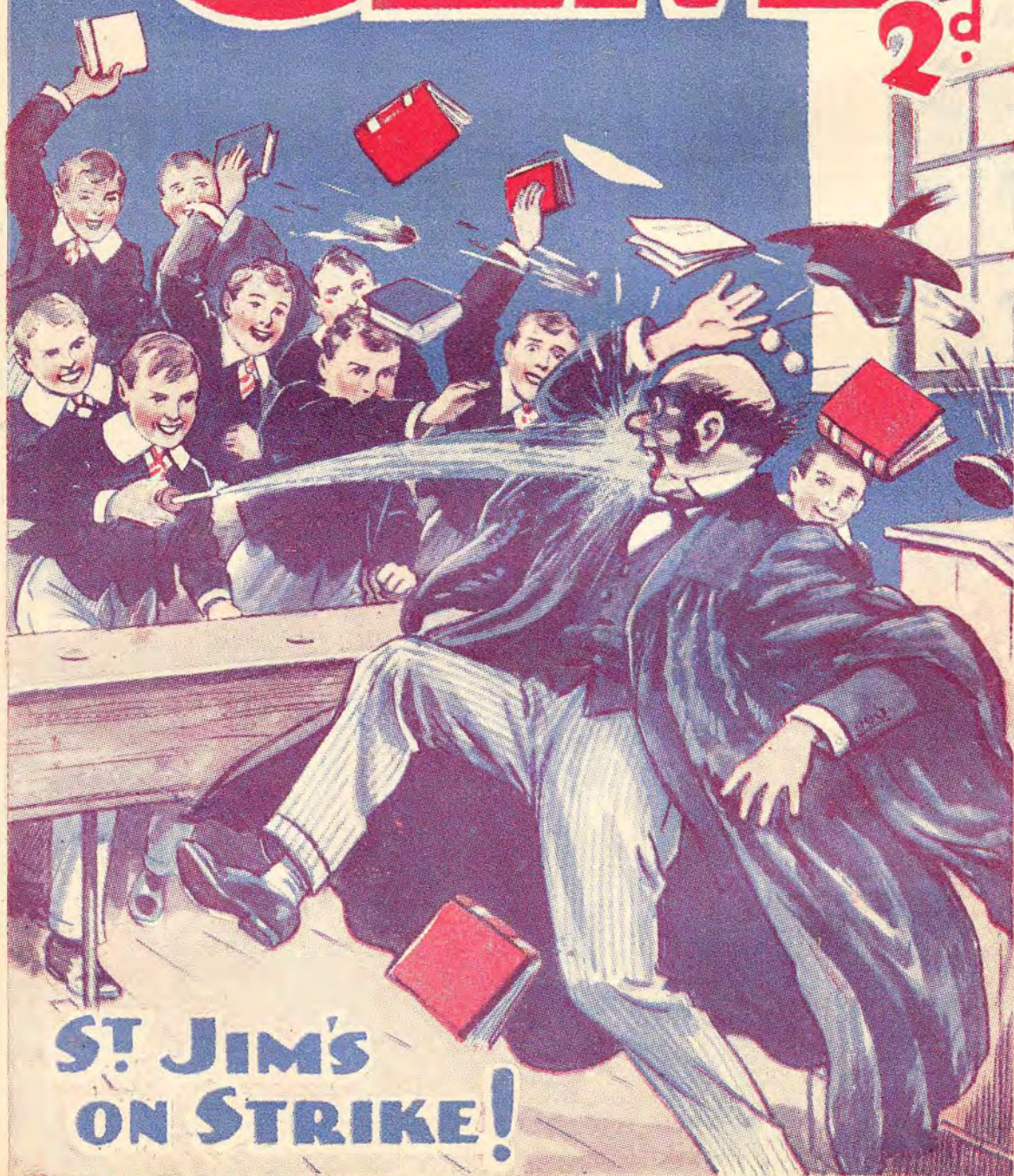


"ST. JIM'S ON STRIKE!" AND "THE GHOST OF GREYFRIARS!"
THIS WEEK'S BEST SCHOOL YARNS—INSIDE.

The GEM

2d



ST. JIM'S
ON STRIKE!

2
NO PETS—NO LESSONS! SUCH IS THE ST. JIM'S JUNIORS' RESPONSE TO THE HEAD'S ORDER BANNING THE SCHOOL MENAGERIE!

ST. JIM'S ON STRIKE!



Gasping and shrieking, helpless in the grasp of the strikers, Mr. Ratcliff was swept along the Form-room passage. Next moment he was tossed headlong at the feet of Mr. Railton and Monteith!

CHAPTER 1.

Mad Dog!

"WESCUE!"

"Hallo!"

"Wescue! Oh cwumbs!"

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther of the Shell Form at St. Jim's stopped in sheer astonishment.

They were strolling round the School House, when the sudden yell burst upon their ears. They were in no doubt as to who was calling. There was only one voice at St. Jim's with that beautiful accent.

"D'Arcy's in trouble," said Tom Merry.

"Sounds like it!" grinned Monty Lowther. "Here he comes!"

