

Every Schoolgirl's Favourite Story Paper.

# The Schoolgirl's Own 2<sup>d</sup>



**THREE CHEERS  
FOR THE BRIDE!**

*(An exciting moment from  
the splendid new complete  
Morocco story inside.)*

*Stirring doings at the opening of Morcove's New Term!*

# THE FOURTH FORM BRIDESMAIDS

By MARJORIE STANTON.

*Such excitement attends the opening of the New Term at Morcove! There is to be a wedding in the school—and some of the Fourth Formers are to be bridesmaids! You'll feel every bit as excited by it as the Morcove girls themselves when you read this capital story.*

Back Again!

"HERE we are girls—an empty one, all to ourselves!"

"Splendid!"

"Yes, wather!"

"Well, get in then, Paula—jump in! You are so slow!"

And Polly Lincoln, being in madcap mood, bestowed some rather terrifying flourishes upon that leucid member of Morcove's Fourth Form, elegant Paula Cross.

"Where are you going to sit, Paula?" gaily inquired Pam Willoughby, as Paula bundled into the railway carriage. "This corner!"

"E—"

"Or this, Paula!" offered Betty Barton.

"E—"

"Paula, are you going to let me get in!" playfully stormed the madcap, standing upon the foot-board. "You are so slow!"

"On the contrary, Polly dear—"

"I shall go next door, girls—goodbye," Polly called into the compartment. "See you at Morcove!"

"But, Polly dear!" yelped Paula.

"Well!"

"It's quite all right, wather. Plenty of woom!"

"Oh, is there?" sweetly inquired the teaser. "I began to think you were standing up because all the seats were reserved. Now, what are you doing, Paula?"

"Merely placing a few things upon the hat rack, Polly. In a moment—"

"In a moment they'll fall down—there they go! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, Paula—"

"Dreadful!" groaned that wary traveller, and she flopped upon a seat, leaving Madge and Betty to recover sundry small but awkwardly-shaped packages from the compartment floor. "Always the way, girls! When the day arrives for our return to Morcove, my trials begin!"

"Your trials," came scornfully from Polly. "When it's as bad as travelling with a blessed infant in arms, to have you with me. What have you done with Naomer?"

"Naomer, Polly!"

"Naomer—where is she!"

"Er—wather, I can't say!"

"Now we've lost Naomer," the madcap remarked grimly. "Well, of course, we shall tell them at the school it was Paula's fault! Shift

up a bit, Paula."

For the compartment was rapidly filling up. Helen Craig and Tess Trevelyan had sprung in upon the others, and now Madge Minden made her sedate entry.

At the same time, lots of other girls belonging to Morcove School were hurrying by in find seats on this, the afternoon train from Darroombe Junction to Morcove Road.

"This back end is the best for getting out presently," Polly stated carelessly. "Bang opposite the platform exit at Morcove Road. Those out first, get indoors first!"

"Yes, wather—"

"That doesn't apply to you," Polly addressed beaming Paula. "You're always last, anyway. I say, how much longer before this jolly old train gets a move on!"

"Another minute," Pam made it, by her wrist-watch.

"And Naomer still missing!" Polly exclaimed, adopting a hoarse and tragic voice. "Where, where's our wandering dove—!"

"I last saw her," chuckled Helen, "buying a half the scone in the refreshment-room."

There might have been a pause, now that the girls were comfortably settled for this last short stage in the journey; but Polly did not allow any pauses. Not on re-opening day!

"And so, dear friends," she began with mock



gravity, "once again we are at the commencement of a new Term! Once again we find ourselves aboard the Rat-and-Rabbit Express, bound for the trials of Learning. Once again, once is the resolve—is it not, Paula?"

"Is not what the resolve, Polly dear?"

"The resolve to—er—what's his name; to improve each shining hour. Meantime, Paula, I am bound to say, most reluctantly, it is your nose that is shining."

"Hownows—"

"Let it alone, dear. The One Bright Spot a day like this; the day, alas! that ends us—Harrah, there's Ethel Courtway! Eth-el, coo-ee!"

Polly, having jumped up to hail Morocco's head girl from the compartment doorway, received the jolliest response from that popular senior.

For a few seconds Polly stood exchanging greetings with whole batches of girls whom she was now seeing for the first time since last breaking-up day. Then she saw Naomer; or, rather, she saw all that could be seen of Naomer, behind the armfuls of paper-bags and cartons which that dusky scholar had just acquired at the refreshment-room.

"All stand!" Polly spoke round to her amused chums. "Band, please. Ta, ra-a-a-a! Enter, Naomer."

"Ooo, yea, quack; I must get in, quack, we are off!"

"Allow me," Polly pleaded, offering to disrobe Naomer of some of the goods. But the dusky one would not part with her purchases. She staggered into the already crowded compartment, stumbled—and shot the whole load into Paula's lap.

"Gwacious," gasped Paula, as the paper bags burst open, letting out bottles of sweets and odd pasties. "Do sit down, some of you! This confusion; this wot—Heelp, ow! You are squashing me, ow!"

"Paula, behave," Polly admonished the one who only wanted peace and quietness. "Is this how you would start a new term? For shame! Look at Naomer, how nicely she behaves!"

This remark, coming at a moment when Naomer, sitting on Pam's lap, was juggling with bottles of sweets that were on Paula's lap, created great hilarity. The merriment almost drowned the noise of doors being slammed along the train.

"Hooay," Polly commented suddenly. "We are off! Next stop, Seagap Halt! Hallo, though!"

She had changed in an instant from dippancy to sudden alarm, and her chums were also betraying anxiety. Now that the little "local" train was moving out, it was rather frightening to the girls to hear cries of:

"Stand away, there!"

This being the train by which so many returning Morocco girls were travelling, Betty & Co. feared that some schoolfellow of theirs was rashly trying to board the moving train.

Then, before any of them in that compartment had time to look out, they all saw with relief that it was a young man who was sprinting along the platform.

He looked so very athletic that it would have been absurd to feel any concern on his account. Apparently he was chasing up the platform, trying to find a compartment that was not packed with schoolgirls. But Madge, if only because it was certain that every other compartment was

well-filled, thought it best—the being handiest—to make a sign that meant:

"In here!"

At that, and with a calm smile, the gentleman nimbly sprang for the footboard, and in another moment was apologetically entering the compartment.

"You'll excuse me!" he pleaded, after he had pulled about the compartment door. "I'll find a seat further up the train at the next stop."

Meantime, he remained standing, not at all discomposed by his recent bit of athletics.

As for the girls, they did not dare meet another's eyes, lest they should burst out laughing. They were certain that he was amazed by the sight of Paula, still nursing so many bottles of sweets, whilst Naomer still rode upon Pamela's lap!

Without actually taking stock of him, the girls got a very favourable impression of this stranger. He looked the sort of fellow who had not reached five-and-twenty or thereabouts—without tasting adventure in far-off lands.

His face could never have become so bronzed by the sunshine of the Homeland. And it was a face that seemed to have been fined down by the hardships which he had endured in places where, perhaps, there had been many a lonely fight against great odds.

As soon as the busy "local" stopped at Seagap Halt, he threw open the carriage door and jumped out. After closing the door, he raised his cap to the girls and smiled, then ran forward, questing a seat on the crowded train.

It had been evident from the first that he was going the full distance—to Morocco—and already the girls had felt a little curious about him. Now that he had left them tongue wagged.

"Unless he is on a visit to the school, I can't think why he should be going out to Morocco!" Betty exclaimed.

Nor could the others account for his presence on the train, since this local line in wintertime hardly ever knew a passenger who was not connected with the school, unless it was someone in the farming world.

"No," Pam murmured, after some pondering, "somehow he doesn't look like a farmer. Well, Madge?"

"It's queer," said quiet Madge, with a frowning smile, "but I seem to have seen him before. At least—"

"Same here," chimed in Tess. "Can't think when it was; but—"

"Some Morocco girl's eldest brother?" Helen suggested. "And he was down here with all the crowd one sports day? Would that be it?"

"Wrong—quite wrong," Polly now dissented, and watched for the effect her next words were going to take upon Paula. Paula was so easily kidded. "A new master, that's it!"

