimmy waved his hand to the ruddy-faced man.

"Hold on!" he shouted "Gerrout of the way!" "What?"

"Clear the road there!" "Why, the cheeky ass!" exclaimed Lovell indignantly.

The man in the wagon was not a pleasant-looking gentleman. Perhaps the hot weather affected his temper. He had bulldog features and bushy red whiskers, and a very cross countenance. He cracked his whip and waved it at the juniors. He did not stop the wagon until his horse's nose was nearly touching Trotsky's—the gigantic farm-horse loomed over the little pony like an elephant.

"Don't you hear me?" roared the big man with the whiskers. "Get that thing out of the road."

"It's for you to get out of the

road," retorted Jimmy Silver. "Back into the gate again."

"Likely!" said the gentleman with the whiskers.

"We should have to back a mile or more," said Jimmy Silver. "That's the nearest where you could pass on."

"Well, do it!"

"Go and eat coke!" roared Lovell, in great indignation. "Don't you know the rules of the road? You've only a dozen yards to back."

"Are you shifting?" inquired the big man. "I'm driving on, anyhow. You can take your chance if you don't shift."

And he set the gigantic horse in motion.

Jimmy Silver grabbed at Trotsky and backed him hastily. He suspected that the red-faced man had been drinking; anyhow, it was evident that Whiskers did not mean to listen to reason. And as the Rookwood outfit had been lent to the juniors by a kind friend for the holidays, they certainly couldn't have it run down—apart from other considerations.

There was no room in the narrow lane for even the pony and the little baggage-cart to turn. It had to back; and it backed, first of all, into the bank, and when it was steered off that bank, it promptly backed into the other. Trotsky was a useful pony, but he was not accustomed to back-peddalling, as it were.

Five excited and wrathful juniors clung round the baggage-cart and

guided the wheels, and backed the pony; and all the time the big farm-horse and wagon loomed over them, and the big-whiskered man grinned down at them in a most exasperating way.

For a quarter of a mile the Rookwood outfit backed, in hot haste and hot sunshine, with tempers reaching boiling-point.

Fortunately, there they reached one of the little "bays" which are arranged in narrow country lanes for carts to draw into when other vehicles have to pass.

Trotsky and the baggage-cart were successfully backed into that little space, leaving the road clear for the farmer.

He cracked his whip and grinned as he drove by.

The Fistical Four glared at him in speechless wrath; but Putty Grace, with great presence of mind, jerked a pea-shooter out of the cart. Putty was a good shot. In an instant he was ready with his weapon of offence, and as the grinning farmer drove by, the first pea flew almost like a bullet, and it caught the big man under the ear.

"Yow!" ejaculated Whiskers suddenly.

"Go it, Putty!" gasped Lovell, in great delight.

Whiz, whiz, whiz! Putty was going it! The tiny but stinging missiles fairly rained over the fat red-whiskered face. The big man did not grin any more, the humour of the situation was now lost on him. He drew the wagon to a halt, jumped down, and rushed at the Rookwood juniors, brandishing his long whip.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Rough on Whiskers!

"LINE UP!" shouted Jimmy Silver. The five Rookwood juniors lined up promptly to meet the rush of the big gentleman with the whisksers.

In the wagon, Whiskers had had all the advantage over the little two-wheeled baggage-cart, but hand to hand, the Fourth-Formers of Rookwood had no doubt that they could give a good account of themselves—no doubt whatever.

With his red face redder than ever with wrath, the big man rushed down on them, his whip lashing through the air. Putty Grace just dodged the lash, and before the big man's arm could go up again, the Fistical Four had closed in on him.

Four pairs of hands grasped him at once, and he came over with a crash in the grasp of the four.

He gave a loud, breathless grunt as he landed in the lane. What happened next Whiskers probably never knew clearly.

But he found himself lying on his back, half in the lane, half in the nettles, on the sloping bank, with a couple of juniors standing on his legs and one sitting on each of his arms, and another gripping him by the collar.

He struggled terrifically, and he was a powerful man but he was not quite good enough for the five sturdy fellows who were quite as resolute as himself.

"Let go!" bawled Whiskers, crimson with fury. "Gerrup! Lerrup! Gerroff!"

"Keep smiling, old bean!" said Jimmy Silver, rather breathlessly.

"I—I—I!"

"You're a road-hog, old nut," said Putty Grace severely, "and you're bad-tempered! In these sweet and pastoral

surroundings you ought to be calm, placid, and good-tempered. You see that?"

Whiskers did not look as if he saw it. He looked as if he saw red.

"Give him a dozen with his own whip!" suggested Lovell.

"I—I—I!" spluttered Whiskers.

"Looks as if he would be violent if we let him up!" remarked Jimmy Silver. "Farmers are generally good-tempered chaps, but this merchant seems a regular Hun!"

"Let me up!" roared Whiskers, struggling furiously. "I'll smash you! I'll wallop you! Lemme up!"

"What an inducement to us to let him up!" murmured Putty.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—groogh!—young scoundrels—ooch—"

The enraged man struggled and heaved beneath the juniors, but they held him fast. Putty looped the long lash of the whip, and Lovell and Raby dragged the big hands together.

The loop was slipped over the wrists and drawn tight. Putty knotted it scientifically in the best style of a first-class Boy Scout.

"Now the dear gent won't do any harm," said Putty. "Can't waste any more time teaching him manners!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Rookwooders rolled the big man into the nettles and left him. He rolled and struggled and sat up, jerking savagely at the bonds on his wrists.

But for the fact that his hands were tied, most certainly there would have been a terrific affray on the spot.

Jimmy Silver & Co. returned to Trotsky, who was cheerfully cropping the grass.

"Good-bye, Gilbert!" called out Putty Grace, waving his hand.

"Farewell, Freddy!" chuckled Lovell. The farmer struggled to his feet.

"Take this here off!" he roared. "How am I to drive my hoss with my hands like this here?"

"Is that a conundrum?" asked Putty.

"You young rips—"

"You'll work it loose in time," said Jimmy Silver consolingly. "Say half an hour. That will give you time to reflect on the trouble caused by bad temper, dear man!"

"You—you—you—"

"Ta-ta, Whiskers!"

The chums of Rookwood wended their way onward again with Trotsky, leaving Whiskers struggling with the whiplash.

He disappeared behind a bend of the lane, though his voice could be heard for quite a long time across the intervening fields.

Jimmy Silver & Co. passed the gate of the field, whence the wagon had emerged, having lost a good hour's time owing to the obstinacy of Mr. Whiskers. But they were comforted by the knowledge that Whiskers had probably lost as much.

"That would be a jolly good field for camping," remarked Arthur Edward Lovell, with a glance over the gate.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"As it probably belongs to Whiskers, we'll give it a miss," he replied. "I hardly think he would be hospitable if we camped on his land."

"Perhaps not!" chuckled Lovell.

The Rookwood tramps pushed on till they came to a cross-roads. The sun was sinking in a blaze of purple and gold, but it was still very hot. At the cross-roads the adventurers paused and looked about them.

"We've done about twenty miles to-day," said Lovell. "Time we had a rest."

"Not much more than ten, I think," said Raby.

"Twenty-two or three, I fancy," said Lovell, who always had a strong bias in favour of his own opinion. "If we'd come under twenty I shouldn't feel fagged. I do feel fagged."

"Which was a clincher!"

"Well, there's water yonder," said Putty of the Fourth, pointing down one branch of the lane. "We want water for camping. Let's try in that direction."

"I can't see any water," said Lovell.

"You see, there's a bridge. The lane runs over a little wooden bridge yonder," said Putty patiently and kindly. "Bridges often mean water under them—not always, of course. But there's water there, so come on!" And Putty led the way down the lane.

Trotsky and the juniors followed on behind Putty, who reached the little wooden bridge well ahead of them.

He stopped and sat on the low parapet to wait for them, looking down at the stream that ran beneath between steep, rushy, and reedy banks.

Then all of a sudden, to the amazement of his comrades, Putty jumped on the parapet, threw his hands together, and dived off, and vanished from sight.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Rookwooders to the Rescue!

"WHAT the thump—"

"Putty!"

"What the dickens—"

In their amazement, Jimmy Silver & Co. stood and stared at the empty bridge ahead from which Putty of the Fourth had so suddenly vanished.

Why a fellow should dive into a stream with his clothes on was a deep mystery to the Fistical Four.

"He's potty!" growled Lovell.

"There's something up!" said Jimmy Silver quickly.

And, leaving the outfit, the captain of the Rookwood Fourth raced forward to the bridge, reaching it in a few seconds.

He stared over the low wooden parapet into the stream.

"Good heavens!" gasped Jimmy.

He could see how very Putty had dived from the bridge. Down the stream a little girl's hat was floating on the current, and Putty, swimming strongly, had just reached its owner and dragged her to the surface. It was a child of five or six. And a number of red poppies, scattered on the steep bank and floating on the current, showed that the little girl had been gathering flowers, when she had lost her footing and fallen in. The stream was not deep, but it was swift, and Putty was only just in time to save the child from being swept away under the bridge to certain death.

"Hold on, Putty!" shouted Jimmy.

"What's up?" bawled Lovell from the road.

Jimmy Silver did not heed that question if he heard it. He could see that Putty was in difficulties, and he stayed only to throw off his hat and his jacket, and then he dived.

He came up a yard or two from Putty, who was swimming with one hand and supporting the child with the other.

Jimmy was with him in a twinkling, and relieved him of his burden. But there was no hold on the banks, and they were swept under the bridge together, the child between them, quite unconscious.

Lovell reached the bridge, and stared over in bewilderment.

"Well, of all the potty fellows!"

ejected Lovell. "Fancy fellows jumping into the water with their clobber on! I'd jolly well like a swim after that dashed dust, but—"

"Help!"  
Raby and Newcome ran to the other side of the bridge. Then, seeing what was on, they scrambled down to the bank.

"Come on, Lovell!" yelled Raby. "Rot! The pony will clear off if I do. What's on, anyway?"

Raby and Newcome did not answer that. They were wading waist-deep in the water, holding on to long branches of willows, to help Jimmy Silver and Putty of the Fourth. The current was swift and strong, but with a determined effort the two swimmers reached them, and Raby and Newcome clutched the hold of them—anyhow, anywhere, so long as they got hold. Jimmy was captured by his collar, and Putty by his hair. But they were secured.

"All serene now!" gasped Raby, dragging at Putty.

"Yarrah!"  
"You're all right!" panted Raby, dragging Putty into the willows.

"Ow! Wow!" "Wow!" shrieked Putty. "Leggo my hair! You're pulling it out by the roots! Yoop!"

Putty got his head away from Raby's helping hand at last. Jimmy Silver, with Newcome's help, scrambled up the steep bank with the little girl in his strong grasp. The whole party, drenched to the skin and dripping, clambered back to the bridge, where they found Arthur Edward Lovell holding the pony, still in sublime unconsciousness of all that had been going on.

"Well, of all the idiots—" began Lovell. Then he caught sight of the little girl, and stopped suddenly. "Why—why—what—what—" He left Trotsky to his own devices, and blinked at the child.

"Did—did—did you go in for that kid, Putty?" stammered Lovell.

"Oh, no!" answered Putty, with deep sarcasm. "I went in to wash my clothes. Still, I thought I'd pick up the kid while I was there."

"Oh!" gasped Lovell. "I—I thought—"

"Don't exaggerate, old chap," urged Putty. "Your mental processes can't really be described as thinking, you know."

For once Arthur Edward Lovell made no rejoinder. The juniors gathered round the little girl, and Jimmy wrapped her in a ground sheet from the cart, the best thing he could think of in the circumstances. Her eyes opened, wide and blue and frightened, and she began to cry, with a force of lung that quite surprised the juniors.

"She must belong to somebody near here," said Jimmy. "Too little to have walked very far. If we could find the show—"

"Hark!"

A woman's voice was heard calling: "Poppy! Poppy! Pops! Where are you, Poppy darling!"

Jimmy grinned faintly. "This'll be Poppy, and that'll be Poppy's mater," he remarked.

The voice came from the bank above the bridge. A woman came through the trees and out on the bank, and as she saw the scattered flowers on the slope, and the child's hat on the rushes on the water's edge, she gave a loud, piercing cry.

"Poppy!"  
Jimmy darted from the bridge.

"It's all right, ma'am!" he shouted. "She's safe!"

The woman, a buxom, plump dame, evidently a farmer's wife, looked up at

him. Putty hurried after Jimmy, with the child in his arms, wrapped in the ground sheet. The plump dame gave another cry as she clutched the little girl.

"Poppy, darling!"  
"Mummy!" howled Poppy.

For several minutes Poppy's relieved parent was fully occupied in hugging Poppy and smothering her with kisses. The Fistical Four stood looking rather sheepish in that interval, while Putty fielded the hat from the rushes, and brought it up the bank in triumph.

"How did it happen?" gasped the good dame, at last.

"I fell in!" wailed Poppy. "Woo-woo-woo-woo!"

"We got her out of the water, ma'am," said Jimmy Silver. "Or, rather, this chap did, and we helped."

And the Rookwood tramps lost no time in looking for a camp.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Awful Luck!

**J**IMMY SILVER & CO. were in camp ten minutes later. They had found a quiet, ideal spot by the purring stream, some distance below the bridge. It was shaded by trees, and green fields stretched on all sides. That it was some farmer's land was certain, and private property, though the footpath by the stream crossed it. But in the circumstances the heroes of Rookwood felt that they could chance it. Four soaked and dripping juniors simply had to get their clothes changed. They were prepared to pay for the privilege of camping, as



"WHISKERS" RAISES OBJECTIONS! "See those young tramps looked up in the barn!" said Mr. Pudsey to his farmhands. "Give 'em a hiding if they raise a hand!" Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged looks of utter dismay. They could not handle the farmer, his two labourers and the bull-dog, so there was nothing for it but surrender. (See Chapter 4.)

"Heaven bless you!" exclaimed Poppy's mother, while Poppy still howled resolutely. "You have saved my little girl's life. She wandered away from me in the plantation."

"Better get her home and dried, ma'am," suggested Jimmy Silver. "Like to borrow the ground sheet?"

The woman smiled faintly.

"No, thank you. But thank you again and again for saving my little girl. You are all wet!"

"Oh, we'll soon get dry in this sun," said Jimmy cheerfully. "Good-afternoon, ma'am! Jolly glad we came by in time to be of use!"

The farmer's wife nodded, and hurried away with Poppy, evidently very grateful to the schoolboys, but also in a great hurry to get Poppy home.

"Well, even that as Putty is some use in the world!" remarked Lovell. "I say, you fellows are wet. We shall have to camp at once now, and you can rub down."

"That's so," agreed Jimmy Silver.

they had done before, and they had generally found farmers of a reasonable and accommodating frame of mind. The gentleman with the red whiskers, with whom they had had trouble on the road, was an exception.

Four fellows felt ever so much more comfortable after a rub down and a change of clothes. The wet garments were hung on branches to dry in the sun, and it looked, as Lovell remarked, like washing-day. Lovell, for once not argumentative, started the camp fire and boiled eggs and made tea while his comrades were otherwise occupied.

Supper and rest were very welcome to the Rookwooders after their long tramp on dusty roads and the adventure that had followed. There were eggs and cheese and milk galore in the baggage-cart, as well as other supplies, and the hungry schoolboy tramps exerted themselves at supper in a way that was almost worthy of Tubby Muffin.

After a tremendous supper they sat in the grass by the dying fire and watching the golden sunset, and chatted contentedly.

"Topping place," said Jimmy Silver, looking away across the stream and the glowing fields to the blue Downs beyond in the distance. "Some sillerly asse waste time buzzing off to Switzerland in the summer, when they might be here! Give me old England!"

"Yes, rather!" said Lovell emphatically.

"Hallo, here comes one of the giddy natives!" yawned Jimmy Silver, as there was a heavy step on the footpath by the stream. "Hallo! My only summer chapeau! It's giddy Whiskers!"

"His nibs, and no mistake!" said Lovell.

The big man of the wagon was tramping along the path, evidently heading for the camp. His red face was more ill-tempered than ever in expression. Indeed, he seemed to be in a spasm of rage. A savage-looking bulldog followed at his heels, and the animal gave a deep, menacing growl at the juniors.

Jimmy Silver & Co. rose to their feet. The big man looked as if he meant trouble, and the dog was decidedly dangerous-looking. But they faced the situation coolly. So far as they could see, Whiskers had no right to interfere with them, and they were not going to stand any nonsense, dog or dog.

The big farmer came to a halt on the other side of the expiring camp-fire, from which a column of smoke was rising. He glared at the juniors across the embers.

"You!" he spluttered.

"Little us!" assented Jimmy Silver.

"Camping on my land!" roared the farmer.

Jimmy gave a jump.

"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated. "Is—is this your land?"

"My land!" roared Whiskers, purple with wrath. "You know it's my land! Any man hereabouts could have told you that this was River Farm and on Farmer Pudsey's land! You knew it well enough!"

"My dear man, we've never even heard the giddy name of Pudsey before," said Jimmy Silver. "How should we know?"

"Think you've a right to camp out and light fires wherever you like?" roared Mr. Pudsey. "Without even saying, 'By your leave,' by gad!"

The juniors looked serious enough now. They realised that they had put their foot in it. If this whiskered gentleman was the owner of the land where they had camped without asking permission, the complexion of the whole matter was altered. In their previous encounter the big man had been utterly in the wrong. Now they realised very uncomfortably that they were in the wrong.

"Lighting fires, burning up my timber, scorching up my grass," roared Mr. Pudsey. "I never did!"

"You see, we were in rather a hurry to camp, or we'd certainly have found out the owner and asked permission," explained Jimmy Silver. "We——"

"That's enough!"

"Let me explain, Mr. Pudsey."

"I don't want to hear you! Saw your smoke from my very window!" roared the angry man. "Never reckoned it was you again! I came here to set my dog on a gang of gipsies! And it's you, is it? I'll make you smart!"

"Oh, bother your old land!" snapped Lovell.

"We'll get off if just as quick as we can pack our cart."

"Will you?" said Mr. Pudsey grimly. "You won't! You're trespassers! I'm, and you're going to smart for it! I'm going to lock you up in my barn for the night and hand you over to the police in the morning!"

"What?" yelled the Rookwooders.

"That's the programme," said the big man. "Now pack up your traps sharp, and get a long where I tell you!"

"We shall do nothing of the sort," said Jimmy Silver coolly, though his heart was beating. "We'll move on if you like——"

"You'll move into my barn, and you'll be locked in there!"

"Rats!" retorted Jimmy Silver.

"Here, Toothy!" roared the big man. "Toothy! Mark 'em, boy!"

The great bulldog growled deeply, and made a movement towards the juniors, showing a terrific set of teeth. Jimmy Silver & Co. drew together, rather alarmed.

"Like him to start on you?" hooted Mr. Pudsey. "If I give the word he'll begin, and he won't let go in a hurry, you mark my words! Now, are you going to march, or are you not?"

He turned and looked along the path.

"Here, Bill—Harry!" he roared.

Two farm hands came hurrying into sight.

"See those young tramps locked up in the big barn!" said Mr. Pudsey. "Give 'em the hiding of their lives if they raise a hand!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged looks of utter dismay.

They had handled Mr. Pudsey once, and got the better of him, though it had been a struggle. But it was obvious that they could not handle Mr. Pudsey and his two men, with the savage bulldog thrown in.

Jimmy Silver compressed his lips.

"Nothing doing!" he said quietly to his comrades. "We've got to take the line for the present."

