

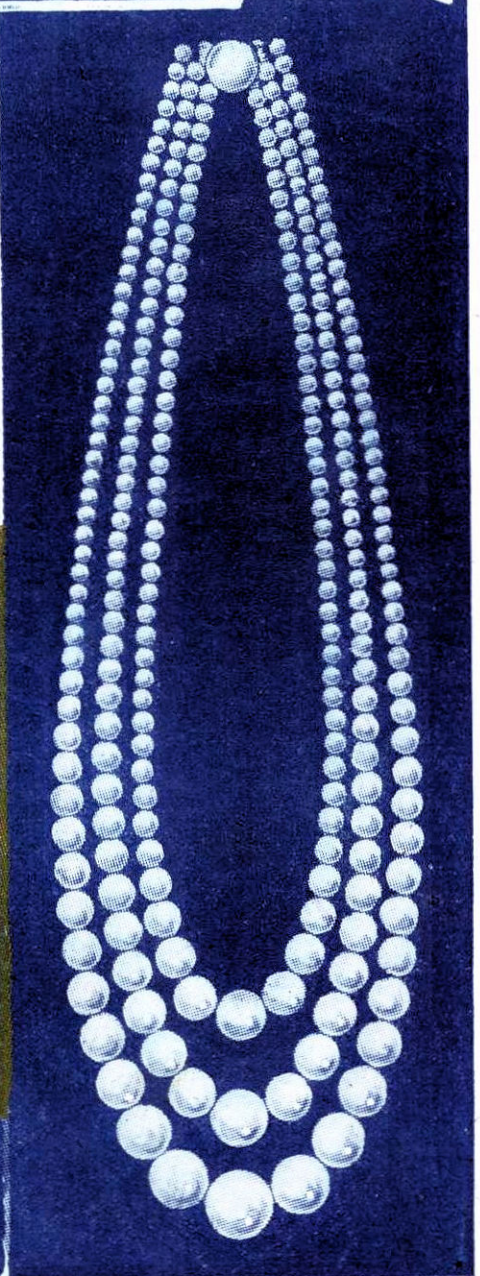
PRESENTATION OFFER OF PARISIAN PEARL NECKLACE (See inside)

THE SCHOOLGIRL

No. 478. Vol. 19.
Week Ending
SEPT. 24th. 1938.

EVERY 2^D SATURDAY

Incorporating
"SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN"



LOVELY PARISIAN
PEARL NECKLACE
offered to **EVERY READER**
Full Details Inside

FOREIGN
FOREIGN

MARVELLOUS PRESENTATION OFFER

Lovely **PARISIAN PEARL
NECKLACE**

FOR EVERY READER OF THE SCHOOLGIRL

Here's wonderful news! Your Editor has been fortunate in securing a number of handsome Parisian Pearl 3-Strand Necklaces and is offering them to readers on remarkably generous terms. These necklaces are beautifully graduated and fitted with a strong Parisian pearl clasp mounted in platinum-finished metal; they have all the delicacy and lustre associated with expensive jewellery. Any girl would be proud to wear one—but it is only readers of The SCHOOLGIRL who can. How to obtain one of these necklaces for yourself is explained below.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

Applicants must cut out and fix to the Gift Voucher below six tokens cut from six consecutive issues of The SCHOOLGIRL. The tokens are the series SCL followed by a number and appear at the bottom left-hand corner of the back cover of The SCHOOLGIRL. (Any six tokens will do, but they must be consecutive. When this Gift Voucher is complete—i.e., after six weeks—write your name and address on the Gift Voucher AND on the LABEL beside it. Enclose Postal Order for ninepence, crossed / & Co./ and send them to The SCHOOLGIRL Presentation Dept., G.P.O. Box 184a, Cobb's Court, Broadway, London, E.C.4. This amount includes cost of posting and packing. Necklaces can only be supplied to regular readers of The SCHOOLGIRL who collect the necessary Gift Tokens. This offer applies only to readers living in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Editor regrets that it cannot be extended to Overseas and Eire readers.

GIFT VOUCHER
CUT OUT AND KEEP THIS FORM—
IT IS IMPORTANT.

Affix six consecutive SCL tokens cut from The SCHOOLGIRL in the space provided above and send together with Label on the right to:
**The SCHOOLGIRL Presentation Dept.,
G.P.O. Box 184a, Cobb's Court,
Broadway, London, E.C.4.**

Please send me one
PARISIAN PEARL NECKLACE.
In accordance with your Special Offer. I enclose
P.O. value ninepence (crossed / & Co./), which
includes postage and packing.

Name

Address

LABEL

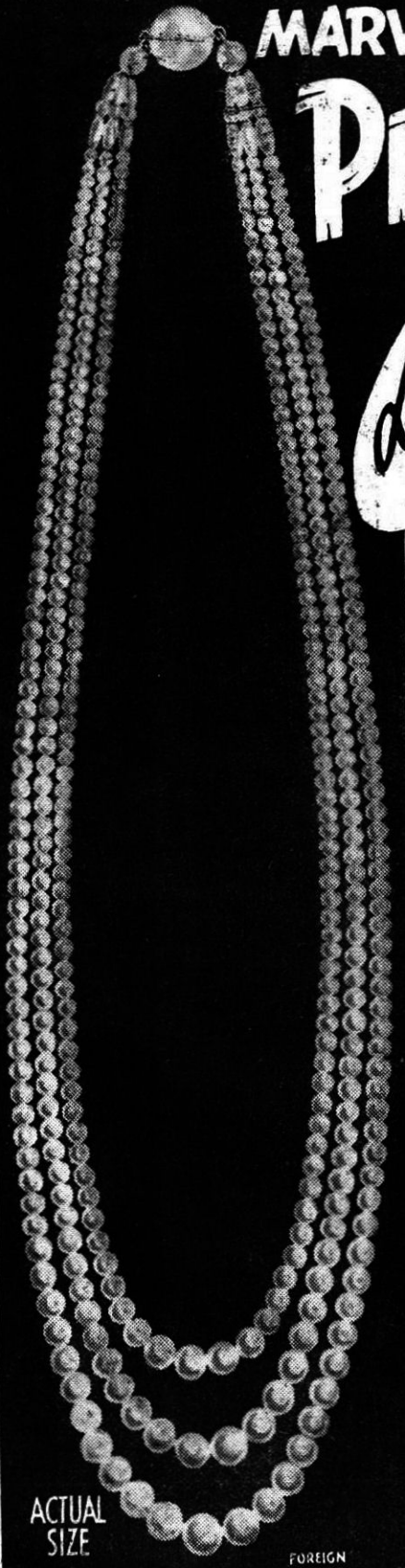
Name

Address

If undelivered please return to THE SCHOOLGIRL, G.P.O. Box 184a, Cobb's Court, Broadway, London, E.C.4.

ACTUAL
SIZE

FOREIGN



An unusual Long Complete story of the Chums of Cliff House School, starring Tomboy Clara Trevlyn.



The TOMBOY'S LONE HAND!

Clara's Task!



TRING! Tring! Tring! Clara Trevlyn's bicycle bell rang furiously.

Clara, Tomboy, junior games captain of Cliff House, was on that bicycle, and Clara, in one of her most reckless and boisterous moods, was travelling at a terrific rate along the road that led from Friardale to Pegg. For Clara was bent upon a mission of some urgency, and haste in that mission was required.

"Hi, hi, hi!" she sang out. "Mind your backs, there! Look out, snails!"

The "snails"—a party of Cliff House juniors leisurely cycling—turned. Then in a flash Clara was through them.

She saw Rosa Rodworth's furious face; she saw the glare of Frances Frost. Muriel Bond, wobbling into Joan Charmant, almost upset her, and Margot Lantham, in front, braked hurriedly. On whizzed Clara.

A chorus of furious howls followed her:

"You reckless idiot!"
 "You clumsy chump!"
 "You silly goose!"

Clara laughed again. The Trevlyn blood was up now. Somewhere ahead of her was her chum, Barbara Redfern, on her way to meet her ne'er-do-well cousin, Keith Redfern, at Pegg Station.

But Babs, a little worried and anxious, had rather hurriedly left Cliff House—and had also left her purse! She would need that—very much would she need it if Clara knew anything about always-hard-up Keith. And Clara,

the purse in her possession, was on her way to restore it before Babs arrived at the station.

Like the wind she pedalled, enjoying this. Here came the hill. Whoops! At it, girlie! And up she went, her unruly curls tossing in the breeze.

Hardly conscious that she had lost breath, she reached the crest.

Her eyes glistened as she saw the winding, snake-like ribbon of downhill road before her. Clara let herself go—whiz!

Just out of sheer reckless high spirits, she released her grip of the handlebars,

"Babs! Babs! Look out!"

Babs was ahead of her—not five yards ahead, cycling steadily in the centre of the road.

Then—Clara saw the disaster coming. But nothing on earth could have prevented it. In vain she tried to swerve clear. Too late, Babs turned in wonderment, bringing her bike broadside on. Then—crash!

Like a battering-ram, Clara's front wheel smote Babs' machine.

Babs went backwards, her bicycle dashing on for a few yards down the road before, with a splash, it landed

"Clumsy, careless Clara," everyone said, when Clara Trevlyn accidentally caused Barbara Redfern to hurt her foot. Careless, perhaps—but how wonderfully the Tomboy atoned when, to save Babs the worry, she worked in secret to get her chum's wayward cousin, Keith, out of a fix—a task that became increasingly difficult, causing her to be misunderstood by the school, causing her to lose her games captaincy, bringing her to the verge of expulsion!

and, with knees pressed together to maintain balance, simply shot along.

At the bottom of the hill the road curved sharply to the right, and just as she was taking the bend, a fly or wasp, or some other winged insect, flew straight into Clara's face.

So great was her speed that the impact of the creature felt like a blow from a stone.

One yell of agony Clara gave; instinctively put one hand to her face—a dangerous trick when travelling at high speed, more dangerous still when rounding a tricky corner. Then she shrieked

into a newly filled ditch. Clara, herself unseated, floundered on to the grassy bank.

"Oh, my hat!" she gasped. "Babs—oh, Babs, I'm sorry!"

And then, alarmedly, she leapt to her feet, her heart sinking.

For across the road, one leg doubled beneath her, her face as white as paper,

By

HILDA RICHARDS

Illustrated by T. LAIDLER

4 "The Tomboy's Lone Hand!"

and arms outflung, Barbara Redfern was stretched, unconscious!

In an instant, all her boisterousness, her recklessness gone, she was at her chum's side.

"Babs!" she cried again frantically. But the Fourth Form captain did not move.

"Babs!" Clara cried again, and shook her, her heart in her mouth, her own face white now. "Babs—oh, Babs! Babs—"

And then she stopped as Babs' blue eyes flickered open. She smiled faintly.

"Clara! Oh, my ankle!"

"Babs!" Clara was almost sobbing then. "Oh, great goodness! I—I thought— Babs, I'm sorry!" she choked. "I was being just a careless, reckless idiot! Babs, you—you're not hurt, are you? Say you aren't hurt!"

Babs smiled again. It was a smile which was cut short by a spasm of pain which twisted her lips. While Clara, quivering in reaction now, gently, if somewhat clumsily, placed a hand beneath her shoulders, Babs sat up. In dismay, she gazed at her ankle.

There the stocking was torn, the skin grazed so that specks of blood were already starting from a dozen little wounds.

Clara groaned. Poor old Babs! Oh, what a clumsy cat she was!

She fumbled with Babs' stocking. Shaking, she drew it down, revealing an ankle already turning dark red. She almost sobbed.

And then round the bend Rosa Rodworth, Frances Frost, Joan Charmant, Muriel Bond, and Margot Lantham came cycling. They all dismounted as they saw what had happened.

"What's happened?" Margot gasped. "I—I had an accident!" Clara stuttered.

"Go on!" Frances Frost scoffed. "And you weren't asking for one, of course!" she added witheringly. "Of all the clumsy, dangerous idiots, you're about the queen, Clara Trevlyn!"

"Who let you loose?" Rosa Rodworth glared.

Clara gulped. She flushed a little. Then she turned her head. Well, the gibes were deserved; for once she had earned them.

"Well, let's do something," she said. "Get some water or something, some of you! Babs, old thing—"

"Please—" Babs said, and smiled. "Don't be hard on Clara!" she pleaded to the others. "She did her best to avoid it—"

"And," Frances spitefully put in, "she did her best to push all of us in the ditch just now! Rushing along like a fire-engine! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Clara Trevlyn! Anyway, let's get busy! Oh, goodness, look at that ankle!"

They got busy.

Clara, feeling as if she had been condemned, stood aside, looking on rather helplessly. All this she had done to Babs when she had meant to help Babs! All this when—

"Well, it's sure you won't be able to use that ankle for a day or so," Margot Lantham announced, after inspecting it. "It's not only bruised, but it's sprained! You can't cycle, and you can't walk! The only thing to do—is to get a car."

"But I've got to get on!" Babs cried. "I've got to go to Pegg! I've an appointment with my cousin!"

"Babs, let me go for you!" Clara put in. "Please, please let me! Bother it! I've done you a bad turn; let me do you a good one for a change! I know Keith; he knows me. I'll explain what's happened, and tell him to come and see you or send a message or something."

Babs looked doubtful.

"But he expects to see me."

"Well, he just can't see you!" Muriel Bond said. "Babs, for goodness' sake be sensible! Let Clara go!"

"Babs, yes!" Clara cried. "Please! And— Oh, my giddy aunt!" Her face fell in dismay. "Babs, will—will it affect your work in the competition?"

Babs paused. Everyone else looked startled then. For that competition to which Clara referred, was a matter occupying the whole excited and enthusiastic interest of Cliff House then. Everybody, for the honour and glory of Cliff House, wanted Babs to win.

The competition was an idea of the colossal and enterprising Hollands' Stores in Courtfield, and the prize ten pounds.

There was a full score of girls' schools in the fifty-mile radius of Courtfield, and the competition had been thrown open to all of them, the only proviso being that all entrants must be under the age of fifteen. One entrant only was allowed to each school. As Babs was easily the best designer in the Lower School at Cliff House, the honour almost naturally had fallen to her.

But although Babs and the Fourth were excited about the competition, there was no doubt that it entailed hard work—dreadfully hard work, especially as the time limit was now so near. More than thirty drawings must be done—each one requiring pains and forethought, each one with an idea behind it. And Babs had hardly started yet. Supposing—

But Babs shook her head in answer to the Tomboy's almost frantic inquiry.

"No, I—I don't think so. Thank goodness—I don't draw with my feet! Clara, will you go and see Keith?"

"This minute!" Clara said, and feverishly grabbed up her bike. If Babs had asked her to go and see the Man in the Moon, at that moment, Clara at least would have attempted it. "You—you'll see Babs back to school?" she added to Margot.

"Yes!"

Clara nodded. That was enough. Her machine was fortunately undamaged. Still shaken, she mounted it and rode off. There was no scorching this time, however.

Poor Babs!

Pegg, gleaming in the afternoon sunshine, came into view presently. Up the hill she pushed her bicycle towards the station; but before she ever reached that station she saw Keith Redfern. Rather sulkily he was seated upon a small, upturned suitcase, staring down the hill.

Clara waved a hand. "Keith! Ahoy!"

Keith Redfern looked up. He saw her. For a moment he frowned, plainly expecting Babs, and then his lips broke into a smile. It was a nice smile, a smile which transformed his rather sulkily handsome face.

"Why, Clara, how topping to see you! But where's Babs?"

"Babs has—has had an accident!" Clara said.

"Accident?" In quick concern he looked at her.

"My fault!" And Clara, biting her lip, told him what had happened. Keith Redfern stared at her in consternation.

"Oh jiminy!" he said. "Poor old Babs! Beastly luck!" he sympathised.

"Well, that leaves me up a gum-tree all right!" he added, his tone changing to gloom. "I was relying on Babs. Hum! Rough!" he added, and moved

restlessly. "What the dickens am I to do?"

"Supposing," Clara asked, "we go into the buffet and have something? We can talk about things then."

The boy shrugged. "No money!" he announced.

"But I have!" Clara said. "At least, I've enough for that. I've got some of Babs' money here, too; just a shilling or two. Come along!"

"But, hang it, I can't sponge on a girl!" the boy cried.

"No?" Clara looked at him. She wondered if he remembered how many times he had sponged upon Babs in the past. "Come on!" she said gruffly, and added, in the only language she knew Keith Redfern understood:

"Ass!"

Keith Redfern grinned at that. He liked Clara for her slangy expressions. "Lead on!" he said. "Here, let me push that old iron for you. I'll dump my bag on the handlebars."

"That 'old iron,'" Clara retorted, "is my new machine! Now"—as they reached the buffet—"park it against the wall. What are you going to have? Tea, coffee, or lemonade?"

"Oh, anything!" the boy said, and as they went into the buffet, dropped into a seat. "Thanks!" he added, when Clara, having bought coffees at the counter, came back. "Jolly nice of you. You know, Clara, I always have said you were a great sport!"

"Thanks!" Clara said, unflattered.

"But I do wish," he added peevishly, "that Babs had come! Clara, I'm in a jam!"

"Money, of course?" Clara asked.

"Eh? No—well, yes and no! What I want," Keith Redfern said seriously, "is a job!"

Clara gazed at him.

"But I thought Babs' father had got you a job—six months ago?"

"So he had." The boy shrugged. "My usual bad luck was with me, though," he added. "As usual, I got kicked out. Anyway, it was a rotten job!"

"And the job you had before that?" Clara asked.

"Oh rats! How do you expect a fellow to stick a life of running errands? I had a row with the boss! But he didn't fire me; I fired him!"

Clara gazed at him wonderingly. What a boy to help! How on earth could one help him? His bad luck, he called it—but it was his own headstrong willfulness, his unwillingness to knuckle down and take orders; his wanting all the time something better than he had got, without knowing exactly what he wanted. Here he was, obviously stranded, without money, without a situation, relying on Babs, as usual, to help him out.

Clara drew in a deep breath.

Babs! If she got embroiled in this, what hope of her ever finishing those drawings for the competition? What hope of her being able to settle down and do anything?

"It's just my bad luck!" Keith Redfern said gloomily. "Just rotten bad luck! I've never had a really decent chance—never in my life. I'm like my father. He never had a chance, either. Look at him! Poorest of the Redfern brothers—too proud to accept help—killed working in a mine! Mother died of shock when she heard the news of his death, and I was left to drift about the world a rotten orphan—"

"Keith, that's not quite true, is it?" Clara asked him. "Babs' father—"

"Oh, yes, I know he took me in! He sent me to school and all that. But it

wasn't my fault I got expelled—and now he says I can fend for myself!"