"Yawwoooooh! Wescue!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of the Fourth Form, came flying round the corner of the old School House.

The aristocratic repose for which Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was famous, was decidedly conspicuous by its absence on this occasion.

His hat had fallen off, his eyeglass was streaming wildly behind him at the end of its cord, and his face was flushed crimson with excitement and exertion.

He came round the House like a runaway horse, and dashed right into

the Terrible Three without even seeing them.

"Look out!" roared Manners.

"Oh, you ass!"

D'Arcy grasped wildly at Tom Merry to save himself from falling. He caught hold of Tom Merry's hair with one hand and his ear with the other, and hung on.

Tom Merry roared with pain.

"Leggo! Yow! You frabjous ass, leggo!"

"Wun, deah boys!"

And D'Arcy having recovered his balance, released Tom Merry's hair and ear and started off again. The Terrible Three seized hold of him.

"What's the matter?" yelled Lowther.

"Figgins & Co. after you?"

"Ow! No! Wun like anythin'!" gasped D'Arcy.

"But what—?"

"It's the bulldog!"

"Herries' bulldog?"

"Yaas. He's gone mad and bwoken loose, and he's aftah me. Look—there he comes. Wun—wun like anythin'!" shrieked D'Arcy.

Gr-r-r-r!

Round the corner came the bulldog, with jaws open, and foam upon them, and bloodshot eyes glaring in search of a victim.

Herries' bulldog Towser was generally a tame old beast, and he was never known to bite anybody that let him alone—excepting sometimes a playful nip, which Herries said was only his way.

But the juniors had never seen him like this before. Whether the bulldog was rabid or not, the juniors certainly had reason to believe that he was, from his looks. He was rushing right at them, and it was not surprising that the Terrible Three, after one look, joined D'Arcy in his wild rush for safety.

Gr-r-r-r!

The juniors dashed wildly for the House door. Towser dashed on their track; and there was little doubt now that he would have bitten them if he had come upon them.

Blake and Digby, D'Arcy's study-mates, were on the steps of the School House. They were talking cricket with Kangaroo of the Shell and Reilly of the Fourth. They stared blankly at Tom Merry & Co. as they came tearing up the steps.

"Hallo, what's the trouble?" demanded Blake. "Is it the New House bouncers, or what?"

"Mad dog!" roared Manners. "Get inside—quick!"

"Great Scott!"

"Mad as a hattah, deah boys—wun!"

YOU'LL SIMPLY REVEL IN READING HOW THE SCHOOLBOY STRIKERS FARED IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST AUTHORITY!

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

"Oh crumbs!"

The juniors dashed into the House. The sight of the bulldog with its foaming jaws was enough for them. And the thought of hydrophobia sent a chill to their very hearts. They scrambled in, and all dragged together at the big oaken door. It swung to with a terrific slam that rang through the School House.

Outside, Towser scrambled up the steps, snarling and growling.

Mr. Railton, the master of the School House, came out of his study with a frowning brow.

The big door of the School House was always kept wide open on fine days, and the Housemaster's impression was that mischievous juniors had closed it with that terrific slam from a mistaken sense of humour.

"Boys! What have you—How dare you—"

"Mad dog, sir!"

"What?"

"Herries' bulldog has gone mad, sir, and he's loose in the quadrangle!"

"Good heavens!"

Mr. Railton rushed to the Hall window. Outside in the sunny quadrangle, the bulldog could be seen. His foam-flecked jaws were terrifying to behold, and there was madness in his bloodshot eyes.

"Good heavens!" repeated Mr. Railton. "This—this is terrible! How fortunate that you got into the House. Hurry round and see that all the doors are closed, and warn boys not to go out into the quadrangle."

"Yaas, wathah, sir!"

"Unfortunately, there are many boys out of doors. And—great Scott! The Head!"

Mr. Railton's face became almost frozen with horror.

The dignified and stately form of the Head could be seen approaching the School House.

Dr. Holmes had been over to the New House to see Mr. Rateliff, the master of that House. He was crossing the quad again, with his slow and stately motion, a reverend and awe-inspiring figure.

Mr. Railton ran to the door and tore it open again. Mad dog or no mad dog, the Housemaster would not leave the Head alone to his peril. He grasped an umbrella from the stand, the only weapon that was handy.

Cr—r—r—r—r!

That remark from Towser first made the Head aware of his presence.

Dr. Holmes halted suddenly. He stood rooted to the ground, his eyes fixed upon the bulldog as if he were dreaming the horrible sight. But it was, unfortunately, no nightmare. Towser dashed right at the Head, and the Head, with a shriek of terror, fled.

No one had ever seen the grave and reverend Head of St. Jim's sprint before. But he sprinted now, with a speed that showed that he had not quite forgotten the practice on the cinder-path in the far-off days of his youth. He gathered his gown round him and ran.

And Towser ran, too. The sight of a man running will always make a dog run, and perhaps that was Towser's reason—if he had any reason. At all events, he ran, with a horrid growl that sent chills down the Head's spine.

"Oh dear!" gasped Dr. Holmes. "Help! Bless my soul! The dog is mad! Oh dear!"

