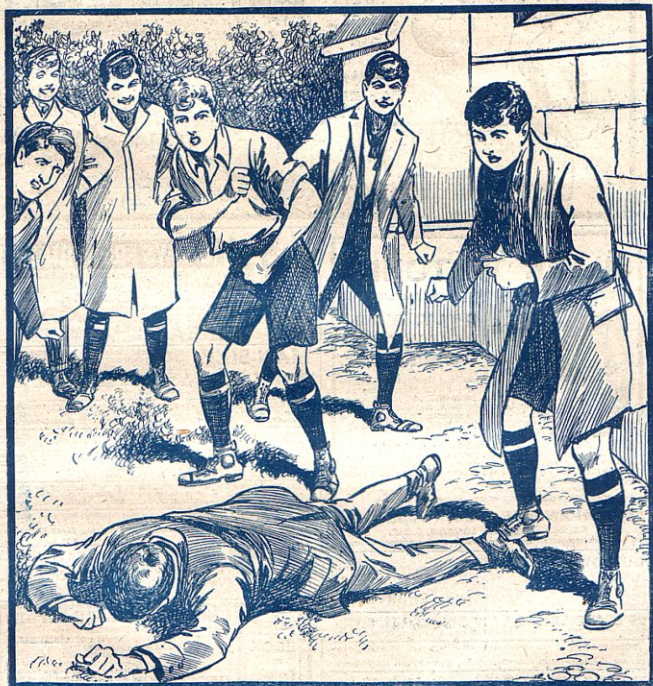


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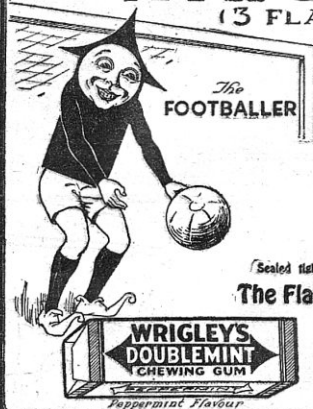
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Driven from School

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

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Interferes!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry uttered that exclamation in a surprised tone of voice, as he halted outside the door of Bolsover major's study in the Remove passage.

On Little Side, at Greyfriars, the Remove Eleven and a scratch eleven had gathered for practice—or, rather nine of the regular team had gathered.

Bolsover major was wanted, and Bob Cherry had come indoors to fetch him.

It was a cold, crisp day, just the ideal weather for footer. A keen breeze was blowing from the sea, and Harry Wharton & Co. were prepared for a fine game with the scratch eleven, captained by Dick Russell.

As a rule a practice-match drew rather a crowd of spectators round the ropes on Little Side, but this afternoon the Removes practically had the ground to themselves. Not many fellows seemed inclined to watch footer in that bitter weather. The twenty juniors were there by themselves, anxious to start the game, if only to get warm. But Bolsover major had not turned up.

Harry Wharton had asked Bob Cherry to run up and fetch Bolsover. And Bob, arriving outside the door of Bolsover major's study, had halted in astonishment, and uttered that remark of his, which he generally used when surprised:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" came from within the study. "Oh, Percy, don't!"

Bob Cherry's sunny face broke into a frown. He recognised the voice of Hubert Bolsover—Bolsover minor of the Third.

"My hat!" exclaimed Bob, under his breath. "Surely Bolsover isn't bullying his minor! Great Scott!"

"Yow-ow! Let me go!" came the

fag's voice, in plaintive tones. "Oh, Percy! Leave off!"

"You cheeky young cub!" grated the voice of Bolsover major. "I'll teach you to ride the high horse over me! Take that—and that—and that!"

Thump, thump, thump!

Bolsover minor's voice rang out in shrill tones of pain, and Bob Cherry, his face grim and his jaw set, grasped the handle of the study door, and flinging it wide open, strode in.

The scene before him made Bob Cherry's frown deepen.

He saw Bolsover minor wriggling in the grasp of his big, burly major, who was boxing his ears unmercifully. The fag's face was wet with tears.

"Here, stop that, Bolsover!" rapped Bob Cherry curtly.

Bolsover stopped, in sheer astonishment. He had not expected Bob's sudden interference.

"Why, you cheeky rotter!" he began.

"Let that kid alone, you bully!" said Bob Cherry hotly. "What's he done, anyway, to be pitched into like that?"

Bolsover major glared passionately down at the tear-stained face of his younger brother.

"What's the little brat done!" he roared furiously. "He's getting too high and mighty—that's what he's done! He's been currying favour with the pater—"

"I haven't!" exclaimed Bolsover minor tearfully. "Really, Percy, I haven't said or written a word against you to father. The trouble is all over the mid-term examination reports—"

"Shut up, you glib-tongued little rotter!" shouted Bolsover major passionately. "You know jolly well you are crawling to the gov'nor! He writes and tells me that you are more credit to him than I am—"

"That is only because of the school report, Percy!" exclaimed the fag

appealingly. "I—I happened to come third on my Form-list, and you—you came—"

"Never mind where I came!" said the burly Removite, his face going red. "You're trying to put me in the shade, and I'm not going to stand it! I'll flay you within an inch of your rotten, worthless life!"

"Here, enough of that, Bolsover!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as Bolsover raised his hand to deliver another cruel blow at his minor's head. "Leave the kid alone, you rotten bully! It strikes me jealousy is at the bottom of this! You came nearly at the bottom of the Remove-list, and Quelch gave you a winking for being such a slacker. I suppose your pater also wrote you a stiff letter about it, and you've got your back up. But you're jolly well not going to vent your rotten spite on this poor kid! Not while I'm here, any old how!"

As Bob delivered this spirited speech, he dragged Bolsover minor from his major's grip, and placed himself between the Remove bully and his tiny victim.

Bolsover major's face went pink and red by turns. He was in a thoroughly bad temper, Bob could see that. At the best of times Percy Bolsover was not exactly an amiable youth. It could never be said of him that he bubbled over with the milk of human kindness. But this show of temper was unusual, for of late Bolsover major has shown signs of reforming.

When his brother had been discovered in Angel Alley, in the slums of London—a ragged little newboy urchin, Bolsover major had resented his coming to be educated at Greyfriars. Little Hubert Bolsover had been a slum waif, and it had taken Bolsover major a long time to overlook that fact. He had treated his newly-found brother harshly at first, but had come, in course of time, to treat him more kindly.

The fag, though rough and ready in speech and manner, was made of the

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right stuff, and had warmed his way into the hearts of his Form-fellows, and Harry Wharton & Co. of the Remove.

He was a good-natured, healthy youngster of the right type, and he had tried hard to be a credit to his burly major in the Remove.

Harry Wharton & Co. had always been "down" on Bolsover major for bullying, and there used to be much bad feeling between him and the heroes of the Remove. Bolsover, however, had lost much of his bullying qualities of late, and was on quite good terms with Harry Wharton & Co. In his manner towards his minor, too, he had changed, so that little Hubert, warm-hearted and affectionate, had come to admire and worship his burly major, who defended him.

But now it seemed that Bolsover's bullying nature had broken out again, and the old antipathy towards his minor revived.

His face was not pleasant to see as he stood, with clenched teeth and glittering eyes, before Bob Cherry in his study that afternoon.

"Mind your own business, Cherry!" he hissed passionately. "This is my affair, not yours! If I like to give my minor a licking, I suppose I can, without your interference! Clear out!"

Bob Cherry did not clear out. He faced Bolsover major, and looked at him with flashing eyes.

"You are not going to bully this kid while I'm here, you cad!" he exclaimed. "You're wanted down on the foot-ground. Wharton and the rest of us are waiting to commence the match!"

"Hang footer, hang the match, and hang the lot of you!" snarled the Remove bully, in quite his old, childish fashion.

"Clear out of this room, and leave me to deal with my minor! I'll punch your blessed head if you don't, Cherry!"

"You—you'll punch my head!" exclaimed Bob. "Don't be funny, Bolsover! Look here, you fatheaded chump, don't play the giddy goat! Come down to footer. Harry Wharton and the rest are waiting!"

"Let them wait!" snapped Bolsover. "I'm going to lick this cheeky kid! Out of my way, Cherry!"

"Rais!" said Bob, planting himself in Bolsover's way, as the Remove made a threatening move towards his minor.

"Get out of my way!" roared Bolsover, biting his lip. "If you don't, Bob Cherry—"

"Percy!" exclaimed Hubert Bolsover. "Don't fight because of me! I—I—"

"Get behind me, kid!" said Bob Cherry, breathing hard through his nose. "Now, Bolsover, you ass—"

"If you don't get from between that fog and me, I'll knock you flying, Cherry!" said the Remove bully between his teeth.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Ha, ha— Yarcoogh! Oh, my hat!"

Bob Cherry kept his word. He bit out, and his fist crashed upon the point of Bob's chin. Bob sat down so suddenly that it seemed to him that the floor rose up to meet him.

"Oh, crumbs!" he gasped.

"Then there was a yell from Bolsover minor, as his brother took him in his grasp once again.

Bob Cherry jumped up. Bolsover major was boxing his minor's ears with one hand, holding him by the collar with the other. The luckless fog wriggled and squirmed, and cried piteously as the cruel blows descended.

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"My-hat!" ejaculated Bob—"You rotten cad, Bolsover! Why, I—I—I—"

Bob did not wait to finish that sentence. Pushing back his cuffs, he advanced upon Bolsover, and hit out straight from the shoulder.

"Biff! Biff! Thud! Thump!"

Bolsover major let his brother go as Bob Cherry's forceful blows came upon him like a battering-ram. He staggered back against the table gasping, whilst Hubert sank into the arm-chair exhausted. Then Bolsover major recovered himself, and, with a bellow that would have made a town bull go green with envy, he made a terrific rush at Bob Cherry.

"You—you cheeky cad! I'll smash you for that!"

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry, between his teeth.

"Biff! Thud! Thump! Whack!"

Bolsover major came on like a whirlwind. Bob met him dauntlessly. Within the space of two seconds the Remove juniors were fighting hammer and tong.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Fight!

"GREAT Scott!"

"What the merry dickens are—"

"Bob, you ass!"

Harry Wharton & Co. had got tired of waiting for Bob Cherry and Bolsover major to appear. They had left the football-ground and come indoors to find out what detained them. As they approached Bolsover's study and heard the wild tramping of feet, and heard the various sounds of conflict and strife proceeding from within, they made haste to discover what was wrong. When they crowded into Bolsover's study, they saw a sight that made them open wide their eyes with astonishment.

Bob Cherry and Bolsover major were engaged in a violent tussle, kicking chairs over, and making a terrific noise. The coal-scuttle had been overturned, and the coal scattered on the floor. The combatants trod on the coal as they fought, and the havoc they wrought on the study carpet was truly startling to behold.

"I'll smash you, Cherry!" hooted Bolsover, landing a heavy drive on Bob's nose. "I'll teach you to interfere between me and my minor! Take that! And—"

"Yarcoogh! Take that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Johnny Bull. "Go it, Bob! Pile into him!"

Bob Cherry dodged Bolsover's furious drives, and beat the burly Removee round and round the study. Bolsover's face was red, and he fought desperately to overcome the champion boxer of the Remove.

Harry Wharton glanced in bewilderment at the forlorn figure of Bolsover minor seated in the armchair, his van face wet with tears.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "Bob, you ass! Bolsover, you chump! Clue it!"

"Tramp, tramp, tramp!"

"You silly duffers!" roared Frank Nugent. "Will you chuck it? You'll have the prefects here in a minute, and then there'll be a row!"

"The rowfulness will be terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur.

But Bob Cherry and Bolsover paid no heed to the voices of Harry Wharton & Co. They continued to hammer away. The probability is they would have wrought considerable damage to the person of each other had not Harry

Wharton & Co. rushed upon them and dragged them apart.

"Now, you mad idiots!" said Harry Wharton angrily. "What's all this tomfoolery about? I sent you up here to fetch Bolsover down to footer, Bob—"

"Yes; but I found the rotter bullying his minor!" exclaimed Bob, dabbing at his nose, which was streaming crimson. "The cad was pitching into the poor kid—"

"Yes; and I'll pitch into you, you interfering cad!" shouted Bolsover furiously, struggling to free himself from the strong grasp of Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent. "Let me go, you rotters! I'll—"

"Shut up, Bolsover!" said Harry Wharton curtly. "What has your minor done?"

"Oh, nothing!" sneered Bolsover major sarcastically. "He's the most affectionate and dutiful brother a chup could have! He—"

"Percy!" broke in Bolsover minor plaintively. "You're mistaken about toadying up to dad, really! I've never—"

"Don't tell lies!" grated Bolsover major passionately. "You know you're trying to supersede me! You just wait till I get a chance—I'll knock every bit of breath out of your body!"

"Enough of that, Bolsover!" rapped Harry Wharton. "Why don't you give the kid a chance? Now, young man, have you been toadying up to your pater, as your major says?"

Bolsover minor shook his head, and told his story. Harry Wharton's brow became grim when he realised how Bolsover major had carried his unfounded jealousy to the extent of bullying.

The chums of the Remove looked scornfully at their burly Form-fellow.

"Shame!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "The unworthy and rotterful Bolsover should be bumpfully punished!" said Hurree Singh.

"Clear out of my room!" roared the bully of the Remove furiously. "D'you think I'm going to put up with you barging in here, interfering between me and my minor? And as for you, Cherry—"

He made another attempt to get at Bob, who was nothing loath to continue the conflict. But Harry Wharton & Co. dragged Bob, protesting wildly, out of the room.

"Come on, Bob, old son!" said Harry. "No more rows—and footer is over, at present rate. Bolsover, you scatter-brained idiot, are you going to simmer down, and come along to footer?"

"Footer can go to blazes, and the lot of you with it!" said Bolsover bitterly. "I'm not going to play footer this afternoon, Harry Wharton! I'm a blessed dunce, and should spend the afternoon snotting, so as to catch up to this wonderful brother of mine!"

