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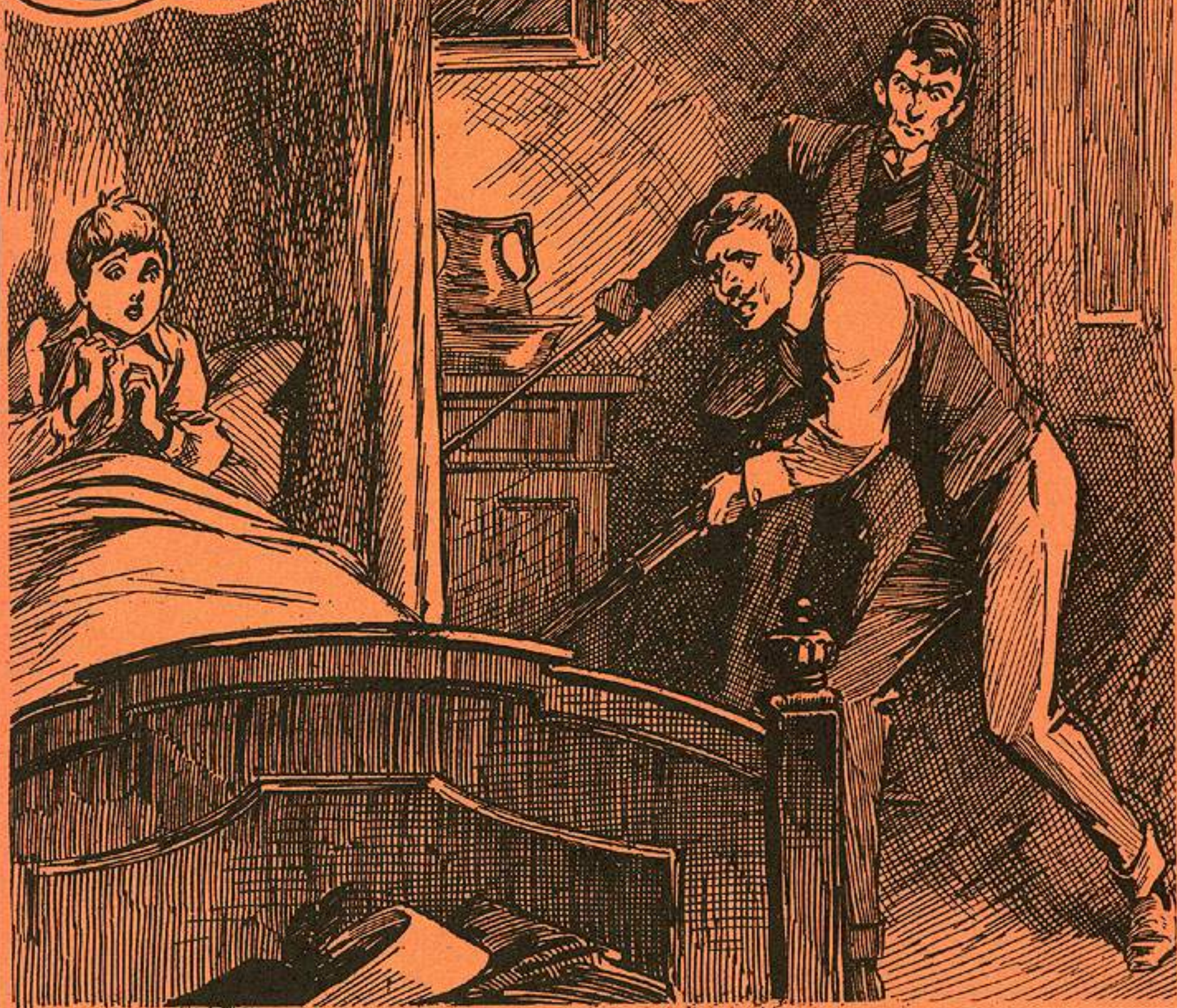
Magnet

LIBRARY

1!

NO. 100.
VOL. 4.

Agent Minor



The Remove Form-master turned pale. "I only hope," he gasped, "that you have really fired a blank cartridge. I can hear no sound." The new boy sat up in bed, hardly daring to breathe.



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NEXT TUESDAY.

ONE HALFPENNY



Nugent Minor

A Splendid Double-Length
School Tale of
Harry Wharton & Co., at
Greyfriars.

BY

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Expected Minor.

"NUGENT!"
"Hallo!"
"You're coming down to the footer?"
Bob Cherry was looking in at the door of No. 1 Study. Bob was in football garb, with a coat thrown round him, and a considerable length of bare leg showing under the coat. He had a football under his arm.
Frank Nugent, who was sitting on the table in the study, with a letter in his hand, looked round and shook his head. Bob stared at him.
"Can't!"
"Rats!" said Bob Cherry warmly. "What do you mean by can't? We're playing the Upper Fourth this afternoon,

and I suppose you don't want the Remove to be licked! We want you at outside-right, and you've got to play. Come on!"

"Can't!"

"You can moon over your blessed billets-doux another time," said Bob wrathfully. "Get off that table, before I yank you off!"

"Can't! This is a letter from home——"

"Oh!" said Bob, his expression changing. "Not bad news, I hope?"

Nugent grinned.

"That's according. I've got a minor coming to Greyfriars. You've heard me speak about young Dicky. He's coming here."

"Well, let him come. Let 'em all come. I don't see that that's any reason for missing the footer."

"He's coming this afternoon. The mater wants me to make much of the young noodle, so that he won't miss home, you know. I shall have to give up the afternoon to it. No good doing these things by halves."

"Look here," said Bob thoughtfully, "I'll tell you what. Sit him down on the footer ground to watch the match. How could he want anything better than that for a half holiday?"

"I don't know when he's coming, either." Nugent shook his head. "He may be along any time in the afternoon. There's one thing you can always be sure of about young Dicky—he will turn up in the wrong place, at the wrong time, and get into mischief of some sort."

"Nice for his major. Well, if you won't come, you won't."

And Bob Cherry marched off down the passage. Frank Nugent looked at the letter again. It had arrived at Greyfriars that morning, and that had been the first intimation he received that his young brother was coming to the school. The matter had been mooted at home, before, he knew; but his mother had been loth to part with little Dicky. Dicky was a spoiled lad, wilful and troublesome, and his mother's darling. He caused Frank all sorts of bother during the holidays; but Frank was very fond of him all the same. But Dicky at Greyfriars—that was another matter!

A dark-complexioned face glimmered in at the doorway, and a dark-complexioned finger beckoned to Nugent.

"The esteemed Wharton wishes you to arrivefully appear upon the footer ground, my worthy chum," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur. "And you have not yet changefully donned your honourable football shorts and esteemed boots."

"Tell Wharton I'm sorry I'm not playing."

"The ratfulness is great," said Hurree Singh. "The esteemed Wharton told me to bring you dragfully by the ears if you did not come walkfully."

Nugent laughed.

"Tell him I'm sorry—"

"Sorry be hanged!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, bursting into the study. "Come on, you young ass! We want you!"

"I've got a minor—"

"I don't care whether you've got a minor, a major, or a whole chromatic scale!" exclaimed Harry. "Bless your minor! Come down to the footer!"

"But—"

"We can't spare you. Temple, Dabney & Co. are turning out in force, and they're in good form. I can't spare you. Now, don't argue with your football captain. Get into your things and come down."

"I can't," said Nugent, with a troubled look. "I must wait for Dicky. If he arrived, and I wasn't ready to look after him, he wouldn't like it."

"Well, suppose he didn't?"

"Well, you see—" Nugent hesitated. "Dicky expects to be looked after. He's rather—er—rather exacting. I don't want him to have the sulks the first day he comes to Greyfriars. I expect he will be a bit ratty at my not meeting the train, though, of course, the mater never mentioned which train it was, and it might be anything between half-past two and six o'clock."

"Now, look here, Frank, you can't waste a whole afternoon, and mess up a Form match, on account of your minor. Why, by your own showing, he may not be here till an hour after the match is finished."

"I know; but he might—"

"Well, I must say you're a soft ass," said Harry. "Your minor wouldn't think of spoiling your half-holiday that way, unless he was a selfish worm, and I suppose he isn't that. Now, look here, I'll ask Bunter to look out for your minor, and you can come and play. Bunter will be hanging about doing nothing, and he can look after the kid, and explain to him, stand him a feed at the tuckshop, and bring him down to see the footer. Your minor will be all right."

Nugent hesitated.

"Well, I suppose you're right," he remarked.

"Of course I am. It really isn't fair, Frank, to leave us in the lurch like this. I could play Russell in your place, but he wouldn't be nearly as good. And the Upper Fourth are going to give us a good fight this afternoon, too."

Nugent slipped off the table. He seemed to be relieved at having his mind made up for him.

"Right you are!" he exclaimed. "Of course, I want to play—you know that. You speak to Bunter while I get into my things."

And Nugent ran upstairs. Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh went down to the Close. There was a thoughtful frown upon Harry's brow.

"I don't quite understand Nugent," he said at last. "He seems to worry a lot over his minor. Of course, he ought to look after the kid, but—"

THE MAGNET.—No. 100.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

USUAL SIZE AND USUAL PRICE:

ONE
HALFPENNY.

"From what I have heard our esteemed chum remark at varying times, I fancy that the worthy Dick is a spoiled darling of his respected mamma," murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur. "He displays the sulkfulness if he thinks he is neglected."

"Then he wants licking," growled Harry, naturally wrathful at the idea of one of his best wingers cutting the match for fear of sulky looks from a spoiled boy. "Frank's too jolly good-natured."

"I say, you fellows—"

Wharton halted, as Billy Bunter came up. Bunter was blinking through his big spectacles with an expression of unusual seriousness on his fat face.

"Good! I was looking for you, Billy."

"Oh, really! I suppose the same idea has occurred to you, then," said the fat junior, with an expression of great satisfaction.

"The same what?"

"The same idea. I hear that Nugent isn't playing. I shall be quite willing to take the position of outside-right for the match this afternoon."

Wharton stared at him, and then burst into a laugh. The idea of the little fat, unwieldy Owl of the Remove in a Form match was distinctly amusing. Billy Bunter blinked at him with an irritated air.

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" he exclaimed. "I suppose that's what you were thinking of?"

"Ha, ha! No!"

"What was it, then?"

"Nugent is playing. We shall have to deprive ourselves of your valuable services, Billy. Of course, we know the use you would be in the match."

"Well, I rather fancy myself as a winger, you know."

"The fancifulness of the honourable Bunter is terrific. We should certainly win, because our worthy opponents would suffer too much from the laughfulness to be able to kick the ball."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"No, I'm not looking for recruits, Billy," said Wharton, with a laugh. "I was looking for you, though. Nugent has a minor coming this afternoon. Now, will you wait for the kid, look out for him, you know, and—"

"Really, Wharton, I'm afraid I shall be too busy this afternoon to look after kids," said Bunter, with dignity.

"And take him to the tuckshop—"

"Eh?" said Bunter, showing a keener interest in the matter.

"And stand him a feed—"

"Ah!"

"And then bring him down to watch the footer."

"I should be very pleased to stand him a feed, Wharton, but I've been disappointed about a postal order, you know. I'm stony."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You young ass! Of course we're standing the tin."

"Now you're talking," said Bunter. "Of course, I shall be sincerely pleased to look after Nugent minor. Nugent's a chap I like, though he never can understand that a chap with a healthy appetite requires enough grub to eat. I'll take charge of Nugent minor, with pleasure. Hand me over a sovereign, and—"

"I'll hand you half-a-crown."

"Oh, really, Wharton! It's no good being mean, you know. Besides, the kid will be feeling lonely, the first day he's at Greyfriars, and there's nothing like a good feed to cure that lonely feeling. Better make it a sovereign."

"Do you think I'm made of money, you young duffer? Half-a-crown will stand a very good feed for two, and if you don't like to take it on, I'll look for somebody else."

"Of course, I shall be glad to oblige you, Wharton."

"Well, here's the half-crown," said Wharton, tossing the coin to Billy Bunter. "Mind, you're to wait for Nugent minor, and not blue the tin till he comes."

Bunter blinked at him indignantly.

"If you think I'm not to be trusted with half-a-crown, Wharton—"

"Well, do as I tell you. Hallo, here's Frank!"

Nugent came out of the house. He tapped Bunter on the shoulder.

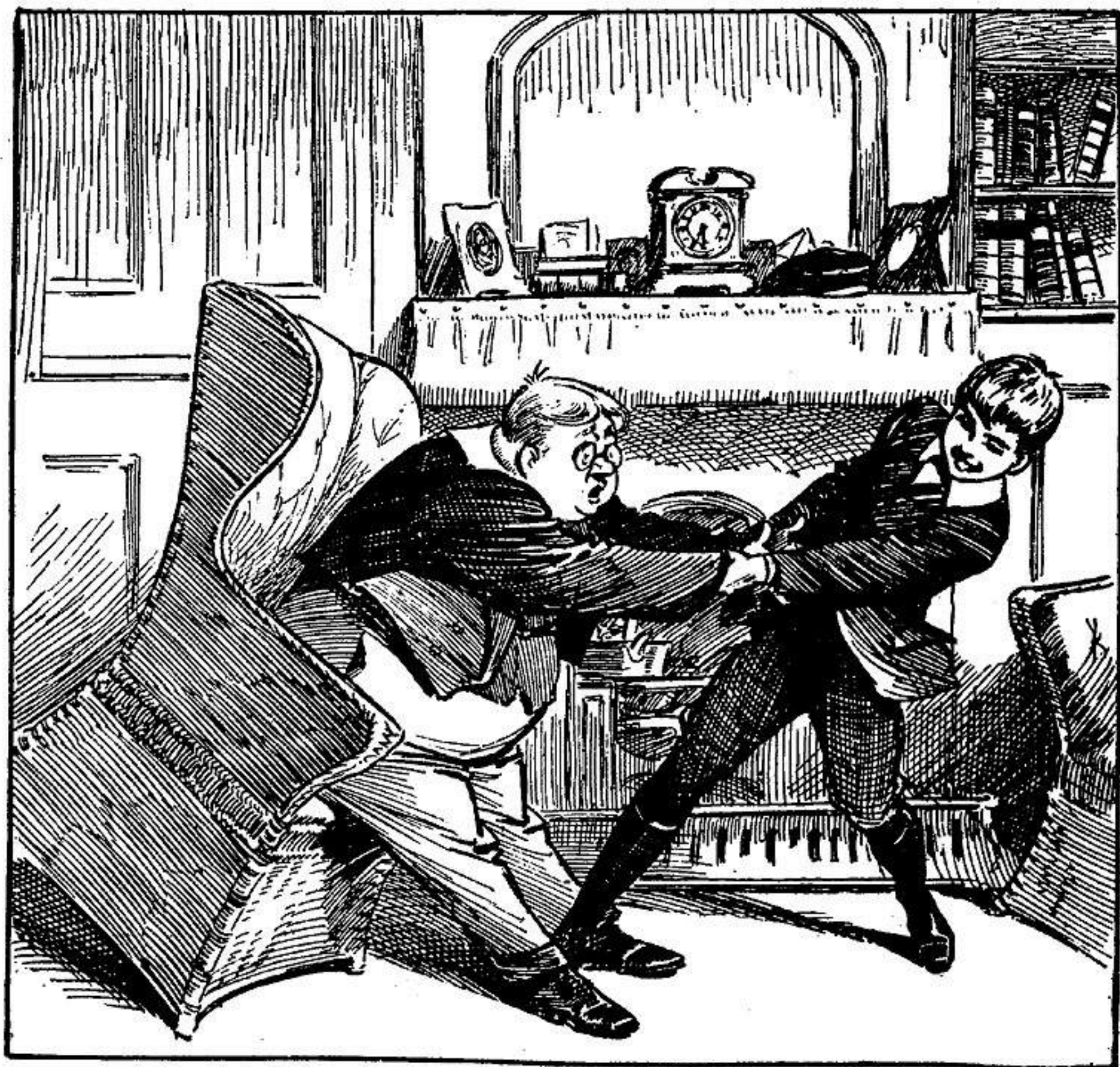
"Mind you don't miss my minor," he said. "He's a chap just like me in looks, only younger—nearly thirteen. He'll be going into the Second Form here. Wait about the gate, and you're bound not to miss him."

"All right."

"And mind you don't blue the cash without him."

"Oh, really, Nugent!"

"If you do, I'll give you the licking of your life—remember that," said Nugent impressively; and he walked on with Wharton and Hurree Singh, leaving the fat junior blinking indignantly.



"Go on, Nugent, pull!" gasped Billy Bunter; "I'm stuck to the chair!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bulstrode Is Left Out.

"WHARTON!"

Bulstrode, of the Remove, came up as Harry reached the football ground. There was a hard and dogged expression upon Bulstrode's face, and a glance was sufficient to warn Harry that the bully of the Remove was looking for trouble.

Harry faced him quietly.

"Well?" he said.

"You're not playing me to-day?"

"The list of players was posted up this morning," said Harry. "I'm not playing you."

"Why not?"

"Because there are better players in the Form," said Harry quietly.

The young captain of the Remove was not given to mincing his words.

Bulstrode gritted his teeth.

"Better players!" he said, with a sneer. "Mark Linley, I suppose—a factory hand. He's a better player, is he—that scholarship fellow?"

"Much better."

THE MAGNET.—No. 100.

NEXT
TUESDAY:

"And that worm Hazeldene?"

Wharton was silent.

"Hazeldene's better, eh?" said Bulstrode savagely. "A fellow that dare not stand up to a charge. You know he's nothing like my form. I know jolly well why you're playing him instead of me, too!"

"I may as well be plain about it, Bulstrode," said Harry. "You can play better footer than Hazeldene—when you like. But Hazel is a trier all the time, and you're not. If you think you're neglected in the field, and don't get chances enough, you play carelessly, and let the game go. I've noticed it lots of times."

"And so have I," said Nugent. "You practically gave a game away to Friardale Rovers last week, Bulstrode, and you can't deny it."

Bulstrode flushed darkly.

"Wharton and Cherry were keeping the ball, and never gave me a chance!" he exclaimed. "What was the good of my slogging away when I never got a chance at the leather?"

"That's just it," said Harry. "You fancy you're being passed over unless you get the ball all the time. You're never content unless you're playing to the gallery. A player's business is to back up his team all the time, and

"THE DANDIES OF THE REMOVE."

BY
FRANK RICHARDS.

not to think of himself. Hazel does that, though his form isn't as good as yours, and he's worth more in the team in consequence."

"Then I'm out—for good?"

"I don't say that. I'll give you another chance later, but not in a Form match. If you got an attack of the sulks, and threw the game away, the Upper Fourth would be crowing over a victory."

"Well, I suppose it wouldn't be much good my playing, as you fellows are in a conspiracy to keep me in the shade all the time!" said Bulstrode furiously.

"If that's how you look at it, can you possibly expect me to put you in the team? You're as good as asking me to let you in to wreck the match."

"Oh, you can't take me in!" said Bulstrode. "Do you think I don't know why you're playing Hazeldene? It's not because he's any good."

Wharton's eyes glittered.

"Then why is it?"

"It's because of his sister Marjorie," said Bulstrode savagely. "Because—"

"That's enough, Bulstrode!"

Harry Wharton walked on to the field. He did not want a row with Bulstrode; but it was as much as he could do to keep his hands off the bully of the Remove.

Bulstrode glared after him, with a savage scowl.

Before Harry Wharton came to Greyfriars Bulstrode had been captain of the Remove; and his fall always rankled in his breast—sometimes more, sometimes less. But now the smart was keener than ever. His uncertain temper made it impossible to play him in a match of any importance; but Bulstrode was far from recognising that fact.

"By George," he muttered, "I'll make them sorry for shoving me out like this somehow! The cads! They all follow Wharton now; they used to follow me. They think more of that factory fellow than they do of me now. By George!"

"I expect they'll get licked, Bulstrode," said Snoop, the sneak of the Form. "I'm pretty certain they'll get licked. Temple, Dabney & Co. are out for scalps."

Bulstrode scowled at him.

"Who wants them to be licked?"

"Why, I—I thought—"

"Well, you're a worm!" growled Bulstrode. "I want the Form to win, of course. But you know jolly well I ought to be playing."

"Of course you ought," agreed Snoop—who knew very well that Bulstrode oughtn't. "Wharton knows that very well, and so does Nugent."

"I'll make them both sit up for it somehow!" said Bulstrode.

He stood gloomily by the ropes, looking upon the level space of the football-field.

The two teams were turning out there, the Remove in red shirts, and the Upper Fourth in blue. Both teams looked very fit. The Upper Fourth, of course, were an older team, and on the whole larger and heavier; but the Remove were hard as iron, and in splendid form from incessant playing.

Mark Linley, Bob Cherry, Nugent, Tom Brown, of New Zealand, Harry Wharton, and Hurree Singh made a half-dozen it would have been hard to beat. Then there were Hazeldene, Micky Desmond, Ogilvy, Morgan, and Treluce.

Harry Wharton glanced over his eleven with a pride that was quite justified.

Blundell, of the Fifth, a big, good-natured fellow, was refereeing the match. The whistle went, and the Upper Fourth kicked off.

The football match started with plenty of "go."

Bulstrode stood watching it for some time, his heart with the players, and a scowl on his face. He longed to be playing, and his eyes hardly left the ball. Then presently he turned away.

Snoop, who was still beside him, yawned.

"Gets a bore, doesn't it?"

"No!" grunted Bulstrode.

"Well, it's not much good watching a game you can't play in," said Skinner. "Who's coming for a trot in the woods?"

"I'm not!" said Bulstrode.

"Nice cheerful chap you are this afternoon!" said Skinner.

"Oh, rats!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, clear out, Bunter!"

"Yes, but I say, you know—"

Billy Bunter blinked doubtfully at Bulstrode, keeping out of the reach of his arm.

"I—I say—it's important."

THE MAGNET.—No. 100.

NEXT
TUESDAY:

USUAL SIZE AND USUAL PRICE:

ONE
HALFPENNY.

"Oh, buzz off! I've no money to lend you—"

"You see, Nugent is—is going to give me a licking—"

"Serve you right, I dare say!"

"I think you ought to stand by me, Bulstrode," said Billy Bunter. "You know, you used to be captain of the Remove. You ought to—to put down bullying, you know."

Skinner burst into a laugh. The idea of Bulstrode putting down bullying struck him as funny. But a new gleam was in Bulstrode's eyes.

For Bunter and his woes he did not care a rap; but if he could use him as a weapon against the chums of No. 1 Study, Bunter would be useful.

