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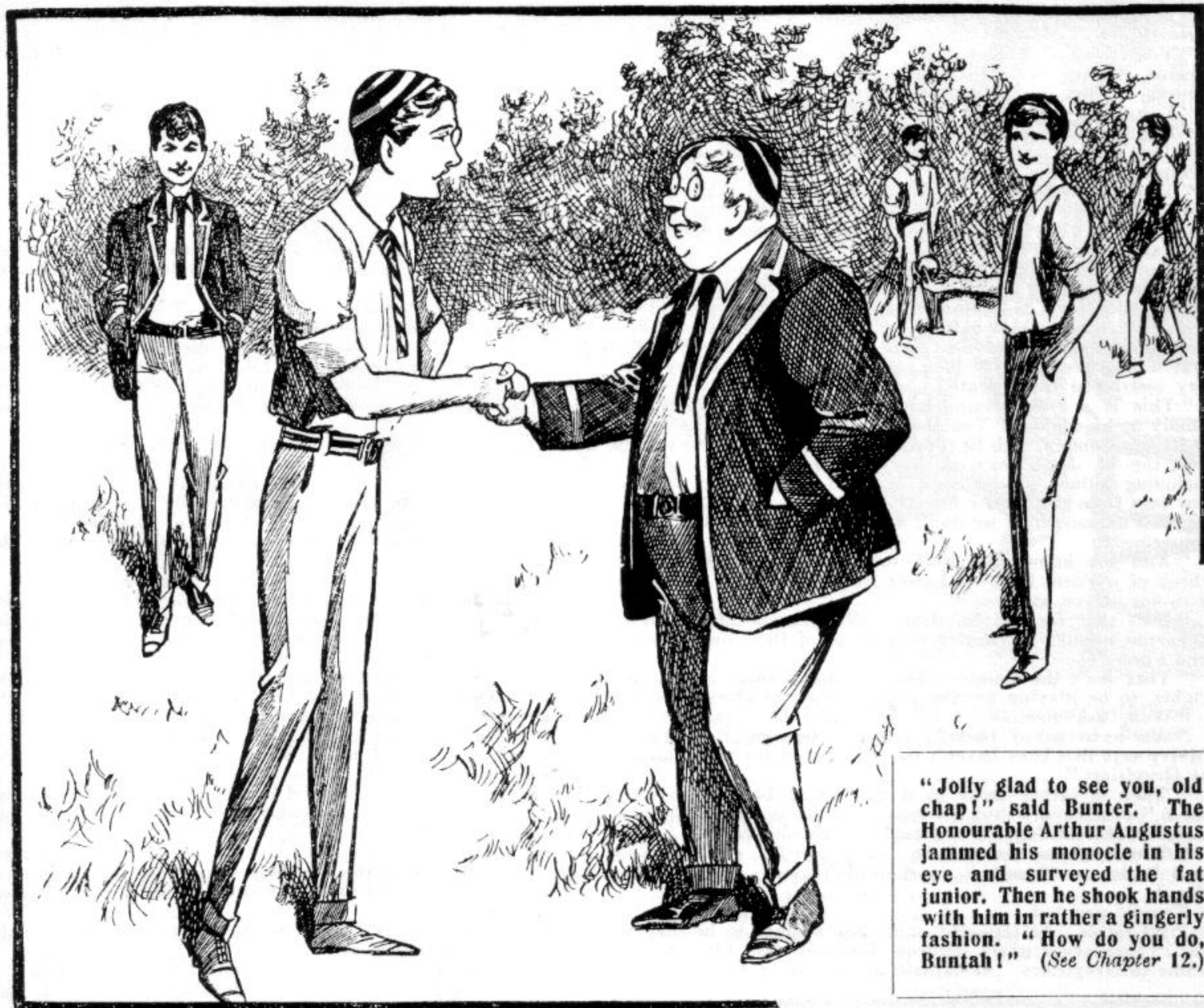
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THE MATCH WITH ST. JIM'S.

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. of
Greyfriars and Their Rivals.

By FRANK RICHARDS.



"Jolly glad to see you, old chap!" said Bunter. The Honourable Arthur Augustus jammed his monocle in his eye and surveyed the fat junior. Then he shook hands with him in rather a gingerly fashion. "How do you do, Buntah!" (See Chapter 12.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Very Good Offer!

TEMPLE of the Fourth smote upon the door of Harry Wharton's study in the Remove passage at Greyfriars with a mighty smite.

Temple of the Fourth was frowning. Dabney and Fry, who were with him, were frowning also. Evidently it was very serious business that had brought the Fourth-Formers to the study of the captain of the Remove.

"You can leave the talking to me," said Temple. "I'm going to put it to them plain."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"I'm not going to stand any nonsense!"

"Certainly not!" said Fry.

"And if they won't see the right thing, and do the right thing, we'll jolly well let them know that there's going to be trouble!" said Temple darkly.

"What-ho!"

"They haven't heard me knock," said Temple sarcastically. "I'll try again."

There was a buzz of voices in Harry Wharton's study. The cricket committee of the Remove were meeting there. A great occasion was at hand—the Remove match with the junior eleven of St. Jim's. It was a very great occasion—the principal fixture of the cricket season for the Greyfriars Remove. But however busy Harry Wharton & Co might be with their discussion in the study, it was quite certain that all the Removites there must have heard

Temple's smite on the door. It could have been heard at the other end of the Remove passage.

But there came no reply, and Temple smote again, with even more emphasis than before.

Thump!

And as no reply came to the second smite, Temple threw the door open and strode in without waiting for the formality of an invitation, followed by Dabney and Fry.

The study was crowded with fellows. The Famous Five were all there—Wharton, and Nugent, and Johnny Bull, and Bob Cherry, and Hurree Singh. Then there were Tom Brown, the New Zealander, and Bulstrode, and Mark Linley, and Vernon-Smith. There really wasn't very much room for Temple and Dabney and Fry to stride in. But in they strode.

And from the cricket committee of the Remove there came a sort of chorus:

"Get out!"

Temple & Co. frowned more darkly. As the chief members of the Upper Fourth Form at Greyfriars, they were older, and, of course, much more important personages than the mere Removites, or Lower Fourth. They felt that they were entitled to a certain amount of respect. But they did not receive any.

"I suppose you're very busy here?" Temple remarked sarcastically.

"You've hit it," said Harry Wharton. "No time to receive visitors, even distinguished guests from the Upper Fourth. Oblige me by travelling."

"I suppose you're talking about the St. Jim's match?"

"Right again! There's the door!"

"That's what we've come to speak to you about," said Temple.

"You're awfully good, but we can do all the talking that is required on the subject," said Wharton, with great politeness. "Thanks for the kind offer, all the same. Close the door after you."

Temple and Dabney and Fry exchanged glances. They had come there to speak gently but firmly to the Remove fellows, but their reception made them greatly inclined to proceed to assault and battery upon the spot. But as there were nine Removites present and only three of the Fourth, that was scarcely practicable. So Temple and Dabney and Fry restrained their wrath.

"This is a rather important matter," said Temple, as calmly as he could. "You Remove kids have had the nerve to fix up a match with St. Jim's. Now, you know very well that the St. Jim's team is the junior team of that school, including fellows of the Shell and the Fourth, and mighty few fags from the Lower Fourth."

"Tell us something we don't know," suggested Bob Cherry courteously.

"And you know jolly well, too, that it's like the awful check of a Form team—a Lower Fourth team—to challenge a junior eleven at all—"

"Isn't that for the St. Jim's fellows to decide?" asked Wharton mildly. "They're playing us of their own accord, you know."

"That isn't the point. The St. Jim's team ought, by rights, to be playing us—the junior eleven of Greyfriars."

"Well, ask them."

"We have asked them," growled Temple, "and Tom Merry says that they haven't the dates open for two matches at Greyfriars."

"Then it rather looks as if you won't be able to play them," remarked Frank Nugent. "That saves you from a dead certain licking, so you ought to be pleased."

"The lickfulness would be really terrific, my esteemed and ludicrous Temple," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Temple grunted.

"By rights," he repeated, "St. Jim's ought to be playing us. There never was a separate Remove team till Wharton came to Greyfriars. As captain of the junior eleven, I used

to play a few Remove fags sometimes. Wharton took the bit in his teeth, and made up a rotten eleven in the Lower Fourth, and started getting up fixtures with other schools and places. Our opinion is that it was like his cheek."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Awful nerve!" concurred Fry.

"And we don't like it!" added Temple, as if that was a clincher.

"If the esteemed Temple does not like it, there is only the lumpfulness left for him," suggested Hurree Singh.

Temple brought his fist down upon the study table with a resounding whack.

"And we're not going to have it!" he continued. "We've stood it for some time, but we are not going to stand it any longer. We never thought of challenging St. Jim's, as they are so far off. But we would have liked the match, of course. We regard Wharton as having stolen a march on us."

"Bow-wow!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"And we say that it's a rotten state of affairs when the St. Jim's team comes over here to play a fag team instead of the junior eleven—that's us!" pursued Temple. "Tom Merry having fixed up the match with you kids, can't very well throw you over, however much he'd like to. Though it stands to reason that he'd rather play a team of the same age and standing as his own. Now, I'm willing to be accommodating. We're not going to stand this state of things. That's settled. If St. Jim's come here to-morrow, they're going to play the junior eleven—not a fag team scratched out of the Lower Fourth. We've decided that. The question is, whether you fellows are willing to be accommodating, too. We're ready to play five Removites in the match. Five of the Remove and six of the Fourth. We regard that as a generous offer."

"My hat!"

"The hatfulness is terrific."

"Of all the blessed cheek I've ever heard of, I think this takes the cake!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "You want to bag our match!"

"It isn't your match," explained Temple with great patience. "Properly speaking, the St. Jim's junior eleven should play the Greyfriars junior eleven. Wharton has wedged in with a fag team on his own. That's the state of things that has got to come to an end. We propose a fair and friendly arrangement. Five Remove kids in the team—"

"Including the skipper?" asked Wharton, laughing.

"Certainly not! I am the skipper of the junior eleven!" said Temple loftily, "and I can tell you I shall have trouble in the Fourth by conceding so much. The Fourth don't like the idea of playing five fags. But I want to be fair."

Harry Wharton & Co. simply stared at the captain of the Fourth.

Temple's coolness almost took their breath away.

It was an old sore point with Temple & Co. that since Wharton came to Greyfriars the Remove Form team had gone ahead by leaps and bounds, and was in a state of far greater efficiency than the junior eleven itself. Many a time, in fact, the Remove had met the junior eleven on the footer or cricket field and beaten them soundly. Harry Wharton's team was far better able to keep the school colours flying than was the junior eleven, older fellows as they were. But Temple would never admit that, and nobody in the Fourth or the Shell would have dreamed of admitting it. All they agreed to admit was that the Remove were a set of cheeky fags, who ought, somehow, to be put into their proper place and kept there.

But that Temple would coolly propose to bag their most important fixture in this way was something that had never occurred to the heroes of the Remove. They could only gasp at the idea.

There was a short silence in the study. It was the calm that preceded the storm.

"Well, what do you say?" demanded Temple at last.

"Say!" ejaculated Wharton. "What do we say, you fellows?"

"Well, I say rats! for one," remarked Bob Cherry.

"Cheek!"

"Nerve!"

"The cheekfulness is terrific!"

"Get out!"

"Buzz off!"

"Chuck them out!"

Most of the Removites were on their feet now. It looked like war; but Harry Wharton held up his hand.

"Hold on! I'll tell you what we'll do, Temple. We want to be accommodating. We want to meet you in every way possible. We can't hand over our match to you, for jolly good reasons. In the first place, we want to play it ourselves; in the second place, we want the St. Jim's team to

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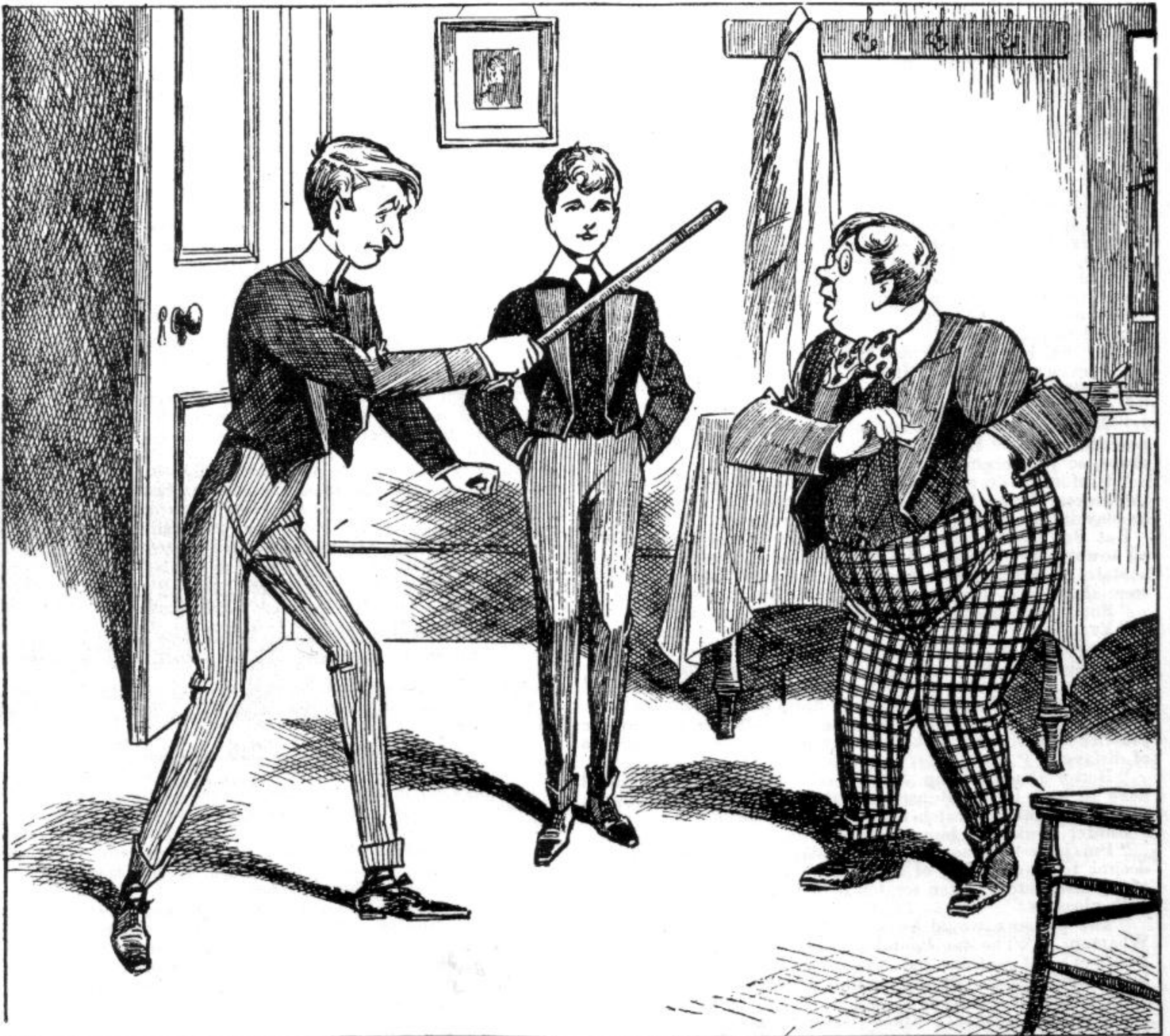
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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 338.

FOR NEXT
FRIDAY—

"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

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Bunter made a rush for the door, and Todd jumped in the way. He flourished the cricket stump within an inch of Bunter's little fat nose. "Yaroo! Keep that stump away, you villain!" roared Bunter. (See Chapter 3.)

be beaten—and you couldn't do it; in the third place, we'll see you blown first."

"Hear, hear!"

"But we'll do all we can, and I'll make you a good offer," said Wharton.

"Well, what's the offer?" said Temple suspiciously.

"We're going to play St. Jim's. That's settled. But you chaps in the Fourth can come and watch the match. By watching us carefully, and noting the way we do it, you will be able to pick up a lot of tips about cricket, and the way it should really be played. It will give you a chance to learn something about the game, and in the course of time you may possibly become cricketers yourselves. I don't say you will, but it's possible. Now, I call that a good offer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites burst into a yell of laughter at Wharton's good offer. Temple and Dabney and Fry stared at him speechlessly for a moment. They did not answer. As if moved by the same spring, they made a sudden rush at the captain of the Remove. They laid hands on him at the same moment, yanked him from his chair, and bumped him on the floor.

Then, with one accord, the cricket committee fell upon the visitors, and smote them hip and thigh.

Temple whirled in the air in the grasp of half a dozen

pairs of hands, and whizzed through the doorway. As he sprawled in the passage, Dabney whizzed out after him, and rolled over him, knocking out whatever breath was left in his body. And before they could sort themselves out, Fry came tumbling over them with a roar.

Then the study door slammed.

Three dusty and dishevelled Fourth-Formers limped away furiously. In No. 1 Study, Harry Wharton remarked cheerfully:

"Now we'll get on with the bizney!"

And the Removites grinned and got on with it.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Temple's Plot!

"YOU'RE wanted, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, was blinking in at the window of the school shop, when Bob Cherry slapped him on the shoulder, with that remark. Bunter gave a yelp. Bob had an unconsciously heavy hand.

"Ow! Don't bust my shoulder, you ass!" growled Bunter. "I say, Cherry, you're just the chap I wanted to see. Mrs. Mimble has got in a new lot of tarts!"

"Thanks for the information. Come on!"

"If you could lend me a tanner—"

"I'll lend you a thick ear," said Bob cheerfully. "That's the only loan you'll get out of me. This way!"

"I'm expecting a postal-order, and— Yow! Leggo my arm! Wharrer you dragging me off for?" howled Bunter.

"I can't walk so beastly quick!"

"Cricket!" explained Bob. "You're wanted!"

Billy Bunter brightened up. An expression of fat satisfaction overspread his plump face.

"Oh, all right! I'm wanted in the team? I've pointed out to Wharton several times that he really can't afford to leave out a player of my class in meeting a team like St. Jim's!"

Bob Cherry roared.

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Bunter, turning his big spectacles indignantly upon the junior. "You know perfectly well that I'm entitled to a place in the team. Besides, the St. Jim's fellows will be glad to see me playing. I've got friends there—especially D'Arcy of the Fourth. I've given him lessons in ventriloquism, and we're great pals. I'm quite keen to see D'Arcy again. I'm jolly glad Wharton has decided to play me—"

"Ha, ha, ha! We're not looking for porpoises to play in the eleven!" chuckled Bob. "This isn't a zoological match!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We want a scratch team to play the Remove eleven for practice to-day," Bob explained, "and we can't find eleven chaps, so you're going to play!"

"I refuse to do anything of the sort. I'll take a place in the eleven if you like. You can't expect a fellow like me to play in a scratch eleven. Leggo my arm!"

But Bob Cherry did not let go. He rushed Billy Bunter off towards the cricket-ground at a speed that reduced him to a state of gasping breathlessness. Harry Wharton & Co. were there, and the members of the scratch team.

"Found somebody?" asked Wharton, as Bob came up.

"Yes; here you are!"

"Bunter! My hat!"

"Bunter can field, after a fashion," said Bob cheerily. "Anyway, he makes up the number. And a little exercise will do him good. Will you have him, Bolsover?"

Bolsover major was captaining the scratch side in the practice match. He looked the fat junior over with a glance of disfavour.

"Better than nothing. I suppose!" he grunted. "You'll have to look lively, Bunter. I don't want any passengers, even if it's only a scratch team!"

Bunter blinked at him.

"I'm jolly well not going to play!" he bellowed. "I decline to do anything of the sort! You can't put a player of my class into a rotten scratch team! I'll play in the eleven with pleasure!"

"The pleasure would be all on your side, then?" grinned Wharton. "The fat bounder won't be much use to you, Bolsover; but you can put him into the long field, and give him some exercise. It will do him good!"

"I jolly well won't—"

"You won't what?" asked Bolsover major, taking Billy Bunter's fat ear between his finger and thumb.

"I—I mean, I will, Bolsover! I'll play for you with pleasure—that's what I really meant to say! Leggo my ear!"

Bolsover major grinned.

"Lucky for you you meant that!" he remarked. "And you'll play up—do you hear? And if I catch you slacking I'll lay a stump round you! Scat!"

And Billy Bunter scatted.

Harry Wharton had been keeping his team hard at practice in preparation for the match with St. Jim's. He knew that the match would be a tussle, and he did not leave anything to chance.

Tom Merry & Co. were to have a beating on the cricket-field, if the Greyfriars Remove could possibly give them one. And as the match was for to-morrow, this was the last practice of the Remove eleven, and Wharton intended that it should be thorough.

There were a good many fellows in the Remove, naturally, who considered that the team might have been greatly improved by their inclusion in it. Billy Bunter, especially, was quite convinced upon that point. The fact that he could not play cricket "for toffee" did not make the slightest difference.

His being regarded as hardly good enough for a scratch team in practice moved his indignation. He rolled away sulkily into the long field, and only terror of Bolsover major and a cricket-stump prevented him from rolling off the field altogether.

His feelings were shared by Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, who was put on at cover point. Fisher T. Fish had often offered to show the Remove how cricket should

really be played, and he would have undertaken to captain the team against St. Jim's, or against I Zingari for that matter, or the M.C.C. But the Remove were not taking any.

Harry Wharton and Vernon-Smith started batting. Temple, Dabney, & Co. of the Fourth came down to watch the scratch match. They did not come to cheer. They came to pass rude remarks in the hearing of the players. Temple, Dabney, & Co. were in very bad tempers. Their visit to Wharton's study earlier in the day could not be called a success. Their kind offer to take the whole affair into their hands had not elicited any gratitude from the Lower Fourth.

Harry Wharton & Co. intended to manage their own business themselves. But Temple was very sore about it, and he was thinking the matter out very deeply. To his immediate chums he confided that he had not given up hope of bringing the recalcitrant Remove to their senses. And nearly all the Fourth agreed with Temple that it was time the Remove kids were brought to their senses, and were prepared to back him up to any extent.

"They call that cricket!" Temple remarked, as Fisher T. Fish missed an easy catch. "That's the kind of cricket they're going to play against St. Jim's to-morrow!"

"Enough to make a donkey laugh!" agreed Fry.

"Laugh away!" suggested Johnny Bull, who was standing with his bat under his arm near the group of Fourth-Formers.

But Fry did not laugh; he frowned.

"Look at that!" went on Temple, as Lord Mauleverer, the slacker of the Remove, who had been impressed into the scratch team, lounged after the ball with his hands in his pockets, and the grinning batsmen crossed and recrossed.

"That's cricket!"

"Buck up, there, Mauleverer, you silly idiot!" roared Bolsover major, enraged. "Do you want me to come after you?"

"Begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer; and he took his hands out of his pockets with an effort, and captured the ball.

He sent it in, however, with a very smart return, and Bob Cherry's wicket was knocked over before he could get his bat on the line.

"Jolly good, Mauly!" said Bob good-naturedly.

"Yaas, begad!"

"That's batting, you know!" said Temple, as Wharton's wicket went down to a really good ball from Ogilvy of the Remove.

"Well, what's the matter with it, you duffers?" growled Johnny Bull. "You couldn't have stopped that ball!"

Temple shrugged his shoulders.

"Of course, there's no reason why these kids shouldn't play at cricket, though marbles would be a better game for them," said Scott of the Fourth. "But to think of their cheek in challenging the second eleven of a school like St. Jim's! Well, it does take the cake, and no mistake!"

"My opinion is that it oughtn't to be allowed," said Temple. "Wingate, as head of the games, ought to interfere!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Still, this is very good to watch," went on Temple. "It's as good as a comic cinematograph, and cheaper."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I'm getting fed up!" said Johnny Bull. "You fellows clear off! If you don't shut up, you'll be shut up!"