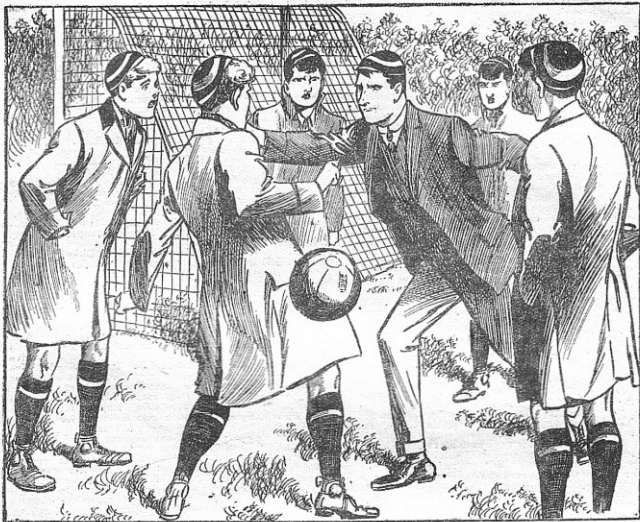
Harry Wharton's brow was grim, and he took Bolsover minor by the arm and led him away.

"Anyway, you rotter," he said, looking back at the Remove bully, "you are not going to spend the afternoon ill-treating this poor kid! Come on, young man!"

Hubert Bolsover hesitated, and cast an appealing look at his major. But the bitter look on Bolsover major's face told the fog that was to stay and plead, or reason with him, was futile.

So, feeling lone and desolate at heart, he followed Harry Wharton & Co. from the room.

Bolsover major made as if to follow, but evidently thought better of it. He slammed the door when the chums of the Remove had departed, and threw himself into the armchair to brood.



Bolsover's fist landed on Bob's shoulder so heavily that he staggered back. "There's your coward's blow!" hissed the bully. "Now I'm going to give you a licking for interfering with me!" (See Chapter 3.)

Harry Wharton & Co. went downstairs, and crossed to Little Side, where the other footballers were impatiently awaiting them.

"Where's Bolsover?" asked Peter Todd, as they came up.

"He won't be down to footer this afternoon," said Harry Wharton shortly. "Newland can take his place."

"Oh!"

Monty Newland, who was chatting with Tom Brown, came forward readily.

Squiff was regarding Bob Cherry's face with great interest.

"What's happened, Bob?" he inquired. "Been trying conclusions with a lawnmower?"

"Oh, rats!" grunted Bob gruffly. "A scrap up, old chap?" asked Bulstrode solicitously.

"Oh, yes, if you like!" growled Bob, rubbing his nose, which felt rather too large for his face. "Don't jaw so much! Let's get on with the washing!"

"Yes!" put in Harry Wharton impatiently. "We've wasted enough time!"

And the Remove footer players "went on with the washing" without further delay.

Bolsover minor stood by the ropes looking on. But his thoughts were not upon the Removites' footer. He was thinking of his surly major, and wondering why jealousy should have so suddenly turned his affection.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Asking for Trouble!

"HALLO! Here's Bolsover!" Frank Nugent made that announcement as the Removites were walking from the footer field.

Footer-practice was over, Harry Wharton's eleven having beaten the scratch team by the magnificent figure of ten goals to three.

The heavy figure of Bolsover major strode upon the field.

"More trouble!" said Johnny Bull gruffly.

The expression upon Bolsover major's face was not pleasant as he planted himself in the path of Harry Wharton & Co. He looked ferocious and angry.

"Out of the way, Bolsover!" said Harry Wharton curtly.

"Rats!" said Bolsover rudely. "I've come for Bob Cherry. Where is the cad?"

"Here I am, old son!" called Bob, coming up with a footer under his arm. "Do you want me, Bolsover?"

"Yes, you rotter!" said Bolsover major surly. "You've got to fight me!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Thump!" Bolsover's fist landed on Bob's shoulder so heavily that Bob staggered back.

"There's your coward's blow!" hissed the Remove bully, between his teeth.

"I'm going to give you a licking, Bob Cherry, for interfering with me!"

Bob sprang forward, his fists clenched, his eyes flashing fire. He would have hurled himself upon Bolsover there and then, but Harry Wharton, Johnny Bull, and Mark Linley dragged him back.

"Steady, Bob!" cautioned Harry. "You mustn't scrap up here, you know. Wingate would be down on us like a hundred of bricks. Come behind the chapel. You can settle it there!"

A move was thereupon made towards the school chapel, at the rear of which was a patch of ground that had been the scene of many an historical fistic encounter at Greyfriars.

Quite a crowd gathered behind the chapel. The news that a fight was to take place spread like wildfire.

Cecil Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, sauntered out of the tuckshop, and hurried over to join the crowd when they heard what was "on." Coker, Potter, and Greene, of the Fifth, also came up. Lord Manleyver, Trellux, Vivian, and Ogilvy, also hurried to the scene, followed by a crowd of fags belonging to the Second and Third.

The Greyfriars fellows formed a ring round Bob Cherry and Bolsover, and Harry Wharton took out his watch in order to keep time.

"The cad!" said Bob Cherry, loosening the neck of his footer jersey. "He'll

with he never bullied his minor after I've finished with him!"

"We shall see!" sneered the Remove bully.

Bolsover did not trouble to relieve himself of his coat. He squared his shoulders, and waited, with a disagreeable look on his hatchet face, for Harry Wharton to give the signal for the fight to commence.

"Time!" said the Remove captain, consulting his watch.

Bolsover rushed at his opponent as if he meant to slaughter him there and then. He wanted to "let off steam," as a Squiff remarked to Piet Delacey, and he threw all caution to the winds.

A nasty jab under the chin made Bolsover stagger back gasping. When that blow was followed up by a perfect hurricane of heavy drives on the body, the Remove bully gave ground steadily.

"Go it, Bob!" chirped Frank Nugent enthusiastically.

"Back up, Bolsover!" roared Horace Coker, snorting with disgust. The mighty Horace was, as yet, unaware of the circumstances that had prompted the fight.

The two Removites fought grimly, and the spectators held their breath. Bolsover was now attacking viciously, and Bob had to use all his science to keep the infuriated bully at bay.

Then Harry Wharton called time.

Mark Linley acted as second to Bob Cherry, whilst Herbert Skinner attended to Bolsover.

The bully of the Remove was red and flushed, and breathed heavily; but Bob Cherry was fresh, and grinned cheerfully at his chums.

"I'll lick him!" he said confidently. "He'll get a lesson he won't forget in a hurry!"

"Time!" called Harry Wharton, at length.

In the second round, Bolsover major again took the offensive, and Bob Cherry answered him by dodging nimbly, and landing a blow at intervals through his guard. Bolsover fought like a tiger, relying on sheer brute force to wipe up his foe. Bob Cherry parried his heavy drives right nobly.

At the end of the second round, Bolsover was lying on the ground as a result of a terrific right-hander, smashing full on his chest just as he dropped his guard.

"Jolly lucky you weren't counted out, you chump!" growled Skinner, as he fanned Bolsover with a handkerchief. "Don't lose your temper—he'll be all over you if you do!"

Skinner was not on friendly terms with Harry Wharton & Co., and anything "up against" them he revelled in.

Bolsover ground his teeth and waited with the eagerness of a hungry wolf for the next round to commence.

Both combatants fought desperately in the third round. Bolsover forced the pace, and Bob responded in good style.

"Bravo, Bob!" chortled Harry Wharton, as Bob landed a heavy drive on Bolsover's jaw.

"That's right, old son!" cried Bulstrode. "One for his nose—good!"

Bob was driving Bolsover before him, like chaff before the wind.

"Begad!" said Lord Maulverer, who was standing in the fore-front of the throng. "Begad, dear boys! Cherry is in fine form to-day! Bet you ten to one he knocks him out in the next round, begad!"

"Bet you fifteen to one he does!" said the Bounder. "Twenty to one in doughnuts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The time was past when Vernon-Smith hooked bets in "quids." But Lord Maulverer did not take him on in doughnuts. The finish of that round was watched

eagerly. Bolsover simply crawled back to Skinner, his face bearing many bruises, and breathing heavily. Bob's face showed signs of wear and tear, but he had not got "belows to mend" like his adversary.

"Good old Bob!" said Frank Nugent. "You'll wipe him up in the next round, old chap!"

Frank's prediction proved correct. At the beginning of the round, Bolsover appeared to lead, and he landed several nasty jabs on Bob's face and body. The whole manner of his fighting was "brutality," as characterised the prize-fights of old.

Harry Wharton & Co. trembled for their chum, when he appeared to be giving way before Bolsover's hurricane of blows. But Bob was well awake, and he waited until Bolsover showed signs of being groggy, before he delivered the last smashing, knock-out blow that stretched the Remove bully on his face on the ground.

There was a breathless hush as Harry Wharton took the count.

"One, two, three, four, five—"

Bolsover made a desperate attempt to rise, but sank back again with a groan. Bob Cherry was standing over him, a grim smile on his face.

"Six, seven—"

"Get up, Bolsover!" bawled Skinner furiously.

But Bolsover did not move.

"Eight, nine—out!"

There was a roar from the onlookers.

"Hooray!" yelled Peter Todd. "Good old Bob! You've licked him!"

"Hooray!" roared Dicky Nugent & Co., of the Second.

Bob Cherry was smiling. "Knocked out," "Licked!" he exclaimed. "Knocked out by Jimmy!"

He bent down to chivalrously help Bolsover major to his feet. But the Remove bully, with a savage snarl, pushed him away, and rose slowly and painfully.

His face was suffused with fury, and covered with bruises. One eye had developed quite an art shade in blue, and was rapidly closing. His lip was cut, and his nose bleeding.

Every eye was directed upon him.

"Well, Bolsover," said Bob Cherry, looking grimly at his beaten foe, "have you had enough?"

"Hang son!" snarled Bolsover major, in tones of concentrated rage. "You've beaten me—hang you! You can afford to laugh, now!"

"Percy!" A small form darted forward and took the Remove bully by the arm. "Percy, you are hurt! What have you been fighting for? Let me—"

Smaek!

Bolsover's heavy hand came across his minor's face with a sound like that of a pistol-shot, and the Third-Former fell back with a cry of pain.

"Take that, you little worm!" grated the bully of the Remove. "Don't try to toady up to me, like you have been doing the pater!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, stepping forward, his face white, and his eyes flashing scornfully. "You unspeakable outsider, Bolsover! You—"

There was a buzz of angry voices at this coward's act on Bolsover's part. The buzz was drowned by a wild howl from George Tubb & Co., of the Third, backed up by Dicky Nugent and his heroes, of the Second.

"Come on, boys! Rag the rotten bully!"

"Hurrah!"

A whole horde of fists surged forward, and Bolsover major was swept off

his feet in their onrush. He disappeared beneath the mob, kicking and struggling.

"Yarooogh!" he roared. "Hands off! You little hounds! Stop it! Yo-ow-ow!"

"Mop him up!" shrieked Paget, tearing at the Removite's hair. "We'll teach him a lesson! Scrag him!"

"Yarooogh!" roared Bolsover major, as the rag horde proceeded to smite him hip and thigh. "Rescue, Remove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker, of the Fifth. "Go it, kids! Pull him to bits!"

"They'll slaughter him!" chuckled Temple, of the Fourth.

"Oh, absolutely!" put in Delacey. Harry Wharton signalled to his fellow Removites, and a rush was made upon the excited fags.

Bolsover major was dragged from their grasp, and rushed away across the quadrangle.

George Tubb and Dicky Nugent & Co. fell back, and rubbed their bruises.

"Never mind!" said the captain of the Third, turning to Bolsover minor, who was looking as unhappy as a fag could look. "We've knocked the cad about a good deal, anyhow! He won't rag you again in a hurry, kid!"

Hubert Bolsover made no response. His looks showed his inward misgivings.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton & Co. were rushing the Remove bully towards the School House steps before any further trouble took place.

The stern, majestic figure of Mr. Quelch met them at the top of the steps, in the hall door.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated the Remove master, regarding the battered and bruised Removite over the rim of his spectacles. "Bolsover major! Bless my soul! What has happened?"

"Grooogh!" moaned the bully of the Remove, wriggling in the strong grip of Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Vernon-Smith. "I—I—I—"

"Have you been fighting, Bolsover?" rapped Mr. Quelch, in thunderous tones. "Oh, crumbs! Ye-es, sir! Grooogh!"

"Bolsover! You depraved, young rascal!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch severely. "I will not tolerate brutal bouts of fist-cuffs among boys of my form. With whom have you been fighting?"

"Me, sir!" said Bob Cherry, stepping forward.

The Remove master eyed him grimly.

"I am ashamed of you, Cherry! You will take five hundred lines. Bolsover, you also will take five hundred lines. Wharton, Nugent, Vernon-Smith, release Bolsover at once, so that he may procure a rash. Boys, disperse! Let there be no more disturbance; this afternoon!"

Bolsover was allowed to go. He strode savagely away, and went upstairs to the bath-room, in a frame of mind that was homicidal.

Bob accepted his imposition with philosophic resignation. As he remarked to Harry Wharton, it was worth it, to give Bolsover a licking.

And the chums of the Remove went up to their own quarters for evening preparation, and dismissed the Remove bully from their minds.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A. H. MY DASHED LAMP! OR THE CURIOUS MEETING!

"O H, my dashed lamp's out now!"

"What rotten luck!"

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent stopped, and dismounted from their bicycles. Frank's



Boisover minor gave a quick, glad cry as he recognised the newcomer. "Spotty, Spotty—you?" The youngster nodded. "Yes, the same old Spotty as in Angel Alley," he said. "What are you doing out at this hour o' the night?" (See Chapter 7.)

lamp had gone out with a splutter. Harry's lamp had gone out five minutes before. The juniors gazed at their bicycles, through the darkness, in dismay.

"That's done it!" said Harry Wharton lugubriously. "Neither of us has a light now. No wonder Hoskins was so jolly nice over lending us that oil. It's no good! And here we are, three miles from Greyfriars, on a rotten, bumpy road, without a light!"

Frank Nugent groaned. The chums of the Remove had ridden over to Courtfield, to insert a footer challenge in the local paper. Dusk had fallen quickly over the countryside. They were on the outskirts of Courtfield Heath, where all was dark, and silent, and lonely. They had twenty minutes in which to get back to Greyfriars before looking-up time.