"And I don't blame him," was Clara's private thought, though she said aloud: "And the position now is that you want a job? Been looking for one?"

"Dozens!" the boy said wearily. "How is it that you can't get one?" "How?" Redfern looked at her. "How?" he echoed, and laughed. "Have you ever tried to get a job, with a rotten reputation behind you—been asked for references you haven't got? That," he added, "is where I'm stumped."

Clara shook her head. "And what makes you think Babs can get you a job?"

"Well, she's known here, isn't she? She might know someone willing to give me a chance—without references. I've a bit of a liking for the sea; if I could get a job with some fisherman now, I believe I'd make good. Anyway, here I am. Down and out, sans cash, sans reference, sans home, sans everything that makes life worth living. But why waste time in gassing?" he asked. "Come on, let's get to Cliff House and see Babs."

"Keith, no!" Clara cried, her mind working very swiftly. She'd got to save Babs from this. She owed it to Babs for what she had done to her that afternoon. With the worry of Keith on her mind, Babs would go all to pieces. "Keith, sit down again," she said. "I'm going to tackle this! You're not going to see Babs!"

He stared. "And who says?" "I do," Clara retorted. "Well," she added, and met the challenge in his eyes. "Keith, don't be a bigger ass than you can help! I've got to tell you about Babs. Babs is doing something—something jolly big! It's a thing which needs every minute of her time. If you go and see her now, what's going to happen? You'll just worry her to death, and I'm not going to let you worry Babs."

"But she's my only hope—" "No she isn't," Clara said, "I am! You and I are going to face this and fight it out, Keith—but you've got to play fair! Supposing," Clara added, "I got you a job? Supposing I helped you—for old Babs' sake? You don't really want to worry old Babs out of her life, do you?"

"N-no. But how—" "Come on," Clara said, rising. "You can leave your bag here. I know a man—an old fisherman called Ben Barrowby. I think he might be able to find you something to do. This way, sonny boy! And please," she added, as she tugged him over the threshold, "leave all the talking to me."

"O.K., chief!" Keith grinned. He held the door open and together they strode off. "Nice little dump, this!" Keith said, as they wended their way down the village street. "Yes, I think I could have a good time here, you know! What sort of fishing does this Barrowby chap do?"

"Crab and lobster—that sort of thing," Clara replied; and, as they neared the beach, paused. "There's his hut," she said.

She pointed. The hut she referred to was before a group of fishermen's cottages which, rising on a ledge above the beach, faced the sea. In front of the hut, on the beach, stood many crab and lobster and prawn pots.

At the side of the hut a white-bearded old fisherman, smoking a short, stubby

pipe, was sitting on a wooden box, scraping cork floats.

"That's Ben Barrowby," Clara said. "Nice old chap! We always hire our rowing-boats from him. Come on."

She hurried across to the beach. Keith followed her. Ben Barrowby saw her, and, removing his pipe, welcomed her with a genial smile.

"Why, Miss Clara, be 'ee wanting a boat?" he asked.

"Not to-day, thanks," Clara said, and turned to Keith. "Ben, I want you to meet a friend of mine—a cousin of Miss Redfern's," she said. "This is Keith Redfern."

Old Ben's smile broadened. "Pleased to meet 'ee, sir," he said. "A friend of Miss Redfern's is a friend of old Ben every time."

"And, Ben," Clara said, "there's just another little matter. I did hear you say, the other day, didn't I, that the work was getting too much for you? You did say, didn't you, that you'd like some sort of help?"

"Ay, Miss Trevlyn, that's right," Ben

Ben considered.

"All right," he decided suddenly. "Thirty shillings a week to start with, and you helps me with the nets and the pots, young man, and an occasional bit of hiring when the girls or the boys want a boat. If Miss Redfern and Miss Clara plump for you, that's good enough, I reckon. Start to-morrow, eh? Eight o'clock in the morning to gather the pots."

"Oh, thanks!" Keith said. "I'll be there!"

Clara laughed. The task had been easier than she had hoped. Keith was beaming now, his eyes were shining. As in high glee he and Clara went off, he turned to her.

"Clara, you sport! You topping old Samaritan!" he said. "That was great of you—scrumptious!"

"Good, eh?" Clara asked, with a laugh. "Only hope you'll do well, Keith. You've got another chance now, haven't you?"

"Yes, rather! And," Keith said earnestly, "I'll do my best to make a



"I'M not going to let you worry Babs," Clara told Keith Redfern firmly.

"But she's my only hope—" started the boy. "No, she isn't," cut in the Tomboy; "I am! You and I are going to face this and fight it out, Keith—but you've got to play fair!"

Barrowby said. "Why, do 'ee know a go of it. There's only one thing—likely fellow?"

Clara nodded. "I do," she said. "Keith here is looking for a job."

"What?" Ben cried incredulously. "Miss Redfern's cousin?"

"That's it," Keith said. "Any old job. You see," he added, with a touch of irony, "although I belong to Miss Redfern's family, I'm on the pauper's side. No money. No home. Just a bit of flotsam on the old seashore. I—" "Shurrup!" Clara said fiercely, lunging out with the side of her foot.

"Ahem! Ben, if you could give Keith a job—any sort of job?"

The old fisherman eyed the boy with shrewd eyes.

"Know anything about lobsters and crabs?" he asked.

"A little, yes," Keith laughed.

He looked so boyishly eager then that it was hard to imagine him as the same gloomy youth who had faced Clara in the buffet.

"Oh, we'll fix those up!" Clara said.

"I know a Mrs. Jones who'll be willing enough to give you some grubbins and a room—cheaply, too. But, Keith," she added suddenly, "will you do something for me?"

"Sure!" the boy said.

"I want you to write to Babs," Clara said. "I want you to tell her that everything's O.K. She'll be worrying until she's heard from you. It's not likely, with the ankle I've given her—a rueful smile for a moment crossed her lips—"that she'll be able to get to see you for a few days. Will you?"

"Why, of course," Keith said happily. "Come on, let's get back to the station. I'll write the note there."

And, getting back to the station, he did. And, later, after they had visited Mrs. Jones together, Clara left him.

Well, thank goodness, that was done! Thank goodness she had paid at least

a part of her debt to old Babs! Chuckling, she clutched the note in her hand. That was all right. Everything was all right.

Except the time. Not until she reached Cliff House did Clara even think of that. And then she stood and stared in dismay, as, approaching the gates, she found them locked against her!

Paying the Price!



"WHICH," Piper the porter said, as he surveyed her two minutes later through the bars of the gate, "you're ten minutes late, Miss Trevlyn. I'll have to report you."

Clara sniffed. "Well, jolly well report," she invited. "Anyway, open the gate." Piper opened the gates. Clara, with an anxious look at the clock, slipped through them. Ten minutes late—Oh golly! In her preoccupation with Keith Redfern she had forgotten the time.

She reached Big Hall. A crowd of girls there turned as she came in. A battery of unfriendly eyes were fixed upon hers at once.

"Here she comes!" muttered Freda Ferriers.

"Hallo, clumsy!" "Watch your feet, girls! Hers are big enough!"

"Mind she doesn't trample on you!" Clara flushed, for a moment, not understanding.

"And what," she asked pointedly, "is the matter with you ninnies?"

"Yah! Who crooked Barbara Redfern?" Brenda Fallace put in.

"Who's never read the Highway Code?" sniggered Freda.

Clara stood still. She understood then. So the news of the accident had travelled, had it? Trust Frances Frost for that! For a moment she stiffened, her face reflecting the bitterness she felt. Well, she had earned it—she deserved it!

Without another word she strode on. A mocking voice followed her from the crowd:

"Clumsy!"

Clara breathed hard. Well, let them get on with it! Rather hurriedly she ascended the stairs; quickly she went along the Fourth Form corridor. She knocked at the door of Study No. 4.

Plump Bessie Bunter, poring over prep, looked up as she came in, and glowered. Golden-haired Mabel Lynn, putting coal on the fire—for it was just a little chilly, despite the sunshine of the day—looked round reproachfully at Clara.

Babs, one foot done up in bandages, and resting on a stool under the table at which she was working, paused in her sketching.

"Why, Clara! I thought you'd gone for good!" she smiled. "Did you see Keith?"

"Oh, yes, I saw him all right! Babs, how's the foot?"

Babs paused. "Not too good, I'm afraid. The doctor says I'll have to give it as much rest as possible for the next few days."

"And that means our picnic on Thursday is busted up!" Bessie Bunter commented aggrievedly. "Really, Clara, you ought to be more careful!"

"And it means, too, that Babs can't come swimming to-morrow morning," Mabel Lynn put in. "When—"

"Please, Mabs—Bessie," Babs said

anxiously, "I've told you it was an accident. Clara, old girl, don't look so cut up. Now, what about Keith? What was it he wanted to see me about? There—there was nothing wrong?" she asked apprehensively.

"Why, no," Clara said. "As a matter of fact, everything is fine. Keith has got a job—a job after his own heart this time. When I left him he was as happy as a sandboy. But here," she added, and produced the note—"read that."

Babs took it with rather a wondering glance at the Tomboy. To hear that Keith was not in some sort of a scrape was news indeed.

Just a little incredulously she slit open the envelope, while Clara, studying her face, smiled to see the sudden happiness which flooded it.

She wondered what Babs would have said if she knew she had practically dictated every word of that letter to Keith!

For the letter said:

"Dear Old Babs,—So sorry to hear about your crooked foot. Hope it'll soon be better; then we can have a meeting. Meanwhile, you'll be pleased to hear, for a change, that I'm fixed up in a job—and I'm going to like it, too. Don't worry about me—everything's O.K.

"Much love.

"KEITH."

"Oh, my goodness, it just sounds too good to be true!" Babs breathed.

"Clara, how did he look?"

"Ripping!" Clara said.

"And did he say anything about coming to the school?"

"Later—of course," Clara said cautiously. She was mentally resolving that Keith should make good in that job before ever he came to Cliff House.

"At the moment, of course, he's rather new and strange to everything, and I don't suppose— Oh, yes?" she asked resignedly as Mary Buller, the prefect, looked in at the doorway. "You want me?" she guessed.

"Miss Primrose!" Mary said in that brief way of hers, and disappeared.

Clara sighed.

Piper had lost no time in reporting her then. Leaving Babs re-reading her letter, she went out. The headmistress gazed at her rather sternly when she entered her study.

"I sincerely hope, Clara, that this does not herald another lawless outbreak on your part?" she said severely. "Why were you late?"

"Well, I—I went to meet Babs' cousin. It—it was the least I could do after—"

"After," Miss Primrose said tartly, "causing Barbara such injury. Clara, I am not going to lecture you upon your carelessness now, but please remember that good behaviour on the road is every bit—and more important—than good behaviour in school. You will take two hundred lines for being late. Please see that it does not occur again."

"Y-yes, Miss Primrose," Clara said. And she left—burning-cared—not because she had earned the lines, but because of the reprimand.

Surely Clara Trevlyn looked like paying her penance in full!

Not the Same Boy!



"HOCKEY this afternoon, you kids! And mind," Clara Trevlyn said, with a frown, "you play like Trojans! It's the first match

of the season, and Courtfield High School have an altogether too good an

opinion of themselves. I'll read out the names."

The scene was the Fourth Form Common-room the following morning.

A few titters and muttered "Clumsies!" had greeted Clara's appearance in the room, but now there was a respectful silence. Everybody who was at all keen on hockey would dearly have loved to play in the first match of the season.

"I'm skipping, of course," Clara said. "Janet Jordan."

"Yes, I'm here," Janet said. "Christine Wilmer, Diana Royston-Clarke, Jean Cartwright. All here?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Rosa Redworth, Amy Jones, June Merritt, Brenda Fallace, Leila Carroll, and Henrietta Winchester. As Henrietta's a day girl, she'll have to be told when she comes into lessons. Reserve: Frances Frost."

The girls named grinned gleefully; some of those not named looked disappointed.

"And—and Babs?" asked Bessie Bunter. "Really, you know, if you're not playing Babs I think you ought to play me! Everybody knows how I play hockey!"

"Everybody does, sweetheart; but this isn't the comic turn in a circus, forsooth!" Jemima Carstairs chucklingly told her. "Still, tough that old Babs isn't in the team. She'll miss not playing in the first match."

"Thanks to clumsy Clara!" Lydia Crossendale sneered.

Clara bit her lip. Poor old Babs! Here was another bad turn she had done her—though, to be sure, perhaps Babs would not be so disappointed now with all her sketches to get done.

"Bully-off three o'clock on Little Side," Clara said. "Mind you're all there to time. And don't forget, everybody—we've got to win."

"Hurrah!" sang Diana Royston-Clarke.

Lesson bell was ringing then, and the meeting broke up, excitedly and enthusiastically talking about the match which would start off Cliff House's hockey season.

Clara, racing ahead, was just in time to catch Babs as, accompanied by her great chum Mabel Lynn, came out of Study No. 4.

"Hallo, Babs, how's the ankle?" she asked.

"A bit better, I think," Babs said. "I—I can almost hobble now," she added with a faint smile.

"Oh, my hat! Here, let me help you," Clara cried.

She tucked her arm in that of Babs'. Mabs, with a queer glance at the Tomboy, took Babs' other arm. Slowly they wound their way down the passage, entering the class-room just as Miss Charmant came in.

"Good-morning, Barbara. How is the ankle?"

"Better, thank you," Babs said.

"I am glad to hear it, my dear," Miss Charmant nodded, though she frowned at the Tomboy. "I hope, Clara, this will be a lesson to you not to be so careless in future!" she said.

Clara flushed to the roots of her unruly hair. Would she never live that accident down? Nobody—not even Babs herself—was more sorry than Clara because of that accident. Nobody was trying more to atone. Still, it was rotten always having it rubbed in like this.

Meanwhile, what of Keith? How was he getting on?

It is to be feared that Clara was thinking more of Keith than of anything else that morning.

Would Keith make good? Would he keep his promise? Yesterday he had meant it, but she knew as well as Babs how much Keith's promises were worth, as a rule. The first sign of trouble, and he must be here, seeking out Babs—

She would see him again—this afternoon. After the match, she'd run down to Pegg.

But, as it happened, there was no need for Clara to run down to Pegg. The opportunity of seeing Keith came sooner than she had expected. Strolling down to the gate just before dinner, she was met with a hail from the road outside, and there, lo and behold, was Keith himself.

"Cheers!" he chortled. "Just coming to see you and Babs, Clara! Is Babs all right?"

"Babs can just hobble along," Clara told him, and looked round quickly. "But what's the matter? What do you want to see us about?"

"Nothing. Don't look at me as if you'd heard I'd been arrested, or something! I want to take you out to lunch—in Pegg!"

"Oh!" Clara gazed at him. "But wait a minute, I can't!" she said. "I've a hockey match at three."

"Well, bother it, we shan't take nearly three hours for lunch!" the boy pointed out. "Oh, come on, Clara, be a sport! You've been so jolly decent to me that I'd like to do something for you. Come along, here's the bus. Never mind your hat."

And without giving Clara a chance to make up her own mind, he caught her by the wrist and tugged her into the middle of the road, holding up his hand towards the oncoming bus as he did so. Breathlessly he pulled her in.

While Lydia Crossendale and Rosa Rodworth, strolling out of the tuckshop just in time to witness that little incident, stared at each other.

"My hat! Where's she off to?" Lydia asked. "Who was the boy?"

Rosa shrugged. "Don't know."

They strolled on. On the road outside, the bus bowled merrily along towards Courtfield. Clara looked at her companion.

"But how can you give me lunch? I thought you were broke?"

"And so," Keith Redfern chuckled. "I was. I touched old Ben Barrowby. I kidded him into giving me a week's wages in advance. Cute, eh?"

"You mean to say," Clara breathed hard, "you've already been paid for a week's work you haven't done?"

"Well, hang it, I've got to live," Keith Redfern said resentfully. "Oh stuff, don't be so dashed high-principled, Clara! I'm going to do the week's work, aren't I? Where shall we have lunch? The Beach Hotel or the Fisherman's Cafe?"

"Well, the Beach is rather dear," Clara demurred.

"Oh, rats to expense! Let's go there. I like that veranda place overlooking the beach. Scrumptious to have a meal there. And here we are!" he whooped as the bus came to a halt.

No resisting Keith in this cheery mood. But when they were seated on the Beach Hotel's veranda overlooking the little fishing harbour, Clara had to ask him one question.

"Keith, how is it that you've all this time off? Did Ben tell you to take it off?"

"Well, I'm entitled to my lunch time, aren't I?" the boy asked a little surlily. "Stop asking questions and have some more of this beef. Horseradish with it? No? I love

horseradish. Hallo!" he added, his eyes travelling along the beach, "here comes the old salt himself!" He waved his fork over the veranda rail. "Ben! Ben!" he called. "What cheer, Ben!"

"My hat! Don't you call him Mr. Barrowby?" Clara asked.

"Why call him Mr. Barrowby? Everybody else calls him Ben," the boy retorted. "You call him Ben yourself."

"But I don't work for him," Clara pointed out.

"Well, what's the difference?" Keith asked with a stare.

Clara shrugged. Hopeless to argue with him. She looked at old Ben Barrowby who, changing direction, was steering a course across the shingle towards them. He didn't seem too pleased either, Clara thought.

He stepped under the veranda, looking up.

"Morning, Miss Trevlyn," he said gruffly. "Redfern, what be 'ee doing here?"

"Having lunch," Keith retorted. "Like some?"

"Who told 'ee to go away?"

"Well, I'm entitled to my lunch," Keith said.

"You're 'titled first of all to do your job," the old man said, his voice gathering anger. "A fine flurry you've put me in. I've been hunting 'ee since twelve o'clock, and I've nearly pulled my arms out rowing on you sea making up for your mistake, young man. What did 'ee do with the small boat when you went out to the store pots this morning?"

"Well, I pulled it up the beach, didn't I?"

"Up the beach!" The old man snorted. "Pulled it half way up,

that's what 'ee did. Didn't I tell 'ee that the tide was coming in? Didn't I tell 'ee plain to beach the boat well up over the high water mark?"

Keith Redfern looked sulky. "Well, what's the difference?"

"The difference, young man, is this," Ben said sternly. "The tide came in and took your boat out to sea. For all you cared it could have gone drifting on to the rocks of Belwin Island. I had to row out myself—and a mighty tough job it was bringing that boat in agen the current. If that's the way you're going to do your job—"

Keith Redfern went deep red. "Dashed old ass!" he muttered in an aside; then, with a glare downward:

"Well, what do you expect me to do about it?"