With furious looks, but feeling that there was nothing else to be done, Jimmy Silver & Co. struck the tent and hurriedly packed their belongings in the baggage-cart, and in a few minutes they were following in the wake of the farmer.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### A Change for the Better!

MR. PUDSEY led the way up the stream and over the little bridge, the scene of Putty's adventure. On the other side of the water, evidently was Mr. Pudsey's farmhouse, though the trees had hidden it from the sight of the Rookwooders.

They followed the lane for a hundred yards or so, and then turned into a rutty path up to the farm gates.

Mr. Pudsey hurled a wide wooden gate open, and Jimmy Silver & Co. led Trotsky onward into the yard, past several up-ended carts and a wagon. Ahead of them was the farmhouse, an old building massed with ivy, and on the right a range of barns. In the porch of the farmhouse a woman stood, with a little girl clinging to her skirts, both of them apparently interested in the tramps who had been caught camping on Mr. Pudsey's land.

The Rookwood juniors glanced at them carelessly, and then they started and exchanged glances. They knew that buxom dame again, and the little girl. "Poppy!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"And Poppy's mater!" said Putty. "My only hat! Do they belong to that ferocious old Hun with the whiskers, then?"

"Looks as if they live here," said Lovell.

"Get across to that there barn!" shouted Mr. Pudsey.

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

Dispiritedly the Rookwooders tramped in the direction indicated by Mr. Pudsey's whip.

But, suddenly, from the farmhouse porch, the buxom dame came running. Evidently she had recognised the Rookwood juniors.

"John!" she called out. "They are—they are the boys!" gasped Mrs. Pudsey. "John, I told you—they are the boys——"

"Eh—what?"

"This is the brave lad who saved Poppy's life, and the others helped him!"

Mr. Pudsey gave quite a jump. He stared at the buxom dame, he stared at Poppy, and then he stared blankly at the Rookwooders.

"Them!" he ejaculated at last.

"Yes, yes yes!" exclaimed his wife, with tears in her eyes. "But for this lad"—she touched Putty on the shoulder—"you would never have seen Poppy alive again!"

"What a dang my buttons!" gasped the big man.

Mr. Pudsey seemed a prey to conflicting emotions. He blinked at the Rookwooders with quite a queer expression on his face.

"Why couldn't you tell me, blow you?" he ejaculated at last.

"We were in a hurry to camp, because our clothes were wet," said Jimmy. "If you'd let me explain to——"

"Nuff said!" said Mr. Pudsey. "I've had a lot of trouble with tramps on my land, stealing chickens, and once they set fire to a hayrick. But—but I'm sorry I was rough with you young fellows. And—and——"

"The words came out in jerks. "And—and I was wrong—I own it—in that row in the lane. I was ratty, and—and I own up. I was wrong. Can't say fairer than that. Now I know it was you helped Poppy out of the water, I'm only too thankful you came along this way. Camp on my land for the rest of your lives if you want to."

"We won't do that," said Jimmy, with a chuckle. "But if you're not so keen now on locking us up in your barn, we'll get back to the road."

Mr. Pudsey shook his head.

"No, you don't!" he said. "You'll camp where you was, my lads, and I'm sending you some farm stuff to pack in that set-of-your yours before you take the road again!"

"My hat!" murmured Putty. "This looks like a giddy change in the jolly old barometer—what?"

It was! Mr. Pudsey, alias Whiskers, all hospitality now, would not take "No" for an answer. The Rookwood tramps had supped once, but they supped again quite cheerfully in the farmhouse; and when they went back to camp, they parted with the farmer on the best of terms.

The next morning Jimmy Silver & Co. were on the road again. And the baggage-cart fairly groaned under farm produce, heaped there by Whiskers himself. Arthur Edward Lovell remarked again that that ass Putty had come in useful for once, but Jimmy Silver declared that it was a case of fortune favouring the brave, as undoubtedly it was.

THE END.

(There's a big thrill in next Tuesday's grand long story of the Rookwood tramps. Don't miss "The Great Wash-out!")

# A FORTUNE—FOR BUNTER!

Billy Bunter cannot get his hands on it! It's a pretty problem for Billy—see how he tackles it in the story below!



# BUNTER THE SPECULATOR!

A Rollicking Long Complete Story  
of Harry Wharton & Co., and Billy  
Bunter of Greyfriars.

By  
**FRANK RICHARDS.**

(Author of the well-known tales of Greyfriars  
appearing in the "Magnet" every week.)

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Caught Banding!

**"YAH!"** That polite and intellectual remark fell upon the ears of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars as they came up to the Remove passage for tea.

The Famous Five had been at cricket practice, and they came up the stairs in a ruddy faced crowd, heading for Study No. 1. Farther along the Remove passage a fat figure was stooping outside the door of Study No. 7. Billy Bunter was apparently addressing someone inside the study through the keyhole, and addressing him with emphasis.

"Yah!" The chums of the Remove grinned. Bunter did not observe them; his attention was given to the keyhole. He was talking to Peter Todd, and also listening for Peter's footsteps. If the latter approached the door from within, Bunter was ready to take to flight.

"You're awfully clever, ain't you, Toddy?" went on Bunter. "Yah! I despise you, Toddy! Yah!"

Bob Cherry tiptoed along the passage towards Bunter, his chums watching him with grinning faces.

Bunter, in his present position, was a tempting object, and Bob could not resist the temptation.

Bunter, with his attention still fixed on his peculiar conversation with his study-mate, did not hear him or see him.

"What you are, Toddy," he continued, "is a silly, conceited ass! You don't know enough to go in when it rains! You're a skinny scarecrow, Peter, that's what you are! And a howling ass. Got that?"

There was no reply from within Study No. 7. Peter Todd was having his tea, and did not seem to think it worth while to interrupt the meal on William George Bunter's account.

"You come out here," continued the Owl of the Remove, "and I'll mop up the passage with you, Peter Todd! Yah!"

Bob Cherry had tiptoed just behind Bunter by that time. He raised his right boot.

Biff! "Yaroooogh!" roared Bunter, taken by surprise.

"Ha, ha, ha!" There was a roar of laughter in the Remove passage. Bob's boot had landed with quite a gentle drive on the fat junior, and Bunter wasn't hurt; but he was not prepared for the shock. He pitched forward, and collided with the door of Study No. 7.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" roared Bunter. "Ha, ha, ha!"

The fat junior squirmed round, and blinked at Bob Cherry.

"You—you—your silly ass!" he spluttered. "Wharrer you kicking me for?"

"Couldn't help it," said Bob. "You shouldn't be caught bending, you know. What are you slanging Toddy for?"

"He's a beast, and you're a beast!" howled Bunter. "I've a jolly good mind to mop up the passage with you, Bob Cherry!"

"Help!" gasped Bob. "I'll jolly well—"

"Mersey!" Bob Cherry rushed back towards Study No. 1, apparently in great terror. Billy Bunter blinked after him for a moment, in astonishment; then he rushed in pursuit. Billy Bunter was not a hero in combat; but he was quite prepared to be terrible to any foe who showed his back. He brandished his fists as he ran.

"Yah! Stop, you funk!" he shouted. "Stop him, you fellows! Don't let him get past! I'm going to smash him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Bob Cherry dodged into Study No. 1, still apparently in a state of dire alarm. Bunter rolled in after him, and Bob dodged round the table. Wharton and Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh, blocked the doorway after him, looking on with great hilarity. Bunter shook a fat fist at Bob across the table.

"Stop, you beast!" he gasped. "Won't you let me off?" pleaded Bob Cherry.

"No, I won't!" roared Bunter truculently. "I'm going to give you the licking of your life!"

He rushed round the study table.

Bob promptly retreated in the opposite direction.

"I say, you fellows, don't let him dodge out of the study!" shouted Bunter.

"No fear!" answered Harry Wharton. "Take your gruel, Bob; you've asked for it, you know."

"Let me pass!" shrieked Bob. "No fear! You've got to fight Bunter!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

Bob Cherry dodged round the table again, with Bunter close behind. Three times round the table they went at great speed, and then the pursuer slowed down. Bunter had more weight to carry than the fugitive, and it was telling on him.

"Stop, you beast!" gasped Bunter. "You can't get out of it! I'm going to lick you!"

"Help!"

"Yah! Funk! You fellows stop him for me!" exclaimed Bunter. And he rolled round the table again.

Harry Wharton & Co. crowded in and collared Bob Cherry as he fled again. Bob was brought to a halt.

"Here he is, Bunter!" grinned Nugent. "Hold him till I get at him!" panted Bunter.

"The holdfulness is terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter," chuckled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Billy Bunter circumnavigated the table and came up to the fugitive. His eyes gleamed with wrath and ferocity through his spectacles.

"Now, then!" he gasped. "Help!"

"Now you're going through it!" said Bunter. "Put up your hands! There, that's for your nose!"

Billy Bunter hit out with terrific vim. To his surprise, Bob Cherry's terror vanished all of a sudden. He recovered his courage all at once. Bunter's fat fist was knocked up, and passed harmlessly by, and the impetus of the drive brought Bunter with a crash on Bob, chest to chest. Bob's strong arms closed round him at once, and held him.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.

"Go it, Bunter!" yelled the Co., in great merriment.

"Wow!" Billy Bunter wriggled in the strong arms that enclosed him like a circle of steel. "Leggo, you beast! How can I lick you when you're holding me like this, you rotter? Ow! Leggo! You're squeezing all my breath out, you beast! Groooogh!"

Billy Bunter gave a gasp like air escaping from a badly-punctured tyre. Bob released him suddenly—so suddenly that the Owl of the Remove sat down on the study carpet.

"Yoooop!"

"Now, if Bunter's done his circus performance, we'll have tea," remarked Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"Oh, dear! Help me up, Wharton, you beast—you know I'm short of breath!" spluttered Bunter spasmodically, as he was landed on his feet.

"Woop! I didn't tell you to chook-chook-choke me!" he stuttered. "You silly ass, leggo my collar! Cherry, you beast—"

Billy Bunter paused. It had dawned upon his fat mind by this time that the playful Bob had only been pulling his leg, and that he was not really terrified. His warlike glare gave place to a feeble grin.

"Well," said Bob, "with or without gloves? I don't mind which!"

"He, he, he!"

Bob glanced round at the clock on the mantelpiece.

"What's that blessed alarm-clock going off for?" he said. "Oh! Was it you, Bunter?"

"He, he, he!"

"What are you he-he-heing about?" demanded Bob.

"I can take a joke, old chap," said Bunter. "He, he, he! Of course, I knew you were only—only joking, and—that that it was your way of asking me here to tea."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I don't mind coming to tea," said Bunter. "I've had tea in Study No. 7, but it was awfully thin! What have you fellows got?"

"Why, you cheeky ass—"

"Would you fellows like some cream—fresh from the home farm at Bunter Court?" asked Billy Bunter.

"Yes, rather!"

"Trot it along!" grinned Nugent.

"I'm expecting a lot shortly, and I'll remember you," said Bunter calmly. "I'll make a note of it. I'm afraid it won't come to-day, so we may as well get on with tea."

And the Famous Five got on with tea—

—with Billy Bunter.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Chance of a Lifetime!

**I** SAY, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter had been silent for some time, fully occupied with the comestibles. There was an unusually good spread in Study No. 1 that afternoon, and Bunter did full justice to it. Now he had arrived at the cake, which was the last item on the menu, and with his mouth full of cake he was disposed to conversation.

"No, we don't want any," said Frank Nugent, with deep sarcasm. "Not at all!"

"I wasn't going to speak about the cake. Still, if you don't want any I'll finish it," said Bunter. "You really ought to lay in a bigger cake when you've got visitors. Don't apologise—"

"What!"

"Don't apologise! Of course, you didn't know I was coming," said Bunter graciously. "It's all right; there's

enough for me. Now, I've got something to say to you fellows—something important. Would you like to make your fortunes?"

"Make our fortunes?" repeated Harry Wharton, with a stare.

That question was quite unexpected.

"Yes; that's the idea."

"How are we to do it?" asked Bob Cherry. "Can we get hold of the postal-orders you've been expecting since you came to Greyfriars? They must amount to a million pounds or so by this time."

"I wish you'd be serious," said Bunter peevishly. "This is a serious matter. You chaps know, of course, that I'm pretty deep in financial matters—know the whole game from start to finish!"

"I know how you keep your own finances going!" said Johnny Bull.

"I mean high finance," said Bunter. "I suppose you've heard of high finance. Stock Exchange, you know."

"Wha-at!"

"Of course, you fellows are rather ignorant of such things!" said Bunter patronisingly. "You don't know anything about stocks and shares, and bulls and bears, and stags, and things. I don't suppose you know what a contango is, do you?"

"Blessed if I do!" said Bob. "Can't say I want to, either!"

"Well, what is a contango?" asked Nugent.

"A—a—a contango is—is—is a contango," explained Bunter lucidly. "That's just what it is, you know."

There was a chuckle in Study No. 1. Billy Bunter's father being a stock-broker, Bunter often heard talk at home of matters connected with the Stock Exchange, and he was very wise on the subject of bulling the market and bear raids, and so forth; but how much he understood of such matters was another question.

"To come to the point," continued Bunter, "I'm on to a good thing. I landed on it just by chance—most good things turn up like that. I'm prepared to take you fellows in—"

"You've taken us in too often!" said Johnny Bull.

"I mean, to take you into the operation."

"The which?"

"The stock operation," said Bunter, blinking at the astonished juniors. "I'm going to make my fortune, and I want to do the same for you fellows, out of friendship, of course."

"You want to raise some cash in this study, you mean?" said Wharton.

"Ahem! Of course, some cash would be necessary. You can't buy shares for nothing."

"Buy shares!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"That's the idea! Tin shares," said Bunter. "No end of money to be made. We could all be rich in a few weeks. What do you think of that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly asses, I'm quite serious! There's nothing to cackle at! You're as fatheaded as Toddy—"

"Oh, is that what you were slanging Toddy about?" chuckled Bob.

"Toddy's a thumping ass! He's refused my offer to make him rich. I told him it would only be necessary for him to sell his bike, and he refused. I hope you fellows have some more sense than Toddy."

"Not a bit more, in that line," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"I could go ahead without you," said Bunter, with dignity. "I can do it on a tenner—"

"If you don't carry out the operation till you've raised a tenner, I think the

operation will be a long way off," said Harry.

"But fifty pounds would make a regular scoop," pursued Bunter, unheeding. "That's why I'm taking you fellows into it. My idea is for you to find the money and take half the profits. I take the other half as my due for handling the matter, with my knowledge and business ability, you know. Now I'll tell you all about it, and you'll see for yourselves what a corking thing it is."

"You can tell us about it, if you like," remarked Nugent. "But that's as far as you'll get in this study."

"I was going to keep it to myself at first," said Bunter. "It's too good a thing to give away. But there's a difficulty about cash, so I've decided to let you fellows in out of friendship. Now, look at that!"

Billy Bunter groped in his pocket and produced a crumpled circular—evidently the circular he had been so intently studying when he was late for lessons that morning.

The juniors glanced at it with some curiosity.

Not that they were inclined to take Bunter's remarkable new "stunt" in the least seriously. But they were rather curious to see upon what he founded his hopes of making a fortune.

The circular had a printed heading, as follows:

"MESSRS. HAVEM & HOOKIT,

Stock and Share Dealers,

1, Sharp's Buildings, E.C."

What followed was typewritten, and it ran:

"Dear Sir or Madam,

"We beg to draw your attention to the shares of the Hankee-Pankee Tin Mines, Nigeria, Ltd.

"The fully-paid 10s. shares in this company are now selling at 1s.

"We need not point out to you the tremendous advance which has been made in Nigerian Tin-mining, or the huge profits that are being made by several companies in Northern Nigeria. We fully anticipate that the price of tin will advance shortly to about £500 per ton. At half that price, any well-managed tin company in Nigeria shows a handsome profit. The possibilities are immense.

"We have every reason to believe that the Hankee-Pankee Tin Mines, Ltd., having recovered from the trade depression, is about to take its place among the big dividend-payers.

"We have a line of these shares to dispose of at 1s., free of commission.

"Trusting to hear from you, we remain,

"Yours faithfully,

"HAVEM & HOOKIT."

The Famous Five read that precious circular through carefully. It was the first time they had happened upon a circular issued by a "bucket-shop" firm, and it was rather interesting, in its way.

"Where on earth did you get hold of that?" demanded Nugent.

"I happened to find it in the Head's wastepaper-basket," explained Bunter. "I looked through it when Trotter brought it out to chuck away."

Johnny Bull gave a snort.

"And what were you nosing into it for?" he exclaimed.

"That doesn't matter! Keep to the business in hand," said Bunter. "I found this circular, and I saw at once what a good thing it was."

"It must have been sent to the Head," said Wharton.



"Of course it was! Shareholders in companies are always getting circulars through the post," said Bunter. "I dare say the Head gets them every other day. But he hasn't sense enough to see what a corking thing it is. He just chucked it into the wastepaper-basket."

"That doesn't look as if it's very corking."

"Oh, the Head doesn't know! He knows all about Greek and such rot; but he doesn't savvy stocks and shares. He's the kind of old duffer who leaves all his money in War Loan, and doesn't even look in the papers to see whether it's up or down," said Bunter.

"I think I'd rather have it in War Loan than in Hankee-Pankee Tin Mines," grinned Bob Cherry.

"That's because you're an ass, old chap, if you don't mind my being candid. I suppose you fellows know something about Nigeria?"

"I know it's a British colony in West Africa."

"That's it; and no end of tin comes from there. It's knocked out the Cornish tin mines," said Bunter. "I've heard my pater say so. So it pays better to get tin in Nigeria and bring it thousands of miles by sea. Lots of the Nigerian tin mines pay no end of dividends, and the shares cost no end of money. But this is a chance to get in on the ground floor."

"On the what?"

"I mean to get in cheap. You buy shares in the Hankee-Pankee Co. for a bob each," said Bunter eagerly. "As soon as they begin to pay dividends they'll rise to par—that's ten shillings. You see the profit you make. You sell them at ten shillings; that's a profit of nine shillings on each share."

"Pshaw!"

"Suppose you have a thousand shares," continued Bunter, his eyes glistening over his spectacles. "That's a profit of nine thousand shillings when you sell, isn't it? That's four hundred and fifty pounds."

"I'd have a new cricket-bat out of that," remarked Bob Cherry, in a thoughtful way.

"You're coming into the deal?" asked Bunter. "Find the money and I'll do the rest."

"Hold on a minute!" said Wharton. "Suppose the shares don't rise in price, what then?"

"Oh, they will, you know."

"How do you know?"

"The circular says so."

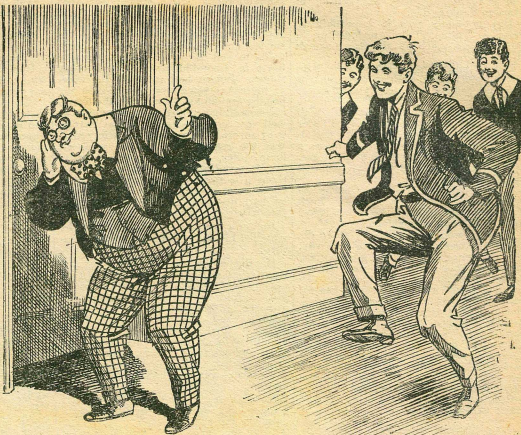
"My bat! I think I should want some better evidence than that."

