

# THE RIVALS OF GREYFRIARS!

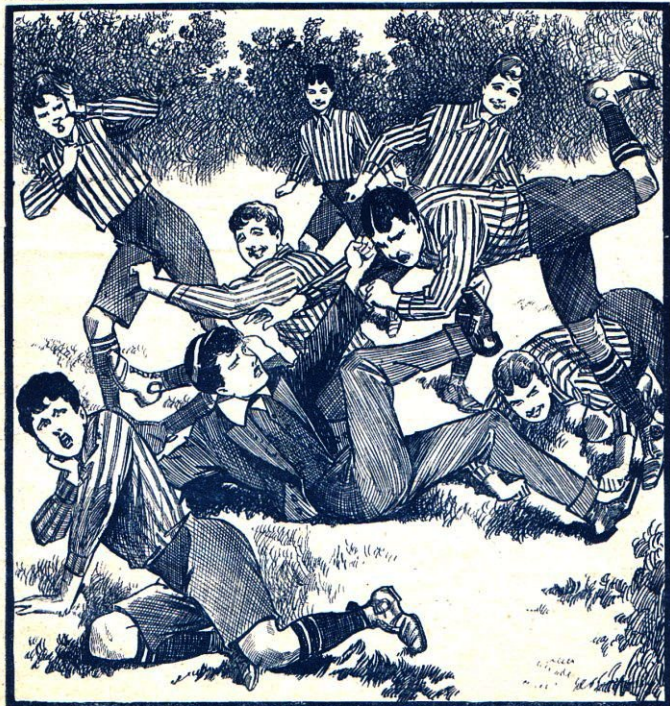
A Grand Long Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.



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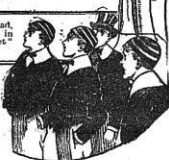
**HARRY WHARTON — REFEREE!**

(An Exciting Scene in the Splendid Long Complete Tale of School Life in this issue.)

# MY READERS' PAGE

OUR COMPANION PAPERS: "THE BOYS' FRIEND," 1d., Every Monday. "THE GEM" LIBRARY, 1d., Every Wednesday. "THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3d., COMPLETE LIBRARY, "THE PENNY POPULAR," 1d., Every Friday. "CHUCKLES," 1d., Every Saturday.

The Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums, at home or abroad, and is only too willing to give his best advice to them if there are in difficulty or in trouble. . . . Whom to write to: Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.



## For Next Monday:

### 'BILLY BUNTER'S REFORMATION!'

By Frank Richards.

## WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

My chums will remember that a fortnight ago I mentioned the possibility of the earlier stories of Harry Wharton & Co. being published in our companion paper, the "Penny Popular." Mind you, I have not yet decided to adopt the scheme; there are many things to be settled first.

To begin with, do you approve of the suggestion? And if I put it into operation, are you going to give me that support which is so necessary to make the departure a huge success?

I want every one of my chums to write and let me know frankly what they think of the idea. If I only get a few letters on the subject, then the idea will have to be dropped. On the contrary, should your response to my request for letters on the subject be a big one, then I shall lose no time in satisfying those readers who are eager to see my scheme put into operation, and who are willing to back me up all they can.

When you write to me, mark your letters "P. P." in the top left-hand corner; and, if you like, mention any stories, which greatly appealed to you, and which you would like me to republish; and let me know, too, whether you want me to begin with that famous story, "The Making of Harry Wharton."

## NOTICES.

### Correspondence, Leagues, Etc.

The "Magnet" and "Gem" Social Club, 344, City Road, Park, Sheffield, would be glad to enrol more members (12-18) from any part of the world. Stamped and addressed envelope for reply, please.

Sydney Wright, 34, Uppertorpe Road, Sheffield, wishes to form a correspondence club. Open to anyone in the United Kingdom.

Will C. Bateman please write to her old chum M. H., 102, Cornwall Street, Glasgow?

Will the correspondents of Private E. Fellows please note that his address now is: R.A.M.C., attached 1st Suffolk Regt., 28th Division, B.E.F., Salonika, Greece?

W. S. Johnston, Co-operative Buildings, 43, New Row, Perth, would be glad to know of any "Magnet" League in his district.

E. D. Roberts, Cartref, Ramsbury Road, St. Albans, wants to form a local "Gem" and "Magnet" League, and will be glad to hear from anyone interested. Stamped and addressed envelope, please.

O. W. Blunt, 16, Oakleigh Road, New Southgate, N., wants to form a local "Gem" and "Magnet" League, and will be glad if anyone interested will call on him after seven, or send postcard.

### Back Numbers, etc., Wanted.

W. H. Simpson, c.o., the Tyne & Tees S.S. Co., Ltd., North Street, Middlesbrough, would be glad to hear from any reader who has a secondhand printing set for sale.

By Louis Cannon, 23, Ballymoney Street, Old Park Road, Belfast—Halfpenny issues of "Magnet." Half price offered. Rifleman E. Andrews, 19/366 B Coy., 19th Battalion, R.I.R., Donard Camp, Newcastle, Co. Down, thanks heartily the readers who sent him back numbers, and would be glad of some older ones—say, three or four years old.

By J. Senior, c.o., Mrs. Jowsey, Racea Green, Knottingley—"The Boy Without a Name."

By R. Waldron, 34, Elsenham Street, Southfields, S.W.—"Bunter's Love Affair," "Bunter the Boxer," "Schoolboy Auctioneer," and "Bunter's P. O."

*Your Editor*

Startling title, isn't it? The natural impulse will be to say: "Well, who would have thought it?" And the next notion in the heads of readers may well be: "But if Bunter is going to reform; if he ceases to chase loans on the security of imaginary postal-orders; if he desists from gorging, and telling the thing which is not, and tying up his bootlace outside study doors, and being hurt and surprised when people will not credit him with the best possible intentions on the smallest possible evidence of any good intention at all—what's going to happen to the stories? Bunter may be all sorts of things that he should not be, but Bunter is undeniably interesting. There are other interesting things, of course; but we really cannot afford to have Bunter made just an ordinary schoolboy." Don't be alarmed! The worst will not happen. And yet the Owl's reformation is no pretended one. All that is best in him—it does not amount to very much, perhaps, but it is there—comes out under the influence of—But this is where I ring off. For further particulars I must refer you to next week's number, and to that very fine yarn,

### "BILLY BUNTER'S REFORMATION!"

## OUR GREAT CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

Did you see the "Gem" Christmas Number, out last week? Great, wasn't it? But I am doing my level best to go one—or two, if possible—better in the Christmas issue of this paper, out the week after next, price twopence. The complete story is one of the most dramatic Mr. Richards has ever written, and no reader can possibly fail to enjoy it. The title of it is

### "THE HOUSE ON THE HEATH!"

This, perhaps, does not tell you much. But when I say that there is a mystery clinging to that lonely house, to which the Famous Five, with Frank Courtenay and Rupert De Courcy, of Highcliffe, and Billy Bunter make their way under very difficult conditions, you will guess something of what is in store for you. Besides this great story, there will be some pages of extracts from the "Greyfriars Herald," an instalment of "The Fourth Form at Frankingham," which is proving one of the most popular serials we have ever had, and a very special attraction in the shape of a portrait sketch of Harry Wharton, accompanied by an article dealing briefly with his career at Greyfriars, and forming something like a biography of one who has become a popular character wherever school stories are read.

## THE WEEK AFTER NEXT—AND DON'T FORGET IT!

## MAKING FIRE-SCREENS OUT OF CIGARETTE-PICTURES.

Other things are needed, of course; and I am not asking for the information for myself. I have no time for amusements of this sort. When I have any time to spare, I use it in trying to catch up my arrears in correspondence. I want instructions for a reader—a man who has done his bit in the trenches, and has been invalided out of the Army, by the way. Can anyone who has used cigarette-pictures to make an effective and handsome screen send me clear instructions, not too long? I shall be pleased to send some slight acknowledgment of the aid thus given to the first reader from whom I receive what I regard as a satisfactory description of the manner of going to work. But please do not take this as meaning that all who send along will get a reward!

A Complete School-  
Story Book, attrac-  
tive to all readers.



The Editor will be  
obliged if you will  
hand this book,  
when finished with,  
to a friend. . . .

# THE RIVALS OF GREYFRIARS!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of  
Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.



"Then why should Greyfriars be licked?" further inquired Miss Clara. Bunter blinked at her through his big spectacles. "It's because I'm not in the team," he explained. (See Chapter 2.)

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Quite a Wheeze!

**G**O it, Temple!"  
"Fire away, old chap!"  
"On the ball!"  
Cecil Reginald Temple, captain of the Fourth Form at Greyfriars, gave a little cough. There was a meeting in Temple's study. All the leading lights of the Greyfriars Fourth were there—

Dabney and Fry and Scott and Murphy and Wilkinson and several more.

The study was quite crowded.

On the table there were ginger-beer and glasses, and a pile of jam-tarts on a dish.

Cecil Reginald had called the meeting, and he had thoughtfully provided refreshments. Perhaps in consequence of the refreshments, there was a good deal of enthusiasm. Cecil Reginald was an elegant and somewhat dandified youth, and

had a first-rate opinion of himself; but there were fellows in the Fourth who hinted that Temple was a bit of an ass and a bit of a bore. But the most exacting Fourth-Former had no objection to letting Cecil Reginald run on while he ate Cecil Reginald's jam-tarts and drank Cecil Reginald's ginger-pop.

Temple glanced over the meeting with his usual lofty glance. Perhaps the meeting paid a little more attention to the refreshments than they did to Temple. Still, they told him very heartily to "go it."

So Cecil Reginald Temple "went it."

"I think all you chaps are agreed that it's about time the Remove were sat upon," was Temple's opening remark.

To which the meeting responded heartily:

"Hear, hear!"

"They're a blessed fag Form," continued Temple. "I don't deny that Wharton plays a passable game of footer, and Bob Cherry knows a goal from a goalpost. But the distinguishing characteristic of the Remove—"

"The—what?" inquired Fry.

"The distinguishing characteristic—"

"Oh, my hat!"

Temple frowned.

"If you're going to interrupt me like a silly ass, Fry—"

"Not at all," said Fry. "Pass the tarts this way, Dab. I was only a bit staggered. I thought it was the head for a minute. But go on. The characteristic distinction of the Remove—"

"The distinguishing characteristic!" rapped out Temple.

"My mistake! Go it!"

"Look here, Fry—"

"Put it on, old chap!" said Fry. "You don't often hear words like that except when the Head's making a speech. It's a treat! Go it!"

Some of the meeting chuckled, and Cecil Reginald gave the humorous Fry a withering look. As a matter of fact, Temple had prepared his little address beforehand, and he looked on it as rather eloquent—quite oratorical, in fact. Fry's absurd remarks detracted from the effect.

"The distinguishing characteristic of the Remove," said Temple witheringly, "is cheek!"

"Hear, hear!"

"The eleven is a Form eleven, a blessed fag eleven, but they book matches and get up games with outside schools just as if they were the Junior Eleven of Greyfriars. And they're not."

"Decidedly not!" agreed Fry.

"No fear!"

"They think they play better footer than we do, which is—"

"Bosh!"

"We've lost some matches to them."

"Ahem! A few."

"Which only proves," continued Temple calmly, "that really scientific footballers may be defeated by rowdy kick-and-rush tactics."

"Oh!" said the meeting.

"In fact, they've sometimes walked off with goals simply because we play a superior, more scientific game," said Temple.

"Oh!"

"Hard cheese!" said Fry gravely. "The better game you play, the less likely you are to win, then. Hard cheese on a really first-rate footballer!"

A chuckle was audible in the study again, and Cecil Reginald Temple went on rather hastily:

"In any case, there's no denying that we're the Second Eleven of Greyfriars, and that Wharton's team is only a Form team—the Remove Eleven. Yet they've had the astounding impudence to book regular fixtures with Rookwood and St. Jim's, just as if they were the Greyfriars Junior Eleven. And St. Jim's can't find a date to play us. Same with Rookwood."

"Rotten!"

"Now they've revived the Highcliffe match," went on Temple, waxing animated. "There used to be a Highcliffe fixture, and we chucked it—I mean, the Remove chucked it. I can't say I blame them for that, because Pensonby did play rather a rotten game. Mobbing a winning team on their ground was a bit thick."

"It was," grinned Fry.

"But since Courtenay came to Highcliffe they've revived it, and they're playing Highcliffe again this week," said Temple. "Courtenay has made a good eleven, though he had rotten materials to work on. But it's a real Junior Eleven—Fourth and Shell in it. Well, that fixture ought to be ours, not Wharton's."

"Hear, hear!"

"In fact, I mentioned the matter casually to Courtenay one day; told him we'd be willing to fix up matches with

him, on condition, of course, that he dropped the fixture with the Remove. He declined."

"Like his cheek!" said Fry.

"But it's getting too thick," went on Temple warmly. "Outsiders take it for granted that the Remove Eleven are the Greyfriars second team, and nothing of the sort is the case, of course. In fact, the cheeky young bouncers call it the School Second Eleven, and make out that there isn't a chap in the Fourth good enough for it. Now, it's time they were sat upon!"

"Hear, hear!"

"So I've thought out rather a good wheeze."

"Go it!"

"I've seen Pensonby at Highcliffe, and fixed up a match with him," said Temple triumphantly.

"My hat!"

"Pensonby is ratty at Courtenay taking the footer out of his hands, as he's done. He jumped at the idea of raising an eleven and playing Greyfriars Second. Courtenay only plays the Remove, you know, and it's a cut above that to play Greyfriars Second Eleven. Next to playing the First Eleven—Waggate's lot."

"Ahem!"

"Hear, hear!"

"And the long and the short of it is that the match is fixed for Wednesday next," said Temple. "Pensonby's getting together a junior team—Shell, Fourth, and Lower Fourth, taking no notice whatever of Courtenay's crowd. They're coming over to play us. And if that don't put the Remove's nose out of joint, I don't know what will."

"Bravo, Temple!"

It was a chorus of admiration.

Cecil Reginald Temple might be a bit of an ass, but there was no doubt that he had scored this time.

The Fourth Form footballers often felt sore at the way the Remove Eleven went ahead, playing generally a winning game, and bagging first-rate fixtures. They felt that the genuine article themselves—was left out in the cold. Now, at all events, they were going to have a Highcliffe fixture as well as the Remove, with the additional advantage that they had a good prospect of victory. It was doubtful whether Harry Wharton & Co. would beat Courtenay's team. But there was no more doubt that Temple & Co. would beat Pensonby's—Pensonby and his friends being extremely elegant nuts, but very poor footballers.

"And it's to be understood," said Temple, "that our fixture with Pensonby is the fixture. The Remove match with Courtenay is a fag game, of no account whatever. We don't recognise it."

"Which will put the kybosh on it at once!" said Fry solemnly. Fry of the Fourth was a little bit of a humorist.

Temple looked at him sharply, but Fry's face was quite serious.

"Exactly!" said Temple. "It will be put in the shade; it will be considered of no account—as it isn't."

"Hear, hear!"

"In fact, we are the people," said Fry. "We are the goods. Gentlemen, we are the genuine article. All others spurious imitations!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And now it's fixed up," said Temple, rising, "we may as well let those cheeky fags know. They're playing Courtenay's lot this afternoon, and if we look on, with the contempt they deserve—ahem!—it may help them to realise their own insignificance."

"It may," said Fry. "But you must remember, old chap, that their distinguishing characteristic is cheek."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You funny ass!" roared Temple, forgetting his great dignity for a moment. "If you're looking for a thick ear, Fry—"

"I'm looking for another jam-tart," said Fry imperturbably. "All gone, by Jove! Let's get down to the footer-ground."

Cecil Reginald Temple sniffed, and strode from the study. And as all the jam-tarts and ginger-beer had been finished, the meeting followed him.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Honours Divided!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. of the Remove were on Little Side, putting about a ball while they waited for the Highcliffe team to arrive.

The Remove Eleven was in great form, and the Removeites were looking forward to a victory.

