

SCHOOL-WILD WEST & ADVENTURE TALES

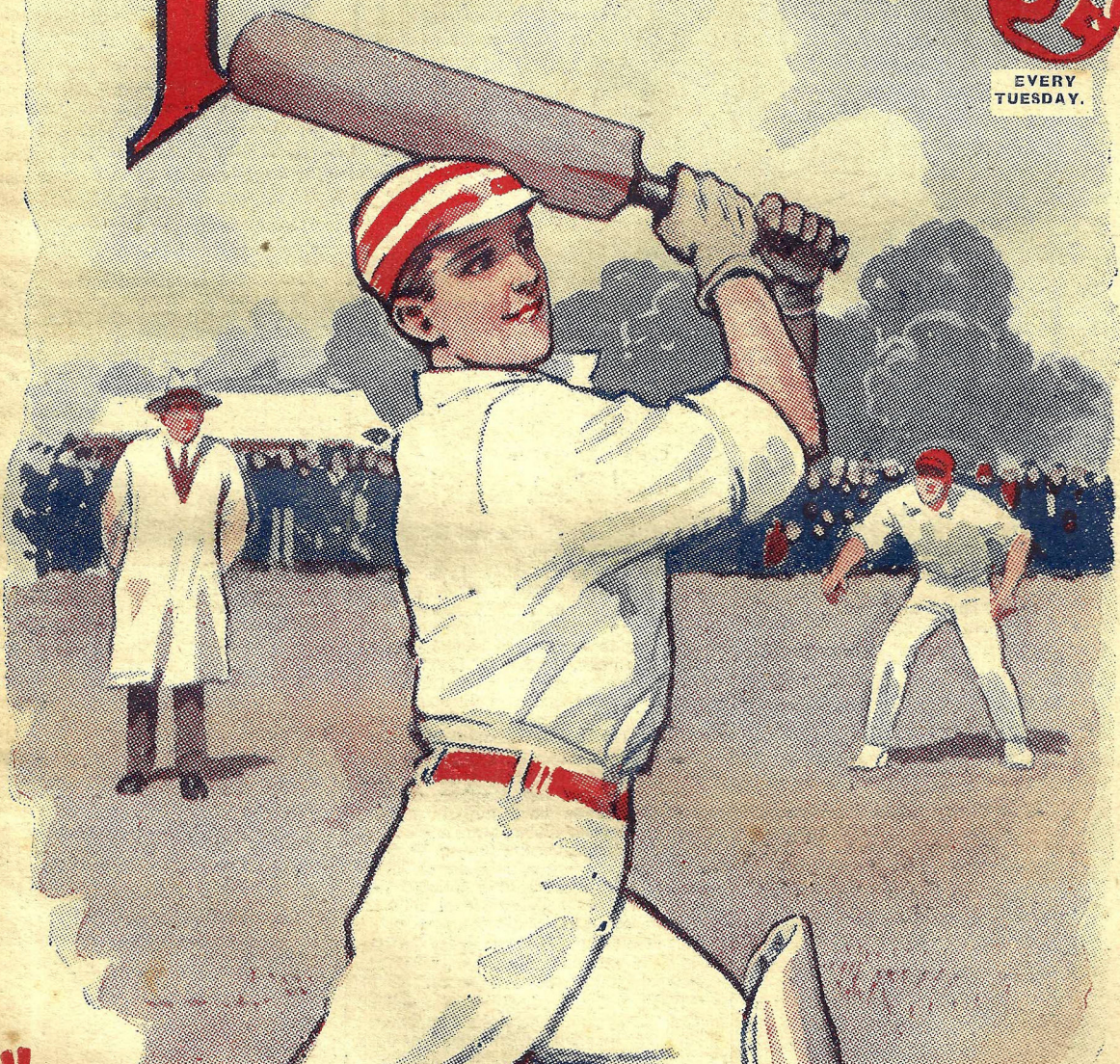
Week Ending  
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Every Week!

# The POPULAR

2¢

EVERY TUESDAY.



"PLAYING  
the GAME!"

Thrilling Tale of Cricket & School Life!





# Mr. Dalton's Brother!

*Peter Cuthbert Gunner has a very small opinion of Form-masters in general, and of Mr. Dalton in particular. But when the chance comes his way of doing his master a good turn Peter Cuthbert is not found wanting!*



## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Perplexing!

**R**ICHARD DALTON frowned. He was puzzled, and he was not pleased.

As a rule, the face of the Fourth Form master of Rookwood wore a very cheery expression. He often smiled, and he seldom frowned. Even in the Form-room, when he had to deal with Tubby Muffin's orthography and Gunner's construe, he generally remained good-tempered and cheery.

On this particular morning, however, he was frowning, and his looks plainly indicated annoyance as well as perplexity.

He had reason to be perplexed. He was mystified.

It had started at breakfast—a meal which Richard Dalton took with his Form, sitting at the head of the Classical Fourth table. At breakfast, all the Classical Fourth fellows had looked at their Form master—looked at him not once, or twice, or thrice, but dozens of times, almost as if his handsome and healthy countenance fascinated them somehow.