"I expect 'ee to do nothing," Ben returned. "But I do expect 'ee to tell me when you're going off. Anyway, finish up your dinner soon as you can. A party of young ladies from Kenmarsh School want to be taken down to Sarmouth at two o'clock. You can row them there."

And the old man turned and went off.

"Well, hang him," Keith said. "Blow him! He can row his own dashed party!"

"But, Keith, it's your job!" Clara protested.

"Well, it can jolly well wait," Keith said sulkily. "Serve the old beggar right for ticking me off! I'm finishing my lunch—and," he added, a glint in his eyes, "I'm finishing it in my own time."

Clara stared at him hard. "Keith, don't you think you're being—well, rather kiddish?" she asked.

"Who's kiddish?" He glared.

A FEAST—THOUGH NOT THE KIND ONE COOKS— IN EACH OF THESE ENCHANTING BOOKS!

A feast of gloriously enthralling reading, as all of you who have sampled these superb Annuals in previous years will expect. And these brand new, 1939 issues—ON SALE NOW—are better and brighter and more enthralling than ever.

For you admirers of Babs & Co., the SCHOOL FRIEND ANNUAL, shown on the right, is a perfect treasure-trove of fascinating features, in which you will meet all your favourites—Babs, Clara, Mabs, Bessie, Diana, etc., etc.—again and again, as well as a whole host of new favourites, created by world-famous writers of schoolgirl stories. Naturally, HILDA RICHARDS is well to the fore. And the price? Why—ONLY 3/6. You must have a copy of your own. So buy one now, save up for it, or reserve it for a birthday or Christmas present.



3/6

The same thing applies with the other three topping Annuals—

THE POPULAR BOOK OF GIRLS' STORIES. Price 2/9. Simply packed with every kind of story, each of which has been specially written by authors whose work you know and adore.

THE GOLDEN ANNUAL. Price 3/6. A "Golden" book indeed! Worth its weight in gold. It contains stories to suit all tastes, from humorous to thrillers, from adventure to romance. And it is lavishly illustrated.

THE SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN. Price 6/-. More fun Once More! That is the chief attraction about this grand Annual, for Betty Barton & Co. are revived in its pages. But there are lots of other features, too.

"And don't you think," Clara went on, "that you're not being quite honourable? After all, Ben is your employer."

"But," the boy broke out, "he's not my father or my schoolmaster, is he? I'll do his rotten work, but I won't be bullied into doing it. Let him wait!"

Clara breathed hard.

"Keith, he's an old man. He's a poor man," she said quietly. "He gave you that job more or less as a favour to Babs and me. Look here, it's five to two now. Are you going?"

"No; I've got my sweet to come first."

"I see," Clara rose. No longer could she control the blunt, outspoken words that trembled on her lips. "I see," she repeated. "You just want things your own way? No wonder," she added bitterly, "you can never stick in one job for long. No wonder nobody can rely on you—always letting them down like this. The trouble with you, Mr. Keith Redfern, is that you're too big for your silly boots! You don't really want a job; you want to be bossing other people in jobs. Well, you're not letting old Ben down!"

The boy sat up. His face was red with fury.

"No? And what," he choked, "are you going to do about it?"

"Are you going to take those people to Sarmouth?"

"No."

Clara picked up her gloves.

"Then," she said, "I am! Now get on with your beastly meal. And I hope it makes you sick!" she added scathingly, as she strode from the veranda.

Clara Takes Keith's Place!



IT was five past two when Clara reached the strip of shingle outside old Ben's shack, to find Ben in worried consultation with three girls from Kenmarsh School. She arrived just in time to hear the leader of the group protest:

"Well, we can't wait all afternoon. Either you take us now or we cancel the boat. You promised faithfully."

"He did," Clara said, coming along. "And you're going to be taken now. Ben, I'm doing this job," she added.

"But, Miss Trevlyn—"

"I'm doing it," Clara insisted. "I'm sorry, Ben, I didn't mean you to be let down. Is this the boat? Skip into it, girls."

The girls, without further ado, skipped into it. Ben looked worried.

"Miss Trevlyn—please," he said. "No, it don't seem right somehow. What about the lad?"

"The lad," Clara said bitterly, "insisted upon finishing his lunch."

"I see," Ben's face frowned. "Nice lubber he is," he growled. "If I'd known I'd never looked at him. Now he's got the money he doesn't care, eh? All right, I'll talk to him—but at the end of the week off he goes!" he added grimly.

"And, meantime," Clara said, not caring at that moment what happened to Keith, "I'll row these girls over to Sarmouth. So-long, Ben!"

She stepped into the boat, giving the old fisherman no opportunity to make further objections. In her anger and disgust of Keith she had forgotten for the time being all about the hockey match at Cliff House. Impulsive Clara always acted first and thought afterwards, and her disgust at Keith, her concern for old Ben had completely driven every other matter from her mind.

And yet, she thought, as she pushed off and slipped the oars into the rowlocks, there was good in him somewhere. Jolly nice of him, after all, to give his first thought to her when he had some money.

She rowed out, watched curiously by the Kenmarsh girls in the boat. It was hard work, heavy work, especially in the deep water which ran hereabouts, with criss-crossing currents.

"We don't seem to be making much headway," one of the girls said with a dubious glance at the shore.

Clara set her teeth. Panting, she went on. Oh, my hat! Both these dreadful currents! Slowly, however, she forged ahead.

The hockey match!

She almost lost her oars as that thought stabbed into her brain. What time could it be? Three o'clock she had set the time for bully-off. Three o'clock, and it must be half-past two now! Desperately she put her back into it. Sarmouth drew nearer with tantalising slowness.

Twenty minutes later they grounded on the beach.

"Well, thank goodness for that!" one Kenmarsh girl said rather tartly. "That's the longest ride from Pegg to Sarmouth I've ever had."

The party went off. For a moment Clara sat, breathing heavily. Then, dreading to see, she looked at her watch.

"Oh, great goblins! Twenty minutes to three!"

And she had to row this old tub back! Empty, she made better progress on the way back. But it was hard work nevertheless, and, with blistered hands and aching back, she landed just as Pegg Church struck three o'clock.

Keith, rather red-faced, splashed forward to pull the boat in as she neared the shore.

"Clara, I—I'm sorry!" he breathed. "You ought to be," Clara told him scornfully. "Here, look after the boat. I've got to fly!"

"Clara, old thing—"

But Clara was running across the shingle. Panting, she swung herself on to the bus.

It was a quarter past three when the bus started. It was half-past when, breathless, she jumped off outside the gates of Cliff House. And even as she did so there came a cry from Junior Side.

"Oh, well played, Courtfield!"

Clara looked. Then her heart seemed to drop. For she saw at once her efforts had been of no avail. The hockey match, with Frances Frost in the team and Diana Royston-Clarke as captain, was already in progress.

"Make Her Resign!"



A THREE-DEEP crowd surrounded the side lines of the Junior Side hockey pitch.

Among that crowd, as Clara ran up, was a significant

silence.

It was obvious at once that things were not going well for Cliff House.

"Oh, my hat!" the Tomboy puffed. She caught a girl by the arm. "What's the score?" she asked.

The girl turned. It was Lydia Crossendale.

"Gosh, are you back?"

"What's the score?" Clara demanded.

"Where have you been?"

"Will you tell me what the score is?"

"Yes, I'll tell you!" Lydia's face

expressed her contempt. "The score at

the moment is two—one; and it looks like being twenty—one by the time the game is finished. The two," she added mockingly, "belonging to Courtfield."

Clara groaned.

"Oh, my hat! Why didn't they wait for me?"

"Well, why should they?" Lydia looked at her mockingly. "The captain's orders were that the match started at three o'clock, prompt. Three o'clock came. No captain. Courtfield were anxious to get it over and done with—so what?"

"But two—one!" Clara groaned, and grimaced as a cry went up. "Oh, gosh! Three—one!"

Other girls had seen Clara now. Glowering faces were turned towards her; scathing remarks reached her ears.

She clenched her hands, hesitated, and then turned away.

Followed by a battery of unfriendly eyes, she tramped towards the school.

A thousand detentions, she felt, would not have been as bad as missing that one match. Empty, hollow, echoing, the school sounded as she entered it. Feeling strangely lonely and out of things, she made her way to Study No. 4.

Babs was there, roughing in a new sketch, and looking rather tired.

She paused as the Tomboy came in, and smiled, but it was not a spontaneous smile. It was a smile which suggested just a little worry.

"Clara," she asked agitatedly, "what's the matter?"

"Matter?"

"Why were you too late for the match? Why," Babs asked, "didn't you come in for dinner?"

Clara coloured.

"I—I met someone," she stammered.

"A boy?" Babs asked. "Lydia Crossendale has told everybody. Who was he, Clara? Anyone I know?"

Clara looked away. She couldn't answer that question. Babs mustn't have an inkling that she had plunged herself into the bad books of the Form because of Keith! She said:

"Well, how should you know him? He—he asked me to go to lunch with him."

Again Babs gazed at her, curiously, wondering.

"Clara," she said, "what is it?"

"What's what?"

"There's something wrong somewhere. You wouldn't miss the first match of the season except for some important reason. Oh, no, don't look at me like that, old thing! We haven't been chums all this long time without my getting to know something about you. Clara, can I help?"

"I'm sorry—no."

"Then there is something?"

"Y-yes. But it—it's nothing to worry about," Clara said unhappily. "Oh, please, Babs, don't let's talk about it. Shall—shall I fill the kettle?" she hurriedly asked, and, without waiting for a reply, grabbed it up and rushed out of the room.

Babs sighed a little. Strange old Clara! Still, what could she do? More thoughtfully she bent her head to her task.

As she did so there came a cry from the hockey field.

"Oh, goal! Well played, Courtfield!"

That meant four—one! Babs paused, her eyes fixed with yearning longing on the window. Out there Cliff House were getting the beating of their lives—and all because she and Clara were not in the team!

Plump Bessie Bunter entered.

"I sus-say, has Clara been here?" she asked.

"Yes," Babs said. "She's filling the kettle. Why?"

"Everybody's asking for her," Bessie said. "Everybody's in a fine paddy about her, you know, even though I did offer to skipper the team in her place! Freda Ferriers says that she's just letting the school down because they chivvied her over bowling you over, Babs. Shall I get tea ready?"

"Yes," Babs said absently, and sighed again.

Bessie bustled about. Presently Clara came in again. Then, outside, there was a roar and a bustle, showing that the match was ended, the tramping of feet. The voice of Rosa Rodworth, in the quad, could plainly be heard.

"Well, we've been hopelessly whacked!" she cried bitterly. "And why? Simply because our so-called captain chose to go off joy-riding with some strange boy! Simply because she deliberately let us down! Not satisfied with crocking Babs, so that she couldn't play, she must get us in the soup! Is that the girl we want for captain?"

"No!" came a thunderous chorus. "Make her resign!" piped a voice. "Let's tell her what we think!"

Clara stiffened. Babs saw the battle light in her eyes, suddenly saw her hands clench.

There was a scurry outside, then a rush of feet along the corridor. The door burst open. A dozen juniors stormed into the room, Rosa at their head.

"Well," Rosa Rodworth said, "there you are! I suppose you know we've lost the first match of the season—6—1! Isn't that a laugh for Courtfield?"

"I'm sorry," Clara said stiffly. "Sorry?" Lydia Crossendale mocked. "Not so sorry, though, that you could forget the side for your boy friend!"

"Look here, Lydia—"

"Please!" Babs said. "Please, girls—"

"All right. This is nothing to do with you, Babs!" Rosa said. "This is between the Form and Clara. Clara crocked you. That robbed us of one good man for the side. She jolly well knew we couldn't get through without her, and so, just to spite us, it looks like, she deliberately walked out on us! Well, we don't want a captain we can't trust!"

Clara drew a deep, deep breath. "And you're all agreed?" she asked, her eyes gleaming.

"Yes!"

"No! No! Wait a minute! Please, please listen to me!" Babs cried. "I'm captain of the Lower School: even if I am crocked, I've got a word to say in this! What's the matter with you all? What's come over you? Has Clara ever let you down before?"

The girls stared.

"Do you always," Babs went on, her own face aflame, "condemn a girl for her first mistake? Isn't even Clara allowed to make one error? Clara has told you she couldn't help not turning up. You all ought to know her well enough by this time to know she tells the truth! You want her to resign, do you? Who are you going to put in her place?"

"Babs—" cried Clara.

"No, let me say it!" Babs was quivering now. "You know you couldn't get another skipper like her! Because you've lost one match, does that mean to say you're going to lose all the others? Clara, you don't want to resign, do you?"

"I don't want to—no," Clara admitted. "At the same time, I'm not going to be skipper if I'm not wanted."



"HALLO, clumsy! Watch your feet, girls! Who crocked Barbara Redfern!" mocked the Fourth Formers as Clara strode along the passage. The Tomboy held her temper in check with a great effort. It wasn't going to be easy to live down the accident she had caused by her carelessness.

There was a pause. Girls looked at each other. Plainly they were swayed by Babs' championing of her chum.

"Well, supposing," said Rosa Rodworth, "supposing we call it off?"

"Well, supposing?" Clara said. "Supposing we give you another chance? Do you promise, on your solemn word of honour, not to let us down again?"

Clara flushed, but Babs hastily interposed. "Yes, yes, of course she does, don't you, Clara?" she pleaded.

"Well, y-yes," Clara admitted reluctantly.

"And you promise," Rosa went on, "that if you do let us down again, to resign on the spot?"

"Yes," Clara said, thin lipped. There was a murmur.

"All right, then, we'll let it stand at that! At the same time," Rosa added bitterly, "that doesn't wipe out the awful licking we've had from Courtfield. But the whole Form's heard, Clara; the whole Form's witness. The very next time remember—"

"And out she goes!" tittered Freda Ferriers. "And, with that, they left. The very next time! The very next time! Not if Clara knew it would that very next time ever come."

But who could be certain of anything with a boy like Keith Redfern in the background—the boy whose affairs she had made her own for the sake of Babs?

Vaguely, uneasily, Clara wondered.

Another Chance!



"CLARA!"

It was the same evening and Clara was hurrying back from Friardale where she had been to purchase for Babs some colour crayons of the type Babs favoured most. Already it was

growing dusk, already late. In a quarter of an hour the school gates would be closed.

So Clara, anxious not to provoke Miss Primrose's wrath for a second night in succession, was stepping out quickly. She paused, however, as the sound of her own name fell upon her ears, and hearing a rustling in the bushes which fringed the road, started.

A boy's head and shoulders came into view. It was Keith.

"Oh my hat! You!" Clara exclaimed. "What's the matter?"

"Everything's the matter," Keith said sullenly. "Are you going back to school?"

"Well, where do you think I'm going—Timbuctoo?" Clara asked a little crossly. "Of course I'm going back to school!"

"Then," Keith decided, "I'll come with you. I want to see Babs," he added.

Clara started. "Babs? What for?"

"Well, she's my cousin, isn't she?" Keith scowled. "She's promised to help me whenever I needed it. Well, I do need it. That old blighter Barrowby's given me the sack!"

"The sack?" Clara repeated, her breath catching. "What for?"

"Oh, you jolly well know what for! Simply because," the boy said bitterly, "I wouldn't jolly well be ordered about like a slave when we were having lunch. We had a row this afternoon, and he told me straight to push off."

"I asked the beggar for another chance, and he wouldn't give it to me—so what? Oh rats, I'm sorry, Clara, I don't mean to be sulky! I'm jolly grateful that you gave me the opportunity and all that, but I reckon Barrowby and I will never hit it off. Anyway, there must be more than one job going. I'll start again."

"And that, I suppose, is what you want to see Babs for?" Clara asked quietly.

10 "The Tomboy's Lone Hand!"

"Well, yes."

"You know she's crooked?"

"Well, she might be able to tell somebody to go to whom she knows. No harm in seeing her."

Clara bit her lip.

Babs! He couldn't, he mustn't, see Babs. Babs who, at this moment believed he was doing well, who believed that he was happy, who, undisturbed because of him, was getting on so well with the competition in which she and the whole school were taking such a vast interest.

"Keith, you can't see Babs!"

"No?" He stared. "Who's to stop me?"

"Keith, I've told you Babs mustn't be worried. In any case, what can she do?" she added.

"The question is," he repeated, "what am I to do?"

"I don't know. Oh gosh!" For Clara had heard the hour chime out from the school's near-by clock-house. "Wait a minute," she said frantically. "Let's get this straight. Keith, don't do anything yet. I'll speak to Ben myself."

"When?"

"To-to-night!" Clara gasped hurriedly. "Meet me outside the gate at half-past ten. But, for goodness' sake don't try to see Babs! Promise?"

The boy looked at her.

"You think he'll give me the job back?"

"I don't know. We can try, though. Promise, Keith, you won't try to see Babs until I've seen Ben? Buck up. I'll be late as it is."

"All right," Keith said sulkily. "I'll meet you. And, Clara, I'm sorry—"

But Clara was already flying. Just as Piper, jingling his keys, was emerging from his lodge to close the gates for the night, she reached them. Before Piper's surprised eyes she flew in—thank goodness! Not a second to spare.

Breathlessly she hurried into the school.

But her mind was whirling then. What had she done? Promised to meet Keith at half-past ten. That meant breaking bounds!

Her lips compressed a little at that. Well, she'd got to go through with it. The great thing—the one thing—was that Babs should be kept in ignorance of the circumstances.

She went to Study No. 4, occupied at this moment by a crowd of girls, all surrounding Babs, who had finished her twentieth sketch. Babs smiled.

"Oh, my goodness! I thought you were going to be late again," she said. "Got the stuff all right, Clara?"

"Right as anything," Clara replied. "Here we are. Phew! I say, how's the drawing, Babs?"

"Marvellous!" Amy Jones said. "Oh dear! If I could only draw like Babs!"

Clara beamed. Certainly the sketches were excellent. Babs had been able to give her full and concentrated time to them.

But if Babs knew about Keith—

But Babs should never know—not, at least, until those sketches were all complete and safely entered in the competition.

Call-over came—with work at an end for the day. Babs, excused, did not go down with the rest. Mabel Lynn answering for her. After call-over—supper—Clara lay long after lights were out, listening, thinking.

Ten o'clock chimed. A quarter past.

She rose. The dormitory was in darkness then. Softly she turned back the sheets, quickly slipped her legs out of bed. Hurriedly she grabbed for her clothes and put them on.

But it would not have been Clara if she had not made some little blunder. In picking up her shoes, she dropped one.

Instantly a sharp-voiced inquiry came from Freda Ferrier's bed.

"Who's that?"

Clara clenched her teeth.