The Highcliffe fixture, however, was a very different thing from what it had once been. When Pensonby was junior captain of Highcliffe, the match had been a walk-over for the Removeites; but things had changed considerably since Frank





Bunter crouched behind the hedge, while the tramp shook Ponsonby and made his teeth chatter. "Let go!" exclaimed Pon fiercely. (See Chapter 4.)

Courtenay had come to Highcliffe. Harry Wharton knew that a tough struggle was before his team, and he had selected his men with great care.

The Remove Eleven consisted of Hazeldene, Johnny Bull, Mark Linley, Tom Brown, Peter Todd, Bob Cherry, Hurree Singh, Frank Nugent, Wharton, Squiff, and Vernon-Smith.

It was as good a team as the Remove could put into the field, though some of the fellows were quite ready to suggest improvements.

Billy Bunter was convinced that the eleven would have been strengthened with himself as centre-forward. Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, was prepared to play in any position on the field, and cover himself and Greyfriars with glory. Bolsover major confided to everybody that he was a better back than Johnny Bull and Mark Linley put together.

But most of the fellows agreed that the eleven was first-rate. Harry Wharton was satisfied that it was, the only doubtful point being whether he should play Hazeldene or Bulstrode in goal. But upon the whole he had decided upon Hazel on this occasion. Skinner of the Remove hinted that it was because Hazel's sister Marjorie was coming over from Cliff House to see the match; but when Skinner hinted as much to Bulstrode, that youth collared him, stuffed his cap down his back, and sat him down in the grass after which Skinner did not trouble Bulstrode with any more sympathy.

Bob Cherry suddenly detached himself from the crowd round the ball, and dashed away towards the gates, as three charming visitors came in. They were Marjorie and Clara and Phyllis from Cliff House School. Bob escorted them to the ground in great spirits.

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NEXT  
MONDAY—

"BILLY BUNTER'S REFORMATION!"

A Grand Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"You're in good time," he remarked, as he found them seats. "The Highcliffe chaps are not here yet. They're nearly due, though."

"Hazel is playing?" asked Marjorie, as she caught sight of her brother among the footballers.

"Yes; keeping goal."

"Not much chance for Greyfriars this time, Marjorie," said Billy Bunter, rolling up, and bestowing a fat grin upon the Cliff House girls. "I'm afraid you're going to see us licked."

"Are you in the team?" asked Miss Clara.

"Oh, no!"

"Then why should Greyfriars be licked?" further inquired Miss Clara.

Bob Cherry chortled, and Bunter blinked at Miss Clara through his big spectacles, not quite knowing what to make of the lively young lady.

"It's because I'm not in the team," explained Bunter. "I've offered Wharton to play centre-forward. But you won't catch Wharton getting out of the limelight to make room for a really good player."

"Hallo, what's that?" asked the captain of the Remove, coming up.

Billy Bunter blinked round.

"Ahem! You see—"

"Who's the really good player I won't make room for?" demanded Wharton warmly.

"Me!" said Bunter loftily.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to cackle at, Wharton."

"I do," chuckled Bob Cherry. "I see a fat duffer."

"How do you do, Miss Marjorie?" Cecil Temple had arrived. He raised his cap with much grace to the Cliff House girls. "Come over to see the fag match—what?"

"To see the Remove match," said Marjorie.

"Yass," assented Temple. "Rather amusin'!"

"Or rather!" said Dabney.

"Awfully amusing," remarked Fry. "We're giving it a look in, to encourage the youngsters, you know."

And the Fourth-Formers smiled broadly.

The Removites glared at them, and but for the presence of Marjorie & Co. they would probably have adopted more drastic measures. But Temple was safe from a bumping just then.

"I hope you'll come over on Wednesday to see the real Highcliffe match," continued Temple. "Greyfriars Second Eleven plays Highcliffe Juniors on Wednesday."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "I had an impression that the Highcliffe match was being played to-day—by us."

"Not at all," said Temple, enjoying the surprise of the Removites. "You surely don't count your fag match as a School fixture, do you? The Second Eleven is playing Highcliffe on Wednesday."

"Us?" grinned Wilkinson.

"Courtenay hasn't mentioned it," said Wharton, puzzled.

Temple smiled loftily.

"I'm not speakin' of Courtenay. We don't recognise his team. We're playing Ponsonby."

"Poa taking up footer again?" said Bob. "Well, I wish you joy of him. Mind he doesn't get a crowd to mob you if you lick him."

"He did that once to us," said Harry.

"I dare say you were cheeky," remarked Temple loftily.

"Why, you silly ass—" began Bob. Then he remembered Marjorie, and stopped suddenly. "Ahem! I mean—go and eat cake!"

"Here come the Highcliffe chaps!" called out Vernon-Smith.

Prompt to time the Highcliffe Eleven arrived.

Harry Wharton greeted Courtenay and the Caterpillar warmly.

The Highcliffe junior team looked in fine form. Courtenay had done wonders with them in a short time.

None of the nuts of Highcliffe were in the eleven—which was all the better for the eleven, from the point of view of football.

Do Courcy—the Caterpillar—was certainly a nut; but he was a first-rate winger, too, and a tower of strength to the team.

The footballers went into the field, and Temple & Co. remained to fascinate the Cliff House girls with the charms of their conversation.

To Temple's surprise, however, the three girls paid more attention to the footer than to his fascinating conversation.

Cecil Reginald rather prided himself upon being a squire of dames, and it beat him hollow, as he confided afterwards to Dabney, how the girls could take so much interest in a fag footer match, when he, the great Cecil Reginald, was ready to entertain them with cheery conversation.

But they did! They watched the game from the kick-off, and they clapped their hands when the Remove went up the field against the wind with a rush.

There was quickly a hot attack on the visitors' goal, but the defence was sound, and the Remove forwards did not get through.

Soon afterwards the Highcliffe forwards got away, and the Remove were called upon to defend.

"They'll get through this time," remarked Temple sapiently. "The Remove are rather good for a fag team. But of course, they can't play a junior eleven. I rather think this is a goal for Highcliffe."

"Rot!" remarked Miss Clara.

"Eh?"

"They can't get through," said Miss Clara. "Two to one they don't!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Temple.

But Miss Clara was right. The Highcliffe attack was foiled, and the game away back to midfield.

"What did I tell you?" exclaimed Miss Clara triumphantly.

"Oh, yass, by gad!" stammered Temple.

But towards the end of the first half the ball went into the Remove goal from Frank Courtenay's foot.

The whistle went before the Remove had a chance of equalising. Temple & Co. exchanged cheery grins. They did not exactly want a Greyfriars team to be beaten by Highcliffe; but, if it did happen, there was much consolation in the thought that the cheeky Remove would be taken down a peg or two.

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"Doesn't look much like a merry walk-over this time," Bob Cherry remarked, as he sucked a lemon.

"Pull yourselves together, you chaps!" said Harry. "We can't let them beat us. But they're hot stuff, and no mistake! Courtenay is a scorcher!"

The Removites looked grim and determined when they lined up for the second half. For a long time the struggle was hard and without result. The Remove attacked hotly, but in vain, and several times their own goal had narrow escapes. Time was drawing near, and Highcliffe were still one up.

"Looks like a come-down for our friends the fags," remarked Temple. "It's up to us to look after the laurels of Greyfriars next Wednesday."

"Oh, rather!"

"A match isn't lost till it's won," said Miss Clara sagely. "There they go! Bravo, Bob!" And Miss Clara clapped her hands.

Bob Cherry had captured the ball and driven it out to the forwards. Harry Wharton took it up the field. The Highcliffians closed in fast, and Wharton went over before a charge, but not till he had passed out to Squiff, who let Vernon-Smith have it on the wing as he was tackled. The Bounder sped it on, and Wharton was on his feet in a second and tearing to take the pass. The Bounder centred at exactly the right moment, and Wharton drove the ball in before the Highcliffe goalie knew what was happening.

There was a roar from the Greyfriars fellows.

"Goal! Goal!"

"My hat! They've equalised!" said Temple. "Not bad for fags!"

"Jolly good!" said Miss Clara warmly. "That was a ripping goal!"

"I guess I couldn't have done it slicker," confessed Fisher T. Fish.

"I guess you couldn't!" said Miss Clara witheringly.

There were five minutes more to play, but the five minutes were without result. When the whistle went the score was one all.

"Well, it's somethin' for fags to be able to draw with a junior eleven," remarked Temple. "Congrats, Wharton! You played up rather well for a fag Form."

And Temple & Co. walked off before Harry Wharton could think of a suitable reply.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Ponsonby's Little Game!

"HERE come the merry footballers!"

Cecil Ponsonby stood at the window of his study at Highcliffe.

There was a cigarette between his fingers, but Ponsonby kept that out of sight from the quadrangle as he looked out.

Vavasour and Gadsby and Monson were in the study. There were cards on the table, and a haze of smoke hung about the room. The nuts of Highcliffe had spent that Saturday afternoon at bridge.

Ponsonby's chums joined him at the window, and they looked out at the returning footballers.

"Licked, I expect," yawned Gadsby.

"Absolutely!" said Vavasour.

"We shan't be licked next week," remarked Ponsonby.

"Anybody could mop up Temple and his fumbly gang!"

"Rotten fag, though!" said Vavasour.

"I know it is, but it's worth while to put a spoke in their wheel. The footer was in our hands before Courtenay came. He's shifted us out of it because we didn't make work of the dashed game. He can call his dashed team the Highcliffe Second Eleven if he likes. We shall call ourselves the same."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We've all resigned from the club," continued Ponsonby; "but there's nothin' to prevent us from formin' a new club on our own 'n' representin' Highcliffe. It will put Courtenay's nose out of joint."

"I wonder if they've heard?" said Monson.

"I dare say they have, if they've seen Temple. I shall tell them, anyway," said Ponsonby. "Hallo! Here comes somebody!"

There were footsteps in the passage and a tap at the door.

"Come in!" drawled Ponsonby.

Frank Courtenay and the Caterpillar came into the study. Courtenay's expression was grave, but De Courcy was smiling. The Caterpillar was quite tickled by the wily Pon's new move.

Courtenay's eyes dwelt for a moment on the cards and cigarettes on the table, but he made no remark on that subject. He was captain of the Fourth, but it was not his

business to interfere with the merry manners and customs of Ponsonby & Co.

He looked directly at Cecil Ponsonby.

"I've heard some news at Greyfriars," he remarked.

"Yas?"

"Cherry was speaking about it at tea. Temple had been talking about it," said Courtenay. "Is it correct that you've fixed up a football match with Temple of the Fourth at Greyfriars?"

"Quite!"

"Absolutely!" chirruped Vavasour.

And the nuts of the Fourth grinned. It was a great entertainment to them to draw Courtenay.

"I think you might have consulted me, as captain of the Fourth," said Courtenay.

"You think so?" queried Ponsonby.

"Yes, certainly."

"Well, you're at liberty to think so, of course. It's a free country."

The nuts chuckled.

"Of course, I don't mean that I'm going to interfere!" said Courtenay quietly. "I'm glad, so far as that goes, to see you going in for football—rather better than slacking and smoking and gambling on a half-holiday."

"Thanks!"

"If you want to make up a Form team and play matches, there's nothing to stop you. It would be better for all of us to pull together in football matters. But I suppose it's no good saying that to you."

"Not in the least," assented Ponsonby.

"I don't quite see where you'll get your men from," said Courtenay. "All the fellows who can play are either in my team or down as reserves."

"That's your opinion. We rather fancy we can play a bit," grinned Gadsby. "We're going to try, anyway."

"But you're makin' a little mistake," said Ponsonby. "I'm not formin' a Form team. I'm makin' up a second eleven for Highlife."

"The Highlife second team is already in existence."

"We don't recognise it."

"What?"

"We look on you and your gang as a crew of shabby outsiders," explained Ponsonby, with great enjoyment.

"nobodies, in fact! We announce ourselves as Highlife Second Eleven—the real thing!"

"Like your confounded cheek!" exclaimed Courtenay hotly.

"My dear man, don't raise your voice in my study," urged Ponsonby. "It gets on my nerves. You're not in your slum now, you know. It was a slum you used to live in, wasn't it?"

Courtenay's eyes gleamed, but the Caterpillar touched him gently on the arm.

"Don't get your rag out, dear boy," murmured De Courcy. "That's what they want, you godless old duffer!"

"By the way, Caterpillar, there's a place in my team for you, if you want it," said Ponsonby. "I couldn't consent to play Courtenay."

"Play me, you cheeky ass!" exclaimed Frank.

"I couldn't do it," said Ponsonby calmly. "Of course, in football the game comes first; but there are limits. I'm rather particular whom I play in my team. None of those shabby outsiders for me. But you're welcome, Caterpillar."

"Thanks awfully!" said the Caterpillar. "I think I'll stick to the shabby outsiders, Pon."

"More duffer you!" said Ponsonby. "I'm makin' you a good offer. It isn't everybody I'm askin' to enter Highlife Second Eleven, I can tell you."

"What an enterprisin' chap you are, Pon!" said the Caterpillar admiringly. "Always up to some merry little game, ain't you?"

"I don't understand you!" said Ponsonby loftily. "It's high time the School was represented by a devout junior eleven, I think. I felt it my duty to arrange it."

"You are such a dutiful chap," said the Caterpillar, with a nod. "But don't you think you are a bit off-side, Pon? Football isn't exactly in your line. Why not constitute yourself captain of a bridge brigade?"

"You silly ass—"

"Or a nap eleven," suggested the Caterpillar. "Or what about a cigarette team? You could call it the Smoky Mochers, or some name like that."

"Look here—"

"Or a pub-hauntin' eleven?" said the Caterpillar enthusiastically. "The Merry Pub-Haunters; that's rather a takin' title for the team. Headquarters at the Cross Keys, and Banks the bookie, for hon. sec.—what?"

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Gadsby and Monson chuckled, and Ponsonby glared at them.

"You should really think a bit before you take on football matches," continued the Caterpillar. "Suppose you find yourself dyin' for a smoke in the middle of the game? Think of your sufferin'!"

"Oh, get out, you burblin' ass!" growled Ponsonby.

"Come on, Frank!" said the Caterpillar imperiously. "Pon's tired of our conversation. Pon hasn't any use for really intellectual conversation. Besides, we're keepin' him away from bridge."

Courtenay hesitated, but De Courcy took his arm and drew him from the study.

Ponsonby kicked the door shut after them.

"Tritatrin' ass, the Caterpillar!" said Monson. "But Courtenay is in a rare way. It was worth the trouble, to pull his leg."

Ponsonby's face cleared, and he grinned.

"Yas; I never thought the cad would give himself away so plainly," he remarked. "He's quite wild. He thinks we're going to play a rotten game and bring ridicule on the School, an' Highlife's footer generally. As a matter of fact, I dare say we shall play a pretty rotten game. Anythin' good enough for Greyfriars' cads, and I'm certainly not goin' to make work of it!"

"Hear, hear!" said the nuts, in cordial agreement. They did not believe in making work of anything.

"But I dare say we shall beat Temple's crew; they're a scratch gang. It will be a feather in our cap, for Courtenay can't beat Greyfriars. And, if we're licked, it will gall Courtenay more than if we win, and the worse show we make the more waxy he will be. So we care any way!"

And Ponsonby, quite restored to good humour by that happy prospect, returned to his interrupted game of bridge.

Courtenay was frowning when he went into his study, and the Caterpillar regarded him with a humorous smile.

"Don't get your back up, Franky," advised the Caterpillar. "You're too old a bird to let Pon draw you, surely!"

"It's rotten nonsense," growled Courtenay. "A set of smoking slackers setting up as Highlife Second Eleven! What sort of a game will they put up?"

All Greyfriars will be yelling over it!"

"Let 'em yell," said the Caterpillar. Courtenay made an angry gesture.

"It's no good gettin' waxy, Franky. Pon's only done it to make you waxy."

