

You've heard of flying fish—here's a FRIED flying fish!

THE SECRET EATER OF ST MIKE'S



NOW watch carefully!"
Matt Crannis, science master at the famous and very select school of St Michael's, applied the lighted match to the Bunsen burner underneath the flask.

Almost immediately the greenish liquid inside began to boil, and a brown gas passed along the complicated collection of test-tubes he had erected on the bench. Matt's attention was fully on his experiment. Even the warning coughs of the boys who were watching did not distract him.

"Ah, Crannis!" Matt nearly took a header into the glassware. It was the voice of the Dean of St Michael's, Dr Granite, and it had been heard only once before in the laboratory building.

The Dean did not take kindly to scientific subjects and he was still inclined to regard Matt as some sort of witch doctor who had got into the school by mistake.

"What have we here, Crannis?" the Dean asked, staring at the glassware. "Splitting the atom today, eh?"

"Er, no, sir!" Matt replied, wondering what the Dean's visit was going to mean. "Just a little experiment with nitrous oxide."

"Really?" Dr Granite remarked. "Amazing what you chaps get up to. Let me have a sniff!"

Before Matt could stop him, the learned doctor bent down and inhaled a deep breath of the gas that emerged at the end of the glass piping.

Nitrous oxide, as Matt had explained already to the class, was the proper name for laughing gas! Dentists used it in large quantities to put patients to sleep. But in small quantities it produced a state of muscular relaxation—in other words, a fit of the giggles.

And no one had ever seen the Dean smile, far less laugh!

He straightened his back, his lungs full of the gas, and stared hard at Matt.

"Good show, Crannis!" he said. "Jolly good show!"

Then the impossible happened. His craggy face split into a grin!

"By Jove!" he announced. "I'm feeling fit today! You can go, lads—get out in the fresh air while the sun's shining. Now, Crannis, seeing all this scientific junk here gives me an idea. I think you're just the chap I'm looking for."

Matt switched off the Bunsen flame, wondering if he could believe his ears.

The Dean took another sniff at the last of the laughing gas as it drifted away—and chuckled as he turned to Matt.

"I've decided to reorganise the Kitchen Committee!" he said happily. "New ideas

lected enough detention to outweigh by far the half-hour break he had just given them!

But there wasn't much the doctor could do about the business of making Crannis chairman of the Kitchen Committee! Although he regretted it, he could only wait and see now what a science master could make of such a highly skilled job as organising the school meals!

Matt Crannis just couldn't believe his good fortune! It was something he had never even dreamed of! For meals were the only part of St Mike's that Matt definitely did not like.

The trouble was that Matt just didn't fit into St Michael's when it came to eating.

At times Matt suffered from an overpowering desire for solid food—lots and lots of it. When he felt like this he had to eat and go on eating until he almost burst!

The food he went after at such times was not the delicate stuff they served at St Michael's.

No, it had to be solid food, like steak and kidney pudding, or meat pies thick with rich gravy. Tripe would hold his appetite in check, or cockles and whelks, but best of all was fish and chips wrapped in newspaper.

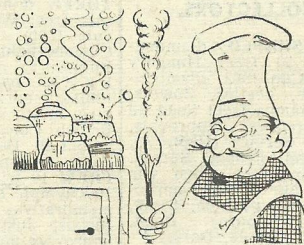
Matt had had difficulty with his appetite all his life, but it hadn't mattered until he reached the famous public school.

Matt had come up the hard way, with a scholarship to the university won by sheer hard work and brains. Nobody had bothered him there as to what he ate and when, nor had they worried him during the five years he taught science at a grammar school.

But when he had got the job at St Mike's, as a result of his very good qualifications, he realised that the Dean and masters would take a dim view if they found his favourite late-night snack was a few feet of black pudding held down with a wad of cake!

For weeks he had held his craving in check, only very occasionally yielding to a strong attack. Nevertheless it made him very unhappy.

The French chef
who cooked up
trouble



with the meals, that's what we want. You may be just the man to see to this! From now on you're chairman of the Kitchen Committee."

He went out of the laboratory, leaving Matt reclining on the bench in a stunned silence. Outside, the fresh air soon dispelled the gas from the Dean's head and brought him back to normal.

Matt's class, now playing a scratch game of cricket, caught the edge of Dr Granite's tongue as he passed, and one and all col-

Now his luck had certainly changed. As chairman of the Kitchen Committee, he would do his best to see that good solid food was served up for the boys of St Mike's.

The old system of feeding by houses had been changed recently, and now the whole school ate together in one big dining-hall.

In charge of the kitchens was a real live French chef who answered to the name of Monsieur Rolande Pierre St Aubyn. He wore a tall white hat, and had spiked moustaches.