"What's the row, Bunter?" he asked more amiably.

"You see, Nugent minor's coming this afternoon—"

Bulstrode started.

"Nugent minor? Never heard of him!"

"Frank Nugent's young brother, you know. They left me to wait for him, and—and take him to the tuckshop; and advanced a half-crown to stand him a feed—"

Bulstrode burst into a laugh.

"Ha, ha, ha! I can guess what has become of the half-crown!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"You've blued it; and you want me to lend you another to make it up," said the bully of the Remove contemptuously. "Well, you can ask somebody else!"

"But—but, I say—"

"I've got nothing to give away!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode, I hope you don't think that I'm the sort of chap who would take money gifts from anyone, even if they were offered. I don't want you to give me half-a-crown, of course. I hope I've got sufficient pride to refuse it even if you offered it."

Bulstrode looked puzzled.

"What on earth do you want, then?"

"I want you to lend me half-a-crown," said Bunter, with a dignified accent on the word "lend." "I'm expecting a postal-order to-night—"

"Same old postal-order?" asked Skinner sarcastically.

"No; another one," said Bunter obtusely. "I've been disappointed about several of them lately; but this is a dead cert to-night, you know. I was thinking you might lend me half-a-crown off it, or else give me the five shillings—it will be for five shillings—and then take the postal-order when it comes. That will be simply cashing it in advance."

"Sure to come to-night, of course?" said Snoop.

"Well, there might be a little delay—but to-morrow morning, at latest."

"Oh, all right!" said Bulstrode.

Bunter's eyes glistened.

"You'll cash it?"

"Certainly!"

"Good! Hand it over—"

"Oh, I didn't say when!"

"Eh?"

"It's certain to come to-morrow morning at latest?"

"Yes, certain!"

"By the eight o'clock delivery, I suppose?"

"Exactly!"

"Then you're sure to have it by—say, a quarter-past eight?"

"Absolutely!"

"Good! Bring it to me at a quarter-past eight to-morrow morning, then, and I'll give you the tin."

Skinner and Snoop chuckled, and Bunter blinked at the Remove bully in dismay.

"But I want the money now, Bulstrode, to treat young Nugent when he comes."

"Rats!"

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"Look here, I'll pay you a shilling interest on the loan—"

"Shut up!"

"Eighteenpence——"

"Get out!"

"I—I must have the money, you know!" said Bunter, pulling at Bulstrode's sleeve, as the burly Removeite turned to watch the game again. "Nugent will lick me——"

"Serve you jolly well right!"

"Well, I think you ought to interfere, you know."

"Rubbish!"

"You see, it's rather important about meeting Nugent minor, as Nugent is playing footer, and I——"

Bulstrode started, and a new gleam came into his eyes.

"By George! What sort of a kid is Nugent minor?"

"I don't know—I haven't seen him."

"Look here!" said Bulstrode. "If he comes before the game is over, bring him to me—or, rather, come and tell me, and I'll look after him."

"You'll stand him a feed?"

"Yes!"

Bunter looked relieved.

"Good! If you feed him, I don't see that Nugent can complain. I'll wait for him, and come and tell you at once."

And Bunter, much relieved in his mind, sauntered away.

Bulstrode broke into a chuckle. Both Skinner and Snoop looked at him curiously.

"Blessed if I see the joke!" said Snoop.

"You will later," said Bulstrode. "I'll make those rotters sorry they left me out of the match before I'm done with them—and Nugent minor!"

"Phew! Nugent minor!"

Bulstrode grinned.

"Yes, rather! A kid coming strange to the school, you know—he needs looking after. I'm going to look after him. Perhaps Nugent will wish I had played footer instead!"

"Oh, hang!" said Skinner. "You're not going to begin ragging a new kid—a Second or Third Form fag, Bulstrode?"

Bulstrode gave him a savage look.

"Are you going to stop me?" he demanded.

Skinner made a hasty step back.

"Oh, no, I sha'n't interfere! But——"

"Who said I was going to bully him?"

"Oh, I thought——"

"Well, I'm not. I sha'n't touch him. I'm going to look after him, that's all."

"Oh, I see! It's a jape."

"That's it!" Bulstrode snapped his teeth. "A jape—and about the best jape we could work off on that set of plaster saints in No. 1 Study. You'll see!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Nugent Minor Arrives at Greyfriars.

"THAT must be Nugent minor!"

It was Billy Bunter who uttered the words. He was standing at the gates of Greyfriars, looking out into the road, and slowly munching milk-chocolate—the remnant of the feed he had spent the half-crown upon.

A boy was coming up the road; but the short-sighted junior did not see him until he was quite close at hand.

Then even the Owl of the Remove could not fail to recognise the likeness to Frank Nugent.

The lad was a couple of years or so younger than Nugent, and he had the same handsome face, the same blue eyes; but the face was both weaker and more wilful in expression. A stranger could have seen at a glance that the boy was the spoiled child of a fond mother, and that he was accustomed to having his own way, and very petulant when he did not get it.

He looked a little tired, doubtless owing to the walk from the village after a long railway journey, as he halted at the gates of Greyfriars.

"I say, is this Greyfriars?" he asked, speaking to Bunter, in a voice that was very like Frank Nugent's, but softer and more musical.

Bunter blinked at him in a friendly way.

"Yes!" he said. "I suppose you're Nugent minor?"

"I'm Dick Nugent."

"Nugent's young brother. Good! I was looking for you."

The new boy looked at Bunter. He did not seem particularly impressed by the Owl of the Remove.

"Oh!" he said.

"Yes, rather! Nugent asked me to. I'm Nugent's chum, you know."

"Oh!"

"We're great friends," said Bunter—"in the same study, you know."

"Oh! Where's my brother?"

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HALFPENNY.

"He's playing footer, and he asked me to meet you, as he had something else to do."

A flash came into Dick Nugent's eyes. Bunter's way of putting it was certainly rather unfortunate.

"I thought somebody would be at the station," said Dick.

"Yes. I dare say it was too much trouble for Nugent to come," said Bunter agreeably. "I would have come if I'd known your train. Have you walked?"

"Yes."

"Where's your box?"

"They're going to send it on."

"Oh!" Bunter's interest in the box ceased. There might, or might not be eatables in it, but in any case the box was out of reach for the present. "I suppose you're tired?"

"Yes."

"And hungry?"

"Yes," said Dick Nugent sullenly.

"Good! I mean, a friend of mine wants to stand you a feed, you see. By the way—ahem—I can be frank under the circumstances—I've been disappointed about a postal-order, or I should jump at standing you a feed myself."

"I don't want a feed."

"Ahem! Well, I'm a bit short of cash, but I've got a postal-order coming by the first post in the morning. Could you lend me a few bob off it?"

"No."

"Oh, really——"

"I'd better see my brother. Where's the footer field?"

"Come this way," said Bunter.

Dick Nugent gave him a dubious glance, and then followed him into the Close. Bunter led the way to the tuckshop, and Dick followed him in. He looked about him in surprise.

"I want to see my brother!" he exclaimed.

"All right. You sit down here and have a lemon-squash, and I'll tell him."

"Oh, all right!"

Dick Nugent sat down on one of the little chairs, and Mrs. Mimble provided the lemon squash, and Billy Bunter hurried away.

A minute later he was pulling at Bulstrode's sleeve. The second half of the football match had long commenced, and Bulstrode was watching it keenly.

He glanced down irritably at Bunter.

"Let me alone, confound you!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode! You told me——"

Bulstrode's expression changed.

"Has young Nugent come?"

"Yes."

"Oh! Where is he?"

"In the tuckshop."

"Good! Come on, Snoopey."

And Bulstrode and Snoop walked away from the football-field. Bunter hurried after them, his little, fat legs going like clockwork to keep pace with Bulstrode's stride.

"I say, you fellows——"

"You buzz off!" said Bulstrode angrily. "You're not wanted!"

"Oh, really——"

"Get out!"

"Under the circumstances, Bulstrode, I shall refuse to come to the tuckshop with you," said Bunter, with dignity.

Bulstrode grunted, and strode on with Snoop. They reached Mrs. Mimble's little shop, and found the new junior finishing his lemon squash.

Dick Nugent looked up eagerly as they came in.

He was feeling a natural sense of loneliness on his first day at the big school, and the very number of the boys he saw in all directions only made him feel more solitary himself. He was anxious to see his brother, and he was disappointed when he saw that the newcomers were strangers.

But Bulstrode came up to him at once with a friendly air. Snoop did not exactly know what Bulstrode's game was, but he was willing to follow the bully's lead in everything. That the Remove bully meant to be really kind to the new boy was impossible, and Snoop would have smiled at the idea.

"Hallo! You're young Nugent, I suppose?" said Bulstrode genially.

"Yes," said Dick.

"Your brother's busy—playing footer," said Bulstrode.

"I'm going to look after you a bit. Of course, you can't expect a chap in the Remove to cut a footer match because he's got a minor coming to the school."

Nugent minor's eyes gleamed resentfully.

"I think he might have spared me a minute," he said.

"Oh, I'm going to look after you!"

"Are you a friend of my brother's?"

Bulstrode chuckled.

"Yes, rather! We're awfully close chums—ain't we, Snoop?"

"What-ho!" said Snoop.

"You come along with me, young 'un," said Bulstrode, slipping his arm through Dicky Nugent's. "I'll show you round a bit. I dare say you're tired?"

"Yes, a little."

"Then come up to my study, and we'll have tea and a jaw—and something else. Smoke?"

Nugent minor looked at him in surprise.

"Smoke! No."

"Oh, I see! You're a ninny, eh?"

"No, I'm not. My father said I mustn't smoke here. He said boys got into rows for it at Greyfriars."

"So they do, if they tell the masters," grinned Bulstrode; "but we keep mum, you see. Bless your soul, Carberry, the prefect, smokes himself in his study, and makes the fags fetch him cigarettes from Friardale."

Dick's eyes opened wide.

"Does he really?"

"Yes, rather! Come along, and don't be a chump."

Nugent minor accompanied Bulstrode from the shop. As they crossed the Close towards the School House, Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, met them. He stopped.

"A new boy, Bulstrode?"

"Yes, sir," said Bulstrode, very civilly. "It's Nugent's young brother, sir. I'm looking after him a bit, as Nugent's playing footer this afternoon."

"Very good," said Mr. Quelch. "That is very kind of you, Bulstrode." And he passed on.

Bulstrode exchanged a wink with Snoop, and they went into the School House. In a couple of minutes they were in Bulstrode's study, and the Remove bully closed the door. Bulstrode shared that study with Hazeldene and Tom Brown of New Zealand, and as both of them were playing in the Form match, there was no danger of interruption.

"Now, then, Snoop, get tea!" said Bulstrode.

"Right you are," said Snoop.

The door opened, and a pair of spectacles glimmered in.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get out!" roared Bulstrode.

"But—but I say, Bulstrode, if you're going to have a feed, you'll want me to help, you know! I'll do the cooking—"

"Rats!"

"And light the fire. I like lighting fires."

Bulstrode hesitated a moment.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "You can make yourself useful for your grub, if you like."

"Oh, really, Bulstrode! That's not a nice way of putting it, you know."

"Oh, shut up!"

"It's only your little joke, I know—"

"Will you light that fire?"

"Oh, certainly, with pleasure!" And the Owl of the Remove set to work.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Dangerous Acquaintance.

NUGENT minor sat in Bulstrode's armchair, with a decidedly discontented expression upon his face.

He was receiving an amount of attention unheard of in the case of any boy coming into the Second Form at Greyfriars—a Form considered as infants by the Remove, and with whom the Remove as a rule had nothing to do.

He did not suspect, so far, that Bulstrode had any ulterior purpose to serve—he was not likely to suspect that yet.

But the unusual attention he was receiving made no impression upon him. He was new to public schools, and did not fully understand what it meant to be chummed up with like this on his first day by fellows in a higher Form. And he was so accustomed to being made much of wherever he went, that he would have taken it all for granted in any case.

His manner implied so plainly, as he looked round the study, that he expected to be looked after and waited on, that Bulstrode hardly had the patience to go through with the little game he was playing. He was greatly inclined to box the new junior's ears and kick him out into the passage to shift for himself. He would have done so, too, but for the knowledge that his original plan would cause more discomfort in Study No. 1. He could not strike a harder blow at Harry Wharton & Co. than by leading Nugent minor into his own ways and manners. For that reason, there was an agreeable smile on his face whenever he looked at the new boy.

"You can see the footer field from the window here," he remarked. "Like to look? I'll point your brother out to you."

Dick Nugent rose, and crossed to the window.

It was an inspiring sight, the active figures on the football-field in stern struggle for the mastery, amid a cheering crowd.

But it only brought a dark look to Dick Nugent's face.

"There's your brother, kid—he's on the ball now."

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"Yes, I can see him."

"He seems to be having a good time, eh? He's great at footer!"

"Mother said he would meet me this afternoon, and look after me my first day here," said the boy, his lower lip quivering a little.

Bulstrode laughed.

"Oh, he's too busy, you know!"

"He oughtn't to be too busy," said Dick passionately; "and I'll jolly well tell him so when I see him!"

"Well, you're a kid with spirit, anyway!" said Bulstrode.

"But I suppose you'll be pretty well under the thumb of your major."

Nugent minor's eyes flashed.

"You will see that I'm not."

"Good for you!" said Bulstrode. "Tea will be ready in a few minutes now. Have a cigarette while you're waiting!"

Dick Nugent hesitated for a moment.

"Of course, if you're afraid of what your major will say, don't do it," said Bulstrode. "I don't want to get you into a row with your brother."

Dick bit his lip.

"My brother's got nothing to do with it—he's not my master. I'll have the smoke with pleasure."

"Here you are, then."

Bulstrode unlocked his desk and took out a cigarette-case. He opened it, and displayed a row of cigarettes, and selected one himself.

"Smoke, Snoopsey?"

"Thanks, I will!"

Snoop selected a cigarette, and lighted up with Bulstrode. Dick Nugent followed his example.

"Smoke, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter blinked round from the fire.

"Er—no, thanks, Bulstrode."

"Oh, don't be a spooney!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode, it isn't that, you know! But, you see, I don't want to do anything to spoil my appetite, you know," Billy Bunter hastened to explain. "Smoking spoils the appetite, and I want to keep mine all right on an occasion like this."

"Oh, get on with the cooking, porpoise!"

A smell of poaching eggs mingled with the odour of tobacco. To the nostrils of the boys, it was by far the pleasanter smell of the two; but they would not have confessed to that for worlds.

"Like the smokes?" asked Bulstrode.

"Ripping!" said Snoop.

"Oh, jolly good!" said Nugent minor, puffing away. "Spiffing!"

"Hallo, the game's over!" said Snoop, glancing out of the window a little later. "The Remove are yelling like mad, so I suppose Wharton's lot have won."

"I don't care much."

"Nor I. Pass the cigarettes."

"Here you are. How long is that grub going to be, Bunter?"

"Five minutes longer. Bulstrode," said the fat junior, turning a red and perspiring face from the fire. "The eggs are getting on a treat. Did you say you would like me to cut down to the tuckshop and get some jam tarts?"

"No, I didn't!"

"Or some more cake? The seed cake's all right, but it occurred to me that Nugent minor might like some sultana cake. Mrs. Mimble has a new sultana cake going to-day, and I shouldn't mind the trouble of going to the tuckshop at all. I'd do more than that for a fellow I like."

"Shut up, then!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"Scat!"

"I say, you fellows, there isn't much jam in the jar—"

"Do you want a thick ear, Bunter?"

"Eh? Certainly not!"

"Then get on with the cooking, and hold your jaw!"

Bulstrode had his eyes on the door now. Now that the football-match was over, he expected Nugent to look for his minor, and as many had seen the new boy with Bulstrode, he would not be long in getting directed to Bulstrode's study.

At any moment, in fact, he might enter the study, and Bulstrode was quite ready for him.

The Remove bully particularly wished Nugent minor to be smoking when Frank came, and he tried to get the junior to accept another cigarette. But Dick declined.

"One's enough," he remarked, throwing the stump of the first one into the grate.

ANSWERS

"Don't you like them?"

"Yes; but—"

"I've another brand here."

"Oh, no, they're all right; but—"

"Buck up, you know. Your brother won't know."

Dick bit his lip.

"I don't care if he does!" he said hotly. "You seem to think that Frank is going to keep me in leading-strings!"

"He will, if you don't stand up for your rights."

"You'll see!"

"Try one of this kind."

Nugent minor shook his head. As a matter of fact, the cigarette had made him feel a little uncomfortable inwardly, and the fumes in the study made his head ache. He would not have confessed as much for anything; but he firmly declined to smoke further. The Remove bully had to give in.

"Tea's ready!" announced Billy Bunter.

"All right!"

Tap!

It was a knock at the door.

"Come in!" said Bulstrode, with a grin.

The door opened, and Frank Nugent entered. He sniffed a little quickly as he caught the odour of tobacco, and looked round.

"Russell says he saw my young brother come here," he said. "Oh, here you are, Dicky! I'm glad to see you at Greyfriars."

"So glad that you left it to somebody else to meet him," sneered Bulstrode.

Nugent coloured.

"That's not your business, Bulstrode. Come on, Dicky. I was playing footer. I asked Bunter to explain to you. It was an important match—"

"Oh, it's all right!" said Nugent minor. "I'm comfy enough."

"You're coming with me?"

"Nugent minor's going to have tea with me," said Bulstrode.

And Dick Nugent nodded.

"I'm going to have tea here," he said.

Nugent looked perplexed.

"I want you to meet my friends," he said. "We were going to get up a bit of a feed in our study to celebrate your coming."

"We're doing that," said Bulstrode.

Nugent turned upon him hotly.

"Hang you, Bulstrode! What's your little game?"

"I haven't any little game," said the Remove bully airily. "I saw the chap come in, and I thought his major might have looked after him a bit—"

"You know I had to play!"

"Lots of fellows would have taken your place."

"I sha'n't argue that with you, Bulstrode. There's one thing I know jolly well, and that is that you don't mean my minor any good."

Bulstrode shrugged his shoulders.

"If your minor likes to be ordered out of the study by you, I don't care," he said. "But if he's got the spirit of a mouse he'll stay."

"I'm going to stay!" said Nugent minor.

"Dick, old chap, I want you to come," said Nugent.

"Why can't you leave me alone?" said Dick irritably. "I'm all right here, I suppose. They are standing me a feed, and I'm hungry!"

"We've got a feed going on in No. 1."

"Well, I've promised."

Nugent stood perplexed. He fully understood Bulstrode's motives in chumming up with a Second Form fag like this, but he felt it was useless to attempt to explain to his minor. At a hint that he was being taken care of, Nugent minor would have flamed up at once.

"I wish you'd come, Dick."

"He won't come!" said Bulstrode. "You can go back to Wharton. If you couldn't cut a footer match for your minor, you can't expect him to cut his friends for you."

"I'm not speaking to you!"

"Well, this is my study, and I suppose I can say what I like in it!" said Bulstrode. "Serve up that grub, Bunter!"

"I'm serving it up, Bulstrode. These eggs are done to a turn—"

"So you're feeding here, too!" exclaimed Nugent scornfully.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Nugent! I suppose you don't expect me to refuse when a chap offers to stand me a feed?"

"Hardly!"

"I never really get enough to eat, and you fellows keep me awfully short. I've got a delicate constitution, and I have to keep it up with plenty of good grub. I'm not likely to refuse Bulstrode's invite. You chaps can get your own tea."

"And leave us to have ours," drawled Bulstrode. "I'm looking after Nugent minor at present. You can't force him

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to leave my study if he doesn't want to. He's not the kind of kid to be bullied, I take it."

Dick Nugent's eyes flashed.

"I won't go," he said. "Look here, Frank, you've left me alone long enough—you can keep it up a bit longer!"

"I couldn't get away, Dick."

Dick's lip curled.

"You couldn't, or you wouldn't," he said. "I don't care! I didn't want you to. I only want to be left alone. Bulstrode has been very decent to me, anyway."

"He doesn't mean you well. This—"

"Oh, rats!"

Frank's eyes gleamed for a moment.

"Look here, kid, you'd better come with me!" he exclaimed. "These fellows have been smoking here, and that's against the rules of the coll."

"I've been smoking myself," said Nugent minor coolly.

His major gave a start.

"You've been smoking!"

"Yea. Why shouldn't I?"

"You did this, Bulstrode, you cad!" exclaimed Frank, turning furiously on the bully of the Remove.

Bulstrode shrugged his shoulders.

"Are you the kid's nurse?" he asked.

"Tea's ready!" said Billy Bunter.

Dick Nugent pulled his chair up to the table. Bunter had lighted the gas, and the tea-table looked very cheerful, the whole study bright and cosy in the firelight. Nugent stood in the doorway with gloomy face.

"Are you coming, Dick?" he said at last.

Dick shook his head irritably.

"No; I'm not!"

Nugent said no more. He shut the door and walked away, his brows wrinkled gloomily, and his hands thrust deep and hard into his pockets.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Sticks to his Own Study.

"**A**NYTHING up?"

"What's wrong?"

"Wherefore the extreme worryfulness of the honourable Nugent's esteemed brow?"

The three questions were fired at Frank Nugent as he came into No. 1 Study in the Remove passage.

There was a decidedly worried look upon Frank Nugent's face and his three chums looked at him in some surprise. He had left them in good spirits enough ten minutes before.

"Found your minor?" asked Wharton.

Nugent nodded.

"He's all right, I suppose?"

"No."

"Phew! What's the trouble?"

"I don't know that there's anything to bother about," said Nugent slowly. "But—well, young Dick's chummed up with Bulstrode."

"Bulstrode!"

"Yes; and he's having tea in his study now. They've been smoking, too."

Harry Wharton frowned.

"What is Bulstrode's little game, then?" he exclaimed.

"What does he mean by chumming up with a Second Form fag? He was far more likely to bully him."

Nugent smiled bitterly.

"Oh, it's one up against us, of course!"

"But why not speak to him, and tell him to come here?" asked Bob Cherry, who had come into No. 1 to tea, and to make the acquaintance of Nugent minor. "I suppose your minor will do as you tell him, or take your advice, anyway."

Nugent shook his head.

"He won't."

"Have you asked him?"

"Yes."

"And he won't come?"

"That's it."

Bob Cherry whistled.

"If I had a minor who wouldn't go, do you think I'd wallop him—yes, what-ho!" he murmured, in parody of an old song.

"The wallopfulness should be terrific!"

"No good," said Nugent. "Dicky expected me to be waiting round for him—and I didn't even know what train he was coming by. I might have cut the footer match for nothing. I wish I had cut it now."