Pon's only done it on the board, but you'd be misunderstood. Better let 'em rip. Besides—"

The Caterpillar grinned. "You know I'm a prophet, Franky. Now, listen to me prophesying. Pon's a swankin' ass, an' Temple of Greyfriars is another swankin' ass! Two swankin' asses together mean a row. Pon will give Temple too much of his swank, and very likely he'll get too much of Temple's. Result—a merry row. My impression is that there'll be trouble; an' very likely the merry fixture will end in Pon and Temple punchin' one another's noses."

Courtenay burst into a laugh.

"There! I'm glad to see you grinin' again," said the Caterpillar, relieved. "Don't bother, old chap. Nothin' in the merry universe is worth the trouble of botherin' about! Let's bake the chestnuts, an' let Pon rip."

And Courtenay decided to let Pon rip, more especially as there seemed nothing else to be done.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Huggins Has Bad Luck!

"S PARE a copper, sir!"

Billy Bunter snorted.

Billy Bunter was not in a position to spare a copper. After vain attempts to obtain tick at the School shop, Bunter had rolled down to Friarale to make an attempt to soften the hard heart of Uncle Clegg at the village shop. Uncle Clegg's heart had remained like adamant, and Billy Bunter was tramping back to Greyfriars in a bad temper. And when a seedy, dirty individual detached himself from the hedge in the dusk, and planted himself in Bunter's path with a demand for a copper, Bunter had neither coppers nor politeness to waste upon him.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" snapped Bunter. "Go and work if you want money!"

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And Bunter pushed by.

The shabby man gave a quick glance up and down the dusky lane, and then he grasped Bunter's fat arm and stopped him short.

"Leggo!" exclaimed Bunter, in surprise and indignation.

"Can't you spare a copper for a pore man?"

"No, I can't," stammered Bunter, beginning to get alarmed. The man looked a very rough character, and his grip on Bunter's arm was like iron. "I haven't any money, really!"

The tramp did not release him. He tightened his grip.

"That ain't good enough," he remarked. "If you ain't got a copper, praps you've got a watch—wot?"

Bunter wriggled in his grasp. Bunter's watch was not worth much, though, according to Bunter, it had cost twenty-five guineas. But the Owl of the Remuave did not want to hand it to the footpad.

"Look here—" mumbled Bunter feebly.

"Like me to wring your bloomin' neck!" inquired the tramp, with a ferocious scowl.

"Nunno!"

"Then 'and over yer ticker, likewise yer purse, and sharp about it!"

There was the sound of a bicycle on the road, and a cyclist came up from the direction of the village.

It was Pensonby of Highcliffe, and he was riding hard and recklessly. He had no light, and it was past lighting-up time, and he was riding at full speed to get back to Highcliffe before locking-up; and he had a good distance to go yet. With utter recklessness, Pensonby came whizzing along the dusky lane.

In the deep dusk he did not see the two figures in the road till he was close upon them, and then it was too late to stop.

Crash!

Before Pensonby could jam on his brakes he was crashing into Billy Bunter and the tramp.

Billy Bunter went flying in one direction and the tramp in the other. The bicycle curled up, and Pensonby went with a "Gee" to the ground.

He gave a yell as he landed on his back.

The tramp, with a string of fierce curses, scrambled to his feet. But Bunter had not missed his opportunity. He had darted through a gap in the hedge, and was out of sight. Bunter knew it was not much use to flee across a ploughed field—he was no sprinter. He crouched behind the hedge in the gloom, quaking.

The tramp blinked round savagely, and his grasp fell on Pensonby as the Highcliffe junior staggered dazedly to his feet.

"You knocked me hover!" roared the tramp.

"Let go, you low bound!" exclaimed Pensonby angrily.

"How dare you touch me!"

"My heve! I'll touch yer 'ard, me lord!"

Pensonby cast a longing look towards the distant village. His friends were there, but he had left them behind in the idle home. Somewhere in the gloom Gadsby and Monson and Drury were riding on, but they were not near enough to help him. Pon was the best rider in the nutty crowd, and he had intended to reach Highcliffe first, and tip the porter to keep the gates open for his friends. But he did not look like reaching Highcliffe in a hurry now.

The tramp shook him fiercely, and Pon's teeth chattered.

"Let go!" he exclaimed, but much less loftily than before.

"You knocked me hover!"

"I'm sorry!" stammered Pensonby. "I didn't see you—"

"Ridin' without a light—breakin' the lor," said the tramp indignantly. "I s'pose you think you can knock hover a pore man as much as you like, me lord—hey?"

"Nunno! Certainly not! I'm really sorry! I—I—I apologise," stammered the dandy of Highcliffe, greatly alarmed by the tramp's truculent looks.

"Well, Bill 'Uggins ain't the man to make a fuss, so long as a gentleman does the right thing," said the ruffian. "A quid will square it!"

"I—I—I—"

"Are you going to make it a quid?"

"I—I haven't a sovereign," stammered Pensonby in dismay. He had been playing billiards at the Cross Keys, and his spare cash was reposing in the pockets of a billiard-sharper there.

"I ain't particular," grinned Bill 'Uggins. "I'll take your ticker, and call it square."

Squaring the tramp was evidently another name for being robbed. Pensonby cast another look along the dusky road. To his delight, three shadowy cyclists loomed up.

"Rescue!" yelled Pensonby.

And he turned on the tramp and grasped him, and began to struggle.

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"My heve!" ejaculated Mr. Huggins.

It would not have taken him long to dispose of Pensonby. But Gadsby and Monson and Vavasour jumped off their machines and rushed to Pon's help. The nuts of Highcliffe were not of the stuff of which heroes are made, but they had no objection to tackling the tramp four to one. They piled on him as he struggled with Pensonby, and Mr. Huggins went down with a crash, with the Highcliffe juniors swarming on him.

"Hold the cad!" panted Pensonby. "I'll make him suffer for laying his rotten hands on me!"

"We've got him!" chorled Gadsby, planting his knee on the tramp's chest and pinning him down. "Stamp on his legs, Monson!"

"You bet!" grinned Monson.

"Absolutely!" chuckled Vavasour.

"Yow-ow-ow!" yelled the unfortunate Mr. Huggins. "Go heavey, gent! I wasn't doin' no 'arm! The young gent knocked me hover!"

Pensonby, with a savage gleam in his eyes, detached the pump from his machine.

"Turn him over and hold him," he said.

"What-ho!"

Mr. Huggins, struggling fiercely, was rolled over in the dust and held fast. Then Pensonby began flogging him with the pump.

The tramp's yells rang along the lane and over the dark fields.

Billy Bunter blinked through the hedge at the scene, and chuckled. The tramp was paying now for the fright he had given him.

"Give him beans!" yelled Bunter, coming out into the road. "The rotter tried to rob me. Give him jip!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" yelled the tramp. "Go heavey, young gent! Yah! Oh!"

Lash, lash, lash, lash!

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter.

Pensonby lashed away with savage strength. The bicycle-pump bent with the force of the blows he rained upon Mr. Huggins' back and shoulders. The rascal certainly deserved punishment, but not quite the brutal punishment Pensonby was inflicting upon him. But the cad of Highcliffe knew that, whatever he did, a racially footpad had no redress, and there was nothing for him to fear.

Mr. Huggins was not exactly in a position to bring an action for assault and battery. So Pensonby gave free rein to his cruel nature, and his savage blows made the wretched tramp squirm and wriggle with anguish.

"I—I say, don't kill him, Pon!" muttered Monson, at last.

Pensonby gritted his teeth.

"I'll half-kill him!" he said. "He laid his hands on me, the low scoundrel!"

"Elp!" groined Mr. Huggins. "Go heavey, sir! 'Elp! I won't never do it agin, pon me davy! Oh, crumbs! Yow-ow-ow!"

Lash, lash, lash!

Pensonby's arm was tired at last, and he desisted.

"Now chuck him into the ditch!" he said.

Bill Huggins was not in a state to resist. The Highcliffe juniors rolled him to the side of the lane, and pitched him headlong into the ditch, which was half full of water and mud. Mr. Huggins went in with a mighty splash.

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter.

"Hallo! What are you cackling about, you Greyfriars cad?" said Pensonby. "Pitch that fat cad in too!"

Billy Bunter promptly took to his heels.

Bill Huggins scrambled out on the further side of the ditch. He shook a muddy fist at the juniors in the road.

"I'll out yer for this!" he gasped. "I'll look for yer some dark night and out yer, you mark my words!"

"I'll mark your face, if I see you again!" said Pensonby, with a contemptuous laugh.

And the Highcliffe four mounted their machines and whizzed away down the road, leaving Mr. Huggins groaning over his injuries.

They passed Billy Bunter on the road, and Pensonby playfully reached out with his foot and biffed the fat junior in the side, and Bunter sat down in the dust. He gasped and blinked after the cyclists as they disappeared.

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Temple tapped at the door of the dressing-room, and looked in. "You fellows ready?" he asked.  
(See Chapter 6.)

"Yow-ow! Boasts!" gasped Bunter. And the fat junior picked himself up and tramped on to Greyfriars, where he found the gates shut; and Gosling informed him that he was to report himself to Mr. Quelch for missing call-over.

But Billy Bunter felt quite confident as he presented himself in the Remove-master's study. After his perilous adventure, he considered that Quelch really would have to excuse him. In breathless accents he related his thrilling story to the Remove-master. According to Bunter, a ferocious tramp had attacked him on the road, and by sheer pluck he had beaten him and chased him off.

Mr. Quelch's keen grey eyes rested on him searchingly as he poured out the tale of adventure.

"Was this tramp a big man, Bunter?"

"Six feet, at least, sir," said Bunter.

"And you beat him and chased him off?"

"Yes, sir," said Bunter proudly. "That's why I'm late, sir."

"If that were why you are late, Bunter, I should excuse you."

"Yes, sir. Thank you!"

"You need not thank me, Bunter. I am quite sure that you could not possibly beat and chase a six-foot tramp," said Mr. Quelch coldly, taking up his cane.

Bunter's fat jaw dropped.

"He—he wasn't quite six feet, when I come to think of it, sir," he stammered. "About—about five feet, I should say."

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"A very considerable difference, Bunter. Hold out your hand!"

"But—but there really was a tramp, sir."

"I fear, Bunter, that I cannot disentangle the truth, if any, from the falsehood of what you have told me. Hold out your hand at once!"

Swish! awish!

And Billy Bunter left the study rubbing his fat hands, and fervently wishing that he had followed the noble example of G. Washington, the celebrated transatlantic gentleman who—according to his own statement at least—could not tell a lie.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Swank!

"WHAT about this afternoon?" asked Bob Cherry.

Bob asked that question on Wednesday afternoon after dinner.

That afternoon the new Highcliffe team was coming over to play Temple, Dabney, & Co. of the Fourth.

Harry Wharton smiled.

"Let's see the match," he said. "It will be entertaining—an eleven of slackers playing a team of duflers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The entertainfulness will be terrific!" remarked Hurree Jāmsēt Ram Singh. "The laughfulness will also be great!"

NEXT  
MONDAY—

"BILLY BUNTER'S REFORMATION!"

A Grand Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.



And the Famous Five decided to be spectators on the great occasion, and towards half-past two—the time fixed for the kick-off—they strolled down to Little Side.

Temple, Dabney, & Co. were already there. The heroes of the Fourth were in great spirits. They considered the match was "one in the eye" for the Remove. It was somewhat exasperating to see the Remove fellows taking it with perfect good-humour. Even Temple's claim that his eleven was the Second Eleven of Greyfriars did not seem to worry the Remove. They knew they were better footballers than the Fourth-Formers, and that was enough for them.

Still, the Remove had failed to beat Courtenay's team, and Temple was quite sure he would beat Ponsonby's team. So that would be a feather in the cap of the Fourth, at all events.

Cecil Reginald Temple bestowed a lofty nod on the Famous Five as they sauntered up.

"Come to see the Second Eleven play?" he asked. "We've come to see the show," said Johnny Bull. "What with your kind of footer and Ponsonby's kind, it will be entertaining."

Cecil Reginald frowned. "As for the Second Eleven, you're not the Second Eleven," said Frank Nugent cheerfully. "Hobson of the Shell is skipper of the Second Eleven, and he doesn't play you because you can't play for toffee!"

"We take no notice of the Shell!" said Temple, with dignity.

"And they take no notice of you," grinned Bob Cherry. "One good turn deserves another!"

"But where's your merry visitors?" asked Nugent. "Didn't somebody say the kick-off was half-past two?"

"Yes; that's the time."

"Well, it's twenty-five to three now."

"They haven't arrived yet," said Temple shortly.

Cecil Reginald went back to his men frowning. He was annoyed by the failure of Ponsonby & Co. to appear on time.

It was not treating him with proper respect. Of course, anything might have happened to delay the Highcliffe footballers; but Temple did not think they had been delayed. He knew that Ponsonby delighted to treat anybody and everybody with supercilious insolence, and he suspected that the excellent Pon was keeping him waiting on purpose.

Ponsonby had been glad to book the match, for many reasons. It annoyed Courtenay, his own junior captain; that was one thing. And Pon fancied that it would annoy the Remove chums, with whom he was on the worst of terms, to see him bring a team to the Greyfriars ground. Moreover, it gave him an opportunity for trouting Greyfriars fellows with disdainful insolence—Temple & Co. being the unfortunate victims in that respect.

The clock on the tower indicated a quarter to three, and still there was no sign of the Highcliffe team.

Dabney of the Fourth cut down to the gates to look for the Highcliffe brake; but he came back to report that it was not in sight.

"The Fourth-Formers were exchanging uneasy looks. "Something's delayed them," muttered Wilkinson.

"More likely sheer cheek!" muttered Temple wrathfully. Fry gave a sniff.

"Of course it's cheek!" he exclaimed. "Ponsonby doesn't care twopence for the game. It's just pipe to him to be able to keep Greyfriars chaps waiting about and kicking their heels. That's the kind of worm he is!"

"It's jolly thick, if that's the case!" growled Scott. "Suppose we refuse to play the cheeky cats, when they do come?"

"Oh, rot!" said Temple. "Pretty set of asses we should look. Look at the Remove fags—cackling already!"

"Blow the Remove!"

The Remove fellows were not exactly cackling. But they certainly were smiling. They had long ago been fed-up with Ponsonby's swank and ill-manners, and it was rather entertaining to see Temple experiencing some of Pon's charming ways. Temple had arranged that match as "one in the eye" for the Remove. It looked like turning out "one in the eye" for the great Cecil Reginald himself.

Three o'clock rang out, and by that time the Fourth Form team had very red and angry faces.

Quite a crowd had gathered round the junior ground, greatly entertained.

There was a buzz of merry laughter on all sides. Temple's unfortunate position did not elicit sympathy.

Most of the fellows remarked that he knew Ponsonby, and knew what a swanking cat the fellow was, and that he ought to have known better than to have anything to do with him.

Cecil Reginald was beginning to think so himself, as a

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matter of fact. He was more inclined by this time to punch Ponsonby's nose than to play football with him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "When is the circus going to begin, Temple?"

"Br-r-r-r!" was Temple's reply.

"We're waiting to cheer, you know," said Sampson Quincy Iffley Field. "Are you leaving it till after tea, Temple?"

Temple made no reply to the Australian junior's humorous query. But the Remove fellows chuckled.

"Dash it all, I'm gettin' fed-up!" growled Temple at last. "Precious lot of asses we look—all the dashed school cacklin' at us!"

"Let's chuck it!" snapped Scott. "There was a hail from the quadrangle."

Temple almost gasped with relief. Waiting about for the visiting team was humiliating enough; but giving up the match, after his great expenditure of gas on the subject, would have been too bitter. But the Highcliffe fellows had arrived at last—forty minutes late!

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Not Nice for Temple!

PONSONBY & Co. lounged down to the football-ground with their hands in their pockets, chatting to one another cheerfully. Evidently they did not attach any importance to the circumstance that they had kept the home team cooling their heels for nearly three-quarters of an hour.

"You're late," said Temple, as civilly as he could. He did not shake hands with Ponsonby. He felt that he couldn't do that.

"Are we late?" yawned Ponsonby.