"Dash the rotten lamps!" said Frank Nugent disgustedly. "Let's carry on, Harry, and trust to luck. We shan't pass a policeman, until we reach the Friar-dale Lane, anyway. Are you game to risk it?"

"Come on!" said Harry, remounting. Frank also remounted his machine, and the two Removites rode on in the darkness, slowly and cautiously.

It was, as Harry Wharton had remarked, a bump road. The Urban District Council of Courtfield were very negligent in the upkeep of the roads—

especially those roads that bounded the heath.

Harry and Frank groaned as their machines lurched into pit-holes in the road, and they averted disasters only by superhuman efforts.

To make matters worse, it had been raining that day, and the road abounded in muddy puddles and pools. The bicycles splashed and lurched along in the darkness, their riders hanging on grimly to the handlebars.

Suddenly, Frank Nugent, who was leading, gave vent to a wild yell.

"Look out, Harry! Here's a deep rut! I—yarooooogh!"

Crash! Frank's machine went over, and Frank sailed over the handlebars, to land on his hands and knees in a muddy puddle.

Harry Wharton was taken completely unawares. He made a frantic endeavour to steer his machine clear of Frank's, but was unsuccessful. With a clatter and a gasp of dismay, Harry joined his chum in the muddy road.

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Yooooogh! I'm wet! Ow!" Harry and Frank staggered to their feet, and groaned hollowly when they discovered that their clothes were plastered with mud. Their hands, and faces, and hair, were liberally splashed, too.

"My only sainted topper!" ejaculated Harry Wharton, dragging up his

machine. "This is a giddy go, and no mistake! I'm smothered with mud, and feel jolly rotten!"

"Yoop! So do I!" gasped Frank Nugent, wiping a smear of mud from his left cheek. "We're in a pretty pickle, and no mistake. It means a licking from Quelch if we're late for call-over. And we dare not trust ourselves any farther on this confounded road without a light!"

Harry Wharton had been peering through the trees, and he gave a sudden hopeful cry.

"Look at that light!" he exclaimed. "Most likely that's a farm-house. Let's apply there for some oil. They may be able to oblige us. That's the least we can do, anyhow!"

So, wheeling their muddy machines along, the chums of the Remove made their way up the lane, and at length reached the wicker gate of a little cottage, at the latticed window of which a light was burning.

Harry and Frank leaned their machines against the fence, and walked up to the front door of the cottage, and knocked.

Almost immediately, the door was opened, and a red, tousled head appeared. The Removites were confronted by a ginger-headed youth of some fourteen years of age, with a mottled

countenance and a look of suspicion in his eyes.

"What d'yer want?" he demanded abruptly.

"Sorry to trouble you," said Harry Wharton politely. "We are cyclists, run out of oil for our lamps, and we cannot go any farther along this lane without a light. We belong to Greyfriars School, three miles distant, and must get back there in twenty minutes. Could you oblige us with some lamp oil?"

The ginger-headed youth regarded the two Greyfriars juniors in the light of the hall-lamp curiously. A faint grin lurked at the corners of his mouth when he saw their mud-spattered appearance.

"Been wallowin' in the mud, ain't yer, young gentlemen?" he said. "Where's yer bikes?"

"Outside, leaning against the fence," replied Harry Wharton.

"Bring up yer lamps," said the red-haired boy cheerfully. "I kin let yer have some oil, though, if the Old 'Un knew, 'ed go off the deep end."

Frank Nugent ran down to the machines, and returned with the lamps.

The boy, meanwhile, fetched a tin of oil from inside the cottage, and when Harry Wharton had opened the oil-reservoirs of the lamps, he filled them.

"There yare!" he said, rubbing his oily hands down his trousers. "Which that ought to last yer till yer get to the school. Greyfriars you said, didn't yer?"

"Yes," replied Harry good-naturedly. "Thanks very much for this oil. You've done us a jolly good turn, lad. Here's half-a-crown."

"Thanks, young gent!" said the ginger-headed youth, pocketing the coin. Then, as Harry and Frank, with polite "good-nights," turned to go, he called after them.

"Say, young gents, it was Greyfriars you said?"

The chums of the Remove looked back in surprise.

"Yes," replied Harry. "Greyfriars School, you know, at Friarale!"

"H'm!" remarked the freckled youngster, rubbing his nose ruminatively. "That's rum, that is! Say, young gents, do you 'ppen to know a young cove there by the name o'—lemme think!—oh, yus—Bolsover?"

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent looked at their questioner in considerable astonishment.

"Yes," said Harry wonderingly: "there is a chap at Greyfriars named Bolsover. Why?"

"Oh, nuthin'!" responded the red-haired boy calmly. "I was only jest wonderin' you know. Only my curiosity, young gents. Good-night!"

With that he slammed the door, and the Removites were left alone.

"Well, that's queer!" said Harry Wharton, drawing a deep breath. "Fancy that kid knowing Bolsover! I wonder how?"

"Which of the two does he mean, though?" said Frank Nugent. "He didn't specify, you know."

"N-no," said Harry. "Anyhow, it's no bizness of ours, and we've got to hustle back to Greyfriars. Come on, Franky!"

They affixed their lamps to their machines, lit them, mounted, and rode on. They reached the gates of Greyfriars at last, just as Gosling was about to lock the gates. The school porter glared at them as they rode in.

"Young rips!" he growled. "Which you ought to 'ave been locked out! Wot I says is this 'ere—"

But the Removites did not wait to hear what Gosling said. They put their bikes up in the shed, and went indoors.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY, No. 675.

Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Hurree Singh, and Vernon-Smith were chatting in Study No. 1 when they came in.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob greeted them. "You chaps do look a dreed, and no mistake! Had a spill?"

"Blessed lamps went out!" grunted Harry. "We managed to get some oil at a wayside cottage, and got in by the skin of our teeth. When I see Hinkins, I'll pour a can of oil down the silly ass's neck!"

The rest of the "Co." grinned, and Inky offered them some chestnuts he had been roasting at the fire.

"I've just had a scrap-up with Bolsover," observed Johnny Bull, rubbing a bump on his forehead. "Wingate interfered, and I've got a hundred licks to do. So I must be off."

Harry Wharton and Nugent raised their eyebrows in surprise.

"What's the trouble with the rotter now?" asked Harry, frowning.

"Old Alonzo Todd caught him clipping his minor's ear, and remonstrated with him," replied Johnny Bull, with a faint grin.

"You know what a soft-hearted chump the Dur is. Talk about good stepping in when angels fear to tread—my hat! Bolsover pitched into Alonzo, and I was just in time to save the poor chap from being slaughtered. And then Wingate chipped in. Bolsover got an

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impot as well as I. Blessed if I can understand what's coming over that ass lately. He seems to be going back to his old, bullying ways."

Harry Wharton frowned thoughtfully. "The chump has been slacking in the Form-room lately, and Quelchy and his pater have been vigging him over it," he remarked. "That's got his back up—especially as his young brother has been doing well in the Second. Jealousy has turned him against his brother, and he's making life a misery for the poor kid. We shall have to keep our weather eye on Bolsover. We can't allow him to start his bullying tricks again."

"No; rather not!"

Johnny Bull and the Bounder departed, and Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent tried to procure a much-needed wash.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
A Licking for Bunter!

"HALLO, kid!"

Hubert Bolsover of the Third was standing alone in the Cloisters at Greyfriars next day, when those words awoke him from a reverie. He turned, and beheld the fat countenance of William George Bunter of the Remove.

There was a smirk upon Bunter's pogy features.

"Feeling a bit down—what?" said Bunter, with a grin. "Your major has properly discarded you now, I see!"

Bolsover minor turned red.

"Mind your own business, Bunter!" he said shortly.

"He, he, he!" cackled the Owl of the Remove.

William George Bunter's idea of humour was perverted and peculiar. He had revelled in the news that Bolsover major had adopted his old bullying tactics towards his minor. Billy Bunter did not like fags—probably that was because they stood not in awe of him, and "checked" him relentlessly.

"Serve you right, young Bolsover!" said Bunter, with a lofty air. "In my opinion, you are one of the cheekiest of the fag tribe at this school. You've got absolutely no respect for your superiors—we Remove chaps, you know! Why, only last week you buffed me in the chest with a footer in the quad, and didn't even have the decency to apologise!"

Bolsover minor grinned faintly.

"No. You shouldn't have abused your fat carcass in the way, Bunter," he said. "You deserved a biffing, and you got it!"

William George Bunter bestowed a look upon Bolsover minor that almost cracked his spectacles.

"Why, you—you cheeky young sweep!" he exclaimed wrathfully. "For two pints, I—'d dot you on the boko!"

"Come on, then!" said the fag invitingly.

Bunter clenched his fat fists, and looked most warlike. But he did not attempt assault and battery upon Bolsover minor, as he had anticipated.

"Oh, I won't lay my hands on you, young Bolsover!" he said, in disparaging tones. "I'll leave that for your brother to do. He seems jolly fond of licking you, I must say. Blessed if I know why the Head allows you to stay at a respectable school like Greyfriars. If my pater knew I was at school with a guttersnipe he'd—Yarooogh! Here, wharrer you at? Ooooooh!"

William George Bunter uttered these yells of pain as a pair of small, but extremely hard, fists crashed upon his nose and chin.

"Biff! Thud! Whack!"

"Take that, you toad!" cried the fag, delivering a smashing blow upon Bunter's chest that sent the fat Removite reeling.

"I'll teach you to call me a guttersnipe! Take that—and that—and that!"

And at each repetition of the word "that" Hubert Bolsover's fat smote the person of William George Bunter.

"Faroogh! Oh, crumbs! Hellup!"

cried Bunter, turning upon his heel and fleeing for his life. "Yow-ow! I'm hurt! You murderous little villain! Yoooop!"

Hubert Bolsover stood rigid, his eyes flashing indignantly, his breath coming in sharp pants. Bunter's cruel words had cut him to the depth of his sensitive little soul.

Bolsover minor was very conscious of the fact that he had spent a sordid boyhood in the slum atmosphere of Angel Alley, and had earned a hand-to-mouth living by selling newspapers in the London streets.

Lost in infancy, he had been rescued from the slums and sent to Greyfriars to be educated, to be afterwards discovered to be Percy Bolsover's missing brother. Bolsover, then notorious as a bully, had not taken kindly to the slum founding.

It had taken some time for the youngster to accustom himself to the ways and habits of Greyfriars. He had a good deal to learn, and suffered in learning it. The persecution of such mobs as Skinner,

(Continued on page 9.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 3.

January 15th, 1921.

The

Staff



EDITORIAL!

An Interview with one of my Readers.
By HARRY WHARTON.

IT was press day. Mountains of manuscripts surrounded me in my sanctum—Study No. 1. I had pinned a notice outside the door to the effect that any silly ass who came in to interrupt me would go out on the neckful portion of his anatomy, as Inky says. In spite of this notice, however, the door was thrown open, and a very peculiar looking youth was blown in. He was a thin, weedy specimen—the very antithesis of Billy Hunter—and his legs seemed several sizes too big for him. His trousers overlapped his boots, his coat hung loosely about his gaunt shoulders. His face was like a spoozed lemon; but the most remarkable thing about him was his hair, which was long and black and bushy, and completely obliterated his ears from view. Evidently my visitor was on distant terms with his barber.

I was about to pick up a crick-stump, and dispatch my strange visitor through the doorway, when I noticed that in his button-hole he wore a badge, showing that he belonged to one of the numerous "Greyfriars Herald" clubs which have sprung into being all over the country. I controlled myself just in time. It would not do to commit assault and battery upon one of my loyal readers.

"Come right in," I said. "Sorry there isn't a chair available; but you can take your choice of the window-sill or the coal-scuttle."

My visitor perched himself on the scuttle, and carefully scrutinized the bookcase. (He was really looking at me, but he was cross-eyed.) I was unable to tell whether his glance was one of scorn, amusement, or admiration. His features were as expressionless as those of a sphinx.

"Excuse me," I said, "but I—I haven't the pleasure—"

"My name is Chuckleberry," he said—"Clifford Chumley Chuckleberry!"

"My hat!"

"I live at Courtfield, and, being a loyal reader of your rag—I mean, mag.—I deemed it my duty to call on you."

I scumbled something to the effect that I was greatly honoured.

"I want to know," continued Master Chuckleberry, apparently addressing his remarks to the bookcase, "if you are in need of an office-boy?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, I am," I replied. "We're without an office-boy at the moment, given him the order of the boot. He was told to put some manuscripts on the file, and he misunderstood, and put them on the fire. Result—we fired him!"

"Can I take his place?" asked Clifford Chuckleberry eagerly.

"I'm afraid not... You don't belong to Greyfriars, you see. I could come over every day, and work for you. Do let me!"

"What do you know about journalism?" I inquired.

"Heaps! My father's an assistant compositor on the staff of the 'Courtfield Gazette.'"

"H'm! Well, supposing I agree to give you the job of office-boy, what are your conditions?"

"I should also like a free hand in running the paper," he said.

"But I thought you were applying for the job of office-boy—not editor!"

"In addition," went on Chuckleberry, unheeding, "I should expect you to provide me with board, lodging, fuel, light, cigarettes, and holidays whenever I feel in the mood for 'em!"

I rose to my feet.

"This interview had better cease!" I said grudgingly. "I'm too busy to listen to cheeky demands of this sort!"

My visitor's jaw dropped.

"You refuse to consider my application?" he said.

"Yes. There's nothing doing."

I pointed to the door, and Master Chuckleberry had the good sense to put himself on the other side of it.

"I'll drop in and see you again next week," were his parting words. "You may have changed your decision by then."

"Never!" I said firmly. "Travel!"

And my amazing visitor travelled. (Glancing from the window a moment later, I saw him being punted across the Close by Bolsover major.)

Wonder if I shall see him again next week? I'd better have my Fighting Editor handy in case!

HARRY WHARTON.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(NOTE.—The Editor does not necessarily share the views of silly asses who do not know what they're talking about.—Ed.)

A Tribute from the Head.

"To the Editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald.'"

"Dear Wharton,—Allow me to compliment you upon your latest issue. It means that a smile rose to my lips as I scanned some of the contents."