"Nonsense!" said Wharton quickly. "You're wrong; you couldn't cut it. Your minor ought to understand; if he won't understand, make him!"

"I can't start his career at Greyfriars with a licking on the first afternoon, I suppose," said Nugent. "Besides, you

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By
FRANK RICHARDS.

don't know Dicky. He's a spoiled kid. He's always been looked after and made much of. He expects the same here."

"He'll be disappointed, then."

"Yes; but Bulstrode is fooling him, and making much of him, just as he expected; you see, and filling his silly head up with false ideas. I'm afraid there was trouble in store for Dick, in any case; but with Bulstrode making a fool of him, he's bound to run up against rocks. Well, I suppose it can't be helped; I've done all I can."

"Let's have tea!" said Bob Cherry, as the only practical suggestion to be made under the circumstances.

And Nugent grinned, and jammed the kettle on the fire.

It was not so cheery a tea as the juniors had intended it to be, although they had laid in an unusual supply of good things in honour of Nugent's minor.

Nugent was worried, and his chums sympathised with him; and then, there was the prospect of trouble ahead for Dick Nugent. From what they had heard of him, so far, the juniors could not help thinking that a few lickings would do him good; but they felt concerned on Frank's account. Frank Nugent was the kindest-hearted and best-natured boy at Greyfriars, and he felt a thing of this kind more keenly than any of the others would have done.

The chums of the Remove had almost finished tea when the door was cautiously opened, and a fat face and a pair of spectacles glimmered in.

"I say, you fellows—" began Billy Bunter, in an ingratiating voice.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Tubby!"

"You haven't finished tea, have you?" said Bunter. "I felt that I ought to come and have tea with you, you know."

"Oh, rats!"

"It's the fact, Bob Cherry. I'm sincerely sorry to see you doubting a chap's word like this. Look here, as Nugent made so much fuss about my having tea with Bulstrode, I decided to come—"

Nugent stared at him.

"Eh? I don't care where you have tea!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, really, Nugent, you seemed very annoyed about it—"

"Ass!"

"So I decided to come and have tea with you fellows," said Bunter, blinking at the chums. "I hope you've left something for me."

"Has Bulstrode finished tea?"

"Oh, yes!"

"And you decided to come and have tea with us as soon as there wasn't anything left to eat in Bulstrode's study?" suggested Bob Cherry sarcastically.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I think a chap should stand by his chums, you know. I thought you would be feeling lonely without me."

"You needn't have worried."

"Well, you see—"

"If that was your only reason for coming, you may as well get back!" remarked Nugent. "We don't feel at all lonely."

"Scat!"

Bunter did not "scat." He came into the study and closed the door.

"I believe in a chap sticking to his chums," he remarked, taking a seat at the table.

"Especially at meal times—eh?"

"I say, you fellows, I hope you haven't absolutely cleared the table," said Bunter blinking round discontentedly. "I might as well have stayed with Bulstrode."

"Quite as well."

"Are they jam-tarts your side of the table, Bob Cherry?"

"See!" said Bob. "Shall I pass them over?"

"Yes, please. Ow! Wow!"

Bob Cherry passed over the jam-tarts, deftly planting one on Bunter's nose and another on his chin.

"Any more?" he asked.

"Ow! Beast!"

"Well, you asked me to pass them!"

Bunter mopped the jam off his fat face.

"I think you're a beast, Cherry. I think Wharton ought to kick you out of the study, for treating one of his own study-mates like this!"

"My dear Bunt, if I kick anybody out of the study, it will be a certain fat porpoise!" said Wharton.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Well, I think I'll get along," said Bob Cherry, as Bunter started on ham and bread-and-butter. "I've paid in my time to see the animals fed at the Zoo, but it isn't a thing you want to see twice!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Bob Cherry crossed to the door. There he paused, and taking a tube of seccotine from the shelf, he squeezed out the whole of its contents upon the seat of the armchair.

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It was Bunter's habit to slide into that chair after a meal, and keep possession of it.

The chair had been purchased by a whip-round among the chums, excepting Bunter, so perhaps the fat junior thought it was a fair division for Harry Wharton & Co. to purchase the armchair and himself to use it. At all events, it never seemed to cross his mind that anybody else might like it.

Nugent grinned faintly as he saw Bob's action. It was too late to stop him, for the sake of the chair, so he said nothing.

Billy Bunter cleared off all that was left eatable on the table, and it was with a somewhat slow and heavy motion that he finally rose. He had travelled through a very good meal in Bulstrode's study before coming to No. 1.

"You haven't had enough!" said Wharton anxiously. "There's still the crockery, and then you might start on the tablecloth!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Or the coals, or the coke!"

"I don't see why you fellows should always be joking about my appetite," said Bunter. "I don't eat much, as a rule! I'm not greedy, but I like enough! I always think that enough's as good as a feast! I think I'll take a rest now!"

And he sank into the armchair.

The juniors grinned and quitted the study.

Billy Bunter soon dropped off to sleep; indeed, some of the Removites said that he always went into a comatose state like a boa-constrictor after a meal.

How long he slept he did not know, but he was awakened at last by the sound of a door opening. The study was in darkness. Bunter blinked at the faint, red glow of the dying fire, and tried to rise from the chair.

But he could not rise.

The seccotine had quite hardened by this time, and the seat of his nether garments was stuck fast to the seat of the chair.

In amazement in finding himself, as it were, held down by an unseen hand, Billy Bunter strove to tear himself away from his chair; but in vain—he could not rise, and his efforts only resulted in dragging the big chair off the rear castors for a moment. Then it crashed down again, and Bunter collapsed into it, gasping.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Row in Bulstrode's Study.

NUGENT minor smoked another cigarette after tea in Bulstrode's study, to the secret amusement of the Remove bully. He was just finishing when Hazeldene came in. Hazeldene and Tom Brown, the New Zealander, shared that study with Bulstrode. Hazeldene sniffed at the smoke, and grunted.

"What the dickens are you up to?" he exclaimed. "What do you mean by turning the study into a blessed tavern?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Bulstrode.

"Who's this kid?"

"That's Nugent minor."

Hazeldene stared at the new fag.

"Oh! I didn't know he had a minor. Pity the kid's major doesn't look after him better, then. He'll make himself sick."

"It isn't so long since you used to cadge cigarettes from me," said Bulstrode, with a sneer.

Hazeldene reddened.

"Perhaps so; but I don't do it now, and I object to this rotten smoke in my study! How can I do my prep. with my head in a fog like this?"

"Oh, don't ask me conundrums!"

"Brown will make a row when he comes in."

"Oh, bother Brown!"

At that moment the sturdy young New Zealand junior came in. He sniffed, or rather, snorted, as he scented the smoke.

"Hallo! Who's bothering me?" he asked cheerily. "And who's making this mess in the study? Really, Bulstrode, you ought to have more sense!"

"Mind your own business!"

"I think it is my business, when you're turning my study into a tap-room!" exclaimed the New Zealander indignantly. "If you want to play the giddy goat, go into one of the box-rooms, or sneak out into the tool-shed!"

"I'll smoke where I like!"

"What's this kid doing here?"

"He's my guest."

"Smoking, too?"

"Why shouldn't he?"

"It's Nugent's young brother," said Hazeldene. "Bulstrode is——"

"Mind your own business, Vaseline!"

"I was going to say——"

"Shut up!"

"Look here, Nugent minor," said Tom Brown seriously, "you're playing a mug's game! That will make you ill, and you'll get into a row if you're found out!"

"Shut up, Brown!"

"Rats, Bulstrode! Do you understand, kid? The prefects here are awfully down on kids smoking, and you'll be called up before the Head if you're caught."

"I don't care!" said Dick Nugent.

Brown stared.

"You'll jolly well care when you're up before the beaks," he said drily. "You'd better chuck that cigarette into the fire!"

"I won't!"

"You won't smoke in my study!" said Tom Brown quietly. "If a prefect came along at this minute we should all be in it, and all get into a row."

"My guest will do as he likes in my quarters!" said Bulstrode.

"They're not your quarters; they're mine, and Hazel's, too—and this silly young ass sha'n't smoke here!" said Tom Brown firmly. "Put that cigarette on the fire, Nugent minor!"

"Sha'n't!"

Tom Brown looked at him steadily. Tom was the very reverse of a bully; but such a reply from a new boy, a fag in the First or Second Form, to a Lower Fourth-Former, was not gratifying. Tom felt a strong inclination to box Nugent minor's ears right and left, and he only refrained for the sake of Nugent major. He was on good terms with Frank Nugent and all the chums of No. 1 Study.

"Will you do as I tell you, Nugent minor?"

"No!"

"Well, I shall take it away, then!"

"Let him alone!" said Bulstrode.

"He's not going to smoke in my study."

"He will do as he likes, and as I like."

"Throw that cigarette away, Nugent minor."

"Rats!"

Tom Brown did not waste any more time in words. He dropped his hand upon Nugent's shoulder. Bulstrode immediately grasped him by the arm and whirled him away.

For a moment the two juniors faced one another with blazing eyes.

Nugent minor rose to his feet. Snoop quietly stole out of the study. Hazeldene looked on, with his hands in his pockets.

"Let him alone," said Bulstrode.

"I tell you he sha'n't smoke here."

"And I say he shall."

"Then it's between us."

"As you like."

Tom Brown pushed back his cuffs.

"Come on, then!"

Nothing loth, Bulstrode "came on."

In a moment the two sturdy juniors were hammering away furiously, while Nugent minor and Hazeldene looked on.

Bulstrode reeled back from a sweeping right-hander, and muttered something between his teeth. He rushed savagely forward, received without heeding a couple of smart blows, and closed with the boy from Taranaki.

He fully expected to overbear the New Zealander by superior strength, but in this he did not succeed. Tom Brown was slighter than Bulstrode, but he was more active, and he seemed to be made of iron.

He gripped his arms round the bully of the Remove, and they staggered to and fro in straining effort, but the New Zealander did not go down.

Gasping and panting, they reeled to and fro in the study.

"Go it!" said Hazeldene. "Two to one on Frozen Mutton!"

Tramp—tramp—tramp!

The two juniors had now forgotten everything but the contest, and they struggled on with flushed faces and flashing eyes, heedless of the noise they were making, and of the fact that there was a senior's study below their tramping feet.

It was Bulstrode who reeled back the first, under the grip of the New Zealander. He struggled furiously to recover his ground, and hurled Tom Brown back against the table.

There was a terrific crash.

The table went flying, and the load of crockery crashed on the floor, smashing right and left.

"My hat!" ejaculated Hazeldene.

Tramp—tramp—tramp!

Tom Brown's boots tramped in the fallen crockery.

There was a sound of hurried footsteps in the passage, and the door of the study was flung furiously open. Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, burst into the room, with an angry face.

"You young sweeps!" he roared. "What's the meaning of this row?"

He stared in amazement at the broken crockery and the overturned table. Then, seizing the two juniors in his strong hands, he wrenched them apart.

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NEXT TUESDAY, The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE HALFPENNY.

He hurled Tom Brown upon one side and Bulstrode upon the other. The Remove bully went spinning against the wall.

"Now, what does this mean?" said Wingate grimly.

Tom Brown gasped.

"It's all right——"

"All right, is it? By Jove, it won't be all right for you!"

"I—I mean we were only fighting."

"Only!" said Wingate, grinning in spite of himself. "Is that really all? You weren't making enough noise to waken the Seven Sleepers as well, I suppose?" He broke off, as he sniffed the smoke in the air. "Who's been smoking?"

There was no reply.

Wingate looked round angrily. Besides being an infraction of a severe rule of the school, smoking was annoying to the captain of Greyfriars, because he could see the ridiculous side of boys aping the manners of grown-up men. His brow contracted darkly as he caught sight of the half-smoked cigarette in the fingers of Nugent minor.

"You! Who are you?" he exclaimed.

"I'm Dick Nugent."

"Oh! Nugent minor? And you're smoking, eh?"

Nugent minor was silent.

"Throw that cigarette into the fire."

It was on the tip of Dick's tongue to refuse, but something in Wingate's manner made him obey in spite of himself. The offending cigarette fizzed in the fire.

"You're a new boy here, and perhaps you don't know the ropes," said Wingate sternly. "I'll let you off this time. If you are caught smoking again I'll give you the licking of your life, so remember. What do you Lower Fourth fellows mean by allowing a fag to smoke in your study?"

The Removites were silent. Bulstrode was not likely to state that he alone was to blame, and the others did not care to throw all the blame upon him, though it would have been only the truth.

"You'll take a hundred lines each," said Wingate, "and I shall keep an eye on this study. You'll show the lines up before bedtime to-night."

The juniors exchanged lugubrious glances.

"You get out, Nugent minor. You'd better go and find your brother, and get him to explain to you some of the customs here, or you'll soon be in hot water," said Wingate.

And he quitted the study.

Bulstrode burst into a laugh.

"Well, you've got off best, young Nugent," he remarked.

"You'd better go. That chap is Wingate, the captain of the school, and he's not to be argued with."

And Dick Nugent nodded, and went.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Rough on Bunter.

NUGENT MINOR paused in the corridor after leaving Bulstrode's study. He was feeling a little dismayed and uneasy.

In the first place, the smoking had made him feel a little uncomfortable inside. Then he had been turned out of the study without a friend to lean upon. He was in a strange place, and Bulstrode apparently did not mean to trouble his head about him further. The boy felt despondent, and he would gladly have seen his brother at that moment, but he did not know where to look for Nugent major.

He glanced up and down the passage in search of someone who could direct him. A junior was coming down from No. 13 Study, at the end, and he was a junior of such a peculiar appearance that Dick Nugent looked at him with great interest. His curious complexion, his pigtail, and his clothes showed that he was a native of the Flowery Land.

He looked at Nugent minor, and smiled a bland smile as he passed, and Dick was encouraged to speak to him.

"I say," he exclaimed, "you speak English, I suppose?"

The little Chinese stopped, and grinned.

"Me speakee lipping," he said.

"Blessed if I know what that means."

"Me Wun Lung."

"Wun Lung," said Nugent minor. "You don't mean to say that's your name?"

Wun Lung nodded.

"That my name, allee light. Velly good name in China."

"Do you know my major?"

"No savvy."

"His name's Nugent—Frank Nugent."

Wun Lung smiled intelligently.

"Me savvy. Frank Nugent—velly good chap. You blothel?"

"Yes, he's my major. Where's his study?"

Wun Lung pointed to the next to Bulstrode's.

"That studee," he said. "No. 1 Studee. You savvy?"

"Thanks!"

NEXT TUESDAY:

"THE DANDIES OF THE REMOVE."

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Wun Lung nodded, and went on his way, and Nugent minor knocked at the door of No. 1 Study. It was next door to Bulstrode's, and Dick wondered if the noise of the conflict had been heard by Frank and his friends through the wall. There was no answer to his tap, and he opened the door. All was dark within.

Nugent minor made an irritable movement. His brother was evidently absent from his room, but as the boy turned away he heard a noise in the study, which showed that someone was there.

It was a crash as of a chair falling down, and then a voice followed, in gasping tones.

"Ow—ow! I say, you fellows—"

Nugent minor stared into the gloom of the study. All the light he could see was a faint red glow from the dying fire in the grate.

"Hallo!" he said. "Who's there?"

"I—I say, you fellows— Oh! I—I don't know what's the matter! I can't get up—I'm stuck to the chair, or else my spine is fractured. Light the gas, will you?"

Nugent minor groped his way into the study. He felt in his pockets for a match, and scratched it on the wall and lighted the gas.

The light shone upon a most curious scene.

Billy Bunter was sprawling in the armchair, gasping like a newly-landed fish, and blinking in blank amazement through his big spectacles. Nugent minor stared at him.

"What on earth are you doing?" he exclaimed, recognising Bunter.

"I—I can't get up!"

"Why not?"

"I—I don't know!" gasped Bunter. "Something's wrong, somehow! Gimme a hand, will you, and tug hard, and perhaps I can get out?"

"Blessed if I can see why you can't get up!"

"Oh, lend me a hand, and don't jaw!" said Bunter.

He held out both his fat hands. Nugent minor grasped them, and gave a tremendous tug.

Billy Bunter gave a howl.

"Ow! Not so hard, fathead!"

"You told me to pull," grinned Dick Nugent.

"Ow!"

Bunter's feet were on the floor, and Nugent minor was dragging him forward. The armchair jerked off the floor again, hanging on to Bunter.

"Ow—ow—ow!"

There was a rending sound, and Bunter's garments parted, and the chair crashed on the floor.

"Oh! Oh, dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent minor. "You were stuck to the chair."

Bunter blinked round at the big fragment of cloth adhering to the seat of the armchair.

"Oh—oh, really, so I was. I—I don't know how it came about. I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!"

"Ha, ha, ha! You'd better go and change your things," chuckled Dick Nugent. "You'll find it rather draughty going about like that."

"Oh, dear! Somebody will have to pay for these trousers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter twisted round to get a view of the torn place. It was very extensive. The fat junior blinked indignantly at the chuckling fag.

"I say, Nugent minor, go and get me some other trucks from the dormitory."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll give you a licking if you don't stop that row!" roared Bunter. "You confoundedly cheeky fag!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter swung his hand round to box Dick Nugent's ears. Nugent minor easily knocked it aside, and quitted the study, still laughing almost hysterically.

"Here, I say, come back! Beast! How on earth am I to get to the dormitory to change?" gasped Bunter in dismay. "Hang it! I wonder who played that trick on me? I—I shall have to get changed. Anybody might come in."

He went to the door, and paused. Suppose he met Mrs. Kebble, or—horrors of horrors!—the Head's wife?

It would never do.

He looked round the study in the wild hope that a coat or a covering of some sort might have been left there, which he could don to hide that patch of tell-tale white.

But there was nothing—nothing but the tablecloth.

There was no help for it. Bunter took the tablecloth, and wrapped it round him, a good deal like a Red Indian wrapping himself in his blanket, and left the study.

He hoped to steal quietly up to the dormitory unobserved; but he had no such good fortune. The hysterical laughter

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of Nugent minor had attracted attention, and a dozen fellows were looking out of their studies.

The effect can be imagined when the fat junior came stalking along in the tablecloth, gracefully draped round his stout person.

One wild yell of laughter rang from end to end of the Remove passage.

Billy Bunter, very red and very indignant, stalked on, the end of the tablecloth trailing on the linoleum behind him.

Bob Cherry, Mark Linley and Wun Lung looked out of the end study, and yelled at the sight.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is it the ghost of Greyfriars?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or the White Chief of the Blackneck Indians."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Velly funnee. What you tinkee? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts!" growled Bunter. "Get out of the way. Why can't you let a chap pass, Skinner, eh? I want to get up to the dormitory."

"But what's the matter?" exclaimed Snoop. "What are you trotting round in a blessed tablecloth for?"

"Mind your own business."

And Billy Bunter mounted upon the dormitory stairs. Ogilvy stepped behind him, and jerked at the tablecloth.

It unrolled, and came away from the fat person of Billy Bunter—and the secret was revealed. There was a fresh roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter bolted up the stairs, followed by fresh yells. He came down in ten minutes and a new pair of trousers, looking very red and indignant, and was greeted with shrieks of merriment.

"Well, Bunter does take the cake!" grinned Bob Cherry, in No. 12. "He told a yarn about sticking to his own study, and I thought I'd help him stick to the armchair at least. Ha, ha, ha!"

And the whole of the Remove roared over it with the exception of Billy Bunter. Bunter glowered and sulked. But nobody minded Bunter.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In the Second Form.

GATTY, of the Second Form, came into the Second Form-room with a portentous frown upon his face. The Second Form at Greyfriars had no studies, and they did their prep. in the Form-room under the eye of a master. The Form-room was also their common-room, for in the junior common-room Second Form fags did not receive much consideration. Now, George Gatty might have frowned portentously anywhere else, and no one would have noticed it. The frowns of a fag would not have been observed in the slightest degree in any other part of Greyfriars. But in the Second Form-room it was a different matter. For Gatty was the biggest fellow in the Form—big enough and old enough to be in the Third, if not past it—and so his frowns were of great consequence in his Form. And when he came in frowning, a good many fags looked anxious.

"Anything wrong, Gatty?" asked Myers.

"No!" granted Gatty.

"Oh!"

Gatty pushed a small fag out of a chair by the Form-room fire, and sat down himself. His frown grew more portentous, and the dispossessed Second-Former did not venture to make the slightest objection to that tyrannical and high-handed proceeding. He was only too glad to escape getting a cuff in exchange for his chair.

"There's a new kid here," said Gatty.

"Haven't seen him," said Myers. "Not in our Form?"

"Yes."

"Name?"

"Nugent."

"Nugent II., or Nugent minor?" asked Myers, with interest. "I've heard that Nugent of the Remove has a young brother at home."

"Nugent minor."

"Then it's Nugent's brother."

"That's it."

"When did he come?"

"This afternoon, during the footer match between the Remove and the Upper Fourth."

"Odd that we haven't seen him," said Todd.

Gatty smote his knee with his open palm with a crack like a pistol-shot.

"It's easy enough to explain that," he said. "Young Nugent has been toadying to the Remove—crawling to the Lower Fourth."

"The cad!"



"Let me get out!" shouted Nugent minor, looking round upon the grinning faces. Some of them were quite cruel in expression, too, especially Gatty's. It dawned upon Dick Nugent's mind that he had fallen among foes.

"The worm!"

"He doesn't seem to know that the Second Form at Greyfriars exists," said Gatty, with growing wrath. "He doesn't know that we don't allow fags to crawl to the Lower Fourth. My hat! We shall have the Remove fagging us soon."

"He ought to be taught a lesson," said Myers solemnly.

"Let's look for him," suggested Todd.

"Well, that's a good idea," said Gatty, rising again. "He was having tea, and smoking in Bulstrode's study when I heard of him, and he can't be there all this time, I should think. Let's go and scout for him, and bring him here, and explain to him the proper position of a new boy in the Second Form."

"What-ho!"

The Second-Formers, ripe enough for mischief, and accustomed to following the lead of Gatty, entered into the plan with great zest.

A dozen of them followed Gatty and Myers and Todd from the Form-room in search of the delinquent who had been guilty of the heinous sin of crawling to fellows in a higher Form.

As luck would have it, they came upon Nugent minor as he came away from the Remove passage to look for his brother. Nugent, as it happened, was in the gym. with Harry Wharton, and Dick had not yet succeeded in finding him.

The fags surrounded the new boy in a twinkling. They knew at once, of course, that this must be Nugent minor.