"The kick-off was fixed for half-past two. It's a quarter-past three now," said Temple tartly. "Anything happened?"

"No. We didn't hurry. The fact is," said Ponsonby, "I'd forgotten the time of the kick-off. Thinkin' of somethin' else, I suppose."

Temple seemed to swallow something with difficulty. His temper was almost at white heat; and only the ridicule which must follow upon his having a scrap instead of a football-match with his visitors prevented him from hitting Ponsonby. The swanker of Highcliffe did not even think it worth while to make any civil excuse for his unpunctuality. He had been "thinkin' of somethin' else." That was all!

Ponsonby did not seem to notice the dark looks of the Greyfriars players. But he knew that Temple & Co. were raging inwardly, and he was greatly entertained thereby. The insolence he could not inflict upon Harry Wharton & Co. was being poured out upon Temple with a generous measure. Which was all the harder upon Temple, because he was rather given to superciliousness and swank himself. Temple, in other circumstances, would have treated Ponsonby & Co. in rather a lofty way. There did not seem much room for loftiness as things were. All the wind had been taken out of his sails.

"Well, let's get to business," said Dabney gruffly.

"Yass, we're ready," said Ponsonby. "I suppose we'd better change. You've got a dressin'-room or somethin', I suppose?"

"You know we've got a dressin'-room!" snapped Fry.

"Thank you!" said Ponsonby imperturbably. "It seems that they've got a dressin'-room here, you fellows, so come in to change."

The grinning Highcliffians went in to change.

Temple's men looked at him with eloquent looks. This was the team Temple had planted on them in his desire to give the cheeky Remove "one in the eye."

"You ass!" said Fry. "If it wasn't for making ourselves look idiots, I'd pile in and kick the whole gang off our ground!"

"It's only their way," said Temple feebly. "They're ill-bred, you know."

"I don't need telling that, fathead! They're pigs!" said Fry crossly. "And if there's much more of it, there'll be trouble. I'm not going to be patronised on our own ground by a set of sneering asses, I can tell you! Who are they, anyway?"

"The totters have only come to make themselves unpleasant!" grunted Scott. "They know we wouldn't stand it, only we'd look such fools if we went for them."

"Well, we're in for it now," said Temple. "We'll never play them again, anyway. Only do let this match go off quietly; the Remove will jape us to death otherwise."

"They're cackling enough already," growled Dabney.

"Don't let the swankin' cads draw you," said Temple. "It's hard enough for me to keep my hands off Ponsonby. But I'm goin' to do it!"

"Oh, well, we'll get through the game without scraggin' him if we can!" growled Scott. "I never saw a cad I felt more inclined to scrag, though. No wonder the Remove got fed-up with the cads and chucked them!"

"Just like Temple to take them on, wasn't it?" said Wilkinson. "One of the jolly sensible things you'd expect of Temple!"

"Oh, dry up!" said Temple, with a harassed look. "It's a score over the Remove at the moment. They don't show it, but they don't like it all the same."

"Looks as if they do like it, the way they're cackling," said Fry.

"Oh, dry up! Go and find the referee, somebody."

Potter of the Fifth had consented to referee the match; but Potter, not unreasonably, had soon tired of waiting, and soon after two or three of the Fourth-Formers rushed away in search of him. They found him, and Potter, after some grumbling, agreed to come back and referee.

Temple was afraid that the referee wouldn't be there when the players were ready to begin. But he need not have been alarmed. By the time Dabney and Fry returned with Potter the Highcliffe players had not emerged from their dressing-room. They were taking their time about changing.

"What sort of a game do you call this?" demanded Potter. "When I said I'd referee for you, I didn't undertake to make a blessed day and a half of it!"

"Sorry!" stammered Temple. "The Highcliffe chaps were late."

"Yes, they seem to have been, a little," said Potter sarcastically. "Well, pile in, and get going. Don't keep it up after tea-time, or you'll want a new referee—I warn you of that!"

Potter growled inwardly. It was rather a favour for a senior to referee the match for them, and it was good-natured of Potter to do it; but Potter had a full sense of the importance of a Fifth-Former, and he did not mean to be fooled about, as he would have called it. He certainly did not mean to miss tea in Coker's study because the juniors were late in getting to work.

"We're just going to begin, Potter," said Fry apologetically.

"Well, why don't you begin?" asked Potter.

"They're changing."

"Who are changing?" asked Potter gruffly.

"The Highcliffe chaps."

"How long have they been here?"

"Not much, over ten minutes."

"They need more than ten minutes to change!" asked Potter sarcastically. "Am I to stand here for a couple of hours while they finish?"

"N-n-not a couple of hours, Potter," said Temple, with a feeble smile. "They—they're just coming out, I think."

"I don't see any sign of 'em."

"I—I'll give 'em a hint."

"You'd better!" growled Potter.

Temple, with a very red face, hurried away and tapped at the door of the dressing-room, and looked in.

"You fellows ready?" he asked.

"Gettin' that way," said Ponsonby cheerily. Pon was smoking a cigarette in the dressing-room, apparently regarding that as a good preparative for a game of football.

"I don't want to hurry you," mumbled Temple. "But the referee is getting a bit impatient. We've got a Fifth-Former."

"Yas?" said Pon, in a tone of polite inquiry.

"I'd be glad if you'd buck up, in fact," said Temple.

"Any old thing. You fellows nearly ready?"

"Let a chap finish his smoke!" said Gadsby indignantly.

"We'll come in a minute, Temple; must finish a chap's cigarette, you know."

Temple turned away with feelings too deep for words. Potter met him with a look of grim inquiry.

"They're just coming," said the wretched Temple.

The Fifth-Former snuffed.

"Kick-off was half-past two," he said. "Now it's half-past three. I'm going in to tea at five."

"I'm awfully sorry, Potter. You know those slackin' Highcliffe cads—"

"What the dickens are you playing such a crowd for?" asked Potter. "There's a Highcliffe junior team that comes here that doesn't play the giddy goat like this. What sort of a team is this you've dug up at Highcliffe?"

"You—you see—"

"Well, I'm not going to wait much longer!"

Fortunately, Ponsonby & Co. came out just then—having finished their cigarettes. Potter glanced at them grimly enough. Pon gave him a cool nod, which made the Fifth-Former frown. He did not like being nodded to in that way by juniors.

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ONE  
PENNY.

"Well, are you ready?" demanded Potter gruffly.

"Yas, I think we're about ready," said Ponsonby.

"Then for goodness' sake get going!"

Temple won the toss, and gave Highcliffe the wind to kick off against. Ponsonby kicked off quite elegantly. The famous match started at last.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged smiles.

"Poor old Temple!" murmured Bob. "I rather think he's had pretty nearly enough of Pon already!"

"This match was going to be one in the eye for us!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "Temple don't look as if he's enjoying it!"

The enjoyment does not seem terrific! it remarked Hurree Singh. "I should not be surprised if it results in scrappulness. The esteemed Highcliffe rotters are playing foulfully already!"

"Same old game!" said Bob, in disgust. "Look at the way Gadsby's charged Wilkinson, the cad! He did me once like that, and nearly lamed me, when we used to play the rotters!"

"Play it, Highcliffe!" roared a dozen voices.

Ponsonby looked round with a supercilious smile. He did not care twopence for the opinion of the Greyfriars' crowd, and he wanted them to realise it.

"Foul charge!" yelled Bohover major. "Where's the referee?"

Potter blew his whistle.

"Gadsby—is your name Gadsby?"

"Oh, yas!" drawled Gadsby.

"Play like that again and I'll send you off the field!" said Potter.

"Will you, by gad?"

"Yes. And kick you off, too, for that matter!" said Potter wrathfully.

The Fifth-Former of Greyfriars did not mean to put up with any nonsense from a Highcliffe junior.

Gadsby considered it better to say no more. The game went on, watched with great interest by Harry Wharton & Co. They were more given to playing football than to watching it, as a rule, but this especial match promised to be quite an entertainment.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Foul Play!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE and his merry men were not first-class footballers by any means. The Remove had beaten them many a time and oft; but it was pretty clear that the Highcliffians were nowhere near their form. Ponsonby & Co. prided themselves on the fact that they didn't work at the game; but without putting in a little work it was not much use to play footer at all. The way the nuts of Highcliffe played it was enough, as Bob Cherry remarked, to make the angels weep.

They fumbled passes, they blundered in one another's way, and they had evidently left their shooting-boots at home. They were very quickly short of wind. The cigarettes in the dressing-room had come home to roost, as it were. Temple & Co., though far from great players, were quite capable of walking all over Ponsonby's team.

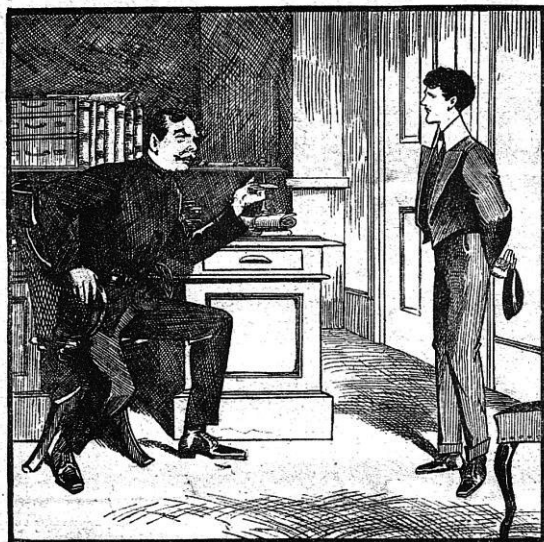
But Ponsonby & Co., though they could not play the game for toffee, had other ways and means of keeping their end up. They were not troubled with scruples of any kind. Finding that the referee's eye was upon them, and that the referee meant business, they could not venture upon such open and palpable fouling as Gadsby had started with. But every slight chance of inflicting injury was taken full advantage of, and in a hustling game there were many such chances for upercupulous and brutal players.

The Highcliffe nuts prided themselves upon a great elegance of looks and manners, but in playing the game they had a great deal yet to learn.

In a quarter of an hour Scott was hopping painfully off the field with a damaged ankle, though he could not exactly say that the kick he had received had been given deliberately. Wilkinson had to take a long rest, because Monson's elbow had been driven deep into his ribs when Monson tumbled on him, though Wilkinson was not ready to swear that Monson had done it on purpose. Fry was nearly crippled for the first half by a cruel hack on the knee; though that, too, had to pass as an accident.

Accidents of that kind were very common in the Highcliffe play, and they all happened to be Highcliffians' opponents. Owing to that series of accidents, the visiting team kept their end up pretty well.

Temple had at least one man off the field all the time, and at times two of them. And Temple, though unsuspecting at



Inspector Grimes looked curiously at the flushed junior who stood before him. "It's about that man—Huggins, I think his name is," said Temple, flushing scarlet under the inspector's gaze. (See Chapter 13.)

first, must not fail to have his eyes opened; and when he realised that the visitors were deliberately, though underhandedly, fouling, Temple's temper rose to a volcanic pitch.

But he controlled it with great efforts. He had brought it on himself. He knew what the Remove fellows thought of Ponsonby & Co., and he had disdained to take any notice of their opinion.

It was his own fault, and he had to go through with it or look sublimely ridiculous. Cecil Reginald had a very strong objection to looking ridiculous.

But when the interval came, and the players retired for a rest—neither side having scored—the remarks of the Greyfriars players were not loud, but deep.

"Did you ever hear of such a gang of rotten hooligans?" groaned Wilkinson, rubbing his ribs.

"I'm jolly nearly dead lame!" mumbled Fry.

"Well, I've been hacked," said Temple. "My shin feels as if it were cut right open. But—but the referee didn't see anything!"

"Oh, they're cunning enough!" groaned Fry.

"I'm not standing much more of it!" growled Scott savagely. "I shall give as good as I get after this!"

"Same here!" Temple looked worried.

"We can't play a foul game," he said. "We've got common decency to consider, if those cads haven't!"

"Are we going to be hacked all the time?"

"Put your beef into it," said Temple. "If they want rough play, let 'em have it—as rough as you can make it—but no fouling! We belong to a decent school, if they don't! We don't want to disgrace Greyfriars!"

His followers assented, though their feelings were very deep. When they went back into the field their looks were grim. Fouling was not in their line, but they were pre-

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pared to give their opponents play as rough as they wanted it.

Now that they thoroughly understood the tactics of their adversaries, they were not such easy victims of "accidents."

Highcliffe players who tried hacking and tripping and elbow-jabbing found themselves shouldered over without ceremony; and the Fourth-Formers, getting into the spirit of the thing, pursued the same tactics, without waiting for the Highcliffians to show the cloven hoof at all.

Ponsonby & Co. soon had reason to regret that they had started hooligan methods.

When Ponsonby fell on Fry, with his elbow all ready to drive Fry's wind out, he was surprised to catch Fry's elbow under his own chin.

He was hurled off with a feeling as if his jaw had been knocked up through the roof of his head.

"They're catching on to the Highcliffe game!" grinned Bob Cherry, who observed the incident.

"Time they did!" granted Johnny Bull.

Ponsonby sat on the ground and gasped, and the whistle went.

"Referee!" howled Ponsonby.

Ponsonby did not like "accidents," that happened to himself.

Potter grinned. He had noted it, too.

"You saw that?" howled Ponsonby.

"I saw it."

"Foul!"

"Foul on your side," said Potter. "You tried to foul Fry, and he stopped you, and serve you right!"

"Liar!" said Ponsonby.

"What?"

"Liar!"

Potter raised his hand.

"Get off the field! I order you off!"

"Then we'll all jolly well go!" exclaimed Ponsonby. "Of course, I might have expected Greyfriars fellows to square the referee!"

"You lyin' bound!" yelled Temple, quite forgetting his resolve to control his temper.

"Well, it's time this game was stopped!" exclaimed Potter angrily. "I never saw such a gang of rowdy outsiders! I advise you, Temple, to be a bit more careful about the teams you play!"

"I—I say, Potter—"

"If I go off we all go off!" said Ponsonby.

"Yaas, begad!" gasped Vasasour.

Vasasour would have been glad to go off. He had been charged over three or four times for attempted foul, and he was getting tired of it.

"The game's stopped!" said Potter. "I refuse to referee such an exhibition!"

And the Fifth-Former walked off the field. Evidently Potter had quite finished with that afternoon's performance.

Temple looked dismayed. The unfortunate match was turning out worse than he could possibly have anticipated. Ponsonby looked at him with a savage sneer.

"Well, are we goin' on or not?" he snapped.

"I suppose we can't go on without a referee?" said Gadsby.  
Temple looked at his followers.  
"I'd rather finish," he said.

"The referee's stopped the game, hasn't he?" growled Wilkinson.

"How the referee! Who's Potter, anyway?" said Temple irritably. "He's afraid of missing the feed in Coker's study—that's what's the matter with Potter. I'll ask another chap to see it out!"

Temple cut off towards the Remove crowd outside the ropes.

"I say, Wharton!"  
"Here I am," said the captain of the Remove.

It was not pleasant to Temple to ask; but he had to ask somebody; and in fact he had quite forgotten his rivalry with the Remove just then. Compared with his feelings towards Ponsonby & Co., his feelings towards the Greyfriars Remove were those of brotherly love.

"Certainly, if you like," said Harry at once. "I see Potter's gone off."

"He's fed up with the cads," confessed Temple. "I'm not surprised; but I do want to play out the match. I want to beat the rotters, at least!"

"I'm your man. It's a bit irregular, though, isn't it?"

"Never mind that, if you'll do it!"  
"Like a bird, old scout!"

Harry Wharton followed Temple on to the field. With the new referee, and with both teams in savage temper, the play was resumed.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER. The End of the Match!