Now, it was quite true that Richard Dalton, the youngest and fittest and best-looking member of the staff at Rookwood School, was worth a second glance. It was also true that a cat may look at a king, and so, naturally, a Fourth Form fellow might look at his Form master.

Still, there was a limit.

Fellows looked at Mr. Dalton incessantly and surreptitiously. For some minutes he really wondered whether he had a smut on his nose, or something of the kind. But it was not that. For some reason, inexplicable to him, he was an object of almost breathless interest to his Form that morning. And even Tubby Muffin did not devote his whole attention to food as usual; even the fat Tubby spared a glance or two for the young master sitting at the head of the table.

It surprised Richard Dalton, it perplexed him, and finally it irritated him, and his brows contracted.

He could not raise his eyes from his plate without meeting a stare, which was immediately turned away, of course, only to return! All along the long table fellows would glance up, and if they met Mr. Dalton's eyes, would drop their glances in confusion. Never-

theless, they could not help looking again.

If it was a "rag," the whole of the Classical Fourth seemed to be in it—even Jimmy Silver the captain of the Form. Jimmy, having met Mr. Dalton's surprised eyes, resolutely did not look again. Raby and Newcome, after a glance or two, did not look again. But Arthur Edward Lovell did not follow this good example of his chums. He stared at Richard Dalton, and stared again and again, as incessantly and fixedly as Putty of the Fourth, Oswald, Conroy, Gunner, Dickinson minor, and other members of the Form. By the time breakfast was over it was growing quite uncomfortable and disconcerting for Richard Dalton.

After brekker the fellows went out, and Richard Dalton took his accustomed walk in the quadrangle before classes. Then it began again.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Just Like Gunner!

**M**UFFIN!  
"Oh!"  
Reginald Muffin uttered that ejaculation and jumped, instead of replying "Yes, sir!" as he ought to have done.

Muffin was loafing by the Form-room door, when Richard Dalton came along with knitted brows. It was close on time for first lesson, and Mr. Dalton was going to the Form-room.

As he came up, the fat Classical stared at him, and then jumped as the Form master addressed him sharply:

"Muffin, what is the matter with you?"  
"N-nothing, sir."

"Is this a concerted piece of impertinence, with the whole Form concerned in it?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton.

"Yes—I mean no, sir! I—I don't believe a word of it, sir!" gasped Tubby Muffin.

"Of what?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Has anything happened, Muffin?" asked Mr. Dalton, utterly mystified, but a little disarmed by the alarm in Tubby's fat face. "What is it that you do not believe a word of, as you say?"

"I mean about you, sir!" gasped Tubby.

"About me? What about me?"

"I mean your brother, sir!"

"My brother!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, astounded.

"Yes, sir. I know it's all rot! I know you haven't got a brother, sir,"

stammered Tubby. "Only, you see, it surprised a fellow, and—and—"

"Are you in your right senses, Muffin?"

"Eh? I—I hope so, sir!"

"I have a brother," said Mr. Dalton. "It is no concern of yours, but it is a fact. Of what interest is that to you, or any other Rookwood boy?"

Tubby Muffin almost fell down. He blinked at Mr. Dalton. He had stared before, with avid curiosity. Now he blinked in helpless amazement.

"Oh dear! You—you own up, sir?" he gasped.

"To what are you alluding, Muffin?"

"N-nothing, sir!"

"I command you to explain at once!" exclaimed the Form master angrily. "Something is going on behind my back, in my Form—something that I insist shall be explained to me at once. You know what it is, Muffin."

"Yes, sir—I mean no, sir!"

"Tell me what it is at once!"

"Nothing, sir!" stammered Tubby.

How could Tubby Muffin explain to an exasperated Form master that Gunner had made an astounding discovery regarding him—the discovery that Mr. Dalton's brother was a tattered, intoxicated tramp, even now lurking in the fields and paths near Rookwood?

Gunner's amazing discovery had astounded Gunner. It had excited the Classical Fourth from end to end. Fellows mostly did not believe it, but it centred their attention upon Richard Dalton with an almost painful keenness. Every fellow in the Form wondered intensely what Dicky Dalton would say—and do—when he heard about it.

It would have needed a fellow with a nerve of iron, a fellow with a much stronger nerve than Tubby's, to make such an explanation to an angry Form master.

Wild horses would not have drawn it from Tubby.

Mr. Dalton came nearer to the fat and terrified junior, and for a moment it looked as if he would so far forget himself as to box Tubby's ears.

Fortunately for his own dignity—still more fortunately for Tubby's ears—he restrained himself.



With an angry frown, he passed into the Form-room, leaving Reginald Muffin gasping in the corridor, much relieved to see him go.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Tubby. He scudded down the corridor, anxious to escape further questioning from his Form master, equally anxious to tell his news to the other fellows in the Classical Fourth. He met a crowd of them coming in from the quadrangle, and gasped out:

"I say! He's owned up!"  
"Who's owned up, to what, fathead?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Dicky Dalton! He's owned up that that tramp is his brother!" stuttered Tubby. "It's just as Gunner said!"