The new boy glanced at them without alarm. He did not know the intention of Gatty & Co. yet.

"I say," he exclaimed, "have you seen Nugent of the Remove?"

"Yes!" said Gatty grimly.

"Do you know where he is?"

"Yes."

"Where, then?"

"In the gym."

"Where is that?"

"Come along," said Gatty sweetly, linking his arm in Nugent minor's, "I'll show you where you're to go."

"Thanks," said Nugent minor, wondering a little at Gatty's effusiveness, and at the chuckles of the other fellows. "Is that the way?"

"Come on."

And the grinning fags marched the new boy straight to the Second Form-room. Nugent minor looked round him in amazement as he entered it. He did not know much about Form-rooms, but he knew that this could not be a gymnasium.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "Is this a joke? I—"

He made for the door. Gatty slammed it shut, and put his foot against it. Then he grinned in the face of Nugent minor.

"Not just yet," he remarked.

"Let me get out."

"Not much."

Nugent minor looked round wonderingly upon the grinning faces. Some of them were quite cruel in expression, too, especially Gatty's. It dawned upon Dick Nugent's mind that he had fallen among foes.

But he was not afraid. A passionate anger rose in his

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breast—the anger of one who had always been petted and coaxed, and had had hitherto no experience of bullying.

"What's the game?" he exclaimed hotly. "What do you mean?"

"Don't you ask questions," said Gatty loftily. "I'm the captain of the Form—the Second Form at Greyfriars, and I'm boss here. You understand that?"

"I don't understand anything of the sort."

Gatty's brow lowered.

"Well, I shall have to teach you, then. It's for me to ask questions, Nugent minor, not for you. Your name's Nugent?"

"Yes," said Dick gloweringly.

"You're coming into the Second Form here?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"We're the Second Form."

"I don't care who you are."

"Cheeky young cub," said Myers. "Punch his head!"

Nugent minor clenched his hands.

"You'd better not!" he exclaimed.

Gatty laughed.

"I suppose you would lick me," he remarked, towering over the new boy. And the Second Form shouted with merriment.

Nugent minor cast a longing glance towards the door.

"No, you can't get out yet," said Gatty. "You've got to go through it first. You've been crawling to Upper Form fellows, and currying favour with Bulstrode, the worst bully in the Remove—a Form we don't approve of, anyway."

"Hear, hear!"

"I haven't! Bulstrode asked me to tea."

"It's all the same. Now, you've got to go down on your knees, and beg the pardon of the Second Form for having had tea with the Remove."

"I won't!"

"You won't! Do you know who you are talking to?"

"I don't know and I don't care. I won't beg anybody's pardon. Let me out of this room. You're a set of cads!"

"Phew!" said Todd.

"Good!" said Gatty, unmoved. "Collar him!"

"Look here—"

"Nuff said. Collar the young cad!"

A dozen hands seized Nugent minor. He struggled desperately, but he was powerless against so many. He struck out furiously, and kicked and scratched in his passionate rage, and Todd staggered away with a swelling nose, and Myers wore a red streak down his cheek.

Myers jammed his handkerchief to the scratch.

"Blessed wildcat!" he exclaimed. "Look at this!"

"Down him!"

"Sit on him!"

Nugent minor was borne to the floor under the weight of a dozen juniors. He still struggled like a wild cat under them.

"Nice boy," said Gatty. "His people must love to have him with them in the family circle—I don't think. Got him tight?"

"Yes, rather."

"Yank him up."

Nugent minor was yanked up in the grip of so many hands that he could not move a limb. Angry faces were looking at him, and he returned their looks with defiant anger.

"You cads!" he yelled. "Lemme alone!"

"The frog's-march first," said Gatty meditatively. "After that, we'll see. Give it him twice round the room."

"Hear, hear!"

And round the long Form-room went Nugent minor.

He still struggled, but feebly, in the grasp of half a dozen pairs of hands.

Right round the room he went—once, and twice, and then the Second-Formers halted with him, and bumped him on the floor. He was looking decidedly dishevelled by this time, with his hair untidy and his collar torn out.

"Now then," said Gatty, "to your knees!"

"Go and eat coke!"

Gatty chuckled.

"You've got to beg the pardon of the Second Form for cheek, and for sucking up to the Remove. Are you going to do it?"

"No!"

"All right! Round you go again!"

"Help!" yelled Dick Nugent.

The fags laughed and hooted; but, as it happened, the cry was heard—and answered. There was a slam as the door was thrown open, and Frank Nugent looked into the Form-room.

The fags halted in dismay.

"Nugent major!"

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

USUAL SIZE AND USUAL PRICE:

ONE
HALFPENNY.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Foes with the Form.

FRANK NUGENT took in the scene at a glance.

He strode into the midst of the startled fags, and gave Gatty a shove that sent him reeling to one side, and Myers a push that sent him reeling to the other. Then he dropped Todd with a thump on the chest.

The other fags released Nugent minor so quickly that he bumped forcibly on the floor, and crowded back.

Nugent stood over his young brother with flashing eyes.

"Hands off!" he said grimly.

Dick Nugent staggered to his feet. He looked ragged and torn and dusty. Frank stepped closer to his side.

"Keep with me, young 'un!" he said softly.

And Dick nodded.

There was a threatening howl from the fags. For an Upper Form fellow to interfere in the private quarrels of the Second Form was absolutely intolerable. It was as if a Fifth-Former had interfered in the disputes of the Remove. The whole Remove would have risen as one man against it. Nugent did not look at the matter quite in that light just now, as was only natural, as it was his young brother who was being frog's-marched.

The fags came crowding round with hoots and yells.

"Get out of our quarters!"

"Yah! Remove cad!"

"Outside!"

"Kick him out!"

"Yah!"

Nugent's eyes gleamed upon the fags.

"Stand back!" he said peremptorily.

"Rats!" exclaimed Gatty hotly. "What are you doing in our Form-room, you Remove cad? Get out, or we'll throw you out!"

"Better come with me, Dick."

"All right," said Dick sulkily.

There was a roar.

"You're not going to take him away."

"Yah! Down with the Remove!"

"Rush 'them!"

"Give them socks!"

And the fags came crowding on. Nugent clenched his fists hard.

"You'll get hurt if you don't keep off," he said warningly.

"Yah!"

"Stand back!"

"Yah! Rats!"

Nugent hit out as Myers and Todd hustled him. Todd went down again, and this time he stayed on the floor, and Myers fell across him.

Nugent caught his young brother by the arm, and dragged him to the door.

"Come on, Dicky—quick!"

"Collar them!" shrieked Gatty.

And he led a furious rush.

The Second Form crowded round Nugent like locusts. He hit out in earnest now, and three or four fags rolled over, but they were too many.

Fighting desperately, Nugent was borne down by the rush, and Dick went down with him, and over both of them swarmed the victorious Second Form.

"Sit on them!" roared Gatty.

"Rescue Remove!" shouted Nugent, at the top of his voice. "Wharton! Inky! Remove! Rescue!"

The cry was not unheard.

Three or four Removites, among them Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, came in at the doorway, and without stopping to ask questions, rushed into the conflict.

Then the tables were turned.

The fags were hurled right and left before the doughty blows of the Removites, and Nugent and Dick were promptly rescued.

But Gatty & Co. rallied, and Harry Wharton thought it only prudent to hurry the rescued ones to the passage, and get them away.

A volley of yells and mocking jeers followed them from the Second Form-room.

"Yah!"

"Cad!"

"Worm!"

Most of the remarks seemed to be hurled at Nugent minor, though he hardly realised it at the moment. He was too breathless and confused to realise anything clearly.

The rescuers hurried them down the passage, and halted out of sight of the door of the Form-room, which was crammed with jeering fags.

"What on earth have you been rowing with the Babes for, Frank?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, in astonishment.

Nugent gasped for breath, and mopped his damaged nose with his handkerchief.

"They were ragging young Dick."

"Oh, I see!"

"Have they hurt you, Dicky?" said Nugent, turning anxiously to his young brother.

"Yes," said Dick sullenly. "It doesn't matter."

"I came in the instant I heard you calling."

"It's all right."

"How did you come to fall foul of them?" asked Nugent, with a worried look. He realised what a bad beginning his minor had made in getting on with his Form.

"They accused me of crawling to the Remove."

"Oh! On account of that feed with Bulstrode, I suppose?"

"I suppose so."

"It's awkward," said Frank, after a pause. "You see, they're your Form; you've got to live with them—sleep in their dormitory to-night."

Nugent minor looked alarmed.

"Have I? Can't I sleep somewhere else?"

"No; it's impossible."

"I suppose I could come with you?"

Nugent shook his head.

"No; the Forms have separate dormitories."

"Look here, I'm jolly well not going to be shut up with that crew!" exclaimed Nugent minor hotly. "I haven't come here to be bullied."

"Well, it's not my fault. They all hate Bulstrode, because he's such a beastly bully, and your chumming up with him was very unfortunate. They naturally think that you're going to sneak to Bulstrode. You shouldn't have done it."

"How was I to know?"

"Well, I asked you to come away from his study."

"If you had met me when I came I shouldn't have gone there. But I'll go there if I like. Butstrode is the only fellow here who has treated me decently anyhow," exclaimed Dick Nugent passionately.

"Bulstrode can't protect you from the Second Form, and he wouldn't take the trouble, if he could," said Nugent quietly.

"I shall speak to the Head."

"What do you mean? That's sneaking."

"Well, I'm not going to be frog-marched in the dormitory to-night, as well as in the Form-room this evening," said Dick hotly. "I don't see why I should stand it."

"You must make it up with the Second Form somehow," said Nugent slowly. "You can let them know that you're not going to toady to Bulstrode, you see; and—and I suppose you have something to eat in your box? Mother will have shoved in something good."

"Yes, there's a good feed."

"Good! You can stand a feed to all the Second Form, after lights out, and make your peace with them that way. They'll chum up to anybody for a feed."

"I don't want to make my peace with them," said Dick Nugent, between his teeth. "They've jumped on me like this for nothing. I won't go an inch out of my way to get into their good graces."

"Now, don't be a young ass—"

"If that's all you've got to say to me—"

"It isn't. You can't live at daggers' drawn with the Form you belong to. Can't you see that the position would be impossible?"

"I'm not going to be the first to make it up."

"You ought to be glad to have the chance to make it up. After to-night it may be impossible for you to make it up at all. You may be sent to Coventry; you certainly will if you speak to the Head."

"I'm not going to be bullied."

"They're all right. It's only rough play, really, and they'll treat you all right if you get on the right side of them," urged Nugent.

"I'm not going to take the trouble to do anything of the sort."

"Do you want to be cut by your Form?"

"I don't care!"

"Don't you understand, Dick? I can't always be at hand to protect you. I—"

Dick flushed crimson.

"I jolly well don't want you to protect me. I can take care of myself."

And he thrust his hands deep into his trousers' pockets, and walked down the passage. Nugent called after him.

"Dick!"

But Nugent minor did not turn his head.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter, the Cat's-paw.

HARRY WHARTON pressed his chum's arm as Dick Nugent disappeared round a corner of the passage. Nugent glanced at him miserably.

"Don't bother, Frank. It can't be helped."

"He's been spoiled at home, you know," said Frank wretchedly. "He can't understand. If he begins with the Second Form like this, why, they'll make his life a misery."

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TUESDAY:

"THE DANDIES OF THE REMOVE"

NEXT
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to him. A fellow can't live on fighting terms with his Form."

"He'll come to his senses in time," said Mark Linley.

Nugent nodded, and strolled slowly away. He was feeling very despondent. It seemed impossible to get on good terms with his younger brother, or to make Dick Nugent understand what was necessary at Greyfriars.

Skinner, who had been one of the rescuing party, and had listened silently to the talk, burst into a chuckle. Skinner was the practical joker of the Remove, and his chuckle showed that some new "jape" had entered his head. Harry Wharton looked at him quickly and suspiciously.

"What's the joke?" he asked.

"Nugent minor," said Skinner, laughing.

"Don't begin any of your little games in connection with him, Skinner, there's a good chap. Frank has enough bother about him already."

Skinner nodded and laughed, and walked away. He went to Bulstrode's study, and found the bully of the Remove alone there. Tom Brown and Hazeldene were gone out. Bulstrode was not looking very good-tempered, and he glared rather than looked at Skinner as he came in.

"Hallo! Been having accidents?" asked Skinner, glancing at the pile of broken crockery still on the floor.

"Yes!" growled Bulstrode.

"I say, I've got a good wheeze on—"

"Go and boil it!"

"It's up against No. 1 Study—"

"Oh! Go ahead," said Bulstrode.

Skinner grinned at the sudden change of tone. He lowered his voice as he went on:

"You know there's that new kid, Nugent minor—"

"Yes," said Bulstrode, grinning.

"What do you think of him?"

"Oh, he's a cough-drop!"

"He's at daggers drawn with all the Second, and he's afraid to go into the Second dorm. to-night to go to bed," said Skinner.

"I'm not surprised. Judging by what I've seen of him, he's about the last fellow in the world to have an enjoyable time in the Second Form."

"Well, he swears he'll sleep somewhere else, and not in the dorm. at all."

"He can sleep on the roof for all I care," said Bulstrode, with a yawn. "Blessed if I care anything about his sleeping-quarters."

"That's where the jape comes in. Suppose you suggested to him—I hear you're on good terms with him—suppose you suggested to him that he should sleep somewhere else? You remember a little trick like that I played on Harry Wharton when he first came to Greyfriars? Well, it would be a howling joke to get Nugent minor planted in the Head's bed."

Bulstrode gave a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It would be funny, and as easy as winking," said Skinner, with a grin. "The only drawback would be that we shouldn't see the Head's face when he found him there."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll do it, then?" said Skinner eagerly.

"No, I won't," said Bulstrode coolly. "You know jolly well that Nugent minor is just the chap to blurt out the whole story to the Head, and I should get a licking then. Set him at it yourself."

"Well, you see—"

"There's Bunter," said Bulstrode. "Take Bunter. Give him something to feed on, and flatter him, and you can make him do anything for you. He'll jape Nugent minor."

"Jolly good idea!" agreed Skinner. And he immediately hurried off in search of Billy Bunter.

Bunter was not hard to find. Skinner discovered him looking dolefully into the little window of Mrs. Mimble's tuckshop. He clapped the fat junior on the shoulder, and Bunter blinked round at him.

"Oh, really, Russell—"

"Hallo, Bunter! Like some tarts?"

"Oh, is it you, Skinner? Yes, I was just thinking I should. Mrs. Mimble has some new tarts in, and she won't let me have any till my postal-order comes. If there's a delay in the post, I shan't get it till to-morrow morning. I'll have some tarts with you with a great deal of pleasure!" And they went into the tuckshop.

Skinner stood half a dozen tarts, which disappeared at a wonderful speed down Bunter's capacious throat.

"I say, this is awfully decent of you, you know," said Bunter, blinking at Skinner as he masticated jam-tarts.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Skinner. "I was awfully tickled by that new idea of yours!"

"Which one?" asked Bunter. "I'm simply full of new ideas. The fellows in my study are awfully jealous of me on that account, as I dare say you've observed."

A

"Of course I have! I mean your idea of japing Nugent minor. It is your idea, isn't it? It's so funny that I thought it must be!"

"Oh, yes, of course!" assented Bunter.

"Nugent minor swears he won't sleep in the Second dorm. to-night," remarked Skinner, as he helped himself to ginger-pop. "That makes it easy for you. If you told him the Remove-master's room, for instance, was a private room prepared for him by order of the Head, he's quite gull enough to believe it."

Bunter chuckled, and attacked his last tart.

"You're such a keen chap, Bunter, that it would be easy for you to take anybody in," Skinner went on. "It's really hardly fair on Nugent's minor; but, after all, a jape is a jape."

"That's it," assented Bunter. "A jape's a jape."

"And the socky young rotter deserves to be taken down a peg."

"Yes, rather! He had the cheek to laugh at me when I was stuck to the chair in my study," said Bunter. "He stood there cackling."

"Then I should jolly well jape him—especially as you've thought of such a ripping wheeze for doing it!" urged Skinner.

"And I jolly well will!" said Bunter. "Did you say another tart, Skinner?"

Skinner did not appear to hear the question. He strolled out of the tuckshop, and Billy Bunter followed more slowly.

Bunter prided himself upon his keenness, and, as he had no particular regard for the truth, he naturally sometimes succeeded in deceiving people. But he was, as a matter of fact, one of the easiest of fellows to deceive himself. His conceit was too great for him to see when he was being fooled. Added to that, his love of flattery was great, and he liked to appear in the public eye. If he could get the credit of any other fellow's ideas he never hesitated. It was the easiest thing possible for Skinner to pull the wool over his eyes.

Billy Bunter strolled thoughtfully out of the tuckshop, looking for Nugent minor. By this time the fat junior really thought that it was his idea to play that jape upon Dick Nugent, and he was chuckling over it at a great rate when he ran into the very person he was seeking in the passage.

Dick Nugent had been up to the Remove dormitory to wash off the stains of his tussle in the Form-room. He had not cared to venture to the Second Form dorm., in case the enemy should be there. It was getting very near bedtime now for the junior Forms, and Dick was feeling nervous.

He was keeping a wary eye open for Second Form fellows when Bunter ran into him.

"Oh, really, Ogilvy!" exclaimed Bunter peevishly.

"You fat ass!" growled Dick.

"Is that you, Nugent minor?"

"Yes, you owl. What did you run into me for?"

"I'm sincerely sorry," said Bunter smoothly. "I was looking for you. I hear that you are to have a separate room to-night, as the Head does not want you to be ragged by the Second Form in the dormitory."

Dick Nugent drew a deep breath of relief.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "I hadn't heard of it, but I shall be jolly glad of it! Where's the room?"

"I'll show you if you'll come with me," said Bunter. "Of course, you'd better not go there now, or the fags may come routing you out. Better wait till the Second Form have gone to bed, and then sneak in. See? The prefects don't all know you've joined the Second yet, and they won't be looking out for you. This is the place. Look in."

He opened the door of Mr. Quelch's bed-room.

The Remove-master's room was a very comfortable and cosy apartment, with a bed in an alcove in the wall, and very well furnished. Dick Nugent looked round the room with great satisfaction.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "I shall be comfortable here, I think."

Billy Bunter grinned as he thought of the scene that would ensue when the master of the Remove came up to bed and found a Second-Form fag asleep in his room.

"Yes, it's a decent room," he said. "Of course, this isn't

permanent, you know—you'll just have this room for the present."

"Yes. I understand."

"You'll have to bunk with the Second Form later, of course."

"I jolly well sha'n't, unless they treat me decently!" said Dick Nugent frowning. "I'll write home to my mother to take me away!"

Bunter chuckled.

"Jolly good idea!" he agreed readily, as Dicky looked at him suspiciously. "Don't you be put upon. I wouldn't."

"I don't mean to be."

Bunter closed the door, and led the new fag away.

"Don't tell any of the Second where you're going to sleep," he said. "They'll rout you out as sure as a gun if you do."

"I'll be careful."

"Don't tell anybody, in fact. It's safer."

Nugent minor nodded, and Bunter left him in the passage. As soon as he turned the first corner, Billy Bunter stopped to chuckle explosively. He was still engaged in emitting mysterious gurgles and guggles when a heavy hand fell upon his shoulder, and he jumped.

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"What are you snortling about?" asked the voice of Tom Brown.

"Oh, is it you, young Mutton? It's all right. I was thinking of a joke, that's all. You can mind your own business, you know."

"You've been playing some mean trick on somebody," said the New Zealand junior.

"Oh, really, Brown—"

Tom Brown shook his head and passed on. He knew that it would be quite useless to attempt to get any truth out of Bunter. The fat junior burst into renewed chuckles, and he was still cachinnating when the Remove went up to bed and he joined them.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Nugent Minor Makes Himself Comfortable.

BEDTIME was looked forward to with great keenness by Gatty, Myers, Todd, and the rest of the Second Form. As a rule, they hated bedtime, and would gladly have risen in revolt against the laws that sent them to bed half an hour earlier than the Remove and the Upper Fourth, and abolished them. But as that was impossible, the fags generally went to bed grumbling, with the worst grace, and indemnified themselves by lighting candle-ends after lights-out, and pillow-fighting in the dormitory, or reading by the light of bicycle-lanterns. And when they were caught in these playful occupations by watchful prefects, there was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in the Second Form dorm.; but their ways remained unaltered, and probably would remain so for ever. But the reluctance with which the fags usually went up to bed was conspicuously absent this evening. They were keen on getting to the dormitory.

And it was all on account of Nugent minor.

The Remove had snatched Nugent minor from the wrath of his Form like a brand from the burning, but it had served the new boy ill. For if there was anything the fags could not possibly forgive it was interference in their rights and liberties by members of a higher Form.

For the Remove to venture to interfere in their internal disputes was outrageous, and, as they couldn't make the Lower Fourth "sit up" for it, they meant to take it out of Nugent minor.

Had the boy been a little more sensible and reasonable, and been willing to profit by the advice and experience of his elder brother, he might yet have made his peace with the Second. But the spoiled son of fond parents was only likely to make matters worse by every word he uttered, and everything that he did.

And the Second Form greeted the prefect who announced bedtime without the suppressed groans and growls that usually greeted him. It was Carberry of the Sixth, and Carberry, being a bully by nature, rather liked cuffing and kicking reluctant fags who hesitated to go to the dorm. on the very instant.

But even Carberry had no excuse for bullying to-night.