"Hownows!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But, of course," Polly reasoned serenely, "there's to be a determined effort, this term, to make us WORK. He is going to the school, you see! And tomorrow—"

"Preposterous, Polly!" was Paula's panicky cry. "Morocco would never put anyone like that over us!"

"Oh, heaps of girls' schools have visiting masters, I shan't mind," smiled Polly calmly. "But it's going to be a bad look-out for girls like—well, like you, Paula!"

"Lul-lie-me, Polly! W-w-why?"

"He's bound to take us in one of the stiffer subjects," the madcap theorized sweetly. "Latin, for instance. I'm sorry, dear. Miss Redgrave has always made special allowances for your being rather—"

"Wather delicate—yes, wather! And you watherly think that—that— But you are wathing. Polly?" gasped the thoroughly dumfounded Paula. "Wwat, I shall tell him; I am not a brilliant scholar!"

"No need to tell him, Paula; he'll find it out soon enough," was the madcap's dry reply, sending the compartment into a fresh convulsion of laughter.

But, joking apart, their interest in their recent fellow-traveller still possessed the girls. As for Paula, her grave looks showed that she was prepared for the worst.

At Morocco Road Station he was seen by the whole trainload of girls to set off on foot—for Morocco! And Paula was so distressed by this curious circumstance that she even forgot to pay the usual anxious attention to her luggage.

The customary fleet of conveyances, hired for reopening day, was in attendance. Keeping together, Betty & Co. packed themselves into one very roomy vehicle, on to the roof of which much luggage was piled. Boxes and portmanteaus could be heard bumping and crashing into position as the girls sat wedged together in the private box.

"They've just heisted up your largest trunk, upside down, Paula—you don't mind!" blantly remarked Polly, knowing what a fit anything like this usually gave the busy one.

"I can't be bothered," sighed the elegant one. "Bai Jove, when I think! He may be going to teach us Greek! It will be some wather new subject, gwaik. Well, I shan't stand any nonsense."

"Don't you!" Polly applauded this desperate announcement.

"I most certainly shall not, gwaik! Bai Jove, when I am woused, you know, I—I am woused, what! If that's the idea, to have a master to wun Greek down our throats, then I for one shall welcome!"

Paula's chams cheered. She, their beloved duffer, really was looking "woused." In vain Nacomer offered satin pralines from a bottle, or something that would soothe the nerves, pending tea. Paula wanted no more.

With the box on its way to the school, she kept up quite an indignant flow of eloquence on the subject of Morocco's apparent intention to "introduce such a horrid innovation!" But it was observed that Paula's next sight of the mystery-man, inside the walls of Morocco, caused her to go up to the studies in a sort of wilted condition.

"Close the door, gwaik," she requested feebly, after sinking into Study 12's best armchair. "It's vewy distawgwing, wwaik! Bai Jove, I can't think what the governess has been about, what! Such a—such a grave departure from tradition, you, wather!"

And she lay back, fanning her pretty face.

Then it was that the door burst open, to let Polly come into the old

study with the bound of one who has great scope to tell.

"Girls!" she shouted. "Oh, and none of us dreamed! We never even recognized him—duffers, all of us! As to that, though, he has changed a good deal—"

"Ho!" You are alluding, then, Polly," exclaimed Paula, sitting up excitedly, "to the new master?"

"Now master—ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!" Polly shrieked her laughter. "Master! And it's Mr. Barnaby—Mr. Dick Barnaby, come back after two years in Kenya!"

The name was caught up by Betty and others. "Dick Barnaby, Polly? Oh—"

"Bai Jove! My goodness, why—"

"He's the gentleman to whom Miss Redgrave has been engaged all along!" was Betty's recollecting cry. "And he's back from abroad, at last—for good, is that it? Polly, what else have you heard?"

"Ooo, yes, gwaik!"

Polly perched herself on the edge of the table, twiddled her feet and rubbed her hands—altogether a joyous proceeding.

"I have heard," she informed her chams blithely, "that Miss Redgrave is to be married in six weeks from now! And how look at Paula there—nearly fainting! Ha, ha, ha!"

Polly perched herself on the table. "I have heard," she informed her chams, "that Miss Redgrave is to be married in six weeks from now!"



Just Fanny!

**P**AULA CREEL rosy had flopped back in the armchair as if quite overwhelmed by the news.

"But Jove, girls!" The elegant one began to beam. "Miss Wedgway to be married! Wonderful! Jove, will reveal come!"

"Why shouldn't Miss Redgrave get married?" Polly promptly demanded wistfully.

"By—all by all means, yes, wether, Polly deah! A match for great gratification, certainly."

"Or is it only a re-opening day rumour?" suggested Tom. "There's always one!"

"Who told you, Polly?" asked Betty.

"Miss Redgrave herself, if that is good enough!" was the cool reply. "Mr. Barnaby was with her at the moment. I've spoken to him—you others haven't!"

Polly's imitation of a girl trying to arouse jealousy created a chuckle.

"I'm sure I don't want to be a bridesmaid!" said Pam, imitating a girl who was trying to hide her greatest ambition. "So see!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bridesmaids, but Jove!" beamed Paula. "Oh, girls, girls, I'll be quite frank. If I thought I could be a bridesmaid—"

"And see—good job, there is the wedding breakfast!" Naumer suddenly recollected. "An enormous wedding-cake—gorgeous!"

"Of course, you would introduce a greedy element, Naumer," was Polly's lofty rebuke.

"That is where you—Walk in!" The madcap broke off, as the door flew open again and several girls almost fell into the room in their excitement.

"I said walk in!" Polly remarked. "Well!"

"Betty—all of you!" peated the newcomers.

"What do you think?"

"Miss Redgrave—"

"Wedding—"

"Six weeks—"

"But we've heard; we know ALL about it," Polly informed the breathless guests. "So you can go away and not bother us, just when we are choosing what to wear as bridesmaids!"

The excited hatch nearly took Polly seriously.

"Who said you were to be bridesmaids?" jerked out Pam.

"Oh, Polly is only roasting!" laughed another, after looking astounded. "Come away, since they know all about it."

But before these intruders could troop away, another hatch suddenly melted the Study 12 doorway.

"Betty! Polly! Perhaps you've heard! Miss Redgrave—"

"Going to be married!"

"Six weeks from now—ow!" yelled another junior, whilst coming off badly in the scrimmage.

Study 12 intimated politely that it could not have its time wasted like this.

"Just because there is going to be a wedding," jeered Polly disdainfully, "one would think you are all going to be bridesmaids. Pam away, please! More room further down the car!"

"See you at tea, girls!" sang out Betty; an which understanding the mob dispersed.

Then the door was closed.

"It is not," said Polly, "that we wish to be exclusive; but one must draw a line between those who are going to be bridesmaids, and those who are not! Do you know, I'm afraid I shan't be able to get much work done this term. Having this wedding to arrange—"

"And, pls, shall we be giving Miss Redgrave a present?" Naumer suddenly asked excitedly.

"Ooo, yes, bekas they always do! Ooo, quick, what shall it be? You say, quick, pls!"

"I thought, a motor-car," Polly said gravely.

"But we shall have to have a Form meeting about that. Do you know, Betty, I'm afraid that you won't, as captain, get much work done this term, either!"

"I am perfectly sure none of us will," laughed Pam. "A wedding, just fancy! How awfully jolly!"

"And, pls, will it be at Morose School?" was Naumer's next question. "Eekas—Ooo, good job, we have a church in as school, yes!"

Faintly there came the long-bong of the gong for tea downstairs, but Study 12 paid no heed. Nor apparently did other batches of girls go cartwheeling down on the instant, for the Fourth Form quarters remained unpeopled.

"But Jove," Paula said, touching her hair to rights in front of a pocket-mirror, "as regards being a bridesmaid—"

"A what!" Polly exclaimed incredulously. "You can never be wanting to be a bridesmaid, Paula? Oh, no, not you! It means a lot of fuss and excitement, far beyond your strength."

"E—as regards my strength, Polly—"

"Quite. Miss Redgrave will understand. Don't worry; you won't be expected to be a—"

"Er—I am sorry, Polly—"

"Oh, no need to be sorry. Miss Redgrave won't be offended."