"Who's that?" the sneak repeated in louder tones. "I say, Clara Trevlyn, is it you?"

"Shut up!" hissed Clara.

"Where are you going?"

"Shut up!" hissed Clara again, and

rushed from the dormitory. She knew Freda's little ill-natured tricks! Freda, never a friend of the Tomboy, was just loving the difficulties in which she was entangled at the moment.

"I say, girls," cried Freda.

"Hallo, what's the matter?" came a

voice from Rosa Rodworth's bed.

"Who's shouting?"

"It's Clara! She's gone out!" Freda

said.

"Out?" Babs started up. "Clara—

out?" she cried. "How long ago?"

"Just this minute!" Freda grinned.

Babs forgot her injured leg in her anxiety for her chum. Clara, the old chump! She'd been in trouble enough lately. If she were caught again—

Without thinking, Babs threw the clothes from her. Unmindful, in the pressing anxiety of the moment, of her weakened ankle, she slipped out of bed.

Then Mabs, next to her, gave a shriek.

"Babs—"

For Babs, with a faint "Oh," had collapsed in a heap!

"Oh my hat! Put the light on!"

somebody cried.

In a flash Mabs was out of bed and

agitatedly running to her chum's side.

"Babs—Babs—"

"It—it's all right," Babs muttered.

"Please don't make a noise. But

Clara—"

"Oh, bother Clara!" snapped Jean

Cartwright. "Mabs, lift her up!"

Commotion then. All the dormitory

was awake.

Several girls ran forward to lend a hand as Babs, her leg doubled under her, her face white with pain, was lifted on to the bed.

"Babs, better?" Mabs asked.

Thrilling New Card Game

Famous racing cars, ships, railway trains, aeroplanes and race-horses are pictured in this new and thrilling Card Game.

"SPEED" will make the time go fast. Its thrills are never-ending. You can go "full speed ahead" without a worry or care when playing this enthralling game. "SPEED" is grand fun and marvellous value for only one shilling.

Depos Series



SPEED

Amusing, Topical, Exciting

Sold by every good

Stationer and Store. 1/-

Published by Castell Bros.,

Ltd., London and Glasgow.

"Y-yes, thanks. I forgot—"

"But what on earth were you getting out of bed for?" Jean Cartwright asked.

"To run after Clara, of course!"

Freda giped. "Clara's out of bounds! Clara—" and then she stopped as the door came open. Too late somebody hissed a warning "Cave!"

"And what," said Miss Primrose, coming into the room, "is the meaning of this?" The headmistress' eyes darted round the dormitory. "And where," she asked, her face growing stern, "is Clara Trevlyn?"

CLARA TREVLYN, at that moment, was hurrying down the lane in the direction of Pegg with Keith Redfern.

She did not speak; and he, sensing her mood, made no attempt to open the conversation as they tramped along.

They moved fast, and reached Pegg swiftly. Now the sea, rolling with oily sluggishness, came into view. Before Ben Barrowby's cottage Clara halted.

"You," she said to Keith, "had better keep out of this. Leave it to me!"

"But—"

"Please!" Clara said with a snap in her voice; and Keith Redfern sulkily kept back.

She knocked. It was Ben himself who opened the door. He blinked as he saw her.

"Why, Miss Trevlyn—you! At this time of night! Come in."

Clara went in. Ben, who knew she must have broken bounds, looked at her in some concern.

"I've come to see you about Keith," Clara said.

Old Ben's face hardened.

"That young good-for-nothing—"

"Ben, please!" Clara shook her head.

"Ben, I—I don't like to ask you, but—but I must! Ben, I want you to give him another chance—just one! I'm sorry; I know he's let you down; but I'm sure, Ben, you'll find there's good in him when he gets used to the work. Ben, won't you—for my sake?" she added pleadingly.

The old fisherman stared at her.

"And ye've risked breaking bounds to come and ask me that?" he asked.

"Yes, Ben!"

"Sure, must be dratted fond of him!" Ben puzzledly shook his head. "I'll own there be good in the lad; but it's that far under the surface, I reckon ye wants blasting powder to get at it! See 'ee here, Miss Trevlyn, if it were nobbut but yourself or Miss Redfern that asked this—"

"You mean," Clara asked, her heart flooding with hope, "you will give him another chance, Ben?"

"Well, I reckon I'm an old fool—but, darn it, since you ask—yes! Where is he?"

"Outside," Clara said joyfully.

"Right! Then send 'em in to me. But you, Miss Trevlyn? I reckon there'll be mighty trouble up at the big school if they find you out of bed! You go—and bless you, lass! Send that lubber in to me!"

Clara almost danced. She slipped out. Keith, shuffling out of the shadows, looked at her.

"Clara—"

"He's taking you back!" Clara said. "He wants to see you now. But, for goodness' sake, mind your p's and q's! Good-night, Keith!"

"Night, night, Clara, you old brick! I'll never forget you for this—"

"O.K.!" Clara flashed, and with that sped away into the night.

Her heart was light then. Well, thank goodness for that! Once more

the trouble was staved off. Once more Babs was free.

She reached the school. Through the gap in the hedge she slipped into the grounds. Cautiously she approached the lobby window, cautiously lifted it. Holding her breath, she clambered over the sill.

All was well.

But was it?

For even as she dropped on to the floor the light went up with a suddenness that made her jump. And there in front of her stood Miss Primrose!

"I think, Clara—yes, I really think," she said in steely tones, "that, despite the lateness of the hour, I will see you in my study!"

An Undeserved Blow!



"AND you have no explanation?" Miss Primrose asked ten minutes later.

Clara, head downbent, flushed.

"I—I'm sorry, Miss Primrose."

"That is the third time you have said that; but it does not provide an explanation! You still refuse to say where you have been, or what you have been doing?"

"I—I'm sorry!" Clara mumbled for the fourth time.

"Very well." Miss Primrose's face was stern. "I will not try to force from you an admission you are unwilling to make, Clara. But you do realise, don't you, that your silence compels me to put the worst construction on your behaviour. I must warn you here and now that I am far from satisfied with your conduct. Reluctant as I am to say it, I must warn you that you are heading for expulsion—"

The Tomboy winced.

"And," Miss Primrose went on, her tones gathering ominous volume, "the next time I have reason to review your misdemeanours, Clara, I shall seriously think of expelling you. Meantime, for to-night's escapade you will be confined to bounds for one whole week, with an extra hour's detention every day. Now come with me. I will take you back to your dormitory."

She rose. Clara, with a heart like lead, followed her. What luck! What beastly, dreadful luck!

In the Fourth Form dormitory Miss Primrose switched on the light. A score of curious eyes peered at her from above the sheets.

"Now, please, Clara, go to sleep!" she said. "See if you can mend your ways! Meantime, remember that you are detained in bounds for a whole week. If you attempt to break that detention I shall expel you! Good-night, girls! And no talking, please!"

Snick! Out went the light. But among the girls there arose an excited mutter. Babs sat up in her bed.

"Clara, where have you been?"

"Oh, nowhere!" Clara grunted.

Babs bit her lip.

"Clara—" Rosa Rodworth said.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" Clara growled.

"Go and eat coke yourself!" Rosa retorted spiritedly. "What's the matter with you, clumsy? I must say," she added witheringly, "you're proving yourself a priceless example. First you croak Babs—"

"Will you shut up?" Clara cried.

"No, I won't! Then you let the side down. Then you break bounds, and, in trying to run after you to stop you, Babs damaged her foot again—"

"Eh? Oh, my hat! Babs, did you?"

"It—it's all right now, Clara," Babs said.

"And now," Rosa flashed savagely, "you've got yourself detained for a week. What price your promise?"

Clara paused.

"Well, what price it?" she asked.

"I suppose," Rosa said sarcastically, "that you've just forgotten about that as you've forgotten everything else? Perhaps you've forgotten we've an important match on the day after to-morrow—against Whitechester? The match is away from home, which means you won't be able to be in the team at—"

Clara started.

"Oh golly! But—"

"And that means," Rosa relentlessly went on, "that once again our so-called skipper lets us down! That's what I mean by the promise—your promise not to let us down!"

Clara breathed hard and heavily.

"Well?" Rosa taunted. "Got anything to say?"

"No!" Clara snapped.

"Then that means," Rosa said, "you're going to resign? You said you would!"

Clara lay still. Resign! She couldn't; she wouldn't! And yet that had been the contract; that was what she had promised. Before she could reply, Babs sat up.

"Look here, you ninnies—"

"This," Rosa starchy informed her, "is our affair, Babs; you keep out of it! You were there when the bargain was made. We don't want a skipper who's continually letting us down—"

"Hear, hear!" came a score of voices.

"And so," Rosa said, "Clara resigns whether she wants to or not this time! Clara, you hear—"

But Clara did not reply. Filled with utter, overwhelmed dismay and misery, she could not have spoken in that moment if she had wished to. She felt utterly baffled, utterly defeated.

What a burden she had hoisted to her shoulders when she had taken on that mission which should have been Barbara's!

The Last Straw!



BUT her resignation, in the circumstances, was inevitable.

The Fourth Form had lost confidence in Clara Trevlyn. The Fourth, if it was astounded by her conduct, was, at the same time, furious. Twice Clara had let them down. It was enough.

Before breakfast next morning Clara, bowing to the pressure forced upon her, had lodged her resignation with Dulcia Fairbrother, the games captain of the school.

And then, for a time, she was forgotten in the exciting campaign which at once began for the election of another captain. Dark and stormy the weather that morning, but not so dark as Clara's thoughts, nor as stormy as her mood.

If she could only tell her friends what the trouble was—but how could she tell them without also telling Babs?

Babs, engaged on the last of the sketches now, would be finishing this afternoon. To-morrow those sketches would be in the hand of the competition department at Hollands'. If she told Babs now—if Babs had just an inkling of what she was doing—

Her lips came together at that. No, that shouldn't happen! She had set

her shoulder to the plough; she would see the job through.

Moodyly she was thinking those thoughts as, after lessons, she drifted near the gates. And then suddenly she looked up with a start, as from the roadway she heard her own name called.

"Ben!" she cried.

Old Ben Barrowby, hat in hand, one arm done up in a sling, it was. His grizzled old face was rather fiercely overshadowed.

"Ben—there—there's nothing wrong?" she asked, as she hurried towards him.

"Nothing?" He frowned deeply. "Everything's wrong, Miss Trevlyn—and all on account of that Keith!—Ay, I was a fool to take him on again—and I never would ha' done it if hadn't been for you!"

Clara cast a scared glance towards the school.

"Ben, come here," she said, and led him behind the cycle sheds. "Now, tell me about it," she invited.

And Ben told her. Clara listened, her heart dropping. Apparently Keith had overslept himself that morning. With the sea running fairly high, Ben had been anxious about his store pots breaking loose. He had called for Keith. Finding the boy was still in bed, he had lost his temper.

"And the lad—he just flares out at me!" he said. "Refused to work until I apologised, the young scamp! Well, I let him have my answer—the only one he'll ever understand! Wrongly, maybe, I clouted him across the head—"

"Serve him right!" Clara said sharply. "And then?"

"Then I went back to the shore. And there were my store pots—broken loose. With no one here to help, I rowed out the old tub myself. But I'm not up to the work single-handed. One of the lines broke—and I got this when hauling a pot in! Now," he added, "the pots are all over the bay. It means ruin for me, Miss Clara!"

Clara gazed at him in horror. Ruin—old Ben ruined—and all because of the lazy young fellow she had pleaded so hard for!

"Where's Keith now?" she asked breathlessly.

"On the beach—sulking. He won't do anything for me, Miss Trevlyn. I thought, maybe, since you have some influence with 'ee, he might listen to you. That's why I came."

Clara paused; for one second she shut her eyes. If she went—what then?

She'd be missed at dinner, missed at lessons, and then—Expulsion!

On the other hand, only she, it appeared, could save old Ben from losing his pots.

Well, she thought, in for a penny, why not the pound? In any case, it was her fault—her fault for having ever prevailed upon Ben to give that shiftless lad a job.

"Ben, come on!" she said suddenly, as she saw the bus from Courtfield hove in sight. "I'll come down and talk to him."

"Oh, Miss Trevlyn—"

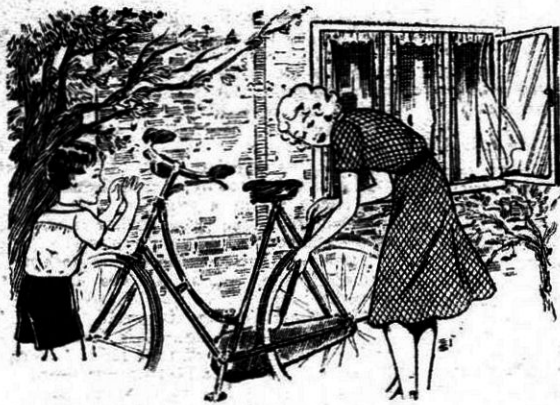
"Come on!" Clara said fiercely. She was pale as she climbed on to the bus. Well, she was in for it now!

"Miss Trevlyn, won't you get into a row?" Ben said, almost timidly.

"Oh, why should I?" Clara said. He fell silent, wondering at the expression on her face. The bus bowled on.

Just as the dinner-gong was clanging at Cliff House they stepped out of the bus, and, hurrying along through the

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS



Patricia is your perfect friend, so gay, and rather wise, too, you know. Week by week she chatters to you in that inimitable way which has won her so many admirers. She tells you of her own doings, of interesting things she has heard, and gives you "how-to-make" suggestions which are delightful in their note of originality.

EVEN you lucky young things who have a whole eight weeks' holiday in the summer are back at school again now, I suppose—or jolly well should be!

So this Patricia of yours wants to wish you a very happy and successful term.

I used to love the Autumn or Christmas Term when I was a round-faced young schoolgirl.

It certainly wasn't because I liked getting into my autumn school hat, for I loathed the thing. Why no one will invent a really comfy pull-on felt in school hats, I don't know. Hats for schoolgirls seem doomed to pudding-basin designs that can only be kept on the head by tight elastics that make you feel you're getting a double chin.

One of these days some clever person will introduce a quite simple black or brown felt hat, that can be pulled on and will stay there.

It will be so soft that it can be rolled without creasing, and yet have so much "snap" in the brim that it can be worn with the brim turned up all round, down all round, or down over one eye.

Isn't that what you'd like? I'm sure it is!

They make this type of hat for grown-ups—I know, I have one—so why not for schoolgirls?

● New Term Joys

Now let's forget school hats, and think of the joys of the autumn term.

Some of you are starting a new school this term—particularly you clever young people who have won scholarships. Then quite a number of you will be going into new Forms, learning new lessons, and making new friends.

Netball will be the rage again, and play-time will see you practising "shooting", or simply hurling the ball to each other. Guy Fawkes' day isn't so very, very far off. (Though, naturally, you won't be celebrating this at school.)

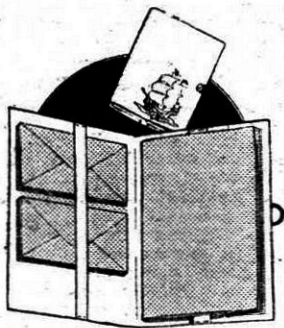
Then you'll be rehearsing for your end-of-term play or concert—always a feature of this time of the year. Perhaps there will be a school bazaar, and almost certainly there will be a school party later on.

And then, right at the end of the term, comes—Christmas!

I know it seems ridiculous to think of Christmas just now, when summer holidays are still in all our minds. All the same, it is not so VERY far off, and let me just whisper to you that I am starting to save up already!

● A Writing Case

Here's a very handy writing-case you can make for yourself, or for that school bazaar we mentioned. You will require a



piece of cardboard measuring 11 inches by 6. Cover this with a piece of linen or any other pretty material you may have.

Then fold in half down the centre. Sew two strips of elastic—one on each side—to slip the stationery under.

A "scrap" can be stuck on to the front cover, and a button and loop keep it closed.

● Personal Treasures

I wonder what treasures you take to school in your satchel or case—in addition to your school requirements, of course.

A comb, I suppose, is the schoolgirl's first personal treasure. She'd be lost without it.

Then a tiny mirror is a boon—for mirrors in the school cloak-room can become so crowded. And even the most UN-vain girl likes to take a peek at herself now and again.

A tiny orange-stick has my vote for being the next most useful item for the schoolgirl who is particular about her appearance. For this orange-stick (and remember you can buy a whole bundle for threepence) works wonders with school-girl nails.

You can push down the cuticles with it, and so have lovely half-moons, and dig out any scraps of dirt that can so easily lodge under the nail.

A spare hankie among your "treasures" is a luxury indeed. And how popular you could be if the Form captain had a cold, found she hadn't brought a hankie to school, and you were able to lend her one!

A little sewing "hussif" is not considered so much of a luxury as a real necessity at school, especially among girls who find they're always springing unexpected "potatoes" at the heels and knees of stockings.

Some black and white cottons and a spot of darning wool, with the necessary needles, should see you through most emergencies.

● So Bright!

Have you tried covering your precious prizes and other books in transparent paper?

The young schoolgirl, Rosemary, who lives next door to us, has done this, and honestly, her books look ripping.

At one time the only paper covers we could make for books were of brown paper. But these, somehow, always made the books look so drab.

But this transparent paper is positively magic. Not only is it very strong to use, but it is quite greaseproof—and even water runs off it in the most amazing way.

But the greatest charm of Rosemary's books, in my opinion, is that they all look as gay as new, as if they had never been covered.

All the titles are visible at a glance through this paper, and the cheery pictures, too.

She has already bought herself "The School Friend Annual" with the money she saved from holiday "tips," and covered this. Now she tells me she is dropping hints around for the family to buy her the other three Annuals.

No wonder Rosemary is so proud of the small bookcase crammed with her very own books which stands by the side of her bed!

● A Novel Broom

Here's another novelty that I'm sure you'd love to make. It would make an ideal "little" present for mother, an aunty—or for yourself.

This very handy little "broom" has a pencil for a handle, and pins and needles stuck into a cork for the "brush" part.

Make a hole in a cork and jab the pencil into this. Next, cover the cork with a little circle of material, gathering it up, around the pencil.

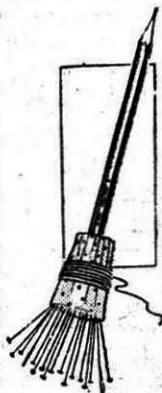
Wind some oddments of useful coloured cotton around the broom head, and stick some pins and needles into one end for the bristles.

Useful in lots of ways, this will be!

Your friend,

PATRICIA.

P.S.—Now for that secret I mentioned last week. You'll find full particulars on page 2—so turn there right away. Isn't it marvellous? The offer of a really lovely Parisian Pearl necklace for ninepence!