"Didn't I say so?" chuckled Gunner.

"Rot!" said Jimmy Silver.

"He's admitted that he's got a brother!" howled Tubby.

"Well, why shouldn't he have a brother, fathead?" demanded Lovell. "I've got brothers, but they're not tramps!"

"Well, we've never heard of his brother before," remarked Peele.

"No reason why we should have," said Jimmy Silver. "We've never heard of his cousins, or his grandfather, if you come to that. But I suppose he has some."

"Well, it looks to me—" said Gower.

"Rats!"

"You can talk rot, Jimmy Silver," said Gunner. "But I know what I know. Mind, I'm not going to throw it up against Dicky Dalton! I like him! It's not his fault that his brother has gone to the bad, and turned out a frowsy, disreputable tramp. Still, the fact's there."

"Bosh!"

"Rats!"

"Piffle!"

"I've met the man. He told me his story," said Gunner. "I'm not a fellow to be taken in, I hope."

"Oh, my hat!"

"He was coming up to the school to disgrace Dicky Dalton, and get money out of him. I chipped in and stopped him. I tipped him a quid to get out and leave Mr. Dalton alone. I did that, mind you, though I was booked for a licking from Dalton. Coals of fire on his head, you know."

"Fathead!"

"I'm standing by Dalton," said Gunner generously. "I happen to have made this discovery about him. The man told me all. I want to keep it dark—quite dark—so as to save Mr. Dalton's feelings."

"And this is how you keep it dark?" said Raby sarcastically. "Telling the whole Form, and hooting it along the passages!"

"I mentioned it—"

"From the housetops!" remarked Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But Mr. Dalton is not to know that we know," said Gunner. "Keep it dark. That's the idea. Save his feelings. He can't help his brother being a loafer and probably a convict—he looks one! Not a word about it for Dicky Dalton to hear! Mum's the word!"

And Peter Cuthbert Gunner strolled loftily away, leaving Jimmy Silver & Co. bereft of the power of speech.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Mossoo Explains!

MR. GREELY coughed. Horace Greely, master of the Rookwood Fifth, had a little, fat, important cough, generally preliminary to fat, important

remarks. Ponderous Mr. Greely looked more ponderous than ever as he approached Richard Dalton in Masters' Common-room and opened his batteries, so to speak, with that fat, little, preliminary cough.

"H'm!" said Mr. Greely.

Mr. Dalton suppressed an impatient ejaculation. He was not in the best of tempers that day. His sunny disposition had been rather sorely tried.

All day long, in class and out of class, he had been the centre of breathless curiosity on the part of the Fourth, and he knew that something or other must have occurred to account for this.

It was no rag. It was something more than that.

But what it was he could not fathom.

"H'm!" repeated Mr. Greely. "You will excuse me, Mr. Dalton—h'm—"

"Yes, yes. What is the matter, Mr. Greely?"

"Your boys, sir," said Mr. Greely, with dignity.

"Kindly say no more, Mr. Greely."

"What?"

"I have no doubt your motives are kind," said Mr. Dalton. "But you must have observed, Mr. Greely, that I never interfere in the affairs of the Fifth Form, from motives kind or otherwise."

It was a snub, and Mr. Greely flushed. However, he had received snubs before, in his career as adviser-in-chief to the Rookwood staff, and he recovered.

"Really, Mr. Dalton, this is hardly what I should expect from you. As a master of senior standing—"

Mr. Dalton rose.

"You are not going, Mr. Dalton?"

"Yes, I am going."

"Upon my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Greely, much offended. "Very well, Mr. Dalton—very well. I will not say what I was about to say. I will not put you on your guard, as I intended. Very well, sir—very well indeed!"

Mr. Dalton walked out of Masters' room, leaving Horace Greely very much offended. The Fifth Form master's last words had excited his curiosity a little, and he wondered whether, for once, Mr. Greely had been going to utter something more useful than unasked advice.

He began to wish that he had let Mr. Greely run on. But he did not seek Mr. Greely to give him another chance. He walked thoughtfully under the old beeches. Gunner and Dickinson minor were going down to the gates together, and they glanced at Mr. Dalton as they went, and then, as they caught his glance in return, hurried on.

Mr. Dalton compressed his lips.

These juniors knew—whatever it was—that was clear. He was tempted to question them and force them to explain. But, after all, how could he force them to repeat the gossip, whatever it was, that was spreading through the school? Such a proceeding would have been too undignified.

Monsieur Monceau, the French master, was taking a little walk under the beeches. Richard Dalton joined him, and the French gentleman greeted him with even more polished politeness than usual. Like many French masters, Monsieur Monceau was a rather neglected and unregarded gentleman, but Richard Dalton had always been very kind and friendly to him, and Mossoo repaid a little thoughtful kindness with a very deep attachment. It was easy to see that Mossoo knew of the mysterious discussion that was going on concerning his friend, hence his particularly polite and cordial manner. It went against the grain with Richard Dalton to raise the subject of his own affairs, but he decided to do so.