"I should like to warn you, however, to be careful what you say concerning members of the school staff. Mr. Prout was much incensed by the suggestion in last week's issue that he was a poor marksman with a rifle. I do not deny the accuracy of the statement, but even the truth may sometimes be libellous."

"In conclusion, permit me to wish your little journal every success. Sincerely yours,

"HERBERT LOCKE (Headmaster)."

(We are much obliged to the Head for his kind note, and we express the hope that he may some day unbend to the extent of contributing to our columns.—Ed.)

Mr. Prout is Slightly Put Out.

"To the Editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald.'"

"Wharton, how dare you insinuate that I am a poor marksman!—Allow me to inform you, you impertinent young rascal, that when I was in the Rockies in 'eighty-nine I could kill any beast, large or small, wild or tame, at a distance of twelve paces. I was known, in fact, as 'The Man Who Never Missed.'"

"You will kindly refrain from depreciating my marksmanship in future."

"PAUL PROUT."

(We do not doubt that the master of the Fifth could handle a hundredbush with fair success in 1889; but much water has flowed under the bridges since then, and his hand has lost its cunning.—Ed.)

Billy Hunter's Grumble.

"To the Editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald.'"

"Wharton, you beast! You only paid me forspence for my Football Kollum which appeared in last week's issue."

"As my Kollum is the most important thing in the paper—in fact, the only feller that anybody takes the trouble to read—I consider this is skunky treatment."

"How much are you going to give me for this week's Kollum? A goodly sum, I trusted.—Yores eggspectantly,

"W. G. BUNSTER."

(Our plump contributor will receive twenty pounds—in his anatomy!—for the pernio piffle he has perpetrated this week.—Ed.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 675.

OUR WEEKLY CARTOON.



"SINGH!"

WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE HERO?

(We have put this query to various Celebrities, Nonentities, and Silly Asses, with the following result.—Ed.)

BOB CHERRY—My favourite hero is the merchant who swam the Channel all but an inch, and then had to turn round and come back again!

BILLY BUNTER—My favorite hero is Wellington Bonypart, the Admiral who said that an Army marches on its stomach. He new what he was talking about!

TOM REDWING—My favourite hero? Go to Jellioec!

BOLSOVER MAJOR—Joe Beckett, of course! He believes in hitting out straight from the shoulder.

HORACE COCKER—After long and careful consideration, I have decided that my favorite hero is—MYSELF!

MARK LINLEY—So far as I'm concerned, it's a toss-up between Sir Philip Sidney and General Gordon. Both were sterling men.

WILLIAM GOSLING—Which I ain't got no favourite 'ero, an' which I strongly objects to bein' argked sich stooped questions!

FRANK NUGENT—The fellow who whistled "The Watch on the Rhine" outside Herr Gans' study window!

NUGENT MINOR—I have tried for a long time to puzzle out who my favorite hero is but it's a very awkward job there are several men who figure prominently in my mind such as Cromwell wellington nelson george roby the prime of wails jack hobbs steve bloomer fatty archie the air walter rally and I can't make up my mind which I like best but if you'll give me time to think I'll let you have my answer in a week or 2 it's impossible to answer a big question like this on the spur of the moment.—(Help.—Ed.)

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY.

By Dick Penfold.

HARRY WHARTON.

The skipper of the Form is he.

A leader fine and fearless.

His oars' black neck me things look black.

Or when the outlook's cheerless.

As sportsman, editor, and clown

His qualities are famous;

And this we know, both friend and foe,

He'll never shame us, nor disgrace us.

'Twas he who formed the Famous Five,

That brilliant band of brothers

Who ever seek to shield the weak

And right the wrongs of others.

No strait-laced Puritan is he.

No plaster-saint nor prig, and

He loves a life of thrills and strife

As much as any brigand.

As centre-forward he is great!

He passes with precision;

And when he shoots the poetic scoots

As if he'd seen a vision!

'Tis where's the goalie who could save

A rasping shot from Wharton?

He traps the ball, and one and all

Agree there's ripping sport on!

At boxing, too, he's simply fine;

Joe Beckett's isn't it!

The school's "White Hopes" are on the ropes

Inside of half a minute!

For Wharton's punch is straight and strong;

You'll have to mind your nose if

Within the gym you're fighting him.

Each blow's a mild explosive!

Long life to Wharton! May his reign

Be prosperous and joyous;

May no mad fool aspire to rule

The Form, and thus annoy us.

May Wharton always rule the roost,

His active keen, and clever, him.

Through storm and shine, we'll toe the line,

And rally round him ever!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 675.

How I would run "The Greyfriars Herald."



A NUMBER OF WELL-KNOWN CELEBRITIES STATE THEIR VIEWS.

JOHNNY BULL—If I were given the editorship of the "Herald" "no such luck!" I'd pack the paper with pirate stories—yarns which would be hair-raising and circulation-raising at the same time. There would be a fierce fight in every line, and an expiring villain in every paragraph. On the crimson quarter-deck of the good ship Thinsummy-bob armed pirates would struggle and snarl—in fact, the "Greyfriars Herald" would simply resound to the ring and clash of steel! And anybody who didn't like it, and preferred sloppy, sentimental stuff, would be made to walk the plank!

HURREE SINGH—If it ever fell to my lotful portion to controlfully rule the destiny of the esteemed and ludicrous "Herald," I should make a special point of seeing that all the stories and articles were penfully written in nothing but the very best and choicest English language.

LORD MAULVEVERER—How would I run the "Greyfriars Herald"? Why, I should send a blank issue to the printer, and ask him to fill it himself, begad!

ALONZO TODD—If that flippant and frivolous journal known as the "Greyfriars Herald" were placed under my supervision should immediately change the name and style of the paper, which would become the official organ of the Society for Providing Woolen Comforters and Mittens for the Wolly-Golly Islanders.

MR. QUELCH—I should publish my "History of Greyfriars" in serial form. There would be no room for anything else in the paper!

WUN LUNG—Me tinkee me makee velly big success of the "Greyfriars Herald" by publishing stollies of my native counctee.

DICKY NUGENT—If I could run the greyfriars herald I shouldnet let any of the remove bounders do any stuff for it becaws they write nutthing but drivvel and tosh. I should write it myself, and I should have an artikel on how to reer and trace wite mice and also an artikel on the necessity of felloes chanaging there collars wenev every 6 months and washing there nex ditto!

OUR WEEKLY LIMERICK.

No. 3.

A fool in the Fifth, known as Potter,

Called Trotter the page-boy a rotter.

On his jawbone he got a

Fierce blow from young Trotter.

"Now tetter!" said Trotter to Potter.

THE GREYFRIARS POLICE COURT.

A vivid account of the latest charges and convictions.

BILLY BUNTER'S ANNUAL BATH.

Amusing Scenes in Court.

William George Bunter, who did not appear, was charged with purloining a pair of skates, the property of the Greyfriars Skating, Sliding, and Skidding Association.

Detective-Inspector Penfold, giving evidence in a voice like a foghorn, said that he saw prisoner leaving the school premises with a suspicious-looking parcel under his arm.

Magistrate: "And what followed?"

Witness: "I did, your worship! I tracked prisoner to Friaridae Lake, where I lay concealed in the rushes, disguised as a water-rat."

Magistrate: "No disguise was necessary." (Laughter.)

Witness: "I saw prisoner untie the parcel, and produce a pair of skates. He put them on, and set off across the ice. Suddenly there was a sickening crash."

Magistrate: "Had prisoner's false teeth fallen out?"

Witness: "No, your worship. Prisoner had fallen in." (Laughter.)

Magistrate: "Where is he now?"

Witness (overcome with emotion): "Boo-hoo! I fear he is food for fishes, your worship! I was able to recover the skates, but not the prisoner."

Magistrate: "Never mind, old sport. Dry those tears. You recovered the most important thing of the two." (Laughter.)

At this juncture prisoner was carried into court by two stalwart constables. He was soaked to the skin, and for once in a way he looked really clean.

P.-C. Johnny Bull: "We rescued this porpoise, your worship, at the risk of our lives. What do we get for our act of gallantry?"

Magistrate: "Divide the contents of the poor-box between you, my dear fellows!"

P.-C. Bull: "But the box contains only tuppence, your worship!"

Magistrate: "One penny each is ample remuneration for saving such an unimportant person as Bunter. Now, had you saved the life of some eminent person, such as myself—"

P.-C. Bull: "B-r-r-r!"

Mr. R. Cherry, K.C.: "Buck up and sentence the prisoner, your worship! I've got an appointment to play a game of noughts and crosses with the foreman of the jury!" (Laughter.)

Prisoner, who complained of feeling chilly, was sentenced to receive a round two dozen with the court poker, in order to restore his circulation!

REPORT IN BRIEF.

Mr. Horace Henry Samuel Quelch, M.A., was charged with cruelty to his pupils, inasmuch as he had deprived them of a half-holiday.

The magistrate explained that, for obvious reasons, he was unable to summon prisoner and place him in the dock. But an effigy of Mr. Quelch was produced in court, and it was stuffed into the fireplace and burned, amid scenes of great excitement.

FRANK FEARLESS— FOOTBALLER!

A Rousing, Thrilling, Gripping, Impelling Story dealing with Football, Love, Hate, Adventure, Romance, and all sorts of Tommy-rot.

By H. VERNON-SMITH.

CHAPTER I.

FRANK FEARLESS was feeling fine. He was immensely bucked with life. At last, after many weary years of striving, after numerous hardships, and no end of struggles in the teeth of clenched antagonists, he was within striking distance of fame and fortune.

Frank hummed a merry tune as he strode through the January dusk towards his trysting-place. He had commenced his football career as goalkeeper for Paradise Court. In those days, being an amateur, he had found it very difficult to make ends meet.

However, he had slowly but surely climbed the ladder, and now he was a real professional in the ranks of the Red Rovers. He had given up goalkeeping—he was tired of being stoned by angry spectators—and he now played at centre-forward, in which position he was able to dodge the numerous missiles, in the shape of boots and bricks, that came whizzing over the ropes.

He shuddered as he recalled the old days at Paradise Court, when he had been compelled to wear his father's cut-down trousers, kept in position by a length of clothes-line.

Things were very different now. In his twenty-five-shilling blue serge suit, and his rakish bowler hat, Frank Fearless looked a full-blooded member of the aristocracy. Only two things remained to complete our hero's happiness.

Frank's team, the Red Rovers, were to play Saltea United on the morrow, in the first semi-preliminary round of the English Cup contest.

The match was to be played at Saltea, and if the Red Rovers won, it would only be necessary for them to defeat another hundred and sixty-eight teams before reaching the Final.

The other thing that was necessary to make Frank's cup of joy complete was the love of Beryl Brown, the winsome, bobbed-haired daughter of one of the Rovers' directors. Frank had loved the girl steadily and devotedly for over two days, and he was now on his way to meet her, with a view to popping the question.

Presently he caught sight of a girlish form perched on a stile. Her handkerchief—and Frank's heart—fluttered simultaneously.

Our hero sprang forward with a glad cry. "Beryl!" "Frank!" "Here we are!" "We're here!" "How's your father?" "Fine! How's yours?"

They continued to speak in this romantic strain for some time. Then Frank Fearless cleared his throat. The supreme moment had come.

"Beryl dear!" "Yes!" "I want to be quite frank with you—" The girl shook her head. "I'm afraid you will never be Frank with me!" she said.

"Don't say that, Beryl. I have loved you for hours and hours—ever since I can remember—and I feel that the time is ripe for an engagement. I've brought the ring with me in anticipation. I bought it for four-and-a-half from a fellow who works at the brass foundry. Don't tell me that I've spent all that money in vain!"

Beryl eyed the speaker coldly. "What are your prospects, Mr. Fearless?" "I should be able to keep you in comfort, if not in luxury," answered our hero. "As you know, I get ten bob a week from the club, and a bonus of tuppence for every goal

I score. I also draw a tanner a week from the Ministry of Pensions. You see, I was badly hit in the war by being made to join up. We shall be able to live comfortably in our caravan home, and funds will sometimes run to threepenny seats at the pictures. Come! What do you say, Beryl?"

The girl was silent. "My whole future hangs upon your answer!" wheezed Frank.

Silence! Suddenly an icy fear gripped Frank's heart: "Is there anyone else, Beryl?" he faltered.

She nodded. "Surely you're not in love with that bouncer Sam Sniper?"

The blush which rose to Beryl's cheeks was more eloquent than words.

Frank Fearless clenched his hands. "Have nothing to do with the fellow!" he cried. "He sometimes plays for Aston Villa—"



Inch by inch, foot by foot, yard by yard, mile by mile, the yellow car gained upon Frank. Would he win the race? Would he?

"Well!" "And therefore he's a Villian!" Beryl smiled. Her pearly teeth sparkled in the moonlight.

"Is for me to choose," she said. "You would cast me off like an old glove?" "No, no! I like you immensely, Frank. But I do not love you—yet. However, if you score six goals to-morrow against Saltea United, why, then I shall be yours!"

Frank's heart gave a leap which a high-jumper might have envied. "Oh, good!" he exclaimed.

And he made a firm resolve there and then to bag those six goals—and Beryl Brown.

CHAPTER II.

SAM SNIPER, Frank's deadly rival, had overheard the whole of the conversation. He scowled darkly as he crawled out of the prickly hedge.

"That fellow Fearless is going to be a

thorn in my side," he muttered, removing a thorn from his side. "I shall have to queer his pitch somehow. I must prevent him from turning out for the Rovers to-morrow. But how?"

Raising his walking-stick above his head, he cudgelled his brains for an answer to that question.

"Ha! I've hit it!" he cried, at length. "And his mocking laugh floated through the darkness."

Frank Fearless was full of good spirits when he awoke next morning.

The great day had arrived—the day on which he was to win the match, and the hand and heart of Beryl Brown into the bargain.

Studying his footer toes into the pocket of his overcoat—twenty-five and six, made to measure—he set out for the railway station, where he intended to take a third-class ticket and travel first-class to Saltea.

But he was not destined to get to the station, for as he tramped along the lonely lane he was overtaken by a yellow car.

Sam Sniper was at the steering-wheel, and three of his confederates were on board.

"Good-morning!" said Sam cheerfully. "Perfect weather for footer—what?"

Frank Fearless halted in the roadway. He was obliged to, for he was covered by four revolvers.