"I am sorry, Polly, if my remarks have created a wrong impression. As a matter of fact, you girls, I would wether like to be a bridesmaid. Yes, wether!"

"You would!" gasped the madcap. She drew the others' attention to Paula, as being a kind of freak. "Here's a girl who wants to be a bridesmaid! Well, well!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come along down," Betty proposed gaily.

"We may hear more about it."

"Ooo, yes, quick—quick!"

Then, in the act of surging from the study, there came an arresting "By the way, girls!" from Helen Craig.

"Yes, Helen!"

"Mr. Barnaby, now I think of it," said Helen, "he's related to a girl in our Form! Diana Forbes—sort of cousin of his, I think!"

"Why, yes," nodded Betty. "I seem to remember something of the sort. It had quite slipped my memory."

Judging by Betty's expression, it had not exactly proved a delight to have her memory jogged. Nor were Polly and the rest able to look greatly pleased, the truth being that Diana Forbes was not the nicest girl in the Form, by any means.

It was not a case of Study 12 prejudice. Study 12 had no prejudices! Diana had long since earned for herself a very general dislike. The best thing that could be said for her was that she had never gone out of her way to make trouble in the Form. She had simply failed to co-operate with the rest, which sort of thing, of course, does not do a girl any good in the eyes of her schoolfellows.

"Sort of cousin—h'm!" Polly reflected aloud.

"So that means, of course, bridesmaid!"

"Oh, well, come along down!" pleaded Betty, as if knowing that the longer they stood thinking of Diana the glummer they would become.

As usual on re-opening day, almost all the girls were trooping in for tea in the great dining-hall, where each Form had its own long

table. Tea in study was a treasured privilege at Morocco, but it was considered unnecessary not to come down to the public tables on the first day of a new term.

This afternoon the Fourth Form could feel proud of itself, as being the Form that was going to have a wedding! It acknowledged the right of the Sixth and Fifth to claim a great interest in the forthcoming event. But the Fourth meant it to be clearly understood; this was "their" wedding.

For the moment Miss Rodgrave was not in evidence. No one, however, had been asked to preside in her place, and so it could be inferred that she would come to the Fourth Form table whilst those girls were still at tea.

The frequent cheering in the meantime was, so to speak, nothing compared with what was in store. Miss Somerfield, as headmistress, met with a terrific ovation. But wait—wait until Miss Rodgrave showed up!

Most of the juniors were seated when Diana Forbes came in, all by herself, and—could there be any doubt about it!—feeling very important. But they could all make allowances. After all, she was Mr. Burnaby's distant cousin.

Only it was rather a strain upon the other girls when Diana began to talk as if the engaged couple and all the arrangements for the wedding were entirely in her hands.

"Miss Rodgrave will be here presently," was Diana's quite patronising announcement. "I have just seen them. Do you all know they are to be married?"

Polly stood up and put a hand to one ear.

"Pardon? When was this, Diana?"

There was a roar of laughter.

"Anything else, Diana?" she was chaffed.

"Dick—he's my cousin, you know, so I call him Dick. And I'm to be a bridesmaid!"

Diana must have been proud of the impressive silence which this remark created.

"They think of spending the honeymoon abroad," she went on. "Of course, there's a lot I know that you girls don't. Dick—he spent a few days at my home, and I have had lots of talks with him. The wedding—"

But at this point Diana's jarring talk was put a stop to in a most dramatic manner. Miss Rodgrave came in. She suddenly walked towards the Fourth Form table with the evident desire to slip into her seat in the old informal way. The Form, however, rose up. All the school rose up.

"Hurrah!" was the first terrific cheer which every throat sent forth.

"Miss Rodgrave, hurrah! Congrats, congrats!"

Then there began a joyous demand for Mr. Burnaby. The school wanted to cheer him, too-lucky man, to be going to marry such a prize as a Morocco mistress! In vain Miss Rodgrave laughed and shook her head.

It was not until the headmistress had stopped across to have word with Miss Rodgrave that the school resigned itself. Mr. Burnaby was

Diana Forbes put her head round the door, interrupting Miss Rodgrave's talk with Betty. "I thought it might be something about the wedding," she said. "Can I make any suggestions?"



not available, having returned to Bournemouth. "Some other time, girls," Miss Somerfield smilingly promised the assemblage.

LOUD CHEERS!

"Meantime," the headmistress added, "let me say, girls, that I share to the full all the happiness which to-day's news has given you. And now—make a good tea, all!"

After that the Fourth Form had Miss Rodgrave to itself. The girls could not, of course, say all that was in their hearts; it would have made her too flustered! But there was a most delightful understanding between the bride-to-be and her adoring scholars. "Our wedding, of course!"

Tea over, Morocco had to give at least part of its mind to all the activities of "first-evening-back!" Unpacking; interviews with matrons; some rooting out of studies, with the laudable intention of making this a tidy term—amidst such excitements the time flew by.

And very much in the way of her Form mates was Diana Forbes, since she would not keep out of the various studies, but would keep on coming in to talk about her wedding!

About seven o'clock Betty was sent for by the headmistress. There was nothing unusual in this. Miss Somerfield invariably had word with the Form captains at the commencement of a new term. But this evening the summons that fetched Betty from Study 12 somehow caused

tremendous suspense in the Fourth Form quarters.

When presently Betty came out of Miss Somersfield's private room she found practically the entire Form waiting for her.

"Betty," the subdued chorus started, as they melted around their captain, "anything about—you know?"

"We're to have a meeting—" was as far as Betty got with her explanation. Twenty girls and more peaced with joy, emitting subdued hurrahs.

Then they and the captain all trooped upstairs again, although Betty was soon to come down once more, to discharge a pleasant little duty.

Tradition demanded that formal notice of the meeting should be posted on the board, and so the captain of the Fourth had got out three lines in her boldest handwriting:

**NOTICE!**

There will be a Meeting of the Fourth Form at 6 p.m. to-morrow evening (Tuesday).

All members of the Form are specially urged to be present.

(Signed) BETTY BAXTON,  
Captain.

**This Wedding Business!**

"I SAY, I must do a few things!" Polly Linton suddenly realised, about half-past eight on this same first evening of the new term. "The next girl who mentions weddings—"

"She get it in as neck, quick, oo, you!" Naomer finished the madcap's threat. "You hear, Paula?"

"Yes, wather! Although I don't know why I am poked out, as if I had been doing all the talking. As a matter of fact, gee, the wedding—owp! Oooosh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Behas," chuckled Naomer, as she hurried herself upon the oft-tossed one, "you were warned!"

"Drop it, stop it, Naomer!" "Let her off this time," suggested Polly, magnanimously. "After all, Paula can't help being excited. Having got the idea into her head that she is going to be a bride—ha! ha, you again, Diana!"

It set the others laughing, to see how vigorously Polly addressed Diana, now that that self-important girl had again looked into the study.

"Miss Rodgrave isn't here, then?" "No—no," said Polly, after looking under the table. "Why?"

"I thought she might be wanting to see me about the wedding."

"She knows your address, doesn't she?" the madcap suggested facetiously. "Well, there may be a letter. Anyway, I'd go and see."

"Oho, jadsas," Diana laughed tartly. "Because I am going to be a bridesmaid and you're not!"

"But how do you know I'm not?" said Polly sweetly. "Or is there only going to be one bridesmaid?"

"Before Diana could find a suitable retort, the study door was tapped, and then Ellen the parlourmaid appeared.

"The Form captain, please—to go down to Miss Rodgrave."

"Ah! Ah!" Polly commented dramatically. "Go on, Betty!"

"Ooo' jee, quick!" Betty burst out laughing, and so did Pam,

Madge, and the rest. In Diana's face, at this moment, there was an expression which had only one possible meaning. The idea of Miss Rodgrave sending for—the captain!

Aware of Diana's starting to follow, Betty hurried on. She scooted up the corridor, feeling sure that Diana was all for taking part in the coming interview—which might not be to Miss Rodgrave's liking!

Very pleasant it was for the Form captain, half a minute later, to stand before the youthful mistress and see such signs of a pipsicon, minus all vanity. There was no gush about Miss Rodgrave. At first, indeed, she talked of the new term and of school routine. And then, very quietly and simply:

"Just one other thing, Betty. I felt I would like to make it known at once, it will be a great joy to me if—if I may have some of my own girls for bridesmaids."