SUCH A FRAGRANT GIFT

To receive flowers by post is such a thrill. But, of course, there is quite an art in packing them for the journey.

ARRANGING FLOWERS

Hints for the schoolgirl who "does the flowers" in the home.

SNIPPING the ends of stems each day will prolong the lives of flowers that are arranged in bowls and vases. Woody stems—such as those of chrysanthemums should not be cut across but should be split in an upward direction.

IT IS a mistake to cut flowers all to the same length before arranging them, for this makes them look so formal and stiff. If they are of uneven lengths—and providing you have chosen the right vase—they will look much better and more "natural."

ALL the stems need not touch the bottom of the vase if it is a tall one you are using. Instead, pull some of the flowers outwards. As long as the stems are in the water they can quite comfortably rest on the sides of the vase and on other stems.

FLOWER "ROSES" (those glass or wire stands in which you stand the flower stems) are a great aid to arranging flowers in a flat bowl. But if you haven't one to fit, ask father if he could give you a small piece of wire netting. This serves exactly the same purpose most wonderfully, and can be bent to all sorts of useful shapes.

IF you live in the country—or in town for that matter—and have a lovely garden, I'm quite sure it is often admired by your friends who are not so fortunate.

"Oh, how I'd love a garden!" they say.

"Why do I have to live in a mouldy little flat!" says someone else.

"How I do adore garden flowers! You are lucky!"

These are quite frequent comments, now, aren't they? Then mother, of course, gives her visitor a "mixed bunch" to take home with her. And that visitor is your friend for life, I'm quite sure.

But there are other occasions when you would like friends and relatives to have some flowers from your garden yet it isn't possible to give them personally.

You may consider sending them by post. Then you think of the fog, and perhaps, you say to yourself, they won't be so fresh when they arrive.

And so—the flowers never go, and the friend never receives that lovely gift.

WITH CARE

Next time you feel you'd like to send some flowers away, say, to an aunty who hasn't been too well, or to a granny

who just loves pottering about arranging flowers, you simply mustn't hesitate.

I can assure you that they will arrive in perfect condition if you pack them with care.

Flowers for travelling through the post should be picked and packed and posted—all very quickly.

Cut the blooms in the morning, selecting those that are not fully open and using sharp scissors to prevent the stems being bruised. If there is dew on the flowers, so much the better, for this will keep the flowers fresh for some time.

A shoe box makes an ideal bed for the flowers to rest in so long as it is fairly strong.

Line the box with damp moss, ferns, or clean blotting paper. Lay the flowers gently on this, in layers. Place the heads of the first layer towards one end of the box and the heads of the next layer at the opposite end.

There will probably be some space in the box when all the flowers are packed. These odd corners should be filled—very lightly—with screwed-up tissue paper or cottonwool.

Wrap the box in brown paper, address it clearly so that there is no danger of delay, and write FLOWERS—WITH GREAT CARE in one corner.

You will have to take the box to the post office yourself, but the cost of sending them will be very little—much less than if you lived nearer the recipient and were buying some flowers for her!

ON ARRIVAL

When the flowers arrive at their destination they should be immediately unpacked and allowed to stand in a jug of lukewarm water to revive after their journey.

They will soon perk up and be ready to go into fancy vases or bowls, and if a little sugar or a pinch of salt is added to the water the flowers will remain fresh much longer.

CAROL BECOMES FORM CAPTAIN

NO one was more surprised than our friend Carol when she realised that she had been voted as Form captain for the new term. She was a bit dismayed, too, it must be confessed—just at first.

"Why so peevish?!" asked her friend Anne. "You ought to be frightfully braced. After all, you were voted for by the whole Form!"

Carol went a bit red.

"I know," she said. "And it is a frightful honour, I suppose. But—well, I'm afraid all the girls will think I've got to be goody-goody now—just because I'm captain."

"Silly!" scoffed Anne. "Of course they won't. You weren't chosen as a sort of example-setter to the rest of us, but just to do a job well. And that," she said with emphasis, "won't make you less popular, if that's what you're worrying about."

"It was," confessed Carol, "though you're the only one I'd ever tell, Anne."

That evening, Carol and Anne sat down and prepared five rules for the good Form captain, which Carol is going to write in her diary and try to follow.

Here they are.

1. I will not have any favourites.

"Everyone knows Anne is my best friend," Carol said to herself. "But that doesn't mean I'm to pick out the cleanest reading book for her every time. I'll hand things out as they come."

2. I will not be bossy.

"When I want the girls to be quiet because the Form-mistress is out of the room, I will not start off by threatening to report them. But I'll give them a chance to be sports. I know that will appeal to them, for they're a jolly decent crowd."

3. I will not sneak.

"I know this sounds obvious," admitted Carol, "but if I should have to report a girl I will do it in front of the class, rather than wait till after lessons, when I can see Miss White alone."

4. I will not interfere.

"While it'll be up to me, I suppose, to lead fire-drill and things like that," explained Carol to Anne, "I'll jolly well leave things like window-opening to the window monitor, and anything to do with games to Jane Gordon (the games



captain). If they should need any help from me, I'll most willingly give it when they ask."

5. I will keep my sense of humour.

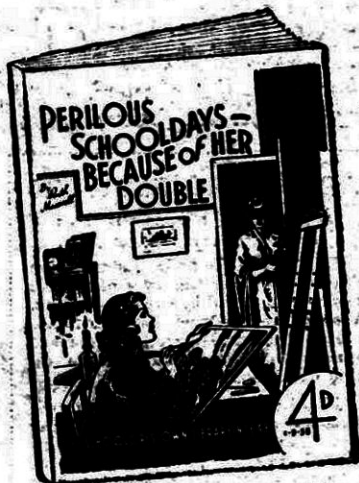
"If I do this, I shan't think the world's coming to an end, and become all excited and crabby because there's no ink in the cupboard, or because Phyllis Green has forgotten to change her shoes. I'll run and fetch some ink myself, and tell Phyllis she'd better dash and change if she doesn't want a Disorder Mark when Miss White sees her."

Anne read the resolutions.

"Well, if you keep them, you'll be a sensation, Carol," she said. "But supposing you don't?"

Carol grinned.

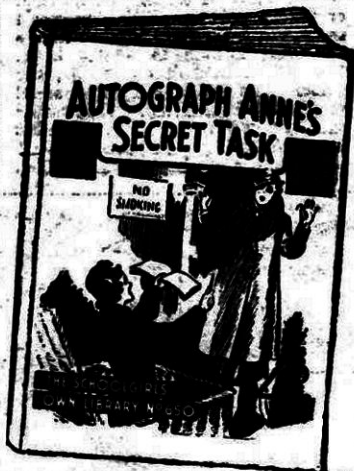
"It'll just show that I'm only human after all, my pet!" she said. "Now shut up. I've got the cloak-room list to write out, and I warn you, you'll take the peg that comes—not that nice corner one you've had your eye on for so long."



Have You

read each of these Enthralling SEPTEMBER Numbers of the famous
SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN LIBRARY?

If not, you have missed a real treat. Secure your copies to-day. They are on sale everywhere, price 4d. each—and remember, No. 649 "Mabs Must Never Know," features your Cliff House favourites in one of their early adventures.



"The Tomboy's Lone Hand!"

(Continued from page 11)

misty spray that drove in from the sea, arrived at the beach.

Sure enough, Keith was there, seated in front of old Ben's hut, idly throwing stones into the sea. He stood up as the old fisherman and the girl appeared, mutiny on his face.

"Keith—" Clara cried.

"Hallo!" he said.

"Keith," she said, "what about getting those pots in?"

"Well, what about it?" he asked. "Let him ask me properly! I'll do it like a shot if he'll only apologise!"

"You've got jolly funny ideas of relations between employer and employee!" Clara said bitterly. "Why should Ben apologise? If there's any apologising to be done, you should do it! Keith, the loss of those pots means ruin to Ben! You've been paid for the work! Don't be a sulky pig! Go on! Do it!"

"Let him apologise!" the boy said stubbornly.

"I'll see ye keel-hauled first!" Ben snorted.

Clara set her teeth. Fury boiled up within her suddenly. Sulky, surly little bouncer! What a boy he was! But she wasn't going to see Ben suffer. She turned.

"Ben," she said, "I'll do it!"

"But, sakes alive, miss—"

"Unless," Clara said scathingly, "Keith likes to take a last chance! Want a girl to do your job?" she giped.

He flushed a dull crimson.

"Tell him to apologise!" he growled. Clara glared at him. It was a glare of such withering contempt that Keith wilted. She caught at Ben's arm.

"Come on!" she said. "Show me where the pots are!"

Not another glance had she for Keith. Sick, disgusted, she stamped away, Ben protesting.

"Come on!" Clara said, almost savagely. "Where are they?"

But she saw some of them as soon as she reached the edge of the beach; a line of black floats, two hundred yards out, was tossing among the waves.

"There be some of 'em, Miss Trevlyn; but it's no work for a girl! Maybe— Hi, hi!" he shouted. "Miss Trevlyn—"

But Clara was running forward. Before Ben could stop her, she had tugged the rowing-boat into the water and grabbed the oars. Fiercely she thrust them into the rowlocks. Strongly she pulled away. Ben roared.

"Miss Trevlyn! Ahoy, Miss Trevlyn!" Clara did not heed. She was well out from land. Overhead the dark storm clouds were gathering; already she felt a spot of rain on her face. But by now the boat was travelling fast with the current.

Whoa! Backwater! Here was the first of the line of floats!

Frantically she dug the oars into the water. She slowed round. Hot work, exhausting work; but Clara was in the mood for it then. Breathing hard, she leaned over and grabbed the line.

Never before had Clara hauled in a crab store pot.

She was unprepared for the immense weight which immediately pulled on her arms and her shoulders. She set her teeth. Now! One, two, three—and Clara tugged with all her might.

But it wasn't easy even then. Not only was the store-pot immensely heavy beneath the surface, but it seemed to increase in weight as Clara, heaving and panting, drew it slowly out of the water. Beyond that the boat was rocking dangerously in the stormy waters.

Inch at a time the rope came into view. A pause to recover her breath and rest her aching back, lying on the rope as though taking part in a tug-of-war, and again Clara exerted her strength.

Never had she tackled such a task. Now and again the pot would slip back, and only a desperate struggle would save it; now and again she would lose her footing and nearly come a cropper in the boat; and once, relaxing her fierce grip for an instant, the rope began to slide through her hands.

Painful, then, to tighten her hands and check it. Clara bit her lip. Her palms were burning; her fingers numb. But the pot was saved.

And once Clara got within an ace of victory at anything, she never gave up until the battle was won. One final prodigious heave, and there was the store-pot, dripping with water, crammed full of crabs, in the bottom of the boat.

"Got it!" Clara gasped triumphantly. "Now for another!"

She rowed off to another pot. Again she took up the struggle. But this time it came to a sudden disastrous end, for somewhere beneath the water the line snapped. Back, with a cry, went Clara, crashing into her oars.

Over the side went the oars, to be caught in the tossing sea and whirled away like match-sticks. Round spun the boat.

Breathless, Clara rose to her feet. Her face was deathly pale.

The old tub, caught in the current, was racing her out to sea—out to sea, with a first-class thunderstorm in the act of bursting above her and the cruel, pointed rocks which surrounded Belwin Island immediately in front of her. Straight as an arrow, the boat was racing for those rocks.

"Oh, my hat! I—I—" she choked. Disaster loomed ahead, and nothing could save her from it!

"THAT'S THE last!" Babs cried, in relief. "The very last! But—oh, my goodness, has anybody heard anything of old Clara yet?"

Nobody had. The fact that she had not been in to dinner seemed to prove

that she was still going her own headstrong way.

Quite a crowd of girls were in Babs' study after dinner. For the time being, even the election excitement had taken second place in the Form's interest.

Great and enthusiastic in Babs' sketches—now the last one happily finished; now all ready, at long last, for the hands of the judges.

And excellent those sketches were. Even Miss Ayres, the drawing mistress, very, very sparing with her praise, had expressed pleased admiration concerning them. If they didn't win the prize—

"We'll trot them along to Hollands," Babs said. "But I do wish I knew what had happened to Clara! Mabs, see if she's come in yet."

She stood up. Her ankle was a great deal better, though still very weak. Mabs, with a smile, put down the sketches she was holding and went to the door. And then she gave a shout, darting back into the study like a breathless rabbit.

Babs started. "But she never told me!" she cried. "Oh, my hat! Then that accounts—" "Accounts for what?" "For what she's been doing just lately, letting the side down, and all that! That accounts—that's where she must be now!" she cried, a sudden flash of illumination striking her. "Keith was the boy she went off with the other day; all the time she's been getting herself into trouble because of him—and saying nothing to me!"

He stared. "But why?" "Why?" Babs shook her head, though for a moment her eyes dwelt on her sketches. "Don't ask me why—although perhaps," she said, "I've an idea! But daddy, we must find her! We must fetch her back! Already she's lost her games captaincy; she's in danger now of being expelled! Have you got your car?"

"Yes. But—Babs, you can't walk!" "I can—with your help!" said Babs grimly. "Daddy, come on!"

Clara, the girl who was doing his job for him! Shiftless! A waster! A coward! That's what he was!

On Clara hurried. He saw her for a moment, standing up in the boat. Gosh, but he couldn't stand this! That fine girl doing his job—that fine girl going to her death! Clara!

In those few frantic moments a great and wonderful change was being wrought in the lad who had been the waster.

For the first time Keith Redfern was seeing himself as he really was—a small-minded, lazy, shiftless good-for-nothing who would even let a girl shoulder his burdens. Something seemed to snap in his brain. Something bigger, finer, than himself sent his feet running towards the small rowing-boat lying at hand. Even as he reached it, he saw.

And a great gulping gasp of horror came from his lips. Clara's boat had struck a rock.

In a flash Keith was pushing out the boat. It was nearly overturned in the



DESPERATELY Keith Redfern rowed. On the ledge of rock lay Clara Trevlyn, the girl who had risked all to help him make good. And at any second a wave might sweep the unconscious Tomboy into the stormy waters.

"Babs, here's your father—coming up the corridor!"

"What?" "It's true!" put in a voice at the door; and into the room, before Babs' delighted eyes, stepped her father's tall figure. "Babs, I had to come and see you," he said. "Where's Keith?" "Keith?"

"I heard about him this morning. Ahem! Girls, will you excuse me?" he said. "Barbara, I should like to talk to you—"

The girls, taking the hint, cleared out, Mabs and Bessie among them. Mr. Redfern gazed at Babs seriously.

"I had a letter from a man named Barrowby," he said. "Barrowby apparently dug up my address from the directory. Clara Trevlyn got Keith a job, but Keith's been letting this old man down—"

"Clara!" cried Babs. "But—but I knew nothing about that—"

"Well, it's true. Apparently Clara's been helping him. Barrowby says that Keith's such a shiftless young waster that Clara has actually been doing some of his work for him."

Touch and Go!



"**B**EN! Ben!" shrieked Keith Redfern. "She'll be killed!"

His face was white as he grabbed old Ben Barrowby's arm. His hand was shaking as he pointed across the heaving waters to the storm-tossed boat containing Clara Trevlyn, which was heading with such furious speed towards the rocks of Belwin Island.

"Ben, do something!" he gasped hoarsely.

Ben's own face was white. But for a moment he turned a furious look upon the lad.

"It's your fault—yours!" he cried. "Ay, but if ye weren't such a shiftless young rascal, you would never have happened! Wait here! I'll see old Harry next door; maybe his motor-boat is in running order."

He rushed away, the last of his words torn from his lips by the rising wind. Keith stood with horror-stricken eyes, watching.

Clara out there—Clara, his chum!

breakers, but he pushed through and leapt in. Frantically he grabbed up the oars. Now, Keith, row for your life! he told himself.

Never in his life had Keith Redfern rowed like that; never in his life had he been less conscious of peril, though every wave threatened to swamp the boat. On, on, on! And merging his powerful stroke with the swift pull of the current, he travelled at an amazing speed.

Clara—where was she?

Where—
There!

His heart gave a swift uplift. For in that moment, staring over his shoulder, he saw her. Clara, fifty yards ahead, lying inert and unconscious upon the flat surface of one of the bigger rocks where she had been washed. And waves were lashing that rock. In another minute she would be tugged into the surging waters.

Keith redoubled his efforts. Nearer, nearer, nearer!

Now! A huge wave, helping the last few yards of the journey, pitched his boat forward, whirling it round.

Keith was flung out. Gasping, stunned for a moment, he fought in the dark depths of the sea. Then, with a quick thrust, he kicked himself upwards, grasping at the ledge of the rock.

Clara—she was there! And, calling her name, he hauled himself out. Gasping, he made his way to her side, desperately caught her up, and dragged her to higher, safer ground.

"Clara, Clara, Clara!" he called frantically.

White as death, motionless as death, Clara lay.

"Clara!" Keith croaked. "Clara, please open your eyes! Don't say you are—"

He could not bring himself to say the dreaded word.

But no movement from Clara. A great sob tore at Keith Redfern's throat. Frantically he shook her. Clara was— No, no! And he the cause—he the cause! Oh, if he could have his chance over again! If only he had seen before what a cad he was!

"Clara!" he muttered. "Clara, speak to me! Clara, old girl, open your eyes! Please, Clara, if you only will, I'll never be a rotter again! I promise! Clara—"

And he started. A thrill ran down his spine. For the Tomboy, as though hearing that plea, fluttered her eyes open.

Keith shouted:

"Clara!"

"Pig!" came faintly from Clara.

And Keith laughed aloud. She was alive!

Alive, yes! He could have danced then. A minute later he actually did dance, for a voice hailing over the water, called:

"Aho!"

And Keith, looking, waved his arms. For in a motor-boat, rapidly approaching the rocks of Belwin Island, were old Ben Barrowby, Harry, his neighbouring fisherman, Mr. Redfern, and Babs.

THREE HOURS later.

Clara, wrapped in blankets in Ben Barrowby's shack, shook her head as she finished speaking. Then she smiled at Babs, at Mr. Redfern.

"And—well, there it is," she said. "I had to do it—to make up to you, Babs. I had to do it in the long run to save Ben's pots—not," she added wryly, "that I made much of a job of that!"

"Nary worry, lass. Pots have all been got in," Ben said kindly. "Harry gave us a hand with that. And Keith," he added, nodding to the shamefaced boy—"he went out with us and helped, done up as he was, and all!"

"And that," Babs asked swiftly, "is the story, Clara? To save me being worried, you took his job on your own shoulders? Keith—"

"And I," Keith said bitterly, "let her down!"