"Don't be cheeky!" said Temple loftily. "Here, keep that bat away, you young ass! Do you hear? Chuck it! Keep off! Yaroooh!"

Temple beat a retreat, with Johnny Bull's bat lunging at his ribs. The other waiting batsmen joined in, and the Fourth-Formers, red with wrath, were lunged off the ground. Their retreat became a flight, and they were feeling considerably sore by the time they escaped from the cricketers. They retreated into the tuckshop, and there, over consolatory ginger-beer, they discussed their wrongs, and the awful nerve of the Lower Fourth.

"The rotten part is, that we've got to stand it," said Dabney moodily. "The cheeky young beggars ought to be put in their place, but how's it to be done? We can't prevent them from meeting the St. Jim's team to-morrow."

"Can't we?" said Temple darkly.

"I don't see how."

"We ought to, if we could," remarked Scott virtuously. "Check like this in a fag Form ought to be put down. St. Jim's ought to play us, or else not play Greyfriars at all."

"Exactly!" said Temple, with a nod. "That's my idea."

"But it can't be worked."

Temple looked round him, to make sure that none but his

faithful henchmen were within hearing, and lowered his voice.

"I think it might be worked," he said. "You fellows all agree with me that the Remove have practically bagged our match."

"I suppose it could be put like that," said Scott thoughtfully.

"It is like that—they ought to play the junior eleven, not a Form eleven. They're not a Form eleven themselves. Therefore, we should be justified in shifting the Remove out and bagging the match."

Temple's companions stared at him.

"We should be justified in doing it," agreed Dabney.

"But how the dickens is it to be done?"

"I've got an idea. If the Remove eleven weren't here to-morrow when the St. Jim's chaps come, what then?"

"But they will be here."

"Perhaps they won't. Supposing, for the sake of argument, that they're not, what will the St. Jim's chaps do? They won't want to travel that tremendous distance for nothing. Their headmaster allows them a whole holiday instead of the usual half to-morrow, because of this match. They can't go away without a match, can they? I shall put it to them politely, and offer them a match with the Greyfriars junior eleven—that's us. Of course, they'll jump at it."

"I suppose they would," agreed Fry. "But the Remove eleven will be here. I suppose they won't go out for a walk to oblige us."

"I'm supposing they're not here," said Temple calmly. "Then we shall meet St. Jim's, play them, and beat them. We must beat them, of course, and show by that fact that we're the proper team to meet them."

"Ahem!" murmured Scott. He had inward doubts as to whether the Fourth-Formers could beat St. Jim's. But Temple had no doubts, and he went on calmly:

"It's up to us to beat them, of course, or we shouldn't be justified in taking the match out of the hands of those cheeky kids. And, of course, I shouldn't think of doing it unless we were perfectly justified."

"Of—of course not!" murmured Fry.

"It would be a top-hole jape on the Remove if we could work it," said Scott. "They're always japing us, and there's no getting out of the fact that they generally get the best of it. There was our play they mucked up—"

"And if we muck up their match, it's only a Roland for an Oliver," said Smith minor.

"Shush!" said Temple chidingly. "We're not doing this as a jape on a set of fags. We're doing it to uphold the dignity of the Fourth, and the Middle School generally, and to put those impertinent fags in their places."

"H'm! Well, never mind what we're doing it for, so long as we do it," said Scott. "But how the deuce are we going to do it, that's the giddy question?"

"Having settled that we're justified in doing it—"

"Yes, yes; that all right!"

"And that, in point of fact, it's our duty to do it—"

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"Well, then, I'll explain to you fellows how I've thought of doing it!" said Temple. "I wanted to make that quite clear first, that's all. I've thought it out, and mapped it out, and though it will come a bit expensive, I don't grudge a little cash for the honour of the Form."

"Hear, hear!"

"And you fellows can contribute to the exes—"

"Hum!"

"Ahem!"

"And now listen—and mind, not a word outside ourselves, not even to the rest of the Fourth!" said Temple impressively. "Those Remove kids are awfully sharp, and if they got a whisper of it, the whole thing would be N.G."

"Not a giddy syllable!" chorused the eager Fourth-Formers.

And Temple lowered his voice to a whisper, and expounded his great scheme. The juniors gasped at first, and looked blankly at their leader. Temple's proposal almost took their breath away. Then there was a general chuckle.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Fry. "If it will work—"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "Temple's cousin, being head of the motor-works at Lantham—"

"And keen to oblige his rich cousin!" grinned Scott.

"It will work like a charm," said Temple. "I'll take care of that. The only point I wanted to have thoroughly settled, was whether we were justified—"

"Oh, blow that!" said Scott. "We're going to do the Remove in the eye! Never mind about being justified!"

Temple frowned. He declined to take that unscrupulous view of the matter. But it came to the same thing, as a matter of fact—the jape on the Remove, planned by Temple, was too good to be missed, and justified or not, they were going to do it. And Harry Wharton & Co. went on with the practice match in great spirits, little dreaming of the plot Temple & Co. were plotting.

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"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

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THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bunter's Little Bill!

"GROOH!"

Billy Bunter collapsed into the armchair in No. 7 Study, with a grunt. He had been fielding, and although his fielding had not been of much use to the scratch eleven, it had had an exhausting effect upon Bunter. The Owl of the Remove had a great deal of weight to carry. He was as crimson as a well-boiled beetroot, and gasping for breath, as he came into No. 7 Study, and collapsed into the chair. Peter Todd followed him in, looking ruddy but quite cheerful. And Tom Dutton, the deaf junior, who had been playing on the scratch side, and had done twice as much running as Bunter, did not look at the point of expiring, either. But Bunter groaned in the armchair, and fanned himself with a feeble, fat hand.

"What's the matter?" demanded Todd.

"Grooh!"

"Fagged out?" asked Todd sarcastically. "How many yards have you run? Two or three?"

"Grooh! I've done most of the fielding, I know that!" groaned Bunter. "I'll give that beast Bob Cherry a jolly good licking one of these days. I think you fellows might get tea, as I'm in a state of exhaustion. I'm hungry!"

"Not too exhausted to eat!" sniffed Todd.

"Something to eat would revive me a little. And look here, Toddy; we'd better have something extra this evening. You fellows can stand it. I'll stand you a whacking good feed to-morrow."

"Got a postal-order coming?" grinned Todd.

"Well, yes, as a matter of fact, I'm expecting a postal-order; but I wasn't referring to that. I've got a pal coming."

"Must be a chap with a jolly queer taste in pals if he's your pal!" growled Todd.

"Oh, really, Todd! I sincerely hope you are not going to be jealous like the rest, simply because I'm on intimate terms with a lord's son."

"Oh, he's a lord's son, is he?" said Todd, staring at the fat junior. "Who is he—Lord Tom Noddy, or the Lord Knowsho?"

"It's a chap named D'Arcy, of the St. Jim's eleven," said Bunter, with dignity. "He's the second son of Lord Eastwood, and a great toff. We're thick pals!"

"I'll bet you're thicker of the two," said Todd. "Thick enough to squeeze cash out of him, what?"

"As a matter of fact, he owes me some money," said Bunter.

"Gammon!"

"If you doubt my word, Toddy—"

"Well, I do!" said Todd, with great candour.

"Ahem! Well, he does owe me money. You know that I'm a first-class ventriloquist—"

"I know I've heard you gas about it."

"D'Arcy of St. Jim's wanted to learn ventriloquism once. He's rather an ass, but I kindly consented to give him lessons. He owes me some money for them. Of course, I had to charge something for my time, but I made it a very small charge—only half a guinea a lesson. He owes me two guineas. I shall ask him for it to-morrow. Then I'll stand you fellows a ripping feed. So this evening I expect something decent."

"I don't believe he owes you anything, and if I catch you cadging of one of the St. Jim's chaps, I'll skin you," said Todd. "You're not going to disgrace this study."

"I tell you he owes me the money!" roared Bunter. "I forgot to mention to him that I should have to charge for my time in going to meet him. He only paid for the lesson, but not for the time spent in going to and fro. I'm going to make out a bill in proper order to give him. Of course, he will pay. He's an honourable chap."

"Must be a howling ass, if he gives you two guineas."

"He's got plenty of money; he's as rich as Smithy or Mauleverer. I don't see why I shouldn't have my whack—I—I mean, I'm entitled to be paid what he owes me, I suppose? There's such a thing as fair dealing, Todd!"

"Not in your line," said Todd. "Now, look here. You're not going to present any little bill to D'Arcy. You're not going to cadge any money from him. I shall keep an eye on you to-morrow, and if I catch you doing anything of the sort I'll break a cricket-stump over you!"

"I tell you I'm going—"

"You're going to help get tea now," said Todd. "Up with you. Get the fire going, while Dutton fills the kettle."

"I'm too tired to move."

"That's all right. I'll give you something to cure all that," said Todd cheerily. And he tilted the armchair forward, and Billy Bunter rolled out on the hearthrug with a roar. "Still tired?"

"Ow! Yow! Yes!" roared Bunter.
 "Say when!" said Peter, and he started with his boots upon the fat junior. Bunter rolled frantically out of his way.
 "Yaroo! Oh! When!" he shrieked.
 Todd chuckled.
 "Now get up and pile in!" he said.
 And Billy Bunter, looking furious, got up and piled in. Under the gentle persuasion of Peter's boots, he found that he was not, after all, too tired to move. The fire was soon going, and the kettle singing upon it, and the three juniors prepared tea. It was a frugal tea-table, for nobody in No. 7 Study was overburdened with cash, and Billy Bunter never by any chance contributed anything to the study funds, though that did not prevent him from considering himself entitled to the lion's share of all that was going. The Owl of the Remove blinked disdainfully over the table.
 "Bread-and-butter and a sardine each and some rotten watercress!" he snorted. "Do you call that a tea? I could polish off all that."

"I dare say you could," agreed Peter; "but I'll see that you jolly well don't."
 "Look here, even if D'Arcy doesn't pay his debt to me, he'll stand me a feed, as his old pal, and I'll ask you," said Bunter. "Go and get something decent. Mrs. Mimble has some ripping tarts—"
 "Have you got any tin?" demanded Todd.
 "Of course I haven't! I've been disappointed about a postal-order—"
 "Then you'll be disappointed about the tarts, too. Shut up, and be glad of what you can get. I'm fed up with you."

Bunter grunted discontentedly, and sat down to the frugal board. There was evidently nothing to be got out of Peter Todd. Bunter blinked at Dutton. Dutton was very deaf, and it was a labour of love to talk to him at all. But Bunter was hungry, and he tried it.

"I say, Dutton," he bawled, "I've got a pal coming here to-morrow—a jolly rich chap."
 "Eh?" said Dutton.
 "My rich friend is coming here to-morrow. He's going to stand us a good feed. Will you stand something now, and I'll let you have a fair whack."
 Dutton looked puzzled.
 "My fare where?" he asked. "I haven't paid my fare anywhere; and if I had, they wouldn't let me have my fare back."

"Whack!" yelled Bunter. "I'll give you a fair whack—"
 "Whose bare back? What are you talking about?" asked Dutton irritably.
 "Oh, crumbs! Will you stand something for tea, and I'll stand you a feed to-morrow!" shrieked Bunter.
 "Borrow?" said Dutton. "You're jolly well not going to borrow anything of me, I can tell you that! You never square up."
 "Not borrow. Morrow—to-morrow!" roared Bunter. "I'll stand you a feed, if you stand something decent now. Don't you understand?"

"Stand! Why should I stand, when there's a chair each? If you think I'm going to stand to my tea to amuse you, you're jolly well mistaken. Do you want all the chairs?"
 "Oh, you fathead! I don't want any. I—"
 "Well, if you don't want a penny, shut up!" said Dutton.
 "Not that I'd lend you a penny if you did want one. I wouldn't lend you a red cent."
 "I tell you—" bellowed Bunter.
 "Shut up!" said Todd. "You'll burst your crop if you go on like that. And it's painful for my ears. Dry up!"
 "Look here, Todd—"
 "Dry up, or I'll hammer you!" said Todd. "And remember what I told you about D'Arcy. Let me catch you cadging off him, that's all."

Bunter snorted discontentedly, and went on with his tea. After tea, when Todd and Dutton were gone, Bunter sat down with a pencil and paper, and screwed his forehead over a careful account to be presented to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's. Billy Bunter was an adept in accounts of that sort. The document, when he had finished it, certainly looked very business-like.

Dr. to W. G. Bunter.

	£	s.	d.
To time expended in travelling from Greyfriars to Luxford	1	1	0
To time expended in returning from Luxford to Greyfriars	1	1	0
Total	£2	2	0

A. A. D'Arcy, Esq.
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Billy Bunter surveyed the document with satisfaction.
 "I think that's about right," he murmured. "D'Arcy can't grumble at that. I'm letting him off lightly because he's a pal. Some people say that you shouldn't mix friendship with business, but I believe in being decent to a chap when he's your friend. I could charge him for wear and tear, but I won't. And for necessary refreshments on the road; that would come under the head of travelling expenses. He sent me the fare; but there are other travelling expenses I never thought of mentioning. I'm afraid I shouldn't be much good in business; I'm too generous."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry, looking into the study. "Toddy here?"
 "No, he isn't," said Bunter, hastily thrusting the bill out of sight. "I wish you wouldn't wedge into a chap's study like that, all of a sudden, Bob Cherry. I don't like it."

"Which means that you are up to some rotten trick, I suppose?" said Bob. "What have you got there?"
 "Find out!"
 "Certainly," said Bob, and he grasped the fat junior's wrist, and forced his hand open.
 "Yow-ow!" roared Bunter. "Leggo!"
 "You told me to find out," grinned Bob. "Well, I'm finding out. What more do you want?"
 "Yah! Leggo! Don't you look at that paper."

"Why not?"
 "It's private—strictly private."
 "Well, I'm not going to look at it," said Bob. "But as you told me to find out—"
 "I didn't mean find out!" growled Bunter. "Look here, you get out of my study—"
 "Hallo! What's the row?" said Peter Todd, coming in.
 "Bunter's got some mysterious document, and he told me to find out what it was," explained Bob. "I'm not going to look at it, but I dare say it's some rotten trick on somebody."

"I dare say it is," said Todd. "Show it to me, Bunter."
 "I jolly well won't!"
 "Who's head of this study?" roared Peter.
 "I am!" said Bunter. "You lemme alone!"
 Peter dived into a corner for a cricket-stump. Bunter made a rush for the door, and Todd jumped in his way. He flourished the stump within an inch of Bunter's little fat nose, and Bunter jumped back with a yell.
 "Yaroo! Keep that stump away, you villain!"
 "Who's head of this study?"
 "I—I— You are, Toddy! Of course you are, old chap!"

"Then show that paper to the head of the study!" said Todd sternly. "I think I can guess what it is, after what you said about D'Arcy. Show it up at once."
 "It—it's private," mumbled Bunter. "Just a private account—"
 "Yes; I know what private account it is. I give you one second to show it," said Todd, taking a business-like grip on the cricket-stump.
 "It isn't any business of yours," said Bunter, showing the paper reluctantly. "I've merely made a statement in a regular way of money due, for D'Arcy to pay up when he comes here to-morrow."

"D'Arcy!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "The St. Jim's chap?"
 "Yes. He owes me money."
 "Liar!" said Bob, with beautiful frankness.
 "He does!" howled Bunter. "You know very well I went to Luxford to meet him, and give him some ventriloquial lessons when he was thinking of taking up ventriloquism. It was understood that he was to pay the exes; but all he paid was the railway-fare and half-a-guinea for the lessons."

"What other expenses were there, you fat villain?"
 "Workmen always charge for their time," said Bunter. "You—you know the plumber who came here the other day? He put down a bag of tools, and went away for his brekker. He charged from the time he put the bag of tools down. Lawyers do the same—everybody does. I've a right to charge D'Arcy for the time. I could stick him for extras if I liked; but I'm too honourable, and he's my pal."
 "Your honourableness will never get you into trouble, anyway," said Bob. "You were a disgusting beast to charge him anything at all. You're certainly not going to try to screw any more money out of the chap. If you haven't any regard for the honour of the Remove, we'll knock some into you!"

ANSWERS

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The Bounder thrust himself forward through the broken window, as close as he could get to the man in the driving-seat. The chauffeur gave a start as he felt a sharp point thrust against his neck. "Stop!" said Vernon-Smith quietly. (See Chapter 10.)

"Look here—"

Peter Todd took the precious invoice, and screwed it up into a ball in his palm. Then he poured some ink over it.

"That's for you, Bunter," he said. "You're going to eat that."

"Wha-a-at!"

"You're going to eat your words!" explained Todd. "That's a penalty for disgracing the study. And if you make out any more bills, I'll make you eat them one after another. And I'm going to lick you with this stump till you get it down."

"Yaroooh, yaroooh! Leggo! Stoppit! Yawp!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Help! Murder! Fire! Yarooop! Ow, ow, ow!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Chuck it!" roared Bunter. "I—I'll eat it! Groogh! Ugh! Yaw-aw! Gig-gug-gig-gug!"

Peter Todd and Bob Cherry left the study laughing, leaving Billy Bunter with a countenance almost green. Bunter gasped, and gurgled, and gug-gugged for some time.

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FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

When he recovered himself, he shook a fat fist in the air at the study door.

"Beasts!" he snorted. "I'm jolly well going to have my money, all the same! Groo! Beasts! Gug-gug-gug!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Not a Toss-Up!

TEMPLE, DABNEY & CO., had been so extremely ratty about the St. Jim's match, that the Famous Five anticipated some trouble with them that evening. They were quite prepared for a raid on the Remove passage, or a rag in the common-room. But Temple, Dabney & Co. seemed to have smoked the pipe of peace. During the evening, Harry Wharton saw nothing of them. It came out later that Temple and Dabney had secured passes out from their Form-master, Mr. Capper, and they did not come in till quite late in the evening. It was close upon bedtime, and the juniors were leaving the common-room, when Temple

A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. Order Early.

and Dabney came in, looking somewhat tired, but quite satisfied.

"All serene?" asked Smith minor of the Fourth.

Temple made him a gesture.

"Shurrup!" murmured Dabney.

Bob Cherry's eyes were upon them at once.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he exclaimed. "What's the little game? Is our beloved Temple plotting a plot, or scheming a scheme, up against his kind uncles?"

"Go and eat coke!" said Temple, in polite reply, and he turned away.

"My offer's still open," called out Wharton.

"What offer?" asked Temple, turning his head.

"About letting you watch the match to-morrow. You can come and watch—and we make no charge for showing you how to play cricket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rats!" said Temple. "Perhaps to-morrow you—" He checked himself, and strolled away with Dabney and Fry, without saying any more.

"Poor old Temple!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Quite ratty because he can't bag our match. But what good would it be to him, anyway? He couldn't play it. Just as much good for a donkey to bag a fellow's violin."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites went cheerfully to their dormitory. They had great anticipations of the morrow, and the truculence of the Fourth-Formers on the subject only amused them. Coker of the Fifth met them in the passage. Coker nodded amiably to Harry Wharton & Co., and they guessed what was coming, and grinned in anticipation.

"Playing a team from St. Jim's to-morrow, I hear?" said Coker carelessly.

"Yes!"

"Rather an older team than your lot," remarked Coker.

"I hear that there are Shell fellows in the St. Jim's eleven."

"Your hearing is quite accurate, Coker," said Wharton gravely. "There are!"

"A bit above your form, what?"

"Oh, no!"

"You don't think you're booked for a licking, then?"

"Not a bit of it!"

"Now, look here, Wharton," said Coker. "I'll tell you what I'll do."

"I fancy you're going to tell me what you won't do," grinned Wharton. "But fire away! Always a pleasure to hear you talk, Coker!"

"Ahem! The Fifth are playing to-morrow, a Form match with the Sixth. I am not going to play for Blundell."

"Then he may win," remarked Nugent thoughtfully.

Horace Coker frowned.

"I shall be free for the day," he said, "after lessons, I mean, of course. But as the Head lets you off morning lessons for this match, of course, he'd do the same for me. I'll play for you, if you like."

"My dear Coker, we wouldn't deprive you of your freedom for worlds!" said Wharton. "You're awfully good, but you can remain free."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you," said Coker, frowning, "that I'm willing to play for the Remove, and give you a leg-up."

"There's a difficulty in the way," explained Harry.

"What's that?"

"We're not willing."

And the juniors marched on, leaving Coker in a state of majestic wrath. Hobson, of the Shell, met them at the door of their dormitory.

"Hold on a minute," he said, tapping Wharton on the arm. "You've got a rather tough match before you to-morrow."

"The toughness is terrific, my esteemed Hobson," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Better leave it to the junior eleven, really," said Hobson.

"I'll tell you what I've thought of, Wharton. If you don't care about leaving it to the second eleven—"

"I don't!" smiled Wharton.

"Then I'll play for you. I specially want to play the St. Jim's chaps!"

"Team's full up!"

"I suppose you can leave out some fag to make room for a Shell fellow!" exclaimed Hobson angrily.

"Then your supposer wants oiling!"

"What!"

"I mean, your supposer must be out of order, if you suppose anything like that," said Harry. "Run away and suppose something else."

"You cheeky fag—" roared Hobson.

"Now then, now then, no rags at this time of the night!" said Wingate of the Sixth, coming along the dormitory passage. "Clear off, Hobson!"

"Clear off, Hobson!"

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And the captain of the Shell cleared off, breathing hard through his nose. The Remove went into their dormitory grinning.

"Might make up a hundred instead of an eleven, with the kind offers we keep getting," said Wharton. "Hobson can play cricket, but we've got plenty of fellows who can play as well as he can—and this is a Remove match, anyway. Let the bounders book their own fixtures. We don't stop them."

"I say, you fellows—"

Wharton held up his hand.

"Now, don't you offer to play for us, Buntly!" he exclaimed imploringly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I jolly well wasn't going to!" exclaimed Bunter wrathfully. "Considering the jealousy shown towards me, I decline to do anything of the sort. I know very well that you fellows are jealous of my form."

Wharton looked critically over the ample figure of the Owl of the Remove.

"Well, your form is certainly a thing of beauty and a joy for ever," he remarked. "Fellows can't help being jealous of it, you know. So much grace—so much airy lightness—such sylph-like delicacy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You know jolly well I mean my form at cricket, you beast! And I'm jolly well not going to play for you! I refuse to do anything of the sort."

"Unsay those cruel words!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"But I want to be put down as a reserve," explained Bunter. "Not that I want to play. I should refuse to play!"

"Then what the deuce do you want to be a reserve for?"

"Then I sha'n't have to go into the Form-room in the morning," Bunter explained. "The team and the reserves have the morning off."

"The team do, but the reserves don't, fatty!"

"But if you asked Quelchy specially, and explained to him that I'm a specially valuable reserve—"

"Yes, I'm likely to tell Quelchy a pack of lies to get you a morning off, you fat slacker!" said Wharton, in disgust. "Shut up!"

"You see, I particularly want to be free to-morrow, as I've got an old pal coming here with the St. Jim's eleven. My old friend Gussy, whom I taught ventriloquism—"

"The fellow you planted yourself on, and who was too polite to kick you as you deserved, do you mean?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Now then, tumble in," said the captain of Greyfriars at the door.

The juniors turned in, and Wingate extinguished the light and left the dormitory. Then Bunter's voice was heard again in the darkness.

"I say, Harry, old chap—"

"Are you talking to me?" demanded Wharton.

"Of course I am, Harry—"

"If you call me Harry again, I'll biff you with a pillow!" growled Wharton.

"Oh, I say, Ha—hem—Wharton! Of course, you were only joking about not asking Quelchy. You see, I must speak to D'Arcy as soon as he comes. I've got rather an important matter to mention to him."

"Have you?" said Peter Todd, sitting up in bed. "What is it?"

"Ahem! Nothing to do with you, Toddy," said Bunter hastily.

"So you're still on that tack, are you?" growled Peter, getting out of bed. "You're going to speak to D'Arcy on an important matter—eh? You're going to cadge from a St. Jim's chap, and disgrace your school, you fat rotter!"