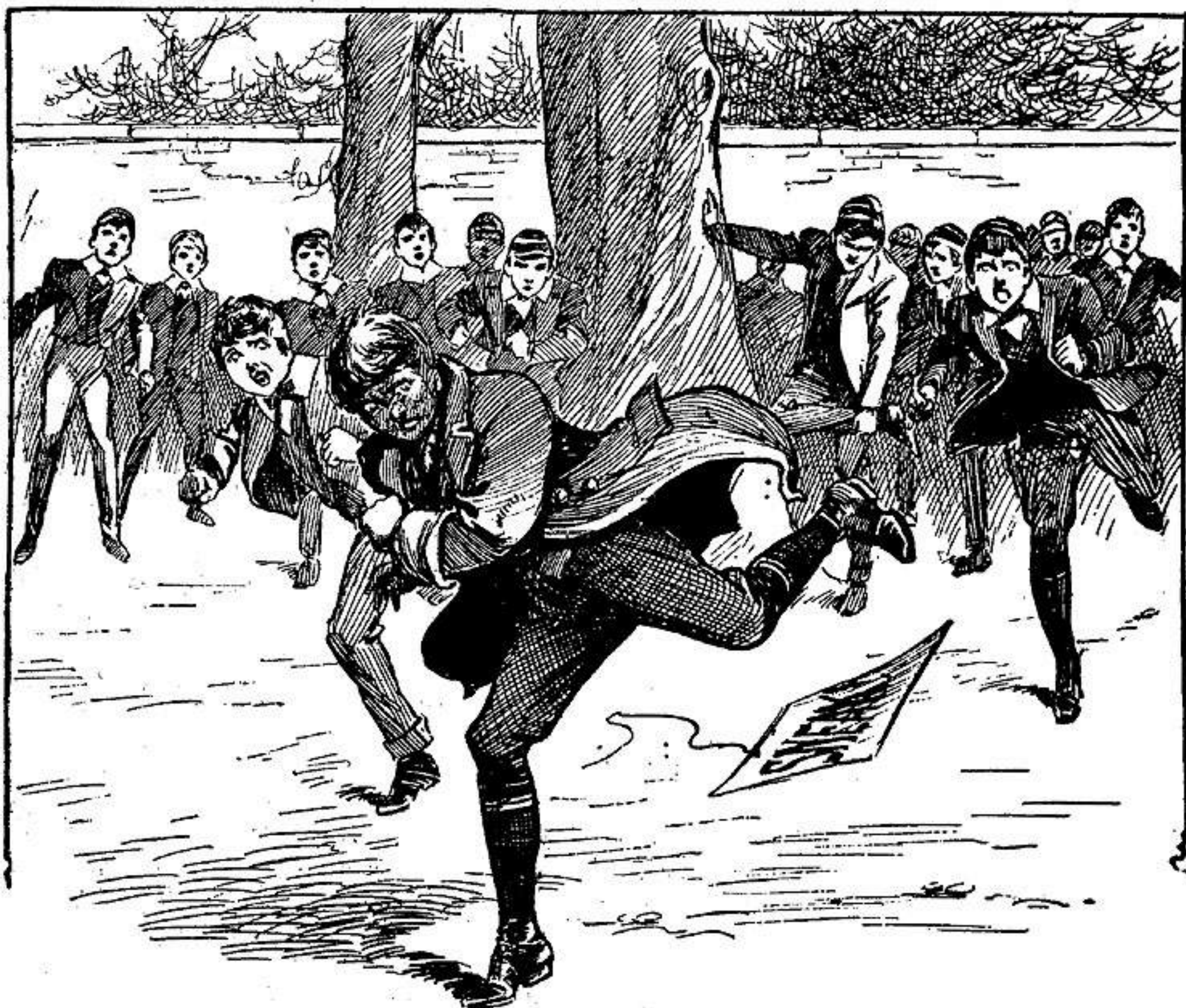
A MOTOR-CYCLE.

PRIZES.

PLUCK

PRIZES.

ROLLER SKATES.



The new boy's savage kick had taken effect, and the next moment Dick Nugent darted away at top speed.

The Second were quite ready for bed, and they marched up to the dormitory without a word, without a murmur.

Carberry stared at them in surprise, but he was glad to be saved trouble, and he herded the fags off to bed, turned out the lights, and left them, without thinking or caring what the reason of their unusual tractability could be.

Carberry had never even noticed that there was a new boy in the Second that day—or, if it had been brought to his attention, he had forgotten it. He had more important things to think of—a game of poker with his worthy chums Carno and Loder in his study, for instance. Loder and Carno were waiting for him, and Carberry wasn't likely to waste much time on the Second Form. The privileges of a prefect were very useful to him, but the duties of the post were not much to his taste. He performed them just well enough to keep up appearances, and that was all.

But in the Second Form dormitory the strange peacefulness was broken as soon as Carberry had turned his back and closed the door.

Gatty sat up in bed, and struck a match, and lighted a candle. Half a dozen other fellows followed his example.

Gatty glared up and down the dormitory.

"Where's that new chap?" he demanded.

"Blessed if I know!" Myers remarked. "He never came up to bed."

"He's not here, Gatty."

"His bed's ready," said Gatty, "and he's not here. What on earth does it mean? I was going to speak to Carberry about it, but I knew he would guess there was something on if I did."

"The kid's hiding away somewhere," said Todd. "He knows what's in store for him."

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"But he can't stay up all night."

"Oh, no. Depend upon it he's hanging about waiting for us to go to sleep, so that he can sneak in quietly without our noticing him."

Gatty chuckled. The explanation seemed to him a very probable one.

"Good!" he said. "That's it, and no error. Put the lights out, and keep quiet, and he'll come in."

And the dormitory was plunged into darkness again.

It was very cold sitting up in the winter night, and the Second-Formers laid down again and covered themselves up, with the natural result that they dropped off to sleep one by one, Gatty being one of the first.

Meanwhile, Nugent minor, as we know, had no intention of coming to the Second dormitory at all, if he could help it. He knew very well that a ragging awaited him there, and even if Bunter had not so kindly come to the rescue, he would have tried to avoid going up with the Second.

He remained quietly out of sight while the Second Form went to bed, and then he made his way to Mr. Quelch's room.

He lighted the gas, and closed the door, and looked round him with an air of great satisfaction and relief.

The room was very cosy and comfortable, and the bed looked inviting to the fatigued junior.

Dicky Nugent had been through a great deal of excitement and exertion that day, and he was very tired.

He undressed, and tumbled into bed, turning out the gas, and in about five seconds after his head had touched the pillow he was asleep.

He slept the sleep of fatigue and healthy youth, and a

gun fired within a yard of him would probably not have awakened him.

While he was sleeping soundly in Mr. Quelch's bed, his major was thinking about him, and wondering how he was getting on in the Second dormitory. Nugent was playing chess with Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh in the junior common-room, with Harry Wharton looking on, when the Second went up to bed. Nugent saw Carberry come down, and after that his mind seemed to wander from the game. He left his king in check two or three times in succession, and was finally checkmated with ease, and was still going on to move after the mate. It was evident that his mind was not in the game.

"The esteemed wits of my worthy chum are wandering," said the Nabob of Bhanipur, in his soft, purring voice. "What is he thoughtfully reflecting upon?"

Nugent grinned faintly.

"I was thinking about my young brother," he said. "He's gone off with the Second, and I'm afraid there will be a row in the dorm."

"I was thinking the same," said Wharton, with a nod; "but I don't know about interfering, Frank. It's better to leave a chap to fight his own battles, except in the case of bullying. Your minor had put up the backs of the Second by chumming up with Bulstrode, and they won't be satisfied till they've ragged him."

"I know, but—"

"You can't always save him. If they let him alone while you're there, they'll start again as soon as you're gone. It depends upon Dick to make his peace with the Form. It's up to him to do it, you know."

Nugent looked worried.

"Yes, I know; but he won't do it. You don't know Dick. He wants to be looked after, and made a fuss of; and they won't do that in the Second."

"Ha, ha! I should say not. But they will knock some of the nonsense out of him, Frank, and that will do him a lot more good in the long-run."

"Yes; but—but I can't bear to think of his being ragged by those rough young rascals, after what he's been used to at home," said Nugent, with a troubled look. "He's a decent kid enough, you know, if—if he weren't such a young ass. You'll like him when you get to know him, Harry."

Wharton had his doubts about that, but he did not say so.

"He hasn't really had a chance," said Nugent, "and he's as obstinate as a mule. He'll kick, you know, and that'll make things harder for him. I suppose it might be better in the long-run for him to fight his battles out, but—but I think I'll go—"

He rose from the chess-table.

"Well, have a look and see if there's anything going on before you go into the dorm," said Wharton. "Call us if you want help."

"Right-ho!"

And Frank Nugent ascended the stairs. He stopped outside the door of the Second Form dormitory.

All was quiet within. There was no gleam of light from under the door.

The fags were evidently quietly in bed. Nugent drew a deep breath of relief. He returned to the junior common-room, and met the inquiring looks of his chums with a nod.

"All serene!" he said. "There's not a sound, except a snore."

"Good!"

And when the Remove went up to bed it was still "all serene."

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

On the War-path.

MR. QUELCH, the master of the Remove, opened his bed-room door at half-past ten that night. He knew where to find the matches—or he usually did. But as he put his hand to the table beside the door for them, he did not find them in their usual place. He regretted then that he had not brought up a candle with him.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "This is most annoying. Someone has taken my matches."

He groped into the room, and groped over the table. He murmured something under his breath as he heard the ink-pot fall over, and some papers go rustling to the floor. Then he went out of the room, descended the stairs again, and came up with a lighted candle.

By that time Mr. Quelch was not in the best of tempers. He had reached a time of life when ascending stairs was no light matter to him.

He was looking pink as he came into his room again. He wished very much to know who had taken away his matches. He did not guess yet that the person who had moved them was sleeping within a few paces of him.

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Mr. Quelch lighted the gas, and proceeded to divest himself of his coat.

The bed, as we have said, was in an alcove in the wall, and partly hidden by a curtain.

The master of the Remove did not observe that it was occupied, nor was he likely to observe it till he went to step in.

But suddenly, as he took off his coat, he stopped, and gave a start.

A sound of deep and steady breathing had struck upon his ears.

Mr. Quelch stood quite still, the coat in his hands, his heart beating. He could scarcely believe his ears for a moment, and he listened intently to make sure that he was not mistaken.

But there was no mistake about it!

There was a steady breathing in the room, and it came from the direction of the bed.

In a moment Mr. Quelch saw it all.

His matches had been moved by the same person whose breathing he could now hear—a burglar, who had hidden himself under the bed.

There was no doubt about it. From where he stood Mr. Quelch could detect that the breathing came from the bed, but whether above or below it he could not tell; but he naturally thought at once of somebody under the bed. That anybody belonging to Greyfriars might be sleeping in his bed never occurred to him for a moment. That was far more improbable than a burglar.

Mr. Quelch stood quite still, listening, for several moments. Then he quietly put on his coat again.

The deep, steady breathing showed two things. First, that the burglar had lost all caution, and was not careful to conceal his presence; second, and consequently, that the wretch had fallen asleep under the bed.

Mr. Quelch smiled grimly.

A burglar under the bed might be a dangerous customer to tackle, especially if he were armed; but by falling asleep he had thrown himself into the hands of the law, as it were.

Mr. Quelch quietly extinguished the gas, so as not to alarm the burglar by a light if he should awaken, and stepped softly from the room.

In the passage he paused a few moments to consider.

The point now was to capture the burglar, and it was necessary to bring such a force against him that he would not venture to struggle, or to use his revolver, if he had one.

Mr. Quelch thought of Gosling, the porter, but shook his head. Gosling was a long way off, and he was not brave. Then he thought of Mr. Prout. Mr. Prout was master of the Fifth, and a great sportsman, and always kept two or three guns in his study. He occupied a great deal of his spare time in cleaning his guns, and at the same time would relate stories of big game to anybody who would listen. Fellows in the Fifth who wanted passes, or who hadn't done their impositions, or wanted to get into favour for any reason, would listen hypocritically to these yarns of danger by flood and field, and would be awfully impressed by the bravery of Mr. Prout.

Mr. Prout, as a man of war and an owner of deadly weapons, was just the man to deal with the burglar. Mr. Quelch descended at once to his study, and tapped at the door. He entered, and found Mr. Prout there, reading a book dealing with big game in America. The Fifth Form-master glanced up with a nod.

"Sorry to disturb you, Prout, but—"

"Not at all," said Mr. Prout, waving the Remove-master to a chair. "On the contrary, I shall be delighted to have a chat. I am just reading in this volume—"

"Yes, but—"

"That the number of buffaloes shot in the Rocky Mountains—"

"My dear Prout—"

"Excuse me, Quelch, but this is a deeply interesting subject. When I was in the Rockies in '95—"

"There is a burglar in my room!" said Mr. Quelch hastily. When Mr. Prout started with "When I was in the Rockies in '95," the Remove-master knew from of old that only a sudden shock would stop him.

Mr. Prout started.

"A burglar?"

"Yes."

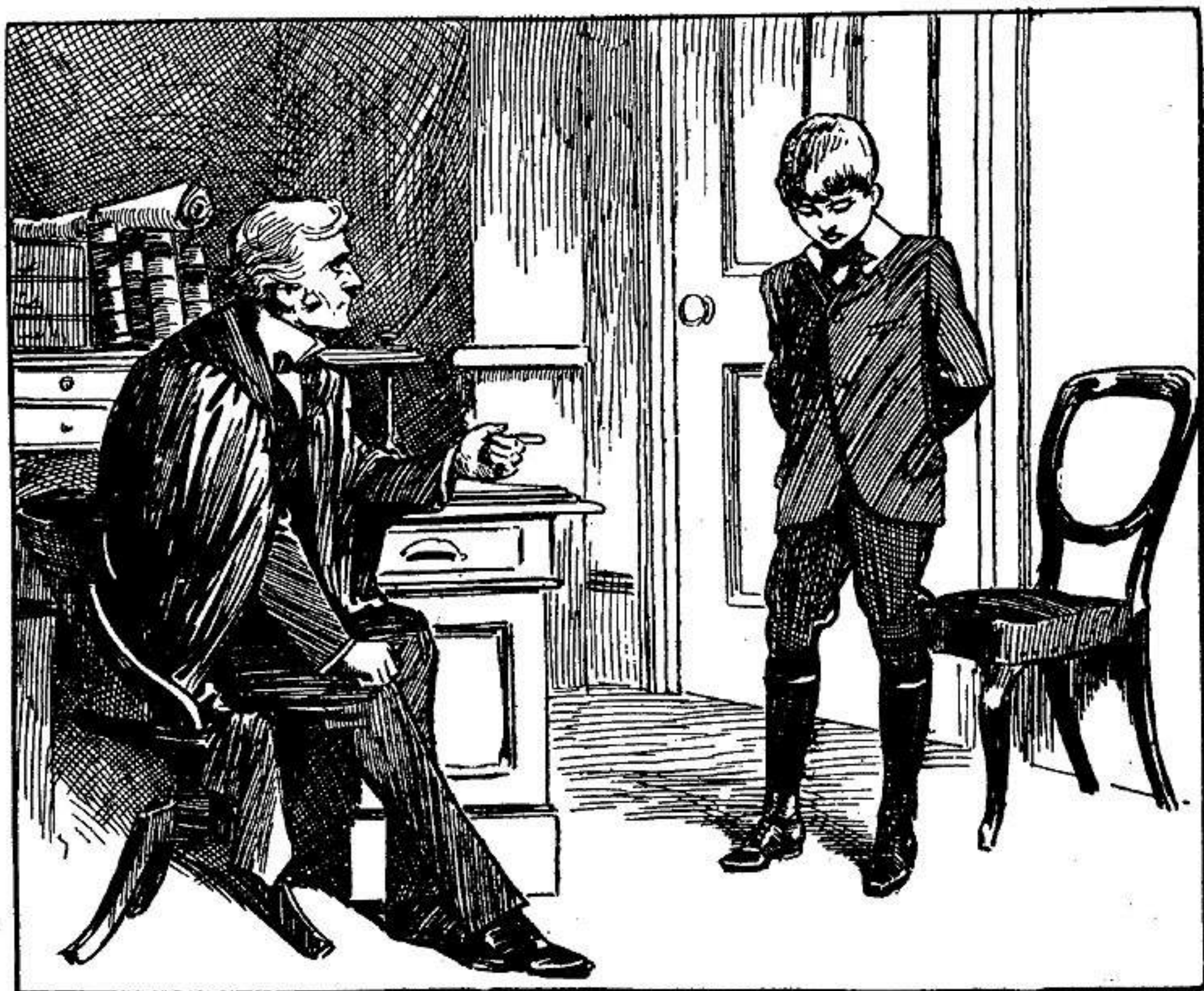
"In your room?"

"Yes, under the bed."

"Good heavens! Did you see him?"

"No, but I heard him breathing. He must, I think, have fallen asleep there. As I was alone and unarmed, you may be sure that I did not try to get to close quarters with him," said the Remove-master drily.

"Quite so, quite so!" exclaimed Mr. Prout, jumping up, forgetting all about when he was in the Rocky Mountains



"I repeat that I am sorry you are expelled, Nugent minor," said Dr. Locke. "You may go now and pack your box!"

in 1895. "I am glad you came to me. I will load my rifle—"

"Ahem! I was thinking that a firearm might frighten the ruffian into surrender," said Mr. Quelch. "Unloaded, however, in case of accidents."

Mr. Prout smiled superior.

"My dear Quelch, suppose he has a revolver? Suppose he fires? It will be necessary in that case to wing him."

"To—to what?"

"Wing him," said Mr. Prout, with quite a bloodthirsty look. "I have never shot a man yet—"

"Dear me!"

"Of course, I should not kill him," said Mr. Prout. "Not if it could be avoided, at all events. I might wing him in the arm or leg."

"You—you are sure of your aim?"

"I have shot buffaloes on the plains of Texas, grizzly bears in the Rockies, lions in South Africa—"

"Yes, yes; but—"

"Rely upon me, Quelch. I will make sure of the villain."

Mr. Prout was all excitement now. Whether he was really as great a hunter as his stories on the subject would imply, or not, there was no doubt that he was keen enough. He took down a rifle from the wall, and unlocked a drawer for cartridges. Mr. Quelch watched him in some uneasiness as he loaded.

"There," said Mr. Prout, "I am ready now. Lead on."

"Pray do not point that gun in my direction," said the Remove-master.

Mr. Prout laughed.

"I assure you, Quelch, that I am not likely to have an accident with firearms. You would be quite safe if I levelled the rifle point-blank at you."

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"I—I would rather you did not, however. Pray come on." They quitted the study.

Mr. Quelch dropped behind the Fifth Form-master in going upstairs. He wasn't afraid of the burglar, but he was decidedly afraid of Mr. Prout's rifle. If the Fifth Form-master had stumbled, he might have killed the Remove-master; and Mr. Quelch did not desire to end his days in that manner.

They reached the door of the Remove-master's bed-room, and Mr. Quelch stepped in quietly and relighted the gas.

"Good!" said Mr. Prout. "He cannot escape now."

Mr. Prout dropped on one knee, and levelled the rifle with depressed muzzle to command the space under the bed.

"I shall have him covered now," he remarked. "You may wake him up and drive him forth. If he will not come, I will fire."

"But—but—but—"

"It's all right," said Mr. Prout, with a smile. "This is a magazine rifle, and the first cartridge is blank."

"But—but if there should be some mistake—"

"Stuff! I never make mistakes with firearms. If I made mistakes with firearms, my dear Quelch, I should not be here to tell the tale. When I was in the Rockies in '95—"

"I will arouse the villain, then."

"At once."

Mr. Quelch bent beside the bed, and raised the edge of the coverlet. His heart was beating hard, and he was very excited; otherwise, he would probably have noticed that the sound of breathing did not come from underneath. But his mind was full of thoughts of the burglar now.

"Come out!" he exclaimed.

"Come forth!" said Mr. Prout threateningly. "Come

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BY
FRANK RICHARDS.

forth, scoundrel! Mind, I have you covered, and my finger is on the trigger. Come forth!"

There was no reply from the burglar.

"Come forth, or I fire!" shouted Mr. Prout.

No answer!

"Then——"

"Pray do not fire, Prout. You see——"

"It is the only way. He must be awake now, and you cannot venture under the bed to drag him out. He probably has a knife."

"Yes; but——"

"I had better fire. Wretch, your last chance—come forth!"

And still no one came forth.

Mr. Prout's eye gleamed along the barrel, and he pressed the trigger.

Bang!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Burglar.

BANG!

The report rang through the house, and rolled back in a thousand echoes. The room seemed full of stunning noise, and the smell of gunpowder. Mr. Quelch jumped almost clear of the floor.

"Oh, dear!" he gasped.

In spite of Mr. Prout's assurance, he could not help having a lurking fear that the cartridge might not be a blank one. Mistakes do happen.

The Fifth Form-master smiled the grim smile of a great huntsman.

"Come forth!" he shouted.

The sound of breathing had suddenly ceased. As a matter of fact, the bang of the rifle had awakened Nugent minor, and he had become aware of the fact that there was a light in the room, and two men there, and a smell of gunpowder.

Startled and terrified, the new boy held his breath, hardly daring to breathe, and without the faintest sound, as he lay in the bed.

"Come forth!" shouted Mr. Prout triumphantly.

He clicked the rifle in a businesslike manner. The next cartridge in the magazine was loaded, and Mr. Prout was ready for the burglar.

But still the burglar did not come forth.

"Good Heavens!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Listen!"

"What?"

"I cannot hear him breathing now."

"Oh, he is keeping quiet on purpose, of course."

Mr. Quelch was quite pale.

"I only hope that you did not make a mistake with the cartridges," he murmured. "Heaven forbid that you have killed the wretched man!"

"Good heavens, Mr. Quelch."

"I can hear no sound."

"I never make mistakes with firearms. When I was in the Rockies——"

"We must look."

"Undoubtedly. I——"

"Ciel! Vat is it zat is so mattair?" asked a voice at the door, as Monsieur Charpentier, the French-master, looked in. "Vat has happen viz itself?"

"There's a burglar under the bed!"

"Ciel!"

"Mr. Prout has fired a blank cartridge to frighten him out," said the Remove-master. "He refuses to stir, however."

"I zink zat you pokes him viz ze poker."

"Ah! A good idea!"

Mr. Quelch stepped to the grate, and took up the poker. He poked under the bed. He was half afraid of finding a dead body there, in spite of Mr. Prout's assurance that he never made mistakes with firearms.

But to his surprise the lunges of the poker encountered only space.

He lowered his head at last, at the risk of damage from the hidden burglar if he should be waiting with a bludgeon for such a chance, and peered under the bed. It was very dark and shadowy there; he could see nothing, but it certainly seemed to him that the space was vacant.

Mr. Quelch was amazed.

"Monsieur Charpentier, pray bring the candle here," he said.

"Oui, oui! Viz ze pleasure!"

And Mossou brought the candle, and lowered it to the floor, and both of them peered under the bed, while the warlike Fifth Form-master remained kneeling with levelled rifle, ready for eventualities.

"Ciel!"

"Dear me!"

Monsieur Charpentier and Mr. Quelch uttered those

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exclamations simultaneously. For the space under the bed was vacant; there was no burglar there.

Mr. Quelch and Monsieur Charpentier rose, staring blankly at one another.

"Well?" said Mr. Prout.

"There—there is no one there!"

"What!"

"I can see no one."

"But—but——"

"Ciel!"

"What is it, Monsieur Charpentier?"

"It is zat he is in ze bed!" exclaimed the French-master, springing away from it. "Look!"