"Yes, Miss Rodgrave! The Form would never forgive you, if you didn't!" Betty laughed, and the mistress laughed as well.

"I would not deserve forgiveness, Betty. Well, then, as captain, perhaps you will let it be known that I shall have to choose—four, I felt it should be, but there seems to be an idea that the size of the Form warrants six! Of course, Diana Forbes will be one of my bridesmaids. It is only right—"

Tap, tap came the interruption, and round the edge of the half-opened door came Diana's head.

"May I come in, Miss Rodgrave?" "Well, Diana, I was just talking with—"

"I thought it might be something about the wedding?" Diana excused her entry upon the scene. "Can I make any suggestions?"

Somewhat Betty and Miss Rodgrave caught each other's eyes, and somehow Betty divined that the mistress, like the Form, was amused at the way Diana was "taking charge."

"I don't know, Diana, that you can be of any assistance at present," Miss Rodgrave responded blandly. "I was merely telling Betty that I shall be choosing the other bridesmaids in the course of a day or two. As captain, Betty may be able to help me to be quite fair."

"Oh, I can do that, or you—I mean, name some girls I'd like to have for bridesmaids," Diana said coolly. "I mean, to be bridesmaids, along with me! There is—"

"Yes, Diana; but if you don't mind, I'd rather you left me a free hand about that," pleaded the Form-mistress, whilst her eyes revealed merriment.

"I think that Dick, being my cousin—"

"Oh, I think not, Di!" Miss Rodgrave was simply forced to dissent with a little laugh. "Mr. Burnaby," she added, addressing Betty, "is all for you girls of the Fourth Form receiving the very greatest consideration. He knows how fond I am of you all."

"I wonder," exclaimed Betty, "if Mr. Burnaby knows how fond we are of you! Please, Miss Rodgrave, we ought to be given a chance to show him! Could we—could it be arranged for the Form to—to—you know! Have him to tea, with you?"

"There's no need," interrupted Diana. "Is there, Miss Rodgrave? I mean to say, the best thing will be for me, as Dick's cousin, to have him to tea one afternoon, with a few girls chosen by me. You'd be there, of course—"

"Thank you, Diana," smiled Miss Rodgrave.

"I am sure you mean it kindly, but Betty is seeing things from the point of view of the whole Form. Yes, Betty; I am sure there is nothing Mr. Burnaby would like better, than to meet you all. If you care to let me know, after talking it over with the others—"

"But," objected Diana, "will Dick like a lot of formality?"

"Diana," said Miss Redgrave, just a trifle wearily, "that will do for this evening. Betty understands, so now I think you may both go. It will soon be call-over!"

But Diana was not going to be dismissed like this. Very awkwardly for Miss Redgrave, the girl evidently felt that she was hardly called upon, now, to treat that young lady with the respect due to a mistress.

Not that Diana was rude, or wanted to be rude; she simply meant it to be remembered that the Form-mistress was, as it were, marrying into her, Diana's, family! On such a distant relationship as that of second cousins, it seemed pretty cool. So, at least, Betty thought.

"Diana is the limit!" laughed the Form captain, as she rejoined the coteries to Study 12. "Really, I felt quite sorry for Miss Redgrave. So uncomfortable, the way the girl will boss!"

"I don't know what we are going to do about Diana," sighed Polly. "I don't see what we can do. But what's the latest, Betty?"

"Yes, bet Jove! As regards bridesmaids, Betty!"

"Well, Diana's one!" Betty grinned as some groans were voiced. "Five more are to be chosen by Miss Redgrave, out of the Form—if Diana will let her choose!"

"Five!" echoed Pam delightedly.

"Oo, good job—five!"

"With luck, one of us may be picked," Polly said hopefully. "What else, Betty?"

"The Form's to give a tea to Miss Redgrave and Mr. Burnaby. Dash, there was a thing I meant to ask," Betty added ruefully. "Only Diana wouldn't let me get a word in. Look here, why shouldn't Madge play the Wedding March on the day?"

"Absurd!" Madge herself instantly derided the idea; but there was a joyous approval of it by the rest.

"Bring that up at the meeting to-morrow," Polly said blithely. "Of course, Diana may object! I say, what a lot of time this wedding business does take up! I haven't done a single thing this evening. Out of the way, some of you. I must get a move on!"

But even as Polly said the words, she knew that it was too late. The bell was ringing for call-over. So she and her happy-hearted chums turned their backs upon an utterly chaotic study and joined in the rush downstairs.

Like a good many others, Betty & Co would have to be up and doing extra early in the morning. Meantime what else could you expect, when Morocco was to have a marriage!

#### The Form—in Form!

**B**ETTY, at the appointed time on the following evening, went down to the Fourth-Form classroom with a slip of paper bearing these cryptic words:

- Wedding Present!
- Madge—Wedding March!
- Bridesmaids!
- Suggestions!

It was the Form captain's agenda for the great meeting!

Everyone was turning up. The room, with its rows of desks showing each girl at her place, looked like business. And the jabber of tongues evidenced the heartiness with which that business would be tackled.

And old garden mallet had been placed on Miss Redgrave's desk in front of the class, for the use of "Chair" in preserving order. Naomer was demonstrating how effectively anyone could rap for order with that mallet, when Betty and some of the last comers appeared upon the scene.

Polly nipped back to the door and closed it, and then an orderly silence fell. Betty's occupation of the Chair, by right of office, was being taken for granted by the girls in general, when it became apparent that Diana Forbes was feeling "passed over." Diana's reluctance to sit down and let the meeting commence drew a blank inquiry from Betty:

"Yes, Diana?"

"Oh, nothing! Only—well, I thought perhaps that being Dick Burnaby's cousin and all that, you you might like me to—take charge!"

"Certainly, if the Form wishes," was Betty's complacent response, and she would have quitted the Chair only the Form so emphatically called upon her to stay, that she stayed.

Naomer, anxious to see proper use made of the mallet, could not help interrupting at the very start, for Betty began the opening remarks without a preliminary thump! for order.

"Pis," cried the dusky one, bobbing up, "give him a whack, Betty!"

WHACK!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, gins," Betty blithely resumed, "the purpose of this meeting to-night is to arrange certain things concerning the approaching marriage of Miss Redgrave—"

Tremendous cheering drowned Betty's voice. Naomer meantime making signs to "Chair" to use that mallet. Amidst so much jollity and enthusiasm, a good few girls could not help noticing that Diana was looking impatient.

All day Diana had been a great trial to the Form; so Polly did not hesitate to rise.

"On a point of order, Betty; what's the matter with Diana?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, if you are all going to rot about!" shrugged Diana. "But I didn't come here to do that. You seem to forget I am Dick's cousin—"

"Thanks for reminding us—again!" said Chair, to the great delight of a meeting that was already fed-up with Diana. The gentle rebuke was delicious.

"Well, girls, to start again—"

"Thump, Betty, pis! A good one!"

THUMP!

"Hearty!" cheered the meeting. "Now, Betty!"

"I am not going to try to say how awfully jolly it has made us feel to know that Miss Redgrave is to be married very shortly. I mean, we all know how fond we are of Miss Redgrave—"

"Heav, heav!" vociferated the meeting.

"So, girls! Straight to business, shall we?"

"Yes, yes!"

"The first question is, girls, what about a wedding present from the Form? Of course, it's certain that the whole school will be giving Miss Redgrave a nice present. But I know, by the way you've all been talking to-day, that you'd like



us to give a present of our own, as Miss Redgrave's own Form—"

"Hear, hear! That's it, Betty; the good old Fourth—hurrah!"

"Well, then, what about it?" And Chair paused for a reply.

"Motor-car!" sang out Polly.

"Yes, indeed, then Miss Redgrave can take us for a ride!"

"Hear, hear! Motor-car; mo—tor!"

"Oh! They'll hear all over the school!" came Betty's playful warning. "Of course, it would be fine to make it a car. I don't know whether we can run to it, but—"

"We can jolly well try!"