"That's rot!" said Bunter decidedly. "Havem & Hookit are stock and share-dealers, and, of course, they know whether the shares are valuable or not. Besides, I know all about Nigerian tin. I've heard it from my father."

"But I suppose one company could be good and another bad in Nigeria, the same as anywhere else?" said Johnny Bull.

"Er—yes; but this is a good one, you see."

It was evident that the wish was father to the thought in Bunter's case.



**CAUGHT BENDING!** Bunter in his present position, was a tempting object, and Bob Cherry could not resist the temptation. The fighting man of the Remove tiptoed along the passage towards Bunter. "You come out here!" continued the unconscious Owl through the keyhole. "I'll mop up the passage with you, Peter Todd. Yah!"

(See Chapter 1.)

He was not prepared to consider any evidence against his scheme.

"Well," said Johnny Bull, "if the shares are worth ten bob and cost only a shilling at present, why don't Havem & Hookit buy themselves and bag the profit?"

"I don't know their business, of course," said Bunter peevishly. "P'raps they haven't the capital. P'raps they've got all their money invested already. You chaps keep on making difficulties. Now, look here, are you going to get together and raise that fifty pounds?"

"I don't think!" grinned Bob.

"If you haven't any sense—"

"We haven't, that sort," said Wharton laughing. "You are a howling ass, Bunter! I don't believe a stockbroker would deal with a kid under age, either."

"I shouldn't tell him I was under age. You see, I just send him a cheque for the shares, and he buys them for me, and there you are. I simply want the money."

"The wantfulness is likely to be terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But I have a suggestive remark to make—"

"If you mean a suggestion, you silly ass, make it!" growled Bunter.

"I suggest that, as it is still light, there is time for some more cricket, my esteemed chums."

"Cricket?" howled Bunter. "Who's bothering about cricket now?"

"We are!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows—"

But the Famous Five seemed to have heard enough of stock and share operations. They streamed out of the study, leaving Billy Bunter to waste his sweetness on the desert air. The baffled financier gave an angry and disgusted

snort and solaced himself with the last fragment of the cake.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

No Sale!

**B**ILLY BUNTER wore a worried and troubled look during the next day or two.

He was still full of his wonderful new scheme for making his fortune, and, incidentally, the fortunes of any fellows who could find the money for the necessary stock operation.

But if the love of money is the root of all evil, there seemed to be very little evil in the Greystriars Remove, for nobody wanted to make his fortune.

Nobody, at all events, was inclined to place hard cash in Bunter's fat hands for the purpose.

Billy Bunter had "tried it on" first with his study-mate, Peter Todd; but the hard-headed Peter was not taking any. The Famous Five had come next, and the Famous Five proved deaf to the voice of the charmer. After that, Billy Bunter hawked his great idea up and down the Remove passage; but there were no takers.

In fact, Hankee-Pan'lee Tin became a standing joke in the Remove, and Bunter was constantly asked how his tin shares were getting on, and how long it was before he expected to be a millionaire.

It was really rough on an enterprising youth who was starting so early to follow in his father's footsteps.

Bunter reduced the necessary capital from fifty pounds to ten. He said that he would "go in" for it with a miserable two hundred shares, which could be had for ten pounds, owing to

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the low market price, at present, of Hanke-Panke Tin.

But not only was it impossible to raise a "tanner," but nobody would put even so much as sixpence towards it.

It was said of old that wisdom cries out in the streets, and no man regards it. And Bunter felt bitterly that it was true.

Fellows who were so careful with money that they wouldn't lend Bunter half-a-crown on an expected postal-order, were reckless enough to refuse a certain chance of landing a big prize. It was really very surprising, and still more exasperating.

It was clear to William George, at last, that if he was going in for Stock Exchange speculations, he would have to find the money personally.

That he would have been glad to do, but there were difficulties in the way. His allowance did not run into pounds. Moreover, his allowance was always booked in advance for the tuckshop.

But Bunter was not to be beaten. Selling his bike was the only resource, certain in that there were difficulties. Bunter was not careful with his bike, and it had sustained many injuries which had never been repaired. And there was a good deal of rust on many parts of it. But it was the only resource, and a couple of days after the important interview in Study No. 1 a notice appeared on the wall of the junior Common-room.

#### BIKE FOR SAIL!

aply NUMBER 7 STUDDY.

Remove passidge. W. G. B.

After tea that day Billy Bunter sat in state in Study No. 7, waiting for the rush of purchasers.

But there was no rush.

Two or three fellows strolled round to the bike-shed to look at Bunter's "jigger"; but, after looking at it, they decided that they would rather have no further dealings with the jigger.

Bunter waited some time; but he emerged from Study No. 7 at last. He glanced in at No. 1, where Wharton and Nugent were chatting before prep. "You fellows seen my notice?" he asked.

"Oh, yes!"

"Well, aren't you looking for a bargain in bikes?" asked Bunter persuasively. "I'm letting that bike go cheap. I'm only asking twenty pounds for it."

"Go hon!"

"I'd take fifteen."

"Not here," remarked Nugent.

"Make it ten," said Bunter generously. "Look here, you can have that bike for ten pounds spot cash."

"Rats!"

"Well, make an offer, then."

"Twopence."

"Silly ass!" roared Bunter. And he rolled away from Study No. 1 in great disgust. Twopence was not much use to a budding financier; and, besides, the bike really was worth more than that.

Bunter looked in at several more studies, but he found no one keen on buying a dilapidated bike. The highest offer he received was from Skinner, who offered him seven-and-six. Skinner having calculated that he could polish the jigger up enough to sell it in Court-field for about two pounds. But it wanted a lot of polishing up, and Skinner was not very keen on it; and anyhow, Bunter was not inclined to accept seven-and-six. Seven-and-six was utterly inadequate as capital for operations on the Stock Exchange.

The next morning the notice in the

Common-room still announced that Bunter's bike was for "sail"; but the sale had not come off, and after dinner Bunter took down the notice. He started out to wheel his bike to Court-field, to sell it to Mr. Lazarus, who dealt in second-hand bikes and other things. Bunter had to wheel the bike, as there was something wrong with the pedals, something wrong with the chain, and something wrong with the crank, as well as several more things wrong with several other parts. Possibly that was the reason why he was seen, an hour later, wheeling it home again. Mr. Lazarus had explained to him that, though he dealt in very many articles, he was not a scrap-iron merchant, and he had declined the offer of Bunter's jigger without thanks.

Bunter's feelings were deep as he trundled his old wreck back to the bike-shed.

Having made up his mind to the sacrifice, it was rather hard to find that nobody was willing to accept the sacrifice. And as the bike was his last resource, it looked as if the incipient financier had come to the end of his tether. Peter Todd, indeed, advised him to write to some of his titled relations and ask for a cheque. But Bunter only snorted. His titled relations did not seem very reliable in money matters.

"Look here, Toddy," said Bunter that evening, "I want you to do a really unselfish thing!"

"I'm the man for that!" agreed Toddy. "What is it?"

"Sell your bike, and lend me the money."

Peter shook his head.

"That wouldn't be unselfish," he said. "That would only be encouraging you in playing the giddy ox, Bunter. But I can be unselfish. I'm prepared to exert myself for your good."

"How?" asked Bunter suspiciously.

"Well, you're a cheezy ass," said Peter. "Cheezy asses ought to be kicked; it's good for them. I'm going to take the trouble to kick you. If that isn't unselfish, I don't know what is!"

And Peter jumped up to carry out his unselfish intentions.

Bunter hastily departed from the study. That was not the kind of unselfishness he was looking for.

"It's simply cruel!" he told the Famous Five in the Common-room. "All this time I may be losing my jumps up in price before I've bought any shares. You fellows will be sorry then that you didn't come into the scheme with me!"

"That does seem hard," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully. "Rather than let that happen, Bunter, I'd hand you my last farthing!"

Bunter brightened up.

"My dear old chap," he exclaimed cordially, "now you're talking! I knew I could rely on you, old fellow! You're not selfish like these chaps. I'll remember you when the profits come rolling in!"

"Good!"

Bob Cherry groped in his pocket.

"You thumping ass!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "You're not going to lend Bunter money to gamble with?"

"You shut up, Bull!" exclaimed Bunter. "You're selfish! You dry up Bob's going to lend me money if he likes."

"Well, I've told Bunter now that I'll lend him my last farthing," said Bob. "Here you are, Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove held out an eager hand. He started as Bob Cherry placed a farthing in his fat palm.

"Wha-a-at's that?!" he stammered.

"My last farthing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the five juniors. Bunter's expression at that moment was, as Bob remarked afterwards, worth a guinea a box.

"You — you — you silly chump!" shrieked Bunter.

And he rolled away, leaving the Famous Five yelling. From that moment Bunter was determined that, whatever happened, the Famous Five should never share in the vast profits to be derived from his deal in tin shares. It was probable, however, that their loss would not be great.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### Nothing Doing!

PONG!

"Hoskins, old chap——"

Pong, pong!

Hoskins of the Shell was getting his note.

The amateur musician of Greyfriars was in his study alone. His studymate, Hobson, had been driven forth. Claude Hoskins was composing sweet music, and at such times Hobson found it easier to do his prep in Stewart's study. Hoskins' hair was ruffled; he ran his fingers through it constantly when he was composing, and now it stood up like quills upon the fretful porcupine. Even his favourite curl, which he cultivated assiduously, under the belief that it looked extremely artistic, was disordered.

He did not even look at Bunter as the fat junior loomed up in the doorway. He was rapping a tuning-fork on the table to "get his note"—a most important matter to Hoskins.

"I say, Hoskins——"

"Ah!" said Hoskins. "Ah! Ah-h-h! Right! I knew I had the pitch all right! That's what comes of being a born musician, Hobson!"

"I say——"

"Shut up, will you, Hobby? Weren't you going down?"

"I say, it's me, Bunter——"

Claude Hoskins looked round irritably. He had not even noticed that the voice in the doorway was not his studymate's. He noticed few things when he was in the throes of composition.

"Bunter, what the thump are you interrupting me for? Get out!"

"I say——"

"Buzz! I'm busy!"

"I—was going to ask you if—you'd play me something," murmured Bunter. Hoskins' face cleared.

"Not now," he said. "I'm busy. But you can come into the music-room when I'm doing my practice to-morrow, if you like—two-thirty."

Bunter made a mental note to be at a safe distance from the music-room at two-thirty the following day, and replied:

"Certainly, old chap! I shall be delighted! I say, what are you doing just now—a symphony?"

"I could do a symphony," said Hoskins. "Although I say it myself, there's not much in Beethoven that I couldn't equal. In fact, I've noticed a good many drawbacks in his stuff, going over it, you know. But I'm not doing a symphony now."

"You've got a lot of music-paper there," remarked Bunter. "That's expensive, ain't it?"

"Horrible!" but of course, I have to have it. It ought to be provided by the

school, of course. It's disgusting that a fellow should have to buy his own music-paper, especially when he uses such a lot. Luckily, I had a remittance yesterday, and laid in a good bit."

It did not occur to Hoskins, for the moment, that it was his remittance of yesterday that had brought Billy Bunter to his study. Bunter had a wonderful nose for remittances, and he had found out that Hoskins of the Shell was in funds, and he was prepared to listen to Hoskins' music, if absolutely necessary, with an eye to those funds.

"Spent it all on that stuff?"

"Of course not, ass!"

"You're jolly lucky to get those big remittances!" remarked Bunter. He did not yet know the amount of the remittance.

"Well, a chap doesn't have a birthday every day," said Hoskins. "My uncle always sends me a fiver on my birthday."

"A fiver!" Bunter had hoped that it was a tenner. "Well, I could get a hundred shares—"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean I was going to ask if you'd published anything yet, Hoskins. I've read in the papers that there's a big demand for really first-class music."

"Rot!" said Hoskins. Hoskins was very busy just then, but he was prepared to talk so long as the talk was about himself. "The newspapers don't know anything. Why, I've sent first-class music to half the publishers in London, and it's only cost me the postage there and back. They don't want good music. They hate good music. They don't understand it. If they put it on at their silly concerts the public won't come in. Look at my march in F major, for instance!"

"Ripping!" said Bunter.

"And my waltz in B flat."

"Splendid!" said Bunter. "I heard you playing it yesterday, and I thought it was topping!"

"You ass! What I was playing yesterday was my sonata in G!" grunted Hoskins.

"W-w-was it? I know it was something topping. I say, suppose you offered them the money to publish your works—"

"It may come to that," said Hoskins moodily. "I feel sometimes that it's not fair to the public to keep back really good stuff while they browse on the awful piffle that's put before them at concerts. Only there's a difficulty in the way—I haven't the money."

"I could tell you how to get the money—"

"Eh? How?"

"You hand me that fiver—"

"What?"

"I've got an idea for operating on the Stock Exchange—"

"You silly idiot!"

"Ahem!"

"Don't talk such utter rot!" said Hoskins. "It's sickening that a chap should be hung up like this for a few thousand pounds. But it's always so—the world never recognises a genius till he's dead. Look at Mozart—never knew where his next dinner was coming from, and some of Mozart's stuff is really good—not like mine, of course; but it has qualities of its own. When I'm dead and gone they'll understand. I dare say they'll give me a tomb in Westminster Abbey," said Hoskins, with bitter sarcasm. "I shall refuse it—in my will, I mean. I shall leave a plain statement that they're not to be allowed to bury me in Westminster Abbey—I've determined on that."

"I—I should," murmured Bunter. "Serve 'em right! But about that idea

of mine. I really want a tenner; but a fiver would—"

"But I'm going to take them at their word," said Hoskins, still sardonic. "They won't have music, so I'm going to give them the other thing. Do you know what I'm writing now?"

"Nunno!"

"A musical comedy," said Hoskins. "Awful rot, of course, but it's what the public wants. I'm going to give 'em what they want. Ha, ha!"

"Oh! But about that fiver—"

Hoskins did not even hear.

"I'm introducing a jazz," he said. "Jazz, you know—that's what I've come down to. Let 'em have jizzes if they want jizzes, and be blowed to them! Eh?"

"Yes, certainly; but I was saying that—"

"I've no doubt this musical comedy of mine will go like hot cakes," said Hoskins. "I'm going to bung it on to the publishers, and let 'em have it for a hundred pounds. Of course, it won't be exactly like the ordinary musical comedies—I couldn't do it so badly if I wanted to. Why, half the stuff they put on in London is scribbled by fellows—goodness knows whom—who don't know a sonata from a canon."

"D-d-don't they? I should think anybody would know a canon if he saw one," said Bunter in surprise.

"Well, they don't. They couldn't write a canon—they couldn't write the exposition of a fugue to save their worthless lives," said Hoskins. "The

## ADD Next Tuesday's Free Gift TO YOUR COLLECTION.

kind of musical moochers who would put G flat into the key of D, you know."

"W-w-would they?" stuttered Bunter.

"They would; and they're the merchants who turn out the stuff the public goes to hear. Listen to this!" Claude Hoskins rapped his tuning-fork again, and started. Bunter listened. Hoskins was humming over the melody he had just written, but Bunter—perhaps for want of a musical ear—did not detect the melody. "What do you think of that?"

"Splendid!"

"It's pretty," said Hoskins. "Not what I could do if they'd let me write good music, but it's done rightly, at all events. Original, too!"

"It—it sounded original," murmured Bunter. "But about that—"

"Look at the way those merchants turn out their piffle," said Hoskins.

"Here's a book here with a song in it. Look at it! I've looked it over, and it's just a patchwork of a dozen old tunes—fragments jerked away from where they belong, and stuck together at the ends. And the chap must have been paid for it. What do you think of that?"

"Awful!" said Bunter. "But I was saying—"

"If I had the tin," said Hoskins. "I'd have a try at educating the public taste, you know; but it's no good tackling music unless you've made a fortune in pills." Hoskins was growing sardonic again. "Then you can muck up an opera by putting it into language that doesn't fit the music, and the papers sing your praises no end. There ought to be endorsements, or something, for really brilliant native musicians—"

"Of course there ought!" said Bunter.

"But there ain't, you know, so suppose you help me in my idea for—"

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"I simply want that fiver," said Bunter, blinking at the enthusiastic musician. "I've got a straight tip, and I can make no end of money. I know a chap who will buy and sell the shares for me."

Hoskins was leaning his chin in his hand, gazing straight at Bunter, with an expression of deep thought. The Owl of the Remove, much encouraged, continued.

"It's as easy as falling off a form. This firm buys the shares for me, and sells them for me when they rise. See? Even with a fiver I can make a profit of over forty pounds. Think of that!"

Hoskins did not reply. His eyes were still fixed on Bunter, but his thoughts were far away.

"You just hand me the fiver, you know—"

"Ripping!" exclaimed Hoskins suddenly.

Bunter smiled with satisfaction.

"You think it's a good idea?" he asked.

"Ripping! A piccolo obbligato," said Hoskins.

"W-h-a-a-t?"

"It's just come into my head. The piccolo will come in beautifully. I must get that down."

Hoskins grabbed his pen and began to scribble.

Billy Bunter blinked at him, in surprise and growing wrath.

"I thought you were speaking about my idea, Hoskins!"

"Shurrup!"

"Look here—"

"You're interrupting me! Get out!"

The Greyfriars musician was in the full flow of composition now; the little bit for the piccolo had to go down before it vanished from his fertile brain.

Bunter glared at him.

Hoskins, evidently, had not been thinking about his remarks at all. While he was gazing so thoughtfully at Bunter he was simply thinking out that obbligato for the piccolo.

"You—you silly chump!" hooted Bunter. "I tell you—"

"Get out! You'll spoil it with your chatter! Get out!"

"Will you—"

Hoskins made a fierce grasp at the ink-pot, turning a deadly eye on Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove skipped out of the doorway just in time.

Claude Hoskins returned to his work, and Bunter put his head in at the doorway again. Evidently there was nothing doing in Hoskins' study, so far as raising cash was concerned. Billy Bunter had wasted his valuable time for nothing.

"You silly ass!" howled Bunter. "I say, do you want to know what I think of your rot? Piffle. Hear that? Rubbish! Tosh! Bosh! Bunkum! Rot! Yah!"

Hoskins made a jump for the door, and Billy Bunter took to his heels.

William George Bunter, in a very disconsolate frame of mind, fared forth in hopeless search of a tenner.

Really, it was rough on the fat junior. Here was a fortune going begging, so to speak, for want of a little capital. But Bunter was a stickler. Not by any means had the last been seen or heard of Bunter, the speculator.

THE END.

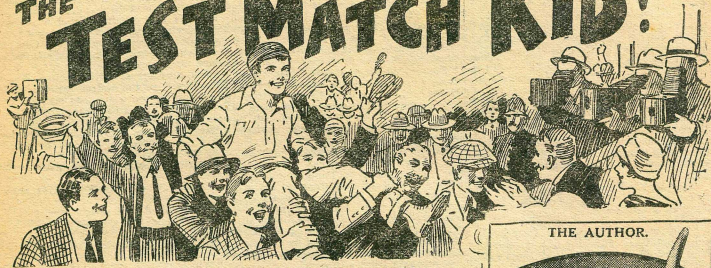
(Billy Bunter is determined to raise enough money to make his fortune. You will read how he does it in "Raising The Wind" next week's topping Greyfriars tale.)

## KID SAVES THE SPORTS STORE!

would have been smashed—it is his wonderful Test record that brings business to the shop, and prevents this disaster!

But for the Kid, the Kennedy Sports Store

# THE TEST MATCH KID!



BY "PATSY" HENDREN.

Introducing KID KENNEDY, the boy bowler of England, and telling how he gets a chance to play for his country in the "Tests."