"Who do you want with me?" he demanded.

"You'll soon see!" was the reply. "You're going to kidnap me!"

"Right first time!" said Sam cheerfully. Frank darted a wild glance up and down the road. But no help was in sight. He was at the mercy of his unscrupulous captors.

"In you get!" said Sam Sniper, with a triumphant leer.

And the next moment the car bounded forward, with Frank Fearless on board, a prisoner in the hands of the enemy.

Frank's good spirits had evaporated by this time, and he was very bitter. It was no use making a stout resistance, for he had a run notion that he would be shot if he did.

It was to an old barn tower, many miles distant, that his captors conveyed him. He was escorted up the spiral staircase, and imprisoned in the topmost room.

For hours he lay chafing in captivity. "And then he determined to make a bid for freedom."

Iron bars had been screwed across the window of his prison. But Frank's trusty pocket-knife soon disposed of the screws.

A moment later he was through the window and swarming down the ivy.

The three confederates of Sam Sniper were keeping guard down below, and one of them immediately gave the alarm.

As soon as he reached the ground the three soundrels hurled themselves upon our hero. But fearless Frank Fearless fearlessly kept them at bay. Right and left, left and right, his fists shot out, and with a series of sickening thuds his assailants fell to the ground.

Then, before you could say "I wonder who's going to win the football match between the Red Rovers and Saltea United?" Frank Fearless was speeding away like a hare.

His face was badly battered as a result of the recent struggle, and he decided to consult a doctor later on. Meanwhile, he consulted his watch.

Half-past one! And the great match started at two!

(Continued on next page.)

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FRANK FEARLESS— FOOTBALLER!

(Continued from previous page.)

Would he do it? Would he win that thrilling race against time? Would he bag those six goals, and Beryl Brown into the bargain? Would he— But we must not anticipate.

When he reached the main road Frank paused like a hunted animal.

Glancing over his shoulder, he saw Sam Saipier's yellow car tearing in pursuit across the turn-of-field.

For a moment his heart sank. And then he caught sight of a dapper little two-seater, which stood unattended in the roadway. The lady driver—I think chauffeurs is the proper word—was engaged in picking flowers.

Quick as lightning, Frank Fearless leapt into the car, which sprang forward at his touch.

The lady who was gathering flowers turned with a sharp cry.

"My Ford! My eighteen-guinea Ford!"

"I'll return it later!" yelled Frank. "Cheerio!"

And then began a thrilling and breathless race between the two cars.

Inch by inch, foot by foot, yard by yard, mile by mile, the yellow car gained upon the two-seater.

Frank Fearless clung to the reins—I mean the steering-wheel—with tenacity.

Again he consulted his watch.

"Twenty minutes to two! And the great match started at two!"

Would he do it? Would he? Would he? The odds were a million to one against him.

But there was always the millionth chance.

And then—

Pop, pop, pop, pop!

The four tyres of Frank's car burst simultaneously! And, with a snort of triumph, Sam Saipier bore down upon his rival.

But Frank was not beaten yet.

He caught sight of an aeroplane in an adjoining meadow.

The pilot of the plane was standing some distance away, engaged in a heated altercation with the farmer whose hedge he had ruined in his descent.

Frank Fearless sprang out of the car, sprang over the hedge—or what was left of it—sprang into the pilot's seat, and the next moment he was up and away. He didn't even stop to swing the propeller.

Racing along beneath him was Sam Saipier, in the yellow car, waiting to pounce upon him if he should drop.

Frank Fearless was a fine pilot, having served as a cockpit orderly in the R.A.F. He controlled the Sopwith Eagle with as much ease and dexterity as if he were driving a Tate's sugar-box on wheels.

Presently, however, something went wrong with the works.

The engine stopped, and so did Frank's heart—almost.

Down he went—down—down—down—whizzing through an infinity of space.

Frank Fearless landed, safe and unharmed, on the top of a cliff.

Before he had time to detach himself from the wreckage the yellow car came racing up.

"Got you!" cried Sam Saipier, with a mocking laugh.

Frank staggered to his feet, and found himself gazing into the barrel of the villain's revolver.

"He was in a terrible plight. If he stepped backwards he would fall over the cliff. If he stepped forward he would be shot. If he stepped sideways he would be shot. Whatever he did he would be shot."

"Sorry, dear readers, but I can't go on. I've got my hero into such a ghastly mess that I don't know how the deacons to get him out of it. Under these circumstances, therefore, I have only one word to add:

(CURTAIN)

(See what Bob Cherry says about this next week.—Ed.)

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MY DIARY FOR THE WEEK.



By Dicky Nugent.

MONDAY.—I rose with the lark and after washing my neck I went downstairs and fed my wife mice and then I said to yung tubb what about a sprint round the close and he agreed and we ran round the close 6 times and got an appetite for brekker and the rest of the day past without incident except that mister twigg gave me 100 lines for talking in class I think twigg's a beestly tirant don't you?

TUESDAY.—that littel beest hunter miner started making faces at me in the dorm and I said are you looking for a thick car porpus and he replide ratts werappun I hit out in jack janson attle and nocked him across his bed at that moment who should come into the dormitory but old twigg and the fat was fairly in the fire how dare you y retched boy rored twigg take another 100 lines and for the rest of the day I was like a bare with a sore head!

WEDNESDAY.—that beest loder of the 6th maid me bag for him and I smashed up all his knockeray and porid the tea down the back of his neck kwite by axident of course but loder didnt regard it as an axident he said I shall report you to mister twigg for being a klunay karless yung scamp and he did and twigg said this is the 3rd time youve got into trubbel lately yungt miner I shall have to decl very severely with you you take a fertther 100 lines oh crumms twigg take another 100 lines for imp-ertinence and that makes 400 altogether its simply awful such is life!

THURSDAY.—I shutt my mite mlee in twigg's desk and when he lifted up the lid he had the shock of his life and he yelled who is the owner of these rolets and I replide i am sir you aganc nugent miner he said spluttering with wrath you will take another 100 lines making 500 in all pile on the agencys mermered under my breth but twigg heard me and he eride another 100 lines and I spent the rest of the day nashing my hare and tearing my teeth!

FRIDAY.—I rigged up a hooby trap on the form-room door hopping to katch bunter miner on the hopp instead of katching bunter miner I caught twigg and there was a terribl sean ink and treaket were streamng down twigg's face and he said nugent miner you are ink-orkrillible you will take another 400 lines and that brings the totle up to 1000!

SATURDAY.—this evening we had a selebration becos twigg had a totokas at prep and we did do any we and the fellog got sun kipers from courtfield this afternoon wick only cost 1d each and I think that was very cheep 4 they wer luvly fish and wood hav bean luvly still if the other fellos had not beest most of them still with the beed wick we man-agd 2 get from the cook our captain wingate sed that we wer mucky fags becos there was a lot of greuce over our books.

MY FOOTBOWL KOLLUM.

By Billy Bunter.

Saterdag dorned brite and kleeer. (That's how most football-story ritters begin their narratiffs.)

XI Greyfriars fellos, and XI Highcliffe ditto, making XXII in all (I jenerally rite in roaming liggers) were lined up on the hard, frosty ground, sodden by recent rane.

A grate match was abowt to take place, and I had been detald to report it for the "Greyfriars Herald."

Armed with a notebook and pensill, I sat on a camp-stool (or a load-stool, I forget wick) in the middil of the field, and waited for the kick-off.

Wingate of the VIth, who was refereee, came up and klapped me on the sholder.

"You can't sit hear!" he said. "Eh? Why can't I?" "You'll get in the way of the players, you silly yung ass!"

"But I've got to report this match!" "Then I should advise you to report it from a safe distance. If you stay hear you'll get so badly nocked abowt that we shall have to take you away on the ambulance!"

"Oh, crumms!" I ejaculated.

And I promptly changed my I's. Wharton won the toss, and he eckted to kick with the wind in his favor. Not that the wind was likely to help him much!

F-e-e-p!

The refereee's wisel rang out over the frozen fellos. And then the game began in reel Ernest.

I could see that the Remove would have to fite hard in order to avoyd defeat.

"On the bawl!" I showed. "Pile in! Pull your soss up!"

Wharton & Co. attacked despritle, but in vane. The Highcliffe box were in grate form, and they stemmed the ferreo rushes of the opposition.

I was too short-stid to see much of the play, so I was obligid to konsult Skinner, who was standing near.

"What's the skore?" I asked him, at 2-time.

"Highcliffe are leoding by five goles to nil," he replide.

"My hat!"

I felt rather sorry for Wharton, but, of course, he had only himself to blame. I had offered my services to the team, and they had been declined without thanks. If Wharton had allowed me to play, I should have gone thro' the Highcliffe defenso like a nife thro' butter.

The skond 2 was very thrilling, but I was too busy mouchng jam-tarts to pay much attenshun to the game.

When the final wisel rang out, I agrane asked Skinner the skore, and he told me that Highcliffe had won by twelve goles to six.

"Ruff luck!" I said to Wharton, as he came off the field. "I'm sorry you were ficked by such a kolossal marjin."

"Licked?" he ekkoed. "Why, you fat duffer, we won by three goles to two!"

"But Skinner said that Highcliffe had beeten you hollo?"

"He was pulling your leg, you chappyny duump!"

And so it proved. But when I lookt round for Skinner, I found he had vanned, and with him, my tarts!

Driven from School!

(Continued from page 8.)

Snop & Co. had made his lot harder to bear. But, gradually, under the championship of Harry Wharton & Co., and his major having come to appreciate him, he had come to enjoy being at Greyfriars, and forget the old life in Angel Alley.

Things had gone smoothly, and the fag had thought that the time of his trials and tribulations had passed. But now it seemed that dark clouds were rising again to blot out the memories of a happy past.

Hubert Bolsover, as he stood in the cloisters, with clenched fists, felt a chill grip his heart, almost wounded by his major's sudden dislike.

William George Bunter scudded through the elms, and, when he was at what he considered a safe distance, he stopped and glared back at Bolsover minor.

"Yah! little guttersnipe!" he bawled lustily. "Go back to Angel Alley! We don't want you at Greyfriars! Yah!"

The Third-Former, excited by these words, ran after Bunter. Billy Bunter fled like a hare.

Across the quadrangle he dashed, with the fag in pursuit.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed the hearty voice of Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five were crossing from the footer field, their faces aglow with health, and looking very cheerful. They stopped and grinned when they saw Bunter running away from Bolsover minor.

"Stop him!" cried the fag excitedly. "I'm going to give the cad a jolly good licking! Hold him!"

Bob Cherry planted himself in Bunter's path as the fat youth of the Remove scudded up. Bunter dodged sideways, and was promptly seized by Harry Wharton, Nugent, and Inky.

"Hold on, Bunter!" said Harry calmly. "What are you running away from a Third-Former for, eh?"

"Leggo!" wailed Bunter, struggling desperately in the strong grip of his Form-fellows. "Don't let that murderous little villain get at me— Yarooogh!"

Bolsover minor dashed up, and made a rush at Bunter. The fat youth of the Remove, gasping with terror, covered behind Harry Wharton and Johnny Bull.

"Keep your wool on, kid," said Harry Wharton kindly, gripping Bolsover minor's arm. "What the merry dickens has our tame porpoise done?"

"He—he called me a guttersnipe!" exclaimed the fag, almost tearfully. "He said I wasn't fit to be at Greyfriars, and—"

"The cad!" exclaimed Harry Wharton heatedly.

The rest of the Co. looked grimly at the Owl of the Remove.

"Don't believe him!" howled Bunter plaintively. "He's telling whoppers, Harry, old chap! Ow-wow! Dudd-don't sb-shake me I-like that, Cherry, you b-beast! Grouough! If you bib-break my eyeglasses, you'll have to pip-pay for them— Yooop!"

"You little toad!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, who was shaking Bunter.

"For two pins I'd thrash you myself! Come on, young Bolsover, you can do what you like with the little roter. Give him a jolly good licking!"

"What-ho!" said the fag, with glistening eyes.

He pushed back his cuffs, and advanced upon Bunter.

Billy Bunter backed away, but Harry

Wharton & Co. would not let him escape. Bolsover minor rushed upon him like a whirlwind, and the fag's blows rained upon Bunter's fat person.

Hazelene and Trevor and Ogilvy and Penfold had come up, followed soon after by Vernon-Smith, Fisher T. Fish, Bulstrode, and Tom Brown. The Removites hemmed Bunter in on either side, so that the fat youth of the Remove was forced to put up a fight.

His defence was feeble, and he staggered back before a perfect hurricane of blows.

"Go it, kid!" cried Harry Wharton encouragingly.

"One for his nose—that's the style!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Another on the chin—bravo, young'un!"

"Pile in, Bunter!" roared Peter Todd, Bunter's study-mate, who had also arrived. "Don't funk it, you little chump! Hit out!"

"Yarooogh!" howled Bunter, as the fag's fist crashed upon his nose again. "I—I can't, Toddy! Yooop! Owi! Help! Rescue! Fire! Yarooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton. Bunter vent to earth at last, and Bolsover minor stood over him, his eyes flashing.

Next minute, Bolsover major burst through the ring of spectators, and glared angrily at his minor.

"Hubert!" he ejaculated. "What are you up to now?"

The Third-Former's face blushed a deep crimson.

"I'm sorry, Percy," muttered the fag humbly. "There's nothing terrible about the matter. I've just been fighting with Bunter—"

Bolsover major seemed to gulp. "What were you fighting Bunter for, hey?" demanded the busy Removite, in his most threatening tones.

The fag dropped his eyes, and did not answer.

"He half-killed me, Bolsover!" wailed Billy Bunter, struggling to his feet. "Take my advice, and keep your minor under control; he's dangerous!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton & Co., rather tickled at the ludicrous attitude of William George Bunter.

Bolsover major frowned, and fastened a grip like iron upon his minor's arm.

"What were you slogging Bunter for, you little sweep?" he demanded fiercely.

"He—he called me a guttersnipe," faltered the fag. "Oh, Percy, if you had heard—"

"So he is a guttersnipe!" roared Bunter—adding, hastily—"with all respect to you, Bolsover, old chap, of course. He's not your class, you know. Ho ought to have been left in Angel Alley—"

"Hold your row, you fat fool!" exclaimed Bolsover major tensely, his eyes glinting like points of fire.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked grimly at Bolsover major.