"Yes, waiter! And, goals—er—if I may be allowed—"

"Sit down, Paula!"

"Order!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quick, thump him, Betty!"

THUMP! And then Chair said invitingly:

"Paula!"

"Thanks! Er—as regards motor-car, goals; I would like to propose that unless the Form can win to a good one, it—"

"Hear, hear!"

"I would be so/ry, goals, if the Form presented Miss Wedgrave with a—"

"The Liza—"

"Old iron—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So, fellow members of the Fourth Form, unaccompanied as I am to—"

"Enough! Sit down, Paula!"

"Unmistak—"

"Sit down!"

"I repeat, goals—"

Thump! went the mallet, and then Paula subsided, to say all that she had been going to say to the meeting, to Naesmer, who was not listening:

"Betty does not hit him hard enough," muttered Naesmer, using the mallet. "I think I better go and help."

"Supposing, then," Betty summed up the meeting's feeling, "we aim at a motor-car, and if the money won't run to it—well, we can—"

"It's absurd!" Diana jumped up to argue impatiently. "A car costs anything up to hundreds of pounds!"

"Well!" Pam stood up to demur, so severely that the meeting went wild with delight. "The Form wants to try to do the best for the best Form-mistress that any school ever had!"

"Hear—er, heard Bravo, Pam! Car, car! Motor-CAR!" insisted the meeting.

Naesmer could not stand the silliness of that mallet any longer. She rushed from her seat, and an "Excuse me!" to Betty, and plied the mallet for her. Whereupon, great applause.

"Ha, ha, ha! That's the way, Naesmer!" Betty, vastly pleased with the meeting's enthusiasm, consented her agenda.

"Next question—oh, yes! It has struck some of us that, as the wedding is to take place in Morocco's own chapel in the grounds, Madge Mindon might play—"

"Hear, hear!" applauded the meeting, whilst Polly gave a good imitation of the Bridal March on an organ.

Thump! Naesmer hit the table again.

THUMP!

Madge was anxious to speak.

"Girls, it is very nice of you, but I simply can't consider—"

"Yes, yes! Carried!"

"May we leave it like this?" suggested Betty, when the uproar had subsided. "In the form of a resolution; that this meeting of the Fourth Form, knowing it would please Miss Redgrave, considers it would be very right and fitting if Madge Mindon could play the music for the wedding ceremony?"

"Good! Hear, hear—"

"Carried!" yelled Polly, holding up both hands.

"Uman!"

But Betty saw Diana Forbes looking furious.

"Well, Diana!"

"Oh, nothing! But—"

"One dissentient," Betty noted down. "And now—er—about—er—bridesmaids."

Sudden silence!

Betty looked up from her agenda, smiling.

"This, of course, is a matter for others to settle. But I know Miss Redgrave would like me to say that the Form—her Form—"

"Hurrah!"

"Will not be overlooked. In fact, girls, all six bridesmaids—"

"Four," corrected Diana tartly.

"Six," repeated Betty quietly. "I suppose Miss Redgrave ought to know!"

"Anyway, it's not settled!" snapped Diana. "At present I am the only bridesmaid, and I shouldn't be a-bit surprised if my Cousin Dick—"

"Order!"

"Well, he is my cousin!" fared out Diana.

"May I propose a vote of sympathy with Mr. Dick Barnaby over his untimeliness?" Polly respectfully inquired.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It Dick knew," Diana shrieked, "how you are making the wedding an excuse for a lot of nonsense—"

"No, not! Shame!"

Naesmer, rushing across with the mallet, brandished it in front of Diana.

"Who is making nonsense? You say, speak! Sit down, or I make you!"

Diana sat down, with a passionate:

"Idiot!"

"Well," said Betty, "we are getting on! And now for any suggestions! It is open to any girl—"

"Except me!" interjected Diana sulkily.

"Order!"

Helen Craig stood up.

"How about an illuminated address, girls? I am sure that Tom Trelawney would do something very special for the occasion!"

"Hear, hear! Tom—come on, Tom!"

"Oh, I'll do what I can!" was the characteristic, crusty reply from that most good-natured genius, Tom Trelawney. "But I don't want a lot of bother."

The Form kept quiet, whilst Betty made a note, saying nothing. They all knew Tom. Let her alone, and she would "deliver the goods."

"Any other suggest—"

"Yes, yes!"

A dozen girls were on their feet, all talking at once.

In vain Betty gestured for order, whilst Naesmer whacked away with the mallet, using both hands, Paula, for one, must have gone in for quite a few of eloquence that was entirely wasted, before the whole burst of talk changed to peals of laughter.

There was a hearing for all, however, sooner or later. One suggestion after another was voiced, to meet with hearty approval. Helen Craig found herself appointed treasurer of the Wedding Present

Fund. Another meeting was fixed for next week to "report progress."

Most important of all, it was proposed by Polly, and instantly "carried unanimously," that the Form should entertain Miss Redgrave and her fiancé to tea, and that Betty should be instructed to find out which day would be convenient.

So at last the great meeting dispersed, Naomer marching out with the mallet as if she were a kind of mace-bearer.

"Bekas," she explained joyously, "he come in useful next time!"



Seeing that Diana Forbes did not want to sit down and let the meeting go on, Betty inquired: "Yes, Diana?" "Oh, nothing! Only I thought perhaps, that, being Dick Barnaby's cousin, you might like me to take charge?" was Diana's modest suggestion.

Meanwhile, it was Paula's secret fear that the mallet might be put to use in Study 22!

One thing, and one thing only, mattered the general satisfaction. About these bridesmaids! All the world knew by now that Diana was to be one of them. But the others?

Many a heart in the Fourth Form quavered. It must be admitted, with suspense to-night. Many a girlish mind was wistfully wondering—upon whom would the choice fall?

So the pens were often pausing during prep., whilst dreaming eyes stared at study walls and beheld a vision of Marcove's own beautiful place of worship, and how lovely and impressive it would look on the great and solemn occasion.

"Will I be one of them? Will she think of me? Ah, I wonder!"

So many girls were pondering in this study and that. But none of them were to know—yet!

#### Who Will Be Bridesmaids?

AT the midday dinner, Diana Forbes stayed behind in the Fourth Form class-room, meaning to get a quiet minute with Miss Redgrave.

"Well, Diana," came blandly from the youthful mistress, whilst she put the last of her books away, "and what can I do for you?"

Not encouraging, such a question! So Diana felt. Not the way she should be treated, considering she was Dick Barnaby's cousin!

"I was just wondering, Ruth—"

"Better address me as the others do, Diana," advised Miss Redgrave gently. "I am sure you must have seen I want the next few weeks—my hat at Morocco, you know—to go on just as usual."

Diana smiled. She was well aware that, in front of the class this morning, Miss Redgrave had appeared utterly unconcerned. It had been hard for the Form to believe that she was the centre of such great excitement. That was all very well, but—

"As Dick's cousin—"

"Yes, Diana, but apparently I have not made myself clear enough. My meaning is that anywhere like this—in the school—"

"Oh, all right, I know your meaning, come to

that," Diana exclaimed pettishly. "And perhaps I had better not say any more. I'll go—"

"Diana! Now that is not called for. What were you wanting to ask me?"

"I thought you might be able to tell me who the other bridesmaids are to be!"

Miss Redgrave answered very gently, after a little pause:

"No, Diana, for the simple reason that I have not yet decided. You can imagine, it is awfully hard for me to decide. I should be so sorry to hurt any girl's feeling—so sorry to make an unpopular choice. But as soon as my mind is made up, then the whole Form shall know."

This sent Diana stalking off in one of those sulky moods which the Form knew to be so unreasonable. It was silly of Diana, but she felt quite aggrieved. Her old failing—the disinclination to co-operate—was taking a glaring form over the impending wedding.

She could not think of being just one amongst so many other girls who were all full of excitement and enthusiasm. It seemed to Diana that

she ought to be "B" as regards the wedding—at any rate, in the eyes of the Fourth. And instead—

"It is going to be Study 12, as usual!" she very uncharitably muttered to herself. "Look at that meeting last night, and Betty in the chair. Just because she is captain! As if the captaincy had anything to do with weddings!"