### Good Old Kid!

KID could either win or lose the game for England!

There was time for the rest of his over—five more balls—and Oldfield, the Australian's last batsman was coming out from the pavilion. If he and Woodfall, now at the wicket, could score six, then Australia would win; if Kid could get either of their wickets before they put those half-dozen fatal runs on to the score of the tourists, then victory went to the Mother Country.

As Oldfield came out, the roar of the crowd rose again on the July air, booming across the Old Trafford ground, swelling from the pavilion to the railway and back again.

The red ball, flitting from felder to felder as the England team waited for the last Australian batsman, pitched to Kid Kennedy as Oldfield neared the wicket. The boy caught it deftly, and as he did so every man in the vast crowd seemed to roar in sudden applause, while Grinnett checked on the pavilion steps to look back and watch the end of the game.

The ball with which Kid had dismissed Grinnett had been a marvel of speed, and the crowd wanted to see a ball like that again.

"Get him, Kennedy!"

"Another one like that, Kid!"

"Burn the turf, boy!"

Then the shouting merged to another terrific roar as Oldfield reached the wicket and turned to take centre. Men were standing in the ring seats now; they couldn't see any better, but they were standing because they could not control themselves sufficiently to sit down.

The very air was quivering with the excitement of the close finish, and Kid had to grit his teeth to stop himself from responding to the nervous tension of the thousands all about him.

He stood watching the umpire's hand jerking as he signalled to Oldfield. Kid watched the Aussie's bat shift in

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response; then the umpire's forefinger tipped to his white sun-hat, and Oldfield took his stance.

"Barney" Oldfield looked cool and quiet as he bent above his bat, tapping it in the block-hole. His eyes gleamed steadily from beneath the big peak of his green cap, and Kid could see that his jaw was squared grimly.

One hit, one drive, backed by those broad shoulders, and he might win the game for Australia!

Kid didn't forget that—he didn't forget that Oldfield was a batsman of courage; a man who wouldn't be made shaky by the tremendous issues that hung on the next five deliveries—the very fate of the game!

Kid turned and went back for his run. Once again the crowd woke to life.

"You'll get him, Kid!"

"Make it hum, Kennedy!"

"Bowl him, Kid—he's yours!"

Another yell then that sent the blood leaping through his veins as he turned at the end of his run. He stood a moment, thrilling. Every nerve in his body was keyed now, every muscle strung. For a moment he had a glimpse of the field and everything on it, limned with an amazing clearness. Details seemed to stand out—the tense figures in the slips; Tate at square-leg, not smiling now; Hobbs at cover-point, bent and on his toes. Every man in the team there to back him to the uttermost in this final, desperate effort to win the game for England.

Then the yells from the crowd dropped to absolute silence—a strange, quivering silence.

Kid jerked forward into his run. He went streaking over the turf, body lifting to his speed, every stride sending its quota of velocity to the ball as it flung from his hand at his final plunge across the bowling crease.

The ball slammed through the air, pitched in a tiny flurry of dust, and as it hit the turf Oldfield's poised bat came crashing down—to miss!

Kid saw the ball shoot upwards from



THE AUTHOR.

the turf, and the wind of it must have shaken the bails as it just skimmed above them. There came the smack of the leather in Struddy's gloves, and then a gasp from the crowd at the narrowness of Oldfield's escape.

Only four balls to come down now, and Father Time would call a halt.

Strudwick trundled the ball back to Kid; he picked it up and paced out his run again. His next delivery was as fast as the previous one; but the fearless Oldfield tackled it differently.

He jumped out to it. From all round the ground there came the sob of caught breath as men watched him shape for a boundary hit. The veriest fraction of time after that there came the rap of leather on that willow, and the ball went away hard and low between mid-off and cover-point.

Kid saw mid-off leap madly at the ball, flinging himself to the turf in a fierce effort to reach it.

"Yes!" roared Oldfield; and from the other end of the wicket Woodfall came leaping down the pitch.

Beyond mid-off, Jack Hobbs jumped at the speeding leather. It seemed that he couldn't reach it. The ball hit the grass and shot off it, just as Hobbs, in one last, desperate effort to save the boundary, shot clear of the ground,

snapped the ball from mid-air, then went slithering over the turf.

Agile, quick, he twisted to his feet, and, without sighting, it seemed, he shot the ball to Kid's end, just as Oldfield started on the second run. The Australian wicket-keeper saw the leather coming.

"Stay!" he yelled to Woodfull. Then Kid's hands jerked as the ball came to them, and he shaped to whip off Oldfield's balls; but the man from "down under" had already cracked his bat to his crease.

Hard upon his shout came the boom of the crowd—staccato clapping and wild cheers for Hobbs' wonderful fielding.

Three balls to go down—and the Australians now needed only five runs to win!

Kid took his time as he walked back with the ball in his hands. He bowed, and stood looking down at Billy Woodfull. Men said that the schoolmaster from Victoria had a wonderful defence; at one time, he was only once bowled in two full seasons of Australian cricket.

He bent above his bat, waiting. Kid thought swiftly. He mustn't lose the game for England—he mustn't let them get in another terrific drive like that last of Oldfield's. He'd got to put all he had into the next three balls—and the cheers of the keenly watching crowd did not see the next ball that he sent down!

But Woodfull had his eye on it. His bat lifted as the ball rose from the turf, then the willow smacked over the leather, driving it dead to the grass, from which it spun idly to the gully, third man picking it up and returning it.

Only two balls to go down now, and still the fate of the game hung in the balance.

Kid took the ball. The Aussies wanted runs, he reflected, Woodfull didn't get that ball away, because he couldn't. The thing to do was to tempt him; it was no use bowling at his wicket, his defence was too sound.

Send the next ball down to the off, and have him nibble at it; not too fast a ball—just fast enough to tempt him. If he got at it, there was a chance he might give a catch in the long field; if he didn't get it squarely, then he might cock it up into the slips and—

Kid looked across to where Chapman stood at third slip. The boy signalled almost imperceptibly with his right hand. Chapman saw it; he went back a little and a shade farther out. He moved until Kid signalled again—and those of the crowd who saw the movement bent forward and watched with all their eyes.

There was no perceptible change in Kid's run—no difference in his delivery. Yet he deliberately took out of the ball those last ounces of snap which made his bowling so fast and so deadly.

The leather went to the off and, just as he had planned, Woodfull reached out for it. Just for a moment, he looked as though he was going to drive it—then he changed his mind and his bat came down in a slashing cut that sent the ball between second slip and the ready figure of Chapman.

"Yes!" Oldfield's voice again—exultant and booming—as he shot down the pitch.

His heart in his mouth, Kid saw Chapman twist and leap after the hurtling ball. The man from Kent seemed fairly to stretch himself over the grass. He held the ball and twisted in the same moment, streaking the leather to the waiting, ready form of Strudwick

at the wicket. Only just in time did Oldfield check as he was about to start a second run.

Kid breathed again—only one run off it.

And only one ball left to send down! The Australians wanted four—and they could get them if Oldfield lashed out! The last ball of the fourth Test—Kid's last chance to win the game for England!

Not a man stirred in the crowd as Kid walked quietly behind the wicket; after Struddy had pitched the ball to him. The clanking and rattling of trams in the Chester Road came clearly to the green, the distant whistle of a locomotive on the railway sounded shrill.

Forty thousand pairs of eyes watched Kid Kennedy as he went back—and over in the pavilion old Uncle Peter sat strained and dry of throat.

"Go on, Kid—you can do it!" he muttered. "Don't forget what I've taught ye—go for his wicket. It's your only chance! Get him boy—break his wicket!"

Kid turned. He could see Oldfield ready to smash his bowling to the farthest corner of the ground—tensed to win the game for Australia.

One moment longer Kid hesitated. An instant after, and he was leaping, straining figure of white, spiked shoes picking flakes of earth and torn grass behind him, his whole body hurtling—skimming the ground.

The crease flashed at him—he saw the watchful figure of the white-coated umpire—the green of Woodfull's cap—then—

Oldfield at the wicket—bat shifting in the block, shoulders back and ready.

Kid flung himself across the crease and the ball hummed with his crease. His hurtling body followed through, and only his spikes kept him from slipping on the grass.

He saw Oldfield jump out at the ball—saw his blade flail down—glimpsed the whipping ball as it flashed across the yellow of the bat—crack!

The ball came from it, flying above

#### WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

**KID KENNEDY**, a young fast bowler, is selected to play for England in the Third and the Fourth Test matches. He is very keen to do well because his uncles,

**TOM and PETER KENNEDY**, with whom Kid lives, own a sports goods shop which is doing badly. Their business rival is **JACOB PILCH**, who is trying to smash up the Kennedy business. Kid arranges with **JACK ARMOUR**, a young editor and owner of the *Evening News*, to give advertisements to the Kennedy shop, in return for which Kid writes his views of Test cricket exclusively for the paper.

In the Third Test Kid does wonderfully well as a result the sports goods shop picks up more business, but not enough to meet a debt of £300 with which Jacob Pilch has saddled the shop. Uncle Peter raises the money to meet Pilch's demand, but Kid cannot find out where the £300 came from.

With increasing business the shop starts to do better, and Pilch sees that it is due to Kid playing sensational cricket in the Test games. Pilch decides to stop Kid playing, but his effort to keep him out of the Fourth Test at Old Trafford is a failure. Kid plays well, bowling magnificently, and towards the close of the last day's play grandly scores a century. There is just time for one more over—the Australians want six runs to win and have two wickets to fall. If they get the runs they will win; if England can get two wickets then the home country will gain the victory, otherwise the game will be a draw. Kid is bowling the last over of the match. With his first ball he clears bowler Grimmett. The Australians now have but one wicket to fall for six runs to win—and only five more balls to come down to end the game!

(Now read on.)

Kid's head in a return drive. The boy jumped for it—jumped with the last impetus of his run. His straining finger-tips touched the ball—the leather seemed to burn across them, but he could not hold it.

The ball skimmed from his touch, fighting sideways. Point came tearing in for the dropping ball—leaped desperately—leaped with all the straining strength of a cricket-trained body—throwing himself at the leather.

It must have brushed his reaching fingers. It bounced from the turf as his body slithered across the grass—then mid off snapped up the ball ere the Australians could dare run!

For a split second, silence held the ground in thrall, then the quietude was shattered by a thunderous roar of applause—applause for Kid's bowling—applause for Oldfield's courageous effort to make a winning hit—applause for the way in which he had thwarted the batsmen.

That ball was the last of the match—the fourth Test was a draw!

But none could say that Kid Kennedy had failed—and the crowd, streaming from behind the barriers on to the grass, making for his white-clad figure showed by their mad cheering what they thought of him.

#### The Rise of the Kennedy Store!

**A** CROSS the hallowed turf of Old Trafford the crowd came roaring, while Kid and the rest made a break for the pavilion. Long before the England team reached it, they were filing through a narrow lane of applauding spectators.

Kid found hands outstretched to shake his own, fists thudded his back, and he was well-nigh deafened by the shouts and cheers which rang in his ears.

But he got to the pavilion at last and, eventually, to the dressing-room, where old Peter was waiting for him, his eyes afloat.

"Thought you'd got Oldfield wi' that last one, boy!" he greeted. "Good or ye—by gosh, ye did try!" His big, calloused hand found Kid's, and he pumped his arm as he went on: "It's better 'n if ye'd won, boy! We didn't deserve to win no more'n the Aussies deserved to lose—an' to see you out there bowlin' like a good 'un—I'm proud o' ye, an' so'll y'r Uncle Tom be when we get back."

Outside the pavilion, the crowd still gathered, yelling for Kid Kennedy to show himself—and they had some reason to yell. In all, just eleven wickets had fallen to Kid's bowling in the two innings—five in the first and six in the second. He had scored 28 not out in the first innings and a useful 35 not out in the second. Also, that final leap when he had checked Oldfield's magnificent drive, had virtually saved the game for England—the ball would have gone to the boundary if he had not partly stopped it.

So the crowd yelled and cheered and cheered again—while old Peter took the boy into one of the bath-rooms and there tended his muscular body. For an hour he worked on him with loving care, finishing up with soothing massage that replaced some of the strength and energy Kid had used.

Celebrations and dinners after matches were not for Kid Kennedy—his uncle wouldn't have it to start with. It wasn't perhaps that they minded, but they knew what was best for Kid—and perhaps strangely, Kid agreed with them.

The kind of bowling that he sent down was liable to absorb the last dregs of his strength. He was very young, and he couldn't stand the strain like

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cricket-wise Tate and tough Kilner from Yorkshire. A session of four overs was as much as Kid could bowl and keep his pace.

Not that he was a weakling—far from it! But his sinewy muscles had not yet acquired the power of resistance and recovery, nor had he yet built up those funds of reserve strength which mark the mature athlete.

For these reasons his uncles took so much care and trouble with him. They wanted him to keep fit—to last—to go on from strength to strength, because they both believed that Kid was not yet bowling his fastest, turf-scorcher though he might already be.

Old Peter knew that the finest thing in the world for Kid now was bed, or, if not bed, rest, at any rate. So when an invitation came for him to attend a dinner celebrating the game, Kid excused himself, and went home with his uncle.

He did not go straight to the old red-fronted shop. He made for the office of the "Sporting News," there to give Jack Armour his version of the day's play. Kid didn't know it, but it was a wonderful story that he told—and Jack printed it in the next morning's issue of the paper almost word for word.

Kid was at the newspaper office the next day, to find Jack Armour very cheerful.

"You'll be glad to know," he told Kid, "that you being retained exclusively by the 'Sporting News' has multiplied the circulation by exactly six—and I've shoved you a full-page advertisement for the shop in every issue since we made our arrangement."

"Good!" said Kid. "But I wish orders would roll up—they're coming in slowly."

"They'll get bigger and bigger every day now, Kid," Jack told him. "And I've done what I promised you. Out of my profits I've got space for you in pretty nearly all the London dailies and in some of the big provincial papers as well. With what you did at Old Trafford, the shop ought soon to be selling stuff as fast as your uncles can turn it out. You played a great game, Kid!"

Kid grinned. "I pretty nearly didn't play at all." And then he told Jack how he and his uncles had all but missed the game through the cunning of the chauffeur who had called for them. "I'd bet anything that chap was sent by Pilch," Kid finished.

"The cunning old beast!" Jack exclaimed. "You're right, too—especially as you say you saw him hanging about when you started off. He didn't want you to play in the Test. Evidently he's afraid of you bucking the business up too much and knocking him. As a

matter of fact, I've heard that his sales in the sports goods line have dropped off a whole lot through your advertisements; you've been getting some of his trade."

"And we'll keep it, too," said Kid grimly.

Jack nodded slowly. "You'll have to watch out for Pilch," he said. "He'll jump on you with both feet if he gets the chance; and he'll do his utmost to keep you out of the Fifth Test."

Kid knew that. If he played in the last Test match at the Oval, and if he did well, it would give a mighty flip to his uncles' business for this winter, because their trade was not limited merely to summer sports goods.

"Anyway," said Jack, "if Pilch does anything else, especially if you can bring it home to him, let me know. You can't prove anything about that car business, worse luck. But if we can catch him, we'll scare the fat old brute stiff!"

Kid went on to the county ground, where enthusiastic team-mates greeted him, and at the end of the week he turned out for the county in front of a big crowd. Kid's success was bringing bigger gates to the county ground, and within a week of the finish of the Fourth Test match his uncles found that they had more orders than they could cope with.

The postman wasn't bringing mere bundles of letters to the red-fronted shop opposite Pilch's glittering emporium; he brought the letters in a sack. More than that, the delivery office sent a special postman with them, because they were more than the usual man could carry on his ordinary round.

"It's Kid and his tom-fool advertisements that's done this!" old Peter growled. "We'll have to get some extra staff an' lay in some bigger stocks. Things are lookin' up like one o'clock!"

Overtime work started at the shop. The little lane at the back was choked with delivery vans some mornings. Before Kid realised it the staff was doubled, with old Uncle Tom handling things well until they got too much for him; then he put the firm's affairs into the hands of a smart secretary whom Jack Armour introduced to them.

And, across the way, red-faced Jacob Pilch stood at his doorway and glared at the scene of industry. Kennedy bats and Kennedy balls were becoming a fad in the sporting world, and it was thoroughly upsetting Pilch's business. The flow of orders that he had once wrested from the Kennedy shop was reduced to a mere trickle.

And it was all through that baby-faced boy who lived in the shop!

Pilch snarled every time that he saw Kid go off to the county ground; he gritted his teeth when he saw his photograph in the papers, and read cricket experts' praise of his bowling skill. And every time that he saw one of the Kennedy shop adverts, he ripped the paper to pieces!

There came a time when the bustle of business at the little shop across the street got thoroughly on Pilch's nerves, while the date of the Fifth Test grew ever nearer. Pilch set himself down to think, and in his cunning brain there grew a scheme which would put the shop and the men he hated out of business for good and all.

#### At Dead of Night!

IT was when the prospects for the Fifth Test were being freely discussed that Kid travelled with the county to Taunton, to play Somerset. The game ended early on the third day, and he just managed to catch a

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ANOTHER **DANDY CUT-OUT STAND-UP FIGURE:** **GIVEN AWAY!**



**AT DEAD OF NIGHT!** Kid's swift movement carried him within reach of one wall, and from the nearest rack he grabbed a bat. He twisted, just as the man crashed his weapon down again. The willow came up like lightning, as Kid parried the blow. (See this page.)

train which would get him home at a reasonable hour.

Tired with the day's play and the long journey, soothed by the handling which old Peter gave him before he turned in, he soon dropped to sleep in his bed-room above the store-room.

The moon was shining through his open window when he woke. He awakened suddenly, all the sleep dashed from his eyes, and he lay wondering what had roused him.

It was a still, quiet night, and the moon lit his room with the radiance of full daylight. He dropped himself on one elbow and looked round. There was nothing in the room which could have awakened him. All the old familiar things were there.

He remained listening. He could hear all the creaks and cracks that the old building made at night, but nothing else.

It was just as he lay down again that a sound from below jerked him up in the bed. It was a dull thud, clear and distinct. A thud with a metallic sort of ring in it, and there was only one thing in the building which made that sound—the lock of the big desk in the store-room!

It was an old desk, and the lock was massive. When the key was turned, the bolt always shot back with a bang, actuated by the stiff spring.

One of his uncles was at the desk, of course. They must be working late. Kid reached to the little table at his bedside, and he lifted his watch, glancing at the dial in the moonlight—three o'clock!

He blinked at it. Three o'clock! They wouldn't be working down there at that hour. Midnight was late for them, even in these busy times.

No other sound came to his straining

ears, but he decided to go down and investigate. He slipped from the bed, and tucked his feet into his slippers; then he cautiously opened the door. Still no sound came to him, and he stepped out to the landing.

The store-room was at the back of the stairs, just to one side of the counter. He could not see the doorway from the landing, and he began to move downwards, treading at the sides of the steps so that the ancient wood should not creak.

He was almost at the foot of the stairs when the store-room door came into view, and the darkness on the far side of the open doorway was suddenly stabbed by the hard, white light of an electric torch.

Kid held his breath as he stepped forward. He reached the door, and stood peering in, while the quick rustle of paper came to his ears.

The big desk against one wall was open. Over it two men bent, their shapes revealed by the sharp light of the torch which one of them held. One was grabbing papers as fast as he could from inside the desk, while the other gathered them together in a neat package.

Kid looked at the men. They were big and burly and tough. One had a choker about his neck, and both had their caps pulled well down over their eyes.