There was a silence. Mr. Redfern spoke next.

"And now, Keith, what do you intend to do?" he asked.

"I don't know," Keith wretchedly shook his head. "I'm fed up—with myself! I've just been a sulky cad, sir! I've just been a brute and a selfish pig! The best thing I can do is to get out of it, I think; to cut adrift and go to some place where I won't trouble any of you any more. I'm just ashamed of myself. I never realised what an awful washout I was till I saw Clara drifting on to those rocks, and realised it was my fault that she was there."

Mr. Redfern looked at Babs. From Babs to Ben. Clara shook her head.

"Well, it was a jolly fine thing he did!" said the Tomboy. "Whatever the cause, I owe my life to him! Mr. Redfern, if there is a possibility of giving him another chance—"

Mr. Redfern nodded.

"We've been talking it over—Ben and I," he said. "Keith, we're going to take you at your word. Now, listen, laddie, and see if you can play up to it. For three months you're going to work for Ben—for nothing except your keep—and half-a-crown a week for your pocket. At the end of that three months—if you make good—"

"Oh, sir, I will!" Keith said earnestly.

"Then," Mr. Redfern said, "I'll buy you a share in Ben's business, and you can run it as partners. How's that?"

But Keith shook his head. Overwhelmed with gratitude, he could do nothing but look gratefully from the man to the girl who had saved him. It was ten seconds before he spoke.

"If—if I don't make the grade," he said unsteadily, "I—I hope you'll kick me out for good, sir!"

LATER STILL—at Cliff House.

The news had travelled ahead of Babs, Clara, and Mr. Redfern, and when they reached the school it was a cheering crowd waiting to meet them. Later, when Mr. Redfern, in company with Barbara and Clara, had been to see Miss Primrose, a new wave of enthusiasm for Clara was sweeping the school.

For Miss Primrose, understanding and forgiving, as usual, when she knew all the details, promptly cancelled all Clara's punishments, and, in fact, confessed herself proud of her.

When Clara came out, she was met by a deputation of Fourth Formers. That deputation was headed by Rosa Rodworth.

"Clara, we're sorry," she said sincerely. "We didn't know, and you, you chump, wouldn't say anything, so what could you expect us to do? But if you're willing to let bygones be bygones—"

Clara laughed.

"What then?"

"Then," Rosa said, "we'd be pleased and happy and proud if you'd take back your resignation and skipper us in the Whitechester match on Saturday."

Which Clara did, and just to atone for the Courtfield defeat, led her team to a five—one victory. Great Cliff House's jubilation over that. But greater still when, getting back to the school, they heard the latest news.

Barbara Redfern, thanks to her brilliant designs, had won the Hollands' prize!

"A thing," Babs said softly, "which I should never have done had it not been for you, Clara. I wonder," she added tenderly, "if there ever was such a friend as you?"

To which Clara, flushing red with characteristic awkwardness, replied:

"Babs, don't talk rot!"

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

The GIRL WHO PUZZLED THE FOURTH!



Jill Holloway—a queer girl indeed. She came to Cliff House as a guest, to be entertained by Babs & Co. The chums of the Fourth took to her at once. Topping girl, they thought. And yet almost as soon as she arrived at the famous school, Jill began to act in the most extraordinary way. She just baffled everybody. No one could explain her amazing conduct. And Jill herself would say nothing. Jill just went on behaving in a way that heaped mystery upon mystery. For no apparent reason at all, she could do the strangest things—things that will puzzle YOU, as you'll discover when you read this absorbing story next week. It really is a Hilda Richards masterpiece, for besides being intriguing, exciting, and dramatic, it is packed with fun. You'll adore it, so order your SCHOOLGIRL now.

Another delightful COMPLETE story featuring—

COUSIN GEORGE and 'The Imp'!



It WAS no joke! The IMP had shut a real, live lion in the tool-shed. But Cousin George, as super-confident as ever, refused to believe it. "Come on, Tompkins," he said. "It's Hetty, trying to scare us." And he opened the shed door,

Not So Funny, After All!

THERE was something unusual, Hetty Sonning noticed, in her Cousin George's manner, as he came into breakfast. Being a prefect at his school, he naturally was inclined to swagger a bit, but the swagger seemed more pronounced than usual this morning.

"Good-morning, Cousin George," she said, in her meekest tone—for he was two and a half years her senior.

"Good-morning, Hetty," he said, as from a great height and immense distance.

Then he went to the door and called to his mother, who had just gone into the kitchen.

"Mother, I shall be going to the zoo this afternoon. Might I have some sandwiches?"

Hetty, nicknamed "the Imp," stiffened with interest.

"Golly! Going to the zoo? But it isn't a half-holiday."

"I happen to be a prefect," said Cousin George loftily.

Hetty felt in real impish mood.

"We don't send our prefects to the zoo," she remarked, a twinkle in her eyes. "They have to wait until the zoo sends for them." And she sipped at her coffee.

George Sonning regarded her with a heavy frown, and tried to think of a clever, crushing rejoinder; but it was too early in the morning.

"Doubtless," he said, after a pause, "you consider that funny, Hetty. It is the kind of remark I should expect from a child of five. For your information, I may say that we have been given lectures in zoology, and we are going to the menagerie that has just pitched in the town, or, rather, just outside, merely to increase our knowledge of wild animals."

"Not just to pinch their food," said Hetty solemnly.

Cousin George, realising that it was a conversation which could hardly be pursued with any profit, glanced at the morning paper, putting it aside when Nellie, the maid, brought in his breakfast.

"You won't forget the sandwiches?" he said.

"No, Master George," answered Nellie.

"They're for the lions," explained the Imp, "or the penguins."

Nellie giggled until she caught George's eye, when she hastened from the room. As the door closed, Cousin George addressed himself to the Imp.

"The more I see of you," he said, in his most stilted tone, speaking as though he were writing an essay, "the less I wonder that the headmistress of your boarding-school asked you to be taken away. It is surprising that your present day headmistress does not do the same."

"Just a question of time," the Imp said flippantly. "But, seriously, are they sending you to a zoo, Cousin George? All the prefects, or just you?"

Cousin George made no reply. He had grown beyond the age when such feeble jokes amused him. Nor was he looking forward to the visit to the menagerie as light entertainment. A serious-minded youth, he wanted only to enlarge his knowledge of wild animals.

Before Hetty could inquire further Aunt Miriam walked into the room, and her questioning saved Hetty the trouble.

Thus the Imp learned that it was an expedition organised by the headmaster, and that ten boys were going.

"It's a pity we can't go, too," she said, with a sigh. "Much better than lessons."

"Ah," said Cousin George, "that would hardly be safe. Going in would be easy; getting out again would be the difficulty."

He laughed with gurgling glee, and his mother echoed it.

"But, all joking apart," she said, rather worriedly, "I hope you won't get too near the lions, Georgie."

"Don't make faces at them—not intentionally," added Hetty.

"And don't put your face near the monkeys," added his mother. "They don't like it."

"You might be reported to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, too," the Imp added anxiously.

"Hetty, Hetty, that isn't funny!" reproved Aunt Miriam. "Let us have no bickering."

So the Imp got on with her breakfast and, having finished it in good time, took the morning picture-paper for a quick skim through.

As she opened the first page, however, she gave a gasp.

"Golly!" she gasped. "Oh dear—bad news? What is it?" asked Aunt Miriam.

By IDA MELBOURNE

"War?" said Cousin George. "Railway disaster?" said Aunt Miriam.

The Imp shook her head. "No. You'll never guess. But jolly funny after what George had been saying. A lion has escaped—"

"From the menagerie?" cried Aunt Miriam.

"Rubbish!" scoffed Cousin George. "Just one of her silly jokes!"

But the Imp showed them the headline. "Lion Escapes From Famous Menagerie."

"And listen to this—a keeper mauled—lion still at large—"

"Oh!" said Aunt Miriam. "How awful! It might even come here, Georgie. I don't think you ought to leave the house until it's found."

"Not leave the house, mother! What rubbish!" he said.

"Well, you certainly won't go to that menagerie," said his mother promptly. "Not with a lion loose. Good gracious, how disgraceful!"

"Shocking!" nodded Hetty. "What would you do if you met it, Cousin George?"

George Sonning shrugged his shoulders. It was such a remote contingency that he hardly gave it serious thought.

"I should look it in the eyes," he said. "Stare it out."

"George, if that's what you'd do, you shan't leave the house," said Aunt Miriam. "Nor you, Hetty."

It sounded a good idea to the Imp, for she had not done all her homework, and she was not looking forward to morning lessons. There was algebra and Latin.

"No, aunt," she agreed. "But I tell you what we ought to do—order in a nice big joint. The lion wouldn't worry about us when there was a juicy joint for it to have."

"Luckily, we have a joint," said Aunt Miriam in relief. "I must get the garden fork in. If the lion comes, we must push the joint through the window on the end of the fork."

Cousin George rose from the table with a glance at the clock.

"I must be going," he said. "And it mightn't be a bad idea, too, to take another garden fork. It would keep it at bay."

Aunt Miriam pleaded with him, but George, quite adamant, went into the garden to get one of the forks.

"Hetty—do you think you ought to go?" said Aunt Miriam.

The Imp laughed.

"Aunt, don't be alarmed," she said. "The lion couldn't possibly come here." "And why not?" asked her aunt sharply.

She seemed almost offended, as though it had been suggested that the lion would not think their house good enough.

"Well, I dare say it could if it sneaked into an aeroplane or swam the North Sea," the Imp went on. "Only the menagerie it escaped from is in Germany. Golly, I must hurry!"

Aunt Miriam, eyes gleaming, snatched up the paper.

It was only too true. A lion had escaped and mauled its keeper—in Germany!

Outside Cousin George had strapped a garden fork to his cycle, while his friend Cyril Tompkins watched with a puzzled frown.

"What's the idea?" asked Cyril.

"Haven't you heard? A lion has escaped from the menagerie," said George. "Best to be prepared. Rather a feather in our caps if we rounded it up; and there might be a reward."

"Gosh, yes!" said Cyril, giving a hurried look about him. "Phew!"

The door of the house opened and Hetty appeared, holding a large dish, on which rested a joint of meat.

"Cousin George—you forgot this!" she called.

George Sonning gave her one withering look and tossed his head in scorn. Then he mounted his cycle and, with his friend, rode down to the gate.

Chuckling softly, the Imp hurried up to her room, packed her homework, and then happened to glance out of the window. It was just a casual glance she gave, but she stood there quite rigid.

For in the field a hundred yards beyond their fence was a lion.

The Imp blinked; she rubbed her eyes and she stared. Then she pinched herself. But she still saw the lion. And, as she watched, it moved.

No doubt about it—the animal was really there.

"Wow!" she yelped, and went hurtling downstairs.

Your Editor's address is:—Eleetway House, Farrington Street, London, E.C.4. Please send a stamped, addressed envelope if you wish for a reply by post.

BETWEEN OURSELVES



MY DEAR READERS.—Well, and what do you think of it?

I mean, of course, that wonderfully thrilling announcement regarding our Big Surprise which appears on page 2.

A beautiful Parisian pearl necklace composed of three lustrous strands—for YOU! Each and every one of you can become the proud owner of one of these beautiful trinkets. It's something you'd treasure for years and years, isn't it?

I do wish you could see for yourselves what a lovely thing this necklace is. It looks most attractive on our cover, I know, but it isn't until you have one in your hands—or, better still, fastened about your neck—that you realise just how lovely it is.

If I had the space I could go on eulogising about this Wonderful-Treat-For-You for hours and hours. But I can't. I've other things—also very exciting—to talk about. But do make sure that you are one of the lucky ones, won't you? Page 2 will tell you exactly what you have to do to possess something which is certain to make you the envy of all your friends—until they follow your example!

And now for another glorious treat.

"PRINCESS TO SAVE LEICONIA!"

That does sound fascinating, doesn't it? And intriguing, too. It is the title of Doris Leslie's magnificent new serial, which takes the place of "Girl Rider of the Blue Hills," and when you have read the opening chapters next week I know you will agree with me that it is one of the most unusual, enthralling and romantic stories you have ever read.

How would YOU like to be called upon to take the place of a princess in her own country; to live in state in a fairy-like palace; to be feted and cheered wherever you went—and to find that a traitor, striving to seize the throne for himself, was plotting to turn the populace against you?

For that is what happens to Pamela Courtney, the heroine of this superb story. Don't forget to share Pamela's amazing experiences next week!

"THE GIRL WHO PUZZLED THE FOURTH!"

is one of the very finest stories Hilda Richards has ever written. It is packed with gripping incidents, dealing with the extraordinary conduct of a girl guest at Cliff House, who behaves in a way that completely baffles the famous chums, and yet—it's also full of the most delightful fun and humour.

Do you like mystery? And comedy? And drama? And surprises? Well, you ARE going to be lucky, because "The Girl Who Puzzled the Fourth" is rich in all those things.

As usual, of course, our next issue will contain another topping "Cousin George and 'The Imp'" story, and more of Patricia's Bright and Useful Pages—so do order your copy well in advance, won't you?

And now, with best wishes,

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

Just Like George!

"AUNTY! Aunt Miriam! Where are you?" the Imp cried, and began a frantic search for her aunt.

But Aunt Miriam had just driven away in the car, and except for Nellie, upstairs making the beds—the safest place for her to be—the Imp was alone in the house.

It was not long, though, before she had invented a plan.

She fetched the joint of meat, carved some small lumps from it, and then took the whole lot warily into the garden.

Putting the joint in the garden shed, she removed another garden fork, left the door open, dragged out the roller, the mower, and a rake, then spread the small bits of meat in a line to the gate that led from the fence.

That done, she opened the gate and rushed back to the house.

Five minutes passed, and then the Imp's heart jumped to her mouth as she watched from the dining-room window.

Through the gate came the lion, sniffing. He sniffed the ground, gobbled up bits of meat, and followed the trail to the shed.

Heart in mouth, the Imp stole out on tiptoe. Artfully she had put the meat in a corner of the shed behind some other tools, so that the lion could not snatch it up and bolt.

The clatter of the tools could be heard, and she peeped hurriedly in at the doorway.

There the great tawny brute was, smashing a hoe with his paw in order to reach the meat.

"One, two—" the Imp counted. Then slam!

The shed door was shut, and the key turned. Instantly it shook to a violent crash, and in feverish excitement the Imp dragged the roller against it.

Then she groped in her tunic pocket for a piece of chalk and scrawled a message on the door.

"BEWARE OF THE LION!
DO NOT OPEN. THIS IS
NO JOKE!"

As anyone would hear the lion roaring, it was warning enough.

"Now," the Imp mused. "Now to find the men who are looking for him; and if I don't get a nice big reward, I'll keep him as a pet. Five pounds reward, and free tickets for the whole Form at the menagerie this afternoon. Whoopee!"

It was difficult to know where to look for the men, but supposing that they might be on the lion's trail, she went to the gate leading to the field, and peered right and left.

In a moment she saw a group of men in the distance, and the fact that they carried implements and were hunting amongst the bushes told its own story.

The Imp paused only to fetch her bike, and then in wild excitement pedalled across the field.

GEORGE SONNING politely lifted his cap to his headmaster, who was just leaving his house.

But if George thought that he was to be allowed to pass without difficulty, he was mistaken; for the Head had seen that garden fork, and his curiosity was roused.

"Sonning!" he called.

George stopped and turned back.

"Yes, sir," he said.

"What is the garden fork for?"

"The fork? Oh, the lion, sir!" said George.

Mr. Sibley knit his brows.

"For the lion! Good gracious, what do you suppose we are going to do at the menagerie—prod the animals? Or do you suppose that we are to feed them?"

George smiled, glad that he had a good answer.

"I mean the escaped lion, sir."

The Head gave a violent start.

"Escaped lion—a lion has escaped from the menagerie?" he gasped.

"Yes, sir!"

The Head stared worriedly.

"How did you learn of the escape?" he said. "This is serious."

"It was in the paper, sir," said George. "The Daily Snap."

The Head said not a word but hurried back to the house, returning with that day's issue of the "Daily Snap."

"Find me the paragraph," he said.

George turned the first page, and saw the headline that the Imp had indicated.

"There, sir!" he said.

The Head took it, read, and then gave a jump.

"But this happened in Germany," he said.

"Germany?" yelled George.

"Germany?" echoed Cyril Tompkins.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Germany!" snorted the Head.

"Good gracious—and you supposed it was here! You are going around with a garden fork—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Tompkins.

George Sonning, his face red as a beetroot, gritted his teeth as he thought of Hetty.

"Gosh—but Hetty made me think—she said—" he babbled.

"I'm afraid, Sonning," said the Head, with a smile, "that you are inclined to be too credulous. Your cousin was pulling your leg—and doubtless at this moment is laughing merrily."

Cousin George wriggled and writhed; and when he thought of the joint of meat which really he had been tempted to take, he nearly burst with rage.

"Wait till I see her again," he muttered. "Just wait—"

"The best thing you can do, Sonning," said the Head, "is to return home with the fork. Hurry!"

Cousin George hurried like the wind, and, rushing into the garden, made a bee-line with the fork for the shed door, followed by Cyril Tompkins.

"Ha!" said Cousin George, a nasty glitter coming into his eyes when he saw the chalk notice on the door. "Look at that."

Tompkins looked and grinned.

"She's certainly seeing the thing through," he said.

"Little fool!" snorted George hotly. "She must think I'm simple. Just as if anyone in their right mind would look a lion in a shed. Just as if—"

An odd sound came from inside the shed, and George stiffened.

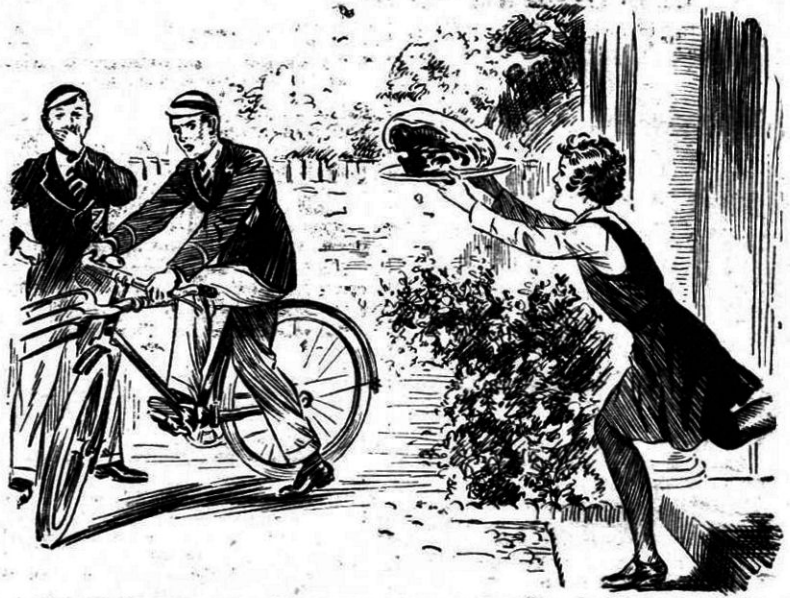
"Gosh—she's there! She didn't go to school. She fooled mother with that lion story, and she's just staying at home. Cyril, old lad, this is where we get revenge."