And was it going to be the same over the choice of these other bridesmaids? Diana frowned as that question again occupied her mind.

She hated the idea of the choice being bestowed upon general favourites in the Form. Betty, for instance—the captain again! Or Polly, or Pam, or very likely a complete batch of these Study 12 girls! And where would she, Diana, be then?

Her jealous mind had a vision of a chosen five who would all look prettier than she on the wedding-day—five popular girls, coming in for all the notice, whereas she would be in the group simply as a girl claiming relationship to the bridegroom.

The worst of it was, too, Marjorie seemed to know already that the relationship need not be carrying so much weight! Dick Burnaby was only a distant cousin, after all, and he could not be wanting much fuss to be made of Diana, or he would have named Ruth Rodgers to make that fuss!

It never occurred to Diana that she, perhaps, was not quite Mr. Burnaby's idea of what a schoolgirl should be, even though he was ultimately related to her.

What did cross her mind was the thought: If only she could have influenced the choice of these other bridesmaids! She would have taken jolly good care not to choose any who might eclipse her. No Pam Widdowhay for her—not one of the Study 12 either, not likely!

But the choice rested with Miss Redgrave, and all she could do was to wait, with all this needy suspense, to see what came about.

Going upstairs, Diana found a singular state of quietude prevailing. The interlards between dinner and dinner was generally a lively one in the Fourth Form quarters. Reaching her own study, she found the two girls with whom she "shared" hard at letter-writing. And then Diana guessed that much letter-writing was going on in other studies.

Parents had to hear all the news about the wedding by an early post, and, needless to say, they were to be told of the wedding present the Form wished to give. A very lavish present, admitted, but—think of Miss Redgrave, how the Form adored her!

Diana turned to go from her study, only to see Polly going by. Promptly the needy girl drew back and closed the door. Nasty!

But it was water off a duck's back to the madcap. Three seconds later Polly was gaily whirling into Study 12. Betty was—writing a letter home! Paula had started a letter, but had abandoned it for the present. Lying back in an easy-chair, Paula looked so distressed that Polly at once inquired:

"And now, what are you grieving about?"

Nazzer supplied the answer, whilst turning the pages of a store catalogue.

"Betas Paula think We will not be a bridesmaid!"

"On the contrary, girls—"

"But on with the dumps, Paula," the madcap advised, indicating the letter. "And see if your people can't post a banner towards that motor-car!"

"As regards their subscription, Polly dash; that will be all right."

"It should be," smiled the teaser grimly. "If ever parents owed a big debt of gratitude to a schoolmistress, your parents owe one to Miss Redgrave. Think how good she has been to you; how it has put years on her trying to teach you!"

Then Paula looked so crucial that Polly could not go on with the teasing.

"I weep, Polly dash, Miss Wedgwave has been a real sport. That's why I—I couldn't finish my letter. Bet Jove, it's all very well, the wedding business; but we are going to lose Miss Wedgwave. I don't want to lose her! I—Ow, pray excuse me, but—cold in the eyes—drawight in the class-room," Paula accounted for her halting to produce a handkerchief. "Ow, it makes me so m'able!"

"Paula—"

"I'm sorry, girls," she pleaded tearfully. "But—when Miss Wedgwave is gone—no one in the world to replace her, no."

"There, there, Polly said in genuine sympathy, whilst Betty got up to come across and help rally the distressed dam. "Of course, dear, we shall all feel like this, at times. I—Ow, dash, now you've made me feel like—"

"I'm sorry," called Paula, dabbing at her eyes. "I don't want to be m'able, but—ow, I am so m'able!"

Then Betty and Polly, looking round, saw that Nazzer had suddenly closed the Store catalogue, and that her face was working as if she were not far from tears.

"This won't do," was the madcap's timely remark.

"No!" And Nazzer jumped up, looking fierce. "Betas, all so school catch it, like the brideswomen. Where is that mallet, quick! Betas—your Nigga it, Paula!"

Such anxious words, accompanied by an equally anxious search for the mallet, took really heading effect upon Paula. She fled, whilst Nazzer gave such a sounding smack! upon the table as seemed to evidence when Paula might have come to her.

"Just finishing, Polly," remarked Betty, referring to her letter. "You know what it is if you leave letters until after tea."

"Oh, rather, I'm just going to knock off mine."

Polly, however, after taking paper and pen at the study table, sat back and became lost in a deep muse. She was such a long while lost in thought that Betty, at last, said:

"Penny!"

Polly came to herself with a little laugh.

"I was just wondering, Betty—who will be those bridesmaids?"

#### The Chosen Few I

**I**N class, that afternoon, once again the Form kept on looking up from the work to steal a glance at Miss Redgrave, and to wonder how she could appear so unconcerned!

She was just as she had always been; just as firm, even though she must have gained some inkling of what the Form was up to, at last night's meeting.

But if it was astonishing, that she should be leaving everyone else to be so excited about her wedding, what complete happiness her own calm state argued!

Betty and many others understood; they could tell that there was not a cloud on Miss Redgrave's

horizon. She was simply perfectly and earnestly happy. Might it be so right up to the wedding day, and for ever afterwards? Such was the girls' fervent wish, in their goodwill towards her.

There was, however, a slight change in Miss Rodgrave at the close of afternoon class. To see her beginning to look a little nervous caused the girls secret excitement. Was she going to have something to say about the wedding—about those bridesmaids?

"If you will put your pens down now, girls—"

Down went the pens, with quite a rattle.

"Whilst we are all together, girls," the Form-mistress resumed, with a slight fidget that was very pretty to see, "I want to say a few words about—about some of you being—bridesmaids."

At that word, Naomer let out a loud: "Ooo, good job!" and so the tension was relieved by a burst of laughter, in which Miss Rodgrave joined.

"First of all, my dear girls," she resumed rather tremulously, "I—I feel bound to say—although I suppose I ought to pretend not to know! But you—you are all being so nice and kind, and—I mean—Oo, dear, I don't know what's the matter," she laughed confusedly. "But I can't say it, after all."

Yet, unspoken though her thoughts were to remain, was there a girl present who did not understand? In her glowing looks and in the tender glance which roamed the class, the Form read what was in Miss Rodgrave's mind.

"To go straight to the point, then, if I can," she resumed, smiling away her embarrassment. "I do want you all to be sure of this, girls. I have thought about this question of bridesmaids ever so much. I wouldn't, for works, do anything that would hurt a girl's feelings. I may even say that I have asked Miss Emswold and other colleagues to help me choose. And so—"

She paused, then asked with a kind of anxious smile:

"Are you all going to be sure that I have done my best to choose fairly?"

"Yes, yes! Yes, Miss Rodgrave—"

"Bai Jove, wather!"

"And you don't need to be assured, do you, that the girls chosen as bridesmaids will represent all the rest? I mean, if you could all be bridesmaids—well, you know what I mean; I only wish, in a way, you could!"

"So do we wish it!" cried some one quite whistfully.

"We shall all be there, anyhow," was Pam's happy reminder.

"Ooo, yes, bekas Midge is to play the organ, and—"

"Sh!" Folly dragged Naomer down to her seat. "You'll be blushing out about the ear next!" Folly whispered grinsly.

"Very well, then, girls; now I can read out the list of names without further hesitation," said

Miss Rodgrave, taking up a slip of paper. "They are in alphabetical order. Betty Barton—"

The Form clapped. That Betty, as captain, would be chosen, had been a foregone conclusion. Nevertheless, the girls applauded as if given the most pleasant surprise. Folly was pounding Betty on the shoulders delightedly, when the next name was read out.

"Paula Creel—"

"Ooo, good job! Ooo, honey! Ooo, quick, so dear olduffer—gerjoo!"

Again there was general delight. It was being left to Diana to look a shade displeased.

"Dolly Delane—"

"Hurray, yes! The Doormat!" shouted the Form. "Congrats, Dolly!"

"Eta Hargrove—"

"Eita!" A fresh round of applause started. There was a clap, clap, clap for Eita.

"And the next and last," said Miss Rodgrave, "making six in all with Diana Forbes—"

A pause. "Pam Willoughby."

"Pam! Bravo, Pam!" It was as if she had come in for a well-deserved prize. "Pam! Splendid!"