Burglars, was Kid's instinctive thought. But what would burglars want with the papers in the desk? Kid knew what they were—duplicate orders, receipts, office letters, and the like. Nothing of any value, and yet these two night marauders were very carefully

clearing the desk of pretty well every scrap of paper in it.

Well, whatever it was they were after, they had no right to the papers. Kid shoved the door open with a bang and stepped through.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

Both men jumped at his voice and wheeled round to face him as Kid stepped into the store-room. The torch flashed into his eyes, half-blinding him.

"Keep it on 'im—I'll fix 'im!"

The growling voice came in a hissing whisper. Kid ducked out of the light just in time to see one of the pair leaping towards him. His right arm was uplifted, and against the light of the torch Kid could see some club-like weapon that the man held. It came smashing down even as the boy saw it, and, at the last moment, Kid ducked away.

His movement carried him within reach of one wall, and from the nearest rack he grabbed a bat. He twisted, just as the man crashed his weapon down again. The willow came up with a lightning flick of Kid's wrist, there was a smack as the club caught it, and then Kid's wrists jerked again, and the flat of the bat caught the man squarely across one ear.

He staggered, and when he lashed out a third time there was all the vicious strength of his big body behind the blow. Once again Kid warded it; then the torch flashed into his eyes, and at the same moment something caught him a terrific blow on the side of the head.

A streak of light blazed across his vision, and he dropped to the dusty floor. The other man had hit him from

one side. Kid's bat clattered down, and he lay there with his brain spinning.

"Better cut!" he heard one of the men whisper hoarsely. "We've got it all. Come on!"

Kid saw the light of the torch flit across the room, and he sat up as the pair disappeared through the door at the far end. Kid shook his head, trying to clear it. With a hand on the side of the desk he clawed himself up and got to his feet.

He staggered through the dark after the pair. He didn't know what they'd stolen those papers for, but they were not going to get away with them if he could help it.

Up above, he heard his uncles moving, alarmed by the noise of the abrupt fight. But Kid couldn't stop for them; the thieves were getting away.

From the other door he glimpsed the pair at the far side of the big work-room, just passing through the door which led to the yard and the lane beyond.

Kid staggered across the shaving-littered floor, and every stumbling step that he took seemed to steady his reeling brain. He reached the door, and heard the pair in the lane; but he couldn't follow them in his pyjamas.

He glanced about him. Close against the door were a dozen old coats that workmen wore. He grabbed one, and slipped it on; then stepped into the yard, and hurried to the lane.

The cool night air helped to revive him as he watched the pair turn the corner at the end.

He went after them at a trot, stumbling over the rutted roadway, all but losing his slippers half a dozen times as he hurried along.

He followed the men to the street, and dodged into the hedge when they looked back ere they entered the thoroughfare on to which the shopfront faced.

But when Kid reached the street they had completely disappeared!

He looked both ways. There was no sign of them. Yet there was no turning within sight, and they couldn't have got away by running, unless— Ah, there was an alley almost opposite, leading to the back of Pilch's Emporium and to the streets beyond. They must have gone that way.

He darted across the road and into the black mouth of the alley, taking a chance that the men might see him. Once in the alley, he could see the far end; it was quite blank for all its length.

He ran down it, his slippers making hardly any sound as he moved. He passed the high wall of the emporium, then went by the big doors leading to the back entrance—and one of the doors was ajar.

More—in the moonlit yard beyond he got a fleeting glance of three figures. Two were those of the men he was following—and the third was Jacob Pilch!

#### A Coward's Blow!

KID pulled up short as he passed the doors, then went back and peered through the narrow opening.

"You've got everything—eh?" he heard Pilch's rasping voice.

"Everything what was in the desk," one of the men answered.

"Good!" and there was a satisfied note in Pilch's tone. "That's all I want. Anybody see you or—"

"That kid came down, but 'Arry flopped 'im on the nut, an' 'e never let out a yip! We ain't 'urt 'im much, though!"

"I wouldn't care if you'd killed him!" Pilch snarled. "He would have to butt in. Well, here you are! You'd better cut along the back way in case there's any alarm. Look lively!"

THE POPULAR.—No. 393

Kid saw something change hands after the men had passed across the sheaf of stolen papers, then the boy backed down the alley in the direction from which he had come. He found a doorway on the side opposite from the emporium, and he slipped into it.

Bare seconds later, the two came out of the yard. They walked silently on down the alley, with hardly a look behind them, and now Kid thought he knew why those papers had been pilch.

With those in his hands, Jacob Pilch would know all there was to be known about the Kennedy shop. He'd know where they got their materials, and how much was on order. The information was of incalculable value to him. It would be the easiest thing in the world for him to upset the running of the shop if he chose.

Why, a little cunning work would stop the shop's supplies! All he had to do was to order ahead of the Kennedy shop—cornering the goods that they needed. If he wanted to, he'd be able to buy up the salix alba willow from which the Kennedy Test match bats were made, and the shop wouldn't be able to fulfil its orders!

Kid hadn't time to think out just how much power those stolen papers had given Jacob Pilch, but he saw enough to realize that it was absolutely essential that he should not get away with them.

The moment that the men disappeared around the corner at the far end of the alley, he slipped from his hiding-place and moved towards the yard doors. Pilch was still standing there, looking over the papers, an evil smile on his face.

Kid slipped silently through the doors and hesitated. He wouldn't get those papers back by asking for them—if he wanted them he'd have to take them!

He crouched, then he jumped full at the man, grabbing at the papers as he went. From the tail of his eyes, Pilch saw him coming. He jerked away, and Kid missed.

There was blood trickling in a thin stream down the side of Kid's face as he swung round squarely. Pilch backed from him, one hand clutching the rustling sheaf. His red face went a little white as he realised what Kid's presence meant to him—the burglary which he had instigated had been discovered.

"Give me those papers!" Kid ripped at him.

"They're not yours!" Pilch snarled back.

"They are! They were stolen from the shop, and I just saw you pay two men for stealing them. Hand 'em over!"

For answer, Pilch stuffed them into the side-pocket of his coat. He bunched his big fists; then he came rushing at the boy.

Kid jumped to meet him. He wasn't scared of Pilch, big as he was.

The man grunted as Kid's brown fist rocked to the side of his jaw, and then Pilch's bunched knuckles landed on the side of Kid's head with a force that flung the boy sideways.

But he steadied on the instant, and came in again, slamming at the bloated features, making Pilch gasp as he lashed stinging blows to the body. Pilch went back—he went right back to the brick wall of the emporium while Kid tore into him with both hands.

Finally, his swift right snapped home full between Pilch's eyes, and the man went down. Kid bent above him.

"Now, will you hand 'em over!" he panted.

Pilch did not answer. He hunched there on hands and knees, and Kid couldn't see that the man's right hand was wrapping about an inch-thick stave from a packing-case.

"Are you going to hand 'em over, or have I got to get help?" Kid demanded.

"All right, I'll—I'll give—" Pilch's gasping voice broke off as he heaved himself up. Kid stepped away; he didn't want to hit a beaten man.

It was as Kid dropped his fists that Pilch's right arm flashed high. The heavy billet of wood slammed down, driving fiercely, and landing full across the top of Kid's head.

Kid swayed on his feet staggered a pace, and then crumpled inert to the ground.

*(Kid is now in the hands of his ruthless enemy, and Pilch is in possession of the Kennedy Stores order papers. With these he can ruin the business, and the Kennedy. See what happens in next week's long thrilling instalment of this powerful cricket story by the famous "Patsy" Hendren.)*

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# A Knight of the Twigs!

The thrilling adventures of a knight of the insect world.

**Y**OU know how the knight of old used to be dressed in plated armour? Well, that was how he was dressed, but with this difference—his armour was, on the broad black back, shot with ruby and purple and gold, if you got it in the right light, just like some of the very fine silk they make for ladies' dresses.

Moreover, his back-armour, which was in two plates only, opened out at will and allowed him to shake out the delicate gauzy wings which lay neatly folded beneath. Indeed, you would never have guessed that he had any wings at all if you had not actually seen him using them. In short, he was a beetle, what is known as a carnivorous beetle—or, rather, one of them, for there are several kinds, all fairly common and none possessing a proper name in English.

At the moment we came upon him he was strolling about the branches of a pine-tree, for no other reason apparently than to show how brilliant and grand his armour looked in the light of the afternoon sun. That was because he moved so slowly. As a matter of fact, he was following a trail by scent, hunting down a quarry, and a very difficult line it was, too, because so many other trails crossed it—trails of moths and flies and beetles and earwigs, and goodness knows how many others.

Then this insect stopped suddenly and stood absolutely motionless, from head to hind hooked claw, as only an insect can keep still. He had come upon a scene among the big gnarled and twisted branches of the tall pine which, had it been magnified, would have appeared to us very wonderful and almost terrifying. Wonderful, too, it must have looked to our beetle from his small point of view.

About a dozen huge caterpillars, all branded and spotted and covered all over with little stiff tufts of hair like miniature paint-brushes, were grouped together, feeding upon the young, narrow, tender leaves of the pine, and four big brownish moths—they completely dwarfed our beetle, who was not more than rather over one inch long, by the way—were settled flat against the bark, laying eggs, and two others were flying about, and a

big, rakish, thin-bodied, waspy-looking red insect was whirling around the whole party.

This latter did not hum; he made an indescrivable sound as he flew, just as daddy-long-legs and dragonflies do. The scene was a family party of that very destructive creature, the pine lappet moth, and its caterpillars being attacked by an ichneumon fly.

Our beetle, however, did not care for any ichneumon fly living. He was hungry, and, with a sudden quick run, he made an amazingly swift spring at the nearest caterpillar's back. Now, caterpillars are harmless things so far as fighting goes, and not very agile, but Nature has provided them with a few useful tricks.

This one, for instance, saw with its three eyes the beetle as he leapt, and, without moving or waiting even the fraction of a second, let go its hold on the pine-leaf with all its sixteen legs and fell headlong downwards like a stone. The beetle landed with a scramble exactly where the caterpillar had been, and all but lost his hold and followed his intended prey to the ground, thirty feet below.

As a matter of fact, however, the caterpillar was not on the ground. It was dangling on an all but invisible thread, which it had taken

care to anchor to the pine-leaf before making its aerial dive. Later, when it seemed all safe, it would coolly climb up again.

Meanwhile the beetle hung motionless on the leaf for five minutes, and then, so suddenly and so quickly that the human eye could hardly follow him, dashed up and along the twig to the main branch at a caterpillar moving across the rugged bark. It was an amazing exhibition of swift attack. But the slow-seeming caterpillar was ready, it appeared, for almost as he started to move it reared its head right up like a plunging horse and met him with a spurt of greenish, acrid, stinging liquid squirted from its mouth. Wonderfully true the aim was, too—so true that had the beetle not swerved in the last stride, and with astonishing agility, he would in all probability have been blinded for life.

Not to be balked, however, the beetle, without checking its speed, continued to swerve, and with one long, quick leap landed full upon the back of another caterpillar about six inches away before the latter could move.

Then was seen what the word strength really means as exhibited in the insect world. The beetle had buried its fangs—which were like curved shears, the ends pointing inwards, and the razor-sharp cutting edge notched like a saw—into the back of the caterpillar's neck, at the same time feeling for a hold on the branch with four out of his six legs. As soon as he got it he calmly hoisted that caterpillar up and held him out, kicking, in space. He seemed to make no effort in doing this, though the caterpillar was two and a half inches long and enormously strong and lashed about with the fury of a serpent.

In a few seconds the formic acid which lies in the beetle's claws got to work, and our friend the caterpillar died in one last fearful convulsion, during which the beetle did not move. Then he calmly hoisted in the prey from its dangling position and fed.

Half an hour later, just as it was getting dark, we find our beetle wandering about the big trunk of the same tree, hunting in and out the



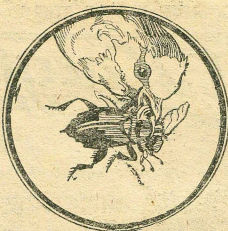
The beetle hoisted the caterpillar up and held him out, kicking, in space. He made no effort in doing this, though the caterpillar was much bigger and enormously strong, and lashed about with the fury of a serpent.

crannies for prey to appease his apparently ceaseless hunger. Suddenly, without warning, out of a hole which must have seemed to him like a cave backed a big bee, sting first. She was one of those solitary wild bees that make tunnel-nests in wood. And, since the thing bobbed out practically under his equivalent for a nose, he stopped dead.

There was a pause, as the owner of the sting came out and sat looking at him rather amazedly. But as soon as she had come to the conclusion that he was alive she made a sudden angry "Buz-z-z!" and, quick as thought, lunged at him with her tail or sting end. The beetle scarcely seemed to move, but he moved enough to dodge that deadly stab, anyway, and in a flash had grappled the bee where her throat should be.

Then followed a stupendous hand-to-hand battle. Up and down the trunk staggered and reeled the locked combatants to the accompaniment of perfectly appalling buzzing, the bee held, struggling, over space, stabbing, stabbing to find a bed for her sting. And then a strange thing happened.

There appeared suddenly a huge monster, and a beak shooting down, seized the bee and went. It was, as a matter of fact, only a tomtit; but, so far as the beetle was concerned, it might have been an elephant. All he knew was that he found himself being whirled away ignominiously through the air before he could open his jaws, and that as soon as he did so he fell headlong and headfirst, without having time to unfold its wings, some twenty feet into a bush, where he fetched up with a tiny crash and dropped from twig to twig to the ground.



There appeared suddenly a huge monster, and a beak shooting down, seized the bee and went. And unable to loose his grip on the bee, the beetle was whirled away, too.

Luckily for him he did not fall on his back, or else, like a turtle, he might not have been able to get up again. But as for falling twenty feet—pff!—he never even gave it a second thought. This was for two good reasons—first, the lightness of his body, and, secondly, the strength and wonderful elasticity of his armour. Moreover, he had no bones to break, remember.

It had been getting dark for some time, and under the bush—which was to him a new world, of course—it was quite dark. Then he unfolded his wings and flew away in the open. First of all he must needs collide with another big beetle, called a cockchafer, going at full speed, and knock himself nearly senseless, and then barge into a bat—it was large as a

house to him—zigzagging like a drawn black line in and out among the trees.

This last collision came near to costing him his life. If he had not been provided by Nature with a wonderful gift, it would have done so. He found himself in the bat's mouth almost before he could move, but ere ever the deadly sharp teeth of the little beast could shut out his view of life for ever, he had the presence of mind to eject a drop or two of the most diabolical smelling and tasting liquid you ever dreamt of, a liquid with which he was provided especially for occasions such as this. Instantly the bat spat him out and hurried off to find water to wash the awful taste out.

As for the beetle, he fell to earth yet again, lay dazed for some little time, and finally picked himself up. Then he jumped! Not four inches away was a fascinating young lady of his species discussing with her lover the delicacies of a newly-slain mosquito. Our beetle did not stand upon ceremony. He had, indeed, undergone enough risk that night to waive ceremony. He sprang straight at the said lover's back, and—well, when he got off it that beetle lover was dead.

Then he and his new mate gaily went off together; but I am still wondering whether he was able to tell her of all the adventure that had befallen him that night, or whether they do not think anything of that sort of thing in the insect world. From what I have seen, I strongly incline to the latter belief.

THE END.

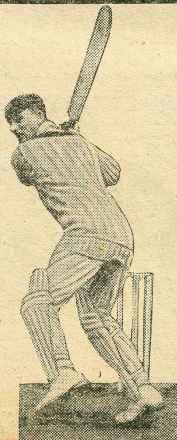
## GOOD OLD HOBBS!

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# BACK to the GREENWOOD!



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## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

**The Nail-tale Nails in the Horseshoe!**  
**R**AYMOND the Smith turned over in bed and listened with both ears.

The thunder of horse's hoofs had mingled with his dreams, and now there was no mistaking the clamour on the smithy door below, or the angry voice that cried "House! House!" at two o'clock in the morning.

Raymond sprang out of bed with the alertness of an old soldier, and drew back the wooden shutters that covered the thurle-hole. It was dark as pitch without.

"Now, who, in the plague's name, cometh beating at honest men's doors at this unwelcome hour?" said the smith sternly.

"One who will pay thee well for a cast shoe, good fellow, and better still if thou wilt find him a draught of wine for horse and rider, since both are nigh spent," replied a voice which Raymond did not recognise.

"Tarry a moment, master, and I'll be with thee," he said, and leaving the window, he made haste to draw on his clothes and prepared to descend to the lower rooms.

"Pray thee be cautious, husband; there are lawless men about," said his good dame, peering timidly forth from beneath the leathern coverlet.

"Nay, have no fear for me," said Raymond, smiling, with a significant wave of the battle-axe, which always hung at his bed-head. "'Twould be a luckless wight who shall try conclusions with this rib-tickler, wife. But hark to Master Impatience below! Does he think I have fallen asleep again, I wonder?"

The traveller was knocking once more on the smith's panel, and with such vigour that Raymond quickened his

pace, and entered the living-room on the ground floor, where the banked-up fire still glowed redly on the hearthstone.

It only required a prod with the handle of the axe to burst it into a blaze, and, lighting a torch, he strode to the door flung it wide, and held the flaming flambeau high above his head.

It shone on the figure of a man in a steel corset and long riding-boots, and the head of a horse that had evidently been hardly ridden.

"A silver shilling for a shoe, smith," said the man, who was young and clean-shaven, with jet-black eyebrows which met across his nose in a straight line.

Raymond the Smith set his arms akimbo and leaned against the lintel of the door.

He looked at the newcomer from top to toe and then at the horse.

"You ride fast, sir," he said, "and you have ridden far. What is your hurry that ye cannot wait till morning?"

"That is my business," said the man, shifting the sword on his left hip into view.

Raymond smiled, and in his turn rested the battle-axe in the hollow of his left arm, with a gesture that spoke volumes.

Raymond was a handsome man, with a square-cut, resolute face, seamed by a sword-cut won in the French wars, and the stranger instinctively realised that if he wished the job done he must speak him fair.

"From the look of that animal," said the smith, "either thou knowest little about a horse, or your errand must be one of great importance. The poor brute has not three leagues left in him."

"I shall be well satisfied," said the stranger, "an he carry me that distance, which, indeed, should bring me to my journey's end."

"Then you ride to Nottingham?" said

the smith, and his eyelids closed down a little as he again took keen stock of the stranger from head to heel. "Well, well, 'tis none of my business, after all, but the fire is out and my boy liveth a mile off, so thou must e'en take thy turn at the bellows. Come this way." And, passing out of the house, he walked towards a large wooden door, which he unlocked and flung wide open, setting the flambeau in a cresset in the wall, while the traveller led the horse in with a very audible sigh of relief.

"Tarry a moment," said the smith, "and thou shalt have a draught of wine." And, going back into the house, he soon returned with a straw-covered flagon and an earthenware mug. In his hand he carried a piece of raw steak, at sight of which the traveller's eyes glistened.

"Ah, good fellow!" he cried, filling the cup and draining it at a draught.

"I know now thou understandest a horse when thou seest one!" And, setting down the cup, he unhooked the bridle, while the smith poured some wine on to the raw meat and proceeded to wrap it round the iron bit.

"I did not follow my lord to the wars for nothing," said Raymond, placing the bit in position again; after which he proceeded to build the fire with small twigs, which he piled up with charcoal and lit by thrusting the end of the flambeau into it.

"Now, sir, yonder be the bellows, and when I have found a piece of iron to the purpose, thou shalt try thy skill."