"Look here. I'm going to be paid my fair and just account—I suppose I'm entitled to what's due to me!" howled Bunter.

"You are!" agreed Todd. "And you're going to get it!"

And he seized Billy Bunter and yanked him out of bed. Bunter landed on the floor with a wild yell.

"Yah! Leggo, you beast!"

"This fat rotter," said Peter, in explanation, "this crawling toad—this slithy tove—this frabjous burbler—has been scheming a scheme for extracting money from D'Arcy of St. Jim's, because the chap is a bit soft. My opinion is that he wants a lesson. Tossing in a blanket would about meet the case, I think."

"Hear, hear!"

Three or four juniors tumbled out of bed at once. A candle was lighted, and Bunter's blanket was yanked off his bed, and he was rolled in it. Wharton and Todd and Johnny Buli and Bulstrode took it by the four corners.

"Now, then. One, two, three—go!"

"Yaroooh! Ow!"

Todd said "Go!" but the blanket did not go. The juniors

dragged at it, but Billy Bunter's terrific weight kept it pinned to the floor.

"Up with him!" gasped Wharton.

The four juniors made another effort. Bunter sat in the blanket, and grinned.

"He, he, he!"

The blanket did not rise.

"My only hat!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Here, some of you come and lend a hand. All hands on deck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry and Nugent and Hurree Singh and Tom Brown took the sides and ends of the blanket. Then, with a dead-lift effort, it was dragged up. But Billy Bunter did not fly towards the ceiling. He remained in the blanket, and his weight dragged it down again with a bump to the floor. Two or three of the juniors were dragged over as they clung to the blanket. They sprawled over Bunter, and Bunter yelled. The dormitory door opened, and Wingate looked in.

"Ahem!" said Wharton.

"Well?" he said grimly.

"Yarooooh! Groo-hooh! Yooh! Yow!"

"Stop that noise, Bunter! Fifty lines each!" said Wingate. "And if there's any more noise here I'll bring a cane with me next time."

He took the candle away with him. Billy Bunter chuckled as he settled down in bed. There could be no more ragging that night, and Bunter felt safe.

"I'm jolly well going to give Gussy my little bill tomorrow," he said, "and I'll make him pay, too! You fellows can go and eat coke! Do you hear, Harry? You can go and eat coke! You can go and eat coke, too, Bob! And you, too, Franky! And Johnny, too! Yah!"

And as the exasperated juniors knew that Wingate was still in the passage the Owl of the Remove was allowed to have the last word.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Telegram!

BOB CHERRY gave a cheery chirrup as he looked out of the dormitory window on the following morning. The rising-bell was clanging across the Close. It was a splendid summer morning, the promise of an ideal day to come.

"Topping!" said Bob. "Lovely day for cricket! We're in luck!"

And the Remove cricketers went down in the best of spirits. Dr. Locke, who had a proper sympathy for games, allowed a whole day's holiday for the St. Jim's match, instead of the half to which the juniors were entitled on Wednesdays. The holiday, of course, only applied to the members of the eleven. And the members of the eleven voted the Head a brick, though the rest of the Remove fellows considered that his briekishness might have been carried reasonably to the extent of granting a whole holiday to all the Form.

Immediately after breakfast Harry Wharton & Co. proceeded to Little Side, to take loving care of the pitch. It was in excellent order. Indeed, as Nugent remarked—Nugent being musical in taste—it was what a musician would have called a perfect pitch.

Billy Bunter grunted discontentedly as he went in to lessons with the rest of the fellows.

His grievances were great. Not only was he left out of the Form team, in spite of his wonderful powers as a cricketer, but he was "done" out of a holiday by not being included in the team. His only consolation was the prospect of extracting ready cash from the kind and polite Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of St. Jim's, later in the day. The fat junior had already thought out further items for his little bill, which he meant to present to the swell of St. Jim's, in spite of Peter Todd and all the Remove. The little bill, as Bunter thought it over, assumed the proportions of a very big bill. But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was rich, and Bunter's view was that those who had money should pay. He was, in fact, a really excellent Chancellor of the Exchequer in embryo.

"What time do the St. Jim's chaps get here?" Peter Todd asked, as the cricketers strolled down to the pitch.

"Not before half-past ten at the earliest," said Wharton. "That's if they catch the earliest train. They have two changes, the second at Lantham. After we've rolled the pitch a bit we might go as far as Courtfield to meet them. We're sending a brake, anyway."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's a wire!" said Bob, as Trotter, the page, came towards Little Side with an envelope in his hand. "I hope there's nothing wrong with the St. Jim's chaps. It would be rotten if they couldn't come."

"Master Wharton—"

Harry Wharton took the telegram, looking rather anxious. The other fellows watched him anxiously, too, as he opened it. The telegram was not likely to be from anybody but the St. Jim's fellows, and if something had happened to prevent

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FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

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ONE
PENNY.

Tom Merry & Co. from coming it would be a bitter disappointment to the Remove.

But Wharton's face cleared as he read the telegram, though he looked a little puzzled. It was evidently a very unusual message.

"Well, what's the news?" asked several voices. "Is it from St. Jim's?"

"From Tom Merry," said Wharton. "I'll read it out."

The message ran:

"Wharton, Remove, Greyfriars.

"Coming down by car. Reach Lantham half-past nine. Meet us there. Plenty of room in car. Come on together to Greyfriars. Will wait for you outside Lantham Station. We want all of you to come. Don't disappoint us. MERRY."

"Well, my hat!" Bob Cherry gave a whistle. "That beats the band! They must have a jolly big car if it will hold two dozen fellows."

"The bigfulness must be really terrific!"

"Motor-bus, perhaps," said Nugent. "Like Mauly hired when he took us out on an excursion once. I should have thought it would be quicker to come by train."

"Well, they could start earlier in a car, I suppose," said Wharton, looking a little perplexed. "They could start any time they chose if they had a car, before the earliest train, of course. I dare say it's a pleasanter way of travelling. But it must have cost them a jolly lot of money."

"Some of them are rolling in tin," said Johnny Bull. "That chap D'Arcy spreads money round like our Mauly. Perhaps he's standing treat. Or it may be his father's car."

"I don't suppose Lord Eastwood keeps a car as big as a motor-bus," said Harry. "However, it's their business. But it's rather odd their asking us to meet them at Lantham. It's twenty miles from here."

"It is rather queer."

"Well, they know we have a whole holiday to-day, and that we've nothing to do but wait for them till they come," remarked Tom Brown. "After all, it will be rather a treat. We don't get a long run in a motor-car every day."

"And it's easy enough to get to Lantham," said Bulstrode. "There are plenty of trains from Courtfield."

"No reason why we shouldn't go, I suppose?" said Wharton thoughtfully. "It seems to me rather queer to ask us, but it would be disobliging not to go. Besides, Merry says they're going to wait for us outside Lantham Station. If they wait for us we must go, or they'll never come on in time for the match."

"That settles it!"

Wharton looked over the telegram again. It was curious, there was no doubt about that. But it seemed quite in order. It bore the inscription "Handed in at Rylcombe at 8 a.m." Rylcombe, as the juniors knew, was the village close by St. Jim's. They had alighted from their train there on their visit to St. Jim's for an away match. Tom Merry had probably cycled down early in the morning to send off the wire as soon as the post-office opened, or perhaps it had been sent as the car passed through the village en route. Anyway, it was certain that, by this time, the St. Jim's party had started, and there was no way of communicating with them. And if they were going to wait for the Remove cricketers in Lantham, it was up to the Removites to go and meet them. They could not be kept waiting there.

"Oh, we'll go!" said Bob Cherry. "The fare isn't so very much to Lantham, and we can't look mean about a blessed railway fare, when they're spending a small fortune on a car all the way here from Sussex."

"Better go!"

Harry Wharton nodded.

"We don't really seem to have been left much choice about it," he remarked. "Some of us will have to go, at any rate."

"Every chap who can raise the fare!" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, let's all go!" said Bob. "Tom Merry says specially that he wants the lot of us to meet them there, and it would look a bit ungracious if we didn't. They're all very decent chaps, too."

"Right-ho!" said Harry. He looked at his watch. "Plenty of time to walk down to Courtfield for the next train. And we can call in and tell them that we sha'n't want the brake after all at the station."

"And that will go towards the fares," remarked Vernon-Smith. "It will be nearly enough for singles to Lantham, if we go third."

"Good egg!" said Wharton, with a kindly glance at the Bounder of Greyfriars. Smithy, who was rolling in money, was not thinking of himself. But Penfold and Linley, the two scholarship boys, who were members of the team, had no cash to waste.

A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Tale
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Wharton put the telegram in his pocket, and the eleven cricketers walked out of the school gates. As a matter of fact, they were not sorry to fill up the time instead of waiting for the St. Jim's fellows to arrive. And a rapid rush in a big car, with a merry crowd of good fellows was a pleasant prospect enough. The invitation was a little out of the ordinary, true; but Tom Merry evidently meant to be agreeable, and they were more than willing to meet him half-way.

In the Fourth Form-room, Temple of the Fourth made the excuse of a forgotten book, and quitted the Form-room, ostensibly to fetch it. He was a long time fetching that book. As a matter of fact, he was standing by the window in the School House, watching the Removites on the cricket-ground. He watched the delivery of the telegram, and smiled. His look became very eager as the Removites stood in consultation. When they streamed away towards the gates he smiled more broadly than ever.

"Swallowed the giddy bait, hook and all!" murmured Temple. "My hat! When my cousin set up in business at Lantham in a blessed motor-works, I couldn't help feeling rather ratty. Rotten to have a relation in trade so near the school. But it's come in jolly handy now—extremely handy. My Cousin Teddy isn't a relation to be exactly proud of; but he's useful, jolly useful."

And Temple chuckled gleefully as he made his way back to the Form-room. Mr. Capper frowned as he came in. Temple had missed half a lesson.

"You have been a very long time, Temple," said Mr. Capper severely.

"Sorry, sir. I couldn't see the book." Which was strictly true, for Cecil Temple had not looked for it.

"You will take fifty lines for carelessness, Temple."

"Yes, sir," said the captain of the Fourth cheerfully. He didn't mind fifty lines. He would not have minded five hundred just then. For his little scheme had succeeded, and he felt that he had his old rivals on the hip. Which was very gratifying indeed for Temple of the Fourth.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bagged!

"THERE'S the car!"

Harry Wharton & Co. came out of Lantham station, just as half-past nine was striking. Outside the station, at a short distance, stood a very large closed car. It was the only car in sight, with the exception of a couple of taxicabs, so the juniors naturally concluded that it was the car from St. Jim's.

"They're in good time, anyway," said Nugent. "They must have got here before half-past nine. But where are they?"

There was no sign of the St. Jim's fellows near the car. They were not likely to be sitting inside it, bottled up, so to speak. Only the chauffeur could be seen—a big fellow, in coat, cap, and motor-goggles. Hardly any of his face could be seen, the lower part being nearly covered by a big dark beard.

"Not the car, I should say," remarked Vernon-Smith. "It's certainly not big enough for us and the St. Jim's chaps too. It would be a bit of a squeeze to get eleven chaps into that car, let alone twenty-three or twenty-four."

"The squeezefulness would be terrific."

Wharton looked round. There was no other big car to be seen, and no sign of one coming. The chauffeur was looking towards them, and he made a motion of raising his cap.

"Looks as if he's expecting us," said Tom Brown.

"Let's go and speak to him, anyway."

The juniors crossed over to where the car was standing.

"Is this car waiting for us?" asked Harry. A glance into it showed that it was empty.

"Are you the young gentlemen from Greyfriars School?"

"Yes."

"Then it's all right."

"But where are Tom Merry and the rest?"

"In the other car," explained the chauffeur. "Master Merry found that he could not get a car large enough for the lot, so he had two."

"Oh, I see! Where's the other car, then?"

"On the road, just outside the town. There was a slight accident, but it's repaired by this time, sir." The chauffeur looked at his watch. "Yes, it will be all right now. Master Merry instructed me to come here and wait for you, and take you to join him."

"All serene."

The chauffeur opened the door of the car. The interior certainly did not seem to offer ample accommodation for eleven fellows. The Greyfriars juniors exchanged glances. That joy-ride was not to be so joyful as they had anticipated.

"The other car is larger, sir," said the chauffeur, as if reading their thoughts—which was not difficult, as a matter

of fact—from their expressions. "The other car takes sixteen quite comfortably."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Harry. "Some of us could walk to where the other car's waiting. Is it very far?"

"About three miles and a half, sir."

"Oh! We'll go in this, then."

The juniors crowded into the car. There certainly wasn't much room. Eight of them were able to sit down, and the other three had to sit upon knees. But, as Bob Cherry remarked, it was lucky that one of them wasn't Bunter. Nothing was so bad but that it might have been worse.

"I say, can't we have the top down?" said Johnny Bull, as the chauffeur was closing the door. "It's pretty stuffy in here."

"I'm sorry, sir; it's jammed."

"Oh!"

The chauffeur closed the door and mounted to his seat. The engine began to snort. Harry Wharton & Co. felt decidedly uncomfortable. Tom Merry might have meant well in providing them with a motor ride, but to provide a car that was too small, with a cover that wouldn't open, was not exactly what they had expected. They were surprised, to say the least of it. They did not want to look a gift-horse in the mouth, so to speak; but really they felt that they had a right to expect better accommodation than this.

However, they did not put their feelings into words. The car moved off, and threaded the streets of Lantham, and sped out upon the open country road. It was a glorious morning, and the sunshine streamed down upon fields and hedges and green woods. Outside the town the chauffeur put on speed, and the car fairly hummed along. Bob Cherry tried to pull down the window. But that seemed to be jammed, too, for he could not open it. The other window was the same. Inside the car, with eleven fellows packed in it on a warm morning, it was growing uncomfortably stuffy.

"Blessed if I like this," said Bulstrode at last. "If this is the way Tom Merry thinks to give us a treat, he's on the wrong track."

"Well, I suppose they mean well," said Mark Linley.

"Mean well be blowed! I'm jolly well not going to be suffocated. If this lasts much longer, blessed if I don't get out and walk."

"Can't be much longer," said Todd. "We've covered a good two miles already. It's a dusty old car, but it's got a good engine. We're simply eating up the ground."

"By Jove, we are going!" said Bob, looking out at the hedgerows rushing past. "That chap is making the fur fly."

"The flyfulness is terrific."

"The rotten windows won't open, and the blessed cover is jammed!" grunted Bulstrode. "What sort of a rotten rattletrap do you call this?"

"Oh, don't grumble!"

"Rats! If they expect any thanks from me, they won't get any, I know that."

"Nor from me."

"It is rather rotten," said Wharton. "I'm getting jolly warm in here. And you're not a light-weight, Bob."

"I'll sit on Bulstrode for a change."

"Oh, don't flop on me!" growled Bulstrode, whose temper was suffering from the heat and the stuffiness. "Flop on somebody else."

"Sit on me," said Penfold good-humouredly.

Bulstrode tapped on the glass that separated them from the chauffeur. The man did not seem to hear. At all events, he did not turn his head.

"Let him alone," said Tom Brown.

"I want to ask him to open the window."

"He'll only tell you it's jammed."

"The silly chump can't hear me knocking. I've a jolly good mind to break through the blessed pane!" snorted Bulstrode.

"Oh, don't be a beast!"

The car rushed on. Three miles at least had been covered from Lantham; but there was no sign so far of the other car mentioned by the chauffeur. The juniors watched for mile-stones. The car whizzed by so fast that they only caught flashing glimpses of them. A milestone—then another! On the last, Wharton caught the figures.

"Five miles to Lantham!" he exclaimed. "He's brought us five miles already! I say, this is jolly queer."

"The queerfulness is—"

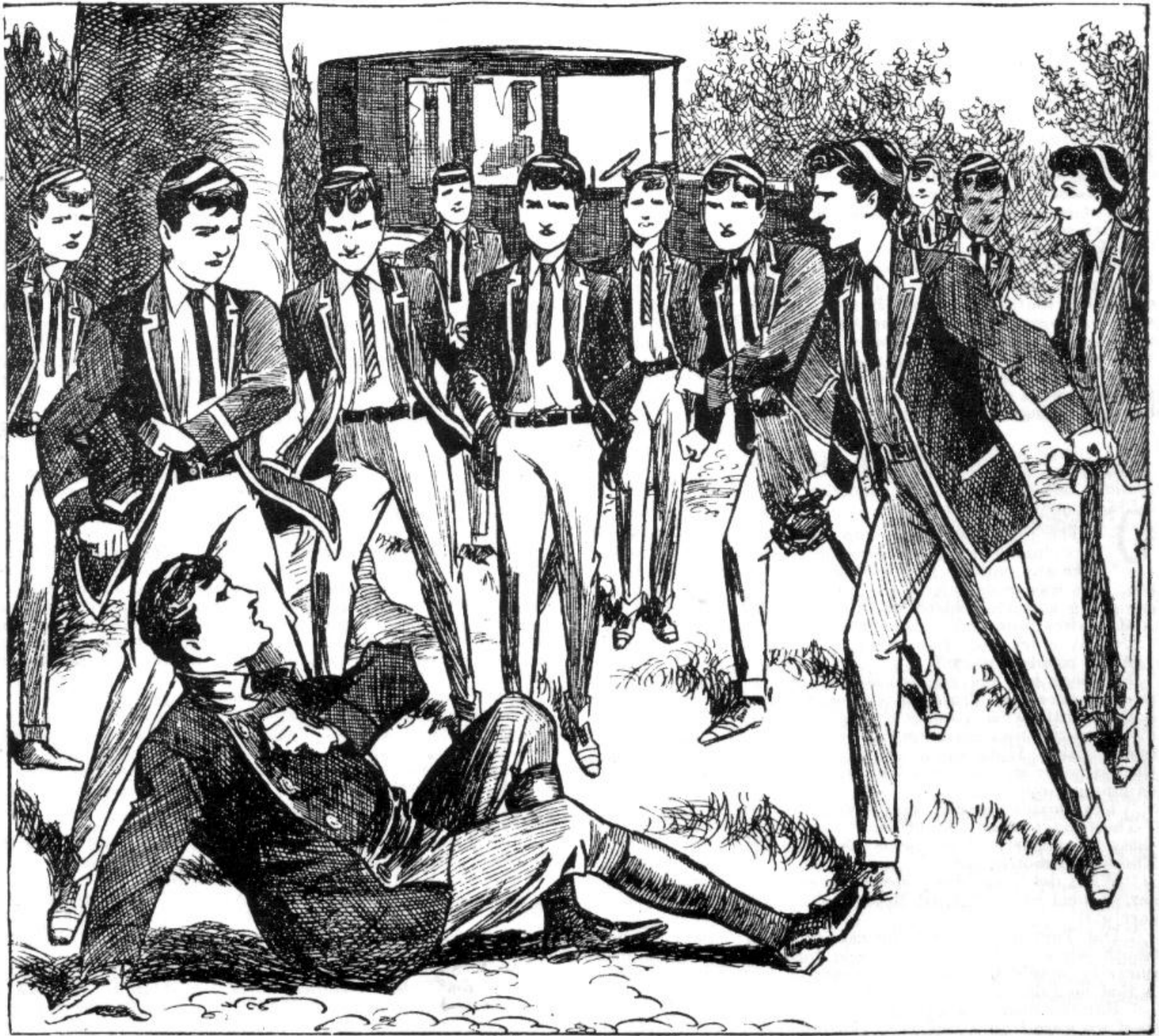
"Terrific!" grunted Bob. "So is the stuffiness, and the heat. I'm getting fed-up."

"I've been fed-up a long time!" snapped Bulstrode.

"We haven't passed the other car," said Wharton, wrinkling his brows in perplexity. "It must be further back on the road than the man supposed."

"Speak to him."

Wharton thumped on the thick glass. He thumped almost hard enough to break in. But the chauffeur did not heed



"Squash him!" Hands were laid on the chauffeur on all sides. His struggles were quite unavailing against so many. His goggles were dragged off, and, to the surprise of the juniors, his beard came off with them. (See Chapter II.)

He must have heard; but he paid no attention. He sat with his eyes steadily before him, never slacking for a moment. He was evidently a good driver. But at the speed at which the car was going, it would have been decidedly dangerous for the man to take his eyes off the road in advance for a single moment.

"Is he dotty?" exclaimed Frank Nugent, exasperated. "Why doesn't he slack down and let us speak to him?"

"Another milestone!" said Bob.

"Look here, I'm sick of this."

"Might as well be in an oven."

"Blow Tom Merry, and blow his car! I'm not going to stand it!" howled Bulstrode, mopping the perspiration from his brow. "Make him stop!"

"Blessed if I know how to," said Wharton. "There's no communicator here. Besides, he can hear me thumping. He won't stop."

"Another milestone."

"That's seven from Lantham," said Johnny Bull. "Is the howling idiot going to take us all the way to St. Jim's?"

The car rushed on, faster and faster, leaving clouds of dust in its wake. Exasperated cyclists on the road yelled "Road-hog!" after the chauffeur as he flashed past them; but the man did not heed. Onward rushed the packed car. Another milestone—another, and another. Ten miles from Lantham!

The juniors were looking at one another very queerly now. The chauffeur had distinctly told them that the "other car,"

with Tom Merry & Co., was three miles and a half from Lantham. Now he had taken them ten miles; and was still going ahead.

What did it mean?

"There—there's something wrong!" said Nugent nervously at last. "Is—is it possible that the man's dotty?"

"Why doesn't he take any notice of our knocking?"

"He won't!"

"And he won't slack down!"

"He must be mad! There isn't any other car at all," said Johnny Bull. "If there was, we should have passed it before now. He's not going to stop—that's clear. And—and we can't stop him."

Another mile—and another. The car was on a lonely road now, racing across a solitary heath. And the chauffeur fairly made it fly. Another mile—another—another—another! Fifteen miles from Lantham. It was quite clear that they were not going to meet another car that had broken down on the road. The man had not told them the truth. Why he should have deceived them was simply inconceivable. But he had. There could be no doubt about that.

"I—I can't understand it," stammered Wharton. "Can this be a jape of the St. Jim's chaps? They'd hardly do such a thing."

"Impossible!"

"Then what does it mean? This car was waiting for us by their orders—as we know by their telegram. And—and

the windows being fastened, and the cover being jammed, it looks like a put-up job. And the chauffeur won't stop. Why shouldn't he stop?—unless he's been ordered not to."

"Great Scott!"

"But—but—"

Bob Cherry shook his head decidedly.

"It's impossible! Tom Merry wouldn't and couldn't play such an idiotic trick on us; it's out of the question. Why, it's mucking up the match. If we waste much more time, how are we going to play cricket?"

"Then what does it mean?"

"Goodness knows—unless—"

"Unless what?" snapped Bulstrode irritably.

"Unless the man's mad!"

"My hat!"

It was a terrible suggestion—that the chauffeur was not in his right senses—with the juniors packed helplessly in the car going at racing speed. But if the man was sane, why did he not slack down in response to their frantic knocking on the glass screen. If he was sane, why was he tearing off with a party of complete strangers in this manner?"

The faces of the juniors grew scared. The conviction grew in their minds that they were shut up in a car guided by a lunatic—racing at fierce speed—to what?

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Joy-Ride!

ON rushed the car.

The juniors had given up knocking on the glass. It was clear that the chauffeur heard them, and refused to take any notice. As for opening the doors and jumping out, that was quite out of the question. To jump out of a car going at such a speed was to court instant death.

One mile after mile fled under the racing wheels.

Twenty miles from Lantham!

What could it mean?

Not once had the goggled driver looked round. Staring straight ahead, he drove on without a pause, only slackening down a little when passing through a village, keeping up at all times the maximum consistent with safety. He was not taking risks. If he was a lunatic, he was a careful one. But the car never slowed down sufficiently for the juniors to think of jumping out.