Cyril Tompkins listened, and his brows knit; for the sounds that came from the shed seemed most lion-like to him. Considering that they were made by a lion munching the joint, the resemblance was natural enough.

"Hark," said Tompkins. "That sounds rather like a lion."

Cousin George listened, and then scoffed.

"If you think so, then you're the mutt she took you for," he said. "That's Hetty's fooling. She's clever enough to make those noises. Probably she's



"WE'LL capture that lion, Tompkins!" declared Cousin George manfully.

"Then," cried the Imp, appearing at that moment, "you'd better take this joint for bait." But the twinkle in her eyes would soon have vanished if she had realised that her joke was coming true!

rubbing bits of tin against wood, or something of that sort. I know her better than you."

"Um!" said Tompkins doubtfully.

Cousin George looked down the garden, and his eyes lighted upon the hose, which he had himself used that morning.

"The very thing," he said. "I'll get the hose fixed, and when I signal, you drag away the mower and the roller."

"All right," said Tompkins uneasily. "But I suppose it isn't a lion?"

"Oh, don't make me mad!" said Cousin George irritably. "I know Hetty and her silly jokes. And this is where she is taught a lesson."

He rushed off, fixed the hose, and returned with the spray jet ready for action, while Cyril Tompkins dragged away the mower.

The odd sounds in the shed stopped.

"We've got her rattled," said George with a grin. "Heave the door wide, Tommo! One, two, three—"

Tompkins pulled the door wide.

Sss-s-s! went the hose into the shed.

Cousin George's broad grin died, faded. His eyes goggled, and a shiver ran through him as he saw just inside the doorway the immense head of a lion, holding in its jaws a joint of meat.

The lion, swamped by the hose, growled, winced, and then rushed.

With an unearthly yell Cousin George skipped back three feet into a bush.

But the lion looked neither to right nor left. It wanted to get out of the rain, and took a magnificent flying leap clean over the fence, landing smack in the garden next door.

Cousin George sat up, his face white, and looked at Tompkins.

"Gi-gosh!" said Tompkins. "It was a lion. That wasn't Hetty dressed up."

Cousin George struggled to his feet, tiptoed to the fence, and peered over. Then he turned to Tompkins.

"Quick—get the fork—get anything! We've got to warn the Skipper next door. He's a rotten old bully, but I can't stand by and hear him eaten alive. Quick's the word!"

And Cousin George and Cyril Tompkins charged round to the front of

the house next door, only a minute before the Imp cycled up to the gate in the back fence.

Lion-Tamer Hetty!

"HERE we are," said the Imp. "And don't forget—the reward's five pounds—and free seats for my form at school—eighteen of us."

The rather red-faced man who walked with her gave her a brief nod.

"Cheap at the price if you've really got the lion—if it isn't some outside ginger cat," he said.

Behind him were five men, some armed with guns, others with hoes, pitchforks, and other implements, and all ready for action.

"Here we are," said the Imp, walking to the shed. "Here we—oh!" she ended.

The shed door was wide open, and a glance showed that the lion had gone.

"My lion! It's gone!" she gasped. "Bolted!"

She looked down the garden, but the gate that led to the front of the house was closed; George had closed it in case the lion crossed the fence again.

"Not that way—I reckon it went out into the field again after taking the meat," snapped the circus proprietor in disgust. "A lion will always make for open spaces rather than houses, if it's got food. Come on, men!"

Leaving the Imp, they all went back to the field, where a boy, yelling with excitement, indicated something he had seen moving in the bushes.

In bitter disappointment the Imp stood looking after them, for with them seemed to go her five pounds and the free seats for the circus.

But only for a moment did she remain lost in gloom. Then she heard the Skipper's excited voice.

"Lion in my garden? Do you expect me to believe that rubbish?"

"But it's true, I tell you," came George's voice.

"Baloney!"

The Imp, understanding, tiptoed to the fence and peered over.

Odd sounds came—snuffing, the grinding of teeth—and presently she saw the lion in some bushes. But now the Skipper came into view with George and Cyril.

"Look here, my lad," said the Skipper, "you're joking! And I know you're joking. The only reason I've come round here is to be able to give you a good lamming. Show me the lion—or, by jiminy, you're for it! Lion—huh!"

Cousin George was half-crazy with excitement.

"I tell you there is a lion here—a real lion, escaped from the menagerie!" he shrilled.

"Yes? Well, if there is I'll soon shoot it," said the Skipper. "If there's anyone hiding there, playing a joke, tell him to look out, because I'm going to get my gun."

And, convinced that it was a joke, he gave George a sly look.

Hetty saw that look, and her anxiety grew; for, although the Skipper thought they were joking, once he realised the truth, he would be just as likely to shoot the lion as not.

Hetty did not want that lion shot. It was her lion, and she liked it. Besides, she wanted the five pounds reward and free seats for rounding it up.

If she rushed back to the field and returned with the men the Skipper would realise that it was no joke, and claim the reward because the lion was in his garden.

On the other hand, if she did not bring the men, the Skipper would shoot the lion—when he had got his gun.

While she debated, the Skipper saw a movement in the bushes at the end of his garden, and a grim smile played about his lips.

"A lion—eh?" he jeered.

"Yes—a horrid, big, growling lion," said the Imp. "Get your cannon, Captain Storm, or chuck a windlass at it."

But Captain Storm picked up a broken fishing rod from the top of the coal bunker, where he had put it for the dustman to collect.

"I'll give it lion! You thought I'd prance about with a gun and make myself a laughing-stock—eh?" he said.

"Well, watch this!"

He dashed down the garden.

"Stop!" the Imp yelled in horror.

"Stop! It's real! It's—"

Captain Storm reached the bushes where the movement could be detected, and, raising the fishing rod, brought it down hard.

Thwack!

So far as the Skipper was concerned, it was a game of tip and run. He had tipped—and now he ran. For as his blow landed, a terrible roar came, and there rose up a lion—a genuine jungle lion.

The Skipper rose up, too. He broke the standing fifty-yard record, collided with his closed back door, reeled, skidded, and then rushed round the side of the house, hard on the heels of Cousin George and Cyril Tompkins.

"Why didn't you tell me it was a real lion?" panted the Skipper. "Stay here and stop it while I get my gun. Stare it in the face if it tries to charge!"

He would have stared it in the face himself, but, of course, he had to get his gun. From an upper window he reckoned to get a good rousing shot at the lion.

But Cousin George and Tompkins had swarmed over the dividing fence, and now joined the Imp

"You idiots!" she said, forgetting her respect for elders. "What did you let out my lion for?"

"Your lion?" said George fiercely.

"Mine. Yes!" said the Imp.

Her brain seethed, groping for ideas, and then suddenly she raced across the lawn to where the ladder lay. Dragging it back, while George and Cyril stared blankly, she rested it against the dividing fence, hoisted it until it dropped over, and then, mounting her cycle, went madly through the gates.

Next door an upper window had opened, and the Skipper, armed with a gun, popped in view.

"Flat on your face!" warned Cousin George.

Bang!

Shot peppered the end fence and tinkled on a forcing frame; and the lion, startled, scrambled up, snarling. He rushed to and fro, and then saw the ladder.

Circus trained, he did not hesitate, but tore madly up it, not realising that the ladder was unsupported at the upper end. Naturally, he had no sooner crossed the fence line than the

DO YOU LIKE MYSTERY STORIES?

Of course you do! There is something irresistible about a mystery—particularly if it is the intriguing kind that is featured in the thrilling series that Peter Langley is writing for our Friday companion paper. This week's story is entitled "THE CLUE OF THE LUCKY CHARM," and it will enthral you from the very first word. Read it in the—

"GIRLS' CRYSTAL"

Six splendid stories in every issue.

2d. Every Friday.

ladder tilted, and down he went, head over heels, into the Sonnings' garden.

Cousin George, flat on his face waiting for the Skipper to shoot again, suddenly saw what had happened.

"Don't move!" he hissed to Tompkins.

Tompkins could not have heard, for he was up in a flash and bolting madly to the house, rushing backwards and forwards like a trapped bird until he found the side gate, when he disappeared down the drive.

Cousin George warily rose to his feet, tiptoed forward, and grabbed the hose.

Ssss-s-s-s!

The lion swung round, pawing at the water and snarling viciously, while George moved to the fence, took a spring, and climbed on to it.

Then came the Imp's excited voice, the voices of men. The fence gate was hurled open, and the men caught the lion in a net, while Hetty watched from the other side of the fence.

It took twenty minutes, but at the end of it the lion was a helpless prisoner.

"Oh golly! I shall miss my lion!" said the Imp.

Cousin George watched as the circus proprietor shook hands with her, and then—produced his wallet and counted out five one-pound notes.

"Good work, my dear!" he said, patting her arm. "And I'll scribble a note giving you a pass for eighteen girls."

"For this afternoon," said the Imp.

Cousin George gave a soft whistle.

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" he said.

Flapping the five pound-notes, the Imp waved to the Skipper at his upper window.

"Five pounds reward for catching it!" she called. "Lucky, aren't I?"

The Skipper, pretending that he had not heard, drew his head back in such haste that he cracked it on the window-frame; then he slammed the frame down so hard that he broke the glass.

"He didn't believe it was a real lion," said Cousin George. "Just wouldn't believe it. But, I say, halves with the reward, Hetty!"

"Halves? When I went to all the trouble to trap my lion in the shed, and you went and let him out?" said the Imp indignantly. "Fair's fair, Cousin George. All you did was to mess things up. What ever did you want to let him out for?"

Cousin George frowned.

"Well—er—"

"Just for a romp, I suppose," said the Imp, her eyes glimmering. "Gosh, you're tough, Cousin George! Still—"

she mused. "I can spare you a pound."

Cousin George, huffed, shrugged his shoulders.

"Keep it!" he said.

But the Imp decided to buy him a present, a memento of the occasion.

Then, in high spirits, she galloped off to school, only to be given five hundred lines for making such a ridiculous excuse for being late. The headmistress lost her temper, and not until the Imp had asked her to telephone the circus would she believe the story.

For the rest of the morning there was a long succession of reporters anxious to interview Hetty; and the headmistress, basking in reflected glory, was photographed with her hand on Hetty's shoulder, smirking with pride.

That afternoon the Imp's Form went to the menagerie, and as there was a circus, too, and a fun fair, they had plenty of fun. In more solemn manner Cousin George and his fellow prefects made a study of wild animals, taking copious notes.

As a special favour the Imp introduced them to "her" lion, and insisted that a light of recognition came into its eyes.

It was somewhat of an anti-climax on returning home to be lectured by Aunt Miriam about inventing such ridiculous things as escaping lions. For twenty minutes Aunt Miriam lectured her, and then the evening paper arrived with a picture of the Imp on the front page and the full story.

Aunt Miriam all but fainted. When she recovered it was with the aid of a nice new bottle of smelling salts in cut glass, Hetty's well-thought-out present.

And for Cousin George there was a super fountain-pen.

"You'll need it," said the Imp. "All the kids in the village will want your autograph when they know you're my cousin."

Rather feebly Cousin George smiled.

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

MEET this irrepressible pair of fun-makers again next Saturday in another delightful story. And be ready for a really exciting announcement.

Exciting concluding chapters of our wonderful Western story—

GIRL RIDER OF THE BLUE HILLS!



By
**DORIS
LESLIE**

FOR NEW READERS.

FAY THORNTON lives on the Flying H Ranch in Texas with her father, ROBERT THORNTON, and her two little brothers, Ted and Bobbie. The ranch is small and not too prosperous. The Thorntons have powerful enemies in John Hampton, wealthy owner of a neighbouring ranch, and his daughter, Lucille. Hampton and his daughter do all they can to foster a rumour that Mr. Thornton is a cattle thief, and at last Hampton cleverly contrives to have Thornton outlawed. He goes into hiding in the Blue Hills, while Fay and a friendly young Englishman named Douglas Lessiter work to clear his name. Vital evidence which may clear her father comes into Fay's possession. Overjoyed, she rides off into the Blue Hills to tell him. But, unknown to Fay, Lucille Hampton is trailing her.

(Now read on.)

The Rustlers' Hide-Out!

"OH gee, do hurry up, Starlight! I'm so excited I can hardly wait till we get to daddy. I'm just longing to see his face when I show him that watch!"

Fay's voice shook as she whispered into her pony's ear.

She didn't really expect Starlight to go any faster; Starlight had been doing his best over the rough country between the trail and the Blue Hills for more than half an hour.

It was just that Fay had to find some outlet for her pent-up feelings.

For all the dramatic happenings in that picturesque part of Texas had now reached a most critical, vital stage. Daddy an outlaw in the Blue Hills, suspected of cattle stealing; the sheriff and his men seeking the fugitive day and night; Douglas Lessiter, her young English friend, absent on some mysterious mission concerned with proving her father's innocence; and Fay herself—

Fay's eyes shone as they scanned the distant foothills, now purpling in the gathering twilight.

She possessed proof of daddy's innocence. More than that, she possessed proof of someone else's guilt. In her pocket at this very moment reposed a watch and chain which the chief of the rustlers had given to her

younger brother Bobbie when the little fellow had unwittingly fallen into the hands of the gang.

Startling, indeed, was the evidence of that watch, for it belonged to none other than John Hampton, the wealthy owner of the Lazy T Ranch, who had been the Thorntons' bitter enemy for years!

On and on she rode the untiring, unflagging Starlight. Nearer and nearer loomed the Blue Hills. As she approached a valley Fay glanced around.

Must be cautious. At all costs, she mustn't betray daddy's whereabouts to any possible watcher.

But—no. The shadowy landscape was deserted. The coast was clear. Reassured, Fay made for the little valley and, picking her way through a pathway strewn with rocks and boulders, climbed up to the cave where her father had taken refuge.

If Fay had waited in hiding, she would presently have seen another rider furtively, craftily following her trail. A

Her Father Arrested, the Last Hope Gone, when Suddenly—

girl, too; a well-dressed girl who mounted on a sleek, immaculately groomed thoroughbred, Fay would have instantly recognised as Hampton's daughter, Lucille.

It was with a sudden start of surprise and a feeling of alarm that Fay spotted her father at last. For he was some distance from the cave, standing fully exposed to the view of anyone within half a mile or more at the mouth of a narrow gorge.

In apprehension, she rode forward swiftly. Hearing her clattering approach over the loose stones, he swung round, hand dropping like lightning to a gun at his thigh. Then, recognising her in the dim light, he gave a shaky little laugh.

"You, honey!" he exclaimed. "Gosh, thought I'd been nabbed for th' moment. But what are you doin' out here again, lass?"

"What are you doing out of the cave, daddy?" Fay said anxiously. She

slipped down from the saddle and grasped his arm. "Oh, daddy, get back quickly! You know it isn't safe! You might be seen!"

"All in good time, lass," was Mr. Thornton's reply, and quietly though he spoke there was a tremor of excitement in his voice. "Come with me. I want to show you something."

An arm about her shoulders, he led her into the gorge. It widened out after a few yards, like an enormously broad bottle, and there, as he gestured before him and Fay peered into the dusk, she saw several things which left her transfixed, astounded.

First of all she noticed a herd of cattle and heard one or two plaintive bellows; then she saw, built against the sheer walls of the gorge, a number of lean-to huts; then she detected the remains of several fires.

Slowly Fay's eyes travelled up to her father's face, and in the shock and sensation of this discovery she momentarily forgot her own purpose here.

"Why," she whispered, "why, daddy, you—you've found it! The rustlers' hide-out, I mean! This—is this where they work; where they keep the stolen cattle until they can sell them; where they change the brands and—and—Oh, daddy!" she ended, her voice breaking. "How wonderful! I—I never thought you'd be lucky enough to find it!"

Mr. Thornton smiled grimly.

"Neither did I, lass!" he confided. "But look! These rustlers have been mighty clever. There's stolen cattle from half a dozen different ranches there, lass, and yet no one who didn't suspect they were stolen would guess th' brands had been altered. Come with me."

It was a thrilling, rather marvellous experience for Fay as her father pointed out one animal after another that had had a brand on its side altered. Spellbound, enthralled, she had completely forgotten that he did not yet know the truth about John Hampton.

Perfectly clearly was she able to understand how Hampton worked with his rustling activities. He confined his stealing to a few ranches whose brands could be changed to one general brand, under which he sold all the rustled cattle.

This general brand consisted of a

large M and H, in the form of a monogram, surrounded by a circle, thus:



It would, as Fay knew, be called the Circle MH, and she gave a little gasp of wonder as she realised how easily the brand marks of different ranches could be converted into that all-covering symbol.

"That's a Bar One steer, I'll wager," Mr. Thornton declared, indicating one animal. "Over there are a bunch of Circle V steers, and some of ours, too." Fay, scanning one animal after another, compressed her lips.

The manner in which the brands had been altered filled her with wonder.

Hampton's own Lazy T brand, for instance—a capital T on its side—only required another horizontal stroke to be converted into an H. And the Flying H, their own brand, thus:



needed but a couple of downward strokes with a running iron, and the middle of the M to be traced in inside the H, to become MH:



The addition of a circle about that combination of letters transformed it into the general brand, Circle MH.

The Bar One, a short horizontal line followed by a figure 1, and the Circle V, a capital V inside a circle, also lent themselves most conveniently to the transformation.

At last Fay looked up at her father again; her eyes were shining. "Oh, daddy, isn't it wonderful you've found this, after all!"

"It'd be a darned sight more wonderful, honey, if I had some idea who's runnin' this show," her father answered, his face hardening.

"Then, supposing I tell you who's running it, daddy?" Fay said, with just the faintest suggestion of teasing in her voice.

"You, lass?" He stared at her. "You—you know?" "Yes," said Fay. She spoke quietly, as though with awe. "It's Hampton!" Incredulously her father stared at her.

"Hampton?" he echoed. "You mean John Hampton—John Hampton, of th' Lazy T—that all-fired scoundrel—"

Fay produced the watch and chain.

"It's Hampton's, daddy—and the rustler chief gave it to Bobbie."