"Can you enlighten me, Monsieur Monceau?" he asked rather abruptly.

"Comment?"

"Something seems to be going on—some discussion concerning me," said Mr. Dalton, colouring with discomfort. "I am quite mystified. If you are aware of what it is, it would be a friendly act to enlighten me."

"Zen you know him not?" asked Mossoo.

"I am quite in the dark."

"Vous Voulez! You desire zat I tell you?"

"I shall be deeply obliged."

Mossoo hesitated.

"It is some talk" he said at last.

"Vot're frere, n'est-ce pas—"

"My brother?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, in astonishment. He remembered Tubby Muffin's mysterious reference to his brother.

"Mais oui! You have one frere who is—"

"I have a brother, certainly; but he is quite unknown here," said Richard Dalton. "He is in the Army, stationed in India. How can it be possible for my brother to be a topic here?"

"Un soldat—a soldier—in India! Jai dit—I have said zat it is all shine of ze moon, as you say in English," said Monsieur Monceau. No doubt the French gentleman meant moonshine.

"But what is it?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton.

"It is said—of course, it is all shine of ze moon—but it is a topic zat you have a frere—one brozzer—who is about ze school—a bad character."

"What!"

"One verree bad character who is one tramp, and who hangs about ze school and ze houses of ze public," said Mossoo. "I speak as a friend in telling you zis, Mr. Dalton. I know zat zere is nozzings in it. Some boy has seen one tramp who say he is your brozzer, and ze story is talked over ze school. I have zink to myself, it is one duty as a friend to warn you of zis."

Mr. Dalton stared at him blankly.

He had tried to imagine what the mysterious topic might be; but certainly he had never imagined anything like this.

"Is—is—is it possible?" he stuttered. "C'est possible! C'est vrai! So one says," said Monsieur Monceau. "Some foolish boy in your Form have started ze story."

"The young rascal!"

"Zere is nozzings in him, vrai?" asked Monsieur Monceau. "Your friends zink no worse of you, monsieur, if you have one relation who is not—vat you call—up to ze marks."

"Thank you, monsieur," said Mr. Dalton dryly. "But I do not happen to have any disreputable relations, that I am aware of. I am much obliged to you for telling me this. I shall investigate the matter at once."

And Richard Dalton, with a grim brow, nodded to the French master, and walked away to the House.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### Good o' Gunner!

"THE awful rotter!" said Gunner indignantly.

"Eh?" said Dickinson minor.

"The swindling brute!"

Peter Cuthbert Gunner was indignant. His indignation was just. It was aroused by the sight of a tattered, frowsy fellow sprawling in the shade of a hawthorn hedge a tattered and battered tramp taking his ease in the grass



and the shade in the warm summer afternoon.

"Know that rotter?" asked Dickinson minor in amazement.

"Yes, rather! That's Dalton's brother."

Dickinson minor almost fell down. He looked on quite dazedly as Gunner strode up to the frowsy man sprawling in the grass, and stared down at him angrily. William Henry Dalton, more commonly known as Bill, blinked up at him and grinned.

"You, sir?" he said.

He recognised the Rookwood junior. He was not likely to forget Gunner. The fellow who had been asinine enough to swallow his yarn of being a relation of Mr. Dalton's was not easily forgotten. The similarity of name and the obtuse credulity of Gunner formed the foundation of the story, though Peter Cuthbert, of course, could not be expected to guess as much. He was far from being aware that he was obtuse and credulous. Indeed, his fixed belief was that he was a very keen and knowing fellow.

"You rotter!" roared Gunner.

"Eh?"

"You rascal!"

"What's biting you, sir?" asked William Henry, grinning up lazily at Gunner.

"I tipped you a quid to clear off!" said Gunner. "You're not gone! What do you mean by hanging about here after I tipped you a quid to go?"

Bill Dalton sat up

"Wot's a quid?" he said.

"Why, you thundering rascal—"

"Ain't I got a brother doing well at your school?" said William Henry. "Ain't it his dooty to help a pore relation? I'm going up to Rookwood, I am, to see whether Richard won't 'elp a bloke."

"You promised to clear off if I handed you a quid," said Gunner, greatly incensed. "I handed you the quid, you rotter!"

"Now, you hand me another, if you don't want me to walk into Rookwood School," said William Henry, eyeing Gunner. "That's business."

William Henry spoke truculently.

Gunner did not doubt his claim to be Richard Dalton's brother—amazing as his crass credulity was, he did not doubt it. Gunner was standing between his Form master and this disgraceful relation, who threatened to "show him up" at Rookwood. It was good of Gunner, considering that he was far from being a favourite of Mr. Dalton's. In fact, it was too good of Gunner! Had he not taken Mr. Dalton under his kindly protection William Henry would not have consumed a pound's worth of strong drink at the Bird-in-Hand, and would not have been lingering in the neighbourhood of the school at all.