"Look here, Bolsover," said Harry Wharton quietly, stepping forward. "Your minor was quite justified in giving Bunter a licking. If he hadn't done so, I should have walloped him myself!"

"Mind your own business, Wharton!" snarled the bully of the Remove. "You and your goody-goody clique are always chipping in where you have no right. Hubert, you little roter, come with me. Mind, Bunter, if there's any more of your talk, I'll give you the thrashing of your life!"

"Oh, really, Bolsover, old chap!" said Billy Bunter peevishly, rubbing his snub little nose, which was visibly swelling.

"I didn't mean any harm to you by

calling your minor a guttersnipe. You weren't brought up in the slums, and made to see papers— Yooogh! Here, stop it! Yarooogh!"

Bolsover major, losing all patience, had raised his heavy boot and kicked Bunter forcibly in the rear. Billy Bunter staggered forward, gasping, and Bolsover major turned, with a scowling face.

"Come on, Hubert!" he muttered.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged uneasy glances as the burly Removite strode away, followed by his minor.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

More Trouble!

YOU little hound!" Bolsover of the Remove spoke these words bitterly to his minor, in the privacy of his own study, a few minutes later.

Bolsover minor was standing by the window, looking as unhappy as a fag could look.

"I—I'm sorry, Percy!" he said humbly. "But it—it wasn't my fault, please! You wouldn't have heard me called a guttersnipe, would you?"

Bolsover major scowled darkly. "Guttersnipe!" he echoed. "Well, what are you—eh? You've been a confounded nuisance to me ever since you came to Greyfriars. Blessed if I know why they didn't leave you in the slums—you were happy enough, and it suited you! I've managed to stand you all this time, but now I'm fed up! You're only a common, low-little cad, and certainly not a credit to me. In fact, I'm ashamed of you, and wish I'd never set eyes on you!"

"Ashamed of me! Oh, Percy!"

"The youngster's cry rang out with a note of pitiful appeal.

"Yes, hang you!" exclaimed the bully, scowling. "Why can't you clear out of Greyfriars, and leave me alone?"

Bolsover minor did not answer. His face had gone suddenly pale, and his eyes were shining with an unnatural light.

"I'd be well rid of you!" continued Bolsover major, in the same heartless manner. "Go back to the slum where you belong, and forget all about Greyfriars and—and me!"

"Percy!" cried the fag, his face ashen pale. "Percy, what are you saying? You—you don't mean—"

"I mean what I say!" said Bolsover major bitterly. "Clear out, and don't trouble all along the line—at Greyfriars and at home, too!"

The fag tried to make rejoinder, but his voice trailed off into a dry, dusky sob. Bolsover major looked down scornfully and disapprovingly at him. For the time being, all that was hardest and most cruel in the older boy's soul came to the surface.

The hated bully of the Remove was revived. His heart contained not a spark of pity for his heart-broken brother.

The fag looked at Bolsover's face—appealingly, pitifully. But all he saw was a hard, grim look—the look of scorn and disapproval.

Then the hot tears welled into the youngster's eyes, and he gave vent to the misery in his heart by weeping bitterly.

His Brother's tears had no effect upon Bolsover major. His lips curled with disdain.

"Stop your silly blubbing!" he exclaimed brutally. "You won't toudy round me by turning on the waterworks, I can tell you! I'm not so soft as the pater! Chuck it, I say!"

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Bolover minor flung himself into a chair, buried his face in his hands, and wept as though his heart would break.

Deep down in his soul he loved this big, hulking brother of his. Time was not long past when Percy Bolover had been his champion, stood up for him against fellows of the Skinner and Bunter type who persecuted him. It was the good in his brother that the outland little fag had come to love and admire—the good that now seemed to have disappeared, consumed by the flames of sudden hatred and bitterness.

The burly Removite stood by, and watched with glittering eyes the bowed form of his young brother and his heaving shoulders, and heard, unmoved, the wild sobs that racked his tiny frame.

"You blubbing little worm!" he exclaimed roughly. "I'll give you something to blub for, if you don't stop it!"

At that juncture, the study door was flung open, and Harry Wharton & Co. strode in.

Their faces were grim and threatening.

"Bolover, you unspeakable cad!" flashed out Harry, regarding the towering bully with a look of utter scorn and repugnance.

Bolover major's face was livid with passion.

"Mind your own business, and get out, Wharton!" he hissed, between his teeth.

"This is my business!" exclaimed Harry. He went over to the sobbing fag, and placed an arm round his shoulders. "What are you blubbing for, kid?" he asked gently.

Bolover minor raised a tear-stained face to meet that of the Remove captain's.

"He—he—Percy—told me he—he was ashamed of me!" he burst out, between his sobs. "He—he wants to get rid of me! I'm not—not good enough!"

"Shame!" muttered Bob Cherry, gulping down a lump that had risen in his throat.

Harry Wharton's handsome face flushed with anger as he looked at the Remove bully.

"Bolover, you are an utter cad to treat your minor like this!" he said, in a voice quivering with scorn. "The kid's done nothing to deserve this persecution. You are making his life a misery! What's come over you?"

"Mind your own business, hang you!" snarled Bolover. "Clear out of my study, you interfering rotters!"

"We'll go," said Harry, between his teeth; "but your brother is coming with us. Come on, kid!"

Hubert Bolover rose from the armchair, and looked, with tear-dimmed eyes, full of appeal, towards his major.

Bolover major, with a dark scowl upon his face, turned towards the door.

"You can clear out!" he said harshly to his minor. "Don't let me see you here again, or don't even speak to me. I've turned against you, and want no more to do with you!"

"Percy!" exclaimed the fag brokenly.

Bolover pointed towards the door.

"Clear out!" he grated. "Before I kick you out!"

Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Johnny Bull took the fag into the passage. Before he closed the door Harry Wharton turned and faced the Remove bully with flashing eyes.

"You'll come to your senses soon, Bolover," he said, very quietly. "We're going to look after this kid, and see that he's not made miserable. You are not worth troubling about as a brother—at least, not by the way you are behaving

now. I thought you had some decency in you, Bolover. I hope it will show itself again soon."

Bolover major sneered.

"You always were good at preaching, Harry Wharton!" he said. "Thanks for the hopes you entertain about me, but, all the same, I shall thank you still more if you keep your nose out of my business!"

Harry Wharton did not linger to bandy further words with Bolover. He slammed the door, and joined the others in the Remove passage.

"Come and have tea with us, kid," he said to Bolover minor. "We've got a good spread, and you've got to tuck in, and forget that bullying brother of yours!"

"He's not worthy to lick your boots, young 'un!" said Bob Cherry, in his good-natured, awkward way. "Don't bother about him; he's not worth it! We've got sosses and chip potatoes and jam-tarts and cream buns and a rabbit-pie, and—and no end of things! Come on, and give your face a treat!"

Study No. 1 looked cosy and comfortable when the chums of the Remove, with their protege, went in. Frank Nugent and Inky made the tea, and an approving spread was put upon the table.

Harry Wharton & Co. did their best to keep the fag in good spirits over the tea-table, and pressed plenty of good things upon him.

Bolover minor tried hard to conceal his feelings. But it was apparent to Harry Wharton & Co. that the youngster was unhappy. Try as he would, he could not dismiss those torturing memories of his brother's cruel words from his mind.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Real Chum!

WHEN tea was over, Bolover minor went back to his own Form-room for evening preparation.

Tabb, Paget, and the others noticed how miserable he looked, and, in their rough and warm-hearted way, endeavoured to cheer him up.

Preparation was an ordeal to the unhappy fag that evening.

When at last his tasks were completed, he slipped unnoticed from the Form-room, declining to join in a game of leapfrog.

He made his way down to the quadrangle, feeling that he wanted to be alone, to think and reflect.

He passed his major on the stairs. The bully of the Remove glanced at his minor, and passed on with a bitter look, but without a word.

The fag winced as he felt a stab like a knife at his heart.

Dusk had fallen when he reached the quadrangle, and the school buildings were bathed in gloom.

With huzzing head and aching heart, Bolover minor went beneath the elms, and found himself walking listlessly towards the gates.

Gosling had not yet locked up for the night, and, not caring where he went, the fag walked through the gates into the Friar-dale Lane.

He had not walked far when he was startled to hear a voice calling him.

He looked round, and as he did so a small figure of a boy walked up through the gloom, and peered at him in the lamplight.

"My 'at!" exclaimed the newcomer.

"It's really 'Uberty!"

The Greyfriars fag gave a glad cry as he recognised the freckled face and ginger hair.

"Spotty! Spotty—you!"

The other youngster nodded, and emitted a deep chuckle.

"Yus, it's old Spotty, large as life and twice as natural!" he said. "Didn't expect to see me round these 'ere quarries since we was in the stones in 'Angel Alley, and sold papers round Claring Cross Station, ain't it?"

Bolover minor gripped the ginger-headed boy by the hand.

"Spotty!" he exclaimed huskily. "Good old Spotty! Fancy it being you! How—how do you happen to be here—at Greyfriars?"

Spotty, the ex-London newsboy and slum-warrior, who had known Bolover minor in the old days, chuckled softly.

"The Old 'Un shifted from Lannon last month," he explained. "The doctor at the 'ospital told 'im to go into the country, so 'e took an old farm 'ouse by Courtfield 'Eath. Me and the Old 'Un live there all alone, and, by gum, it ain't 'arf a nice, excitin', adventurous life—I don't funk! Jiggered if I thought of ever seein' you again, since you was carted off by the 'igh-class bloke wot turned out to be your 'igh-class father. I 'eard all about it from the boys."

"Lumme, 'Uberty, if it wain't for yer face, I wouldn't 'ave reckerised yer in those swell digs. I thought p'aps you might not like to speak to the likes o' me, now you're at this big school. I 'eard from the boys that your name was Bolover, and that you was at a school by name o' Greyfriars, somewhere in the country; but it quite staggered me like schoolfellow called at our farm 'ouse for some oil. Me 'eart never stopped beatin' fast all that night, believe me!"

"Soon as I knew you was near me, I wanted to see yer, and charst waver I was good enough for yer to speak to. I 'ung round these gates last night in the 'ope of seeing yer, 'Uberty; but no luck. So I came again to-night, and 'ere you are, still alive and kicking, and at a proper young swell. Sure you don't mind?"

Bolover minor pressed his old chum's hand, and a lump rose in his throat.

"Mind, Spotty!" he exclaimed huskily. "Why, Spotty, you don't know how glad I am to see you! You are the same old Spotty, who used to share your suppers with me when I'd got none, and would put up a fine fight when the other toughs came to steal our corner. Oh, Spotty, I am, really and truly, glad to see you! I—"

The Greyfriars minor's voice broke off. Spotty looked quickly into his anguished, stricken face.

"Why, chummy, wot's the matter?" he exclaimed, holding his old companion's hand very tight. "Ain't you 'appy, ole chap?"

Bolover minor could not reply, for the tears had welled again into his eyes. The sound of his old chum's kind voice, and the warmth of his hand-clasp, broke the barriers of his grief, and for the second time that day he sobbed brokenly.

Spotty, a look of genuine alarm and consternation on his mottled features, placed an arm round Bolover minor.

"Stop the blubbin' old chap!" he muttered hoarsely. "Believe me, 'Uberty, I'll start the waterworks, too, if you don't stop blubbin'! Wot's the matter, anyhow?"

Bolover minor stifled his sobs, and then, in broken, tearful sentences, he told Spotty the miserable story of his elder brother's persecution of him.

Spotty's face hardened as he listened.

"Well," he exclaimed at length, "if that don't take the biscuit! He rotten 'eart 'ys you ain't good enough to be 'is brother—just 'cos you came from Angel



Bolover minor appeared again over the gable. His clothes were burnt and his face begrimed with smoke. "Quick! I've got a rope! Fasten it to the gable before the whole place gives way!" he cried. (See Chapter 10.)

Alley, and sold newspapers for a livin'! Oh, wouldn't I like an hargument wiv 'im! 'E'd feel the force o' my darbies—wot-o!"

"It's no use, Spotty," said the Greyfriars fag miserably. "He seems to have fairly hardened himself against me. He—he told me this afternoon to clear out, and he meant it!"

"Did 'e, though!"

Spotty looked searchingly at him.

"Do you want to leave Greyfriars, kid?" he asked slowly.

Bolover minor shook his head.

"No, Spotty," he said. "I—I had a hard time at first, but—but I thought that was long past and gone. Most of the fellows at the school are friends of mine, and I haven't many enemies. I—I like Harry Wharton and his chums of the Remove, and my own Form-fellows, too. And I'm getting on splendidly with my

lessons. Oh, I was so happy until—until Percy turned against me. He—he wants me to go, so I—I suppose I had better."

"That's right!" said Spotty, gripping his chum's arm tightly. "Run away from school, 'Ubert, and come and live wiv me and the Old 'Un. 'E wouldn't mind—fact, he'd be only too glad to see yer!"

Bolover minor looked incredulous.

"Run—run away from Greyfriars!" he exclaimed.

"Yus, that's the ticket!" said Spotty enthusiastically. "I don't mean run away for good, you know—only for a little while, jest to scare that bully'n brother of yours, and bring 'im to 'is senses. 'E won't know where you are, and might think you're a goncer—p'r'aps done yourself in. That'll scare 'im stiff, I reckon!"

"Oh, Spotty!" exclaimed Bolover minor, drawing a deep breath.

"Will you do it?" demanded Spotty eagerly. "Don't you think it's a good notion?"

"Yes," said the fag slowly; "it's a ripping idea, Spotty, old chap! I—I'll run away and live with you, and then—then perhaps Percy will come round. I'll do it!"

"Good!" chuckled Spotty, rubbing his grimy hands together gleefully. "Op along wiv me now, and—"

"No, not now, Spotty!" said the fag, shaking his head. "I—I want to leave a note for Percy, and—and get my things. I'll meet you here at eleven to-night. I can steal out of the dormitory."

