

writing at boarding schools. You have another friend named Rita now, haven't you? The bazaar was a great success, wasn't it? I think the Maypole dance was the prettiest I have ever seen—Mrs. Hault must be a splendid teacher. The Waiwera baths are lovely; I don't wonder you thought the bath the best part of the day, but it is not good for you to stay in too long. I must wish you a happy New Year now, Mary, and close this, as I have several other letters to write, and one is to another Cousin Mary.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—I am afraid I have not much to write about to-night, as we have just started our holiday. I liked the Veterans' Bazaar very much—Amy and myself were playing tennis for nearly an hour to-day, and it was lovely. We are going to Ruth's island for our holidays; it is quite near Waiheke, do you know it? It is a lovely place to spend holidays. I am sending away cards to my friends this week, and I am sending you one, which I hope you will like. Have you been to the Magic Cave in the D.S.C.? It is just beautiful. I have been twice, and I would love to go again; I really think I must the next time I go to town. It must keep you very busy answering all the cousins' letters. I am afraid I would not have enough patience to write so many letters. I cut my finger on the knuckle when I was cutting bread, and it is very sore. Dear Cousin Kate, I am feeling so sleepy that I am afraid I must end now. With love to your dear self.—I remain your loving Cousin Mary. P.S.—I hope you will enjoy your holidays immensely.—Mary.

[Dear Cousin Mary.—Thank you very much indeed for the lovely card you sent me, and also for all your good wishes. I am afraid it is rather late to wish you a merry Christmas, but I wish you a very happy, prosperous New Year. How are you getting on with your tennis? I shall expect to hear of you as champion of Auckland some day soon. I have heard a great deal about the Magic Cave at the D.S.C., but have never had time to go yet. It does take me rather a long time answering the cousins' letters every week, but I like it, and that always makes the time go so quickly, doesn't it? I hope you have not cut your finger very badly, and I also hope you will have a lovely time at Ruth's Island. I have been there, but not to stay. We spent six weeks at Waiheke, just opposite, once.—Cousin Kate.]

Astonby's Surprising Pupil.

NOT ONE OF THE OLD FASHIONED KIND.

"Now, Mr. Voyse," Addington Brown's Uncle Silas had said to the Vicar of Astonby, when arranging for Addington's installation at the vicarage with the other five young gentlemen there in the receipt of an old-fashioned education, "I want you to work the classic side of the boy as hard as you can. He's quite scientific enough by nature, and, ahem—well, I suppose I may say also by inherited family instincts. Quite, indeed."

Uncle Silas smiled. Mr. Voyse raised his eyebrows at that smile. There was in it a certain reticence and pride (tingled) which piqued him. But Uncle Silas continued briskly:

"Well say no more about it, however. Fill him with Latin and Greek, my dear sir, and—and—my wife wishes me to say he has rather a delicate throat. Women are like that, aren't they?"

And then they both smiled together. "I quite understand, quite," said the Vicar. "I can assure you Mrs. Voyse will take the lad's throat in hand as zealously as I will endeavour to nourish his intellect—on the classic side. My wife, Mr. Brown, really loves a delicate boy, in the abstract. She—"

"Oh, but Addington is not exactly that," said Uncle Silas. "Excuse the interruption. It is only that he poisoned his system a few months ago in experimenting with my chemicals, and it has left a certain predisposition to sore throats. That is all. And now I will run for my train."

This was Addington Brown's introduction to the Astonby establishment.

He was a tall, quiet lad, with a singularly lofty forehead and an air of self-command, and at times remoteness

from his surroundings, which interested the other five boys extraordinarily.

The other five were the Vicar's two sons, Peter and Samuel, Tony Apowell, Daniel Hunter and Sir Bartholomew Trotter.

Tony Apowell was the master spirit of the little circle hitherto. It was Tony who had in six weeks crushed all the "baronetical humbug" out of Trotter, and even taught Barty that he was almost to be pitied for being a baronet at the tender age of 13. And it was Tony who set to work to test Addington, to see if that dreamy, yet luminous stare in his eyes, and resolute indifference to trifles were frauds like Barty's unfortunate inheritance of a title.

The things Addington had to put up with from chopped horsehair on his sheets and in his flannels, to mysteriously accidental bangs on the head from the football in the vicarage paddock!

He bore them all with a patience that was as sublime as it was exasperating. Though he tossed about a good deal at night, he didn't complain in the morning. Even when he got hot at football and seemed to scratch and nudge his shoulders painfully, he made no remark. And all he said one afternoon when, four times in half an hour, the football had come at him hard between the tupe of his neck and crown, was this, "It's queer how I'm always getting in its way."

Addington had a bedroom to himself. It was one of the points he had insisted upon with his uncle. And there were drawers and a cupboard in the bedroom which he locked the first evening (after he had emptied his boxes), and kept locked.

"My dear boy," Mrs. Voyse had said to him at the end of the first week, "give me the keys of the cupboard. It wants dusting."

"Oh, no, Mrs. Voyse, it doesn't, thank you," he replied. "I'll see to it."

Mrs. Voyse tried again, but again Addington blocked her.

"I promise you solemnly, Mrs. Voyse," he said, "that I'll never keep grub there."

"But why, my dear, should you keep it locked, then?"

"Oh, well!" And then Addington looked at her, as she said to her husband, "as if he were fifty and I was only sixteen," and remarked with a sort of dry politeness, "I hope I'm old enough to be trusted with an empty cupboard, Mrs. Voyse. Don't you think so?"