"The man's mad!" said Wharton, setting his teeth. "There can't be any doubt about that. Only a lunatic would carry off a party of strangers like this. He must be mad. There's no motive for it."

"What did Tom Merry mean by sending a lunatic with a car to meet us?" groaned Bob. "Why couldn't he be more careful?"

"Did Tom Merry send the car, after all?" said Vernon-Smith soberly. "It's a very queer business. We thought it queer he should send such a car—and it is queer. My belief is that he didn't send the car at all."

"But the man was waiting for us in Lantham. He asked us if we were from Greyfriars, you remember, and mentioned Merry's name."

"I know that."

"Well, then, the car must have been sent by Tom Merry."

Vernon-Smith shook his head. His brow was wrinkled in deep thought.

"I can't think so," he said decidedly. "This is a jape on us, and I don't believe the St. Jim's fellows would play such a fool-trick. They knew they're mucking up their own match, if they take us away from Greyfriars like this. It's incredible. If they did such a thing, we'd never have anything more to do with them. It's not fair to them to think so. Either this man has gone suddenly mad, or else Tom Merry hasn't had anything to do with sending this car for us."

"He must be mad!" growled Johnny Bull.

"He's driving jolly carefully for a madman," said the Bounder. "He's keeping up top speed, but he's taking no risks."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"But if he isn't mad, it's a jape," he said. "And who can be japing us excepting Tom Merry?"

"Somebody who's using Tom Merry's name, I suppose."

Wharton started.

"But—but the telegram. Tom Merry telegraphed to us to meet him in Lantham, you know, and the car was waiting there."

"The car was sent there by the same chap who sent the telegram, of course," said the Bounder quietly. "But I don't believe Tom Merry did, either."

"Then who?"

"Somebody who used his name."

The juniors looked at one another, impressed by the Bounder's reasoning. Their first impression had been that the driver had taken leave of his senses. But the Bounder's

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theory was certainly more plausible. Tom Merry & Co. would not have played such a trick on them. But if somebody else had used Tom Merry's name—an easy matter in sending a telegram—

"You see, it wasn't a letter from Merry," said the Bounder. "We know his writing, or some of us do. And a japer wouldn't be in a hurry to commit forgery, for the sake of ever so good a jape. But anybody could have put the name of Merry at the end of a telegram. He might even reckon that he was putting on that signature as a pun—meaning that he was merry at taking us in. A sort of joke."

"I'd joke him!" said Bob, clenching his big fists. "I'd make him merry, the rotter, if I could get at him!"

"But the telegram came from St. Jim's!" exclaimed Wharton. "I looked it over. Here it is. See for yourself. Handed in at Rylcombe at eight o'clock this morning. Rylcombe is close to St. Jim's. Somebody from St. Jim's must have sent the wire immediately the post-office opened."

"But it wasn't Tom Merry," said the Bounder, with conviction. "Somebody sent that telegram, and arranged for the car to be at Lantham ready for us. And Tom Merry doesn't know a syllable about it, I bet you!"

"My only hat! In that case, it's all spoof. They're not coming by car at all, and they're coming by train, as usual."

"Exactly!"

"And they'll arrive at Courtfield, and won't find a brake ready to take them to the school, as we had arranged. We've cancelled the brake."

"That's so!"

"And"—Wharton gritted his teeth—"they'll get to Greyfriars, and won't find us there to play them!"

"Precisely! And that's the little game!" said Vernon-Smith. "Some awfully deep rotter had planned this, and spent a good bit of money on it, too; for the hire of this car must have cost something, and I should think that rascal out there must have wanted a good tip for helping in such a trick."

"But—but who could have done it?" gasped Nugent.

"Some fellow at St. Jim's who's up against Tom Merry," grunted Johnny Bull. "Perhaps that rotter Levison, who used to be at Greyfriars."

"It's like one of his tricks," said Bob. "But Levison wouldn't spend the money on it. He would stop short of a jape that cost a lot of money."

"Yes, rather!"

"But I don't believe it's a St. Jim's jape at all," said the Bounder. "More likely it's somebody at Greyfriars."

"But the telegram came from St. Jim's!"

"It came from Rylcombe. Whoever has done this has spent a good bit of money. He might have spent a little more, by sending someone to Rylcombe over-night, to despatch that telegram in the morning."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"I—I say, that's rather thick," said Bob. "Like a blessed Machiavellian plot. Old Coker wouldn't have brains enough for that."

"Temple!" shouted Wharton suddenly, as a light burst upon his mind.

"Exactly!" said the Bounder. "Temple & Co. were up against us, because we wouldn't let them bag the match. And my belief is that Temple has worked this."

"Oh, the rotter!"

"The cad!"

"Temple's got plenty of tin. And I remember now that he and Dabney were out all last evening. You remember?"

"Yes, yes."

"Making the arrangements, of course," said the Bounder, with a grin. He did not seem to share the exasperation of the rest of the party. The cunning displayed in the scheme seemed to tickle the Bounder's fancy. "We needn't blame ourselves; it was simply impossible to guess that anything of the sort was being planned. They kept it awfully dark. And there's another point. Temple has a cousin who keeps a motor-works at Lantham. I've heard talk about that, because Temple's rather a snob, and he's ashamed of having a relation in trade near the school. Some of the Fourth chip him about it. His cousin started a motor-works there last year. My belief is that last evening Temple visited that chap, and arranged with him to send a man to Rylcombe, and to have this car ready for us in the morning. It was as easy as rolling off a log. I dare say the cousin fellow was told it was just a schoolboy jape; nothing about the match at all, most likely. And Temple must have paid the exes. And there you are!"

The juniors had little doubt of it. They would probably not have worked out the problem so easily themselves, but the Bounder's cool, clear brain had done it, and now they were convinced.

They owed their present plight to Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Fourth. Temple had wanted to bag the match, and

had failed. He had determined that the Remove should not play St. Jim's. And this was the result.

The discovery of the facts added to the exasperation of the trapped cricketers, for it assuredly looked as if the scheme was to succeed.

Already they were more than twenty miles out of Lantham—that is to say, well over forty miles from Greyfriars. And if Tom Merry & Co. were coming by train in the usual way they would be arriving at Greyfriars now. And there would be no Remove team there to play them. What would be the feelings of the St. Jim's fellows when they reached Greyfriars and found that the home eleven had vanished could not be imagined. There would not be a word of explanation for them. Harry Wharton & Co. had had no doubts when they started. Only themselves had seen the telegram, and all the other fellows being in the Form-room at the time, they had mentioned it to nobody. The Saints would be utterly mystified by the unaccountable action of the Remove eleven in vanishing just before the match, and nobody at Greyfriars would be able to furnish the slightest explanation.

"By George," exclaimed Bob Cherry furiously. "I think Smithy's right, and we've been done by the Fourth! This is Temple's answer to us for refusing to let him bag the match. I think it's beyond a joke myself!"

"The beyondfulness is terrific!"

"It's a dirty trick!" exclaimed Wharton wrathfully. "This kind of thing isn't a jape. It's beastly for the visiting team, as well as us. They'll come all the way from St. Jim's, and unless we get back there won't be a match!"

"Unless the Fourth Form give them one," said the Bounder, with a shrug of the shoulders.

Bob Cherry gave a yell.

"Great pip! I didn't think of that! Don't you see, you fellows, it isn't only to keep us from playing St. Jim's, it's a plot to bag the match after all!"

"The St. Jim's fellows will want to play somebody," said Vernon-Smith. "They won't want their journey for nothing. I fancy that Temple will kindly offer them a match with the second eleven."

"The rotter!"

"The swindler!"

"The beastly spoofer!"

"Something's got to be done!" exclaimed Wharton desperately. "If Smithy's right—and there doesn't seem much doubt about it—this driver chap intends to take us so far that we can't get back in time to play St. Jim's at all! We're booked for the day."

"And this was going to be a giddy joy-ride!" groaned Bob.

"The joyfulness is truly terrific."

"We've got to stop that villain somehow!" Wharton knocked furiously on the glass, and shouted: "Stop, you scoundrel! Do you hear, you villain? Stop!"

The chauffeur certainly heard; but he stared straight on, without turning his head. The car was rushing along a white country road at the full limit of speed.

"We're trapped!" groaned Nugent. "What can we do?"

"I know what I'm going to do," said Harry, setting his teeth. "Give me room to get my boot on this glass!"

Wharton raised his boot and smashed the heel on the glass screen. The glass flew out in a thousand fragments, scattering over the chauffeur. The man gave a violent start. It was perhaps dangerous to startle him while he was going at such a speed; but the juniors were in a mood to take risks now.

But the man's start was followed by his former impassivity. He drove steadily on. Harry Wharton reached out to him and caught his shoulder.

"Stop, you rotter!" he said. "Do you hear? Stop!"

Then the man spoke for the first time.

"Let go my shoulder, sir!"

"Stop!"

"Against orders, sir."

"Whose orders?"

"My employer's, sir."

"Who is your employer?"

"Against orders to talk, sir."

"Look here!" shouted Wharton. "We've got a cricket-match on to-day, and this is a trick to keep us from playing. Do you understand? You're liable to punishment for what you are doing. We could prosecute you."

The man did not reply, but Wharton heard him chuckle. The threat was indeed a vain one. It was hardly feasible for the Remove fellows to think of invoking the law to punish the Fourth Form for a jape. For that was what it amounted to. This trick, it was true, was quite beyond the limits of a schoolboy jape. The juniors agreed in regarding it as a dirty trick, and not a jape at all. But the fact remained that it was a scheme of the Fourth to do them "in the eye," and there was nothing for the Removites to do but to get out of it if they could, and grin and bear it if they couldn't.

"Will you stop?" Wharton demanded, after a pause.

"Can't, sir."

"Look here, we'll give you a quid to chuck it!"

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"Against orders, sir."

"Give him anything he likes!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith. "I'd stand a fiver to beat Temple at his own game. Look here, chauffeur! Drive us back to Greyfriars as fast as you can, and it will mean five quid to you!"

"Against orders, sir."

The man was evidently proof against bribery and corruption, and the juniors suspected that he was not an ordinary chauffeur at all, but some friend of Temple's, perhaps his Cousin Teddy himself. Anyway, it was evidently useless to offer the man money. The escape from the predicament was not quite so easy as that.

"You've got to stop, you beast!" exclaimed Wharton. "Look here! Stop the car, or we'll drag you backwards! You'll stop fast enough then!"

"If you do, sir, you'll wreck the car! I shall not let go the wheel. And if I do, the car will run into the roadside at once and smash up!"

Wharton gritted his teeth in helpless rage. It was true enough—they could not force the chauffeur to stop without wrecking the car. And a sudden smash-up at such a speed was not to be thought of, for it meant death or disablement for everybody in the car.

"Don't touch him, Wharton!" said Bulstrode hastily.

Wharton let go the man's shoulder. He was not beaten, but he was baffled for the moment. And while the juniors crowded there in furious perplexity the car drove on. Mile after mile sped under the racing wheels. Decidedly it was not a joy-ride.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Vanished!

"HEAH we are, deah boys!"

It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, who made that remark. The train had stopped at Courtfield Junction.

Fourteen juniors turned out of the train, most of them carrying bags. They were the junior eleven of St. Jim's, and three more fellows. Distinguished among them was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, with his monocle screwed in his eye, and his elegant jacket and well-pressed trousers looking like things of beauty and joys for ever.

"Yes, here we are!" said Tom Merry. "There's a brake outside, so Nugent said in his letter: 'This way!'"

The St. Jim's team walked off the platform. They looked very fit and well. The eleven was composed of Tom Merry, Lowther, Dane, and Noble, of the Shell; and Blake, D'Arcy, Reilly, Figgins, Kerr, Wynn, and Redfern, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's. The other three were Glyn, Digby, and Manners, the last of whom carried a camera. Manners was not in the team, but he intended to take photographs of the match, which was even more to his taste.

Tom Merry looked round outside the station, but there was no brake to be seen.

"Bai Jove! Where's that bwake?" said D'Arcy.

"Doesn't seem to be on view," remarked Figgins. "I suppose they knew what train we were coming by?"

"Of course they did! And their secretary said there would be a brake here to meet us," said Tom Merry. "Better wait a few minutes for it, anyway. They're not likely to have forgotten it, I should think."

"It would be wathah a bweach of politeness to forget it," remarked D'Arcy, "and it would be a bweach of politeness to forget our twain."

"By Jove!" said Lowther. "That would make a pair of breeches!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"There's a bun-shop over the way," remarked Fatty Wynn. "May as well step over there. I've had nothing since brekker, excepting the sandwiches I brought in the train, and the pie I got at Luxford, and the cake at Lantham, and—"

"Then you must be famished," said Tom Merry sympathetically. "Let's get over to the bun-shop, by all means, before our champion bowler perishes of hunger!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The St. Jim's party adjourned to the bun-shop, where Fatty Wynn's performances were quite worthy of Billy Bunter at his best. They kept an eye on the station, but the brake did not appear. Ten minutes passed without a sign of the brake. Tom Merry frowned a little.

"Looks to me as if they had forgotten it," he said, "or else the brake people have mistaken the time of the train. Anyway, it's no good wasting time here."

"I'm not wasting time," remarked Fatty Wynn. "Try some of these tarts, old chap. They're really topping!"

A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Tale
of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. Order Early.

"You chuck it!" exclaimed Figgins, grasping his fat chum by the arm and dragging him away from the tarts. "You won't be able to bowl if you keep on. Kim on!"

"Just two or three more—"

"Rats!"

"Just one more!" pleaded Wynn.

"Take his other arm, Kerr."

Kerr grinned, and took Wynn's other arm, and the fat Fourth-Former was marched forcibly out of the bun-shop. The juniors paused on the pavement to consult. The brake did not appear to be coming, and the question was whether to walk to Greyfriars or to hire vehicles.

"It's a good long walk, I believe," said Blake. "Two miles or more. We don't want that just before playing. I think there's a local train to Friardale, which is near Greyfriars. If we can catch it—"

They crossed to the station again. But the local train was gone, and the next was in half an hour.

"We don't want to hang about here half an hour," said Tom Merry, "and the brake's not coming, it seems. I must say this is rather careless of those chaps! Let's walk!"

"Wats!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy decidedly. "We can't walk two or three miles and cawwy these bags! We want to be fwesh for the match. They have taxi-cabs heah; there are three of them outside the station. Let's cab it!"

"Good egg!" said Blake heartily. "It's Gussy's treat. Order up the giddy motor-cars, Gussy, and count out your spare cash!"

"I did not mean—"

"Never mind what you meant, old chap. It's your treat, and, as we're in a hurry, we won't refuse you!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"If Gussy is going to keep us here while he makes speeches, we may as well wait for the local train," said Blake resignedly.

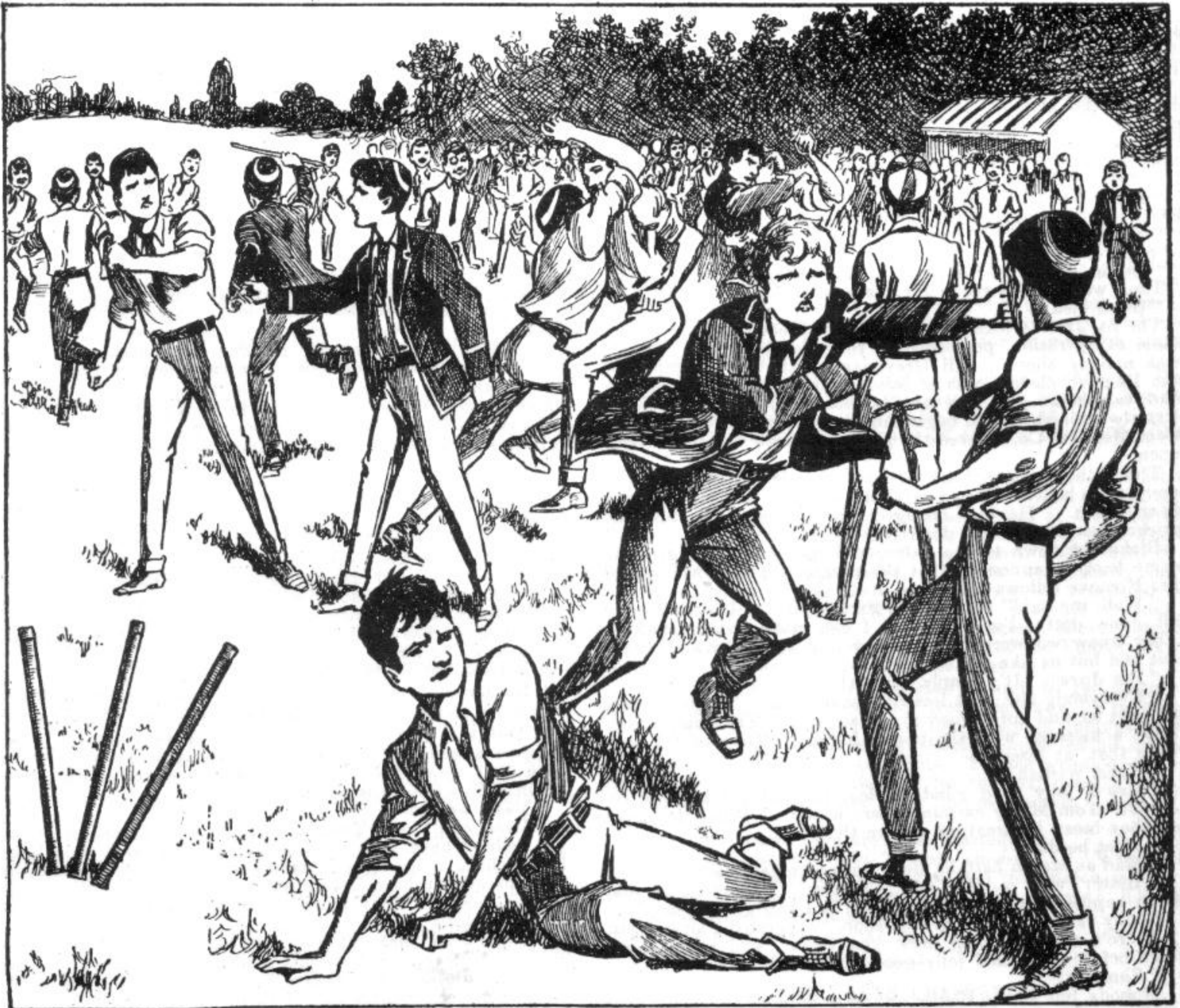
"Wats! Heah, taxi!"

As there were fourteen fellows in the party, three taxis at least were required. The St. Jim's juniors crowded into them, and they started off for Greyfriars. It was quite a procession.

"Bai Jove! Pway don't cwush me!" said Arthur Augustus,



Many of my Scout readers are doubtless ambitious to become Scoutmasters later on—a very natural and laudable ambition. A good Scoutmaster exerts a splendid influence over his Scouts; and those who have been themselves Boy Scouts should make the best Scoutmasters. Our illustration shows a Scoutmaster instructing some members of his Troop.



Harry Wharton & Co. rushed on the cricket-field. There was a gasp of astonishment from Tom Merry & Co.; a yell from the Greyfriars crowd. The returned eleven did not heed. They collared Temple and Dabney and Fry, and dragged them over. (See Chapter 13.)

who was crowded between Lowther and Noble. "Kangy, deah boy, you are squeezin' me!"

"Sorry!" said Noble, without moving.

"Weally, Kangawooh—"

"That's all right," said the Cornstalk junior affably. "I don't mind a bit."

"But I mind!" howled Arthur Augustus. "You are cwushin' my clothes. I wegard it as vewy wemiss of those Gweyfwiahs chaps to forget our bwake! As a wule, they are wathah decent chaps; but I feel wathah watty about this!"

And Arthur Augustus frowned. He was uncomfortably squeezed, and any breach of politeness jarred upon his sensitive nerves.

"Well, it won't be long," said Blake. "This is quicker than a brake. Awfully good idea of yours, Gussy! Chap's lucky to have money instead of brains, after all!"

"Weally, Blake, you ass—"

"Here's Greyfriars!"

"Bai Jove! I'm jollay glad we've awwived!"

The journey had not been long in the taxi-cabs. The three vehicles glided in at the open gates of Greyfriars, one after another, and Gosling, the porter, came out of his lodge in considerable surprise. The cabs stopped, and the St. Jim's juniors poured out.

In spite of Blake's little joke, the juniors "whacked out" the cost of the taxi-cabs, and the vehicles rolled away. Then the cricketers looked round them. Greyfriars was

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evidently at lessons, but they had expected Harry Wharton & Co. to be in sight.

But the only person who was in sight was Gosling, the porter. From where they stood they could see part of the playing-fields—enough to see that the cricket-ground was deserted. Tom Merry wrinkled his brow in perplexity.

"Well, this beats it!" he exclaimed. "It looks as if we're not expected! No brake at the station, and nobody here to meet us! Can they have made a mistake about the date?"

"Pewwaps you have made a mistake, Tom Mewwy—"

"Ass!" said Tom Merry politely. "We've got the date right enough; but it looks as if they haven't. They seem to be in school to-day. Let's ask this chap!"

"Portah, deah boy—"

"Mornin'!" said Gosling, raising his cap.

"We're the St. Jim's team," Tom Merry explained. "We've come over to play the Remove, you know. Can you tell us where the fellows are?"

"They ain't come in yet, sir," said Gosling.

"Are they gone out, then?" exclaimed Tom Merry, in surprise.

"Yes, sir. They all went out some time ago, sir," said Gosling. "I think one of the young gentlemen 'ad a telegram—I know that a telegram come. They didn't say nothing to me, but I seed them go out all together."

"And they haven't come back?" ejaculated Blake.

"No, sir. Wot I says is this 'ere, it's skewrious," said Gosling—"werry skewrious!"

It was certainly curious. The St. Jim's party looked at one another in astonishment.

"Then they haven't made a mistake about the date?" asked Tom Merry. "They knew we were coming?"

"Oh, yes, sir! The 'Ead gives them a 'ole 'oliday to-day for the match," said Gosling. "I don't know where they've gone. It's skewrious!"

"Well, this beats the band!" exclaimed Blake. "They can't have gone to meet us, or we should have met them in Courtfield. They knew we were coming to Courtfield."

"Blessed if I can understand it!" said Tom Merry. "It beats me! I suppose they'll be coming in pretty soon!"

"Yaas, wathah! I twust so. I wegard this as a bweach of mannahs!"

"Better get on to the pavilion, and change," said Figgins. "Then we shall be ready for them when they come in!"

"Good idea!"

The St. Jim's cricketers, in a state of great amazement, and some exasperation, proceeded to the cricket-ground. There was nobody there. All Greyfriars, with the exception of the Remove eleven, was at lessons, and the Remove eleven had vanished. It was an extraordinary state of affairs. Utterly astonished, and beginning to feel just a little "ratty," Tom Merry & Co. entered the pavilion, which was fortunately open.

There they changed into their flannels, expecting every moment to hear the Remove fellows arrive. But they did not hear them. Having changed, they came out; but the cricket-ground was still deserted.

Blake cut down to the lodge, and spoke to Gosling. He came back to announce that the porter had seen nothing of the Remove fellows yet.

"Well, my hat!" Tom Merry exclaimed. "Unless they've all gone dotty, I'm blessed if I can make anything of it! They knew we were coming, and they've deliberately gone out and left us like this!"

"Bai Jove! It's simply wotten!"

"Everybody else is at lessons," said Tom. "Nobody here to meet us, and not a word of explanation. They didn't even leave a message with the porter for us. They might have done that, at least!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I've a jolly good mind to clear off and get back to St. Jim's!" Tom Merry exclaimed wrathfully. "What the deuce do they mean by treating us like that?"

"Must be dotty!"

"Mad as March hattahs, deah boys—I mean, hares!"

"Better wait a bit," said Lowther. "Something may have happened, though I'm blessed if I can guess what!"

"May as well ask in the tuck-shop," suggested Fatty Wynn.