That day William Henry had been sleeping off his potations under the hedges. Now he was thirsty again, and the sight of Gunner was like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years.

Whether the same chicken would fight a second time William Henry did not feel sure. But it was worth trying. Gunner, apparently, was fool enough to be "stuffed" to any extent. Stuffing fools was an old game with William Henry.

He drew himself out of the grass and blinked at Gunner.

"What's a man to do?" he asked. "A bloke's got to live! A quid would see me clear. I 'ad to pay that quid you gave me to a blooming innkeeper for—"

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for food. Make it another quid, and I'll hook it!"

He eyed Gunner cunningly, wondering whether the chicken would fight.

"How's a fellow going to believe you?" said Gunner at last. "You promised to go last time!"

"I mean it this time, sir! I'd have gone afore, only I 'ad a bill to pay—on my davy! I've got a job waiting for me in Sussex, if I could get there. Make it a quid, sir."

Gunner hesitated.

Dickinson minor said no word. "He was staring on in blank astonishment. Astonishment deprived him of speech. Dickinson minor, being Gunner's study-mate, knew his friend's asinine qualities. He had supposed that he knew every kind of silly ass Gunner was. But this was a discovery to him. Evidently he had not quite known Gunner.

"Look here, my man!" said Gunner, making up his mind. "I'll give you another chance. I haven't the money about me now—"

"Oh!" said William Henry surlily.

"I'll come again after tea, and meet you here, and give you the quid," said Gunner, "and I'll jolly well walk with you to the station and see you on the train. See?"

William Henry had his own ideas about that. But he nodded. The "quid" was the important matter, in William Henry's estimation.

"I'll wait 'ere for you, sir," he said.

"Wait till I come," said Gunner.

And he walked back towards Rookwood with Dickinson minor. That astounded youth found his voice at last.

"Is—is that the man, Gunner?" he gasped.

"Yes."

"He's really made you believe that he's a relation of Dicky Dalton?" gasped Dickinson minor.

"His name's Dalton—"

"Well, I suppose there are hundreds of Daltons, if not thousands," said Dickinson minor. "His name might be Gunner, but that wouldn't make him your brother, would it?"

"Don't be an ass, Dickinson minor! I suppose you don't think the fellow could take me in, do you?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Am I the kind of fellow to be taken in?" demanded Gunner.

"Look here!" gasped Dickinson. "That fellow's pulling your leg, Gunner. Why, I never heard of such a transparent yarn! He must think you're the biggest idiot in Hampshire to swallow a yarn like that. He must really. Ow! Oh! Leggo! Whoop!"

Gunner had grasped Dickinson minor by the collar, and was banging his head against a tree.

Thump, thump, thump!

"Yow-ow-ow! Leggo!" roared Dickinson minor, struggling frantically in Peter Cuthbert's hefty grasp.

"Say when!" said Gunner.

"Yaroooh!"

"Do you think I'm a fool to be taken in—what?"

"Ow! Yes—no—yaroooh! No! Oh, no!" yelled Dickinson minor.

"Good!"

Gunner released the hapless junior. Dickinson minor rubbed his head, and glared at Peter Cuthbert. Gunner strode on towards Rookwood, unheeding him further, having reduced Dickinson to a proper state of discipline.

Dickinson minor followed him, still rubbing his head.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Dicky Wants to Know!

"DICKY—ahem!—Mr. Dalton!" Jimmy Silver & Co. jumped up.

The Fistical Four were at tea in the end study when there was a knock at the door, and Mr. Dalton presented himself. Most of the Classical Fourth had come in to tea, and there was a clatter of crockery and a buzz of cheerful voices along the Classical Fourth passage.

"Come in, sir!" said Jimmy Silver. "Very kind of you to come to tea with us, sir."

Jimmy Silver spoke hospitably, but a little uneasily. As a matter of fact, he was well aware, from Mr. Dalton's expression, that Dicky Dalton had not come to tea in the end study.

"A certain matter has come to my knowledge, Silver," said the master of the Fourth. "I have come to you as head boy of my Form."

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Jimmy.

"That ass Gunner!" murmured Lovell.

All the quartette knew now why Richard Dalton had called.

"I have known all day that something unusual was going on in my Form," said Mr. Dalton quietly. "Now I know that I have been made the subject of a ridiculous and impertinent discussion. Some member of my Form has started an absurd story concerning me—concerning some supposed relation of mine. You are aware of it, Silver?"

"Yes, sir," stammered Jimmy.

"We never believed a word of it, sir," murmured Newcome.

"Thank you! Some boy claims to have seen a disreputable tramp, I understand, whose name is Dalton, or who states that his name is Dalton, and who claims to be my relation."

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"The boy's name?"

Jimmy was silent.

Gunner deserved to be licked, if ever any fellow did, for his asinine credulity, and for making such a sensation in the school, with Dicky Dalton as the victim of it. Still, the juniors were disinclined to give even the egregious Gunner away.

"I—I think the fellow meant well, sir," said Lovell. "He can't help being a born idiot, sir—the biggest fool at Rookwood!"