He took the shoe from the stranger as he spoke and examined it carefully.

"Shall I tell you the road you have travelled?" said Raymond the Smith. "You come from Wales, by way of Chester, and in the County of Stafford this shoe came loose. Am I right?"

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The black line of eyebrow came down straighter over the stranger's nose.  
"Art wizard as well as smith?" he said.

"The saints forefend," replied the other. "I am simply a plain man that keepeth his eyes open," and then he fell into silence, motioning the stranger to the bellows handle, while Raymond laid his iron on the forge and waited until the fire should be hot enough to work it.

All this time he was thinking, and the manner of his thoughts was this: "This man rideth from Wales as surely few men have ridden before with news for the Sheriff of Nottingham. His dress is rich and his speech betrays him to be a Norman. Now what news, under high heaven, can he bring at such a pace?"

He flung the iron into the fire, where it speedily glowed, first red and then white hot, and then picking it out with his pincers, he beat it into shape with a small sledge-hammer, replacing it from time to time and motioning the man to continue his work at the bellows.

"If you carry papers of importance," he said casually, "you run great risks in riding through Sherwood at night. Know you not that Robin Hood and his band infest these glades and take heavy toll from passers-by?"

The stranger laughed, and the smith looked sharply at him. Their eyes met, and the man closed his mouth with a snap. He had been about to speak, but had thought better of it.

"Ho, ho!" thought the smith, "this man is cautious, yet will I get his secret out of him before he fares forward."

He placed the shoe close to his cheek to test its temper, and then setting the horse's foot between his strong knees, bade the stranger hold the torch so that he might see.

With a few deft strokes of his knife, he pared away at the horn, so that the shoe would lie easier, and then laid it in position.

There was a hissing sound for a moment, followed by a pungent smell of acid burning, and Raymond drove the first nail home.

He noticed that the stranger kept his ear to the door all the while, and as he drove nail number two, the smith muttered under his breath:

"This man is pursued—that is clear as daylight. Now the question is, shall I so shoe the beast that he carries him but a mile, or shall I set him fairly on his road?"

The stranger's next speech settled the matter beyond all doubt.

"Ha, ha!" he laughed suddenly.

"You spoke just now of Robin Rascal and his saucy varlets, and to say truth, they pressed me close far back in the Welsh marches; but I shall give them the slip, thanks to your aid, and thy guerdon shall be two silver shillings instead of one, good smith."

The draught of strong, rough wine, taken in his exhausted condition, had loosened the messenger's tongue, and Raymond bent lower over his task to hide the gleam of satisfaction that came into his face.

"These outlaws are troublesome folk, if rumour lies not," he said. "Steady, lass, I shall soon have finished with thee, and," he added under his breath, "with thy master, too."

He turned to the forge again, where the fire had died down to a dull, red glow, and, with his back towards the stranger, he nipped off the heads of the remaining nails with his pincers, so that there was not more than a quarter of an inch of shank to them.

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"Help thyself, master," he said, pointing to the flagon; "twill put new life into thee. And set the torch in yonder sconce, where it will give me all the light I want."

Keeping a wary eye on the traveller, Raymond made artful pretence of driving in nail after nail, and no one could have told when he had finished that the first stumble, or the first loose pebble in the way, would wrench the shoe off again.

"Now, master," he said, "the job is done, and I thank thee for thy liberal payment. If thou knowest not the road to Nottingham, all thou hast to do is to follow this glade, keeping the wind on thy left cheek until thou art past the castle of Sillinghurst. From thence 'tis but a matter of eight mile, the road lying through the valley all the way."

The stranger thanked him and, leading the horse out, mounted into his saddle.

A dig of the sharp spurs set the poor beast into a shambling trot, and as the darkness swallowed him up and the heavy woodland soon muffled the sound of the hoofs, the smith smiled as he stood in the doorway, clicking the silver coins mechanically in his great fist.

"Pardie," he said, "I know not now whether I ought not to have brained yonder popinjay with my hammer; but this I know, 'twill be daybreak ere he reaches Nottingham town, the babbling fool!"

—He was about to turn into the smithy again to extinguish the torch, when a low whistle fell on his ear, and, swinging round, he was conscious that several figures were running towards him, in the dark. He could not see them, but the cheery voice that hailed him by name did not leave him long in doubt as to their identity.

"Gadzooks, friend Raymond!" cried Friar Tuck, who came up puffing and blowing, "who would have thought to find thee up and about at this unearthly hour. Marry, and a flagon of wine, too!" And striding into the smithy without ceremony, the worthy man raised the flask to his lips and drained it to the dregs.

With him were Allan-a-Dale and Will Scarlet; and as they exchanged a warm greeting with Raymond the Smith, he saw that they, like his recent visitor, had travelled fast and far.

"Now," by my halidom, cried Raymond, "how hast missed thy man, Fool that I was!"

"Grammercy!" cried Will Scarlet seizing Raymond by the arm. "Dost speak of one who rideth a grey gelding?"

"The same," said Raymond. "He is not two bowshots off. I shod the grey barely five minutes ago, but in such fashion that if he reach Sillinghurst without a broken neck, 'twill be little short of a miracle."

Friar Tuck let the empty flagon fall on the smithy floor, and seizing his quarter-staff, pounded out through the door without a word, his two companions following him.

"Robin Goodfellow and the rest of our lads are not far behind us," called Allan-a-Dale over his shoulder. "Tell thee whither we have gone."

For a few moments Raymond the Smith could hear the crackle of the undergrowth and the crunch of last year's leaves, as the three outlaws started in pursuit; but the sound soon died away, and there he stood waiting in the torchlight, with a grim smile on his weather-beaten visage, his head turned slightly to the left, as he listened for the approach of the main body.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Of the News Brought by the Advance-Guard, and the Trap Laid by the Outlaws!

"GADZOOKS!" said Allan-a-Dale, as the three companions sprang abreast over a fallen tree-trunk. "Tis good to be back home again in the dear old green-wood."

"Thou sayest right, lad!" exclaimed Friar Tuck. "The smell of it gladdens the heart like old wine, and the very prick of the holly on my bare shanks hath a sweet, familiar sting."

"Hush!" said Will Scarlet. "Methinks I hear the fool in front; and if my ears deceive me not, his horse is well-nigh spent."

They stopped, and were rewarded by the sound of a floundering plunge and a heavy fall.

"Gadzooks, he's down!" cried Allan-a-Dale; but Friar Tuck caught him by the elbow as he was about to dart forward, for a loud voice cried, "Who goes there?" and through the screen of underwood there suddenly gleamed the light of several torches.

"By the road," muttered Will Scarlet, "the knave hath fortune on his side. Had the grey chosen a spot fifty yards this way or t'other, we had had our bird. As it is, he is at the very gate of Sillinghurst Castle itself, and the watch has turned out to help him."

They crawled forward, and saw that Will Scarlet had spoken truly enough. The barbican of Sillinghurst, unlike most of those Norman castles, was built upon the outside edge of the moat, with the drawbridge behind it; and from the little wicket in the great gate, seven or eight men, with steel caps, were looking forth, holding aloft a couple of flaming torches, which showed the foresters the figure of the man they were pursuing, as he reeled and staggered from his dying horse towards the gateway.

"I am tempted to feather an arrow in his ribs," whispered Will Scarlet. But Friar Tuck said:

"Not so. That would only be to proclaim our presence sooner perchance than Robin would wish. The rogue has escaped us, that much is certain; and all we can do is to watch what happens."

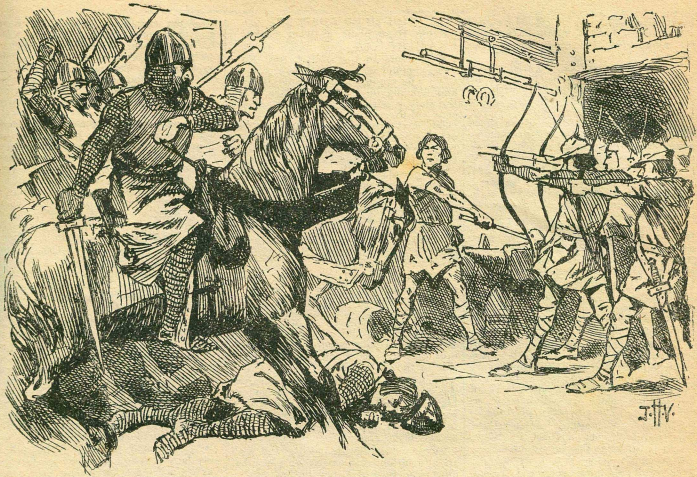
He had placed his lips to Will Scarlet's ear as he said these words, and when he turned his head again towards the barbican, he discovered that Allan-a-Dale was no longer by his side. Several tangled thorn-bushes grew within earshot of the gateway; and Allan-a-Dale, making no more sound than a leaf that rustles down from an October beach-tree, was gliding forward like a snake towards the friendly cover.

"The plague on that daring young blade," said Friar Tuck. "One of these days he will burn his fingers as he thrust them so close to the fire."

Allan, in the meantime, had encoined himself little more than a spear's length from the wicket in the gateway, where he not only saw, but heard every word that was spoken.

"How now? How now?" said a grey-moustached man-at-arms, who was evidently the sergeant of the watch. "Thou seemest in a pretty plight. What hath befallen thee?"

"My horse, firstly; and as for the rest 'twere best told to thy master's ear," said the stranger, who had been badly thrown and was covered with dust and blood. "Prithee, good fellow, rouse the good knight, and tell him



**THE TABLES TURNED!** The men-at-arms were surging round the smithy when, suddenly, a bugle call sounded, and, as the soldiers faced about, the doorway was crowded with men in Lincoln Green. Each of us had his longbow strung, and a feather fitted. "Loose, lads!" cried Robin Hood. (See Chapter 3.)

that Percival of Homerton would have speech with him on a matter that will brood no delay."

"Gadzooks, Master Percival of Homerton," said the old man-at-arms. "Our master's sword may have grown a trifle rusty; but I trust thy business is truly of import, for 'tis a bold man who bringeth Sir Bevis of Sillinghurst from his bed before sunrise."

"'Tis of such import, varlet," said the stranger hotly, "that thou wilt hang in the morning unless thou carry my message. I must have a horse, for I ride to the Sheriff of Nottingham with news that Robin Fitzooth and his ruffians have come back out of Ireland, and are but a day's march behind me on the road to their old haunts."

"Pardie," cried the old soldier, "this is ill news indeed! We have been rid of the vermin these two months or more, and hoped we had seen the last of them. Speed one of ye to our master, and tell him of this thing."

One of his men ran, with clanging footstep, across the drawbridge which spanned the moat behind the barbiican; while Percival of Homerton sank on to the bench that stood against the wall under the archway.

Allan-a-Dale could almost have touched him had he stepped forward from beneath the thorn-bush under which he lay flat on his face. And while they were waiting for the coming of Sir Bevis, three or four of the men went with a flambeau to the dead horse that lay in the road where it had fallen.

In a very few moments the lord of that stately castle made his appearance, and Allan-a-Dale's mouth opened wide at the sight of him. He had seen him often enough at a distance, but then he had been armed and fully

clad. Now he came bareheaded, his face flushed with sleep, and a mantle of blue camel held about his figure by both hands. Had the mantle been brown instead of blue, it might have been Friar Tuck that looked out from the wicket, with the ring of steel caps behind him shining in the torchlight.

Sir Bevis of Sillinghurst had been a good enough soldier in his time; but for twenty years he had lived in peace behind his castle walls, giving himself up to eating and drinking. His head was as bald as an egg save for a little fringe of brown hair that encircled it above the ears, still further increasing its resemblance to Friar Tuck's shaven pate.

"Pardie, Master Percival," said the knight, "I know thee well by repute for a trusty friend of our noble liege the King. What can I do to be of service to thee? Pray Heaven thou has sustained no serious hurt."

"I thank thee for thy kind words, Sir Bevis," said Percival of Homerton, "thou canst indeed serve me with a fleet horse. I have ridden hard these three days past, for I did chauce into the very middle of Fitzooth's ruffians, even to the overhearing of their plans, which are to come back to Sherwood and take up their quarters once more in their old hiding-place, which they call the 'Red Thorn.' Forewarned is forearmed, and if the sheriff can learn of this business, he may plant such an ambush as shall exterminate these turbulent dogs once and for all."

"By my hallidom," exclaimed Sir Bevis, drawing his mantle closer about him, for the wind whistled shrewdly under the archway, "thou wilt earn the thanks of all good men, Master Percival! And thou shalt have the fleetest horse in my stable; though since thou art so far ahead of them,

there can be no harm in thy tarrying here until daylight. A cup of malvoisie will make thee a new man, and thou wilt tell thy tale to my friend the sheriff all the better for it."

"I thank thee, sir knight," replied Percival of Homerton; "but delays are ever dangerous. Perhaps on the morrow, I may return to taste thy hospitality, which is a byword in the land."

"As thou wilt, as thou wilt," said the stout knight. "And, pardie, I hear the clatter of the hoofs already. My knaves are not wont to be so expeditious. Stand back, rascals, and unbar the gate."

Sir Bevis was not sorry for an excuse to shelter from the wind, which had brought some raindrops with it. And, as Allan-a-Dale watched with bated breath, he saw the gate open and a fine Norman coursers led forth by a half-dressed groom.

In spite of his fatigue Percival of Homerton lost not a moment in mounting, and scarce pausing to cry adieu, he galloped away into the darkness, almost riding down the men-at-arms who were examining his dead charger.

Sir Bevis was already striding back across the drawbridge to seek his couch, when one of the men overtook him, carrying something in his hand.

"Master," said he, "we have made a discovery, and he thrust a new horse-shoe under the knight's nose. "This cometh fresh from the hammer of Raymond the Smith, and the dog hath put five false nails in it."

Sir Bevis stopped and examined the shoe intently.

"Now, by my hallidom," said he, "we have long known that this same Raymond was hand and glove with Fitzooth and his band! The man is sharp as a ferret, and no doubt, having inkling of Master Percival's mission,

hath betrayed him in this foul fashion."

He rubbed his fat, clean-shaven chin for a moment, frowning deeply the while.

"Mount a score of ye," he cried, "and burn the smith in his bed! I will be answerable to the King. Off with ye, and let me see the smithy blazing before I sleep."

His brutal command brought a shout of approval from the rough men-at-arms, who of late had had too little of such work for their liking. And their laughter echoed from the towering wall as they ran off hot-foot to the stables.

The knight had spoken loud and high, and his words had reached the unsuspected listener.

"Grammercy!" muttered Allan-a-Dale. "Friend Raymond must have warning of this, and that right soon." And, stealing away on all fours, he joined Friar Tuck and Will Scarlet and told them what he had heard.

Without a word they rose to their feet, and all three sped back towards the smithy in the wood, as fast as their legs would carry them.

"Shame, shame on these robber knights and Norman wasters!" exclaimed Friar Tuck. "We cannot save poor Raymond's homestead; but this shall be a heavy score against Bevis of Sillinghurst, which we will wipe off at our leisure. The cowardly glutton!"

"Gadzooks," laughed Allan-a-Dale, "say not too much against Sir Bevis, for in truth he is thy very double."

Friar Tuck snorted in high disdain, little thinking how soon the resemblance that Allan had discovered was going to stand them in good stead and lead to a very extraordinary adventure.

As they entered the little hamlet in the forest clearing, the first thing they saw was the smithy-door still standing open, brightly illuminated by the glare of the torch within, and, evidently alarmed by the sound of their approach, a well-known figure appeared against the light, looking keenly in their direction.

The simultaneous cry of joy burst from the three men as they recognised Robin Hood himself, and knew that the band, full seventy strong, had arrived during their brief absence.

It required but a moment to tell their leader what had been happening, and of the danger that threatened the smith and his home, and instantly a hush fell over the crowd of lads in Lincoln green that filled the smithy.

"Ho, ho!" said Robin in a stern voice, yet with a thrill of exultant triumph in its tone. "I had thought that we would hide our return from the world, until we would be settled in our old quarters; but tonight the tyrants shall know that we are back again, and that we can bite sharply as ever. Now lads, fit each of ye a shaft to his string and conceal yourselves behind the cottages yonder. You, smith, have a little door at the back of the forge there, through which you can slip out of harm's way." And seeing that Raymond understood his meaning, Robin sprang into the darkness and disappeared, leaving the smithy in the possession of his brawny owner.

Raymond stepped to the doorway and listened. A distant chorus of shouts and laughter came on the rising wind, and the smith smiled with a glitter in his eye that boded ill for the men of Sillinghurst.

"They less no time," he said aloud, "and I must make me ready against their coming."

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### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Robin Hood plans a Great Frolic!

THERE were two large wooden doors to the smithy, and Raymond set them both wide. Then he applied himself to the bellows and blowing up a cheerful blaze, filled the smithy with the warm glow of the charcoal fire.

His next proceeding was to lay a bar of iron on the anvil, and keeping a wary eye on the doorway, he began to beat it lustily with a sledge-hammer.

Clang, clang, clang, clang! The musical sound reverberated through the barn-like shed and echoed far and wide across the clearing.

The ruffians heard it and looked one at another. "Pardie! Our man is up betimes," said the leader of them, a hard visaged man, with a cleft lip.

"Silence all, and ride your horses along the grass! We will give him a great surprise."

The clang of the hammer still resounded and under cover of the noise the twenty horsemen approached in single file, seeing nought of the keen eyes that watched them from the other side of the little green.

Then the leader of the party raised the short boar spear that he carried in his right hand, as a signal, and with a roar of laughter the horsemen rode into the smithy, ducking their steel caps to avoid the top of the doorway.

Raymond the Smith faced round with an affection of surprise and a magnificent picture of a man he looked, the hammer grasped in his huge fists and the muscles of his brawny bare arms standing out like whipcord.

"Good-morrow, Oliver," he cried. "What frolic is this that brings you all out of bed so early? Why the sun be not yet showing above the tree-tops."

"That will never see the sun rise any more, traitor," said Oliver in a surly voice, somewhat shamefaced as he said at the open manner of the man with whom he had emptied many a cup of ale and mead. "Get to thy prayers, knave, for thou art going to die, and thy end will be a warning to all who help the enemies of King John."

"Sayest thou so?" said the smith, a grim smile lighting up his face as he noted that the men were armed with sword and spear alone, and had no

crossbows with them. "Die I shall when my time comes, but 'twill not be by thy hand, Oliver Sittlip!" And, springing backwards over a heap of scrap-iron, he flung his sledge-hammer with so sure an aim and such terrific force that it knocked the man-at-arms over his crupper and made his horse rear up on end.

An angry roar burst from the throats of his companions, and half a dozen of them sprang from their saddles, to reap swift vengeance on the daring man; but ere they could make one stride towards him, before even Raymond could lay his hand upon the little door behind him, a well-known bugle call sounded without, and a mighty shout of exultation made the Sillinghurst men face round to the open door that gave on to the clearing.

There, in the glare of the torchlight, they saw a crowd of men in Lincoln green blocking up the doorway in solid phalanx, and each had his longbow strung and the feather of his arrow drawn to the tip of his right ear.

"Loose, lads," said Robin sternly, "for those cowardly dogs are not fit to live!"

The bow-strings twanged like some giant harp, and every man of the party who had come forth to roast the smith and his family in their beds paid the last penalty of all—every man save one, and he, escaping by a miracle, flung himself from his saddle and sank to his knees, amid the plunging horses.