**P**ONSONBY raised no objection to the new referee. As a matter of fact, he was glad to see Wharton take it on. He whispered a few words to his men as the play was starting again. The Highcliffians grinned at one another. Ponsonby had an old score against the captain of the Remove, and he thought he saw an opportunity now of paying it off. What he had whispered to his followers was:

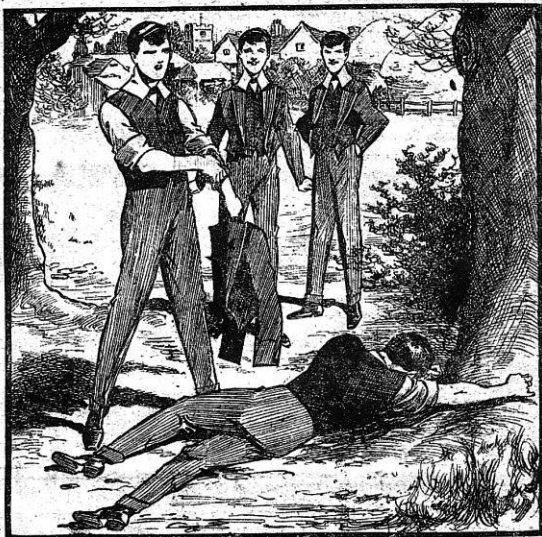
"Play the referee!"  
The cheery Highcliffians proceeded to "play the referee." They let the ball go wherever it would, and in a few minutes Temple put it in the Highcliff goal. Meanwhile, the Highcliff players played the referee. And Harry Wharton, in those few minutes, received more kicks and shoves and licks than he had received in his last dozen matches.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "They're mobbing Wharton!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover major.

"I guess that's funny," chuckled Fisher T. Fisher. "Wharton looks as if he's run up against a snag—what? Ha, ha, ha!"

It was not a laughing matter for Harry Wharton, however. He was down, with three or four Highcliffians sprawling over him.



Ponsonby had to face the music till it was clear that he was done. Then he was allowed to lie and groan on the grass, while Temple put on his jacket. (See Chapter 9.)

Wharton realised at once the intentions of his old enemies, and he hit out fiercely.

Ponsonby & Co. weren't quite prepared for that. They seemed to have an idea that they could do exactly as they liked; but that everybody else was to be bound strictly by the rules.

That was a little mistake on their part, however. An "accidental" charge having bowled over the new referee, and three or four fellows having accidentally piled on him, Wharton hit out vigorously as he was kicked and elbowed and hacked. Gadsby caught his knuckles with his chin, and rolled off yelling. Vavasour got a drive fairly in the eye, and squirmed away shrieking. Monson went spinning from a crashing right-hander on the chest.

Wharton scrambled to his feet. The Highcliffians did not enjoy hard hitting at close quarters, and they left him clear. Vavasour sat on the ground and nursed his eye.

"Yow-wow-wow!" said Vavasour.  
"What sort of a game do you call this?" roared Wharton.  
"Yow-wow-wow!"

"Temple," yelled Ponsonby, "I object to your referee! I don't want a referee who starts fightin' in the field!"

"Why, you started it, you cad!"  
"Liar!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Temple, pushing between them.  
"You'd better get off, Wharton."

"You saw what they did!" shouted Wharton. "They weren't playing focker, they were mobbing me!"

"Well, get off all the same, there's a good fellow."  
Wharton gave a snort of contempt, and stalked off the field. He had had quite enough of refereeing in that extraordinary match.

"I'm fed-up with this, Temple," said Ponsonby sulkily.

"We don't get fair play here. I decline to play out the match!"

Temple's temper flamed up at that.

"You cowardly, skulking rotter!" he exclaimed.

"What?"

"Play out the match!" shouted Temple. "You haven't been playing at all! You only came here to swank and make yourself unpleasant, you cad. You've been behaving like a convict!"

"Thanks, that's enough," said Ponsonby. "Come on, you fellows! We'll get off!"

The Highcliffians marched off the field. A deep groan from the spectators followed them, at which they smiled sneeringly and shrugged their shoulders. Cecil Reginald Temple fairly panted with wrath.

"Well, we've beaten them, anyway," said Scott. "We've got a goal."

"What a game!" groaned Wilkinson.

"Oh, rather! What a game!"

"Oh, you ass, Temple!"

"Temple, you fathead!"

Temple gritted his teeth.

"Pile it on, rub it in!" he said. "I didn't know what rotten scoundrels they were. I'd rather play a convict prison than play them again. Precious fools they've made us look! Of course, that was their game all along—to make the whole thing ridiculous—because they're up against Greyfriars. Well, Ponsonby can't play a game like that on us. He's going to pay for it."

"Better not have a row here," muttered Fry. "It's a bit thick to lick the skipper of a visiting team!"

"I know that. Ponsonby's going to fight me, all the same! I'm going to see him about it now."

Temple was in deadly earnest.

It did not take the Highcliffe players so long to change this time. They were very soon out of the dressing-room. Temple met them, with gleaming eyes, as they were about to start for their brake.

"Ponsonby, you cad—"

"Don't talk to me!" growled Ponsonby. "I've had enough of you!"

Temple planted himself directly in Ponsonby's path.

"You'll listen to me!" he said. "You've nucked up the match; you've played foul; you've made me look a fool to all Greyfriars; and you're going to pay for it. Will you get

off your brake on the common, and meet me there? I'll bring a couple of friends with me."

Ponsonby nodded coolly.

"Certainly, if you want a lickin'!" he said.

"Then it's a go! I'll be along ten minutes after you."

"Done!"

The Highcliffians walked on, and their brake bore them away. Temple & Co. put on their coats, and went into the house to change. Temple's brow was very moody, and his eyes were burning. His excellent schemes had turned out remarkably badly, and he was anxious to make Ponsonby pay for it. Temple was generally an easy-going fellow. But he had a hot temper when it was roused, and certainly it was roused now. He had had to make a great effort to keep from thrashing Ponsonby there and then on the Greyfriars football ground.

The Famous Five were smiling as they went in to tea. That famous match of the Greyfriars Second Eleven had not put the kybosh on the Remove, as Cecil Reginald had fondly hoped it would. It had ended disastrously, owing to Ponsonby's insolence and foul play. And such success as Temple & Co. had had did not reflect much credit upon them. The whole affair had been ridiculous from start to finish, and Temple's bad luck was being chortled over all through Greyfriars. Had Cecil Reginald wound up by thrashing Ponsonby on the football ground, that would have put the lid on, so to speak. Fortunately, Cecil Reginald had stopped short of that extreme.

"What a joyful afternoon!" grinned Bob Cherry, as the chums of the Remove sat down to tea in Study No. 1. "Did you enjoy your job as referee, old son?"

"The rotten cads!" growled Wharton. "I've got bruises all over!"

"I fancy Temple won't play Highcliffe again in a hurry," chuckled Squiff. "It beats me how the cads get anybody to play them. I suppose they're not always quite so rotten as that!"

"They're improving," said Nugent. "They fairly took the cake to-day. Hallo, fatty, what do you want?"

Billy Bunter grinned into the study.

"I believe there's something on," he remarked. "Temple and Fry and Dabney are going out, and—"

"Let 'em go!"

"I shouldn't wonder if they're going after Ponsonby—"

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Ha, ha, ha! They

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only want to finish up with a fight to make the picture complete!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Wharton looked out of the study window. Temple & Co. had just come out of the house below.

"Hallo, Temple!" called out Wharton.

Temple looked up in surprise.

"Want a second?"

"A second?" repeated Temple savagely. "I'm going for a walk. What do you mean?"

"Well, you don't want a second if you're only going for a walk certainly," said Harry, laughing. "But if it's a scrap—"

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Temple. And he walked away with his chums.

"No need to let those Remove kids know anything about it," remarked Temple, as they went out of gates. "They'll only cackle all the more. The affair's rotten enough as it is."

To which Dabney replied, "Oh, rather!" and Fry nodded. The Fourth-Formers were quite agreed on that. Ponsobly of Highcliffe had to answer for his sins; but there was no need to provide further food for meritment for the Remove.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### The Trick That Failed!

"HERE come the cads!" drawled Ponsobly.

The dandy of Highcliffe was smoking a cigarette under the trees on the border of Courtfield Common. Gadsby and Monson were with him. The Highcliffe brake had gone on to the school, and Ponsobly & Co. were waiting for Temple.

The brake was out of sight, and so were the other Highcliffians. As the Greyfriars fellows came up, Fry looked round rather curiously. Edward Fry was a keen youth, and he had half suspected that they would find a crowd of Highcliffians on the spot—Ponsobly not being troubled by any notions of fair play, either in football or in a fight. But only Ponsobly and Gadsby and Monson were to be seen.

Ponsobly threw away the stump of his cigarette. "So you've come?" he remarked.

"Didn't I tell you I would?" growled Temple.

"Yess; but I thought you'd very likely fink it."

"You didn't think anything of the kind," said Temple grimly. He had no intention of wasting any more civility upon the cad of Highcliffe. "You knew I should come. I thought very likely you wouldn't wait for me, though. But there's no need to jaw. Get your jacket off!"

Temple threw his jacket and cap to Dabney.

Ponsobly removed his own jacket with leisurely slowness.

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Temple's look was very grim; he intended to give the Highcliffe junior the licking of his life. Pon's own opinion was that he could lick Temple. But if the tussle went against him, Pon's measures were already taken. He was not there to be licked.

"You've not brought any gloves," remarked Monson.

"We don't want gloves,"

"Not at all," said Ponsobly. "I'm goin' to give the Greyfriars ad a lickin' he will remember!"

Temple laughed scoffingly.

"Well, get ahead and do it!" he said.

"Who's goin' to keep time?"

"Dabney or Fry," said Temple at once.

"I'd rather one of my own friends."

"I can't trust your friends," said Temple coolly. "There'd be foul play. But two together, if you like."

"Any old thing," said Ponsobly.

Gadsby took out his big gold watch, and Fry took out his silver watch. They compared them, and prepared to keep time together. Temple and Ponsobly faced one another, with their sleeves rolled up, their fists clenched, and their eyes gleaming.

"Time!" said two voices in unison.

And the fight began.

It took Ponsobly about half a minute to discover that his estimate of Temple was a mistaken one. Temple was a good deal of a dandy, and a bit of a slacker; but he was a good boxer, and had heaps of pluck. And he was bitterly incensed against the cad of Highcliffe, and in deadly earnest. In the first round Temple had it all his own way, knocking the Highcliffe fellow right and left.

Gadsby would have called time a little ahead, but Fry was keeping time, too, so that was not feasible. Ponsobly had to fight out the round to the finish, and the finish saw him on his back, gasping.

Monson picked him up, and made a knee for him.

Ponsobly sat down and panted for breath. There were bruises on Pon's handsome face, which did not look quite so handsome now.

"That chap's rather a handful, after all," remarked Monson doubtfully.

Ponsobly gritted his teeth.

"I'll give him another round," he said.

"And then—"

"If I go down again, whistle!"

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"Right-ho!" grinned Monson.

"Time!"

Ponsonby stepped up again. The second round was hard fought, and Temple received some punishment. But his blows fairly rained on Ponsonby, and before the call of time the Highcliffian went down into the grass with a heavy bump.

The next moment a shrill whistle burst from Monson's lips.

The Greyfriars fellows started, and looked round. The whistle was evidently a signal, and it was answered at once by the appearance of Drury, Vavasour, and Merton, from the bushes behind the trees. They came up at a run.

Temple's lip curled bitterly.

"What does that mean?" he exclaimed.

Ponsonby staggered up.

"Rush the cads!" he panted.

"Foul play!" yelled Fry.

The three Greyfriars fellows drew together quickly. There was no doubt now that foul play was intended. Temple's eyes blazed at Ponsonby.

"You funky cad!" he shouted. "Aren't you going to finish?"

Ponsonby did not trouble to reply.

"Rush them!" he repeated.

And the six Highcliffians made a rush together.

Ponsonby & Co. expected the Greyfriars juniors to bolt for it, and they meant to run them down and rag them at their own sweet will. But that was another little mistake. Temple and his clams did not run. They stood up to the rush, shoulder to shoulder, hitting out. It was three against six, but the three were in much better condition, and had a good deal more courage than the six put together. The rush did not scatter them, and they held their ground grimly.

Drury and Merton were bowled right over, and Monson went sprawling across them in the grass. Then Temple & Co., their blood quite up, attacked in their turn, driving Ponsonby and Gadsby and Vavasour back.

"Go for the cads!" panted Temple. "Smash the rotters!"

"Oh, rather!" gasped Dabney.

Temple selected Ponsonby, and peased him hard. Gadsby went down, and Vavasour fairly took to his heels. The taller Highcliffians jumped up and piled in again, but it was half-hearted. They had not looked for fighting like this, and they did not like it. There was a terrific struggle for several minutes—five against three. Vavasour keeping right out of the conflict. But it ended with Gadsby lying on the ground in a dazed state, and Merton and Monson retreating out of range.

"Mop 'em up!" roared Fry, greatly encouraged by the weakening of the enemy. "My hat! We could lick a dozen funks like that! Mop 'em up!"

He rushed at Drury, who turned and bolted. A roar of laughter from Fry followed him. Vavasour had disappeared, and Drury disappeared after him. Gadsby was crawling away, Monson and Merton ran as Dabney and Fry came for them; and Ponsonby was run, too, but he couldn't—he was in the grasp of Cecil Reginald Temple.

"Let me go!" yelled Ponsonby.

"Not just yet," grinned Temple. "We haven't finished yet."

Dabney and Fry came back panting. The enemy had gone. "Rotten funks!" said Fry. "They've cleared off. Are you going on, Temple?"

"I'm going to lick this rotter!" said Temple, between his teeth.

Temple was limping a little. He had received a kick on the shin in the struggle, and he was in great pain. But that only made him more determined.

"Put up your hands, Ponsonby, you cowardly Hun!"

Ponsonby cast a wild look round.

His trachea had been a failure—his friends were gone. He was left alone to face his punishment.

He had never dreamed that his trick would turn out like this, or he would not have remained on the common to meet Temple at all. But he was in for it now, and there was no escape.

He put up his hands sullenly and savagely.

There was nothing for it but to fight, man to man, and Ponsonby screwed up what courage he had, and did his best.

There were no more rounds; the fight was hammer and tongs, and it was an experience that was simply terrific for the dandy Highcliffie.

Temple's blood was at boiling point. He did not spare his adversary.

Ponsonby was knocked right and left under a rain of blows, and he went down again and again. But malingering was not allowed—a touch of Fry's boot helped him to decide to get up.

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again. And Ponsonby had to face the music till it was clear that he was done.

Then he was allowed to lie and groan in the grass.

Temple put on his jacket.

"Come on!" he said. "I think that cad's had his lesson."

"Looks like it!" grinned Fry. "Ta-ta, Pon! Next time you lag a giddy ambush, you'd better get a couple of dozen funks!"

And the Fourth-Formers of Greyfriars walked away, leaving Ponsonby in the grass. The Highcliffie junior sat up dazedly. He pazed his hand over his face and groaned.

He had been thrashed as he had never been thrashed before. His nose was swollen, his mouth streaming red, and he knew that both his eyes were bluenching. That was the kind of face he had to show at Highcliff! He ground his teeth in helpless rage at the thought.

He picked himself up at last, and limped away towards Highcliffie, keeping off the road, and taking a path over the fields. He did not want to be seen.

Near the Highcliffie gates he found his friends awaiting him, looking decidedly sheepish. The Highcliffie nuts were not exactly proud of their share in the affair.

They stared at Ponsonby's disfigured face in horror.

"My hat! You've been through it!" muttered Gadsby.

"Did they set on you?"

"You know they didn't!" hissed Ponsonby. "I got this from Temple, hang him! You rotten funks, to clear off like that!"

"You see—"

"Well, I didn't like the idea at all," said Merton. "It was a bit thick, piling on them like that. They gave you fair play."

"That was why you ran, was it?"

"Oh, rats!" said Merton uneasily.

"I—I say, there'll be a row when Mobby sees your face, Pon," said Vavasour. "You look awful, by gad!"

"You'll have to make up some yarn," said Drury.

"I know that, confound you!"

"What are you goin' to say?"