The Form-mistress was quite herself again by now.

"There it is, then, and now—now, Naomer, not so much noise! Dinna!"

Away rushed most of them. Naomer, quite the first to get



"It's all very well, this wedding business," wailed Paula, "but we are going to lose Miss Wedgwood, and I don't want to lose her. Ooo, pray excuse me," and she furnished for a handkerchief.

"It makes me so mis'able!"

out of class, did a sudden dash back. She had taken it into her head to hunt herself upon Miss Rodgrave and hug her.

"Bekas, you are going to get married! And I love you; we all love you, bother him for wanting to marry you! But you will come and see us sometimes, plea? You say, quick!"

"Often, I hope, dear," was said with a fond rumping of the dusky one's glossy hair. "I shall not be far away—only as far off as Barncombe."

"What! Ooo, good job, gorjus! Bekas, when you do not come to see us, we can come to see you!"

And Naomer, crazy over this latest bit of information, dashed off again, to impart it to the other girls.

Diana was one of the last to quit the class-room. By her sauntering step and cold looks, she was letting it be seen how little the great choice appealed to her. In the hall, mobbed around by the rest, were those girls who were to be Diana's fellow bridesmaids. But she was not disposed to mingle with them.

Going up to her study, she waited about until her two study-mates came upon the scene—Kathleen Murray and Eva Merrick.

"Well?" she asked them, with a bleak smile.

"What do you think of Miss Rodgrave's choice, you girls?"

"Oh, nothing to complain about, I suppose," said Kathleen.

"What most of them seem to have expected," was Eva's comment.

Diana nodded.

"Meaning—Study 12, as usual?"

"Oh, well," shrugged Kathleen, "that isn't to say that Study 12 has been favoured. It so happens that the most popular girls belong to Betty's set."

"There shouldn't be a captain's set!" retorted Diana.

"But there isn't," argued Eva. "Not in the sense you mean. Let's be fair. I suppose, if it had been put to the vote, the result would have been about the same. And, anyhow, Di, you've no cause to complain," the speaker smiled. "You're a bridesmaid!"

"I might have preferred to see other bridesmaids who were—were my friends."

"Oh, well, it's settled now," Kathleen said at

last, giving a lift and fall of her shoulder. "I don't mind!"

"Neither do I!" declared Eva. "I never expected to be picked—not like some of them!"

"And yet," Diana rejoined, with a vague feeling that here was a disappointment which might somehow be turned to good account, "if I could have had my choice—well! Look here, you girls, would you—do you still want to be bridesmaids?"

Their looks alone were sufficient answer! "But what can you do, Di?" came Eva's dejected murmur at last.

"It's hopeless to expect Miss Rodgrave to change her mind," exclaimed Kathleen glumly. "If that is what you are thinking."

"I was not thinking that way at all," Diana answered testily. "You may fancy it is too late; but I'm not so sure. Anyhow, I'd like you to be bridesmaids with me. And—I am Dick Burnaby's cousin, don't forget?"

More excited over that fact made her execute a sort of dramatic exit after voicing the words. In the corridor she met Betty & Co., looking for Study 12. Her ill-will came to a head and she swept past them all, chin in air.

At the moment, all the girls were as if they had not noticed this flouting of them. But Betty, when Study 12 was reached, remarked casually:

"It's a great pity about Diana. Something like me, Diana is going to cause trouble."

If only—ah, if only something could have told Betty; could have warned her, and warned the whole school, how to guard against that trouble! If only Morocco could have known the form it would take!

Then, what a different story there might have been to tell, concerning these last exciting days before Morocco's wonderful wedding.

For Diana was fated to wreck everyone's happiness—even Miss Rodgrave's.

It was all through Diana and her petty jealousy that these very nearly came to be—no wedding at all!

(END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.)

What trouble is Diana going to cause? You cannot afford to miss a word of next week's splendid Morocco story, if you want to know. It is "Her Spite Against Study 12." Place an order for your SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN now!



MORCOVE MAGAZINE week has come round again, so I've only room for the briefest of letters in this issue. In fact, I haven't space enough to do anything but say a few words about next week's stories. So let me get straight on to the subject before I feel tempted to stop and have a chat!

Having read this week's Morocco story, of course you'll all be longing to know just what mischief jealous Diana Forbes does manage to cause over the wedding. Next week's story will tell you. Entitled "HER SPITE AGAINST STUDY 12," it is a tale you will read with a burning feeling of injustice against Dick Burnaby's

schoolgirl cousin. Diana is determined to direct everything connected with the wedding—and she makes a big move in this story that looks like getting her her own way!

"ANNE O' SNUOGLERS' HOUSE" is just too exciting for description, in our next issue. I can just hint that Anne meets the preventive men face to face, and also, her father returns home from his latest daring voyage. But what is the outcome of it all I must leave for next week's instalment to tell you.

Matters grow very difficult for Thomas Ward in "HAPPY CINDERELLA" next week, and once more Miriam hits upon an ingenious way of getting her into Uncle Bob's black books. Whether or not it succeeds you will be able to read for yourselves next Tuesday.

"LEAVING OUT LALLA," by Ellen Draycot, is next week's complete story. You're bound to enjoy every word of it, so don't forget to order No. 415 of the SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN as soon as possible, to make quite sure of reading it!

Your sincere friend,  
YOUNG ENGLAND.



No. 27.]

[Week ending January 12th, 1929.

## OUR NEW YEAR'S NUMBER.

By BETTY BARTON - - - - - Editor.



NCE more into the breach, dear friends, once more—

By the time you read this we'll be back at school again learning Shakespeare and maths, and Latin and French, and— But don't let us think about such things! We're gradually drawing near to the end of one of the jolliest holidays we've ever spent, and at present we're living in the past more than the future. Those glorious days of parties, tobogganing and gathering around the fire at Linton Hall while the wind howled outside, and never a thought of school to take the gilt off the gingerbread! How we wish they could last for ever!

Still, there are consolations even in having to return to school! And one of our consolations is *The Morcove Magazine*. Some of this issue was written before we broke up.

The contribution from Dot Fairfax came by post to me at Linton Hall. I think Dot must have had nothing to do one evening during her holidays, and so she perpetrated her story. We all roared when we read it. Doubtless it is meant to be serious, but I found it one of the funniest stories I have ever read, and I hope you will, too!

The rest of this issue was done at Linton Hall, and all of us had a hand in it. We were singing "Widdicombo Fats" in the music-room one evening when Polly suggested that it would make a good addition to "The Morcove Song Book." I think it's one of the most relishing songs of the lot, and if you got half a dozen girls yelling it out lustily you'll agree with me. The best of it is that you can put your own names to it, and make it all the more jolly.

And now, just to finish up this little chat, let me wish all our readers the best of luck and prosperity for the coming year!

## MY FAVOURITE QUOTATION.

Gathered from the Fourth-Formers by MONICA HOLDEN.



EARLY everyone has a favourite saying of some description—a motto or a quotation—which, nine times out of ten, gives an insight into their character. It struck me that our readers might perhaps be interested in the favourite quotations of our Fourth-Formers, which happen to be particularly typical of all of them. Betty Barton's, of course, is well-known. It is: "I'll manage!"

Short, snappy, and yet what a lot it contained! As for Polly Linton's favourite, you won't be surprised to know that she confesses to: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." While: "Art is long, and life is short," is unmistakably Tom Treasewy's choice.

Trixie Hope, when I asked her, replied: "Je ne sais pas." I am still wondering whether that is her favourite motto, or whether she can't quite make up her mind!

Madge Menden gave us here: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." Whether she meant players of the piano, or players in theatrical productions, I don't know, for Madge is equally good at both. "Do unto others," is Dolly Delaney's favourite, which is just what one could expect from the dear old Doersnot, who is never happy unless she is helping others.

As for Paula's favourite—well, when I asked her, she replied: "Wally, dear girl, I can't say, but Jove!" It was Polly, at last, who suggested what Paula's ought to be. Here it is: "Would the wugged wooks the waggod wuscal was!"

And Nadner! It took me half an hour to explain to her what a "quotationable" was, and when I had finished she clapped her hands and exclaimed:

"Ooo, I have a very nice quotationable, but it is very good. He is: 'Bargety-bang went as sarpence in us tuck-stop!'"