"There's a school shop here, you know; and when I was here before, they had jolly good tarts—"

"Shurrup!"

Nobody but Fatty Wynn was in a humour for tarts, even jolly good ones. Their treatment at the hands of the Remove team of Greyfriars was extraordinary—unprecedented.

The St. Jim's cricketers waited for the Remove to turn up; but the Remove team showed no sign whatever of turning up. And Tom Merry & Co., as they waited and discussed the astounding situation, grew more and more exasperated.

THE NINTH CHAPTER. Something Like a Success!

TEMPLE, DABNEY & CO. came out of the Fourth Form-room with cheery smiles.

Morning lessons were over, and the juniors were free for the rest of the day.

The Remove had not yet been dismissed, however, and Temple & Co. lost no time in hurrying down to the cricket-ground.

There was a sound of the click of bat and ball, but the Greyfriars Remove team were not to be seen. Fourteen fellows in St. Jim's caps were on the cricket-ground, and they were apparently putting in the time at cricket practice; but at sight of Temple and his comrades the play ceased. Tom Merry came to meet them.

"Hallo!" said Temple affably. "Tom Merry of St. Jim's—what? I think I remember you from your last visit here. How do you do?"

He held out his hand very genially. The St. Jim's junior skipper shook hands with him; but his brow was clouded.

"I'm Tom Merry," he said.

"I'm Temple of the Fourth, captain of the second eleven here, you know," said Temple. "How are you getting on with the Remove? Innings over?"

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"We haven't played yet."

"What!"

"We haven't seen anything of the Remove," said Tom Merry sharply. "We've been here over an hour, and, as nobody turned up, we've been knocking the ball about to amuse ourselves. Better than doing nothing."

Cecil Temple looked extremely astonished.

"But where are Wharton and the rest?" he asked.

"That's what we want to know."

"Yaas, wathah!" chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "And I must wemark that I wegard this twreatment of a visitin' team as outwageous!"

"Outrageous!" exclaimed Temple warmly. "I should jolly well say so!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Never heard of such a thing!" said Fry.

"It's a bit thick," said Scott. "Do you really mean to say that the Remove eleven haven't shown up at all?"

"If they have, we haven't seen anything of them," said Tom tartly. "We thought they might have mistaken the date, though it was hardly possible, and might still be at lessons. But the porter tells us he saw them all go out."

"Oh, they're not at lessons," said Temple. "They have a whole holiday to-day, you know, for this match."

"Yes, we know. But they seem to have cleared off. We agreed to wait till somebody came out from lessons before going," said Tom Merry. "If there is any explanation to be given, we're willing to hear it. We don't want to cut up rusty about nothing, but I shall want a jolly good explanation."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Temple shook his head.

"Not much good asking for an explanation," he said.

"The Remove kids don't consult the Fourth about their proceedings, and I fancy nobody else in the Remove knows why Wharton has taken himself off like this. They think the match is going on."

"It's extraordinary."

"Rather too extraordinary for my taste," growled Blake.

"It looks to me as if Wharton has made fools of us."

"And the best thing we can do is to clear off," said Figgins angrily. "You can tell Wharton when he comes back that we've been, and that we jolly well sha'n't come again. This fixture is off for good."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hold on!" said Temple pacifically. "I must say that you fellows have been treated scandalously, and, as a Greyfriars chap, I apologise sincerely. Nothing of the kind has ever happened here before to my knowledge. It's simply unprecedented. They must simply be off their dots, that's all I can think of."

"I don't see that anything can have happened to them," said Tom Merry. "Accidents don't happen to eleven fellows at once. Besides, the porter told us they all went out of their own accord after one of them had a telegram."

"It beats me," said Temple. "But look here! You fellows can't have a journey like that for nothing. You must have a match."

"We don't want to play a scratch team picked up from the Remove fellows left over from the eleven!" growled Noble.

"Of course you don't," agreed Temple at once. "I wasn't suggesting that. There are enough Remove fellows to make up another team, certainly; but then they're not cricketers. Wharton had all their good players in his eleven. I was thinking that you might care to play the Greyfriars Second Eleven as you're here. As a matter of fact, it's a more suitable team for you to meet than a fag team like Wharton's."

"Oh, rather!"

Tom Merry & Co. exchanged glances. Certainly they did not want to travel the great distance from St. Jim's and not get a match. They did not want to return to St. Jim's and tell the fellows there that they had been fooled, and had not played. Temple's offer came really right at the right moment.

"Well, that's not a bad idea," said Tom Merry. "I must admit we feel pretty keenly being treated like this by the Remove, but of course we've nothing up against the rest of Greyfriars. We don't want to be rusty. Are the Second Eleven free to play to-day?"

"Well, we should have had a match with a fag team for practice," said Temple. "Nothing of any importance, however. But we'd put off anything to try to make up to you chaps for the shabby way you've been treated by the Remove. As a matter of fact, we should be very happy to play you."

"Certainly!" said Fry. "It would be a pleasure!"

"And we promise you a good game," said Temple. "As skipper of the Second Eleven, I can answer for that. We play only the Fourth and the Shell in the Second Eleven—no fags."

"Bai Jove, it's wathah a good ideah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I must wemark that you are actin' vevy handsomely, my deah fellow!"

"Yes, you are indeed!" said Tom Merry. "We don't want our journey for nothing. If you're sure that you'd like a match—"

"Delighted!" said Temple heartily.

"Oh, rather!"

"Then it's a go, and we're much obliged to you. We should feel awful asses going home to St. Jim's and confessing that we hadn't played," said Tom Merry frankly.

"It would have been sickening," said Blake.

"Simply wotten, deah boys!"

"Say no more," said Temple genially. "It will be a pleasure to us. And we'll begin at once, and you fellows can join us at dinner. There will be time for a good bit of an innings before dinner."

"Good enough!"

A crowd of juniors were arriving on the cricket ground by this time. Most of the Remove, as soon as they were released from morning lessons, came streaming down to Little Side to see how the cricketers were getting on. They stared in blank astonishment when they found that Harry Wharton & Co were not there.

"Hallo, why are not you fellows playing?" exclaimed Bolsover major, coming up to the St. Jim's fellows as they stood talking with Temple.

"Because Wharton has cleared off with his team for some reason," said Temple, answering for Tom Merry. "They're playing us instead."

"Wharton cleared off! What rot!"

"We haven't seen anything of them," said Tom Merry.

My hat! But what—what have they done it for?"

"That's for them to explain," said Tom drily. "I don't know anything about it. We haven't seen them at all."

"Great Scott!"

"But—but it's extraordinary!" exclaimed Russell. "What can they mean by it? They were here ready for you when we went in to lessons."

"They were not here when we arrived, and there was no brake at the station, either," said Jack Blake.

"But the brake was ordered!" exclaimed Ogilvy. "I was with Nugent when he ordered it."

"It didn't turn up, anyway."

"By Jove! What have you fellows been doing all the time?" asked Esmond.

"Waiting for Wharton," said Tom Merry. "But we're not waiting any longer. Temple has offered us a match with the Second Eleven, to save us from having our journey for nothing."

"Oh, that won't do!" exclaimed Bolsover major. "You came over here to play the Remove. If Wharton chooses to walk off with his team, there's enough of us to make up another eleven. I'll captain a side to meet you, and I'll jolly soon get a team together."

"The fag-end of the Remove," grinned Temple. "Precious sort of a team you'd be able to make up from what's left over after Wharton's picked out his men!"

"Well, it would be a scratch team, of course," said Bolsover; "but we have some pretty good players—better than nothing."

"But not better than the Second Eleven!" said Temple tartly.

"So that's your little game, is it?" said Bolsover major fiercely. "You were trying yesterday to bag our match, and now you think you've got a chance. Well, you're jolly well not going to do it! Tom Merry's team is going to play us!"

Tom Merry's eyes gleamed a little. Bolsover major was a big fellow, and the bully of the Remove. His dictatorial manner had the effect of getting Tom Merry's back up at once. Besides, he had already agreed to play Temple; and above all, he had no desire whatever to play a scratch team composed of fellows whom Wharton did not consider good enough to put into his eleven.

"Excuse me!" said Tom. "I've arranged to play the Second Eleven now."

"But it's a Remove fixture!" exclaimed Bolsover excitedly.

"Yes, but the Remove team have chosen to walk off and leave us to ourselves. I consider it very decent of Temple to get us out of the difficulty. And, to be quite candid, we don't feel inclined to play a scratch team," said Tom Merry bluntly. "And the Remove haven't treated us so well that we need consider their feelings in the matter, so far as I can see."

"Wathah not. Personally, I should wefuse to play the Wemove at all."

"Same here!" said Blake warmly. "We don't blame you fellows if you know nothing about Wharton's conduct; but the Remove fixture is off—very much off!"

"No more Remove for me!" said Lowther.

Bolsover major snorted. He did not feel under the necessity of wasting much politeness on visitors. But he could see that Tom Merry & Co. were determined.

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FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

"Oh, have your own way!" he snapped.

"Thanks!" said Tom, unmoved. "We mean to."

Bolsover major stalked away angrily. The Remove fellows discussed the matter in excited tones. Wharton's amazing conduct in vanishing with his eleven just before the match astounded them. They could not think of any possible explanation, and they had to admit that the visitors had plenty of reason for getting ratty about it. It was no wonder that they declined to have anything more to do with the Remove. Besides that, everybody but Bolsover major admitted that the Remove could not raise a second team anything like fit to meet St. Jim's. It was not to be expected for a junior Form. A team composed of players like Bunter, Fisher T. Fish, and Lord Mauleverer, would have turned the match into a farce. Anyway, the St. Jim's fellows evidently had a full right to please themselves, and they were going to do it.

Several of the Remove fellows spoke to Tom Merry, telling him they were sorry for what had happened, and explaining that they couldn't imagine for a moment what Wharton meant by it.

Tom Merry received their apologies cheerily enough. He was quite content to play the Greyfriars Second Eleven instead of the Remove, though he resolved that the Greyfriars fixture should be scratched off the St. Jim's list after that day.

Temple, Dabney, & Co. lost no time. The Second Eleven were called together. Most of them, who were not in the secret of Temple's little plot, were astounded at the state of affairs. But they rejoiced. They all agreed with Cecil Temple in his desire to "bag" the Remove match with St. Jim's, and now, unexpectedly, a golden opportunity had offered. Hobson of the Shell, remembering the reception of his kind offer to Harry Wharton the previous evening, chuckled aloud with glee. And the Second Eleven, composed of five fellows of the Shell and six of the Fourth, were soon in their flannels, ready for the game.

And the St. Jim's team were glad enough to get playing, too. At all events, their journey would not now be in vain. Tom Merry tossed with Temple for choice of innings, and won the toss, and elected to bat. Cecil Temple led his merry men into the field in great spirits. Temple grinned cheerfully at Fry as he tossed the ball for the first over.

"What price the Remove now?" he murmured.

Fry chuckled.

"I wonder where they are?" he murmured.

"Goodness knows!" said Temple cheerily. "Wherever they are, they won't be here again till this match is over, and we've done them—done them fairly in the eye! This is where the Remove sings small."

And certainly it looked like it.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Getting It in the Neck!

HARRY WHARTON stood in the crowded car, his brows deeply corrugated. The other fellows were furious. But there seemed no help for it. The car was still tearing on, the chauffeur choosing the loneliest roads. Bob Cherry, in desperation, had made an attempt to open the door, only to make the discovery that both doors were locked.

The car slowed a little as a policeman was sighted at a corner, and Johnny Bull smashed out the side windows with his elbow, with a desperate determination to attract attention and interference. The policeman stared at the car as the glass came rattling out in fragments, but it raced by before he could do more than stare. The juniors, looking back, saw him run into the road, looking after the car. Then he vanished round a bend of the road.

And the car rushed on.

The juniors had ceased to count the miles now. They knew they were a tremendous distance from Greyfriars, and that was enough. It was close upon noon now, and still they were shut up in the car, helpless as rats in a trap.

They hardly dared to think of what was happening at Greyfriars. The St. Jim's fellows arriving at Courtfield, and finding no vehicle and nobody to meet them; arriving at Greyfriars and finding that the home team had vanished, without a single word of explanation!

For there was no further doubt, of course, that all this was a trick of Temple & Co., and that the St. Jim's party know nothing at all of the telegram that had been sent from Rylcombe in Tom Merry's name.

What would the visitors think? What could they think? That they had been deliberately slighted, at least. Probably they had gone away again, angry, and determined to have nothing more to do with the Greyfriars Remove. Of course,

Wharton could explain to them afterwards. But the match was hopelessly sacrificed. Or perhaps the Saints were playing Temple & Co., if that was the intended outcome of the Fourth-Form plot.

Wharton gritted his teeth at the thought.

But what was to be done?

To stop the chauffeur by force was to invite the wreck of the car. But the juniors were so furious by this time that they were almost prepared to risk that.

The smashing of the car windows had let in air, but it was insufferably hot in the packed car. Bright sunshine was streaming down upon them. The juniors perspired and grunted and growled. When they passed through villages they shouted out to the passers in the streets, and there were many stares after the car with broken windows, packed with yelling schoolboys. But the car fled so fast that interference was impossible. And the cunning chauffeur avoided towns, picking unfrequented roads with a thorough knowledge of the country. Probably the people who stared at the car regarded the affair as a "joy-ride" of an unusually rowdy description. That a chauffeur was really driving off a car crammed with schoolboys against their will was not likely to occur to anyone. The smashed windows and the shouting probably caused the party to be set down as a particularly rowdy and noisy gang of joy-riders.

And still the car sped on its way.

"Something's got to be done!" said Harry Wharton, at last. "We shall be laughed to death at Greyfriars if we let this go on."

"The Fourth will cackle over it," said Bob Cherry lugubriously. "They've fairly done us in the eye. I never imagined that Temple had it in him to jape us like this."

"It's more than a jape," growled Tom Brown. "I call it a dirty trick. But they'll say we were funks for not forcing the chauffeur to stop."

"The beast won't!" said Nugent. "So long as he's going fast, and keeps hold of the wheel, it would wreck the car if we tackled him."

"The question is," said Vernon-Smith slowly, "would he dare? If he really believed we were in earnest he wouldn't want the car wrecked any more than we do. He would stop if he really thought we were going to tackle him."

"He knows we can't," said Wharton savagely. "The only way to convince him is to drag him out of his seat, and that means a smash-up."

It was only too true. The chauffeur held the trump card, as it were.

"All the same, it can't go on," said Vernon-Smith. "I'm game to take the risk, if you fellows are. Shall I collar him by the neck?"

"Hold on!" said Bulstrode hastily. "Don't play the giddy goat. I don't want to have my neck broken, if you do."

"It's too dashed risky, Smithy," said Nugent uneasily. "If we collar him the fellow may not be able to avoid a smash-up."

"And the smash-upfulness will be simply terrific!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We're slowing down."

"Perhaps he's running out of petrol! Good luck!"

The juniors looked out eagerly. The car almost jumped as the brakes jammed on. They quickly saw the reason. The lonely road the car was following was stopped by a level crossing. The gates were locked for the passage of a train. Ahead of the car the wooden gates stretched across the road, barring all progress, and two or three vehicles were waiting there for the gates to open. The scream of an engine-whistle was heard in the distance.

The chauffeur had no choice but to slow down. He could not charge the locked gates of the level-crossing.

Wharton's eyes danced with delight. It was a chance for the trapped juniors at last. Slower and slower!

"By Jove! Now's our chance!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"Wait till we've quite stopped!" said Johnny Bull. "Then have the villain over by his neck, and drag him off his seat."

"Yes, rather."

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

The juniors waited eagerly. But suddenly the car sprang forward again at increased speed. A side-road turned just before the level-crossing was reached, and the chauffeur had perceived it. He turned the corner, and once more the car rushed on, at right angles to its former course.

The juniors' faces fell.

The disappointment was bitter. If the car had stopped at the level-crossing the matter would have been all in their hands. But it was not to be! It was rushing on again, through a narrow lane, at increasing speed.

Vernon-Smith's jaw set squarely.

"We're going to stop this, at any risk!" he said. "I'd rather risk my neck a dozen times than be made a fool of."

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FRANK RICHARDS

Contributes a Splendid, Complete School Tale in our New Saturday Companion Paper—

"CHUCKLES," ½^d.

like this. Look here, I can drive a car! I've driven my father's car dozens of times. If we can get that brute under I can take the car back to Greyfriars. We're going to stop him!"

"I say, Smithy——"

"I agree with Smithy," said Wharton desperately. "Hang the risk! He's going to stop, or we'll all be mashed up together!"

"But——" began Bulstrode.

"'Nuff said!" snapped the Bounder. "Besides, I've thought of a dodge."

He took out his pocket-knife. It was a combination knife, with all sorts of tools in it. Vernon-Smith opened the gimlet that was attached to it. The other fellows stared at him in surprise and some alarm.

"What the dickens are you going to do?" asked Bob.

"I'm going to give him this in the back of the neck!" said Vernon-Smith grimly. "If he doesn't like punctures in the neck he'll stop."

"My hat!"

"Draw it mild, old man!"

"Rats!" said the Bounder. He thrust-himself forward through the broken window, as close as he could get to the man in the driving-seat. The chauffeur gave a start as he felt a sharp point thrust against his neck.

"Stop!" said Vernon-Smith quietly.

"Can't, sir!"

"Very well; how do you like that?"

"Oh! Ow! Take that thing away!" gasped the man, as Vernon-Smith drove the sharp gimlet at his neck with a hard and steady pressure. "You—you're hurting me! Stop it!"

"I mean to hurt you," said the Bounder coolly. "If you know what's good for you you'll stop before I get to the jugular vein."

"Smithy——"

"Cheese it!" said Vernon-Smith. "I'm running this show now. I'm going to make him stop, or kill him! He can take his choice."

The chauffeur was twisting wildly in his seat, but he still drove on. The pressure of the gimlet on his neck must have been excruciatingly painful. The skin was not yet broken, but now the gimlet pierced it, and there was a trickle of red. The juniors looked on in grim silence.

"Stop it!" shrieked the driver. "Do you want the car to be wrecked?"

"I'll risk that!"

"Take that thing away, or I'll run the car into the hedge."

"Right-ho! Go ahead!"

The threat was idle, of course. Vernon-Smith knew that. But the car wobbled wildly as the man strove to twist himself out of the Bounder's reach. But that he could not do. And the sharp gimlet was in his flesh now. And flesh and blood could not stand that.

"Stop it!" shrieked the man desperately. "I'll stop!"

"Stop first!" said the Bounder mercilessly; and he kept on the pressure of the gimlet.

The brakes jammed on. The car slowed, and stopped. The chauffeur's face was pale with pain. The juniors gave a shout as the car came to a standstill. They felt, perhaps, that the Bounder's method was worthy of a Red Indian; but they were glad enough to stop.

Vernon-Smith had solved the problem.

"Get down and open the doors," said Vernon-Smith quietly.

The man bounded out of his seat. His hand went up to his neck, and his fingers were tinged with red. He glared savagely at the Bounder through the motor-goggles. Vernon-Smith clambered through to the driver's seat.

"Hurrah!"

"Smithy's done the trick!" grinned Bob Cherry. "The roiter has got it fairly in the neck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chauffeur was dabbing furiously at his damaged neck with a handkerchief. Now that the car was at a standstill the juniors scrambled through the broken windows to the road, head-first, caring nothing for the tearing of their clothes. Glad enough were the prisoners to stretch their legs on the road again after their long confinement. And as soon as they were out of the car they closed round the chauffeur, with grim looks. The hour of reckoning had come.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

On the Home Run!

"COLLAR him!"

"Bump him!"

"Rag him!"

"Squash him!"

Hands were laid on the chauffeur on all sides. His struggles were quite unavailing against so many. The juniors

bumped him down in the road. His goggles were dragged off, and, to the surprise of the juniors, his beard came off with them. The face of a young man was revealed, and there was sufficient facial resemblance to Temple of the Fourth for the juniors to guess who the man was.

"Your're Temple's cousin, I suppose?" said Wharton, looking down grimly at the man as he wriggled in the grasp of the juniors.

The chauffeur grinned faintly.

"Yes!" he gasped.

"And Temple put you up to this, of course,"

"No harm meant, sir. I understood that it was a school-boy joke; that was how Cecil explained it to me," said Teddy Temple cheerfully. "Cecil told me you youngsters are always japing him in some way or other, and he wanted to get his own back. As he was willing to pay all the expenses, I didn't see why I shouldn't oblige him."

"Didn't you? Then we'll try to make you see," said Wharton. "I suppose the telegram I received this morning was sent by some friend of yours?"

"Can't say."

"Can't you? Bump him!"

Bump! bump! bump!

"Ow, ow! Don't! Yah! Stoppit!"

"Now perhaps you'll explain about that telegram," said Wharton.

"Ow, ow! All right! I sent one of my hands over to Rylcombe last night to send it!" groaned the unhappy Teddy. "Cecil paid for the whole thing, of course. There was no harm in it, you know."

"Do you know that we've been taken away just when a visiting team was coming to play us at Greyfriars?" demanded Wharton.

"Ow! I understood it was something of the sort!" gasped Teddy.

"Well, you've obliged your cousin, and now you're going to pay for it. We're going to borrow your car to go back to Greyfriars."

"Look here," exclaimed Teddy, in alarm, "I'm not going to trust my car in the hands of silly schoolboys!"

"How are you going to stop it?" grinned Wharton. "If you can fight eleven fellows you can stop it. Not otherwise."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you can't take my car!"

"Well, whether we can or not, we're going to. If anything happens to it, that's your look-out. Perhaps Temple will pay, as he seems to be paying for things so liberally," said Wharton, with a chuckle. "Anyway, we're going to take it. But we're going to give you a lesson first."

"If—if I lend you the car, you'll take me back to Lantham?" said Teddy, alarmed. "I was going to take you back there later, of course."

"How far are we from Lantham now?"

"About fifty miles."

"That makes it seventy to Greyfriars!" groaned Bob Cherry. "And it's half-past twelve now! We shall have a lot of time to play St. Jim's, if they're still there—I don't think!"

"I fancy they're still there," said the Bounder. "Temple will have managed to get them to play his rotten eleven somehow."

"We'll stop all that when we get back," said Harry. "We can make it a single-innings match, and play St. Jim's after all. As for this rotter, he can walk back to Lantham, or find a train somehow. We're not going to take him in the car."

"No fear!"

The juniors were quite resolved upon that point. The unfortunate Teddy had stranded them, and now he was going to be stranded in his turn. It was only justice. But Teddy's expression showed that he did not like it. They were miles from any railway-station, and he had a long tramp before him before he could get a train to Lantham. The matter was not working out according to Teddy's programme.

"Look here," exclaimed Teddy, "I'll give in! Only let me come in the car. I've got to get back to the works, you know, and—and—"

"You should have thought of that before, my pippin! You can get back any way you like—excepting in the car. And you're going to be jolly well ragged first! There's a ditch here quite handy—that's a bit of luck! Shove him in!"

"Hold on! Leggo! Stoppit! I say— Yaroooh! Grooh!"

Splash!

There was a deep ditch, with a couple of feet of water and a good foot of mud, beside the lane. Teddy Temple disappeared from sight as the juniors hurled him in. He came into view again, puffing and blowing, and looking a most deplorable object. Mud and slime smothered him from head to foot. And the scent he brought up with him from the depths of the ditch was not pleasant.

"Grooh! Ugh! Gug-gug-gug!"

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"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
The unhappy Teddy tried to scramble out; but half a dozen boots shoved him back again—not gently—and he squashed into the ditch again.

"You'll stay there till we're gone," said Wharton coolly. "It's our turn now, you know."

"Grooh-hooh!"

"All aboard!" said Vernon-Smith.

The juniors scrambled into the car. Teddy Temple stood half buried in the ditch, blinking at them through smothering mud. His aspect, as he stood in the ditch, was so extraordinary that the juniors yelled with laughter as they packed themselves into the car. But Teddy did not laugh—he gurgled and gasped.