"Hold!" said Robin. "This fellow may be useful to us for, by my troth, I have a scheme whereby we may teach Bevis of Sillinghurst not to meddle with other folk's affairs. Sirrah, dog!" And he strode up to the trembling man. "How many men hath thy master behind yonder walls?"

The man, livid with terror, replied that there were thirty left in the castle; and then Robin Hood laughed aloud.

"This Bevis of Sillinghurst hath ever been a thorn in our side," said the outlaw. "What say ye, lads? Shall we break our fast at his expense? The thing will be easy enough, for we are seventy strong, and once across the drawbridge 'twill take all the King's horses and all the King's men to rout us out, until such time as we choose to leave of our own accord."

"Say on, Robin!" cried several voices. "The gate is strong, and no doubt the garrison is wide awake."

"Pardie!" said the outlaw, laughing. "Here are steel caps and leather jerkins enough to clothe twenty of us! The morning breaks not yet, nor do they deem us yet so close. Who will ride with me, as a bold man-at-arms?" And, picking up a steel cap, he set it on his head.

It was an adventure after the hearts of all of them, and a struggle ensued as to who should masquerade in the dress of the dead ruffians.

In a few minutes nineteen of the fortunate ones stood equipped round their leader, and a right lusty band did they make.

"Now, my lads, for a frolic of the merriest!" cried Robin. "Before many hours are past the news shall fly from mouth to mouth throughout the broad County of Nottingham that Robin Hood has come back to the greenwood!"

THE END.

(Don't miss next Tuesday's splendid story—"Robin Hood's Frolic!" It is one of the finest of these grand old-time romances for which the POPULAR is famous.)

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## "HOW'S THAT, UMPIRE?"

Some useful tips for the young cricketer on umpiring.

**WHEN**, as frequently happens in club cricket, a side finds itself minus an umpire, there are usually only two courses open, one to canvass the onlookers, if any, the other for the skipper sternly to order one of his own men out of a comfortable deck chair to do the job, provided the other side has no objection.

In view of the fact that nothing spoils cricket more than bad umpiring, the former method is too risky, for no matter how cheery and willing an obliging stranger may be, a series of comic decisions soon casts a blight on the game.

To that end then I really think all fellows should regard umpiring as just as important a part of the game as batting, bowling and fielding, and study it accordingly.

Apart from the fact that it seems rather absurd not to know everything about a game one is fond of, it is extremely useful to be able to fulfil a difficult position in order to make a match smooth and pleasant. And, anyway, when the time comes at last when one has to give up active play and umpire regularly, a thorough knowledge of the job will be at least some consolation. For verily is a good umpire honoured among all men! If he isn't he should be.

### KNOWLEDGE ESSENTIAL!

To begin with, the "Rules of Cricket" and "Instructions to Umpires" issued by M.C.C. must be learnt thoroughly. Both rules and instructions have been altered somewhat of late, so it would be as well to secure an up-to-date copy. The instructions are designed to supplement the rules and guide the umpire through the many knotty little points that creep into a match.

Space will not allow more than the bare mention of their existence and the advice to learn them, but if they do contain some surprises for quite a few players. Learn the rules and instructions until you have them by heart and can give prompt and quick decisions. Cricket may be a leisurely game, but slow uncertain decisions are unpopular.

### SIGNALS.

Besides the rules, etc., the code of signals must be learnt. Some are for the players, but most are for the scorer. They should be learnt as if they spoiled a game to have an umpire "conversing" with the scorer by means of hoarse bellows from mid-field.

There is a signal for every decision, and though on occasion the umpire must speak, he should make it a rule constantly to use the appropriate signal as well.

"Out!" as everyone knows (alas!) is signalled by a dignified raising of the index finger; "not out!" by a shake of the head. To signal a boundary "four" wave the hand across the body, for "six" extend both arms above the head.

Byes are signalled by raising the right arm above the head with the hand open wide.

"Four" or "boundary" byes, by combining the boundary and "bye" signals. For leg-byes, raise the right leg and smite it ostentatiously with the hand.

"No ball!" must be shown by raising and extending one arm horizontally. "No ball!" should also be called and the speed with which this is done is the hall-mark of a good umpire. It is only fair that the batsman should profit by the bowler's lapse, so call "No ball!" quickly and loudly.

"Wides" are signalled by extending both arms horizontally and "one short" by bending the arm upwards and touching the shoulder with the tips of the fingers. "One short" should also be called.

The game is restarted by the call of "Play!" and "Over!" shall be called when six fair balls have been bowled by the bowler. Always turn towards the scorer when making the signal and wait until he

acknowledges it before allowing the game to proceed.

Also, if a player questions your decision, give him the reason, that is, if he asks nicely. If he doesn't, ignore him. All players have a right to an explanation, however, and no umpire should withhold such. Players should always call "left hand" or "vice versa, whichever is necessary. This will save a little time and confusion when the field changes over. Decisions must be made quickly, signals made promptly, and any remarks made clearly and decisively.

### POSITION.

The next point is the important one of an umpire's position on the field. Of the two ends that of the bowler's is the more important and we will deal with that first.

Please note that a batsman must be given "guard" from the exact point on the bowling crease crossed by the bowler. It is not the least use to the batsman if the umpire gives him centre from behind the stumps, whenever the bowler proposes to bowl from the farthest point of the crease. I have played in matches where the umpires stood behind the stumps the whole time and gave "guards" regardless of whether the bowler bowled "over" or "round," "left" or "right-handed." Another beauty surveyed us from positions ranging from two feet outside the off-stump to a foot outside the leg-stump, all for the same sort of bowling, and gave lbw. decisions with the greatest cheerfulness from each of them.

Ask the bowler what he bowls and where he crosses the line. Face the batsman from that point, tell him what the bowling is and give him the guard he asks for, either by a motion of the hand or by calling the position of his bat. Having settled that, retire to your station, which should be at a point about five feet behind the wicket and exactly in a line with the batsman's wicket. From that position only can a fair lbw. decision be given.

### LBW!

Special attention should be given by all umpires to cricket's greatest woe, lbw. The difficulties arising out of this is never sufficiently appreciated by players and, candidly, some umpires have the very widest ideas of the law. For a batsman to be out he must obstruct a ball with his person that would (a) have pitched in a straight line between the two wickets, and (b) have hit his wicket.

It is in the latter part of the business that mistakes so often occur, for many a turning ball that may have pitched straight and may even have been straight on to the wicket when it hit the batsman's pad would never have hit the stumps, after it had gone another two feet, by reason of its spin. This also applies to rising and dropping balls. Further in case (a) the space in which the ball must pitch is, after all, merely the width of the wicket, so it is obvious that only the keenest and most rigid attention can help a man to decide whether a ball has fulfilled both these conditions or only one. It is to the study of lbw that an umpire should give most attention.

Finally, if without losing anything in the way of firmness, he can always be pleasant, his lot will be a happy one. He is, after all, only presiding over a game.

J. J. B. G.

*Our cricket expert will be pleased to answer any questions about this great summer sport, or solve any problems that may confront the young cricketer. Address your letters to: The Editor, "The Popular," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*

## JACK THE GIANT!



J. M. GREGORY

The Famous Aussie, who is the subject of this week's Grand Free Gift!

**T**IME after time during the past few years, when Australia has been putting England through the hoop, we have sighed and wished we had a fast bowler like Jack Gregory. It was this player who, in association with Macdonald, skilted our men out during the last Australian tour in this country.

It was said at that time that many of our batsmen, facing Gregory and finding him much faster than anything to which they had previously been accustomed, were "out" before they really got "in." This does not mean that Gregory frightened them, but that they felt themselves powerless to stand up to the lightning deliveries of Australia's express man.

Gregory is the giant of the present Australian team, standing six feet three, and using every half inch of his height when sending down those deadly deliveries. He is, as they say in Australia, as strong as a horse, and it is certainly most valuable to have a bowler who can not only send them down fast at the start, but who can keep on sending them down at the same pace for many overs.

Gregory is the first of most interesting career. Born at Sydney he first of all went into the Army, and after that he had a spell at farming. Whether he found the plough and the harrow too heavy for him is not known, but eventually he gave up life on the farm and became associated with a hardware firm.

From the warehouse of their building he is able to see the Sydney cricket ground, and one can well imagine from his wholehearted enthusiasm for cricket that this is the spot he loves best in the world.

Even now Gregory is only thirty years of age, and when he was last in this country he suffered a lot with a leg injury which cost a lot of money to get right, and which threatened at one time to end his career as a cricketer.

Gregory is the sort of fellow, however, who would have even smiled in face of such a calamity, and indeed he prepared himself for it at one time by taking up golf most seriously. "But I can't always get my drive in as I would like," he once said.

But when Englishmen sigh for a Gregory they are really wishing for something more than a fast bowler, because he is such an excellent forcing batsman that he has a right to be numbered among the best six all-rounders in the world.

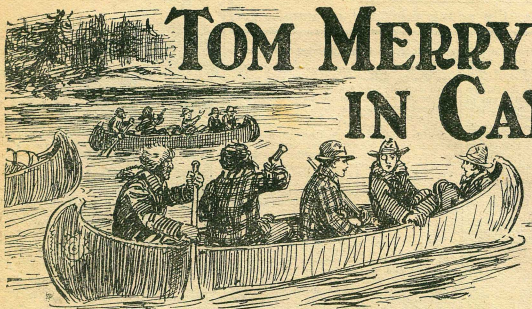
When things are going well for his side in the batting line Gregory is apt to take risks, but when there is need for a batting effort, Gregory is there to supply it.

He has scored a century in a Test match against England, and is at his very best when Australia has had to fight with backs to the wall.

In the two previous tours he has on each occasion taken over a hundred wickets and scored over a thousand runs, while the top of it all he is very nearly, if not actually, the greatest slip fielder in the world. During the present season a leg strain has troubled him, and partly because of this he has not been so successful. Other reasons for his comparative failures are that he no longer has Macdonald in support, and also that the England batsmen are not so frightened of him as they used to be.



**THE SCHOOLBOY ADVENTURERS!** Pursued by their relentless enemy, the St. Jim's adventurers press on to the Frozen North, braving a thousand perils as they go!



# TOM MERRY & Co. IN CANADA!

An Exciting Long Complete Tale, dealing with a strange quest which leads the Chums of St. Jim's into the land of the Yukon.

By  
**Martin Clifford.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### The Midnight Flight!

**T**OM MERRY could not sleep. It was night, deep and dark; a chill wind from the north whistled in the deserted streets of Vancouver.

In the dimness of the room Tom could hear the steady breathing of his comrades, deep in slumber.

A ray of starlight glimmered in at the window, and fell on the faces of Manners and Lowther, near him, sleeping peacefully. Farther, in the shadow, were Figgins and D'Arcy and Fatty Wynn, and Levison major and minor. Tom Merry spoke in a whisper.

"You fellows asleep?"

"There was no answer.

But in the silence there came the sound of a movement in the adjoining room.

Mr. Levison was there; and the movement showed that the hunted man was not sleeping.

Tom Merry sat up in bed, drawing the blankets round him; the night was cold. He could not sleep.

It was their first night in Canada, and perhaps the strangeness of his surroundings had something to do with it.

Perhaps it was the shadow of danger unseen, but ever present.

That day the party had landed from the yacht which had brought them from far-off England; and at dawn on the morrow they were to start for the North-West. Their way lay through the mountains to the frozen banks of the Yukon.

Tom Merry, as he sat in the darkness, was thinking of that strange and perilous voyage, and the grim pursuit of Dirk Power—of the terrible perils that dogged them step by step. Dirk Power had been left behind in San Francisco. That he would follow was certain; but he could not be at Vancouver yet. The fugitives had a breathing-space. Yet—

Tom Merry turned out of bed at last. The thought of the madman was in his mind—the copper-faced man from Alaska, who had been driven half-insane by his sufferings as a prisoner among the Indians of the Yukon. Half-insane, with the cunning of insanity, and more than the determination of a sane man.

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Where was Dirk Power at that moment?

In the shadows Tom Merry seemed to see the coppery face, the burning eyes, threatening him.

He shivered.

Surely the man was far away—many a long mile south of the Canadian border. Yet Tom's nerves quivered with a sense of peril near.

He stepped to the window.

It looked out on a wide street, with tram-lines; silent now and deserted. The starlight glimmered there, ghostly. Tom gave a sudden start.

Across the street, close by a light-standard, a shadowy form caught his eyes—the figure of a man, standing motionless, his eyes fixed upon the hotel.

It was not Dirk Power; Tom Merry would have known the Alaskan at a glance, even at that distance.

But the man was watching the building.

As Tom gazed at him the watcher moved and crossed the street, coming directly towards the hotel. He disappeared under the wooden balcony beneath Tom's window.

The junior's heart beat fast.

He opened the window softly, and stepped out on the balcony without a sound.

From the silence below came a faint murmur of voices. Tom Merry leaned over the wooden balustrade, straining his ears.

He caught one word:

"Levison!"

That word came clearly out of the faint whispering below. He drew back quickly as the black figure emerged into sight again. But the man did not look up; he crossed the street rapidly, turned a corner and disappeared. A door closed softly below.

Tom Merry did not hesitate a moment. He re-entered the room, and stepped quickly to the door that communicated with Mr. Levison's room and tapped.

He heard a sudden gasping breath in the adjoining apartment. The door opened quickly.

Mr. Levison, fully-dressed, appeared before Tom's eyes. His face was pale and worn. He had not slept.

"What—what is it?" The hunted man's voice was shaking. "You are not asleep, my boy—what is it?"

"We're being watched, Mr. Levison," said Tom quietly.

Mr. Levison started.

"Watched! Impossible! Dirk Power

is hundreds of miles away—"

"He may have associates here," said

Tom. "He may have used the telegraph

—or the telephone—"

"It is possible! What have you seen?"

Tom Merry explained quickly:

"A man was watching from across the street—he came over and spoke to someone in the hotel—the porter,

perhaps—"

"But—"

"He mentioned your name, sir. I

heard it."

Mr. Levison pressed his hand to his

brow.

"That leaves no doubt," he said.

"We are watched, then. Dirk Power

has friends here, and he has communi-

cated with them somehow!" He

shivered. "Wake your friends, my boy;

we shall not wait till dawn. We may

elude them yet. We shall at least be

gone before Dirk Power can arrive in

Vancouver!"

"But the car will not be here till

dawn, sir—"

"I will go down now and telephone

for me to come as quickly as possible.

We must not lose an instant!"

"Very well, sir!"

Mr. Levison quitted his room, and

Tom Merry called softly to his comrades

to awaken them.

"What's the row?" asked Levison,

springing from bed at the first call. "Is

it—is it Dirk Power?"

"Up with you!" said Tom. "Mr.

Levison's getting the car round now,

and we've got to start as soon as it

comes!"

"Bai Jove! Without waitin' for

mornin', deah boy?" asked Arthur

Augustus D'Arcy drowsily.

"Yes, yes!"

"Wait—ho!"

"We'll be ready jolly soon," said

Figgins. "Buck up, Fatty!"

"I'm bucking up!" yawned Fatty

Wynn. "We shall have to get off with-

out breakfast—I suppose we shall have

some grub in the car?"

"Never mind grub now!" growled

Monty Lowther. "Hallo, I can hear

them moving downstairs!"

There were footsteps below, and a



murmur of sleepy voices. The juniors dressed quickly and packed their bags—they had done little unpacking so far. Tom Merry uttered an exclamation as there came the snort of an automobile in the street outside.

"It's the car!"  
Mr. Levison opened the door.  
"Come!"  
"We're ready, sir!"

The juniors followed him downstairs. A sleepy porter was stacking the baggage on the big car. The chauffeur blinked curiously at the party as he sat at his wheel. Round them, as they crowded into the car, the city was sleeping. Mr. Levison spoke in a low voice to the chauffeur; the car began to hum. A dark figure came running across the street as the car moved along the trammelines.

It was the spy.  
The man leaned back from the way of the car. Tom Merry glanced round as the big automobile swept on—the man was standing in the middle of the street, staring after them. A minute more and he was lost to sight, as the car rushed on into the dimness of the night.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.**  
**Arrested!**

**E**ASTWARD, over the Rocky Mountains, came a pale flush in the sky.

It was the herald of dawn.  
Tom Merry & Co., crowded in the big car, were half-asleep. Only Mr. Levison sat upright, sleepless, with restless eyes.  
For mile on mile the big car had hummed on through the night northward, ever northward.

Once more the wild flight had begun—the flight from the mad avenger. Many times Mr. Levison gazed back along the shadowy road, searching. But the road was deserted. There was no sign of pursuit. The spy had been thrown off the track.

More than once the chauffeur had changed his route at a word from Mr. Levison, winding like a hunted animal to throw a possible pursuer off the trail.

Many a long mile lay between them and the city on the Pacific when the first faint flush of dawn appeared in the sky. By hilly roads, with sharp gradients, and never a pause, the great automobile fled through the night. Tom Merry looked out in the dawn as the light strengthened. A gleam of water on his right. It was the Lillooet Lake, though he did not know it.

He glanced along the road ahead.  
Against the pale sky buildings rose into view, and Mr. Levison, following his glance, said quietly:

"Lake Crossing! We stop there, and leave the car."  
The sun could be seen now, gleaming from the east. The new day was awakening on the hills and valleys of British Columbia.

Levison uttered a sudden exclamation.  
"The road's watched, father!"  
"What?"  
"Look!"

A mounted man in uniform sat his horse motionless in the centre of the road.

He did not move as the big car came rushing down towards him.  
Mr. Levison panted.

"But— Ah!" His face cleared.  
"It is a police-officer. We have nothing to fear from him!"

"He's going to stop the car!" said Manners.

All eyes in the car were fixed upon the mounted policeman ahead. He raised a hand as the car drew nearer and the

driver jammed on his brakes. It was a signal to stop.

Behind the horseman two constables appeared in sight from a building, with carbines in their hands.

"Halt!"  
The car clanged to a stop.  
Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another. It was impossible that a man in the uniform of the Canadian Mounted Police could have any dealings with Dirk Power and his gang. Yet what did it mean?

The horseman rode up to the side of the halted car. He saluted stiffly.

"What does this mean, sir?" exclaimed Mr. Levison. "Why are you stopping my car?"

"You are from Vancouver?"  
"Yes."  
"You must have left soon after midnight?"

"That is so."  
"Your name?"

"Levison."  
"I thought so," was the grim rejoinder. "I am Inspector Forester. You will alight here."

"But—but why?" panted Mr. Levison.  
"Orders have been telephoned through from Vancouver to stop your car," said the inspector briefly. "What is in this baggage?"

"Our supplies for a journey to the Yukon."

The inspector smiled grimly.

"If that is the case you have nothing to fear. But step down."

"But—but"—Mr. Levison breathed hard—"we are in haste—"

"Very likely!"  
"Has anything happened at Vancouver since we left?" exclaimed Ernest Levison.

The inspector gave him a curious glance.

"Since you left probably not," he answered dryly. "But last night there was a bank robbery in Vancouver—"

"What?" exclaimed Mr. Levison.

"Every police-office in the section has been warned by telephone to watch for your car and stop it. We were warned two hours ago."

"Good heavens!"

"A—a bank robbery!" stammered Tom Merry. "You—you can't possibly imagine that we had anything to do with that."

"Bai Jove!"

"I have my duty to do," said the inspector drily. "Every road out of Vancouver has been watched for your car, and I guess those orders were not telephoned from headquarters for nothing. But if you are innocent you have nothing to fear but a brief detention."

"But—but we are in haste."