Ponsonby reflected. He did not want the whole story to come out—of the cowardly ambush laid for the Greyfriars fellows, and the attack of six on three. Even at Highcliffie, even in Pon's own select circle, there was a certain amount of pride owing to be considered. Neither did Pon want all Highcliffie to know that he had been so soundly thrashed by a Greyfriars junior.

Some yarn was required to satisfy his Form-master, who was certain to make horrified inquiries as soon as he saw Pon's face.

"What about that tramp we met on Monday?" said Gadsby, after a pause. "Suppose you make out that you met him, and he slogged you, Pon? He might, if you met him, after the way you pazed him. That's a likely yarn."

Ponsonby nodded.

"That's good enough for Mobby," he said. "It won't do to let the story come out. Courtenay and his crowd would crow over it no end, and—"

"And the whole dashed thing isn't much to be proud of," growled Monson.

"Not so far as you're concerned," sneered Ponsonby. "The fags would never let you hear the end of it if they knew how you'd run—six from three!"

"You tried to run," said Monson savagely. "I saw you. And Temple had to hold you by the collar. I saw him!" Ponsonby clenched his fists.

"For goodness' sake, don't begin raggin' now!" said Gadsby. "We ain't proud of the dashed thing, any of us, and the less said the better. Tell Mobby that yarn an' stick to it. Better go in alone; it won't do to let Mobby know we were on the scene, or he'll wonder why we didn't chip in. We'll go in first."

"That's a good idea."

The nuts went in, and Ponsonby followed them after about ten minutes. Mr. Mobbs was duly spoofed with the story of the tramp; it never occurred to Mr. Mobbs to doubt the explanation of his dear Ponsonby. And that evening all Highcliffie knew that Pon had been attacked and badly beaten by a ruffianly tramp, and the fellows who knew the facts were very careful to keep those facts to themselves.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### A Peculiar Position.

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Scat!"

"But I say, there's news," said Billy Bunter—news from Highcliffie! Something's happened to Ponsonby."

It was the following afternoon, and Billy Bunter had come in full of news.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's happened to Pon?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Smashed up by a tramp," said Bunter impressively. "Nearly crippled, I hear. Fairly smashed up by a tramp on the road last night."

"Sorry to hear it," said Harry Wharton, sincerely enough. "Have you seen him?" asked Nugent.

"No; I heard it from Smithson—met him in Courtfield," said Bunter. "Pon got off the brake to walk home by himself, Smithson says, and he met a tramp, and the fellow went for him and walloped him. He says Pon is off lessons, fairly laid up—both eyes black, nose squashed, and right on his beam-ends."

"That's jolly queer," said Wharton. "I don't see why a tramp should go for Ponsonby and smash him up."

"It's the same chap," said Bunter. "You remember I told you about the tramp who went for me the other night."

"One of your thumping yarns!" growled Johnny Bull.

"It was true!" said Bunter indignantly. "I told you so."

"How could it be true when you told us?"

"Oh, really, Bull!" Billy Bunter spluttered with indignation. "I suppose you can take a fellow's word? The tramp was going to rob me of my thirty-guinea gold watch, a birthday present from a titled relation of mine."

"Pile it on!"

"Ponsonby larruped him with a bike-pump; bent the pump on him," said Bunter. "Serve him jolly well right! He yelled out that he would go for Ponsonby when he had a chance; I heard him. Now he's done it. I say, Smithson says Mr. Mobbs went down to the police-station about it, and they're looking for the tramp. He ought to be arrested, you know. I'm jolly well going to help."

"Ha, ha!"

"I mean, I'm going to give information," explained Bunter. "I shall be wanted as a witness, as I know all about it. That means getting out of lessons for one morning at least. The man's still hanging about here."

"Jolly odd that he should hang about after doing a thing like that," said Wharton. "How do you know?"

"Because I've seen him!" said Bunter triumphantly. "I came back across the common, and there he was, eating bread and cheese on the common, just as if he wasn't afraid of anything. I jolly well bolted when I saw him, I can tell you."

"You needn't tell us that," grinned Bob Cherry. "We can guess that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, the beast might have gone for me, you know, after the way I knocked him down the other night," said Bunter. "I'm jolly well going to tell them where to find him—after tea."

Billy Bunter was quite keen to help to serve the ends of justice; but, of course, tea came first.

Ponsonby's misadventure was soon known far and wide.

The football match of the previous day had made Ponsonby a subject of talk at Greyfriars, and all the fellows heard with interest what had happened to him.

And as Ponsonby was, there was a good deal of sympathy for him.

But the news made quite a different impression when it reached Temple's study.

Cecil Reginald Temple was at tea with Dabney when Fry came in with the news.

The Fourth-Formers grinned over it.

"I suppose Pon didn't feel inclined to tell the facts," chuckled Temple. "There wasn't much in the affair for Pon to brag about. He's stuffed them up with a yarn about a tramp. Well, it's no bizney of ours."

"Bunter says the police are looking for the tramp."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple roared at the idea of the local police hunting for a non-existent tramp. But Fry was rather grave.

"I haven't told you all," he remarked. "It seems that there is a tramp. Some shabby scoundrel molested Pon on the road the other night; Bunter was there. Pon thrashed him with a bike-pump, the other cads holding the poor wretch down. I dare say he deserved it, but you can bet your socks that Pon acted like a brute. Well, Pon's yarn is that this is the same fellow."

"Well, it's no business of ours to contradict his yarns," said Temple. "I'd rather the story didn't come out. We look silly asses enough over that football match already."

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"That's so. Only, suppose the peeliars collar that poor rotter!"

Temple whistled.

"I suppose they might," he remarked. "I don't suppose Ponsonby thought it out as far as that."

"Pon couldn't stick to the yarn if the man was arrested," said Dabney, with a shake of the head. "He couldn't be beast enough to get a clap sent to prison for nothing."

Temple looked very grave.

"I don't know," he said slowly. "Pon's word would be good enough against a tramp, especially if he proved that the man molested him before. But I dare say the fellow's far enough away by this time."

"Bunter's seen him this afternoon," said Fry.

"Well, Bunter isn't in the police force; it doesn't matter."

"The meddling ass is going down to Friardale after tea, to tell old Tesser what he's seen. He's out for himself."

"Oh, my hat!"

Temple looked uneasily at his chums.

"We don't want the story to come out," he said haltingly.

"The fact is, I was so wild with Pon for his rotten tricks that I went a bit too far. He must be looking an awful sight to-day."

"No doubt about that."

"And the Head's down on rows with Highcliffe," muttered Temple. "If it came out that I'd patted Pon like that, Dr. Locke would—would—"

"Might be a flogging," said Dabney, with a whistle.

"It wasn't my fault," said Temple, growing red. "The rotten cad tricked us in every way, and then having his friends in hiding to tackle us two to one—if ever a rotten cad asked for a thrashing, Ponsonby did. I'm not sorry I did it. But—but I don't want to be hauled up before the Head. He wouldn't look at the matter as we do."

The chums of the Fourth regarded one another uneasily. They had supposed that the affair of Ponsonby was over and closed. Evidently it was very far from closed. Probably Ponsonby had not foreseen that his falsehood would lead to the police looking for the supposed tramp who had assaulted him. But, having told his story, he had little choice but to stick to it. Temple could disprove it easily enough, but—but there was a very big "but."

A fight without gloves, carried to such a length that Ponsonby was disgraced for weeks to come—they knew how the Head of Greyfriars would regard such an affair. The results of the facts coming to light would be serious enough for Temple.

"There was a long silence in the study. Temple did not finish his tea. He seemed to have lost his appetite."

"It's a ghastly bizney!" he said at last. "I wish I'd never had anything to do with the rotten cad. It's the fault of those cheeky Remove rotters, really. I'd never have thought of playing Ponsonby if they hadn't bagged the match with Courtney's eleven. I—I say, Bunter's got to be shut up. If he doesn't go gasping at a police-station the man won't be found, very likely, and he may shift out of this neighbourhood any minute."

"Not much good trying to shut up that gasbag!"

"I'm going to try, anyway. Come along!"

And the three Fourth-Formers proceeded in search of William George Bunter, to essay the almost hopeless task of inducing the tattler of Greyfriars to hold his tongue.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Does His Duty.

BILLY BUNTER was crossing the quadrangle to the gates when the Fourth-Formers bore down upon him.

Bunter had quite an important look. Helping to serve the ends of justice was a new role for Bunter, and he was going to make quite an impression at Friardale Station with what he could tell about Mr. Huggins.

He shook his head as Cecil Reginald Temple beckoned to him.

"Can't stop!" said Bunter loftily.

"Just a word, Bunter!"

"Sorry—can't stop!"

Bunter was rather pleased at the opportunity of rebuffing the dandy of the Fourth, who generally treated him with the loftiest disdain. The Owl of the Remove rolled on towards the gates without a pause. Temple hurried after him, biting his lip. It was humiliating to the great Cecil Reginald to have to ask favours of the fat Removeite. But there was no help for it.

"Hold on a minute, Bunter!"

"Don't bother now, Temple! I'm in a hurry."

"I—I— Would you care to come to the tuckshop, Bunter?"



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Bunter halted as suddenly as if his fat feet had taken root in the earth.

"Certainly, old chap!" he said affably. "I'm not in such a terrific hurry as all that. Only I've got to get down to the police-station and back again before locking-up. Come on, dear boy!"

It made Temple writhle to be addressed as "dear boy" by Bunter. But he grinned as amiably as he could.

Fry and Dabney followed them to the school shop. Cecil Reginald stood front, and Billy Bunter began to guzzle ginger-bread and jam-tarts. He was a little puzzled as to Temple's motive, but he was very keen on improving the shining hour in that way.

Temple waited till Mrs. Mimble had gone back to her little parlour.

"So you're going down to the police-station, Bunter?" he remarked carelessly.

"Yes. Got to give information, you know," said Bunter importantly. "I know where to find that rotter who bashed Ponsonby."

"What are you clipping in for? Hardly worth a walk, is it?"

"Duty," said Bunter, with his mouth full. "Helping justice, you know. I've got rather a strict sense of duty—not like some chaps."

"You gassing us—?" began Dabney. But Temple made him a sign to shut up. It was necessary to be diplomatic with Bunter.

"The fact is, Bunter," said Temple, "I don't believe it was that tramp who bashed Ponsonby at all."

"What rot!" said Bunter.

"I—I think very likely he got into a fight, and spun a yarn to his Form-master, you know."

"Did you fight with him?" asked Bunter at once.

Temple coughed. It would hardly have done to confide the facts to Bunter. It would have been the same thing as confiding them to all Greyfriars.

"I—I mean, it's very likely," he said.

"I saw you go out last evening," said Bunter inquisitively.

"I told Wharton I thought you'd gone to fight Ponsonby."

"Did you, you spying rotter! I—I—I mean—have some more facts?" stammered Temple.

"Certainly!"

"Look here, Bunter, suppose you don't go?" suggested Temple, hardly knowing what reason to give for his request.

"Must!—These tarts are good, ain't they?"

"It's no business of yours," urged Temple.

"It's everybody's business to help the law," said Bunter loftily.

"Besides, if the man's prosecuted I shall be wanted as a witness. That means a morning out of the Form-room."

Dabney and Fry looked hopeless. The prospect of slacking instead of working for a whole morning was more than enough to make Bunter determined to help the ends of justice.

"I hear that Ponsonby pashed him the other night," said Temple. "Don't you think that's enough? If—if he bashed Pon, he was only getting his own back."

"He ought to be locked up," said Bunter loftily. "Did you say doughnuts, Temple?"

"Look here, I'll stand you doughnuts if you won't go to the police-station!" said Temple desperately.

Bunter blinked at him in blank astonishment.

"What the dickens does it matter to you? That seedy tramp isn't a relation of yours, is he?"

"You silly chump!" roared Temple.

"I'll have the doughnuts," said Bunter. "Mrs. Mimble"

"Not unless you promise me!" said Temple.

"He wouldn't keep a promise!" muttered Fry. "And it'll be the talk of the school at this rate, Temple. Chuck it!"

Temple paused. Bunter was very curious already, and though he was not keen enough to guess Temple's motive, others might be keen enough, if he told of the Fourth-Formers' anxiety on the subject.

"I'll tell you what," said Bunter. "I'll think over it. There!"

Temple set his lips.

"What do you want the fellow to get clear for, Temple? Because Pon played you such a ripping game yesterday?" chuckled Bunter.

"I think you'd better not meddle in what doesn't concern you!" said Temple savagely. "I don't believe that tramp bashed Ponsonby at all, and—I think you may get him punished for nothing!"

"Oh, rot!"

Harry Wharton came into the tuckshop with Nugent. He rapped on the counter with a half-crown, and Mrs. Mimble came out of her parlour. Temple, Dabney, and Fry looked at one another uncomfortably.

"I'll tell you what—?" began Bunter again, much torn

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between his desire for doughnuts and his desire to distinguish himself at the police-station. But the Fourth-Formers did not wait for Bunter to finish. A discussion of the matter before the two Renovites and Mrs. Mimble was not exactly what they wanted. They walked out of the shop.

Billy Bunter blinked after them, and grunted, and finished his ginger-bread.

"Silly asses!" he remarked. "I say, Wharton, what do you think Temple wants that tramp let off for?"

"Eh? Does he?" said Harry in surprise.

"He's offered to stand me doughnuts if I won't go and denounce him," said Billy Bunter. "Of course, I refused. Refused at once, of course!"

"What the dickens does Temple care about it, one way or the other?" said Nugent, in astonishment.

Harry Wharton looked rather thoughtful.

"Quess, ain't it?" said Bunter. "I suppose he's raty with Ponsonby over the footer match yesterday. I say, Nugent, could you cash a postal-order for me—I'm expecting one by the next post—"

Wharton and Nugent left the tuckshop with their purchases, leaving Bunter's query unanswered. Bunter emptied his glass to the last drop, cleared the last crumb off his plate, and rolled out, and in a few minutes more was hurrying down to Friarale.

Temple & Co. had gone back to their tea in a worried frame of mind. Cecil Reginald felt that he had already talked too incautiously to Bunter, and there was evidently nothing more to be done in that direction.

But later in the evening the chums of the Fourth looked for the fat junior to learn the result of his visit to Friarale. They found Bunter telling the story to the Renovites in the Common-room.

"Old Tozer was awfully civil," said Bunter. "He took down the man's description, name, and all that, and just where I saw him on the common. He says he'll have him under lock and key before dark. Old Tozer's jolly keen. He wants to collar him and do the Courtford bobbies in the eye. He, he, he! And I shall be wanted as a witness."

"It mayn't be the right man," said Tom Brown.

"Oh, it's the right man, right enough!" said Bunter. "He said he would go for Ponsonby, and he's done it. Ponsonby will have to identify him, too."

Temple & Co. walked away quietly.

"Well, here's a go!" said Fry.

"The fat, meddling fool!" said Temple savagely. "Why couldn't he mind his own business! I suppose old Tozer will nab that poor brute now, and march him into Courtford police-station and hand him over to Grimes. Well, I can't help it. After all, he seems to be a ruffianly footpad, and chokey's the proper place for him."

"Not for a thing he hasn't done," said Dabney.

"I can't help it, I tell you! If Ponsonby identifies him, that's his business. If he chooses to tell lies to that extent—"

"You could clear the poor rotter."

"And get a flogging from the Head for my pains!" growled Temple. "It's not good enough. Nice thing for me to be flogged—me!"

Dabney and Fry were silent. The tramp Huggins was undoubtedly a ruffianly character, and probably had earned several sentences of hard labour that he had never received. But that made no difference to the fact that it was Temple's duty to see that he was not sent to prison for something he had not done.

But the thought of appearing in a police-court, of owning up to what was described as a ruffianly attack on Ponsonby, and of facing the Head of Greyfriars afterwards—it was all too much for Temple. He shuddered at the thought of it.

A brutal tramp—a dirty police-court—a sharp-tongued magistrate—and all Greyfriars' faddishness nerves horribly.