"Right-ho!" said Spotty, his eyes shining with delight. "My word, won't I enjoy you stayin' wiv me again! It will be quite like old times—wot? I'll tell the Old 'Un wot we're goin' to do, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 675.

and I'll be 'ere at this very spot, at eleven. Trust your old Spody!"

The chums gripped hands. And then Bolsover minor had to go, for Gosling was just about to lock the gates.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In the Night!

HARRY WHARTON awoke with a start from his warm slumber.

Somebody was moving about in the Remove dormitory.

With bated breath, and in tense silence, the captain of the Remove raised himself on his elbow, and peered through the semi-darkness of the dormitory.

A bright moon was shining in at the window, illuminating the room with soft and mystic radiance.

Harry caught his breath sharply when he saw a small figure moving beside one of the beds.

The intruder, Harry realised, must be a fag; but for what purpose was he in the Remove dormitory that cold, frosty night?

Harry looked keenly, and saw the fag place something upon the pillow of the bed where he was standing, and then move swiftly away, after a long, lingering glance at the sleeper.

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Harry, jumping out of bed.

The midnight marauder started, and looked in dismay at Harry Wharton. Then, without a word, he slipped quickly and silently from the dormitory.

Harry reached the door, and then turned back. For the moment he thought it was a Second Form fag, and therefore deemed it advisable to look at what the intruder had left.

Harry saw, with some surprise, that it was Bolsover major's bed. Wonderingly, he picked up a sheet of paper and unfolded it. By the light of the moon Harry mechanically read these words, written in a straggly, large, but neat handwriting:

"Dear Percy,—I am going to leave Greyfriars to-night, because you have told me that you don't wish to see me any more. I am going right away, where you will never find me. Perhaps you will never see me again. I'm sorry that I've been so much bother to you, but now I am gone I hope you will be happier. Good-bye, Percy. By the time you read this I shall be far away. You will soon forget.

"Your brother,
"HUBERT."

Harry Wharton could not help reading the whole of this letter, for his attention had been arrested by the first line.

A look of consternation and dismay clouded his face, and a lump rose in his throat as he realised what had happened.

"Oh, my hat!" he muttered hoarsely. "The poor kid's run away from Greyfriars—driven from school by his brother! I never thought Bolsover would bring his minor to this!"

Harry then awoke Bob Cherry, Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh.

These youths sat up in bed lazily and sleepily, but when Harry Wharton told them the news, their sleepiness disappeared.

"Great Caesar!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, making haste to dress himself. "We must go after the poor kid, and bring him back, Harry!"

Harry Wharton nodded.

The Famous Five dressed quickly in the moonlight, oblivious to the cold. Their one thought was for the broken-

hearted fag, who had been forced to run away from school because of his elder brother's cruel persecutions. Bolsover minor must be brought back, and a scandal averted at Greyfriars.

There came a sleepy grunt from Bolsover major's bed.

"Saw-aw-aw!" growled the bully of the Remove, sitting up and blinking at the Famous Five in the moonlight.

"Whasser-marrer?"

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

The captain of the Remove took the letter from his pocket, and held it out to Bolsover major.

"Read that!" he said tersely. "I was going to keep it to myself, but now you are awake, you might as well know what your rotten bullying has done!"

"What'd you mean?" growled Bolsover surlily.

"Your brother has run away from school," said Harry quietly.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Read the note he left," said Harry. "That will tell you everything."

Bolsover major, now alarmed instead of sleepy, blinked at the letter. As the full significance of the words sank into his brain, his face underwent a vivid change. The Famous Five watched his expression curiously.

"Oh, good heavens!" muttered the Remove bully thickly. "Hubert—he—he's really run away! This is not a joke, Wharton!"

"Is it a joke for us to get up out of bed this frosty night, Bolsover?" asked Harry Wharton curtly.

Bolsover major sprang out of bed, and scrambled into his clothes.

"Wait for me," he exclaimed savagely. "The little rascal must be brought back. I can see what his game is—he's going home to tell the pater I drove him away from school, and cause some more trouble! He must be fetched back at once!"

Harry Wharton regarded the blustering Remove with curling lips.

"You deserve to be flogged for the way you've treated that kid, Bolsover!" he said in measured accents. "So you are still against him! Hasn't this sobered you!"

"I'll sober him!" muttered Bolsover between his teeth. "He wants to cause a scandal, the little worm! Come on, you fellows, there's no time to lose. We can catch him if we hurry!"

"Come on, then, you rotter!" said Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five and Bolsover, carrying their boots, hastened from the dormitory.

Without speaking a word, they put on their boots, climbed through the box-room window, and at last reached the quadrangle.

The frosty night air struck chill to their faces. Thrusting their hands in their overcoat pockets, they hastened towards the outbuildings, where the wall was low enough for them to climb.

The moon went in behind a bank of clouds, and deep gloom enveloped the massive pile of Greyfriars.

Suddenly Johnny Bull stopped, with a muttered warning.

"Look!" he breathed, pointing to the school wall.

In the dead darkness and eeriness of night, they could dimly see the figure of a man scaling the wall, hauling up after him a bulky sack by means of a rope.

For some moments they did not move, staring at a fascinated way at the man on the wall. Then Harry Wharton, giving the signal for the others to be silent, stole silently forward. There could be no doubt as to whom this intruder was. A cracksmen, escaping from Greyfriars, after having made a good haul of "swag."

The Removees reached the school wall by the tradesmen's entrance. Farther along, the burglar on the wall had hauled up his sack, and was now preparing to descend to the lane on the other side.

Harry Wharton's heart beat fast. It flashed across his memory that a cracksmen of reputed daring had been prying upon the neighborhood of Greyfriars during the past two weeks. One of Sir Hilton Popper's gamekeepers had been badly hurt one night last week, trying to seize the miscreant after a robbery at the house. Wharton was not afraid to attack this desperate ruffian, however, although it would be a serious matter to fall foul of a ruffian armed with a jemmy, or, perhaps, a still more deadlier weapon.

"Come on!" he muttered to the others. "We can slip over the wall here, and nab the rascal in the lane."

The others did not hang back. Bolsover was one of the first over the wall. Bully though he was, he had heaps of pluck.

At last Harry Wharton & Co. and Bolsover were all on the turf bank bordering the Friar-dale Lane. They held their breath for a few moments, wondering whether the burglar had seen them. The rascal was also in the lane, lurking in the shadow of the school wall, evidently placing the rope in the sack in preparation to making his escape.

Harry Wharton's heart thumped as the moon emerged from a bank of cloud, shedding its mystic brilliance over the scene.

Within twenty feet of them, blinking in the light, was a burly man holding a sack, and a band of crepe swathed over his face to mask it.

He stared at the five juniors, blinking. They stared at him in tense fascination. For a single moment there was not a sound, save the wild wail of the wind as it swept up from the sea by Pegg Bay.

Then Harry Wharton sprang forward, followed by Bob Cherry and Nugent.

The movement broke the spell. With a snarl of bitter rage, the man cowered back as the Greyfriars juniors flung themselves towards him. He realised that against these plucky youngsters he would stand a very poor chance of escape with his swag. So he lifted the sack just as Harry Wharton and Bolsover sprang at him, and dashed it in their faces.

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"Yarooogh!" roared Harry, staggering back upon his oncoming chums. "Oh crumbs! Help!"

"Help!" shouted Bob Cherry.

There was a mocking laugh from the gloom, as the masked ruffian sped away. Harry Wharton & Co. were floundering on the turf together, for the fall of Harry Wharton and Bolsover had brought the others over.

They jumped to their feet instantly, only to see the figure of their quarry disappear into the bushes on the opposite side of the lane.

Harry turned swiftly to his chums. "Frankly, you can take care of this bag of loot while we others chase that ruffian," he said. "Thank goodness we've got the plunder back, anyhow! We might— Mum-my-hat!"

Harry Wharton uttered that ejaculation in tones of almost incredulous amazement. He had been looking towards the bushes where the masked burglar had disappeared. A short, youthful figure had appeared, followed by another boy.

The moonlight shone full upon their faces, and Harry Wharton looked upon them like one in a dream.

One he recognised as the ginger-headed youth he had met at the farmhouse on the lonely road bordering Courtfield Heath.

The other was Bolsover minor of the Third Form at Greyfriars—the boy who had run away that very night.

Harry Wharton sprang forward, his voice ringing out on the cold night air. "Bolsover minor! Come here! We've been looking for you!"

There was, Harry thought, a look of pain on the runaway's features. As for his companion, his freckled face was the picture of defiance.

"Hubert!" roared Bolsover major. "You young sweep, I—I—"

But Bolsover minor was gone. The freckled youngster disappeared with him into the black shadows of the bushes which gave entrance to the Friar-dale woods.

Harry Wharton turned swiftly to the others.

"They—they must not get away!" he exclaimed. "Come on, Bolsover and Bob and Johnny! Frank, you must take charge of that sack of stolen property!"

"Right-o, old chap!" said Frank Nugent a trifle ruefully.

And Harry Wharton & Co. forgetting for the time being the cracksmen who had robbed Greyfriars, plunged into the bushes and were swallowed up in the deep gloom.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

From Deadly Peril!

THE Removites crashed through the undergrowth of the woods until they reached the main path. There Harry Wharton called a short halt.

"They seem to have disappeared," he said; "but I know where to look for them. We'll go to make our way to Courtfield Heath. That ginger-haired kid belongs to a farmhouse on the health border; I saw him there the other night. Now I come to think of it, he inquired about Bolsover. It did not strike me at the time that he meant your minor, Bolsover."

The bully of the Remove scowled in the moonlight.

"One of his old low associates, I expect!" he said bitterly. "I can see through the whole game now. They've efficed Hubert to run away from Greyfriars and join the old gang. And the burglary at the school was arranged as

an extra turn to the dramatic exit. I expect!"

Harry Wharton and his chums started. They had not looked at the matter in that light before.

Was Bolsover major right? The fact's old associates of the slums, they knew, were of the lowest type, numbering among them many notorious thieves and pickpockets. Hubert himself had not been one with them, they knew; but there was no denying that he had once, through force of circumstances, to be one of them.

Had his old associates sought him out and induced him to return to them? Had the fog, tired of his existence at Greyfriars, to bear the brunt of his major's dislike, chosen the lower alternative and, in leaving, been a party to the robbery of Greyfriars?

Harry Wharton gritted his teeth.

"I—I won't believe it!" he muttered. "Your minor was straight, Bolsover—good right through! You drove him away, and—and—"

"He's gone to join the old gang, whose headquarters are at this lonely country farmhouse by Courtfield Heath!" sneered Bolsover. "No wonder there have been so many robberies in this neighbourhood lately! Come on, you fools, if you are coming! We shan't get there in time!"

Harry Wharton's face was troubled as he went the way along the path. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull were frowning, too. Bolsover major's words sounded plausible, and yet they could not believe that Bolsover minor, a youngster with a heart of gold, could have gone wrong so suddenly.

"Hurry up!" muttered Bolsover major savagely.

Through the keen night air they hastened, emerging at last from the wood and taking the road that led to Courtfield Heath.

The ten minutes that followed seemed an eternity. Harry Wharton led the way, and finally they came within sight of the old-fashioned farmhouse where Harry Wharton and Nugent had first seen the ginger-haired boy.

As they approached the wicker gate, keeping well within the shadow, Harry Wharton gripped Bolsover's arm.

"Look!" he said. "There's a light in one of the rooms!"

Bolsover halted, and the others stopped, too. They stared at the farmhouse, looking strangely eerie in the moonlight, and their hearts beat fast.

"Follow me, and make no noise!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "I'm going to have a look in at that window, if I can!"

Creeping stealthily along the path that led from the wicker gate to the front door, the Greyfriars juniors approached the house. Harry Wharton, motioning his chums to be silent, made his way towards a water-pipe that ran up the side of the house. This water-pipe was new, fastened to the ivy-clad walls with strong staples.

Watched breathlessly by Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Bolsover major, Harry climbed swiftly up the pipe until he was just above the window from which the light glimmered. He bent down to take a look over the top of the blind.

Then there came a horrified cry from Bob Cherry.

"Look out, Harry!"

The window had suddenly been flung open, and a burly man leaped out. With strong, sinewy arms he grasped the water-pipe below where Harry Wharton was clinging, and wrenched it free of the wall.

"Oh, good heavens!" muttered Bob Cherry, his face going white.

The staples came out of the old brick-work very easily, and the pipe sagged out.

Harry Wharton looked down with blanched face. He dare not jump the distance he was above the ground. The pipe was gradually giving way from the wall. The ruffian, leaning out of the window, looked up at the trapped school-boy with a mocking laugh.

Then, with a hasty wrench, he tore the pipe completely away from the wall.

But Harry Wharton at that precise moment jumped clear of the pipe. The gabled roof of the old-fashioned house sloped down towards him, and as the pipe had left the wall Harry dug his toes against the brickwork and made a desperate upward spring, and gripped a protruding rafter of the gable.

Hanging on by one arm to the gabled roof of the farmhouse, Harry Wharton was between life and death at that moment.

A snothered oath came from the man at the window, and next minute his head disappeared.

"Hang on, Harry!" cried Bob Cherry appealingly from below. "For Heaven's sake don't let go!"

Harry Wharton did not let go. He was strong, and the best junior athlete at Greyfriars. He swung his body upwards until his legs gripped the gable. Then, with both hands gripping the wooden framework, he cluded like a monkey on to the roof of the farmhouse.

The watching schoolboys below drew deep breaths of relief.

"Thank Heaven Harry's saved himself!" gasped Bob Cherry, in fervent thankfulness. "But he's not out of danger yet! There's no knowing what those rascals might do now! They've got Harry helpless on the roof!"

"Come on!" said Bolsover major, clenching his big fists and setting his jaw grimly. "My minor's in there, too! I'm going to fetch him!"

Bolsover dashed up to the door and pounded upon it. Chaos and confusion seemed to be in progress within. He could hear sounds of quick-moving feet and muffled snarls.

"Open this door, you villains!" roared the burly Removite, beating at the door with all his might.

Then from inside the cottage there came a cry—a boy's cry that Bolsover knew only too well.

"Help! Help!"

Bolsover major raged outside the door as he recognised the voice of his minor. That the youngster was in trouble he knew well. All the bitter hatred and jealousy was purged from Bolsover's soul in that instant. He seemed to forget the suspicions he had entertained against his minor but half an hour ago. His sole impulse was to break the door down and rescue his minor, and bring him back to Greyfriars.

Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull had dashed to the rear of the cottage, where the scullery door was. There they met two men—one who, by his heavy build, they recognised as the man who had robbed Greyfriars, and the other a wizened old man.

"Back up!" panted Bob Cherry, charging at the burly ruffian in the doorway. "We'll get in here! Bolsover, this way!"

"Bolsover! Come on!" roared Johnny Bull, flinging himself to the attack.

The burly ruffian, of evil, dirty countenance, fought desperately with the boys. He seemed galled with giant strength, and in his mad fury he did not care how he used those massive fists of his.

Bob and Johnny Bull realised that, sturdy and strong though they were,

they were no match for this hulking ruffian.

As for the old man, he stole quietly inside. Bob and Johnny were still wrestling with their foe, when the crabbed old man reappeared with a stout bar of iron.

He raised the bar of iron aloft, and was just about to bring it down over Johnny Bull's head, when Bolsover major dashed round from the front of the house.

Biff!
Bolsover's four-point-seven punch hit home well and truly on the old man's skull, and felled him like a log.

Bolsover did not hesitate a second, but flung himself upon the man with whom Bob and Johnny were already grappling. Very soon he was a prisoner in their grasp. Bolsover and Bob Cherry held him down, while Frank fetched some rope from the corner. With this they bound him.

Then they dashed into the kitchen, and, finding a flight of steep stairs, they ascended, one after the other. At the top landing they gave vent to glad cries, for there was Harry Wharton, with Bolsover minor and his chum, Spotty.

"Hubert!" exclaimed Bolsover major, striding forward and gripping his minor by the arm. "Are you—you all right?"

"Yes, Percy," said the fog softly, his face radiant with happiness to see that his brother's treachery had disappeared. "This is Spotty, my chum, whom I ran away with."

The burly Removite looked suspiciously at the red-haired boy.

"Who is he?" he demanded. "What the merry blazes?"

"It's all right, Bolsover," said Harry Wharton, stepping forward. "I've heard everything. This kid used to know your minor in the old days. They were pals together. Spotty lives with the old chap you saw downstairs. He's no relation, so far as Spotty knows. Certainly Spotty had no idea that the old man was the head of a gang of thieves, and was compelled to leave London owing to the police making it too hot for him. Your brother ran away to-night, to live with Spotty for a time. Neither of the kids had anything to do with the burglary at Greyfriars."

"Look!" screamed Johnny Bull, suddenly interrupting, pointing to the stairs. A curl of smoke was ascending from

below—smoke that soon belched forth in thick, pungent clouds.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, white to the lips. "The villains must have escaped somehow, and have set the place on fire, and—left us here to die!"

Bolsover major dashed down the stairs, but had got barely half way when he was forced to halt.

"They've barricaded the bottom of these stairs!" he cried. "And the kitchen's burning like a furnace!"

His face was pallid when he rejoined the others on the landing.

"Our only chance lies in getting on the roof!" said Harry Wharton. "Come on! There's a trap-door at the end of this landing!"

He led the way to the trap-door, and they scrambled through, one by one. Johnny Bull went last. Barely had he gained the roof than the landing gave way with a sickening roar, and fell into the roaring inferno beneath.

Clinging to the broken slates of the roof, the Greyfriars boys and Spotty looked below. They could not see far through the blinding smoke.

"The whole place might collapse at any moment!" exclaimed Harry Wharton tensely. "Boys, I think this is the end of us!"

But Bolsover minor, who had been peering over the edge of the gable, suddenly disappeared from view.

With cries of horror, the others crawled to the place where he had disappeared, and looked over. The fog was clambering down the ivy, still clinging to the walls.

He disappeared in the blinding smoke. They waited, not knowing what to think, or to expect.

After what seemed an eternity, Bolsover minor appeared again over the gable. Perspiration stood in great beads upon his brow.

"Quick!" he panted. "I've got a rope! Fasten it to this gable! There is time to get down, before the place gives way!"

Harry Wharton pressed the boy's hand as he took the rope from him. With quick, deft fingers, he made the rope fast to a beam in the gable.

Then, trusting to Providence that the cruel flames would not reach the rope and sever it, the Greyfriars juniors proceeded to swarm down it.

Spotty insisted on going first. It was risky, for the rope might already be broken. But a reassuring dangle of the rope after he had disappeared a few moments told the others that all, so far, was safe.

Bolsover major went next⁽¹⁾ with Hubert. The fog was almost unconscious, but he managed to hold on to the rope, and his brother's shoulder.

By great good fortune the rope held. Harry Wharton was the last down. The flames were licking upwards, hungrily searching the rope. But all they had to encounter was smoke—banks of thick, choking smoke. But they managed it, and at last they assembled in the garden of the cottage, alive and well, despite their ruined clothes.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

All Scenes!

"HERE they are!"
"Thank Heaven they are safe!"

These glad cries burst upon the Greyfriars juniors' ears as they stood in the smoke-clouded garden beside the blazing cottage.

Many figures loomed up, and next minute Frank Nugent dashed towards Harry Wharton, followed by Wingate and two policemen.

"Harry!" exclaimed Frank hoarsely. "We—we knew you were in there, and thought we'd be too late! How did you get out?"

Harry Wharton grinned faintly, and indicated Hubert Bolsover.

"That plucky kid saved us!" gasped the captain of the Remove hoarsely.

"We were imprisoned on the roof, when he climbed down the ivy, fetched a rope, and climbed up again. If he hadn't—"

Harry Wharton shuddered. "You kids have had a jolly narrow escape!" said Wingate grimly. "My hat! There goes the roof! The place is doomed now!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were looking curiously at Wingate.

"How did you know of—of this, Wingate?" asked Harry.

"I woke him up!" interposed Frank Nugent, with a grin. "Getting in at the bog-room window, I dropped the bag of wax, and soon afterwards Wingate copped me in the corridor! Of course, I had to tell him, and he insisted on going after you. So we left the stolen stuff with the Head, and Wingate and I came here. On the way we collected a couple of policemen, and then, when we were nearly here, we saw the flames. I can tell you, we ran for dear life!"

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Harry Wharton.

"And what do you think, Harry?" said Frank Nugent eagerly. "On our way we ran into two men—one a white-haired old Johnny—who were carrying a large trunk between 'em, and seemed to be running away from somewhere. Curiously enough, I recognised the other fellow as the burglar we met outside Greyfriars earlier this evening. So we went for the couple, and soon overpowered 'em, with the aid of a policeman and another man. When we opened the trunk we discovered that it was full of jewellery and silver plate and ornaments, and things like that. The policeman says they are the proceeds of all the burglaries that have taken place in the neighbourhood. Evidently this house was the headquarters of the gang."

Harry Wharton nodded.

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"The villains!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

In the lane outside the boys gathered, and watched, in tense silence, the flames and sparks that arose from the debris.

"Well, you kids," said Wingate, at last, "we shall have to get back to Greyfriars. We can do no good here."

"Right-ho, Wingate!"

They left the scene of the conflagration, and made their way towards Greyfriars. Spotty went with the Greyfriars fellows at Bolsover major's suggestion. Wingate opened the side gate when they arrived at Greyfriars, and they all trooped up to the Head's study, where Dr. Locke was waiting for them.

He listened to Wingate's account of the evening's happenings in amazement.

When the stalwart captain of Greyfriars had told his story, Dr. Locke turned to Bolsover minor, a great, kindly light shining in his eyes. He held out his hand, and gripped the fag's forehead, smothering his hand in his hair.

"Bolsover minor," said the Head, his voice trembling with emotion, "I and these other boys present owe you a great debt which words alone cannot suffice to express! Had it not been for your almost reckless courage in climbing down from the roof of the burning house, and obtaining the rope, I shudder to imagine the consequences. You all would surely have perished. Thank you, my lad! I am proud to know that a pupil of Greyfriars is endowed with such dauntless courage!"

Bolsover minor did not reply. His glance wandered over to his major.

Percy Bolsover met his minor's glance, and flushed. But it was not an angry flush. The look in his eyes bore a wealth of tenderness.

"You had better get to bed now, my lads," said Dr. Locke kindly. "Master—er—Spotty, I will see that comfortable bed is made ready for you."

"Thank you, sir!" said Spotty breathlessly. His awe of Dr. Locke, looking so majestic in cap and gown, amounted almost to worship.

Harry Wharton opened the door, and they all retired from the Head's study, leaving only Wingate to discuss matters with Dr. Locke.

In the Remove dormitory, by candle-light, Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, and Bolsover major undressed.

The bully of the Remove was very quiet and subdued. Harry Wharton was about to blow out his candle, when Bolsover major stepped over to his bedside.

"I—I say, Wharton," he blurted out, "I'm sorry for all that has happened these last few days! My minor has proved himself a brick! I'm proud of him, and ashamed of myself! But I—I shall be decent to him in the future!"

"That's all right, old chap!" said Harry cheerfully. "Your minor's the best of kids! Thank goodness things have turned out as they have done! Good-night, Bolsover!"

"Good-night!"

"Lumme, ain't it glorious!"

Spotty breathed these words in tones of deep admiration, as he looked round upon the stately, ivy-clad walls of Greyfriars.

Hubert Bolsover, who was by his side, grinned happily.

The two chums had come down to the quadrangle together next morning, to take a stroll before breakfast.

Harry Wharton & Co. joined them, and were chatting cheerfully with the Bolsovers and Spotty, when Wingate strode up. He nodded kindly to the Removites, and then looked at Spotty,

"Dr. Locke would like to see you in his study at once, young 'un," he said good-naturedly. "Will you come with me?"

"Yesir!" said Spotty reverently.

He followed the tall, stalwart captain of Greyfriars indoors, and up to the Head's study.

Dr. Locke greeted the ginger-haired boy with a kindly smile.

"Good-morning, my lad!" he said. "I have—er—arranged for your future welfare in a manner that will—ahem!—be quite satisfactory to yourself, I hope."

"Yesir!" replied Spotty.

"My friend, Sir Hilton Popper, informs me that he requires a page-boy. I have highly recommended you for the post, and Sir Hilton is willing to give you the situation, if you care to take it."

"Is it near Greyfriars, sir?" inquired Spotty eagerly.

"Yes, my boy," replied the Head, with a smile. "Sir Hilton Popper's grounds adjoin Greyfriars."

Spotty's eyes were shining with delight.

"I reckon that job will just suit me, sir," he said.

The Head smiled again, and rang the bell. Trotter, the page, appeared, and exchanged a wink with Spotty.

"Trotter, kindly see that breakfast is prepared for Master—er—Spotty," said Dr. Locke. "He will take the meal with me."

Trotter departed, after winking again at Spotty. Spotty was looking most impressed with the prospect of having breakfast with the Head of Greyfriars.

When he left Dr. Locke's presence, and rejoined Hubert Bolsover outside, he was full of the good news that he was to be given a situation with Sir Hilton Popper, next door to Greyfriars.

"My hat!" exclaimed Bolsover minor, with glistering eyes. "How ripping, Spotty!"

"Not 'arf!" said that youth cheerfully. "We'll be quite close to each other—eh? And I'll be able to nip over the wall and see you every night, old chap!"

Spotty had breakfast with the Head, and, although he was brimming over with excitement and awe, he managed to

quadrangle, and then he went to see Sir Hilton Popper.

"Well, kid," said Harry Wharton, gripping the ginger-headed boy's hand in his, "I'm jolly glad things have turned out as they have done! You'll always be welcome at Greyfriars when you care to come in."

Bolsover major came up, and held out his hand to the little sun boy.

"Good-bye, kid!" he said gruffly, but in a voice that rang with sincerity. "Thanks for all you've done for me and Hubert! Don't forget to come and see us, will you?"

"Wot-o?" said Spotty, with a chuckle. "The Greyfriars fellows watched him walk down the Friarale Lane with Trotter. Then, as the bell for lessons rang, they turned away from the gates and crossed the quadrangle to the School House."

And Bolsover minor, as he took his place in the Third Form-room, felt that he had not a care in the world. Events, that at first had seemed disastrous, had certainly transpired happily for the fag who had been driven from School.

THE END.

(Another Grand Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. next Monday, entitled "His Blundering Best!" by Frank Richards.)

THE EDITOR'S CHAT.

Address all your letters to—The Editor, MAGNET LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

For Next Monday:

Our next week's grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. will be entitled

"HIS BLUNDERING BEST!"

By Frank Richards.

In this story we find Bolsover anxious to make amends to Mr. Quelch for the splendid manner in which the Form-master backed him up in the matter affecting Mr. Hobbison. (This affair was dealt with in the story entitled "Up Against It!") The unfortunate trouble with his minor has interfered with this desire, but the opportunity comes at last, and although Bolsover does

"HIS BLUNDERING BEST."

he finds that once again he has put his foot in it. But, as everything ends up "all serene," Bolsover is happy.

This story, boys and girls, is one which will appeal to you all, and I strongly advise those of you who have not already ordered your copy of the MAGNET LIBRARY to do so now.

OUR SUPPLEMENT.

There will be another magnificent supplement in next week's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY. Harry Wharton & Co. are working hard to fill up the little space I can spare them with everything that is good in the way of interesting stories, articles, and verses, and I am sure all of you are enjoying and appreciate their efforts.

And I may here say that Billy Bunter is once again busy on another issue of "Billy Bunter's Weekly," so my chums can look forward to another attack of laughter in the near future.

Jolly good luck to "Billy Bunter's Weekly!"

THE GREAT ANNUAL.

No, I am not going to refer to Billy Bunter's annual, but, if that is what you

are thinking about, my chums, I want to say to you all that "The Holiday Annual" is the most wonderful reading matter for boys and girls. Keen readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY will also find much in the way of personalities affecting the chums of Greyfriars.

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Will readers be kind enough to send me a postcard, or a letter, and tell me how much they like our grand supplement? And did you find "Billy Bunter's Weekly" to your liking?

Believe me, I am not asking this question out of idle curiosity, but I have at the back of my mind a great idea, and if you like our supplement, and tell me so, I will get to work on the idea. Let it go at that for the moment!

Your Editor

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 675.