Bob Cherry waved his hand to the muddy Teddy as Vernon-Smith set the car in motion.

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" he chortled.

"Grooh!"

"Have a nice walk home, won't you?"

"Grooh!"

The car buzzed away.

The unhappy Teddy scrambled out of the ditch and stared muddily after the retreating car. Teddy had certainly come out at the little end of the horn—as Fisher T. Fish of the Remove would have expressed it. His journey home to Lantham in his present state would be the reverse of joyful.

But Harry Wharton & Co. did not waste any further thoughts upon Teddy. They had the car in their hands at last, and Vernon-Smith was a good driver. He did not tear along as Teddy had done, but he kept the car at a good speed, going back on the road they had travelled, and slowed down as he spotted a milestone.

"Six miles to Grassmere," he said, glancing back at the juniors in the car. "What's the time, Wharton?"

"Just on one o'clock."

"Good egg! The express passes through Grassmere at one-thirty," said the Bounder. "From there it's two hours to Courtfield Junction. I'll drive the car to Grassmere, leave it there, and we'll take the train."

"What about driving to Greyfriars?" asked Nugent.

The Bounder shook his head.

"Not enough juice, as Teddy would put it," he replied.

"Besides, the express would be quicker," said Wharton. "Smithy can't go racing along like a real chauffeur; a bobby would stop him soon enough. And this car will attract a lot of attention, with the windows broken. We don't want to be stopped and questioned, and made to waste time. Are you sure about the train at Grassmere, Smithy? I don't know anything about this part of the country."

"Quite sure. My pater came by that train last time he came to see me," said the Bounder. "Besides, I know the line."

"Then go ahead for Grassmere, and blow Lantham!"

The car sped on again. Vernon-Smith drove into Grassmere, and stopped at the railway-station. There was ample time for the train. The juniors did not bother about the car. Leaving it standing in the road, they walked into the station. No doubt Teddy would recover it sooner or later. At all events, it was not their business to look after a car which had been used to kidnap them. If Teddy had to advertise for it, it would be something more for Temple of the Fourth to pay for, as Bob Cherry cheerfully remarked. Perhaps by the time the affair was finished with, Temple would find it a very expensive jape. But that was Temple's affair—not theirs.

"My treat!" said the Bounder, as he took the tickets for the express. "It was my idea to take the train."

"Oh, rot!" said Wharton warmly. "I—"

"'Nuff said. It's my treat!"

And Smithy changed a fiver for the tickets, and they went on the platform, the Bounder refusing to listen to a word of protest. A few minutes later, the juniors were in the express, dashing towards Courtfield Junction, with a two hours' run before them.

"Courtfield at half-past three!" said Bob Cherry. "That means Greyfriars about four. Not much time for a cricket-match."

"Time to stop Temple's little game, anyway," said Johnny Bell.

"Yes, rather."

"We may get in a single-innings match," said Wharton. "It keeps light late now, and, under the circumstances, the St. Jim's chaps will be willing to catch the latest train home. If we find them playing—"

"By Jove, we'll soon stop them!"

"No need to waste time talking to them," said Bob. "We'll just go for them bald headed, and mop up the ground with them."

"Hear, hear!"

And during the long journey the Removites were considerably solaced by the prospect of going for the Fourth bald-headed, and mopping up the ground with them.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Presents His Bill!

TEMPLE, DABNEY & CO. were looking a little blue when the innings stopped at dinner-time.

The heroes of the Fourth had "squeezed out" the Remove, and had "wedged in" themselves. So far, all was successful. They had bagged the St. Jim's match, and the Remove team were somewhere miles away, quite off the scene. The programme had been carried out successfully up to that point.

But from the point the programme seemed in danger of collapse. For it had been Cecil Temple's plan to beat St. Jim's, and thus show that the Second Eleven was really the proper team to play. And when afterwards the Removites recriminated on the subject of the vanishing eleven, Temple would be able to say loftily:

"Well, we beat them! You couldn't have beaten them! But we did!"

That would have been a complete answer to the Remove, Temple considered. Only——

There was an "only."

For from the start of the match, it was perfectly clear to all the spectators, and to the Second Eleven themselves for that matter, that they hadn't the remotest chance of beating St. Jim's.

Tom Merry & Co. were a big handful for the Remove eleven; and, though Temple never would admit it, the Remove eleven was far and away better than the Second Eleven.

It oughtn't to have been so—it was absurd that it should be so—and Temple never would confess that it was so; but the troublesome fact remained that so it was.

And the St. Jim's fellows, who would have given Harry Wharton & Co. the tussle of their lives, simply walked over Temple and his team.

Tom Merry and Noble—the Cornstalk, whom his comrades called Kangaroo—opened the innings. Fry and Dabney and Temple bowled to them in vain. The two batsmen knocked the bowling all over the field, and took as many runs as they chose, so to speak; and their wickets were never in danger, either from bowlers or fieldsmen.

They played for forty minutes, until there came a pause for the juniors' dinner; and in those forty minutes, Tom Merry and Kangaroo had knocked up 55 runs, and looked as if they could knock up 55,000 more, for all Temple & Co. could do to stop them.

The two batsmen, still as fresh as paint, came off the field quite cheerfully and smilingly when the innings stopped for lunch.

They could not help smiling. They had come over to Greyfriars expecting a hard-fought fight. They were having a walk-over, as easy as if they had been playing the Third or Second Form at St. Jim's. There were some good bats in Temple's team, but at bowling they were weak, and fielding they always neglected. And it looked as if they would not be batting at all, if St. Jim's chose to keep possession of the wickets for the rest of the day.

"Bai Jove, do they call this cwicket?" Arthur Augustus murmured to Tom Merry, as they walked towards the School House. "Wharton's team play a great deal bettah than this."

Tom Merry laughed.

"Well, it's amusing, anyway," he said. "We sha'n't want to finish the innings. I'll declare when we have a couple of hundred, and let them bat. If their batting is on a level with their bowling and fielding, we shall be finished in time to catch the early train home."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Extraordinary thing that Wharton hasn't turned up yet and hasn't sent word," Jack Blake remarked.

"Oh, blow Wharton!"

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard him as havin' acted as a wotten boundah, and I shall certainly wefuse to speak to him when he turns up!"

Tom Merry & Co. dined at the Remove table with cheerful faces. Temple, Dabney & Co. were not looking so cheerful; it was borne in upon their minds that they would not beat St. Jim's. The match would count as a defeat for Greyfriars; and when the fellows learned of the trick Temple had played on the vanished team they would be furious. If the Second Eleven won handsomely, there was Temple's excuse ready-made. But a crushing defeat was very different.

What would the fellows say to the junior who had cleared off a winning team by a trick, and played a losing game in

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their absence? It was not a pleasant reflection for Cecil Temple. Not only the Remove, but his own Form, and the rest of Greyfriars would be heavily down upon him. The one thing that could justify to any extent his action was a victory. And already he realised that a victory was beyond the limits of possibility.

So while Harry Wharton & Co., many miles away, were chafing under the success of Temple's trick. Temple himself was not feeling very happy about it. And Dabney and Fry and Scott and Smith minor, who were in the secret, looked very lugubrious. They had warmly approved of Temple's little plot, but the way it was working out made them very much less satisfied. After a hopeless licking, what would they be able to say in their defence?

Bolsover major and the rest of the Remove were grinning. If Bolsover major had played St. Jim's with a fag-end team of Removites, the results could not very well have been more deplorable. And the Removites were not sorry to see the Fourth and the Sheil knocked sky-high by the visitors. It served them right for bagging the match, so Bolsover major declared, and the other fellows agreed with him.

There was one member of the Remove who was not thinking about the match at all, however. Billy Bunter did not waste any thoughts on the vanished eleven, or on the success or failure of Temple's team. Billy Bunter kept his big glasses upon Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's. He had a little bill in his pocket, which he intended to present to the swell of St. Jim's at the earliest possible moment; and if he thought of the vanished eleven at all, it was only to rejoice that Todd and Bob Cherry were out of the way, and could not interfere with his designs upon Arthur Augustus's pocket-book.

When dinner was over, the juniors strolled down to the cricket-ground again, chatting there till the resumption of play. That was Bunter's opportunity. He rolled up to D'Arcy with an affable grin on his fat face, and held out a podgy hand.

"Jolly glad to see you, old chap!" he said.

Arthur Augustus jammed his monocle into his eye and surveyed the fat junior. Then he shook hands with him in a rather gingerly manner. Bunter's fat paw was none of the cleanest, and the swell of St. Jim's was fastidious. However, politeness came before everything with the Hon. Arthur Augustus, so he shook hands with the Owl of the Remove.

"Buntah!" he remarked. "How do you do, Buntah?"

"I've been looking for a chance to speak to you," said Bunter. "How are you getting on with the ventriloquism?"

"Ventriloquism! Bai Jove, I've dwopped that! As a mattah of fact, I had forgotten all about it, deah boy."

"I'd give you some more lessons if you liked while you're here," said Bunter.

Arthur Augustus coughed. Bunter's lessons, as he remembered very well, consisted of refreshing himself with ginger-beer and pastry, for which D'Arcy was called upon to pay.

Lessons of that kind were not worth half-a-guinea a time.

"Thank you vevy much, deah boy, but I've weally dwopped the ideah."

"H'm! Then I suppose you won't mind settling the account."

"The—the what!"

"The account! Short reckonings make long friends, you know."

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass very deliberately upon the Owl of the Remove. His acquaintance with Bunter was not at all so intimate as Bunter hinted to the Remove fellows. But he had probably discerned something of the character of the Owl of the Remove.

"I do not compwehend you, Buntah!" he said calmly. "I was not awah that there was any account at all."

"You remember I met you at Luxford to give you lessons."

"Yaas, and I paid you for it, and your railway fare both ways, as well as for a twemendous feed at the station. I weally do not think you have anythin' to complain of."

"There were some items I forgot to mention at the time," Bunter explained. "I'm not much of a business man, really. I treat people too generously. Still, it's always better to have these things in order. Don't you think so? To save you the trouble of remembering the items, I've made out a little bill."

"Bai Jove!"

"Of course, if it's not convenient for you to settle the tot at once, I'll take a pound on account, and let the rest stand over for a time," said Bunter liberally. "You can send me a postal-order from St. Jim's."

"A—a—a pound!"

"Yes, on account, you know."

"Gweat Scott!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus, his eyeglass dropping from his eye. "Then how much do I owe you, Buntah?"

"Oh, a trifle of three-pounds-ten!" said Bunter negligently.

"Wha-a-a-at!"

"Here's the bill."

Billy Bunter extracted a greasy and inky piece of paper from his pocket, and presented it to the St. Jim's junior. D'Arcy took it in astonishment and dismay, and his astonishment increased as he ran his eye over the precious document. It ran:

	£	s.	d.
Dr. to W. G. Bunter.			
To time expended in travelling from Greyfriars to Luxford	1	1	0
To time expended in returning from Luxford to Greyfriars	1	1	0
To expense of refreshments en route, going and returning	1	1	0
Extras	0	7	0
Total.....	3	10	0

"A. A. D'Arcy, Esq."

So ran Bunter's little bill, a considerable improvement upon the rough draft which Peter Todd had forced the fat junior to swallow. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's eyes grew rounder and rounder as he looked at it. He seemed unable to do anything but gasp for a minute or so.

"Bai Jove!" he ejaculated at last.

"Is that all right?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"All wight? Gweat Scott! No; I do not wegard it as all wight—I wegard it as all w'ong, bai Jove!"

"Of course, I'm ready to meet you in any reasonable way," explained Bunter. "If you're dissatisfied, I'm willing to explain to you."

"What's the trouble?" asked Tom Merry, joining them, attracted to the spot by D'Arcy's astounded and dismayed expression.

Arthur Augustus passed him the little bill.

"Wead that, deah boy!"

Tom Merry read it. His brow darkened for a moment, and then he burst into a laugh.

"I suppose it's a joke," he said.

"Yaas, I suppose it must be a joke."

"No joke about it!" said Billy Bunter briskly. "You shouldn't employ a ventriloquial professor if you don't want to pay him. You agreed to pay all exes. I sincerely hope you are not going back on your own word, D'Arcy."

Arthur Augustus reddened.

"I have nevah gone back on my word, you wottah—ahem!—I mean, Buntah. But I paid your twavellin' expenses, and paid for the lesson, and for the feed, and lent you some tin, and I wegard that as quite suffish."

"As for what you lent me, I shall settle up!" said Bunter, with dignity. "That is an entirely separate matter, and we can leave it over for the moment. It's not business-like to confuse accounts. Accounts should always be kept separate."

"Do you really mean that you want D'Arcy to give you three pounds ten shillings?" asked Tom Merry, not knowing whether to be angry or amused.

"Not give—pay!" corrected Bunter.

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort!"

"Oh, really, D'Arcy! If you are going to act dishonourably—"

"Bai Jove! I——" Arthur Augustus clenched his fist, and then, remembering that he was a visitor at Greyfriars, unclenched it again. "Buntah, I wegard you as a wotten, sewewin' cad! I will pay you, and——"

"No, you won't!" said Tom Merry. "I'll punch your head if you do!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

Tom Merry signed to Bolsover major, who was near at hand regarding the scene. The big Removite strolled up.

"I—I say—I—I'll take a quid, and call it square!" said Bunter hurriedly.

"You won't!" said Tom Merry. "Bolsover, look at this."

Bolsover major stared at the paper. Then his brow grew like a thundercloud. Bolsover major was a good deal of a bully, and he had his faults; but the disgrace to his Form, Bunter attempting to screw money out of one of the St. Jim's fellows, was a thing he felt keenly.

"You dirty fat cad!" he roared.

"Oh, really, Bolsover——"

"Don't mind Bunter," said Bolsover major. "He's a professional cadger, and we come down heavy on him sometimes for it. I'm going to come down heavy now."

And he did. He seized Bunter by the back of the neck and ran him round the pavilion. From behind the pavilion

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FOR NEXT MONDAY—

"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

EVERY MONDAY,

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ONE PENNY.

came a sound of wild roaring. A few minutes later Billy Bunter was seen in full flight, still yelling. He crossed the Close like a champion of the cinder-path, and disappeared into the School House, whence he did not emerge again. And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of St. Jim's, saw no more that day of Billy Bunter or his little bill.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER. Wharton Turns Up!

"OVER!"

The innings had restarted. Tom Merry and Kangaroo were at the wickets again, and Fry had bowled the first over. It added six runs to the St. Jim's score.

The St. Jim's batsmen who were waiting their turn stood in a grinning group before the pavilion, looking on. They could not help grinning. Their opponents were so far below their weight, that they knew half the bats would not be wanted. The match was a walk-over, and it would make the fellows yell when they were told about it at St. Jim's. Their anger at the supposed slight from the Remove team had quite faded away now. They could not be angry and amused at the same time, and they could not help being amused at this match.

Temple's team was no good, and that was all there was about it. As a matter of fact, Cecil Temple's influence in the junior cricket club, and his position as skipper of the Second Eleven, were largely due to his wealth and aristocratic connections, and not to his abilities as a cricketer or as a captain. Hobson of the Shell would have made a much better captain; and certainly he could not have selected a poorer team. Temple's powers chiefly lay in the line of swanking, and his idea of forming a team was to put his own friends into it, or fellows who were extremely civil to him. And his idea of cricket practice was to bat to an admiring audience. With such a skipper, the Second Eleven was not likely to do much. Against a strong team like Tom Merry & Co. they simply crumpled up.

Their fielding was "rotten," and good fielding was wanted now. Their bowling was weak, and only very good bowlers could have touched the St. Jim's wickets. When they came to batting, probably they would do better. But they would not come to batting until the St. Jim's fellows chose to let them. Coker of the

Fifth, who was looking on, remarked to Potter and Greene that St. Jim's could keep their wickets up for a month of Sundays if they chose; and, for once, Coker's chums agreed that he knew what he was talking about. Indeed, all the onlookers were grinning at the poor show made by the Second Eleven.

Tom Merry was out at last, taking a fifth run when there was only time for four; but he had done it carelessly, with the idea of giving another batsman a show. It was not worth while keeping his wicket up when he knew that all the eleven would not be wanted.

Jack Blake took his place, and knocked the bowling all over the field. The St. Jim's score stood at 100, when Hobson, of the Shell, almost the only good man in the home side, caught Kangaroo out. Two wickets down for 100.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came in to join Blake. And the swell of St. Jim's showed that, in spite of his elegant ways, he was a hard hitter. D'Arcy and Blake between them brought the score up to 150, when Blake was bowled by a lucky ball from Fry.

By that time the Second Eleven had been given so much leather-hunting that it looked as if they would have no breath left for batting, if they were ever allowed to bat. Unless Tom Merry declared, certainly they would never bat at all. But as Tom wanted a win, he had decided to declare at the round figure of 200. Two hundred, as he calculated, could easily be knocked up by four o'clock, and then the home team could be polished off at the wickets in time for the visitors to catch the six o'clock train home.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Figgins brought the score up to 200 between them. As a matter of fact, it still wanted five minutes to four when the board showed 200. The batsmen were well set, and could have gone on for hours. Temple, Dabney & Co. were gasping in the field. They felt that that dreadful innings would be the death of them if it lasted much longer.

"I'll declare after this over," said Tom Merry, when a four

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A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. Order Early.

from Figgins had made up the required 200. There were still three more balls to the over.

Fry bowled again.

Just as he delivered the ball, a crowd of fellows, with faces red from running, came streaming in at the school gates.

The crowd round the cricket-field did not observe them for the moment, all their attention being given to the game, so the return of Harry Wharton & Co. passed for the moment unnoted.

Figgins had knocked away the ball, and was running with D'Arcy, when the new arrivals came running upon the cricket-ground. There was a shout as they were seen.

"Hallo!" roared Bolsover major. "Here they are! Where have you idiots been?"

"Faith, and what do you mean intoirly?" bawled Micky Desmond.

Temple's jaw dropped.

"The Remove! That idiot Teddy—he's let them get back! Oh, crikey!"

Harry Wharton & Co. did not speak a word. They were red and breathless from having run almost without a pause from Courtfield. But they had breath enough left to take summary vengeance upon Temple, Dabney & Co.

They rushed on the cricket-field.

There was a gasp of astonishment from Tom Merry & Co., a yell from the Greyfriars crowd. The returned eleven did not heed. They collared Temple and Dabney and Fry, and dragged them over and bumped them in the grass.

The fieldsmen who were not in the secret of Temple's plot gathered round angrily, and piled in to help their leaders, but they could not stand against the angry and vengeful Removites.

Temple, Dabney & Co., and their followers, were knocked right and left.

Tom Merry and his comrades stood looking on open-mouthed. Never had they beheld such a scene upon a cricket-field before.

"Well, this beats the giddy band!" gasped Figgins, as he came off from the wicket. "I suppose this will be an unfinished match—what?"

"Looks like it," grinned Blake. "They're Wharton's team, and they've come back. But what they're going for their own chaps for is a giddy mystery."

"Must be pottay, deah boys. Pewwaps it's sunstwoke."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!" roared Figgins. "Pile in! Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But the Greyfriars crowd had swarmed on the field, and the combatants were dragged apart. Temple, Dabney & Co., red and dishevelled, struggled away from their assailants. For the moment both parties had forgotten the St. Jim's cricketers, who were looking on.

"What on earth are you up to, you fellows?" roared Bolsover major.

"Where have you been?"

"What does it mean intirely?"

"Ask that rotter!" panted Wharton, pointing to the dishevelled Temple. "He got us away by a trick, and we've only just got back, and found him playing our match!"

"Great Scott!"

"Look here!" gasped Temple. "Trick or not, we're playing the match now, and you fags can clear off!"

"Catch us! Do you hear, you fellows? Temple sent me a telegram, signed with Tom Merry's name, and got us away, to bag our match while we were gone."

"My hat!"

"What a rotten trick!"

"Oh, that's the limit!"

"Kick 'em off the field!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah! Kick 'em out!"

All the Remove piled in with a will. Temple, Dabney & Co. disappeared from the cricket-ground with a crowd of boots behind them. Hobson and the rest, who were not in the secret—they were in the secret now, of course—retired in disgust. Probably they were not sorry that so hopeless a match had been interrupted. An unfinished match was better than the terrific licking that had only too clearly been in store for them.

Harry Wharton ran towards the pavilion. Four o'clock was striking. Tom Merry & Co. met the captain of the Remove with grim looks.

"I'm awfully sorry, you fellows." Wharton said breathlessly. "You must have thought we were acting in a rotten way, in not being here to meet you."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, as a matter of fact, we did," said Tom Merry bluntly. "Temple offered us a match with the Second Eleven, to save wasting the day, and we accepted. And after the

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way you didn't play us yourselves, I think it's pretty cool of you to clear them off the ground in this way!"

"Let me explain. Look at that!"

Wharton held out the telegram. Tom Merry stared at it in amazement.

"That's my name signed to it," he said.

"Exactly! And we thought it had come from you."

"But—but—I don't understand—"

"It was a jape of those rotters!" Wharton explained breathlessly. "They wanted to bag our match. Temple sent a man last night to Rylcombe to send this wire—we've found it out since—and had a motor-car at Lantham waiting for us. We were carried off—over seventy miles away!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Well, I'm blessed if I've ever heard anything of that sort before!" ejaculated Tom Merry. "Then you thought I'd asked you to meet us in Lantham?"

"Of course—from the telegram. We thought it rather queer, but as the wire said you'd be waiting for us, we thought we'd better go. And then we were whisked off in the car—and it was a long time before we could make the chauffeur stop—and then we were at Grassmere, seventy miles from here!" Wharton panted. "You see now?"

"I see. Of course, you were not to blame, under the circumstances," said Tom, cordially enough. "I'm sorry you've had such a trick played on you. To my mind, it's rather beyond the limits of a joke."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"We got back as quickly as we could. We guessed these rotters had bagged the match, somehow. But we've stopped that soon enough!" added Wharton grimly.

Tom Merry looked somewhat perplexed.

"That's all right," he said. "It's a queer business. But what's to be done now? You don't want us to go on playing Temple's team?"

"No fear!"

"But"—Tom Merry glanced up at the clock-tower—"it's turned four. Are you thinking of playing, all the same?"

"If you fellows are willing," said Harry. "We can make it a single-innings match, and I think there will be time. It would be rotten if we're done out of the match altogether. It's rotten for you chaps to have your match mucked up like this by Greyfriars fellows. But you see that we personally were not to blame."

"Quite so! That's all right!"

"Yaas, wathah! As a mattah of fact, it was vevy polite of you to go all the way to Lantham, on the pwesumption that Tom Mewwy had asked you to meet us there, deah boy!"

"Well, shall we make the best of it?" asked Wharton. "If you fellows wouldn't mind going by a later train, there's time for a single-innings match."

"Right-ho!" said Tom Merry heartily. "All serene! We're ready when you like."

"It won't take us five minutes to get ready."

"But, I say, are you fit to play, after what you've been through?"

"Fit as fiddles; and you've been playing already, too, so that will make it square," said Wharton, laughing.



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"All serene! We'll make a match of it yet, then."

"Good egg! We'll be ready in a jiffy."

And Harry Wharton & Co., if not ready in a jiffy, were ready in a few jiffies, and they came quickly out on the field. Temple, Dabney & Co. had vanished, to hide their diminished heads. And a crowd of fellows, buzzing with excited discussion of the strange adventures of the vanished eleven, thronged round the field to watch the performances of Harry Wharton & Co. against St. Jim's

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Fight to a Finish!

HARRY WHARTON had won the toss, and the Remove went in to bat, Wharton opening the innings with Bob Cherry.

And the St. Jim's fellows, if they had expected to find the Remove team anything like the unfortunate Second Eleven, soon had their eyes opened.

Fatty Wynn, the champion junior bowler of St. Jim's, delivered the first over to Harry Wharton. The over brought eight runs to the Remove, which was a good beginning. And Tom Merry remarked to Blake that the Remove would be a hard nut to crack.