He took the watch. Fay's heart filled with joy as she saw the wonder and hope that suddenly radiated from his tired face.

And, meanwhile, a figure was slipping back from the point where she had been staring down into the gorge at father and daughter. That figure was Lucille Hampton.

Lucille, perched among some crags, had not been able to hear a word Fay and her father said, but she was filled with exultation, all the same, as she silently moved off.

At first, though, she had been taken aback. In her heart she had never

seriously entertained the idea that Robert Thornton was a rustler. She had pretended to merely to strike at his daughter. But there was no getting away from this. His presence in what was obviously the rustlers' hide-out could only mean one thing. He was what people said, after all.

Lucille crept back to her horse. Robert Thornton was in her hands now. She'd race into town and spread the news of her discovery, and within an hour the father of the girl she hated would be a prisoner!

The Ambush!

"WELL, that's the whole story, I guess, daddy."

Some while later. Fay and her father had retreated to the shelter and comparative safety of the cave, from the entrance of which, screened by bushes and boulders, they could command an extensive view of the moonlit country while yet being almost completely screened themselves.

As briefly as possible Fay had told her father of the extraordinary circumstances of John Hampton's watch coming into her possession. In silence her father had listened; and in silence he squatted now, seconds after she had finished her recital, seemingly deep in thought.

Eagerly she watched him. At last, quite abruptly, he looked up.

"Good work, honey!" he said, nodding. "Mighty good work, though I'm not sure that everything's going to turn out fine even yet."

With tender compassion Fay pressed his arm.

"I know what you mean, daddy," she said. "You're thinkin' that, though this is proof to us of Hampton's guilt—because we know you're innocent—it may not strike the sheriff the same way?"

"You've said it, honey. Hampton's a wily bird, an'—"

Fay nodded as her father broke off with a helpless shrug.

"I reckon that— Why, daddy," she broke off, frowning, "what is it?"

For her father was leaning forward, peering intently across the moonlit valley below them.

"Do you see anything over there, lass—by the stream?" he said keenly.

Fay, scanning the hollow with narrowed eyes, suddenly jumped. Horsemen, more than a dozen of them, were stationed behind trees and bushes.

"Why, daddy, it's the rustlers!" Fay breathed. "Waiting for someone, too. And I guess— With a cry she broke off, clutching her father's arm. "Over there, daddy!" she gasped. "Look—look!"

Robert Thornton's face set as he saw something else which had attracted Fay's attention. It was another band of horsemen riding straight towards those who were so obviously in hiding.

"My stars! The sheriff's posse—headin' into an ambush! Why, th' ambushin' curs, I'll put a stop to that!"

He sprang to his feet, and, before Fay could prevent him, had gone scrambling down the rocks, firing his revolver as he ran.

"Daddy!" Fay cried. "Oh, daddy, come back! They'll get you!"

She tore after him, but her father scarcely seemed to hear. All he could think of was saving that band of loyal, courageous men who rode with the sheriff. Just past the gorge he stopped, firing again and again. By now the posse, hearing those reverberating

shots, had reined in, guns and rifles appearing like magic. And the rustlers, startled, had gone racing off across the valley.

As Fay, panting for breath, filled with agonising dread for her father, reached his side she saw the sheriff's posse split up. Two-thirds went in pursuit of the fleeing gang; the remainder came racing towards where she and her father stood.

icy cold she felt as she watched the riders approach. Escape for her father was impossible now. Indeed, he seemed too stunned all of a sudden to be even contemplating it. Like a statue he stood there, gun-arm hanging limply at his side.

"Oh, daddy—" Fay choked; and then the sheriff had arrived in a flurry of dust and stones.

"Stick 'em up, Thornton!" he rapped. A rifle was levelled at Fay's father. "Take his gun, boys! An' keep an eye on young Fay!"

Resignedly, though with a bitter smile, Robert Thornton allowed the four other men to disarm him. His arms were tightly gripped and he was forced forward to the sheriff's side.

"Pretty noble o' yuh, Thornton, puttin' yore pals wise like thet," Sheriff Martin observed with a trace of admiration, "but it's yuh we want most at th' moment, I guess."

"My pals?" Robert Thornton gave a bitter laugh. "Yeab, my pals all right—once. You an' the posse. Not that pack o' wolves," he said, his lip curling. "They're no pals of mine!"

"Daddy fired those shots to warn you, sheriff!" Fay cried, her voice shaking.

"Oh, yeah?" said Martin, with a scornful laugh, and was about to enlarge upon the subject when a new voice saved him the trouble.

"So you got him, sheriff? Good work! Afraid I wasn't in time to warn you boys of that ambush, but seems that Thornton did that accidentally, and saved me the trouble."

And on to the scene rode John Hampton, accompanied by a crafty-looking man whom Fay, gasping at the rancher's audacity, recognised as his foreman, Lew Tate.

"Why, you—you—" she began, then broke off, dumbfounded.

Of all the colossal nerve! Of all the presumption and sublime self-confidence, Hampton's appearance on the scene was the limit. It left Fay not only afeared with anger, but momentarily paralysed. She could only stare while Hampton, flashing her father a mocking smile, reined in beside the sheriff.

"I spotted the ambush some way off, while hunting round for Thornton myself," he remarked. "Well, seems the hunt's more or less over."

But Sheriff Martin was staring past Hampton towards the gorge.

"Just a moment, boys. Don't let go o' Thornton!" he snapped, and rode forward.

Into the gorge he disappeared. Minutes passed before he emerged.

Then, a steely light in his eyes, he stopped before Fay's father.

"So that's your hide-out, huh?" he rapped. "Very smart, Thornton. Now you may as well come clean. I see you've a general brand for th' cattle you and your gang steal. What's they go to? Who buys them?"

"I'm no wiser than you," Fay's father returned, tightlipped.

Fay came back to earth with a jolt. As though emerging from a trance, realities came crowding into her mind again. Daddy caught—the rustled cattle seen—and Hampton, who should have

been in Daddy's place, lyingly helping to send him to gaol!

"Daddy knows nothing about these cattle!" she cried, stepping forward. Her chest was heaving, her eyes blazing. "He only found them himself a few hours ago. It isn't his hide-out. He's not a rustler. And if you want to know where the stolen cattle are sold, and who buys them, why don't you ask the man who sells them?"

"What do you mean, Miss Fay?" the sheriff growled, frowning.

"He!" Out shot Fay's arm, her finger pointing at Hampton. "Ask John Hampton! He's the man who sells the cattle. He's the real rustler chief! And—and if you don't believe me," she added in sudden desperation, as she saw looks almost of amusement gather on the faces of the sheriff and his men, and a start of fear in Hampton's swiftly change to an expression of mild enjoyment, "then I'll—I'll prove it. Look! Here's Hampton's watch!"

She whipped it out of her father's pocket. With hands that shook, she held it up.

"The rustler chief, who was masked of course, gave it to my young brother when he was made a prisoner by the gang. See the initials!" She snapped open the back. "There—J.H."

Breathlessly she finished. There was a strange, electric silence. Then the sheriff gave an impatient click of the tongue.

"That ain't proof, lass," he said. "Unless, o' course—" He turned to Hampton. "This yours, Mister Hampton?"

Very coolly, Hampton inspected the watch, then handed it back with a shake of the head.

"Never seen it in my life before, sheriff."

Fay's eyes blazed. "Oh, that's not true!" she burst out. "You gave it to Bobbie! And Douglas Lessiter got him away from you. Douglas—"

"Waal, where is Lessiter?" drawled the sheriff, narrow-eyed.

"He's not here. Oh, but he's coming soon!" Fay panted. "He—he'll bear out what I say, I guess, and—and then—"

But the sheriff was shaking his head. "Sorry, Miss Thornton, but I've grown out of fairy tales, I guess. Even if this dumb English tenderfoot did bear out what yuh say it'd only be what yuh both arranged aforehand. Now march him off, boys!"

And her father's captors led him away.

Douglas' Amazing Story!

FIVE yards, ten yards, fifteen yards captive and captors had gone. The sheriff, not unkindly, touched Fay's arm. It roused her. And when Hampton, with a significant frown at Lew Tate, started after that little group, sudden ungovernable frenzy surged through her.

"Stop—stop!" she cried, and darted after her father. "Listen, sheriff!" she cried, as the men holding her father, disconcerted by her determined stand in front of them, came to a halt. "You're making a dreadful mistake. What real proof have you that daddy's a cattle thief?"

"Real proof?" The sheriff stared. "Why, plenty. Now please, Miss Fay, try an' be reasonable like," he begged in kindly tones. "You'll be looked after. Git going, fellows!"

He jerked his head to Mr. Thornton's

captors. Again they started marching him away, and again they abruptly halted, for all at once there came the clattering of hoofs and next moment, from around the angle of rock, burst a horse and rider.

The rider, reining in, fought to gain spent breath.

Fay's heart leapt as she recognised him. Douglas Lessiter! Douglas had done it. He was here at last. Then it wasn't too late, it wasn't—

In sudden anxiety she started towards him. Douglas glanced at her and grinned. That was all, but it filled Fay with the most wonderful sensation of ecstasy she had ever known. Douglas had a trump card up his sleeve!

Eyes shining, hands clenched, she watched him now.

"Just a moment, sheriff," the young Englishman said, coolly. "I happened to overhear something about cattle thieves. Well, I'd like to say a few words on the subject if you've no objections."

"Yuh?" said Martin, and frowned. "What do yuh know about it?"



TO everyone's amazement Fay whirled from her helpless father and pointed fiercely at John Hampton. "He's the real rustler chief!" she cried. But even as she said it, Fay was desperately wondering how she could convince the sheriff and his men.

"Quite a bit," Douglas grinned. Then, face hardening, he began to talk, swiftly, forcibly, like one with authority and power. "For months I've been watching a certain man in this district—names barred for the moment. I suspected this fellow of being the rustler chief because he was spending far more money than he could earn through the legitimate business of his ranch."

"I joined up with a pack of dudes because they served my purpose; helped to allay this man's suspicions. I watched his ranch. I saw men riding off at night when they should have been in the bunkhouse. They went to the Blue Hills. Once, they spotted me. One of them fired but I got away. One night shortly after that, I trailed them again—to this very spot—and I found what I wanted; cattle with a Circle MH brand, running irons, fires, shacks."

"But," Douglas continued, eyes roving from one intently watching face to another, "even then I couldn't prove a thing against this man. No one would have believed me. I got access to his books. They revealed he'd

sold far more cattle than he'd ever possessed this year. Even that wasn't enough. But—"

Douglas' features relaxed for the first time into a grim smile.

"Something else was. I learned he'd been selling the cattle while disguised—false beard and all that—and I not only traced where he sold them, but who bought them. And that, sheriff, is all there is to it."

There was a deep silence following that brisk but impressive recital. Fay, looking at Hampton, saw him nervously fingering his mustache; saw him exchange a disconcerted look with his foreman, then open his mouth as if to speak. But Sheriff Martin forestalled him.

"Yuh say yuh traced th' guy who buys this stolen cattle, Lessiter?"

"Why, yes! Several guys. I've brought one of them—Abe Green—along with me, as a matter of fact," Douglas said amiably. "Hi, Abe!" he called, turning in the direction he had come himself. "Abe! Come and do your stuff!"

Everyone turned as a thin, wizened little man, almost lost on the back of a huge, raw-boned pony, rode into view.

"Tarnation!" roared the sheriff, and whipped up his rifle.

But Douglas, with an amused little chuckle, knocked it down.

"It's all right, sheriff. He's harmless enough—just one of the dupes, like a dozen other fellows in distant towns who've been buying Circle MH brand without the faintest notion of its origin. Now, then, old-timer," Douglas said, a hand on Abe's shoulder, "you know your little piece. Can you recognise the guy who sells that cattle without his whiskers?"

"Him!" said the sheriff, more as a statement than a question; and he jerked his hand towards Robert Thornton.

But Abe Green did no more than glance at Fay's father, and then, to her palpitating relief, gave his head a vigorous shake.

"Nope. That ain't th' guy. Th' guy I mean is big 'n' stout, with a genuine moustache, by th' looks of it—a swarthy-faced son-o-a-gun, who—" Abe's

roving eyes stopped. They widened; they stared. "Strike me for a Red-skin!" he barked. "That's th' scoundrel! That's him—that guy thar! I'd know him anywhere by that moustache alone—an' his nose, I guess!"

He shot out a long arm—straight at John Hampton.

"And Hampton's the man I've been watching all these months!" snapped Douglas. "The game's up, Hampton!"

"What th'—?" began Sheriff Martin dazedly. "See here, Mr. Hampton—"

The sheriff twisted round. Hampton, suddenly frenzied, went for his gun. In another second there might have been tragedy, but, swift as Hampton's hand, he slashed down to his gun holster, another hand beat him to the draw, even though it started after his.

"Steady, Hampton!" ordered a steely voice; and there was Douglas, a gleaming six-gun unwaveringly covering the startled rancher. "And you, Tate! Well, sheriff, there's your man all right. It never was Thornton."

But Sheriff Martin was still rather bemused.

"Waal, I—I jest dunno, Lessiter. Hampton's a highly respectable citizen, I guess, an'—"

"Listen!" snapped Douglas. "I can get proof together against Hampton that'll convict him a thousand times! And if you're afraid to arrest him at this moment, then I'm going to!"

"Yuh won't, young fellow!" Martin snapped, bridling. "Yuh ain't got no authority for that, an' I reckon—"

"No!" said Douglas, and, quietly producing a card from his pocket, held it out. "Then take a glimpse at that, sheriff!"

Wonderingly, Martin did so. The expression on his face was so extraordinary—almost ludicrous in its astonishment—that Fay had to crane over his shoulder, while her father stood on tiptoe, also peering.

And the few printed words they read on that little white card were certainly sensational, for they intimated that the bearer, Douglas Lessiter, was an official

investigator of the Texas Cattlemen's Association, and, as such, was empowered to inquire into the rustling in the Redland Gulch district and take whatever steps he considered expedient to check it and bring the culprits to book.

Fay felt breathless; she felt overwhelmingly grateful to Douglas, too, for the way he had saved her father. But there was also a queer beat of pride in her heart as she laid her hand on the young fellow's arm.

"Oh golly!" she breathed. "You—you're a detective, Douglas, and—and we never even suspected!"

So that was why Douglas had so often puzzled her with his secretiveness!

"More or less," he said, and laughed. "My father's a big noise in the association; that's how I got the job. Well, sheriff, all O.K.? You'll find your other men have got the rest of the gang bottled up a mile or so from here. When you chaps arrive, you can just go in and get them!"

It was more than O.K. so far as Sheriff Martin was concerned. With alacrity, he had Hampton and Tate securely roped; with a husky voice he stammered out an apology to Robert Thornton.

But Fay's father did not mind, nor did she. Everything was so gloriously wonderful now that she felt she wouldn't have minded anything. Daddy saved! Daddy freed! Daddy vindicated—for ever and ever! Oh gee, how marvellous!

"Guess—guess we'll never be able to thank you, Douglas!" she whispered, starry-eyed, and gripped his hand.

"Don't try," Douglas said. "You did more than I, old thing. You had to keep your end up; you had to stand all the gibes and taunts, and fight to keep things going—to look after your dad here and your young brothers! All honour to you, Fay!"

"She's the finest lass in the world!" said Robert Thornton; and, as he slipped an arm about Fay's waist, there was a mistiness in his eyes.

Oh, gloriously happy was Fay at that moment! Yes, but one thing she did not forget.

"Poor Lucille!" she presently murmured. "This will be a terrible shock to her. She couldn't have suspected."

Even when, afterwards, she learned that it was Lucille who had betrayed her father's whereabouts to the sheriff that night, she still felt bitterly sorry for her former enemy.

Lucille's whole world had crashed about her. Humbled, bowed with humiliation and disgrace, she quietly slipped out of town the same day that her father confessed. His continued denials were useless, for the rounding up of the gang revealed that half of them were punchers from his ranch, only too ready to turn State's evidence to lessen their own punishment.

He also admitted that he wanted the Flying H Ranch, because it would have provided a short cut for rustled cattle to be driven to the Blue Hills.

Queer how Fate distorted that plan; for it was Fay's father who, with the reward for the capture of the rustlers and the testimonial presented to him by the grateful victims of the gang, bought up a large tract of Hampton's former ranch.

There were so many occasions for jubilation after Fay had seen Hampton marched away by the sheriff that she never really decided which was the loveliest of them all.

But she rather fancied it was her father's reunion with Bobbie and Ted, at the shack of Lefty Mason, in the Blue Hills.

The youngsters were overjoyed. Bobbie, of course, had not been told the truth about his father's absence, but that had not prevented him from beginning to worry in a childish sort of way. He'd sensed that everything was not as it should be.

And Ted, knowing of his father's plight, and being old enough to understand something of what it might mean, had not been able to make a very convincing job of pretending things were all right.

The moment they saw their father again the boys went wild with delight. They whooped and cheered, and dragged him round and round the room, Bobbie firing off a never-ending string of breathless questions, and Ted, struggling with his pride and admiration, desperately trying not to give the game away. Radiant-faced, Fay looked on for a while.

"But—but, please, daddy, where have you been?" Bobbie pleaded for the thousandth time. "Go on. Be a sport. What have you been doing? Do tell us, daddy, an'—ooo, I sus-say," he suddenly shrilled, jumping up and down excitedly, "guess what?"

He lowered his voice to a thrilling whisper.

"I held up some real, live rustlers, daddy. Honest! You listen an' I'll tell you all about it—"

It was then that Fay, smiling happy, stole away. And now—

Prosperity, happiness, and the esteem of their neighbours has transformed the lives of the little family. They've new friends by the score now. But for Fay there can never be a friend like the one who comes to visit them whenever he can snatch a vacation—the young cheery Englishman who helped her to win through when she was the "Girl Rider of the Blue Hills."

THE END.

Like every girl, Pamela Courtney dreamed of happiness, luxury, beautiful clothes, excitement and glamour. But Pamela never expected those things to come true, least of all when, as a humble dressmaker's assistant in romantic Leiconia, she went to the Royal Palace with a dress for the Princess Sonia. But—they did come true. For Pamela stayed at the Palace, taking Sonia's place, and becoming—

Princess to Save Leiconia!



She, an unknown English girl, now ruler of a fairylike Kingdom—the only one who could save it from the schemes of a plotter. No wonder Pamela was thrilled! What a gorgeous time she'd have. And a gorgeous time Pamela DID have, too, with enough glamour and excitement to last all her life. This unusual story, brilliantly told by Doris Leslie, commences next week. It'll hold you spellbound from the very first word, so—order your copy now.

S.C.L. 1