"The inspector smiled ironically. The black despair in Mr. Levison's face had not escaped his keen eyes. He had little doubt—or, rather, none—that he had the bank robber under his hand.

"A brief detention!" muttered Mr. Levison, with white lips. "But in that time—" He broke off.

"It's only a mistake, father," whispered Levison. "It will be set right. It will be found out soon—"

Mr. Levison gave his son a ghastly look.

"It is not a mistake," he said hoarsely. "It is a trick. Dirk Power's spy has done this."

"Father!"

"We are delayed. We have nothing to fear from the police when they learn the truth. But in the interval Dirk Power will be here. His agent is carrying out his orders."

"But—but how—" gasped Tom Merry.

Mr. Levison clenched his hands.

"He is using even the law, even the police for his purpose!" he muttered. "He is a demon incarnate, and we are lost!"

"We—we mayn't be detained long, father," muttered Frank. "The police will soon find out—"

"Step down!" rapped out the inspector.

Mr. Levison suppressed a groan, and stepped from the car. The juniors followed him in silence.

They felt that Mr. Levison was right, that it was the hand of Dirk Power that had thus reached out to them from afar. The flight was stopped, and every hour that was lost brought the mad avenger nearer.

But there was no help. Resistance was impossible, even if they had thought of attempting it.

A constable entered the seat beside the chauffeur, and the car was driven away under his direction, with the baggage still on it.

Mr. Levison walked heavily by the side of the inspector, followed by Tom Merry & Co., through a gateway by the road into a yard before a large, frame-built house. The gate closed heavily behind them as soon as they were inside.

"What place is this?" exclaimed Tom Merry, catching his breath.

The inspector glanced at him.

"The calaboose!" he answered briefly.

There was a grim sound as a huge iron key turned. The gate was locked behind them, and they were prisoners.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**  
**The Enemy at Hand!**

**F**REE at last!

The sun was sinking down towards the Pacific, the shadows of the hills lengthened over Lake Lillooet.

The dreary day was past. But they were free.

For a while weary day they had been prisoners within the lumber walls of the calaboose at Lake Crossing, detained on suspicion. The Canadian inspector had done only his duty; they did not blame him. But the day, which should have seen them across the lake and well on their way to the Fraser River, en route for the North-West, was gone.

It was at sundown that the news came through on the telephone from Vancouver. The juniors hardly knew the details, but they knew that false information had been given to the police in the city on the coast, and that now the truth was known.

They were free!

Mr. Levison had passed the day sunk almost in despair, dreading at every moment to hear the tread of his enemy; to see the coppery face and the burning eyes of the man from Alaska. But Dirk Power had not come—the delay had not been long enough for that. As the juniors saw their baggage stacked into the canoes that were to take them across the lake they wondered how far distant their enemy was. The car had been dismissed; on the other side of the lake horses were waiting for them. Mr. Levison pushed on the preparations for departure feverishly, but the Kootenay Indians who manned the canoes were slow and heavy. But at last the waters of the lake flowed beneath them.

"Off at last!" said Levison of the Fourth, with a deep breath of relief. The Indians paddled out over the dark lake.

Tom Merry & Co., sitting in the

canoes among their baggage, looked back at the shore they were leaving.

Lights glimmered from the little town. "Hark!" muttered Figgins.

He held up his hand.

From the single street of the lake-side town came the snort and roar of a powerful automobile.

Two great lights, like flashing eyes, darted through the gloom, and stopped, as it seemed, almost on the verge of the lake.

"A car!" whispered Levison.

The juniors watched with strained eyes.

Was it Dirk Power? Was he so close behind them?

A faint buzzing of voices came on the wind across the waters as they widened behind the canoes.

Crack!

A flash of fire came through the gloom, and the report of a revolver. A bullet skimmed over the waters of the lake.

Mr. Levison caught his breath.

"Dirk Power!"

Crack!

It was the madman! He had arrived too late—only by minutes—and he was firing wildly, blindly, into the darkness of the lake.

The Indians rested on their paddles and stared back. Mr. Levison shouted to them furiously.

The canoes glided on again.

There was another shot, faint and distant now. Then silence.

The St. Jim's fellows looked at one another with pale faces.

"Bai Jove, that was a close shave!" murmured D'Arcy.

"He will follow!" whispered Frank Levison. "He will follow!"

The canoes glided on through the thickening darkness.

No sound came to the ears of the fugitives now, save the dash of the paddles and the lapping of the waters of the lake.

A silver gleam fell upon the waters as the moon glided out from a bank of clouds.

It showed them the dark pines and firs on the farther side of the lake for which they were heading.

"Faster! Faster!" breathed Mr. Levison.

The paddles dashed unceasingly.

As they neared the land Mr. Levison peered ahead anxiously in the gloom.

"The guide and the horses should be here," he said. "They had orders to be here in the morning, and to wait for us if we were delayed."

A faint sound came through the silence from the shore.

"I can hear horses, sir," said D'Arcy.

"They're there!" said Tom Merry.

"A group of them, by a cabin—"

"Thank Heaven!" muttered Mr. Levison.

The canoes ran into the reeds. There was a sound of horses in the gloom under the trees—a jingling of bridle and stirrup. A dusky figure came forward, peering.

"Monsieur—"

"I am here!" said Mr. Levison. A lantern gleamed out, showing the dark face and piercing black eyes of a half-breed. "You are Leronge, the guide that—"

"C'est moi! Gaston Leronge, monsieur," answered the North-West half-breed, eyeing Mr. Leronge curiously.

"Good!"

Mr. Levison cast a quick look back across the lake. The waters glimmered in the moonlight. There was no sign of a canoe or a boat—no sign as yet of pursuit.

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He breathed more freely.

Dirk Power was not far behind, and he would not lose a moment. But the fugitives had a start. The way to the North-West lay open before them.

In a very short time the party was mounted.

With Gaston Leronge in the lead, the party pushed by on along the trail in the darkness under the heavy timber.

Hardly a word was spoken as they rode.

The sure-footed Canadian horses trod on stealthily in the darkness of the rough trail.

Leronge rode ahead without a word, Mr. Levison close behind, and Tom Merry & Co. following.

Through the hours of darkness they pushed on, fatigued, but uncomplaining.

They kept on after dawn, and were still on the trail as the sun rose higher over the firs and cedars. As the daylight strengthened the juniors cast many glances backwards. The trail before them ran through a long, wide canyon of the Cascade Mountains, with no habitation in sight. Mr. Levison was

pose, taking the trail again at dawn, and that, with a brief rest at noon, was all.

The rough life had fatigued the St. Jim's juniors at first, but it was invigorating them now.

They were sun-browned, wind-bitten; they rode hard and breathed deep; they slept rolled in blankets on rough ground; they rode and tramped for hours without exhaustion. Even Mr. Levison was changed. The twittering nerves were still; his face was harder; firmer; his eyes had a steadier light.

Dirk Power, it seemed, had been shaken off at last.

Since he had been left on the edge of the Lillooet Lake Tom Merry & Co. had seen nothing of the Alaskan.

Doubtless he was still seeking them; but he was seeking without a trace.

The party was reduced now; the Kootenay had left them on the Fraser River, and one of the pack-mules had been drowned in fording a creek. The baggage was reduced; they were travelling light. Their rifles provided many of their meals from the game in the forests.

Gaston Leronge, their guide to the Yukon, was still with them—silent, almost morose as ever. He spoke no English—at all events, the juniors never heard him use that tongue. Mr. Levison talked with him in French when it was necessary to speak; but he was taciturn, and he answered little. But his keen black eyes often roved over the party questioningly. Sometimes it seemed to Levison that he was listening, though why he should listen to a language he did not understand was a mystery.

The party halted on the bank of the Stickeen, far, far to the north of the Fraser Valley. They were now fairly in the boundless unsettled North-West territory of British Columbia, and close upon their destination—the frozen wastes of the Yukon. There were chips of ice in the waters of the Stickeen, as it flowed past between its high, wooded banks.

"We halt here for the night," said Mr. Levison.

"Bai Jove! I'm wathah glad of that!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I say, Tom Mewby, this is wathah a change fom St. Jim's and Sussex."

"Yes, rather!" said Tom, with a smile.

"Are you awf'ly tired, Figgy?"

"Not so tired as you are, Gussy!" answered Figgins grimly.

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Jolly hungry, if you come to that!" said Fatty Wynn. "I'm glad you potted that antelope way back, Tom Merry. It means a jolly good supper. Lots of sticks here for a fire. Pile in!"

"Fatty's cook," said Figgins, with a grin. "Fancy you're back in the old study at St. Jim's, Fatty, and give us a good feed."

"This is going to beat anything we ever had at St. Jim's," said Fatty Wynn. "I've got a good appetite here, I can tell you. I think I shall settle in Canada when I'm a man. You enjoy your grub in this air."

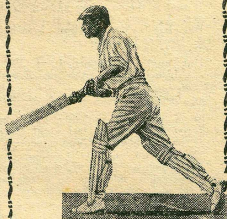
Some of the juniors gathered brushwood for the camp-fire, while others drew water from the stream, or staked out the horses.

Leronge staked out his own horse and the pack-mule, and then helped in the camping.

The weather was fine, though cold, and the campers were to sleep in their blankets and rugs on beds of leaves.

"I think we've shaken off Dirk Power

## ANOTHER FREE GIFT NEXT WEEK:—



**W. R. HAMMOND**

(Gloucestershire's Great Batsman)

**IN ACTION.**

avoiding the beaten paths—Leronge had his instructions. What had happened at Lake Crossing had warned him. Even in the wild sections of the Canadian West the telephone-wire stretches; it had served Dirk Power already, and it might serve him again. And the hunted man knew that Power had confederates in this region, and that spies were probably watching for the fugitives. But on that lonely trail through the Cascade Range there was at least no danger of spies.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### The Traitor!

"THE Stickeen River!" said Mr. Levison.

In the setting sun the horse-men rode out of the forest upon the rugged, rocky bank.

Many days had passed since Tom Merry & Co. had passed the lakes, and the party had pushed on without a pause.

They camped at night for brief re-

at last," said Monty Lowther, when the meal was in full progress. "Don't you think so, Mr. Levison?"

Mr. Levison's brows clouded at the name.

"I hope so," he replied. "I have questioned a great many Indians at the villages we have passed, and have talked with some white trappers, but have been unable to hear anything of the man. I hope—I believe—that he is still far away. But he seems to have unbounded money, and he will spend it like water to reach us. We are not safe from him yet."

The half-breed, who was sitting on a log by the fire, gnawing a venison-cut, glanced up at his master's.

It was only a momentary glance, but it was quick and searching. Levison of the Fourth had his eyes upon the guide, and he noted it, and his eyes met the half-breed's. Leronge dropped his glance to the fire.

"But when shall we be safe from him, father?" muttered Frank.

"Soon, I hope," said Mr. Levison. "When we reach the village of the Indian chief Thunder-Face, across the border in Alaska, I shall have proofs of my innocence. Dirk Power believes that I betrayed him into the hands of the Indians, who kept him a prisoner for ten years, and tortured him when he strove to escape. He is half-mad. But when I have the proofs—"

"Will he heed them?" muttered Leronge.

"He will—he must!"

The half-breed guide rose and lounged away from the fire. Levison's keen eyes followed him.

Supper was over, and Mr. Levison threw fresh logs upon the fire.

"Sleep now," he said. "We start at dawn."

"But the watch—"

"Leronge keeps the first watch. Turn into your blankets."

Mr. Levison rolled himself in his blanket, with his feet to the fire, and the juniors followed his example. Gaston Leronge stood at a little distance half-hidden by shadow, leaning on his rifle.

Ernest Levison raised his head a little and glanced at the guide. He did not sleep. An hour passed, and Levison's eyes were still open.

Leronge moved, lounging a little nearer to the dark trees that shadowed the camp by the bank of the Stickeen. Levison turned a little, and touched Tom Merry on the shoulder. Tom awakened with a start.

"What is it?" he whispered.

"Listen to me, Tom. You've noticed the guide?"

"Yes."

"What do you think of him?"

Tom Merry rubbed his eyes. He was quite awake now.

"I don't like his looks much," he said. "I suppose he's all right. Your father pays him well for his services."

"I don't trust him!" muttered Levison. "He's supposed to speak no English—he's a French half-breed—but I'm certain that he often listens when we speak, especially when Dirk Power is mentioned. I noticed him when my father mentioned Power just before we turned in."

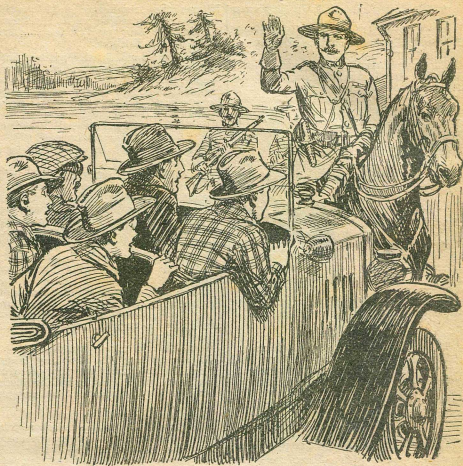
Tom Merry started.

"You think the man knows Dirk Power?"

"He may have known him—Dirk Power was many years in this wilderness—or he may only know that he is rich, and would pay anything that was asked to get on my father's track."

"But Leronge does not know—"

"If he understands English he knows



THE ARREST! Ernest Levison uttered a sudden exclamation, "The road is watched, father!" A mounted man in uniform sat his horse motionless in the centre of the road, and as the car rushed towards him, he raised his hand. "Halt!" The car clanged to a stop. (See Chapter 2.)

the whole story from what he has heard of our talk."

"True!" said Tom Merry.

"If he should betray us!" whispered Levison uneasily.

"But Dirk Power is far from here."

"How do we know?"

"Dash it all, Levison!" muttered Tom. He started abruptly. "Where is he? Where is Leronge?"

Levison looked round quickly.

The shadowy form of the guide had vanished. Gaston Leronge had disappeared into the blackness of the forest.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.  
Face to Face!

TOM MERRY sprang to his feet. The fire had died down, and only a dim glimmer came from the embers—a dull glimmer of red. Darkness wrapped the banks of the Stickeen. Tom kicked the fire together hastily, and a blaze shot up.

The light danced on the camp, on the river, on the dark pines and firs. Gaston Leronge was nowhere to be seen. Tom's rifle was in his hand, and he half-expected to hear a shot ring out under the blackness of the forest. But there was no sound save the sigh of the wind in the pines, and the faint murmur of the Stickeen.

"The horses!" muttered Levison.

Tom stared round him.

The horses and the pack-mule had been staked out by the river in reach of the water. The cut trail-ropes sprawled on the bank; the animals were gone.

"Gone!" exclaimed Tom.

Levison gritted his teeth.

"I was right—the guide— Father, wake up!"

Mr. Levison started from sleep, and

threw aside his blankets. He rose on his elbow.

"Ernest, what is it?"

"The guide is gone. He has taken the horses."

"What?"

"The half-breed has betrayed us," said Levison, between his teeth.

"Good heavens!"

Mr. Levison leaped up. The juniors were all awake now, and on their feet.

"He has deserted us! Has the arm of Dirk Power reached us, then, even here in the heart of the wilderness?" muttered Mr. Levison.

"Aftah him!" exclaimed D'Arcy.

Mr. Levison shook his head.

"In this blackness we cannot follow him into the forest. There is no trace to follow till dawn. By then he will be beyond pursuit—if he has not by then joined Dirk Power."

"You think that villain—" began Tom.

"I am sure of it."

Levison ground his teeth. His suspicions of the guide had come too late; or it was probable that Leronge had divined his suspicions, and acted at once. The guide was gone; the horses and mule were gone. The adventurers were abandoned, on foot, in the heart of the North-West wilderness.

Mr. Levison stamped out the embers of the camp-fire.

"We must wait till dawn. Then we must try to reach the hunter's camp on the Stickeen, where we are to get the sledges for the journey north. It means delay—more delay—on foot—" Mr. Levison broke off. "Sleep now, my boys. I will watch till morning."

But there was little more sleep for Tom Merry & Co. that night.

At the first gleam of dawn they were astir.

After a hurried breakfast they started, followed the bank of the Stieckeen as their only guide.

The rugged, broken bank was difficult to follow, but it was their only guide to the hunter's camp, and they kept to it.

As the wintry sun rose higher over the forests they tramped on doggedly. It was not till noon that they stopped for a brief rest and a meal, washed down by water from the Stieckeen.

Splash!

Tom Merry rose quickly from the half-frozen log upon which he was seated, and stared towards the glimmering river.

A canoe glided round a bend of the stream with the current.

Four men were in it, paddling.

One of them was the false guide, Gaston Leronge; one was the scarred Spaniard, another the Mexican, the associates of Dirk Power, and the fourth was—

Tom Merry knew that coppery face, those evil, burning eyes. It was Dirk Power!

"Cover!" he breathed.

"They threw themselves face down on the rocks of the river-bank. The first had screened them. They were not seen yet. Tom Merry raised his head a little to watch. The canoe, as it came on, was hidden from sight by the high bank. But the paddling had ceased.

"They've stopped!" whispered Levison.

Tom put his fingers to his lips. His grasp was on his rifle. From the high, rocky bank came the murmur of voices. "They will be following the river."

It was the treacherous guide's voice and he was speaking in English now. "It is their only way to the hunters' camp on the Stieckeen."

"We have landed twice without finding a trail." It was Dirk Power's sibilant voice. "But they cannot be far away. Get ashore, Leronge—you have a good eye for a trail. If there is a trace of them on the bank—"

"I guess we have passed ahead of them; the canoe travels fast—"

"Fool! If you had brought me word of them sooner—"

"I could not," muttered the half-breed sullenly. "I knew you were in pursuit, from their talk, but I knew not where to look for you. It was not till yesterday—when I saw you with my glass from the hill—and you were miles away on the river—"

A curse interrupted him. Every word came clearly to the juniors on the bank above.

There was a sound of paddles, and the canoe jarred against the steep, rocky bank, then the sound of a man climbing the rugged rock from the water's edge.

Tom Merry's eyes gleamed.

In a minute more the treacherous guide's head would rise into view over the bank amid the rocky boulders. Tom Merry's finger was on the trigger of his rifle.

There was a breathless hush.

The head of the half-breed came into sight. He was panting as he came struggling up the rugged bank; his dark bronze face was turned towards the juniors, within six feet of him. He saw them.

Crack!

Tom Merry's rifle spat fire, and with a cry the half-breed fell backwards. The bullet had struck him in the shoulder, and he swept down helplessly as he lost his hold.

Crash!

A yell rang from the river.

Tom Merry ran forward to the edge of the rocks, his comrades at his heels. They were ready to fire on the canoe. But it was not needed.

The wounded half-breed had fallen fairly upon the canoe, and his weight had driven it bow under. In an instant the frail craft was swamped. The fierce current of the Stieckeen tore at it as it went under, the paddles floating away amid the bubbles.

Deep under the rapid current the capized canoe was swept away, leaving the four men struggling madly in the water.

The wounded half-breed, the Mexican, the Spaniard, were already sweeping helplessly down the river. Dirk Power made a fierce attempt to reach the bank; his hand grasped at the steep rocks, but there was little hold, and the current tore him away. Tom Merry stared down at him in horror. Struggling madly in the midst of the whirling waters, the man from Alaska was swept from his sight.

THE END.

*(Has the madman paid the penalties of his crimes, or will the schoolboy adventurers meet him again in the far-off Yukon? See next week's thrilling tale of Tom Merry & Co., entitled: "For His Father's Sake!")*



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