"Good gracious!"

Mr. Quelch dragged aside the curtain. Nugent minor was revealed sitting up in bed, with a pale and scared face, and startled eyes.

He stared at Mr. Quelch, and Mr. Quelch stared at him. Monsieur Charpentier gave a sort of crow of astonishment.

"Ciel! It is a garçon!"

"Dear me! Who—what——"

"It is a boy. It is not a burglar. It is zat zere has been a mistake. Ciel!"

Monsieur Charpentier's face relaxed into a grin. Crimson was slowly covering the countenance of Mr. Quelch.

He understood now what an egregious blunder he had made. Monsieur Charpentier, grinning, slipped quietly from the room, mysterious cachinnations proceeding from him as he went down the passage. Mr. Prout sprang up, and rushed towards the bed. His face was a study as he saw Nugent minor.

"Gr-gr-great Scott!" he gasped.

"Boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in a voice of thunder.

"This is the burglar, Mr. Quelch?"

"There—there appears to have been some mistake," said the unhappy Remove-master. "I—I certainly thought there was a burglar under the bed."

Mr. Prout grunted. He put his gun under his arm, and stalked away. A great many fellows had gathered in the passage, attracted by the report of the firearm. They looked curiously at Mr. Prout, who was very pink as he strode away, without vouchsafing a word to anyone. Mr. Prout was a great sportsman, and had a keen hankering after adventures; but they never seemed to come his way. From the time when he had shot Wan Lung's kite, to the present he had never found an occasion worthy of his great abilities as a man of war.

Mr. Quelch remained alone with the new junior. His face was crimson, his eyes sparkling with anger. He felt that he had made himself look absurd, though really he could not blame himself for the mistake. How was he to have guessed that a fog of the Second Form would have the amazing impudence to go to sleep in his bed?

And Nugent minor had not simply lain down there, either—he had gone to bed. Mr. Quelch now observed his clothes, and saw the collar of a nightshirt round the junior's neck. And he had certainly been fast asleep.

Nugent minor had evidently settled there for the night.

Mr. Quelch stood looking at the boy for some time in silence. He really did not know what to say.

Dick Nugent was recovering from his astonishment now.

He was not pleased at being awakened and frightened in the middle of the night, and his look was growing as angry as Mr. Quelch's.

"Boy," said the Remove-master at last, "what are you doing here?"

"I'm sleeping—or was, till I was woke up," growled Dick.

"What's all this row about?"

"Boy!"

"I want to go to sleep."

And Dick settled down again, with his head on the pillow, and drew the bedclothes up round his neck.

Mr. Quelch was almost petrified as he viewed this proceeding.

"Boy," he gasped—"boy! Who—who are you?"

"I'm Nugent minor."

"What Form do you belong to?"

"Second," said Dick sleepily.

"You—you—How dare you go to sleep in my room?" roared Mr. Quelch. "You—you are a new boy at this school, I presume?"

"Yes."

"It is customary here to address a master as 'sir,'" said Mr. Quelch, with a dangerous gleam in his eye.

"I'm sleepy."

"Get out of that bed."

"I want to go to sleep."

"Why are you not in the dormitory with the rest of your Form?" asked Mr. Quelch, as much perplexed as annoyed.

"I don't like them. I'm not going to sleep in the dormitory."

USUAL SIZE AND USUAL PRICE:

ONE
HALFPENNY.

"Eh?" said Mr. Quelch, scarcely able to believe his ears. "What?"
 "I wish you'd let me go to sleep," said Dick irritably.
 "Boy!"
 "Oh, don't bother!"
 "Boy, boy, are you mad? Get out of that bed at once!"
 "Sha'n't!"
 Mr. Quelch simply staggered.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Given Away.

NUGENT minor settled his head more comfortably on the pillow, and closed his eyes. Mr. Quelch stared at him speechlessly for a full minute. He was too astounded to do anything else. Then he woke to action.

With one stride he reached the bed. He grasped the bed-clothes with both hands, and dragged them off the junior. Then he grasped Dick Nugent by the shoulders, and dragged him off the bed.

Nugent minor rolled on the floor with a yell.
 "You rotter!" he roared. "Lemme alone! What d'ye mean?"

"I never came across such a boy in my life before!" exclaimed the Remove-master. "Dress yourself at once, and leave this room!"

"I won't!"
 "Go at once to the Second Form dormitory."
 "Sha'n't!"

Mr. Quelch gasped.
 "The boy must be mad!" he murmured—"absolutely mad! Nugent minor, do you know who I am? I am a Form-master!"

"I don't care!"
 "You have never been to school before, I suppose?" said Mr. Quelch, controlling his temper admirably.

"I've had a tutor," growled Dick Nugent; "and I jolly well won't stay here, either! I don't like the place. I'm going to sleep in that bed!"

"Boy, this is my room!"
 "I was told I was to sleep here."
 "Oh," exclaimed the Form-master, scenting a junior joke, "you were told so! Who told you?"

"I forget his name—a fat chap in spectacles. He said that the Head had arranged it," said Dick. "Why shouldn't I sleep here if I want to?"

"It is my room. I will speak to Bunter about this in the morning. You must go to the Second Form dormitory at once. Put on your clothes, and I will take you there."

Dick Nugent looked at the Remove-master, and met his grim eye. It occurred to him then that he had better obey. Slowly and sulkily he put on his clothes, and then Mr. Quelch took up the candle, and led the way to the Second Form dormitory. Dick followed with reluctant steps, and a scowling, sullen face.

Mr. Quelch opened the door of the dormitory.
 "This is the place," he said. "I will show you a light to bed. Mind, I shall overlook your outrageous conduct this evening, because you are a foolish and inexperienced new boy, and have evidently been the victim of a trick. But nothing of the sort must occur again. There is your bed. Get in."

And Nugent minor got in.
 Mr. Quelch closed the door, and returned to his room. Nugent minor grunted, and settled down. A sleepy voice came from Gatty's bed:

"Is that you, young Nugent?"

"Yes!" growled Dick.

"You're jolly late!"

"That's not your business."

Gatty snorted.

"You young cad! We were going to put you through it to-night, but I'm too jolly sleepy to get up now. It must be past eleven. What on earth have you been doing all the time?"

No reply.

"Was that Mr. Quelch brought you in?"

"Find out!"

"Have you been licked?"

"Oh, don't bother!"

"Very good!" said Gatty grimly. "I won't bother—I'm too sleepy at this time of night. I'll talk to you in the morning, Nugent minor."

And he went to sleep. Dick Nugent followed his example. He had been saved, after all, from the ragging prepared for him by the Second Form, though only for the time. On the morrow the fags were likely to make up for lost time.

On the morrow, too, a humorous youth in the Remove was to be called to account. When the Lower Fourth came down that morning Mr. Quelch beckoned to Billy Bunter to follow him to his study. Bunter did so, in some alarm, which increased when he saw the Remove-master take up a cane.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE DANDIES OF THE REMOVE."

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT
TUESDAY, The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE
HALFPENNY.

"If—if you please, sir, it wasn't me," stammered Bunter—a little previously, so to speak.

"Bunter, what was not you?"

"I—I mean, sir, I didn't do it."

"You did not do what?"

"I—I—"

"The fact is, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch severely, "I have learned of the trick you played a new boy yesterday. You induced Nugent minor to go to bed in my room, under the impression that the Head had so ordered it."

Billy Bunter's jaw dropped.

"Oh, sir! You see—"

"Did you, or did you not, tell Nugent minor that the Head had arranged for him to sleep in my room?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"You see, sir—"

"Do you deny it, Bunter?"

"No-o-o-o; not exactly, sir."

"Then you admit it?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Bunter, you must do one or the other. If you tell me a falsehood, Bunter, I shall send you to the Head to be severely punished. Now, did you play this trick on Nugent minor?"

"I—I suppose I did, sir."

"Ha, I thought so! Hold out your hand!"

"If you please, sir—"

"Hold out your hand. I shall give you six cuts. Not so much for a joke upon a new boy, though that is very reprehensible, but for your impertinence in using my room for the carrying out of a joke."

And Bunter had three on each hand, and he went out of the Remove-master's study wriggling like an eel.

"I—I say, you fellows," he gasped, as he joined Harry Wharton & Co., "I'm hurt! That beast Quelch can lay it on! I say, that young Nugent is a worm—a sneak—a mean rotter!"

Frank Nugent coloured angrily, and took hold of the fat junior by the collar and shook him.

"Ow! Oh, really, Wharton! Chuck it! If you make my glasses fall off, they'll get broken, and you will jolly well have to pay for them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, is it you, Nugent! Stop it!"

"Then shut up about my minor!" said Frank angrily.

"Well, it's true," said Bunter, jerking himself away. "I've just had three on each hand from Quelch, and it hurts."

"What's that got to do with my minor?"

"He sneaked to Quelch!"

"It's not true!" exclaimed Frank angrily.

"Well, I know I jolly well got six on each hand—"

"You said three just now," said Wharton.

"I meant three first, and then three more—that makes six," said Bunter. "My hands hurt like anything, and all through that young rotter. I really told him to go and sleep in Quelch's room from kindness of heart, because I knew that the Second would rag him."

"What!"

"I dare say Quelch made it warm for him when he found him there, but that wasn't my fault. Besides, he ought not to have sneaked."

"Serve you jolly well right for playing such a trick on my minor," said Frank. "I've a jolly good mind to give you a licking myself!"

Billy Bunter retreated in alarm.

"Here, hold on! I'm hurt!"

"Oh, get away!"

And Nugent looked so angry that Bunter promptly got away. Frank's face was overclouded, and his lips were tightened.

"It's rotten!" said Harry. "I suppose the kid blurted it out, you know. He couldn't have meant to sneak."

Nugent nodded without speaking, and went slowly into the dining-room. His minor was likely to prove a thorn in his side at Greyfriars, that was growing pretty clear. Billy Bunter was in a state of flaming indignation, and he was not likely to make a secret of the delinquency of Nugent minor.

"Hallo, Fatty," said Gatty, of the Second, disrespectfully, as he came upon Bunter in the passage, twisting his fat hands, "been catching it?"

Bunter glared at him through his spectacles.

"Go and eat coke, you young beast! Nice set of sneaks you fags are! Yah! If Nugent minor were in our Form we'd squash him!"

"Eh?" said Gatty quickly. "What's that about Nugent?"

"He's sneaked to Quelch."

"My hat!"

A

19

"He gave me away to our Form-master, and I've just had eight on each hand," said Bunter pathetically. "You ought to make it warm for him."

"Well, you're such a liar, you know!" said Gatty.

"Oh, really, Gatty—"

"But I'll jolly well look into it!" said Gatty, wrinkling his brows. "If the young cad's a sneak as well as all the rest of what he is, we'll make the Second Form too hot to hold him!"

Whereat Billy Bunter was comforted.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Called to Account.

NUGENT major looked out for his minor after morning school. He was very worried about Dick, and he did not quite know what to do with him. Dick's business was to make his peace with the Second Form; but Frank felt that he would not succeed in doing it. He had only succeeded in setting the Second against him. The "sneaking," of which Billy Bunter accused the new boy, would make matters worse, too. Nugent found his young brother in the Close alone, looking decidedly downcast and moody.

Dick glanced at him, not very amiably, as he came up. He was lonely, and glad to see his brother, as a matter of fact, but he was in a bad temper, and full of irritation.

"How are you getting on?" asked Frank, assuming a cheerful manner.

"Rotten!"

"Any more rows?"

"No!"

"I hear that there was trouble last night. I thought you were in your dorm., and it seems you had gone to Quelch's room."

"Dick's brow darkened.

"I was sent there by a fat cad playing a trick."

"You told Mr. Quelch who it was?"

"Yes; he asked me."

Nugent looked worried.

"Bunter was caned for it this morning," he said.

"Serve him right!"

"Yes; it serves him right, true enough," assented Nugent. "but it won't do, you know. You oughtn't to have told the Form-master that it was Bunter sent you there."

"Why not?"

"Because it was sneaking."

"He asked me."

"I can't help that. You mustn't give a chap away to a master, whatever he's done; it's called sneaking here, and it makes the fellows wild."

"I don't care whether they're wild or not."

"What I mean is, the Second will be more down on you than ever if they know; and Bunter isn't likely to keep it dark."

"I don't care."

"I wish I could make you understand things better, Dick. You won't get on at a school like this till you try to be a little more reasonable."

"I don't want to get on here," said Dick bitterly. "I don't like the place. I don't like the people. I'd rather go home."

"It's rough on you at first; but you'll get to like it."

"I don't think so."

"Anyway, as you've got to stick it, you'd better make up your mind to make the best of it," urged Nugent.

Dick shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"I'm going to write to mother to be taken away."

"What's the good of worrying her?" demanded Frank hotly. "You're sent here for your good? You don't want to worry mother with your rotten little troubles. You'll find it all right if you only try to be a little reasonable."

Dick's lips set obstinately.

"I'm going to do as I like," he said.

"Oh, very well, please yourself; it's acting like a coward, that's all!"

"That's enough," said Nugent minor, thrusting his hands deep into his pockets. "Quite enough. I don't want you to stand by me. Let me alone."

Nugent breathed hard.

"I will let you alone," he said. "If you want anything of me after this, you can come and ask for it."

"I sha'n't come, I promise you."

Nugent walked away. His face was clouded as he joined Harry Wharton & Co. for footer practice. His chums knew what was troubling his mind, but they did not speak on the subject. They could say nothing that would be of any comfort.

After his major had left him, Nugent minor remained alone. He was feeling miserable and depressed, and he could hardly restrain his tears as he thought of home and

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the comforts there, and contrasted them with his present surroundings. The first days at school are rough enough to many boys, but Dick Nugent's ways made them rougher to him than was usually the case; and his unconciliatory spirit made it probable that matters would become worse instead of better.

He was leaning against the wall, moodily enough, with his hands in his pockets, the shouts from the distant football field jarring on his ears, when he was spotted by Gatty & Co., of the Second.

The crowd of Second fags came up with a rush and surrounded him. Dick drew his hands from his pockets and looked at them in alarm.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"Here he is!"

"Here's the cad!"

"Sneak!"

"Rat!"

"Look here," exclaimed Dick fiercely, "you let me alone! I don't want to have anything to do with you! I'm jolly sorry I ever came to this rotten school."

"Hark at the cad!"

"Collar him!"

Gatty, and Todd, and two or three more seized the new boy. He was hurried and hustled away in spite of his struggles. Whither they were taking him he had no idea, or for what; but he guessed that it was for something decidedly unpleasant to himself.

The Second Formers crowded into the tool-shed with their helpless victim, and jammed him down upon a wooden bench, two or three of them holding him there.

"Now, keep still," said Gatty threateningly.

"Sha'n't!"

"You cheeky young cub, you want a lesson!" said the chief of the Second Form. "Some of you get a rope."

"Good!"

"Let me go!"

"Rats!"

"I tell you I won't stay here!" shouted Dick Nugent, struggling furiously. "You cads! Let me go! I'm not going to stay here."

"Your mistake—you are."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tie his legs to the bench."

And in spite of Dick's resistance, his legs were tied to the wooden bench, and he was a helpless prisoner. He gasped with rage.

"Now, where's that chap, Bunter?" demanded Gatty.

"He's not here."

"I told you to fetch him, Todd."

"He said he couldn't come unless there was something to eat."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fat porpoise—he—why, here he is."

The fat, spectacled face of Billy Bunter, of the Remove looked in at the door of the tool-shed. He blinked at the excited Second-Formers.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Come in!"

"But I say, is it a feed? If it is, I'll join you with pleasure. I never get enough dinner, as you know. If you want any shopping done, I'm not too proud to lend a hand, though you're only inky little Second Form fags. I—"

Todd and Myers seized him by the arms and ran him into the shed, and slammed the door. Billy Bunter blinked at them in something like alarm.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"It's all right," said Gatty, "we only want you as a witness. There's nothing to eat—"

"Then I'm sincerely sorry, but I'm afraid I can't stop—"

"You've got to stop. Hold him!"

"What-ho!"

"Oh! I—I say, you fellows, you know—"

"Did you send this young ass to bed in Quelch's room last night?" demanded Gatty, putting on a ferocious frown.

"Certainly not. I—I—"

"You told me you did."

"Well, as a matter of fact, perhaps I—I did."

"You did. Remember, witness, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; as what you say will be taken down to be used in evidence against—against Nugent minor."

"It was only a jape."

"We're not going to bother about that. You've accused Nugent minor of sneaking. That's what we're getting at."

"Oh, I see!" said Bunter, greatly relieved to find that he was not to be accused of anything. "Yes, it was a jolly good jape, and my idea from start to finish. I thought it would be a lark to send him to snooze in old Quelch's bed."

"And he gave you away to Quelch?"

"Yes—told tales like—like—like a beast."
 "Do you admit it, Nugent minor?"
 "Go and eat coke!"
 "Finished with me?" asked Billy Bunter anxiously. "I want to see a chap who was going to lend me sixpence. He might forget it."
 "Yes; kick that rotten Remove animal out."
 "Ow! Ow! Ow!"
 Billy Bunter was promptly kicked out.
 "Now, Nugent minor, do you admit your guilt?"
 "Rats!"
 "Do you own up?"
 "More rats."
 "Look here, you young cub——"
 "Let me go!"
 Gatty held up his hand.
 "Guilty or not guilty?"
 "Guilty!" chorussed the fags.
 "Good! Fasten the door, so that none of those Remove cads can interfere, and we'll sentence him and execute him," said Gatty.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER. Nugent Minor's Punishment.

DICK NUGENT wriggled in the bonds that held him to the wooden bench. But it was in vain that he strove to loosen himself. He was tied too tightly, and he could only sit there and await the judgment of the curious court established by the Second Form.

He was alarmed, but less alarmed than enraged. His face was perfectly white with anger, and his eyes were blazing. He was helpless in the hands of the fags, and they clearly meant to show him no mercy.

"Prisoner," said Gatty, "you are found guilty of crawling to Upper Form fellows, cheeking your Form, and sneaking to a master. You're going to be put through it."

"Rats!"

"Where's the burnt cork?"

"Here you are."

"Good! Hold his hands!"

Myers and Todd hung on to Nugent minor's arms. Gatty, with a chunk of burnt cork, proceeded to blacken the unfortunate prisoner's face all over.

This done—with startling results in the way of changing Nugent minor's appearance—they dragged off his jacket and waistcoat, and substituted a ragged old coat in their place. The old coat was one worn by Gosling, the porter, when he was doing rough work in the wood shed. It was about a dozen sizes larger than was necessary for Dick Nugent, and full of holes and smothered with dirt and grease.

Dick's eyes burned through the black on his face.

"You beasts!" he gasped. "You cowards!"

Gatty laughed.

"Think that will do, you kids?"

"Well, he looks very pretty."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nugent minor, are you ready to go down on your knees and beg the pardon of the Second Form for being a rotten outsider and a tale-bearer?"

"Rats!"

"Very good. Open the door and yank him out. He's going round the buildings in a procession, to show the school how the Second Form deal with sneaks."

"Hear, hear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dick gasped with rage at the thought of being marched round the Close with a blackened face, in Gosling's old coat. But there was no help for it. He had put the backs up of the Second Form, and they were merciless.

The shed door was opened, and Dick was cast loose from the rope, and dragged out into the open air.

The winter sunlight was falling upon the Close, and nearly everybody was out of doors.

The Second Form was on the spot almost to a man—or, rather, to a boy—and they crowded round Dick with shouts and gusts of laughter.

"This way!" shouted Gatty.

"March!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dick Nugent struggled furiously. The perspiration ran down his face, making streaks in the black of the burnt cork.

But many hands grasped him, and he was hoisted upon the shoulders of Gatty and Todd, and marched forward, his wrists and ankles held by strong hands.

A yell of laughter greeted his appearance on all sides.

"My hat!" gasped Temple, of the Upper Fourth. "Who—what is that?"

"Looks like a nigger," remarked Fry.

"Or a Christy minstrel."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"My word!" shrieked Tom Brown. "It's young Nugent!"

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NEXT
 TUESDAY:

NEW
 TUESDAY, The "Magnet" ONE
 LIBRARY. HALFPENNY.

"Nugent minor! Ha, ha, ha!"

One of the Second-Formers had pinned a card across the breast of the old coat Dick Nugent was wearing. It bore in large letters the single word "SNEAK!"

It was a sufficient explanation to the onlookers as to what his punishment was due.

"No business of ours," remarked Temple. "And if he's been sneaking, serve him jolly well right!"

"Oh, rather!"

But Tom Brown thought differently. He had not taken a liking to Dick by any means. But he was thinking of Nugent, with whom he was very chummy. He ran off towards the footer-field to apprise the chums of the Remove of what was going on.

The Second Form procession, avoiding the masters' windows, marched on, and as it happened they skirted the football-ground, and arrived there soon after the New Zealand junior.

Tom Brown ran on the field, where Harry Wharton & Co. were practising passing and kicking at goal.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's the row?"

"Young Nugent—the Second are ragging him!" exclaimed Brown breathlessly. "I came to tell you, Frank!"

Frank Nugent looked worried.

"What are they doing to him?"

"Look—there they come!"

The footballers looked at the procession as it came swarming towards them.

Nugent's eyes seemed almost to start from his head as he saw the figure with the blackened face, and in the absurd coat, borne on high before the uproarious procession.

"Great Scott!" gasped Harry Wharton. "That's not Dick Nugent, surely!"

"Yes, it is!"

"My hat!"

"The hatfulness is terrific!"

Nugent cast an appealing glance at his chums.

"Stand by me, chaps!" he exclaimed. "I know Dick has brought all this on himself; but I can't stand by and see it. I'm going to stop them."

"Right you are, Franky. Come on."

"The readyfulness of our esteemed selves is terrific to back up our worthy chum."

And the Removites, leaving the footer, rushed towards the procession, in football-shorts as they were. Tom Brown, Mark Linley, and several others of the Lower Fourth joined them, always ready to back up Harry Wharton.

"Put that kid down!" roared Nugent.

There was a yell of defiance from the Second Form, strong in numbers.

"Rats!"

"Go home!"

"He's a sneak!"

"Yah!"

"Put him down, I tell you; or we'll jolly soon make you!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Now, then, down with him!"

"Go and eat coke!"

And the procession swayed on.

"Come on!" said Nugent between his teeth.

And the Removites rushed to the attack.

The procession was broken up at the first rush.

It was not particularly agreeable to Nugent minor, however; for, as the fellows who were carrying him staggered and reeled, he came to the ground with an unpleasant bump.