Mr. Dalton looked at Lovell.

"You prefer not to give me the boy's name?" he asked.

"If—if you don't mind, sir—"

"Very well. No doubt I shall find him."

Mr. Dalton left the study.

The Fistical Four exchanged glances.

"Isn't he a jolly good sportsman?" murmured Raby. "Lots of masters would have had the name out of us fast enough, or made us squirm."

"One of the best," said Jimmy.

"Just like Gunner to fix his silly story on the best man at Rookwood!"

"Oh, just!"

"Dicky is sure to bowl him out," said Lovell.

"Sure to—now you've given him the clue!" chuckled Raby.

"Eh? What clue did I give him?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell.

"You said it was the biggest fool at Rookwood."

Lovell grinned.

"Yes. Dicky might guess from that. Ha, ha, ha!"

As a matter of fact, Dicky Dalton had guessed—possibly from Lovell's description of the unknown junior but partly from the remembrance of some



remarks Gunner had made to him, which he had not understood at the time. It was Peter Cuthbert Gunner, the most egregious duffer at Rookwood School, who was responsible for this amazing story. And Mr. Dalton proceeded along the Fourth Form passage in quest of Gunner. He looked in at Study No. 7, and found it vacant. Gunner and Dickinson minor had not yet come in. Inquiry in the other studies did not unearth Gunner.

Finally, the Fourth Form master left word that Gunner was to be sent to his study immediately he came in, and went down the stairs.

He left a buzzing crowd in the Fourth Form passage.

"Here he is!" called out Mornington, a little later.

Gunner came up the stairs, followed by Dickinson minor.

Dickinson minor was giving his head an occasional rub, as if it had lately come in contact with something hard.

"Here he is!"

"Here's Gunner!"

"You're to go to Mr. Dalton's study, Gunner," said the captain of the Fourth.

"I don't mind. If Dicky Dalton has heard the story, it's not my fault. I was keeping it dark," said Gunner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't mind seeing Dalton about it! Not at all. I'll go. I'm going to have my tea first, of course!"

And Gunner went into his study.

"Isn't he the limit?" exclaimed Dickinson minor "I say, I've seen the man."

"Seen Dicky's brother?" chuckled Lovell.

"It isn't his brother, of course! A frowsy tramp pulling Gunner's leg!" said Dickinson minor. "I told him so, and he banged my head on a tree."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The silly ass is having his silly leg pulled, of course," said Dickinson. "But he thinks he's keeping a shady relation of Dicky's away, and he's agreed to meet the man again after tea and give him another quid to go."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Tell us all about it," said Jimmy Silver.

Dickinson minor gave a graphic description of the meeting with William Henry Dalton in the lane. The juniors listened—Jimmy Silver with a very thoughtful expression on his face.

"So the man's waiting there for Gunner?" asked Jimmy.

"Yes."

"I know the man. We met him ourselves, I think," said Jimmy. "I remember a frowsy tramp who told us his name was Dalton. He didn't tell us he was our Form master's brother, though."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's waiting for Gunner in the lane. We'll go instead of Gunner, and ask him to step in at Rookwood—to see Mr. Dalton."

"He jolly well won't come!" grinned Lovell.

"He won't be able to decline."

"Eh? Why not?"

"Because we shall have hold of his ears. Come on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're all in this!" chuckled Morny. "Come on! All the whole giddy family! We'll make it a procession, with Dicky's brother in the place of honour."

"Good egg!"

"Come on, Dickinson, and point him out," said Conroy.

"Right-ho!"

And a crowd of the Classical Fourth marched off to interview William Henry Dalton, now waiting in Coombe Lane for Gunner. He was not to see Gunner, after all, but an army of Gunner's Form fellows instead, which would probably not be so satisfactory to William Henry. Meanwhile, Peter Cuthbert Gunner, in his study, finished his tea in leisurely comfort, blissfully regardless of the fact that his Form master was expecting him. Tea finished, Gunner left his study—but not to visit Richard Dalton.

Mr. Dalton had left word for him to come, but Gunner could not help that. It was for Richard Dalton's own sake that he was negotiating with William Henry, and Gunner felt that it would

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.  
Owning Up!

"GUNNER!"

"I'm in rather a hurry, sir!"

"You impertinent boy!"

"The fact is, sir, I've an appointment to keep," said Gunner. "Kindly tell Bulkeley to let me go at once, sir!"

"From certain words you have let fall in speaking to me, Gunner, I have reason to believe that you are the author of a wicked and ridiculous story now circulating in the school!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton sternly.

His voice was sharp and clear, and it drew a good many Rookwood fellows to the spot, exchanging curious glances.



**GUNNER LOSES HIS WOOL!** "That tramp must think you're the biggest idiot in Hampshire to swallow a yarn like that, Gunner," said Dickinson. "He must, really! Ow! Oh! Whooop!" Gunner had grasped Dickinson by the collar and was banging his head against a tree. Thump, thump, thump! "Yow-ow-ow! Leggo!" roared Dickinson minor, struggling frantically in Peter Outhbert's hefty grasp. (See Chapter 4.)

be judicious to get finished with William Henry at once. Suppose the fellow, thinking Gunner had failed him, came on to the school? In the actual circumstances it was not probable, but to Gunner it seemed very probable. He walked out of the House—with the promised pound note in his pocket—and started for the gates.