If Temple did not choose to speak, it was not the business of his chums to give him away. They said nothing. But Temple could see what was in their thoughts, and he stalked away by himself in a very unenviable frame of mind.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### Temple Makes Up His Mind!

HARRY WHARTON glanced curiously at Temple of the Fourth when he met him in the passage the next day.

Cecil Reginald Temple was looking pale and worried.

Evidently he was not in a joyful mood.

Wharton had been thinking over the matter, and he could not help a suspicion rising in his mind.

Temple, however, did not glance at him. He was too busy

with his own moody thoughts. He was very anxious to hear news of Bill Huggins, and to know whether P.-c. Tozer had been able to run him down on the strength of Bunter's information.

Ponsonby had attributed his injuries to an unknown tramp, but he had been very vague in his description of the man, and on his statements alone Mr. Huggins would have been in no danger. Ponsonby had only been thinking of spinning a yarn to keep the true facts concealed. He wanted no more than that. But for Bunter's intervention the matter would have ended there. But the Owl of the Remove had made all the difference. Unless the tramp had left the neighbourhood he was pretty certain to be found by Mr. Tozer. And Bunter had seen him on the common.

Temple had anatomised the meddling of the Owl of the Remove, but there was not much comfort in that.

He tried to dismiss the matter from his mind, but it would not be dismissed. He tried to think that it was no concern of his what happened to a rascally tramp, but he could not quite succeed in thinking so.

After lessons that day the suspense worried him so much that he determined to get information. Mr. Quelch being out, Temple borrowed his telephone, and rang up Courtfield police-station.

Inspector Grimes answered the telephone. Temple asked whether anything had been heard of the tramp who had assaulted Ponsonby of Highcliffe. And he dropped the receiver in dismay—when the inspector replied that the man had been found by P.-c. Tozer of Friardale and brought in to Courtfield police-station.

Temple left the study with a harassed brow. Dabney and Fry met him in the passage, with inquiring looks.

"They've got him!" said Temple almost huskily.

"Got the tramp?"

"Yes."

Dabney whistled.

"What are you going to do, old fellow?"

"Nothing!" said Temple savagely.

Dabney and Fry looked very grave.

"Ponsonby will have to swear to him," muttered Temple.

"If he chooses to commit perjury—"

"He'll do it—it's safe enough for him," said Dabney.

"He's either got to do that or own up that he was lying to his Form-master at Highcliffe."

"Well, let him!"

"Are you going to let him, Temple?"

"I'm not going to interfere."

Temple walked away, and his chums said nothing.

The rest of Greyfriars soon knew that the unfortunate Mr. Huggins was under lock and key. Billy Bunter, athirst for news, had gone down to Courtfield to inquire, and he came back full of information. Billy Bunter was a very important person just now—he regarded himself as a limb of the law.

"It was all through me!" he announced proudly in the Common-room.

"They'd never have got him without me!"

Ponsonby wasn't able to describe him properly. Queer, too; but there you are—Pon's an ass! But I had him down to a hair!

He's going to be brought before the magistrates to-morrow morning, and Ponsonby and I have to go and swear to him. He'll get six months."

"Has he admitted it?" asked Harry Wharton.

Bunter chuckled.

"No fear!" He swears that he wasn't on the Highcliffe road at all on Wednesday evening, so the bobby said. Of course, he was!"

Harry Wharton walked out of the Common-room with a knitted brow. He made his way to Temple's study in the Fourth Form passage.

Temple was alone there. Wharton found him walking about the study in a restless mood. He stopped, and fixed a far from welcoming look on the captain of the Remove.

"Well?" he snapped.

"There's news," said Harry. "They've got the tramp who's accused of hammering Ponsonby last night."

"I know. I—I mean—" Temple stammered.

"I suppose he did it?" said Harry, looking keenly at the captain of the Fourth.

"I suppose so," assented Temple.

"Ponsonby has to identify him when he comes before the magistrates, anyway."

"Well, I suppose he won't, if he isn't the man."

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"I don't know," said Harry slowly. "Ponsonby seems to have fallen foul of the man once, and probably has his knife into him. You know he's a revengeful beast. I rather fancy he'd see all the tramps in Kent sent to chokey sooner than own up that he was spoofing with the yarn he told."

Temple shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"Well, it's nothing to do with me, is it?"

"I don't know. Is it?" asked Harry.

Temple changed colour.

"What the dickens do you mean? What are you driving at?" he exclaimed.

"I'll explain," said Wharton quietly. "You went out after the Highcliffe fellows left. Bunter had a yarn that you'd gone after Ponsonby to fight him. You remember, I spoke to you—"

"Yes, I remember; some Remove check!" said Temple in his old arrogant way.

Wharton did not heed.

"You tried to keep Bunter from giving information about the tramp, too. I don't want to be suspicious, Temple, but—you looked as if you'd been in a scrap when you came in on Wednesday evening. Did you fight Ponsonby?"

Temple was silent.

"If you licked the cad, it would be like him to lie about it," said Harry. "He might spin a yarn about a tramp attacking him. Did you do it?"

"Suppose I did?" said Temple desperately. "I don't see that it's any business of yours, Wharton!"

"You did, then?" said Harry. "I thought so from the first. The yarn seemed too fishy, somehow. Pon didn't want to own up to being licked, I suppose."

"It wasn't only that. They set on us—a gang of them," growled Temple. "They were two to one, and we licked the lot! Then I gave Ponsonby the thrashing of his life, if you want to know all about it. Perhaps I hit a bit harder than I should have if I'd been cooler. I knew I left him looking a pretty picture. Hang him!"

"Serve him right!" said Harry.

"He couldn't tell the facts, even at Highcliffe—there are a few decent fellows there. So he spun this yarn. And it wouldn't have mattered, but for that meddling fool Bunter!"

"But now, Temple—"

"Now the matter's closed, as far as I'm concerned," said Temple doggedly. "I'm not going through a police-court and taking a flogging from the Head for the sake of a rotten footpad!"

"You know Ponsonby won't tell the truth, Temple. He'll be afraid to. They're pretty easy with him at Highcliffe, but they would come down on him for pulling their leg like that and making them call in the police for nothing. He will keep mum, and let that poor brute go to chokey."

"I suppose so."

"But you can't, Temple!"

"Can't?" said Temple, his eyes blazing. "I suppose I can do as I like! Do you think you're going to stop me, confound your cheek?"

"I'm not going to interfere," said Wharton quietly. "But you can't do as Pon does, Temple. You can't, because Pon is a scoundrel, and you're not. You can't, because you can't disgrace yourself and your school. You can't, because you'd never have a minute's peace if you let that man go to prison because you were afraid to own up to the truth!"

The angry blaze died out of Temple's face.

If Wharton had threatened, his obstinacy would have been aroused, and he would have been as hard as steel. But the appeal to his better nature did not leave him unmoved.

"I—I can't go through with it," he muttered. "I—I may have to go through a police-court. Pon will make it as thick as hog-can, and his friends will lie like liars, if necessary. They'll make me out a common hooligan, and—and there's the Head to face afterwards!"

"It's rotten, I know. But you owe it to Greyfriars to play the game, old fellow!"

"I was an ass to have anything to do with that black-guard!" muttered Temple. He paced to and fro restlessly.

"After all, that beastly tramp Huggins is a regular beast. Bunter says he tried to rob him."

"But he's innocent of this."

Temple drew a deep breath.

"You're right," he said. "I should never be able to look a chap in the face again if—I let it slide. You're right!"

"You'll be glad afterwards," said Harry.

Temple shrugged his shoulders and quitted the study. He went down to the bike-shed, and wheeled out his machine.

Dabney and Fry met him in the quadrangle.

"Whither bound?" asked Dabney, in a half-hearted way.

Temple smiled grimly.

"I'm going to Courtfield police-station," he said.



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NEXT MONDAY—

**"BILLY BUNTER'S REFORMATION!"**

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"My hat!"

"To own up," said Temple. "Ta-ta!"

He wheeled his machine out, and mounted in the road. Dabney and Fry looked at one another with evident relief in their faces.

"I knew he would, in the long run," muttered Fry. "He couldn't be a cad!"

"Oh, rather not!" said Dabney heartily.

Temple had recovered his place in the estimation of his chums. But Cecil Reginald was not looking happy as he cycled down to Courtfield, and his face was very worried as he jumped off his machine at the police-station.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### The Right Thing!

INSPECTOR GRIMES looked curiously at the flushed junior who stood before him. The Fourth-Former of Greyfriars had told him that he had information to give, and the inspector had asked him into his own room.

"It's about that man—Huggins. I think his name is," said Temple, flushing scarlet under the inspector's gaze.

"Another witness?" asked Mr. Grimes, with a smile.

"Yes, in a way. I happen to know that Huggins never touched Ponsonby."

"By gad!" said the inspector. "You'd better appear before the magistrates, then."

Temple shivered.

"But I don't quite see," went on Mr. Grimes. "Mr. Ponsonby hasn't identified the man yet, but there seems to be no doubt."

"I know who did it," said Temple.

"Name?" said Mr. Grimes concisely.

"Mine!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I did it," said Temple, as calmly as he could. "It wasn't a case of assault at all. Ponsonby was lying when he said so. He played some rotten tricks on me on Wednesday, and I had a fight with him. He gave me a foul blow, and I thrashed him. That's all."

"Oh!" ejaculated the inspector.

"Ponsonby didn't want to own up to it," said Temple. "He lied to his Form-masters, his parents, and to all the fellows at Highcliffe. That fat fool Bunter knew nothing about it. But I'm ready to swear that I fought with Ponsonby on the Highcliffe Road on Wednesday night, and that Huggins wasn't anywhere near the spot. And if you ask Ponsonby, and tell him I've told you, he won't have the cheek to tell any lies. I should think."

The inspector gave a snort.

His little case had been explained away, and it was rather disappointing to discover that it consisted of nothing more than a schoolboy scrap.

"You'd be able to guess, I should think, by looking at Ponsonby," said Temple. "If the tramp had assaulted him, he'd have been knocked about all over, I should think. But if you see him, you'll see that only his face is damaged. My friends did it."

The inspector smiled.

"I am glad you came to me, Mr. Temple," he said. "It saves me from looking a fool before the magistrate to-morrow. I don't doubt what you've told me."

Temple drew a deep breath.

"I'm ready, if you want me," he said.

The inspector burst into a laugh.

"Did you think you would be put into a cell?" he asked. "I don't know. I suppose you've got Huggins in a cell."

"Ahem! That's rather different. Huggins is a ruffian, arrested on suspicion of assault and battery. But school-boys are not arrested for punching each other's noses, I believe," said Mr. Grimes good-humouredly. "I shall see Mr. Ponsonby, and if he confirms your account—as I've no doubt he will—the man will be released at once."

Temple drew almost a sobbing breath of relief. That dingy vision of a crowded, buzzing police-court faded from his mind. His uneasy fears had painted the prospects blacker than it was.

"And—and—and I can go?" he ejaculated.

"Ha, ha! Certainly. I'm much obliged to you for coming and telling me the facts. I shall have something to say to Mr. Ponsonby, and to his headmaster, too. But you need not have been alarmed for Bill Huggins; Ponsonby could not very well have identified him to-morrow."

Temple did not state his own opinion on that subject. He took his leave of Mr. Grimes, and breathed more freely when he was outside the building.

The Fourth-Former rode back to Greyfriars in great spirits.

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Harry Wharton met him as he wheeled his machine in.

"All serene!" said Temple. "Grimes is an old sport; and—and it wasn't quite so serious as I thought. I shouldn't wonder if the Head doesn't hear of it at all."

"I'm jolly glad!" said Harry. "But if he does, and there's a flogging, you've done the right thing."

"And now you Remove kids can cackle!" said Temple bitterly. "Our Highcliffe match was a ghastly frost, and no mistake! I didn't want all Greyfriars to know how it ended; it can't be helped now."

Harry Wharton smiled.

"You've only found out Ponsonby in his true colours," he said. "I admit we cackled a bit over the footer-match. But I'm glad you gave Ponsonby the kicking he was asking for, and you won't hear anything more about it from us, at any rate."

Which was a little comfort for Cecil Reginald Temple.

Billy Bunter rolled into the Common-room the next day with an expression of great disgust upon his fat face.

"What a rotten day!" he announced.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What is it now?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"They've let that beast Huggins go!" growled Bunter. "They make out that he didn't assault and batter Ponsonby at all. It was only a fight with a chap, and Pon was telling lies about it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Just like Pon!" grinned Bob.

"I've just seen Smiltison," said Bunter. "Inspector Grimes has called at Highcliffe, and Pon was had up before the Head and old Mobby. He admitted it; said all he spun the yarn for was to keep Temple from getting into a row for hammering him. More lies, of course. That was Pon's way of putting it."

"Temple!" exclaimed a dozen voices.

"Yes; it was Temple all the time."

"My hat!"

"And Mr. Mobbs is coming over to complain to the Head, and Temple's going to get it in the neck," said Bunter.

Bunter's news was well founded. A little later Mr. Mobbs appeared at Greyfriars, and Temple was called into the Head's study. His friends waited anxiously for him to reappear. When Mr. Mobbs came out he stalked away with a very discontented look, from which the juniors guessed that there was no fogging for Cecil Reginald Temple.

Cecil Reginald appeared a few minutes later, rubbing his hands.

"Licked?" asked Harry Wharton.

Temple grinned ruefully.

"Not very badly. I told the Head the whole yarn, and he spoke pretty plainly to Mobby about Pon. Mobby said it wasn't true; but the Head knew it was. Mobby wanted me flogged, the cad, but the Head didn't see it. He said that Ponsonby had been much more to blame in the matter, and asked whether Pon had been flogged."

"Good old Head!" said Bob. "He's a brick!"

"And Mobby had to admit that Pon wasn't punished at all. Let off with a caution, after all his lies," said Temple. "Gated, or something, but not even caned. That's how they do things at Highcliffe! The Head gave me two on each hand for fightin' Pon; but, by gad, it was worth it! Pon's face, when I left him, was worth a dozen on each hand!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And when's your next Highcliffe fixture?" inquired Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors, as Temple snorted, and walked away without replying.

There was no next Highcliffe fixture. Temple, Dabney, & Co. were completely fed-up with Ponsonby of Highcliffe, and that cheery youth was never likely to visit Greyfriars again for a football-match.

### THE END.

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THE FOURTH FORM  
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## THE PREVIOUS INSTALMENTS TOLD HOW

two new boys appeared at Franklingham School on the same day. One is a senior—CONRAD HARDING CARDENDEN—the cousin and enemy of HARRY GRANVILLE, the popular captain of the school. The other is a junior—JOHNNY GOGGS, who looks soft, but is by no means as soft as he looks. Goggs chums up with three other members of the Fourth—BLOUNT, TRICKETT, and WATERS—and shares their study. Goggs is quite an exceptionally good all-round athlete for a boy of his age, but he does not blow his own trumpet; and though his chums know that he can run and jump, and that he has made a heavy entry for the school sports, it is quite by chance that his ability as a footballer is discovered. He and his chums plan a trick upon one AMINADAB JARKER, a cross-grained old caddy. Meanwhile, Cardenden has had a row with Granville, the result of which is that Cardenden is transferred to another House, and loses all chance of becoming a prefect. The four Fourth-Formers devise a plot to set Jarker and P.-c. BUSWELL in rivalry for the hand of Jane Green, cook at Grayson's House. Sports Day comes. House rivalry is keen. A shield is held by the House scoring most points—open events counting five points for first place, four for second, three for third, while junior events count three, two, and one. Goggs wins the junior events count three, two, and one. Goggs wins the junior hundred, and Bags ties with a fellow from another House for second place. Cardenden throws the cricket-ball farthest, and scores for his new House, Granville being second. PARKER, by getting third place in the senior high jump, puts Goggs in the lead. In the open 100 yards Goggs is placed second to Cardenden, with Granville third. TRICKS and ALLARDYCE, of Hayter's House, have a very tough contest in the junior high jump. With only the junior quarter left to decide the issue, Hayter's and Grayson's are level on points.

(Now read on.)