And Tom Merry was right.

After the excitement of their adventures that day, the Remove cricketers did not seem at all flustered or out of form. Indeed, if the rest of the team required time to recover, they had it, for Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry held possession of the wickets for a long time, in spite of the efforts of Fatty Wynn and Blake and Kangaroo in turn with the ball, and of the keenness of the fieldsmen.

Fifty runs had been scored when Wharton's wicket fell to Fatty Wynn, and the Greyfriars crowd cheered him as he went out. Peter Todd took his place, and Peter, who was an extremely simple-looking youth, was not expected by the field to stand long against Fatty Wynn. But Peter, as his Form-fellows knew, was not nearly so simple as he looked. He proved to be a mighty man with his hands. His drives were tremendous when he had a chance, and the score went up by leaps and bounds under his hard hitting.

And when Blake clean bowled him at last, Vernon-Smith came in, and the Bounder had seldom been in better form. Fatty Wynn, masterly bowler as he was, exhausted himself in vain against the Bounder's wicket. Vernon-Smith, as cool as a cucumber, put "paid" to every attempt to dislodge him. And the figures went up.

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked, when the field crossed over once more. "This is somethin' like a wicket. These boundahs can play!"

"They can!" grinned Tom Merry. "We shall have all our work cut out to beat them, my son. But we're going to beat them!"

"Oh, yaas!"

But it was clear that the Remove would require some beating. Bob Cherry was caught out by Tom Merry in the slips, and Nugent, who took his place, was caught and bowled by Fatty Wynn. The Remove were four down, but the score was 100.

The Bounder was still going strong. Penfold, who joined him, had bad luck, his wicket going down for 6; and Bulstrode fared worse still, being caught out for a duck's egg. But the Remove looked cheerful enough over those losses. They felt that they could afford them. The Bounder, with Mark Linley at the other end, was still batting away like a Hayward or a Jessop. At 130 Mark Linley was bowled by the redoubtable Fatty, who received a wildly enthusiastic thump on the shoulder from his chum Figgins that nearly doubled him up. Tom Brown came in, and added 9 before he was stumped. Eight down! The Bounder and Johnny Bull were batting, and adding runs every minute.

Tom Merry & Co., tough as they were, were given enough leather-hunting to more than satisfy them.

"Get that chap out, or I'll boil you!" said Tom Merry genially, as Fatty Wynn went on to bowl against the Bounder once more.

Fatty Wynn grinned, and did his best. Whether he was afraid of being boiled or not, certainly he did remarkably well in that over. The Bounder added half a dozen more runs, and then his middle stump was whisked out of the ground.

"Bravo, Fatty!" yelled the field.

"Last man in!"

Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the dusky and serene Nabob of Bhanipur, was last man in. And there were loud shouts of "Go it, Inky!" "Pile in, Snowball!" And the dusky junior grinned and piled in.

But Fatty Wynn was very dangerous now. The score stood at 146 when Johnny Bull's leg stump was whipped out of the ground as clean as a whistle, before Inky had had much time to show what he could do.

"Inky," said Wharton solemnly, as the visitors came off the field, "you've got to bowl as you never bowled before! If you don't perform hat-tricks by the dozen we'll bleach you, and spoil your lovely complexion!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"The hat-trickfulness shall be terrific, my esteemed chum."

"And you, Browney—you're our other tower of strength in the bowling-line. If you don't take the wickets, we'll—we'll make frozen mutton of you!"

The New Zealander grinned.

"Depend on me to do my best. I've never felt in better form."

Harry Wharton led his followers into the field. If there was time to finish the match, he had high hopes of the result. He knew the hitting powers of Tom Merry & Co., but in Inky and Tom Brown he had two bowlers who were really marvellous.

And they did not disappoint him, though they surprised the visitors. From the first over it was clear that this was not to be anything like batting against Temple, Dabney, & Co.

Tom Merry opened the innings with Kangaroo, as before. Tom Merry had knocked up six runs when the New Zealander found his middle stump. And the Saints looked very grave as their skipper came out with only six runs to his credit.

Hat-tricks seemed to be at a discount, but the bowling was first-class. Neither Tom Brown nor Inky provided the much-desired three in an over, but they took wickets in very good style. Figgins was much surprised at being dismissed for twelve, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was simply astounded when Tom Brown bowled him first ball.

But Kangaroo was making a splendid stand, and the Cornstalk kept his end up well against the bowling of the New Zealand junior. Kerr, at the other end, added fifteen runs before he fell. Lowther added twenty. But Kangaroo was scoring all the time.

Five down for 70!

Fatty Wynn was the next victim. He added only six. But when Redfern joined the Cornstalk, the fur began to fly again. And both Tom Brown and Inky found that they could not touch the wickets. The score had passed the hundred when Kangaroo was caught out by Mark Linley. Seven down for 102.

Another man down—and 115 runs. Another—with the figures on the board at 130. Jack Blake was last man in. Sixteen wanted to tie—seventeen to win! And the light still good. Many eyes were turned anxiously upon the sky. But for twenty minutes yet, at least, the light was good enough, and in twenty minutes there was time for the great match to be won and lost.

Jack Blake was at the top of his form. He started the innings with a four, following that up with a couple of twos and a three, which brought Redfern to the batting end. Five wanted to tie—six to win! Plenty of light for that. There was no danger now that the match would be an unfinished one. The innings had been fast and furious from the start, and it was finishing in keen excitement. No more for the over; but in the next, with Tom Brown bowling to Redfern, there came a two—and then another two. The St. Jim's figures stood at 145, and another hit would do it.

The excitement was intense now.

Tom Brown took a grip on the round red ball. That ball, he knew, would probably do it, and he sent it down with all his skill in it.

Clack!

Redfern's bat gleamed and met the ball, and it fled on its journey, and the batsmen were running.

But someone else was running, too. It was Harry Wharton! And he was running with his eyes on the sailing ball—running like lightning—and his hand was ready, and the ball came down, settling, like a bird into its nest, in the palm of the Remove captain, and there was a yell of breathless relief from Greyfriars.

"How's that?"

Wharton held up the ball.

"Out!"

Greyfriars Remove had won the match by a single run!

Harry Wharton & Co. saw the St. Jim's fellows off to Courtfield in great spirits. It had been a close finish—very close—but the Remove had won. And in their delight at the great victory, they felt that they could afford to forgive Temple, Dabney, & Co. for their trick. And they forgave them accordingly. And that evening there were great rejoicings in the Remove over the famous victory of the vanished eleven.

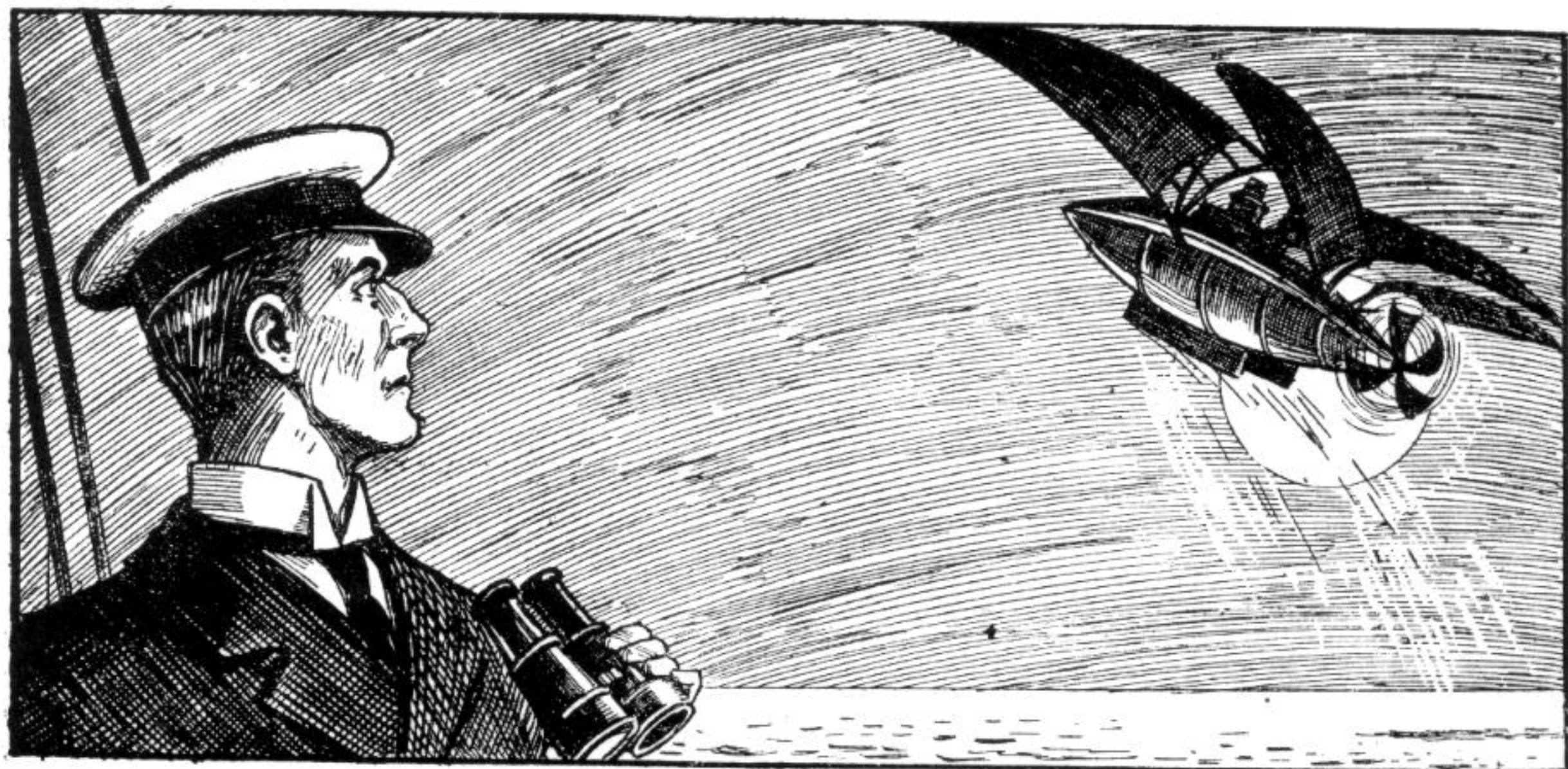
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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Arrival of Gan-Waga and Company—The Eskimo Welcomes Herr Schwartz—Aboard the Mysterious Vessel—On the Scent.

His Imperial Highness Ching-Lung of Kwai-hai was perched on the gate of a field watching a herd of cows trooping along towards the milking-sheds with dreamy eyes. His cigarette had gone out, and he had pushed his tweed cap to the back of his head. Only a hatpin that was thrust through it and through his neatly-coiled pigtail kept the cap in position. The dreamy eyes belonged to Ching-Lung, not to the cows.

The cows vanished, but his Highness still gazed on at nothing in particular except the grass.

"Gr-r-oomph! Gr-r-oomph!" grunted a motor-horn, and the prince turned his head and glanced down the road.

A cloud of dust rose above the hedgerows, and the horn grumbled out another hoarse warning. A powerful motor-car took the dangerous turning practically on the near-side wheels, and a smile crossed the lips of the Chinaman.

"Hallo! Avast! Belay! Drop your anchor! Gr-r-oomph! Full speed astern! Back her! Back pedal!"

Amid a chorus of advice, and the ear-splitting music of the big motor-horn, the car came to a standstill. The five occupants, goggled and rubber-coated, gave a rousing cheer. Once more Ching-Lung smiled, and then he waved his hand and pointed northwards.

"Go away!" he said. "I'm a police-trap. Go away quickly! My ducks! How you took the corner!"

"I nevers tooks de corners, Chingy. I leaves de corners where him wases!" gurgled the voice of the driver. "Ho, ho—ho, hoo! I frightens dems alls out ob deir witses, Chingy! I, de most grandfulest drivers! Kiss me, my butterfuls Chingy! Oh, kiss yo' darlings Gan like lightnings, Chingy!"

Gan-Waga, the Eskimo, in his rubber coat and goggles, bore a remarkable likeness to a couple of balloons, large and small, the larger one being provided with feet, and the upper one with a pair of skylights. He bounced out of the car and made a rush for the gate and Ching-Lung.

"By honey, don't let him get near you, sir!" shouted

another occupant of the car. "He's drunk nearly all the lubricatin'-oil!"

The speaker was Mr. Thomas Prout, and his voice was as big as himself, and would have shamed a foghorn.

"And he'd have drunk the petrol, too, souse me, if we hadn't used violence!" growled another voice. "'Ow I've come through it alive I don't know. 'Ere, Barry, am I alive or ain't I alive? I ain't sure which way it is, souse me!"

The speaker was Mr. Benjamin Maddock, and the question as to his condition was addressed to Barry O'Rooney, Esquire, late of Ballybunion Castle, the famous poet and best of good fellows. In answer, Barry merely remarked politely that if Ben was not dead it was very hard luck for everybody else. At this the fourth gentleman laughed unkindly.

"I love you, Gan," said Ching-Lung, "but don't come near me. If you do, I'll take this gate off its hinges and comb your hair with it. You're far too oily. Shake hands with you—eh? Not much! When you've had a bath I may. Why did you allow him to get into such a mess, boys?"

"Did you ever see him when he wasn't in a mess, souse me?" asked Maddock. "I never did, and I never 'opes to. Oh, he's mustard, and 'otter!"

"Well," said Ching-Lung, "drive along round, and I'll cut across the fields and meet you."

The car rushed away, with Prout at the steering-wheel.

"Dey gots no plucks, Chingy," said the corpulent Eskimo. "I drives fifty mileses and I nevers kills nobody. Dat greats, hunk? I only kills one sheep. I sound de horns, but I tink dat silly ole sheeps be bad 'nuff deafs. Tree poundses dat cost, Chingy. Ho, ha, ha, ha! Tommy Prouts, he pay! Oh, hows I laughs! Den he says it my faults, and want de silly pins in my ties, Chingy."

"And you gave it him?" asked Ching-Lung, as they walked across the meadow. "Not that diamond pin, Gan?"

"No; but ones just likes him. Ho, ho, ho, hoo! Ole Tommy, he say he keepses de pins tills he get hims tree poundses backs, Chingy. Oh, butterfuls! De pins he gots costed ninepence, Chingy. Ho, ho, ho, hoo! Ninepences not tree poundses, Chingy, hunk?"

"Not quite, blubber-biter! You're getting to know a thing or two or three or several. Well, it's joy to see you,

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Gan, though you do hum of lubricating-oil and petrol. Now I'm serious. There's the chance of another little trip. Are you going to be good?"

"But I always goodness, Chingy," said Gan indignantly. "I always de butterfuls prizes-packets. When yo' know me badful, hunk? What's rudenesses? I goods all de times. Yo' wants me to hit yo' wids de big spanner I gots in my pockets, hunk?"

"You're the limit," answered Ching-Lung. "Get to lee'ard, for I really can't stand the niff of the oil to wind'ard. No, no; that way. Sharp to the left. Right across here, my son. Wait till I find the key. Now, then, through you go!"

Ching-Lung unlocked a door in the wall of the great old-fashioned garden, relocked it, and kept away to the left.

"But I bad 'nuff hungrifuls and tiredness, Chingy," protested Gan-Waga, gazing longingly at the chimneys of the mansion. "We not goings in to grub, hunk? Dat awfulness! I wants some grubses, Chingy!"

Ching-Lung kept on remorselessly. Far below them the waves were moaning and sobbing under the cliffs, although the sea was invisible. The orchard, screened by its lofty walls, was in full bloom, and the air was heavy with the scent of the blossoms. A cow with her twin calves was browsing there, and a few turkeys were strutting to and fro. It was a perfect picture of rural peace and beauty, but it was suddenly marred as they reached the gate. There was a sharp challenge, a quick salute, and a brawny man with a rifle over his shoulder, paced on with measured tread. Then came a second challenge, and Gan-Waga grinned to the very tips of his ears.

"I not tink I comes and robs dis orchards, Chingy," he gurgled. "Ho, ho, hoo! Dey lookses after de fruits, Chingy, hunks? Dey not loses much. I tink I let ole Ben Maddocks, or ole Barry Loonatics, or ole Tom Brussell Sprouts robs dis orchards fo' me, Chingy, when de fruits get ripses. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Now I know where I ams. Press de buttons— Ohmi! Am de country invadeeds, Chingy?"

Still another sentry was guarding the little ivy-clad arbour, but he stepped aside. A couple of steel gates closed behind them, and they were descending. The strange lift stopped, and its doors slid back. The air struck chill and damp, and tasted salt.

"Two," cried Ching-Lung, "and five to come. They will come by the east lift."

It was pitch-dark. Gan-Waga sniffed in the cold air joyfully, and peeled off his rubber coat. He loved the cold. A faint, sobbing sound throbbled through the darkness. Then a light gleamed on the flat face and little beady eyes of the Eskimo, as he lighted a strong cigar.

"O-oh, Chingy, yo' laughs yo'self silliness if yo' see me come rounds de butterfuls corners!" he giggled. "I de best bloater-car drivers in de Empires. Oh, I makes dems shudders! I scrapes de moss off de stonemiles, dat is de milestones, as we comes alongs! De clock tings dat say hows faster yo' go, he busts up. O-oh, butterfuls! Dey alls nearly dies wid frightfulness, Chingy. You would have laughs!"

"Yes!" cried a deep voice.

Ching-Lung and the Eskimo blinked their eyes, dazzled by the sudden glare. Arc-lamps swinging from the rocky roof of the cavern hissed and spluttered, and turned the water below into a silver mirror. A tall, broadshouldered man held out his hand. He was Harold Honour, the man of deeds, not words—Ferrers Lord's matchless engineer.

"Had a breakdown with the electric light?" asked Ching-Lung.

The man of silence nodded, and patted Gan-Waga on the shoulder.

"Is the chief here?"

Hal Honour pointed down at the shining water. At that moment Barry O'Rooney, Prout, Maddock, and Joe, the carpenter and handy man, appeared on the rocky gallery opposite. They leaned over the steel rail that guarded it and stared curiously at the water.

"Bedad, there's more in there than fishes!" said Barry. "Phwat's the saret—phwat's the mystery, the terriblo mystery insoide there, as me ould Uncle Dennis used to say every toime he dug a fork into a pork-sausage? Tell me, Tommy. Is ut a lucky bag?"

Naturally, they had heard rumours and whispers of something new and wonderful. When Ferrers Lord and Harold Honour matched their brains, the outcome was always something marvellous. Deep down beneath the translucent, shining water lay a dark and shapeless mass. What was it? Not the Lord of the Deep, the magnificent submarine, for the Lord of the Deep floated half submerged under the other gallery, the bows and propellers almost grazing the rocks. A man with a pipe in his mouth was leaning against the conning-tower.

"Yi!" yelled Gan-Waga. "How yo' was, cooksey? How yo' was, hunk, Misterns Shorts? Yo' was ails nices and butterfuls, hunk!"

The man looked up and shook his fist.

"Ach, dot voice und dot face," he remarked, "dey do

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fill me mit moech pain. Dake dot face away, dake id away! Ja, ja; I do not like it!"

"Ho, ho, hoo! I comings down to kisses yo', cooksey!" shouted Gan. "Holds mine cigars, Chingy! One, two, trees, and den de bumps. Yi!"

Gan went headlong over the rail, and, dropping like an arrow, cut through the surface of the water with hardly a splash. Bubbles streamed up, shining in the light like strings of giant pearls. At last the Eskimo's head bobbed into sight.

"Ohmi, ohmi! I haves seen her, Chingy!" he yelled. "I wanted to go insides, but de bad 'nuff door him locked, and I squints through the holes-key. Ho, ho, hoo! I tink I goeses downs once morer and knock at the knockers. Don't yo' let my cigars go out, Chingy! I'll be backs in a minutes!"

Gan dived like a seal or an otter. The Eskimo was a true amphibian, as much at home in the water as on land. Two minutes went by—three, four—but still the diver remained invisible. Then a frenzied shriek rang through the cavern, followed by a roar of laughter. The shriek came from the throat of Herr Schwartz, the cook. Gan-Waga had fulfilled his promise. Clambering noiselessly aboard the submarine, he crept round the conning-tower, soaked and streaming, and uttering a gurgle of delirious joy, clasped the unsuspecting cook to his bosom.

"O-oh, hows I loveses, yo', cooksey—hows I loveses yo', darlings!" lisped Gan. "Yah-ha! Oh, butterfuls! Why, yo' squeal, hunk? Oh, ho, ho, ho-oo-o!"

Before the cook could find a crowbar to hit him with, Gan plunged over the rail.

"Ach, rasgal! Ach, peeg of an Esgimo!" howled the cook. "Dunder, I am vetted to der skin, is ud? Oh, but I vill kill you! Ja, ja! I haf der life of you! Vait dill I vind ein gun, and den I plow off der head of you! Blitzcn! Vait dill I meed you, dot vas all, yes!"

Gan, with great vulgarity, placed a thumb to his nose, and then rolled over and over in the water, laughing hysterically. He plunged for the opposite shore under water, however, when a lump of coal, flung by the irate cook, skimmed past his ear. Hal Honour stepped out of the lift. He waved his hand, and pointed to the submarine. Then he lowered his hand and moved it swiftly to the right.

"Souise me, the mystery thickens!" said Mr. Benjamin Maddock. "That means we ain't going to 'ave a look at her. Hoist all sail, Tommy!"

They hurried down the steps and crossed the gangway. Gan-Waga picked up a hammer and brought it with him, for he ran the risk of meeting Herr Schwartz.

The Lord of the Deep sank gently. In ten minutes they had discarded their ordinary garments and were encased in diving-suit, and the door of the diving-chamber closed behind them. The water rose above their helmets, and another massive steel door in the hull of the submarine opened automatically.

Unhampered by clumsy air-tubes, they walked through the gloomy water towards the mysterious object. The lights above were suddenly extinguished, but a bright beam shone from Hal Honour's lamp. One by one they followed the engineer into a diving-chamber exactly like the one they had just quitted. The door swung inwards, and the water sank away as it was sucked out by the pumps, and the mysterious vessel was in motion. Ready hands relieved them of their ponderous suits, and they heard the dull hum of machinery. Prout, Maddock, Barry, and Joe were trembling with curiosity. So was Gan-Waga, but in a different way. As he struggled to draw the thick woollen shirt over his head, he said, in muffled accents:

"What's yo' do wid dat cigars I giveses yo' to keeps aight, hunk, Chingy? I hopes yo' not loses hers, Chingy, 'cos she costed tuppence."

"Then they saw you coming, Wagalong," answered his Highness. "I tried one whiff, but the brute put the half-nelson on me, so I gave in and lost the stakes. Why, here's my best suit all laid out for me! They are kind people! They must have been expecting us. Out of it, Gan, you rascal! Let my hair-brushes alone! I don't care for the hair-oil you use. Like your tuppenny cigars, a little of it goes a long, long way."

While the others had been amply provided for in the way of clothing, Gan-Waga had been overlooked entirely. Gan was not particular whose property he annexed, so he coolly helped himself to a suit of pyjamas belonging to the engineer.

"Dese butterfuls," he said, with much satisfaction, "only dey a bit longses in de legses. Where ams de butterful seisserses? Tank yo', Chingy! Snip, snip, snipses, and offs come de longness. Ho, ho, hoo! I tink I ought to be a tailors, Chingy. Tom Prouts has a big red necks. Oh, paint dat red necks blue! Now dey fits me loveliful, hunk. I

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am so hungrys, Chingy. O, fo' a pounds ob taller cangles, Chingy! Hooray!"

The door opened, letting in a louder hum of machinery. But it was not the noise of machinery that made Gan-Waga cheer, or the sight of his old friend Herr Schwartz. It was the smell of cooking, and Gan had a glorious nose. He ducked under the arm of the cook and followed his nose. And the cook followed Gan.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Tells Why Thomas Prout Became Gloomy—How Ching-Lung Tried to Cheer Him Up.