"Gunner!"

It was Mr. Dalton's voice from his study window.

Gunner heard it, but he affected not to hear. He quickened his pace a little, that was all.

"Bulkeley, stop that junior, please."

Bulkeley of the Sixth strode after Gunner, who was running now. His grasp dropped on Gunner's shoulder before he reached the gates. And Mr. Dalton, with a grim and frowning brow, came striding up from the direction of the House.

"You have invented a silly, stupid, and wicked story, Gunner—"

"Nothing of the kind!" said Gunner hotly. "I've done my best to keep it dark! I've tipped the man to keep away! A fellow couldn't do more!"

"What man?" roared Mr. Dalton.

"Your brother, sir, if you will have it out before all the fellows!" said Gunner.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bulkeley.

"My brother is in India," said Mr. Dalton, glancing round. "This incredibly stupid boy has been imposed upon by a tale of some charlatan, if he is not inventing the whole story himself!"

"Well, I like that!" said Gunner indignantly. "I never expected any gratitude, sir. But this is really too thick. I stood the man a pound out of my own pocket to go. I'm going out to see him now, to give him another quid to clear off. I really think, sir, you might



thank a fellow for trying to save you  
from an awful show-up."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Dalton's face was crimson.

"You stupid boy! You have been  
imposed upon! The man you speak of,  
whoever he is, is no relation of mine."

Mr. Dalton was interrupted.

There was a shout from the gates.

"Here he is! Here's Dicky's  
brother!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr.  
Dalton, staring at the crowd in the  
gateway. "What—what does this  
mean?"

Gunner gasped.

"My hat! It's Mr. Dalton's brother!  
And they've brought him here! The  
game's up now!"

"Let a bloke alone!" William Henry  
Dalton was yelling, as he was propelled  
into the gateway. "I ain't going in!  
Yaroooh! Leggo my years, will you,  
you young rip! Yoop! Stop kicking a  
cove! Ow, ow! It was all a joke! Ow!  
Wow! Leave off kicking a cove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In you go!" chuckled Lovell.  
"All kick together!" said Jimmy  
Silver.

"Yaroooooh!"

William Henry rolled in headlong at  
the gates.

Mr. Dalton strode up, with a black  
brow.

"Now, Silver, tell me what this  
means!" he exclaimed. "Why have you  
brought this disreputable man into the  
school?"

William Henry sat up.

"Ow! Let a bloke mizzle! Ow!"

"That's the man who told a fellow  
he was your brother, sir," said Jimmy.  
"As the story's all over the school, we  
thought we'd round him up and make  
him own up it was a lie, sir."

"You silly ass!" roared Gunner.  
"You've done it now! Didn't I warn  
you to keep it dark?"

"Oh, dry up, Gunner!"

"I did my best, sir," said Gunner.  
"I tipped the man to keep away. I  
should have kept it all dark, sir. I  
tried—"

"You crassly stupid boy! Is that the  
man who claimed to be a relation of  
mine?" thundered Mr. Dalton.

William Henry fairly quaked as he  
eyed the athletic young master towering  
over him.

"Oh, gum!" he gasped. "You, Mr.  
Dalton, sir?"

"Yes, you rascal! And you claim  
to—"

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" splut-  
tered William Henry. "Oh, no, sir!  
I beg your pardon, sir! Name of  
Dalton, sir, that's all, sir! That young  
cove, sir, fairly begged and prayed to  
be took-in, sir, and him being such a  
fool, and me 'ard up. I did pull his  
leg, sir, that's all!"

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Mr.  
Dalton.

"Let a bloke mizzle, sir!" gasped  
William Henry. "I'll clear out of the  
county, sir, I will that, and glad to go,  
sir! 'Tain't my fault that the young  
cove was such a blithering idiot, sir,

and fairly begging to be took in, sir.  
'Ow was I to know he was silly enough  
to swaller such a yarn, sir? I put it  
to you, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar. Even Mr. Dalton's  
angry face relaxed. As for Peter Cut-  
bert Gunner's face, it was a study in  
changing emotions.

"You—you villain!" he gasped.  
"You—you took me in! You—you're  
not Mr. Dalton's brother! You—  
you—"

Words failed Gunner. He rushed at  
William Henry. And then words did  
not fail William Henry. He poured  
out a stream of words—very expressive  
words—as Gunner got to work with  
right and left.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Gunner!"

William Henry scrambled away and  
fled for his life, and a yell of merrit-  
ment followed him as he darted  
through the gates of Rookwood and  
vanished.

Gunner was not licked, as most of  
the fellows expected. Gunner, indeed,  
could not see that he deserved to be  
licked. Apparently Mr. Dalton shared  
his view, and Gunner escaped. Perhaps  
Richard Dalton realised that Gunner  
had meant to be good, though alto-  
gether it was too good of Gunner.