## THE MORCOVE MAGAZINE

# THE MORCOVE SONG-BOOK.

No. 7. "Naomer Nakara and All."

(To the tune of "WIDDICOMBE FAIR.")



Hi, Staggles, oh, Staggles, bring  
out the school 'bus,  
All along, out along, down a  
long lane,  
For we're going to Stormwood—  
dozen of us—  
With Betty Barton, Polly  
Linton, Madge Minden,  
Paula Cross,

Naomer Nakara, and all! Naomer Nakara and all!

He brought out the 'bus and we all scrambled in,  
All along, out along, down a long lane!  
And, of course, you can't blame us for causing a  
din—

With Betty Barton, Polly Linton, etc.

When we got to Stormwood the whole school  
turned out,

All along, out along, down a long lane!  
Their Fourth-Formers welcomed us with a great  
cheer

For Betty Barton, Polly Linton, etc.

On the hockey field soon we were all playing fast,  
All along, out along, down a long lane!

And Stormwood discovered the process at last  
Of Betty Barton, Polly Linton, etc.

The Stormwood side's forwards were soon looking  
blue,

All along, out along, down a long lane!  
Though greatly they tried it, they couldn't break  
through

By Betty Barton, Polly Linton, etc.

Before we'd half started, they wished we had  
ceased,

All along, out along, down a long lane!  
Tom Trolowney scored first, then the score was  
increased

By Betty Barton, Polly Linton, etc.

But though we had beat them, they proved to be  
sports,

All along, out along, down a long lane!  
For Stormwood girls always were jolly good sorts  
To Betty Barton, Polly Linton, etc.

They gave us a cheer, and they called "three times  
three!"

All along, out along, down a long lane!  
They invited the whole of our players to tea—

By Betty Barton, Polly Linton, Madge Minden,  
Paula Cross,  
Naomer Nakara and all! Naomer Nakara and all!

## A "FOLLOW-MY-LEADER" POEM.

An Idea For Your Party.



THE "follow-my-leader" poem is a  
fine idea for parties, and a great  
amount of fun can be got out of  
it. One girl starts the ball roll-  
ing by writing a verse, choosing  
her own subject and metre. Then  
the other girls add a verse  
apiece, still carrying on the same  
subject, and writing in the same  
metre.

One evening at Linton Hall, when we had played  
everything we could think of, Polly suddenly  
declared that she was going to write a poem for  
THE MORCOVE MAGAZINE, but the faint of  
inspiration dried up before Polly got any further  
than the first verse, which ran:

"When the stars shine bright,  
On a winter's night,  
And the snow is falling fast;  
Come the soft festival,  
Through Linton Hall,  
Of the ghost who walks at last!"

Having chewed the end of her pencil for some  
time, Polly then announced that she was going to  
give it up, but Madge came to the rescue, and  
wrote the second verse:

"The surroundings grim  
Never trouble him,  
As his innocent watch he keeps;  
With his clock drawn tight,  
'Gainst the bitter night,  
While the whole world soundly sleeps!"

By this time we were all getting interested, and  
it was Betty who suggested that we should each  
take a hand. She wrote the next verse, which was:

"Though none have seen  
His ghostly men,  
We oft have heard his tread;  
We have heard him pause  
In the corridors,  
As we snuggled safe in bed!"

"Come along, Tom!" she cried as she finished  
this. "Let's see what you can do now!" And this  
is Tom's effort:

"Is he Norman, Dane,  
Or Saxon swain,  
Who thus disturbs our rest?  
Is he cavalier  
Who now walks here?  
Or a knight in armour dressed?"

"Paula's turn now," she said, handing the paper  
and pencil to Paula. Paula, however, arranged  
that she was too much of "a wool, a wain" to  
write herself, and after some considerable thinking and  
fate starts, Paula dictated:

"Did this warlike fight  
For the wrong or right?  
Was it king for whom he above?  
Was his quarrel just?  
It was, I trust—  
But I'd like to know, but Jews!"

## A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE THIRD.

Dot Fairfax shows her "literary merit!"



**I**n printing this contribution because I think it too good to be missed! I give it exactly as it stands, together with the note I received with it.—H.B.

"Dear Betty,—Of course we all like—like—the Morcove Magazine in the Third Form, but we think we could get out a wonderful issue if you were to give us a chance. Just to show you what we could do, I am enclosing a story I have written, which the other girls say is skramshus. It is an example of our literary merit.

Yours,  
"Dot Fairfax."

Here, then, is the "example" of the Third Form's "literary merit."

## "A SCHOOLGIRL'S HONNER!"

By Dot Fairfax.

Miss Swotter, the Third Form mistress of Smallcove School, gazed in perplexity at Dorothea Fairplay, the most popular girl in the school.

"I am sorry to see that you have not done your prep. properly, Dorothea," she said. "Your grammar is very weak, and you do not seem to know anything about China."

"I admit I am not conversant with China," confessed Dorothea. "I leave eggs and scones to the maids to deal with."

This was really a very witty retort, but Miss Swotter, not being very bright, was unable to see it.

"Dear, dear!" she said, fairly flummoxed for the moment. "I don't know what has come over you, Dorothea. You were once one of my favourite girls, but just of late you have been doing your work, and you are very sleepy in class, too. What is the reason?"

Dorothea was silent. She did not want to explain to her mistress the real truth about things. How could she say that she was sleepy in class without revealing the secret which she did not wish the mistress to know? Two days before, Dorothea, in taking a constitution in the woods, had come across an escaped convict, and she had given her word that she would not reveal his hiding-places to a soul!

How was the Third Form mistress to understand that, when all the other girls had been asleep, Dorothea had broken bounds? How was she to know that the steadfast Dorothea had even saved her pocket-money, instead of wasting it on tuck, and had given it to the poor

unfortunate man, who had told Dorothea that he was not guilty of the crime that had been alledged against him?

"Ha, girl, you cannot give me a reason!" cried the mistress. "Very well, you will write me one hundred lines before to-morrow!"

This was a favor for Dorothea, because she had promised to take some more grub to the poor convict that evening, and she could not do it if she had to write the lines. But she swallowed her chagrin, and said, meekly:

"Very well, Miss Swotter." Then, turning on her heels, she precipitely left the study.

But Dorothea did not mean to write the lines. She had given her word of honor to stand by the convict, and she called together her chums, and was soon in conference with them.

"Don't you worry, Dorothea," said her greatest chum, Emyl Eastwood, "we will write the lines for you."

"Not half!" said Flo Brook, and so the matter was settled.

That night Dorothea crept cautiously from the school, with a bag of tuck under her coat, and made her way to the woods to see the convict. The man was pleased to see her once more, and was just thanking her for her timely aid, when a harsh voice rang out on the night air:

"At last I know your secret! You deceitful girl!"

Dorothea turned, and her face suddenly blanched. For the voice was that of her Form-mistress!

"Miss Swotter!" she exclaimed in a panic. "Yes," replied the mistress. "And who is this convict that you have been helping?"

She turned to the man, and then gave a scream.

"Why, it is my own father!" she cried.

"Yes, Miss Swotter," replied the man. "I am your father, and thanks to this girl's bravery and courage I have been able to elude my pursuers! I am innocent, and only this girl believes me!"

"But have you not heard!" Miss Swotter gasped. "The true criminal has confessed his guilt and you are free! We have been looking for you everywhere!"

"And it is owing to this magnificent girl that you have found me," said her father sternly. "Perhaps in teacher you won't treat her so tyrannically."

"I promise I won't, father," said Miss Swotter. "Come, let us all go back to the school."

And that is how Dorothea Fairplay proved her honor and became a great hero in at Smallcove School.

## A "FOLLOW-MY-LEADER" POEM.

"Oh, now you must write down what I say, Polly!" interrupted Naacorn. "I like beams, zinc pennyrite!" And Naacorn contributed this last verse:

"You all want to know  
Who he was, and so

I soon will answer all!  
I would like beam most  
If it was no ghost,  
But no—it was just an owl!"

And that finished our "follow-my-leader" poem. But just try one at your next party, and you'll be surprised how well it goes!



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