Then the swaying and struggling juniors trampled over him, and he was rolled over and over, and a dozen or more fellows sprawled across him.

The uproar was, as Hurree Singh would have said, terrific.

The Second Form, though they had the advantage of numbers, had no real chance against the fighting men of the Remove; and after a brief scramble they were scattered to right and left—all who were not scrambling upon the ground.

But the tussle was hardly over when Wingate, of the Sixth, came-up, with a face pink with anger, and cuffing right and left.

"What do you mean by making this row?" he roared.

"Ow! Oh!"

"Chuck it!"

"Yah!"

Removites and Second-Formers promptly scattered. Nugent minor sat up, dazed and bewildered. He was so confused that he hardly knew what was happening.

Wingate uttered a gasp as he saw the black-complexioned stranger.

"Wh-wh-who are you?" he gasped.
Nugent minor scrambled to his feet.
"Who—who are you? What does this mean? What are you rigged up like this for?" exclaimed Wingate, grasping the new boy by the shoulder.
Nugent minor struggled savagely.
"Let me go!"
"You are Nugent minor!"
"Yes! Leggo!"
"Then what do you mean by this?"
"Leggo!" yelled Nugent minor furiously.
"Are you mad?" exclaimed Wingate angrily. "Do you know who I am?"
"I don't care who you are! Let me alone."
Wingate's grip tightened. His face was very angry now.
"You will learn to care who I am in time, I think, if you're not kicked out of Greyfriars too soon," he said quietly. "I am the captain of the school."
"Let go!"
"You young fool, I——"
Nugent minor kicked out furiously.
"Oh!" gasped Wingate.
He staggered back in pain. The savage kick had taken effect upon his shin, and for the moment he was helpless, and he released the junior.
Dick Nugent took advantage of the opportunity.
He darted away at top-speed.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Licked!

WINGATE compressed his lips hard. He was in great pain. The kick had been a hard one in a tender place. His face went quite pale for a moment.

But he was as much amazed as hurt. He had come in contact with all sorts and conditions of boys at Greyfriars, but no one just like Nugent minor before. For a Second Form fag to kick the captain of the school! Wingate could hardly believe it, though his leg was aching with pain.

The Removites had witnessed the scene from a distance, and Frank Nugent's face was a study.

"He's done it now!" he said.

And the Nabob of Bhanipur murmured that the donefulness was terrific.

"Come back, Nugent minor!" shouted Wingate.

But the junior did not heed.

Wingate limped after him for a few paces, and then stopped, and called to the fags, who were looking on from a distance with scared expressions.

"Fetch that young fool back!" he said. "Bring him to my study!"

"Yes, Wingate!"

"Right-ho!"

"We'll get him!"

So chorussed the fags, eagerly enough.

Wingate, the rugged but kind-hearted captain of Greyfriars, was the idol of the Lower Forms. The fags felt more incensed against Nugent minor for his treatment of Wingate than for anything else.

They entered into the chase with zest.

"Your minor is in for it this time," Gatty leered to Nugent as he passed him.

Frank made no reply, only looking worried. But Bob Cherry put out a foot, over which Gatty promptly tumbled, rolling on the ground.

He jumped up in a fury; but, seeing Bob Cherry's fists doubled, he thought it more prudent to dash on after the other fags.

Wingate signed to Nugent to come to him; and the Removite, with a deeply overcast face, obeyed. The captain of Greyfriars looked at him curiously.

"You seem to have a queer fish for a minor, Nugent," said Wingate.

Nugent nodded gloomily.

"I hope you won't be hard on him, Wingate," he said. "He's not a bad sort really. He can't understand that he's not at home, that's all. This sort of place is new to him. He had a tutor at home, and did what he liked."

"Yes, I guessed as much. But we can't have fags kicking the shins of the Head of the Sixth," said Wingate grimly.

"Of course, he ought to be licked."

"And he will be. You ought to take him in hand a little, Nugent, and try to show him the ropes. I found him smoking in Bulstrode's study yesterday. It seems to me that he wants a lot of looking after; and, as his major, you ought to do it."

"I—I've tried——"

"He's in trouble with the rest of his Form, too. They

haven't treated a new kid in this outrageous way for nothing."

"I—I know they haven't."

"What has he done?"

"He—he let out to Mr. Quelch the name of a chap who played a trick on him. He didn't mean to sneak, of course," said Nugent hastily.

Wingate's brow contracted.

"Well, it was very unfortunate, that's all," he said.

"You'd better keep an eye on him; or Greyfriars will be too hot to hold him soon."

And Wingate went into the house.

Meanwhile, the fags were hunting down Nugent minor with a great deal of relish. Not knowing the ground well, he had little chance of escaping, even for a time. He was soon cornered, and the fags surrounded him, and dragged him back towards the School House, vainly struggling.

This time the Remove chums did not interfere.

It was impossible to "kick" against the authority of Wingate, the captain of the school.

Nugent minor had to face the music.

Meanwhile, Wingate had met Mr. Quelch as he entered the School House. In spite of himself, the Sixth-Former was limping a little, and the Remove-master stopped to speak to him.

"An accident, Wingate?"

"Oh, no, sir; a kick!"

"What—a kick?" said the Remove-master, in surprise.

Wingate smiled.

"Yes, sir. We have a new boy here who is something new in that line. He does not know that the Head of the Sixth must not have his shins kicked."

"Dear me! Is it possible? I suppose you are alluding to Nugent minor?"

"Yes; the new kid in the Second."

"A most peculiar boy," said Mr. Quelch. "He slept in my room last night, and caused me a great deal of trouble in getting rid of him." The Remove-master coloured at the recollection of the ridiculous burglar alarm—an alarm that seemed more ridiculous than ever in the broad daylight now. "I hope, Wingate, that you will make it clear to him that such outrageous insubordination cannot be allowed."

"Yes, sir."

Wingate went into his study, where he rubbed the bruise on his leg—and a big bruise it was, too.

He was still so engaged when a crowd of fags came tramping along the passage, with a struggling prisoner in their midst.

Gatty threw open the door of the study, and put an untidy head and red, triumphant face into the room.

"Got him!" he ejaculated.

"Here he is!"

"Here's the cad!"

"Shove him in!"

A struggling form was projected through the doorway.

Nugent minor staggered in, and fell upon his hands and knees on the carpet, gasping for breath. The doorway was crammed with triumphant fags, many of whom had smears of black upon their faces from Dick Nugent's burnt-cork complexion.

"Thank you!" said Wingate quietly. "You can clear out."

Rather reluctantly Gatty & Co. withdrew. They wanted to see the interview. They crowded back into the passage, but Gatty kept the door an inch ajar, his eye to the aperture.

"Close that door!" rapped out Wingate.

Gatty reluctantly obeyed.

Nugent minor scrambled to his feet. He looked a pitiable object. His blackened face, and the old ragged coat reaching below his knees, made him look utterly absurd. Wingate fixed his eyes upon him.

"I want to speak to you, kid," he said, not unkindly.

"You are on the worst of terms with your Form. You have kicked my shins; but you don't understand yet what that might mean to you if I were hard. You seem to be a wilful and obstinate young rascal, and amenable to only one kind of persuasion—a licking. I'm going to give you a licking, not on account of this big bruise, but for your own good."

Dick eyed him warily and sullenly.

"I won't be licked," he said.

"Your opinion won't be asked," said Wingate, taking up a cane. "Hold out your hand."

Dick put his hands behind him.

"Will you obey me, Nugent minor?"

"No!"

Wingate breathed hard through his nose.

"Very well," he said. "You only make it harder for

yourself. You will have the licking all the same in a more painful way."

He stepped towards the junior to take him by the collar. Dick Nugent promptly dodged round the table.

"Come here!"

"Sha'n't!"

Wingate paused. It was extremely undignified in a big Sixth-Former, captain of the school, too, to chase a nimble fag round a table. Wingate's temper was rising again. He had been very patient with Nugent minor, and it was not surprising that his patience was failing at last.

"Nugent minor, come here."

"I won't be licked."

"I give you one more chance. If you put me to the trouble of catching you, I'll make this a licking that you won't get over for weeks."

Nugent minor made no reply, but he stood warily watching. It was evidently not his intention to give in.

"Very well," said Wingate. "You will have only yourself to thank for what you get."

"I won't be licked. I don't want to stay at this school," said Dick. "I'm going to write to my people to take me away. I hate the place, and everybody in it."

"Will you come here?"

"No!"

Wingate said no more. He ran round the table after the fag. Dick Nugent dodged again, and Wingate, reaching across to seize him, bumped against the table and sent it flying.

There was a crash as a heap of books and paper, accompanied by an inkpot, went to the floor. The table rocked wildly.

But Wingate's grasp was upon the fag now.

Dick Nugent struggled desperately. He kicked and fought and yelled, while Wingate fastened a strong grip upon his collar, and lashed him with the cane.

Wingate laid it on well, and every blow brought a fresh yell from Nugent minor, who was helpless in the powerful grasp of the senior.

Wingate had said that it should be a good thrashing, and he made it so.

He gave Nugent minor a dozen powerful lashes across the back, and then he jerked him to the door of the study, and opened it.

"I hope that will be a lesson to you," he said. "You will get it worse next time."

And he tossed the yelling fag out into the passage, and closed the door.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Struck Down.

DICK NUGENT staggered to his feet.

He was hurt—very much hurt—and the Second Form fags, who had intended to give him a further ragging when he emerged from the captain's study, felt that he had had enough. He stood for some minutes leaning against the wall, his whole form shaken with dry gasping. They looked at him, and let him alone.

"Come on," said Todd. "The poor beggar's had enough this time."

"Right-ho!" said Gatty.

And the Second-Formers streamed away.

Nugent minor was left alone in the passage, quivering from head to foot, as much with passion as with pain, and trying hard to keep back the tears.

He glanced up savagely at the sound of a footstep.

It was his major.

"I'm sorry for this, Dick," said Frank Nugent softly.

"It's awfully rough. Come along, old fellow, and—"

"Let me alone."

"Dick!"

"Can't you leave me alone?"

Nugent bit his lip.

"Oh, very well," he said. And he walked away. Dick Nugent looked after him with sullen, glowering eyes.

The fag's heart was burning with hatred and malice and all uncharitableness. Towards Wingate he felt a furious hatred.

All his thoughts were directed towards revenge upon the senior who had given him that severe, but well-deserved thrashing.

He went slowly down the passage, and the grins and chuckles which greeted his appearance reminded him of the absurd figure he was cutting.

He tore off the old coat, and threw it upon the floor, and hurried away to a bath-room to get the burnt cork washed off his face.

In the streaming hot-water he rubbed and rubbed, but it was long before the black was off his face, and then some traces of it still lingered round his ears.

When he had finished, and looked into the glass, he saw a face dark and sullen, with the eyes glinting, the brows contracted.

He was aching all over from the thrashing, and the rough handling he had received from the Second Form fags.

He left the bath-room, and went out into the Close; and, to his relief, the fags took no further notice of him. They were not done with him yet, but they realised that it would be only decent to let him alone after the licking he had had in Wingate's study. If they had known what was working in his mind, however, probably they would have acted differently. The thrashing Wingate had given him had been far from reducing Nugent minor to a state of subordination.

He glanced up at Wingate's window as he went into the Close. The captain of the school stood at the window, which was open, watching some football practice, his window commanding a view of the football field.

Nugent minor's eyes glittered.

His eyes fell upon a big round heavy stone, and he glanced from it to Wingate, and from Wingate back to the stone again.

He stooped, and his fingers closed convulsively on the stone.

The spoiled, passionate boy was not given to calculating the consequence of his actions. At home, he had done what he liked, and generally his elders had taken great trouble to placate him if he were annoyed. Now he was thinking only of his revenge upon the captain of Greyfriars.

He stood under the leafless elms, looking up at Wingate, who was quite unconscious of the fag below his window, stone in hand.

Harry Wharton, who had come off the football field, and was walking towards the house, caught sight of Nugent minor, saw the stone in his hand and the look on his face, and guessed his intention. He gave a shout of warning.

"Look out, Wingate!"

Wingate started, and looked downward. At the same moment Nugent minor's hand swept through the air, and the stone flew.

Wingate gave a sharp cry, and disappeared into the room.

"Good heavens!" cried Wharton. "You mad young fool!"

He ran into the house, and up to Wingate's study. The captain of Greyfriars had staggered away from the window, and sunk into a chair. There was a dazed look on his face. A dark, bruised mark was forming on his temple.

"Wingate! You're hurt!"

"I—I—yes!" stammered the senior, rubbing his forehead with his hand. "I—I feel stunned. Did that young fool throw a stone at me?"

Wharton did not reply.

But no reply was needed; the stone was lying on the floor, where it had crashed down after striking Wingate. The captain of Greyfriars essayed to rise from his chair, but sank back again. The concussion had almost stunned him, and the effort to rise made his senses whirl.

"I—I—oh!"

Wingate lay limp in the chair.

Wharton's face went white. He dashed to the washstand in the alcove at the foot of the bed, and seized the water-jug. He dashed cold water into the captain's face. Wingate gave a shuddering breath, but did not open his eyes.

"What on earth's the matter?" exclaimed Carberry, looking in at the open door. "What are you doing, Wharton?"

"Wingate's been hurt."

"Phew! Who did that?"

"Somebody threw a stone."

"Great Scott!"

Carberry loosened Wingate's collar and tie. Wharton bathed his face as he lay limp in the armchair. Other fellows came crowding into the study, alarmed and curious. The prefect waved them back.

"Don't crowd round," he said. "He wants air. Some mad idiot has been throwing stones from the Close, and he's stunned."

"My hat!" said Loder. "I shouldn't care to be the chap who did it."

"Hardly."

"Who was it, Wharton?"

"I think Wingate knows," said Harry.

"What is the matter here?" said a deep voice at the door.

The fellows turned round in surprise and some dismay. A form in cap and gown stood there. A pair of searching eyes looked into the study.

"The Head!"

Dr. Locke looked into the room.

"What has happened?"

"Wingate's hurt, sir," said Carberry respectfully.

"Bless my soul!" The Head came into the study, the seniors respectfully making way for him, and stood looking down in horror at the pale face of the captain of the school.

with the big bruise on the temple. "Who—what has done this?"

"It was a stone from the Close, sir."

The Head glanced at the big round stone on the floor.

"Who threw it?"

"Wharton says Wingate knows, sir."

"He's coming to," said Harry quietly.

Wingate's eyes opened. He blinked wildly about him, and tried to sit upright. Harry gently detained him.

"Don't try to get up," he whispered. "Stay as you are. You'll feel better."

"The young rascal!" muttered Wingate faintly. "He threw it because I licked him, you know. He must be mad!"

"Who was it, Wingate?" said Carberry.

"The new kid in the Second—Nugent minor."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

Wingate started. He had not observed the doctor at his side. He glanced round at the Head with startled eyes.

"Some of you find Nugent minor, and bring him to my study, please," said the Head. "I am sorry to see you like this, Wingate. Such an outrage is unprecedented—unheard of. There shall be no chance of its repetition at Greyfriars. The boy shall leave the school this afternoon."

And the Head strode from the room.

Carberry and Loder and another Sixth-Former went to look for Nugent minor. Wharton brought a towel, and Wingate mopped his face dry. He was very pale, and felt sick and dazed.

"Thank you, Wharton," he said, with a faint smile. "I feel better now. You can cut. Tell Nugent I'm sorry his brother's going to be kicked out; but it can't be helped. We couldn't allow this sort of thing at Greyfriars."

Harry nodded sadly.

"I suppose not, Wingate. It will be rough on old Nugent."

"Tell him I'm sorry. But the kid will be better away from the school; after the beginning he's made here, he would have an uphill time of it."

Harry nodded, and left the study.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Expelled.

DR. LOCKE sat, with a hard, stern brow, waiting for the delinquent to be brought before him. It was seldom that the Head was angry; but he was angry now, and very angry, indeed. The assault on the captain of the school had been too outrageous for pardon. It was not as if Wingate had been of a bullying disposition, like Carberry or Loder, for instance. The captain of Greyfriars was rugged enough in some ways, and he never minced his words, but he had a heart of gold. The fags worshipped Wingate; he was even more popular with the "Babes" of the First and Second Forms than with the seniors.

Nugent minor's act would set the whole of Greyfriars against him, from the eldest prefect to the youngest fag. And it had set the Head against him, too. Dr. Locke's procedure was to be short and sharp.

He intended to send a telegram to Nugent minor's parents, followed by a letter of explanation, which, however, would be preceded by the arrival of the boy himself at home.

Nugent minor was to shake the dust of Greyfriars from his feet that afternoon, and take the next train home.

Upon that the Head had already resolved. It remained only to pass the sentence upon the rebellious fag.

A tap at the door interrupted the Head's grim reverie.

"Come in!" he said quietly.

Carberry and Loder entered, bringing in Dick Nugent between them.

The boy was not resisting. In the first place, resistance would have been useless and painful to himself. At the first sign of it, Carberry and Loder had twisted his arms till he screamed with pain. He found them very different from Wingate. And after that sharp lesson, he had come quietly. But, besides that, Dick was a little scared now. Even his passionate and wilful temper was not proof against the contempt and condemnation he saw in every face.

He realised that he had gone too far, and he was inwardly decidedly uneasy.

His brow was sullen as he was brought in, and stood face to face with the doctor, who had risen to his feet.

Dr. Locke looked at the boy searchingly.

The lad looked handsome enough, more handsome, perhaps, because of the flush in his cheeks and the sparkle in his eyes. But all his good looks were marred by the sullen frown on his face.

There was regret in the doctor's face for a moment. The lad might have been so very different, had his training been different.

But it was no time to think of that now.

"Nugent minor," said the Head quietly—that quiet voice

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of his that was more impressive than the loudest tones from anyone else—"I have only a few words to say to you. Loder and Carberry, you may go!"

"Yes, sir."

The two seniors left the study. Dick Nugent cast a glance towards the door, but he did not stir. He was not held, but there was something in the Head's stern glance that chained him to the spot.

"Nugent minor, I hope you realise the seriousness of what you have done? You hurled a heavy stone at Wingate—"

"He licked me!"

"It was a cowardly and cruel act of revenge, even if your previous punishment had been undeserved," said the Head, raising his voice a little. "I am assured, however, that whatever punishment Wingate may have meted out to you, it was fully deserved."

Dick was sullenly silent.

"Your action will be viewed with abhorrence by every boy at Greyfriars," said Dr. Locke. "It will probably be for your own comfort to leave the school. Because you are so young, and because I can guess that you have not had certain advantages of training which fall to other boys, I shall not flog you before you go!"

Nugent minor started.

"Before I go!" he faltered.

"Certainly! You are expelled from Greyfriars!"

Dick started again. He had wanted to leave the school—passionately desired to be sent home, to quit the place, and never see it again.

But now that his wish was granted—

It seemed different now, somehow. It was one thing to be taken away at his own request, another to be turned out in disgrace.

There were the people at home to be faced. What was he to say to them? If he had written to his mother, and she had persuaded his father to take him away, that would have been all right.

But now he would have to admit that he was kicked out—that he was sent home because he was not considered fit to remain at the school. The thought made the colour burn in his cheeks.

He fancied he could already see the pitying and contemptuous looks, and hear the remarks of those who had said always that he was a spoiled boy, and would never get on at a public school.

The Head watched the boy's face, which was like a mirror to the thoughts that thronged within.

"Have you anything to say, Nugent minor?" he said at last.

"I—I—"

The boy broke off. What could he say? He would not beg for mercy, that was certain. He knew, too, that if he did, he would beg in vain.

There was no respite for him.

Anything he could say would not alter what he had done, and he knew that there was no rescinding of his sentence. He relapsed into silence.

"I am sorry for this, Nugent minor," said the Head. "A term or two at a public school would do you more good than you can imagine—if you had not made it impossible for you to remain at Greyfriars. You have been guilty of a cruel, cowardly act. I hope that, on reflection, you will be sorry for what you have done."

Dick was sullenly silent.

"Have you anything to say?"

"I—I'm sorry I threw the stone," said Nugent minor, with an effort. "I—I didn't mean to hurt him so much."

"You do not deny throwing it?"

"No, sir."

"Why did you do it?"

"Because he licked me."

"You know that the captain of the school has authority to punish the younger boys?"

"I—I suppose so."

"Then I am to conclude that you might have acted in the same way if it had been a master who had punished you!" exclaimed the Head.

Nugent minor was silent.

"You are certainly not fit to be at this school," said Dr. Locke. "I am only sorry, for your own sake, that I do not think that a flogging would meet the case. You will go at once and pack your box, and Gosling will take you to the station for the three o'clock train. I shall wire to your parents, and write a letter of full explanation. Your father will understand that I cannot keep the responsibility of a boy of your nature upon my hands."

Dick Nugent shivered a little.

His mother, he knew, would greet him on his return with boundless confidence and affection, but his father—

It was his father who had insisted upon his going to

Greyfriars, because his mother was spoiling him. What would he say when the boy returned on only the second day—in deep disgrace?

But it was too late to think of that now.

"I repeat that I am sorry, Nugent minor," said Dr. Locke. "You may go up now and pack your box!"

"Yes, sir," said the junior heavily.

And he left the Head's study.

Dr. Locke remained with a troubled look upon his face.

"There is good in that lad, with proper training," he murmured to himself; "but he has come to Greyfriars too late. In any case, I cannot pardon him now; he must leave the school. I only hope he will have better fortune elsewhere."

Dick Nugent went slowly upstairs to the Second Form dormitory to pack his box. He opened the box, and then sat down on the edge of it to think, and forgot all about packing. His thoughts were gloomy enough.

After all, he might have had a good time at Greyfriars—if he had started there in a different spirit. How was it that everybody and everything had gone against him? Was it all his own fault?

Home in disgrace!

"Dick!"

Frank Nugent entered the dormitory. Dick looked up at him with a dull, dogged expression. Frank came over quickly towards him, with an anxious face.

"What are you doing, Dick?"

"Packing."

"What for?"

"I'm leaving the school!"

Nugent's face lengthened with dismay.

"You don't mean to say you're expelled, Dick?"

Nugent minor shook himself irritably.

"Well, I am," he said. "There's no help for it now. I biffed Wingate with a stone, and he seems to be hurt more than I intended. It can't be helped."

"It was a beastly cowardly thing to do, Dick!"

The boy clenched his fists.

"What's that?"

"It was cowardly and rotten," said Frank, without mincing his words now. "Wingate is one of the best fellows breathing. If he had been one of the worst, stone-throwing is a dirty, cowardly trick, anyway! Do you know what I'd do if you weren't punished enough already? I'd give you such a licking that you wouldn't be able to stand!"