THE END.

*(You'll find another tip-top story of  
Jimmy Silver & Co. in next week's issue,  
chums!)*

## HOW THE TREASURE CAME TO CRUSOE ISLAND!

*(Continued from page 12.)*

course, if they were such fools as to  
get drunk and go to sleep, we might  
do something with them, same as—"

"Which is not going to happen," re-  
marked Frank, pointing seawards  
again. "See, they've put off in the  
boat, and are making for the other side  
of the island. When they see the native  
village they'll come scooting back, and  
take my word for it, they won't ludge  
far from the steamer!"

Till well into the morning the hidden  
four watched the movements of the two  
scoundrels.

As Frank had predicted, no sooner  
did they light upon signs of habitation  
on the far side of the island than they  
returned to the wreck, and for the rest  
of the day busied themselves in putting  
their home into a state of defence.

Towards sundown, however, they  
landed again, and started up the slope  
towards the knolls of palms.

"They're none too sure about the  
hiding-place of the gold-chest now they  
think there are others on the island,"  
explained Joe. "See, besides their  
guns they're carrying a spade!"

Bilson and Fisher talking earnestly  
and casting furtive glances on every  
side, were slowly ascending the slope.

Suddenly Fisher swung round, and,  
shading his eyes against the red of the  
sunset, pointed to the fringe of the reef.

"What's that moving down by the  
surf, this side?" he asked.

The skipper grinned.

"Nothin'—only your fancy!"  
"I tell you there is lots o' little  
things."

"Sun's got into your eyes."

"Open your own. The whole patch  
of ground appears to be moving."

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Bilson stared fixedly.

At the spot to which the mate  
pointed, the leaky boat was drawn a  
few feet above the water.

Between the boat and the steamer  
piled high on the reef a quarter of a mile  
of limpid, clear water stretched.

Suddenly the surface of this was  
troubled with ripples.

"There's sharks in the lagoon, but  
they needn't consarn us," said Bilson.  
"Our boat's good enough to take us back  
to the wreck, and to-morrow we'll hev  
to caulk her."

Fisher turned away reluctantly.  
"My sight don't generally play tricks  
wi' me. I could ha' sworn I saw some-  
thing moving just as though that yaller  
sand was all alive."

"You've got yellor things on the  
brain," jeered the skipper. "Now then,  
lend a hand, and we'll soon have this  
little lot shifted."

For a full ten minutes they worked  
laboriously.

At length, however, the work was  
accomplished, and, crooking their rifles  
under their arms, and taking one handle  
each, they commenced to move down  
the slope.

Fifty, sixty yards were covered when  
a terrible scream broke from the mate,  
and he pointed with shaking hand to-  
wards the boat.

"They've got our boat! Look at 'em  
—millions of the brutes, and unless we're  
quick they'll rip the bottom out of her!"  
"What's that?"

Even from where the four watchers  
crouched they could see that Bilson  
had gone grey under his tan.

What he said was only too true.

Joe sized up the situation immedi-  
ately.

"By jove, boys, every yellow crab  
this side of the South Sea has been  
brought in by that storm. See, the  
little brutes are making straight for the  
one Bilson shot."

Thousands of the crustaceans were  
mounting the slope, while myriads more

lined the water's edge and barred the  
mate's and Bilson's way to freedom.

They saw the skipper kneel down on  
the sand and lift his rifle to his  
shoulder.

They heard the scream which Fisher  
gave as one of the brutes nipped him  
by the leg.

"Quick! The water, man—the  
water!" cried Bilson, emptying the  
magazine of his rifle. "It's your only  
chance."

Fisher glanced wildly round.

"The gold chest—the gold chest! We  
mustn't leave it!"

"It's the gold chest or your life! I  
know my choice," said the skipper, and  
with that he leapt over the swarming  
line of crabs and plunged waist deep  
into the lapping tide.

Mad with terror, the mate followed  
him. The four saw the two unhappy  
wretches swimming strongly towards  
the piled-up wreck, three hundred yards  
away.

Then a yell, more dreadful than any  
that had gone before, shattered the  
stillness of the warm evening, and two  
dark, triangular fins made a ripple  
against the surface of the lagoon.

Joe drew the boys away, and his face  
was set.

"The sharks have got them. That's  
the end of the two wusset fellers that  
ever cumbered this earth."

Joe turned to the beach. The car-  
case of the slain crab had disappeared.  
The long line of slowly-moving forms  
was making its way back to the sea.

Joe looked steadily out to sea.

"The danger has passed us by," he  
said, gripping each hand in turn.  
"Uncle Walter Polruan's gold has come  
back to its right owners again, and I  
guess it will stay with us as long as we  
remain on Crusoe Island."

THE END.

*(There will be another topping long  
complete tale of the four adventurers in  
next week's issue, entitled: "KING OF  
CRUSOE ISLAND!" Don't miss it!)*