Gan-Waga was not particularly speedy, except when on snow or ice, or in the water. He might have reached the galley and escaped with some ill-gotten plunder had he not collided with an individual who had just stepped out of his cabin. The shock was not a very severe one, but it compelled Gan-Waga to pause and apologise.

"I hopes I nots hurts yo' muchfull, Ruperts," he gasped. "Why yo' nots ring yo' bells, hunk? Why yo' not sounds yo' horns, hunk?"

"Never mind about that," said Rupert Thurston. "I'm not cycling or motoring. Look which way you are going in the future."

"How I knows dat, hunk, when I never see de places befores?" said Gan-Waga indignantly. "O-oh, Ruperts, I norribleful hungriness. Dey only lets me haves four steak-beefs on de ways fo' lunches. Dey cruelty to animals. Oh, Ruperts, where dey keeps de grubs, hunk?"

Herr Schwartz, the pursuer, had pulled up at the sight of Thurston. He felt that the contents of his galley were safe.

"My dear Gan, we shall have lunch in half an hour," said Thurston. "Go into the saloon and ring the bell if you can't wait. Tell them to bring you some sandwiches. There's the saloon right behind you. Hallo, Prout! Hallo, Barry! How are you, my brave old lads?"

There was a good deal of handshaking. Gan did not stay, for Gan wanted his sandwiches. The saloon resembled the saloon of the Lord of the Deep, but there was a scent of newness about it. Gan's bare feet sank deeply into the rich carpet. Balancing himself on one leg, he applied his big toe

to the button of the electric bell, seized a cigarette, lighted it, and sank with a grunt of satisfaction into a luxurious easy-chair.

"Yes, sir?"

"Yo' brings along a big plates of sangwichers, and a pounds of butters, and some milks-and-sodas, and a pick-tooths, and some boiled-hards eggs," said the Eskimo, without turning his head. "Den I haves a bloaters and some marmarlades. Dat alls I want fo' de present, John."

"Very good, sir!"

"You have certainly a remarkable appetite, Gan," said a deep, musical voice, "and a curious one. How do bloaters and marmalade go together?"

The Eskimo sprang up, his face one huge smile. Ferrers Lord, the millionaire, owner of the submarine, rose lazily from the Chesterfield on which he had been lying. Gan-Waga, fortune's favourite, laughed aloud.

"Yo' justs try de bloaters and marmarlades whens dey comes," he chuckled. "Dey most butterfuls. Ho, ho, ho! We goins backs to de ice and snows, hunk? I dying to see de ices and snows. We go theres, hunk?" he added eagerly. "I longs for dems."

"Stranger things than that might happen, Gan," answered the millionaire. "We shall see."

Leaving Gan-Waga to his extraordinary meal, Ferrers Lord walked quietly across the saloon and pushed a mirror aside. He mounted to the conning-tower in the lift the mirror concealed. The conning-tower was tenantless. The steering-wheel was there, but there was no steersman. Painted on it in gold letters was the name "UNCONQUERABLE." It moved untouched as a brass pointer traced a red line on a glazed chart hung in front of the binnacle. The light was dim, and there was something ghastly and uncanny in the sudden revolutions of the wheel. Spectral hands seemed to be guiding it, invisible eyes watching the compass and steering the strange vessel on her course.

Ferrers Lord watched the pointer for a time as it marked a broad red track over the faint, sinuous line on the chart. The Unconquerable was doing eighteen knots at a depth of thirty fathoms. Ching-Lung, Prout, Maddock, O'Rooney, and Hal Honour climbed the ladder. The wheel made a sudden spin that made Thomas Prout rub his eyes, a bell clanged overhead, and across the chart flashed a printed warning:

"Handcuff Rocks. Half tide. Rise eight fathoms."

The pointer swept sharply to the left and back again to the right, leaving a broad red smear across the wavering line. Two great searchlights flashed through the gloomy water, revealing the dark mass ahead. Prout's instinct was to spring to the wheel, but Hal Honour's strong arm restrained him. The lights went out, but no crash came, though they had seemed to be rushing to certain destruction. Round went the wheel once more. The vessel, guided by no human hand, had cleared the dangerous obstacle.

"By hokey," muttered Mr. Thomas Prout, "this 'ere is almost like dreams!"

Maddock, the bo'sun of the Lord of the Deep, blew his nose and said "Souise me!" sixteen times in a low and far-away voice.

"Don't you like it, Tom?" laughed Ching-Lung.

Ferrers Lord had entered the lift, and Prout was not afraid of anyone else.

"By honey, I don't!" he replied, as the uncanny wheel took a half-turn to starboard. "Many and many a thousand mile I've steered the dear old Lord of the Deep! Drat your automatic machines, I say! Drat 'em all! They may be mighty clever, but drat 'em!"

"'Ear, 'ear, Tom—'ear, 'ear, souise me!" growled the bo'sun. "I'd sooner be skipper of a canal-boat, souise me! Our job is gone!"

"Whisht—whisht!" said Barry O'Rooney. "Oi don't agree wid ye at all, at all. Good luck to the gintleman that does away wid harrd work, say Oi. Phwat did Shakespeare say? Ut doesn't matter much phwat he said, but I say down wid work! Ut makes ye toired. Anythin' that makes ye toired is no good. Bedad, Oi only wish Mистер Honour would invent a machine that would bring round your wages every Saturday when you'd been in bed all the wake. That's phwat Oi call inventing!"

The engineer laughed in his quiet, mirthless way, and pointed to the ladder. Presently Prout and Maddock received another shock. A light bridge of steel ran across the engine-room. The great machines pulsed and panted and hummed below them, but not a human being was visible. A bell signalled half-speed, and the gleaming monsters slowed down. Again Hal Honour laughed.

"How far will she run like this, Hal—without any attention, I mean?" asked Ching-Lung.

Hal Honour held up his left hand, and made a couple of



The GIRL FROM GAOL

The life story of a beautiful girl who, forced by her inhuman guardians to consort with rogues and criminals, yet remains honest and true. Made the victim of a cruel plot, she goes to prison for the sin of another, and when released has a hard struggle to maintain her independence. How she foils her enemies and escapes a thousand dangers is the theme of "The Girl From Gaol," which starts in TO-DAY'S

1/2 1/2

FAVORITE COMIC

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 338.

FRANK RICHARDS

Contributes a Splendid, Complete School Tale in our New Saturday Companion Paper—

"CHUCKLES," 1/2d.

circles in the air with his forefinger. The gestures signified five hundred knots.

"And the crew? We used to carry a fair crew on the Lord of the Deep."

Both the engineer's hands went up. Twenty men all told on that great vessel! Prout wiped his bald head.

"By honey!" said Prout. "It's fine and wonderful and glorious and grand, but I'm not in love with it. If ever a man loved a boat, I loved the Lord of the Deep. Mark my words, by honey, there's trouble in store! A vessel is just the same as a dog or a 'orse. If they don't obey you and do as you tell 'em, there's chunks of grief. They want a master. Mark my words, there's going to be a mix-up. I don't like it, by honey, and I never shall!"

"Full speed ahead!" came the signal; and the engines obeyed.

Even Barry seemed awed, and it took a good deal to awe that volatile Irishman.

"Twenty-six knots, eighty-three fathoms, thirty-nine knots dead reckoning. One hundred and seventeen minutes!"

It was the voice of Ferrers Lord, but hoarse and tinny. It thundered above the noise of the engines through a huge megaphone.

"And we're less than two hours out, Hal," said Ching-Lung. "What do you think of it, Tommy? She can run herself, steer herself, and talk. She tells you where she is, how deep the water is, and how far she has gone. What's your candid opinion, old stick-in-the-mud?"

"By honey, I'll tell you when I wake up!" said Prout. "I'm asleep just now, so you'd better ax Barry or old Ben!"

"Sure, av poor Tommy's aslape, we mustn't wake him," said Barry O'Rooney. "Is ut my opinion ye're afther wantin', Ching darlint? And av ut's my opinion ye want, sor, put me alongside of a big steak wid a poached egg or two on top, and some chipped potatoes, and, bedad, Oi'll tell ye whether that steak's tough or tender in the twotieth shake of a pug-dog's tail! Oi'll give a quick opinion on that steak!"

"'Ear, 'ear, souse me! That's the way to talk!" cried Maddock. "Barry, you are a pal. I'll leave you my ruby tarara in my will!"

Prout, O'Rooney, Maddock, and Joe were on the best of terms with Herr Schwartz, the emperor of cooks. They adjourned to the galley, where their wants were promptly supplied. Prout was unusually silent. Even the lager beer did not cheer him up. He filled his pipe thoughtfully.

"By honey," he said suddenly, smiting his brawny leg, "science may be science! Motor-cars is grand things when 'errors like Gan-Waga don't drive 'em, and flying machines is great if you don't fall out of 'em. But when it comes to a ship that combs its own 'air and cleans its own teeth, then, by honey, we've got to the limit! Oh, there'll be trouble! If we're both drowned, Ben, my insurance policy is at 'ome under the marble clock!"

"But Oi can't see the oidea at all," said Barry. "Oi'll wager ut's not savin' money the chief is afther. Phwat's money to him? Bedad, when you build a ship that'll talk, ut's sorra a penny ye're savin' in wages. Arrah! Get out! Sling the table at him! Away wid ye, spalpeen!"

Gan-Waga removed his head, and promptly shut the door. It was a sensible action, for Herr Schwartz was bearing down on him with a carving-knife in one hand and a sharpening steel in the other. Gan hastened back to the saloon, where he knew he would find peace and safety.

"She is magnificent!" Thurston was saying. "Incomparable as an automaton. But you have kept us very much in the dark, Lord. She appeals to me as a mere freak, as vast intellect misapplied. I could understand her on a small scale as a torpedo. It makes one's flesh creep to think about it. Why, the vessel seems to have a brain. If you could do this with a torpedo, you could simply launch her from the beach at home, direct her where you liked, go to bed, and read the havoc you had caused in your morning paper."

"And why not? Ask Hal Honour." Ferrers Lord drummed on the table with his knuckles, and smiled. "Luckily, we do not hold any such bloodthirsty ideas, Rupert. You said just now that I had given my vessel rather a bombastic name. I hope to disillusion you. Honour and I have been experimenting in a rather novel way. If we have kept you in the dark, the pleasanter may be the surprise!"

"More surprises?" yawned Ching-Lung. "Don't be jealous, Ru., for I'm nearly as much in the lovely obscurity as you are. I know the Unconquerable steers and runs herself, but that's about all. I've never had a look at her, but I've nearly been shot twice. Talk about the Mint or the Bank of England! The first time I came strolling up to Ferrers Lord in the dark I ran against three levelled rifles."

"And none of them went off? What a pity!" laughed Thurston. "Well, we'll wait for the further surprises. Thank goodness we're doing something again, if it's only making experiments! Maddock and Prout are quite down in the dumps. They don't like your experiments."

"She is going well, Honour," said Ferrers Lord. "Oh, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 338.

EVERY
MONDAY,

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

if we could only give her eyes! She has a brain and a voice, but she is blind. I hope we shall not carry away any trawl-ropes. That is the only danger. Paying for lost gear is nothing, but we do not want to raise a furore of curiosity. If she had eyes, she would have well earned her name."

"Yes," answered the engineer laconically. "Yes, yes."

He half-closed his own blue eyes, and peered through the cloud of smoke that he puffed out.

"Yes, yes," he repeated, knocking the ashes out of his pipe. "She must have eyes. Yes, she must have eyes."

The strange boat rushed on through the dark recesses of the sea, unwatched and unguided. The uncanny wheel spun to and fro, and the pointer on the chart left a broad red mark behind as it followed the faint line. And the mighty engines throbbed and hummed without human guardian.

Herr Schwartz cooked a very tempting dinner. Gan-Waga did not want any, although he was invited to eat his behind a screen. It transpired that he had had two boiled lobsters and the greater portion of a large gooseberry-tart on top of some treacle, as well as a bottle of salad-oil.

"That makes me feel happier," said Ching-Lung, when he heard the news. "Who owns the pussy?"

A wretched little yellow kitten was purring on the engineer's shoulder. It arched its back, spat, and clawed out viciously as Ching-Lung reached over to stroke it. Hal Honour smiled.

"Mascot," he said. "Found."

"Then it's a mighty bad-tempered mascot," said Ching-Lung. "Can't you find anything better than that, Hal? I don't think it likes me."

"Which shows that it's a creature of intelligence," said Thurston. "I respect that kitten. I drink its health, Hal, in our host's best wine. May it eat his favourite canary, and good luck to it! By Jove, it's nine o'clock! Have we a billiard-table aboard our new venture, Lord?"

"No; we are not so luxurious as yet," said the millionaire. "I fancy I can amuse you without billiards to-night. If you care for a game it will make little difference. We are on business bent, Honour and myself, but my guests must please themselves."

"So we are only guests?"

"Pardon me, he is referring to you and the kitten," said Ching-Lung. "I belong to the establishment. Good-night, all of you!"

"Surely you're not going to bed?" growled Rupert Thurston.

"What else do you expect? You've got the jumps and the bite-your-head-offs. Hal only thinks of his miserable kitten, and Lord sits there with never a word to say. Going to bed? Not a bit of it! I'm going to find better company in the galley. Old Barry can always raise a smile. Do you think I want to be buried before I'm dead? Not much! And I think I'll take these with me before they go mildewed!"

Seizing a couple of bottles of champagne, Ching-Lung made his way to the galley. Cheers long and loud greeted his advent. Even Prout's gloomy face relaxed. Ching-Lung waved his hand in the air, and a bottle of champagne appeared. He waved his hand again, and lo and behold five glasses were there! He shook the bottle, and the cork flew out with a merry, popping sound.

"Good luck, boys!" he cried. "I've stolen this for you. Cheer up, Tommy. Smile, Barry, but don't smile loud enough to break any of the windows. Herr Schwartz, I drink do you, mine tear friendt. Ach, I to; is ud? Ja, ja! Dunder und blitzen!"

"Hoch, hoch!" cried the cook, all smiles.

Ching-Lung placed the other bottle on the table, when suddenly a voice rang out:

"All hands on deck!"

In an instant Ching Lung and his drinks were forgotten. They raced up the ladder. Ferrers Lord was standing at the wheel. Overhead hung a white moon silvering an almost unruffled sea. The moon was blurred by the wet glass of the conning-tower. Behind them streamed a white wake, for the vessel was at full speed. She sank, and all was dark.

"Hold fast—hold fast!" cried the millionaire. "Hold fast there!"

The floor of the conning-tower sloped backwards at a sharp angle. The submarine rushed to the surface.

"Hold fast!"

Then came the miracle. The Unconquerable leapt clear of the water, and spreading out four vast wings, she righted herself and skimmed along like a gigantic flying fish a full hundred yards above the placid sea.

(Another splendid long instalment of this grand new serial next Monday.)

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OUR COMPANION PAPERS:

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My Readers' Page

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The Editor
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 pleased to
 hear from
 his Chums,
 at home or
 abroad.

No one, now buying these two papers for the first time, could fail to be impressed by the high quality of their contents, and the value for money given. Then, to all of you, my chums, who are kind enough to wish to help me. I say again,

NOW IS THE TIME!

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

J. McK. (Glasgow).—I am afraid that what you suggest at present is impossible.

"A Young Reader" (Scotland).—Thank you for your letter and sketch. Afraid I have no photo of Billy Bunter, but his picture appeared in "The Magnet" Portrait Gallery some time back.

"Wild Colonial Girl."—Thank you very much for your most interesting letter.

Miss M. Thurbon (Holloway).—Very many thanks for pointing out error.

J. H. W. (Lower Clapton).—Bulstrode's Christian name is George.

O. Osodrac (London).—Thanks for your letter.

Thos. Soakell (Billingham).—Wibley has been given a trial in the Remove Dramatic Society. A Summer Double Number of the "Magnet" Library will be published shortly. When Mr. Richards has time, his first task will be to write a story for "The Boys' Friend 3d. Library," as I have mentioned several times before.

SOME INTERESTING CRICKET FACTS.

Lancastrian Breezes.

Kent are "not in the same street" with Lancashire, who are an easy second to Surrey, when it comes to the matter of missing players. For instance, Hallam and Wass, the two bowlers that gained Nottinghamshire the Championship in 1907, were once on their list of players. The first-named trundler commenced his cricket career with Leicester, afterwards qualifying for the County Palatine. On joining Nottingham, under the birth qualification, he became one of the best bowlers in England on a bad wicket.

In S. Hargreaves, C. S. Baker, and Charlesworth, Warwickshire have three excellent cricketers who were rejected by the Lancastrians, while others it was at one time within the power of the northern county to play in their team, include C. E. de Trafford, of Leicester fame, and C. H. Eyre.

That famous stylist, L. C. H. Palaret, could also have represented Lancashire if he had chosen, as he was born at Grange-over-Sands, in that county, but he threw in his lot with Somerset, and right gallantly has he helped them in their struggles.

W. Findlay, Surrey's secretary, a first-class wicket-keeper, was also at one time in the Red Rose ranks.

Somehow or other Lancashire are very unfortunate with their players, and there have frequently been "breezes" between the latter and the club committee. W. Brearley, if not actually the best, is certainly the most consistent, fast bowler who has ever worn that county's colours, was out of the game for one entire season on account of a bit of bother, which was fortunately smoothed over. However, this was not the case with S. F. Barnes, who threw up his connection with the team, and joined Staffordshire in the minor counties championship. Such splendid form did he show for them that he was given a place in the side sent to Australia in 1907-8. The Colonials were never in doubt as to his class, and one of them remarked that Barnes was the best hard-wicket bowler he had ever met. When he left Lancashire they lost a man they could ill afford to part with.

(Another Grand
 Cricket Article
 next week.)

FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"SELF-CONDEMNED!" By FRANK RICHARDS.

In this splendid long complete story of the chums of Greyfriars, Frank Nugent of the Remove Form receives a severe shock from his young scamp of a brother. Dicky Nugent of the Second Form has been a sore trouble to his elder brother before, and Frank has never failed to help him with ready sympathy.

But this time Dicky's trouble is of a sort which rouses fury rather than sympathy in Frank's breast. The usually mild and good-tempered Removite lets himself go, and, among others, Dicky himself comes in for a severe thrashing from his brother's hands. Frank Nugent, for his part, suffers sore punishment at the hands of the Head of Greyfriars, but the final blow to him is the loss of his former chums' friendship. Harry Wharton & Co. are amazed at the change in their chum, but there is only one course open to them, for Frank Nugent is

"SELF-CONDEMNED!"

OUR RECORD NEW SERIAL!

In this issue of "The Magnet" Library starts a serial story which I verily believe will create a greater sensation among my fiction-loving chums than any other serial previously published.

"THE UNCONQUERABLE!" By Sidney Drew,

is not only another grand story of Ferrers Lord, Ching-Lung, Thurston, Gan-Waga, Barry O'Rooney, and all the rest of that famous company which the magic of Sidney Drew's genius has made immortal; that alone would be sufficient recommendation to my chums. But, apart from the fact that it deals with these great characters, "The Unconquerable" possesses an intrinsic merit of its own, as an adventure story of the very first water, which makes it absolutely irresistible to all good story lovers. I have seldom been moved to speak with such absolute confidence of the attraction of a new serial, but I do think that, in securing

"THE UNCONQUERABLE!"

the "Magnet" Library has scored the biggest "coup" of its career.

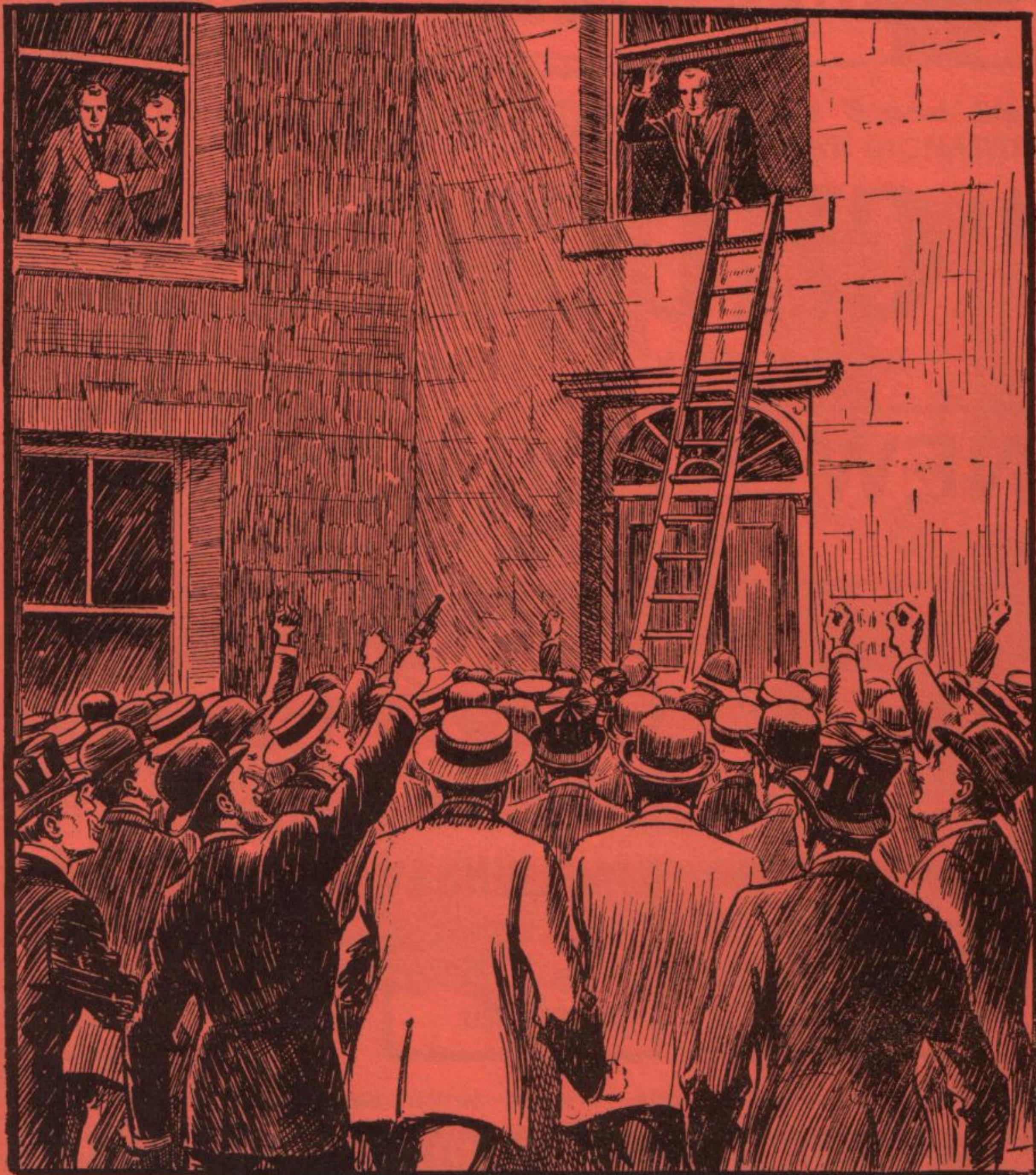
NOW IS THE TIME!

In the midst of the summer season, when seaside and other holidays are in full swing, it is appropriate that the two original companion papers—"The Gem" and "The Magnet" Libraries—should come out with an extra strong programme of contents.

The complete school stories in each paper leave nothing to be desired, while in both grand new serial stories of extraordinarily powerful interest are just commencing. These two magnificent tales—"A Bid For a Throne," by Clive R. Fenn, and "The Unconquerable!" by Sidney Drew—are, in themselves, sufficient to lift the companion papers far above the common ruck. Now is the time, then, for my loyal chums of all ages and both sexes to make a little extra effort to obtain new readers for "The Gem" and "Magnet" Libraries.

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