Nugent minor stared at his brother, too amazed to be angry. Frank had never to his recollection taken that tone with him before.

"But it's no good talking about that!" said Nugent. "You're expelled, and that's an end of it! I hope you're satisfied now. You'll worry dad, and make mother miserable. All because you had to act like a silly kid of eight instead of a fellow of twelve, who ought to have had more sense."

"Oh, pile it on!" said Dick bitterly. "I admit I've been rather a fool! But everybody has been against me from the start!"

"I wasn't against you, but you wouldn't let me help you. The fags didn't want to be against you. Why should they? You put their backs up at the beginning, and wouldn't try to make your peace, though you could have done it. Did you think the fellows at a school like this were going to pet and coax you as mother and Aunt Ada do at home?" said Nugent hotly. "You must be a fool!"

Dick reddened.

"Well, it's no good jawing me now!" he said. "I dare say I'd act differently if I had it over again. Now I'm expelled!"

"It's rough—rotten rough!"

"I can stand it!"

"I wasn't thinking of you," said Frank savagely; "I was thinking of mother!"

"Oh!"

"She thinks a lot of you—why, I'm blessed if I can make out! It will be a blow to her to have you kicked out of school on the second day. I—I wonder if it could be stopped?"

"The Head's as hard as a rock!"

"Yes; but Wingate. It's worth trying, though it seems an awful cheek to think of speaking to him, but I'll try!"

Before Dick could speak again, Nugent hurried from the dormitory.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Good for Evil.

WINGATE was sitting in his study, a cushion behind his head, his face very pale, and with an expression of pain upon it. His head was aching terribly, and he was fit for nothing, either work or play. To a fellow who never passed an hour indoors if he could help it the inaction alone was torment, and he could not even read now. He grunted as a tap came at his door, and frowned as Nugent of the Remove entered.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"THE DANDIES OF THE REMOVE."

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Frank Nugent was looking very red and uncomfortable, but he had resolved to go through with the thing. After all, it could do little harm, if it did little good.

Wingate fixed his eyes on him.

"I don't want to be disturbed," he said grimly.

"I'm sorry, Wingate."

"All right—get out!"

Nugent hesitated, with his hand on the door.

"Won't—won't you let me speak to you for a minute?" he said.

"Oh, come in, and get on, then!"

Nugent closed the door.

"It's about my minor."

"I guessed as much."

"The Head has expelled him."

"Good!"

"He's leaving Greyfriars this afternoon."

"All the better for Greyfriars!"

"I—I dare say it is, Wingate. But it's rough on his people at home—my people. But—but I suppose I was a cheeky ass to come here. I'll go."

And the boy, with a miserable face, turned to the door again.

Wingate's expression changed.

"Stay here!" he said.

Nugent turned back.

"Now, what did you come here to say?" asked the captain of Greyfriars. "It won't do any harm to say it, at all events."

"It's an awful cheek, under the circumstances—"

"Oh, get on!"

"It's about young Dick—my minor. I—I—I was going to ask you if—if you'd look over it," stammered Nugent. "I know it's an awful cheek. I know what he's done—he ought to be skinned for it. I think I should like him to have a flogging. But—but—Of course, I suppose it doesn't matter to you, but my mother—"

Wingate smiled slightly.

"But perhaps it does matter to me," he said. "Go on."

"It will come very rough on the mater if he goes home, that's all," said Frank. "You see, he's been spoiled—"

"Yes, that's pretty clear."

"Mother is awfully fond of him, but he's a fearful worry to her all the time, all the same; and he puts the dad into bad tempers, too," said Frank. "I know jolly well that they'll be happier at home if Dick is at Greyfriars; but, besides that, they take a lot of pride in him, and if he's sent home in disgrace—They—they'd feel it less if I were expelled."

Wingate nodded.

"If you could lick him instead, Wingate, and let him off—"

"But the Head has sentenced the young fool!"

"Yes, I know, but—but if you were to speak to the Head—"

Nugent's voice trailed away. It dawned upon him what a colossal nerve he was displaying in asking this of Wingate. If the captain of Greyfriars had risen and bundled him neck and crop out of the study Nugent would not have been surprised or offended. He felt that he deserved it for his cheek.

But Wingate did not do anything of the sort.

He sat quite still and silent for a full minute, looking at Nugent with a curious expression on his face. Then he rose to his feet.

The motion brought a throb of pain through his head, and he had to grasp the table for support, and his face went paler for a moment.

"Oh, I'm a brute to disturb you now," said Nugent remorsefully, "and it's all that young cad's fault; but in an hour it will be too late."

"I'll see what I can do."

"Oh, Wingate!"

"I'll go to the Head. Wait here."

Nugent burst into incoherent thanks, but Wingate did not stay to listen to them. With slow and uncertain steps the captain of Greyfriars made his way to the doctor's study.

Dr. Locke was still there. He had laid down his pen, and was thinking, with a very pensive expression on his face. Wingate tapped and entered, and the Head looked at him in surprise.

"Wingate! You ought not to be getting about yet. I wish you would lie down for the afternoon."

"Yes, sir. But I wanted to speak to you on an important subject."

"Go on. Take a chair."

"It's about Nugent minor, sir," said Wingate, sitting down. "As I am the injured party, sir, you may think I have a right to speak."

"Go on."

"Could you possibly let him off, sir?"

The Head started.

"Let him off, Wingate—after what he has done?"
 "I don't mean to let him off entirely," said Wingate hastily.
 "I mean, let him off being expelled. Of course, he ought to be flogged."

The doctor's face was very serious.

"It is generous of you to intercede for him like this, Wingate, when you have suffered such a brutal assault at his hands. If you think that the boy may become in time amenable to discipline—"

"I think he might have another chance, sir, if you are agreeable. I shouldn't like any kid to be expelled on my account, and—and there's his brother, who's one of the best lads in the Remove, and his people, too. If he doesn't amend in a week or so, sir, he could leave Greyfriars."

"Ah, yes, we might arrange that—a term of probation," said the Head slowly. "I will say, Wingate, that I am glad you have spoken like this. I could not do otherwise than as I have done, yet I shall not be sorry to give the boy another chance. I think his faults are rather due to his home training than to any inherent evil in his nature."

"Then you will let him stay, sir?"

"For the present, yes, and we will watch the result. You will let me know what you think of the boy in a week's time."

"Thank you very much, sir!"

"Not at all. It is Nugent minor who should thank you; and sooner or later, I hope, he will come to see and feel how much he owes you."

And the captain of Greyfriars quitted the Head's study.

He returned to his room, where Nugent was waiting with a clouded face and a heavy heart.

The junior looked up eagerly.

Wingate smiled as he clapped him on the shoulder.

"It's all right, my lad!"

Nugent drew a deep breath.

"Wingate, have you got him off?"

"Yes."

"He's to stay at Greyfriars?"

"Yes, on probation. According to how he shapes his conduct for the next week or two, so the Head will decide. You had better let him know it, and warn him to mind his p.'s and q.'s."

"Wingate, you are awfully good! I—I don't know how to thank you!" stammered Nugent.

Wingate laughed.

"Don't try! Get out now—my head aches."

And Nugent got out.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

A New Start.

"EXPELLED!" said Gatty. "Well, you jolly well deserve it, I must say! If you hadn't been expelled we'd have ragged you bald-headed!"

"What-ho!" said Todd.

"You'd learn that you couldn't biff old Wingate on the napper with things," said Myers. "Why, you young cad, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! I've a jolly good mind to give you a licking now myself!"

"Oh, let him alone," said Todd. "He'll get enough."

"Yes, that's so."

Dick Nugent made no reply to the remarks of the crowd of Second-Form fellows in the doorway of the dormitory.

He went on packing his box with a heavy heart.

The fags had tracked him to the Second Form dormitory with the intention of renewing their ragging, but they had learned that he was expelled, and that news stopped them. It was not "cricket" to rag a fellow under sentence of expulsion.

Nugent major came into the dormitory, pushing his way through the fags. Gatty & Co. walked away, leaving the brothers alone.

Dick looked up. There were tears in his eyes now. The unaffected satisfaction of the Second Form at the prospect of getting rid of him had wounded him deeply. It was not pleasant to be told that his departure was as good as a whole holiday to the Form he belonged to.

"It's all right, kid!" said Frank abruptly. "Wingate has got you off!"

"Wingate?"

"Yes. He interceded with the Head."

Nugent minor stood motionless.

"Wingate?" he repeated again. "After the way I treated him! He asked the Head to let me off?"

"Yes."

"Blessed if I understand it!"

"You'll get to understand Wingate better if you stay at Greyfriars," said Frank. "He's the best fellow here. Of course, you're going to be punished. You'll be flogged, and you'll have to stand it."

"Flogged?" said Nugent minor slowly.

"Yes. But anything's better than being expelled. You've got a chance to get out of this way you've got into. After a flogging the fags will let you alone for a bit, and you will have a chance to pull round. The best thing you can do in the Second Form is to fight Gatty. He's nearly twice your size, but you had better tackle him. If you lick him, you'll be a favourite; if he licks you, as I suppose he will, it will make the other fellows respect you. No more sulking and snarling, mind! Keep a stiff upper lip, and try to be a man!"

Dick coloured.

"I'm sorry I threw that stone at Wingate," he said. "I—I never expected him to speak for me. He must be awfully decent."

"I'm glad you can see that, at any rate."

"And—and I'm not to leave Greyfriars?"

"Not if you behave yourself, and show that you're worth being given a chance."

Nugent minor nodded without speaking.

The bell rang for afternoon lessons, and Frank Nugent left his brother and went into the Remove room as usual, but Nugent minor did not go to the Second. He was taken into the Head's study by Gosling, who waited there, with a lurking smile on his face, which would have shown anyone that knew Gosling that a flogging was coming.

Dr. Locke looked sternly at the junior.

"Little as you deserve it, Nugent minor," he said, "Wingate, the victim of your brutality, has interceded for you. I have commuted your punishment to a flogging. Gosling, you will take him up."

And Gosling hoisted Nugent minor. The boy did not speak a word. He took his flogging—and a severe one it was—almost in silence.

When it was over he left the Head's study, and, to the great surprise of the Second-Formers, made his appearance in the class-room, but his uneasiness on the form, and the desire he showed to stand up on every possible occasion showed them what had taken place—that Nugent minor had been flogged after all, instead of being expelled from Greyfriars.

After lessons, Dick Nugent hung about the passages for a chance of seeing Wingate. The captain of Greyfriars had missed lessons with the Sixth that afternoon, but he came out of his study later, and Nugent minor met him in the Sixth-Form passage. Wingate looked down grimly at the fag.

"I—I want to speak to you," faltered Dick. "I—I want to say I'm sorry. I—I'm very sorry I did that. I hope you'll believe me. It was a cad's trick."

Wingate's face softened a little.

"All right," he said. "You needn't bother."

And he passed on. Harry Wharton & Co. came along, and carted off the new fag to tea in No. 1 Study, and that afternoon marked a new starting-point in the career of Nugent minor.

THE END.

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Ronald Chenys is forced to leave Sandhurst through the treachery of his stepbrother Ian, and enlists in the Wessex Regiment under the name of Chester. Unfortunately for Ronald, Ian joins the Wessex as a subaltern, and, assisted by Sergeant Bagot and Private Foxey Williams, does his best to further disgrace Ronald. The unscrupulous Bagot, however, gets caught in his own toils, and is publicly degraded to the ranks. Foxey Williams meets his death mysteriously in a burning barn. The Royal Wessex are forming the garrison of Eastguard Forts, near Plymport, during manœuvres. After some nights' weary vigilance, the enemy make an attack, and Ronald is told off with a party of men to help in the magazine. Bagot, the ex-sergeant, attempts to blow the place up, and when Ronald captures him the two fall into the sea. They are, however, rescued by one of the enemy's torpedo boats, and are eventually put ashore. From that moment the two men disappear, so Gussie, one of Ronald's comrades, persuades Mouldy Mills, another friend of Ronald's, to stay behind when the Wessex leave Plymport, and make a search for the missing men. They trace Ronald to a disreputable inn in Castle Gate, and, in pursuing their search further, are themselves trapped, and thrown into an underground dungeon. They feign unconsciousness, and are visited by Ian Chenys and a villainous Polish wrestler named Pushoffski, who steps forward to throttle them.

(Now go on with the story.)

Bob and Cosgrave on the Trail—A Shipwrecked Crew—To the Rescue!

"Hold! None of that!" said the landlord, catching at his arm. "We don't go to work that way here; it's too clumsy. We've ways of settling jobs like this without leaving any marks on throats, or making holes in people. If they are spies, that's enough. I suspected as much myself when they first pushed their noses in. You leave them to me. I'll look after them. Jim, just send in the other chaps!" he ordered.

Before either Gussie or Mouldy could recover their wits to think of some plan of action, a number of men entered, and, picking them up, began to steer their way through another maze of narrow passages.

How far they were thus dragged, whether it was a hundred yards or as many miles, neither had the faintest notion. At last they came to a halt. A rope was knotted under the arms of each in turn, and they were hoisted up out of the evil-smelling burrows into the fresh night air.

Close at hand they could hear the swish and gurgle of the tide among piles and timbers.

So their deaths were to be by means of drowning. Drugged until they were supposed to be as helpless as dead men, they were to be flung neck and crop into the harbour!

"Carry them down to the boat!" commanded the landlord of the Spyglass.

"Boat!" exclaimed Ian's voice in amazement.

"Yes!" growled the other. "You don't think we want three corpses in uniform washing about here stuck in the piles, do you? Don't you worry yourself so much, any way. We know our business. A boat with a leaky plug and the oars overboard'll carry 'em so far as is fur enough, and no further. Then there'll be an accident—two drunken deserters trying to row across to France, or something; and the verdict will be brought in quiet and simple-like. Go on, in with them, and stand by with that dinghy to give me a tow off!"

THE MAGNET.—No. 100.

NEXT
TUESDAY:

Gussie and Mouldy were dumped unceremoniously on to the thwarts of a crazy craft, which was immediately run down the foreshore, and left while a second boat was manned and launched.

"It's almost low water now?" Gussie heard Ian say, in a harsh, strained voice.

"Yes," answered the other. "The tide'll turn in half an hour, and by four o'clock your friend below in the black hole'll be swimming like a rat in a pail, with his nose just touching the ceiling. Ten minutes after that it'll be all over. Will you wait?"

"Yes—no; I don't know," replied Ian miserably.

Then the boat in which the two soldiers lay shamming lurched forward, and they steeled themselves for their own battle with death.

Mouldy was for springing up, cutting the painter, and shouting for help; and conveyed as much in a Morse code signal on Gussie's nose, which was the only part of him he could reach without moving.

Gussie, however, thought differently, and recorded his opinion on Mouldy's left ankle. They had a good three hours and a half yet in which to rally a force to Ronald's rescue, and by not giving the alarm now, they might easily capture the whole villainous crew red-handed, Ian included.

Moreover, Gussie, very much awake to the fact that the boat was slowly filling, had groped for the plug, and found that, by clapping his hand over the leak, he could more or less stem the inrush.

"This is fur enough, surely!" said a voice, in a hoarse whisper at last. "Let her go now, Jim!"

"We'll just haul her up alongside first and see that everything's all right," was Jim's reply.

The two gunvales bumped together.

"Doing nicely!" sniggered Jim. "They'll be walking on the bottom soon. Nice pair of sleeping beauties they look, don't they? If I had a face like that fat one there, bust me, if I wouldn't go and drown myself right off without waiting for some kind-hearted chaps like us to come and do it for me. I suppose the skip's bin through their pockets already, so there's no use wasting time over that."

"You bet!" grunted the other anxiously. "Saw him do it. Go on, Jim, shove off! You never know who's hanging about this 'ere harbour, and we'd look silly if we was copped like this."

A sturdy push sent the sinking boat spinning away seawards on the tide, the two soldiers listened to the receding beat of oars in muffled rowlocks, and then cautiously rose up.

"Find that 'ole, quick!" squeaked Mouldy, his eyes starting out of his head with terror.

"Got it already!" retorted Gussie coolly. "Got my little finger in it. Lend us your handkerchief and one of those pins. I'll make a new bung, while you bale out for all you're worth. Then we'll pull the floorboards up and row like one o'clock!"

"Row where?" wailed Mouldy, preparing to obey.

"Eastguard Fort, if we can make for it. The tide's still running out, and if we put our backs into it, we ought to make it all right."

Cosgrave, having obtained a fortnight's leave of absence from his regiment, he and Fairly decided to lose no time,

"THE DANDIES OF THE REMOVE."

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

but make for Woolchester at once. That was as far as they could get that night by rail, at any rate.

Taking a late train out of Aldershot, they caught a Great Western express at Reading, and just before midnight ran into Woolchester Station.

They were making their way out of the booking-office when a motor whizzed by, the light of the station lamps falling for an instant on the solitary occupant of the car.

"Ian Chenys, by all that's wonderful!" exclaimed Bob Fairly, halting in his stride. "What can he be doing in Woolchester?"

"It's not only a case of what is he doing in Woolchester, but what is he doing out of it at this hour of night?" said Cosgrave. "On the Plymport Road, too. By Jove! it's funny. We'll take a fly up to the barracks, and see if we can find out the meaning of it all."

On arrival at the guard-room one half of the mystery was quickly solved, for they found the advance party in possession.

"Mr. Chenys in his quarters?" asked Bob Fairly casually of the sergeant of the guard.

"Yes, sir, I think so. There's no light in the officers' mess, but he hasn't left the barracks. I am positive."

"Ah, I'll just stroll over and see him," said Fairly, and piloted Cosgrave out across the dark barrack square.

"You heard that? He has not left the barracks by the main and only official gate there is. Why this secrecy about his leaving? And why has he broken the barrack rules and crept out by a back way?"

"I can't say," replied Cosgrave; "but in view of all we know, I think we ought to inquire into the mystery."

"Exactly. I hate spying and keyhole work of any kind, but I'm going, nevertheless, straight to Master Ian's room to see what I can see. The detachment marched in just after eleven, and he creeps out again a few minutes before midnight. That was young Falkener's car, which he must have got out of the Roebuck garage, and we find him tearing along the Plymport Road. Something's taken him back in a dickens of a hurry to a place he has not been out of three hours—a place, too, where a good deal of underhand work is going on that concerns him directly. We've got to find out what that something is."

Ian's room was in a state of wild disorder, as if he had got out of uniform into mufti in greatest haste. His kit was flung right and left, and drawers were left open.

"What's this that has been burnt?" asked Fairly, picking out of the grate a flimsy, crumpled sheet of charred paper, which, though burnt to ash, had yet remained whole.

One corner of it dropped inside the fender, and crumbled to dust as Fairly lifted it up, but the rest he saved by slipping a newspaper beneath it.

Tenderly bearing it to the light, they saw that it had been a letter, the writing of which was still fairly visible—faint, dull scratches upon a glossy, black surface.

Scarcely daring to breathe lest the ash should crumble, Bob spelt out the words, which Cosgrave took the precaution to write down.

"The man you know is here. Come at once—to-night certain. Bearer will be in East Street. Wait fourth turning right after you leave town-hall. Bring money—£200. Will not wait."

The crumpled corner had contained the rest of the message.

"What does it mean? Can 'the man you know' be Ronald?" asked Bob Fairly, almost in a whisper.

"Let's hope so, for that would mean that so far he has come to no harm," answered Cosgrave. "Who writes the letter? It must be a foreigner."

"A foreigner!" exclaimed Bob. "Why, Pushoffski, of course. You remember what I told you about one of our fellows overhearing an ominous conversation between Ian Chenys and a wrestling ruffian? That is the man. He is in hiding in Plymport, depend upon it. Ronald Chenys has fallen into his hands, and to-night will decide his fate."

In his excitement Bob Fairly brought his fist down with a crash upon the table, and the condemning mass of ashes crumbled into a thousand flakes.

"Confound my carelessness!" he exclaimed. "Never mind, we've evidence enough when it comes to that. Come on, Cosgrave, we must follow on the young fiend's tracks. We can borrow a car at the Roebuck, perhaps."

Slinging their bags into Bob's room, they strode back across the square and out of the barrack gate. It did not take long to bargain with the landlord of the hotel for the loan of a motor, for he had one which he kept for hire.

In less than half an hour after they had seen Ian dash past the station they were in hot pursuit, driving as hard as Cosgrave—who was an expert motorist—knew how.

In a little over half an hour they were in Plymport main street within view of the town-hall.

"He'll have made for Buckley's garage—certain to," said Bob Fairly; "but, as he'll have put his car up long ago, let's hurry to East Street, and skirmish about there. We may be in time to get a glimpse of him."

But East Street was empty. They tried some of the side turnings, and made a rapid circuit of the place of rendezvous.

But Ian Chenys had got clear.

"Back to Buckley's garage, then," said Bob, choking down his disappointment.

There, sure enough, was the car Ian had driven over in, but the attendant knew nothing of his whereabouts.

"I asked him whether he wanted to be put across, to Fort Eastguard to-night, because if so, I'd have run him over in the gov'nor's motor-boat," said the man, on the look-out for an extra tip.

"Motor-boat!" echoed Bob, in an aside. "What do you say, Cosgrave? Shall we inform the police first of what has turned up, and then take a spin down the harbour. We know where Ronald landed on that night. It is the lowest and roughest quarter of the town. If any dirty work is to be done it will be done there, that's certain. Supposing we run down and slip ashore? We must do something."

Cosgrave was game for anything. In a few minutes, while the assistant had gone on ahead to prepare the petrol-launch, the two officers had interviewed the superintendent of police, leaving the copy of the burnt letter, a description of Pushoffski, the Pole, and Ian Chenys, and other information on which he might immediately set his men to work.

Then they made for the quay, boarded a smart, high-speed pleasure craft, and were soon slipping down the long lanes of moored shipping in the direction of Castle Gate.

A smart breeze from the sea stifled the steady beat of the powerful engine. As the two officers crouched behind the sheltering hood covering the bows, they simultaneously detected two beetle-like objects a long mile ahead. That they were rowing-boats was plain.

But one immediately put about, making for the shore; while the other, which was empty, apparently, was left to drift outwards on the bosom of the tide.

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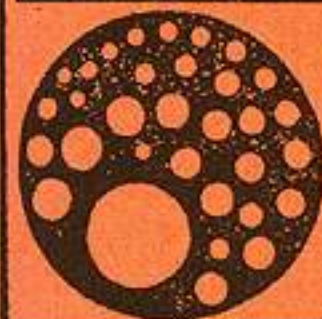
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