To Mr. Voyse, who was shrewd to mark the social relationships of his pupils, all this was in its way amusing. He rated Addington as an uncommon boy, as touching his character, though deplorably backward in his Latin and Greek. From Tony, with whom he was on very gracious terms, he got an opinion that there wasn't such a chap in the world as Addington Brown—"So different from other fellows, don't you know, sir, though not at all a bad-hearted fellow, you know."

And this, too, pleased Mr. Voyse.

But when eighteen days had passed, Mr. Voyse had a sudden and most disquieting shock. There was an explosion in the night. It happened between twelve and one o'clock. Every soul in the building was awakened, and there was soon a patter of bare feet on both the bedroom storeys of the vicarage, with something like shrieks from the two housemaids, whose room was over Addington's.

"Is it an — earthquake, dad?" asked Samuel Voyse when, candle in hand, the Vicar came, white-faced, into the main landing.

The Vicar had thought so at first. But now he smelt something.

"Where's Brown?" he asked.

Addington appeared opportunely, in his trousers and shirt. "So sorry," he said, with the utmost calmness. "I—I've blown my window frame out. I ought to have known better. It serves me right for attempting anything without proper appliances. I'll make all the reparation possible, of course; and—there won't be any more of it. That I promise."

The Vicar winked rapidly several times during this speech. Then he sent all the household back to bed, and went into Addington's room.

"Come!" he said to Addington, and he shut the door.

What exactly occurred inside no one knew except Addington and the Vicar. Even Mrs. Voyse could get nothing out of her husband beyond these words:

"That boy has dared to defy me. I—

I must see what is to be done."

And it was noticeable that the next morning, in class and at meals, he had a new kind of look for Addington Brown and an unusual severity of tone, both of which seemed to trouble Addington not at all.

Of course the other five boys were furiously inquisitive about it all. But Addington kept his own counsel.

"Do you mean to say you won't tell us?" asked Tony, fiercely, after many futile minutes.

Addington contemplated Tony as if he were a statue devoid of mind.

"My dear Apowell, you wouldn't understand a single syllable of it," he said. "Besides, I as good as promised old Voyse to keep it a secret. He's as ignorant as the rest of you. 'Oh, well, sorry! I didn't mean that. But just drop the subject, there's a good chap!'"

II.

This began a three days' estrangement between the other five and Addington. They carried it on just as long as they could, but three days formed the limit. And then they forget it all, for Addington himself did not crow about his secret as some fellows would have done. Besides, they were sorry for him. He had a whole book of Virgil as an imposition; and of course the carpenter's account for that window was to go down in his bill.

But Mr. Voyse's mouth was always firm, and he seemed always to wear a bad frown now when he looked at Addington.

As for Mrs. Voyse, she had to be content with the key of Addington's dormitory cupboard. This had nothing in it now, except a few scientific books and some clothes.

And the maids were left free to believe that it was an earthquake which had unsettled them so startlingly on that particular night.

Matters were thus when one morning there arrived a visitor from Addington, a most celebrated person, the sight of whose card made Mr. Voyse gasp when it was brought with the request to see Master Addington Brown. Mr. Voyse exchanged a few words with the gentleman, who seemed teased by a pensive smile, which disturbed the Vicar, and, of course, Addington was then summoned into the drawing-room. And there the Vicar left him.

For a whole hour they stayed in conversation. Mrs. Voyse came in for a moment to make the great man's acquaintance, but she met with no encouragement to stay. The great man talked about the weather and scenery to her, and did it as if he were vastly bored, and would be so much obliged if she would go away. And so she did go away. And the next

For Quiet Nights
Healthy Infants
TRY
RIDGE'S
The Best FOOD
Refuse all Imitations
Satisfying, Strengthening, Soothing for Infants.
Agreeable Digestible, Nourishing
AGENTS FOR AUCKLAND AND WELLINGTON—
Sharland & Co. Ltd.
RIDGE'S FOOD MILLS—LONDON, ENG.

RHEUMO.

Is a medicine of marvellous potency and of great therapeutic value, and is absolutely free from poisonous or hurtful ingredients. It is a scientific preparation, and its efficacy has been thoroughly proved in numberless cases of rheumatism, gout, sciatica, lumbago, and uric acid diathesis. Rheumo is a medicine, not a stimulant. Rheumo is a liquid, not a pill. It acts as nature does; seeks out the affected parts, dissolves and expels the excess uric acid, kills the pain, and removes the swelling. Rheumo acts as a tonic as well, and helps build up the system. Sold by chemists and stores at 2/6 per bottle.

Stocked in Auckland by H. King, Chemist, Queen-st.; J. M. Jefferson, Chemist, Queen-st. and Upper Symonds-st.; J. W. Robinson, Chemist, Parnell; Graves Alectin, Chemist, Queen-st.; and sold by all Chemists and Stores, at 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle.



Milkmaid
LARGEST SALE BRAND
in the WORLD. **Milk**

Milkmaid
LARGEST SALE BRAND
in the WORLD. **Milk**

Milkmaid
LARGEST SALE BRAND
in the WORLD. **Milk**

Milkmaid
LARGEST SALE BRAND
in the WORLD. **Milk**

Milkmaid
LARGEST SALE BRAND
in the WORLD. **Milk**

See this Trade Mark on every Tin.