## By a Single Point.

"I don't know that we have," the captain replied; "though I'm not prepared to admit that Allardyce will necessarily win. But you've got to remember that we've scored heavily through Goggs in the senior events, and if he fails in a less important race because of that, it's our look-out. I haven't a word to say against the junior quarter being run at once, and I'm sure Goggs wouldn't have."

"By the way, have you seen that kid's eyes?" asked Tilson. And the question seemed so altogether wide of the mark that two or three of the masters wondered whether the stalwart head prefect of Hayter's knew quite what he was talking about. But to Tilson those bright blue eyes and Granville's certainty that Goggs was a good sportsman were quite closely related things.

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NEXT  
MONDAY—

"BILLY BUNTER'S REFORMATION!"

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"I'm sorry about that spiking, Granville," said Mr. Hayter. "Is your foot badly hurt?"

"Oh, I shall limp about in a slipper for a day or two, I dare say!" the captain replied. "But lint and a little rest will put it right."

"Such accidents will happen, but it is a pity when they spoil the chance of a likely winner," observed Mr. Grayson.

Not by as much as a word did Granville hint that he knew it was no accident, but sheer foul play.

"We're achieving our end," said another of the little group. "We're using up time. But people outside may get impatient."

"Why not have the sack race now?" asked Mr. Hayter.

The notion was hailed as quite a brilliant one. The sack race did not count for points, and was regarded mainly as a joke. Few seniors entered, but the juniors relished it.

A minute or two later the bell rang, and a stentorian voice started to proclaim that the sack race would be taken before the junior quarter.

Goggs breathed a sigh of relief.

"That is extremely fortunate for me," he said, never guessing that consideration for him, and for the hopes he carried, had dictated the change.

Tricks, Bags, and Wagtail all bolted off to take part in the sack race. There was no entry or fee for this, and it was more or less an impromptu affair. As a rule, the number of competitors was determined by the number of sacks provided.

"Would you have cared for this?" asked Alice Trickett of Goggs, who, left with his chum's party, showed no sign whatever of feeling shy or embarrassed.

"I should have liked it very much indeed," he answered.

He had his glasses on again, and looked more owlish than ever. No one but Tilson and a few of those near the tape had noticed his blue eyes, and some of them were wondering why the Goggs kid had "looked so different."

"Oh, I should not have thought it would have suited you at all! You are so very serious!"

Just then Mr. Jarker and cook, still together, passed again, and behind them, furious of face, stalked P.-c. Buswell.

Johnny Goggs looked solemnly at Vera Blount, and shook his head sagely. The girl burst into rippling laughter.

"You don't know him yet, Lal," she said.

Now Mr. Trickett sought out the hero of the hour—for as such J. G. might fairly be considered.

"Walter tells me you are likely to spend your Christmas holidays at the school," he said.

"I am afraid it is possible, sir," answered Goggs, saying nothing about his grandmother.

"But it's out of the question! You must come to us!"

"Oh! And I meant to get B. to ask the mater to invite him to our place!" cried Vera.

"It comes to very much the same thing, as we've practically next-door neighbours," answered Tricks' father.

Vera did not think it quite the same thing. But it would be jolly, anyway.

Allardyce was grumbling again. He wanted to try his luck in the sack race, but wasn't going to spoil his chance in the quarter by doing so. He was fully conscious of the responsibility upon him. Setting aside the question of third place—which might affect the decision if gained by a junior from either Hayter's or Grayson's—it seemed that the issue of the struggle lay between him and Goggs.

So Allardyce looked scarcely less serious than the new boy, and commanded relays of Hayter juniors to rub his calves till they fairly smarted with the friction.

The sack race scarcely provided as much fun as usual. To the great majority of those present it was only an annoying delay. They wanted to see the issue between Hayter's and Grayson's fought out. There were old boys present who had been inmates of the Houses in the days of old, when they bore different names, and their keenness was scarcely less than that of the present generation.

But to the Blount-Trickett group the sack race was no failure. For the trio in whom they were interested actually secured three of the four prizes—Baga was first, Tricks third, and Wagtail fourth. They deserved their places, too, for each of them had been down half a dozen times at least, and to get up when one is down in a sack race is none too easy. A pretty general spill close to the winning-post had helped their chances, and they had been shrewd enough to keep well out to one side, while the majority were crowding one another in the middle through over-crowding.

The prizes were all his, and the trio expressed satisfaction. "Put me square," said Baga. "Old Dicebox won the top on our tie, and took the third prize, as I guessed he would. But I've got a bat now!"

Then he went off with Goggs for the start of the quarter.

"Wish I was in this!" he said wistfully. "But I'm no good at the quarter. Two hundred's my limit at anything like sprinter's pace. Are you going to pull it off, old man?"

"I do not know, Baga. It depends a good deal upon whether there is anyone to beat me." Johnny Goggs answered

gravely. "Perhaps Allardyce may. But he also has been busy to-day."

That was true. And the representative of Hayter's showed it. But he was game to the backbone, and would die hard.

Baga scanned the line.

"There isn't a chap here who hasn't been in for some of the other events," he whispered to his chum. "And I'm hanged if there's one who looks fresher than you do! Shall I take the goggles again?"

"I think perhaps it would be as well," Goggs answered.

It was better without glasses when he had a big effort to make. But they were not entirely a fraud. Some months earlier his eyes had been injured in a slight laboratory explosion, and for a time he had been absolutely compelled to wear the goggles. He could have dispensed with them before he came to Frankingham; but the whim to appear there in them had seized him.

Evans was turning out again, though anything more unlikely than his being able to stay the course could scarcely be imagined. The mile had completely crooked him up at the time, and his quick partial recovery had deceived him. But the most formidable rival Goggs and Allardyce had to face was Murchison, of Waymark's, who was reckoned particularly good at the quarter, and had not been engaged in any very hard struggle, as he had done little in other events.

There were fifteen entrants in all.

Half the distance reduced the fifteen to five. Not that the other ten had all given up. Three of them, including Evans, had. The remaining seven were plugging on in the rear, but had nothing to hope for but the credit of finishing the course.

The black-and-magenta of Waymark's showed to the front. Murchison had made the running at first. Now he was dropping back a bit, but still led the field.

Behind him the red-and-green of Bulbitude's and the green-and-silver of the Head's House showed side by side. Ten yards behind them, neck and neck, ran Goggs and Allardyce.

If the three in the van could maintain their places, the result would be a tie on points for Hayter's and Grayson's—a thing that had never happened before.

If one of those two who ran together got into the first three, and the other did not, the House of the placed man would win.

If both were in the first three, all depended upon what place each took.

The race was rather a slow one. Neither Goggs nor Allardyce could do what he might have done earlier, and Murchison was scarcely running up to his reputation.

But he still kept slightly ahead, though now the black-and-white and the red had drawn up to the other two behind him, and all four were somewhat nearer him.

A hundred yards from home, and still no sport!

It seemed as though no one of the five had any sport left in him.

But the gap between Murchison and the rest had lessened. They were overhauling him by inches, sticking to it doggedly.

Green-and-silver faltered, swerved aside, and tumbled. Red showed ahead of red-and-green and the magpie colours, drew nearer Murchison, drew up to him. Allardyce was hauling like a little hero for Hayter's honour!

"Oh, Goggs! Come on, Goggs! Oh, back up, old man!" yelled Baga in a frenzy.

Johnny Goggs did not hear. His ears were full of a buzzing noise, and something seemed to be going round and round in his head. He did not exactly feel that his legs were giving way; but, in some dim way, as if they belonged to another fellow, he realised it. Never in his life before had he felt so baked as this!

His eyes were on the red that Allardyce carried—seemed carrying to victory! Murchison did not matter. It was Allardyce—Allardyce! He must not win—he must not!

Vaguely Goggs wondered whether Allardyce felt at all as he did.

And in point of fact, Allardyce felt rather worse. He knew the tale was but a few yards ahead, but he felt as though he could never reach it.

He had passed Murchison now! He wondered where Goggs was. And next moment he knew.

"Gray-Gray-Gray-Gray-Crayson's!"

The roar of many voices was in Allardyce's ears, and in Goggs' yet scarcely could either distinguish the familiar House yell from another.

"Make-make-make-Hay-Hay-Hay-Hayter's!"

Through the mist before his eyes Allardyce had a glimpse of black-and-white just ahead, nerved himself for a final effort, drew up to Goggs once again, and then reeled on, knowing himself beaten, yet hoping against hope to the last.

(Continued on page 10 of cover.)

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## THE FOURTH FORM AT FRANKLINHAM.

(Continued from page 20.)

Beaten—but by inches only! He fell, and, lying on his back, saw the black-and-white flag flutter out above the red, saw no more for a few seconds, and then opened his eyes to see a pair of bright blue eyes that were strange to him, and wondered extremely to find them in the familiar face of Goggs.

"Ran—jolly—well!" he gasped. "Congrats—old man!" Then Tilson helped him to his feet, and spoke words of praise, and he staggered off hanging on the arm of his House's head prefect, satisfied that he had done his level best, and that those whose opinion mattered most knew it.

But Grayson's horse swarmed in, and seized Goggs, and lifted him shoulder-high, and chaired him to the pavilion, while all the air vibrated to the notes of the shrill, hoarse yell:

"Gray-Gray-Gray-Gray-Grayson's!"  
"Cheers for Goggs of Grayson's!" roared Granville above the din. And now the House yells died down, and they shouted for Johnny Goggs.

Limping painfully, resenting hotly the foul play that had spoiled his own chance in the other race, yet well content that his personal triumph had been but a small one, so that Grayson's had found its feet, Granville cheered as lustily as any there.

### Goggs' Grandmother!

"You people have simply got to come to tea in our den," said Bags. "Oh, hang the Head! No, I don't mean that; he's a good sort. But, anyway, we lost you last year, because he happened to get you in tow and take you off, and he isn't likely to miss you this year in such a crowd."

"Besides, there's old Goggs," added Wagtail, as though the prospect of taking tea with the hero of the hour was one that could not fail to convince any waverer.

"And we've laid in no end of grub," said Tricks. "It will be a tight squeeze. What are you giggling at, V?"

"I'm not going to eat so much as all that, anyway," answered Bags' twin.

"I know what I should call you if you weren't a girl: I meant the den would be a tight squeeze. But we can manage seats for all of you, and we don't care a scrap if we have to stand. Oh, do come along!"

They went. Goggs had not emerged from the pavilion yet, and into those precincts, sacred to the seniors at ordinary times, his chums could not penetrate, though they were impatient for his coming.

"I congratulate you very heartily, Goggs," Mr. Grayson said. "And if you congratulate me in turn I shan't resent it, for I don't mind telling you that there isn't a boy in my House who is more delighted at the winning of the Williamson Shield than I am!"

Then I do congratulate you, sir; and I'm glad that the boy answered. "I hope, too, that this will be followed by many more victories for the House."

"Thanks, Goggs! I hope so, too; and I believe it will. Why, boy, what is the difference in you?"

"I think perhaps it is that you have never seen me before without my spectacles, sir."

"That is it! But oughtn't you to be wearing them still?"

"No, sir. I do not think that it matters. My eyes are all right now, and possibly I shall not wear them again."

Then the Head came in, and he, too, praised the new boy, and said he hoped that he had not overstrained himself. And Goggs said politely, "Not at all, sir!" though all the time his legs and back and loins were aching, aching, and he hardly knew how to stand on his feet.

And then it was Mr. Hayter's turn. A younger man than Mr. Grayson: not yet quite at the end of his own athletic career. Mr. Hayter understood.

"You did splendidly, Goggs," he said. "Mr. Grayson ought to have a glass case made for you, and preserve you as a shining example of what one junior can do! But don't want you to qualify for the glass case in a hurry by succumbing to your exertions; and if you take my tip you will at once go and have a warm bath, with a handful of mustard in it, and after that take it easy until an early bedtime."

"Thank you, sir," answered Goggs. "I will go and take a bath at once—with mustard, of course! Do you also recommend pepper?"

"Goggs is something of a humorist, Grayson," remarked the younger master when the boy had gone.

"Goggs is altogether a singular character," replied Mr. Grayson.

Outside the pavilion the junior ran into Allardye and his people.

"Oh, here he is!" cried Allardye. "I say, Goggs, my folks would awfully like to know you, don't you know?"

"I shall be honoured and delighted!" Goggs answered gravely.

He was fairly yearning for that bath, but he did not look so completely fagged out as his rival, who, undoubtedly, had done more than was good for him.

Goggs accepted congratulations and made polite responses, noted that Allardye's sister was quite as pretty as Vera Blount, but scarcely as jolly-looking, refused an invitation to tea, on the ground that he would certainly be expected in No. 11, and managed at last to get off to his bath.

There was competition among those whom he met in the bath-room to wait upon him. One ran to the kitchen to fetch mustard, another to his fag-master's den to borrow a thermometer, in order to make sure that the water was exactly the right temperature, though he had no idea what the right temperature was. Two enthusiasts rubbed Goggs down after he had emerged.

He took it all quite modestly, and thanked them in his precise way, which, somehow, they no longer found so funny. Perhaps he realised, for he was acute enough—that he had that day laid the foundations of such popularity as no other junior at Franklinham had ever enjoyed. But there was no trace of swank about him, and he actually slipped into No. 11 without being perceived until he was in the midst of the throng.

"Oh, you boulder!" cried Bags. "We were going to tune up 'See the conquering hero comes,' and you go and sneak in as if you hadn't done anything at all!"

Goggs did not answer that, but he took the teacup which Vera, who had been elected to the management of the tray, had just filled, and handed it politely to Mrs. Trickett. He refused to sit down until everybody was waited upon, and then he quite solemnly took a seat on the floor.

"He doesn't look a bit queer now. Why is it?" said Alice Trickett aside to her sister.

"Why, he isn't queer-looking at all, except for his thinness; and you said he was the rummiest object you'd ever clapped eyes on!" Kate Allardye had told her brother a quarter of an hour earlier.

So much difference did the removal of his spectacles make to Johnny Goggs!

They were in the midst of tea and talk when the House party tapped at the door, and announced that there was a gentleman below to see Master Goggs.

"Wrong, my lad—I'm here!" said a familiar voice at the top of the stairs. And along the corridor stepped a tall, spare man with a clever, clean-shaven face.

"Why, Jack!" he said.

"Uncle Rod!" cried Goggs, shaken out of his sedateness for once. "I never expected to see you. I didn't even know you were in England!"

"Only returned this morning—off to India the day after to-morrow," answered the tall man. "I couldn't get down earlier, and I'm sorry, for I hear you've been doing great things to-day!"

"Oh, that is nothing! Do you mind waiting here just a moment?"

"Not a bit, old chap! I'll sit on the stairs, if you like."

Goggs put his head in at the door of No. 11, and beckoned Bags out.

"Allow me to introduce one of my chums," he said. "Shawbags—oh, beg pardon, Bags!—my silly mistake, Blount, I mean. This—or is my grandmother, Blount?"

"Oh, you ass!" roared Blount.

"I have never been called an old woman before!" observed the tall man.

But Bags, shaking hands with him, tumbled to the joke, and called out Tricks.

"Johnny's grandmother, Tricks!" he said. "You've heard about her. This is Trickett, alias Tricks, sir, or ought I to say 'me am'?"

"I guess she's a fairy grandmother—they were generally godmothers, though, weren't they?—and can change her shape," answered Tricks, moving forward to greet Mr. Roderick Ingleby. "Wonder what old Wagtail will say?" he continued.

"Wagtail, called out, said it was all rot, and was half inclined to think his chums meant to insult either him or Mr. Ingleby, but tumbled to the joke after a minute or two.

Goggs' uncle seemed to have tumbled at once. No doubt he understood his nephew's little ways.

"Come along in, sir!" said Bags. "I can't say there's room, because that wouldn't be exactly true, but we'll make it, somehow."

They did, and Mr. Ingleby was at home at once with everybody.

(There will be another grand instalment of this exciting story in next Monday's issue of the MAGNET Library. Order your copy in advance.)