"This 'ere way, sir!" yelled Taggles, the porter.

The porter's lodge was the nearest refuge. Taggles heroically held the door open till the Head dashed in, and then closed it before Towser could reach it. The Head sank upon a chair, almost fainting with excitement and exhaustion.

"Good heavens!" he gasped. "Thank you, Taggles. How did that dreadful dog get into the quadrangle? In future the gates must be kept closed in case of mad dogs!"

Taggles snorted.

"That there dog belongs to St. Jim's, sir," he said.

"What! Belongs to the school!"

"It's Master Herries' dog, sir," said Taggles. "Master Herries of the Fourth Form, sir."

"Bless my soul! Now I come to think of it, I have seen the dog before," said the Head. "I remember punishing Herries for bringing him into the School House. Oh dear! The horrible creature must be destroyed at once!"

"Ye-es," said Taggles. "'Twon't be an easy matter, sir. There ain't many pussons want to face a mad bulldog, sir."

"Oh dear!"

Taggles watched from the window, prudently keeping the door shut. Towser was in undisputed possession of the quadrangle. Fellows on the playing

The juniors of St. Jim's are up in arms with a vengeance when the Head orders all their pets to be banished from the school! And wild are the scenes of disorder and defiance that follow the juniors' declaration of a strike!

field had taken the alarm, from the yell on all sides of "mad dog," and they had taken refuge in the cricket pavilion and locked themselves in. Other fellows had crowded into the New House: School House and New House boys making for the nearest shelter. Mr. Railton had hurried back into the School House as soon as he saw that the Head was safe in the porter's lodge.

Towser ramped to and fro in the quadrangle, furious.

Tom Merry & Co. watched him, fascinated, from the windows of the School House.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It's frightful! I always said that beastly bulldog had no respect, whatever for a fellow's trousers. But I nevah expected him to turn out like this! He's frightfully mad—perfectly wabid! Where is that ass Hewwies?"

"Where's Herries?"

"Herries, old man, where are you?"

"Here he is!"

Herries of the Fourth had been in the Form-room doing lines, and grinding so hard over his imposition that he had not taken the alarm. Three or four fellows dragged him out to see what his bulldog was doing. Herries came out in a decidedly bad temper. Love me love my dog was a fixed creed with Herries. In his eyes Towser could do

no wrong. He snorted as a roar greeted him.

"Herries, you ass, your bulldog!"

"He's gone mad!"

"He's chased the Head across the quad!"

"You'll be scragged for this!"

"And you will deserve to be scragged, deah boy. I have frequently remarked to you that that wotten bulldog ought to be sent away to a beastly home."

"Silly asses!" said Herries.

"He's mad—mad as a hatter! Where are you going?" asked Tom Merry, as Herries put his hand on the door.

"Didn't you say Towser's broken loose?" demanded Herries.

"Yes."

"Well, I'm going to take him back to his kennel."

"You're what?"

"Going to take him back to his kennel," said Herries calmly. "There will be trouble if he gets into the Head's flower-beds."

"You can't go out! He'll bite you!"

"Rot! Towser won't bite me!"

"He hevvy neably bit me, Hewwies, you—"

"Rats! Towser is jolly particular what he bites, I can tell you!"

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"You can't go out—you shan't!" yelled Blake, grasping his chum by the arm. "Towser's got hydrophobia, and he'll bite you. He won't know you, as he's mad."

"Towser isn't the one that's mad," growled Herries. "I think the whole school has gone dotty. Towser's all right."

"Stay in here, you ass! Mr. Railton has gone for his gun!"

Herries seemed petrified for a moment.

"His gun!" he roared.

"Yes. You have to shoot mad dogs, you know."

"It's the only way, Hewwies, deah boy."

Herries gave a roar like a bull in a state of extreme exasperation.

"Let anybody try to shoot my bulldog, that's all! I'll smash him into little bits, master or not! Let anybody try—"

"Shut up, you ass! Railton will hear you!"

"I don't care!"

Herries dragged the door open and ran out on the steps.

"Collar him!" shouted Tom Merry. "He mustn't go—it'll be his death! Collar the silly cuckoo—quick!"

The juniors dashed at Herries. But Herries ran down the steps and sped across the quad, straight to where Towser sat, with glaring eyes and foaming jaws.

CHAPTER 2.

The Head Comes Down Heavy!

"TOWSER! Towser, old boy!"

The juniors halted, gazing on in horror. They were in instant expectation of seeing the devoted Herries bitten by the mad dog, and the idea almost paralysed them. How was Towser to know his master if he were mad?

"Towser, old fellow!"

Herries had reached the bulldog. He was holding him and fondling him, and Towser, instead of biting him, snuggled his big nose against Herries' waistcoat affectionately. Herries stroked him and

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patted him, and Towser showed not the least inclination to bite him.

The juniors gazed at the dog and its master in wonder.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in amazement. "He isn't mad at all, dear boys—or else it's a sudden and remarkable recovery."

Towser evidently was not mad. A mad dog would not have snuggled up to his master in that way and licked his hand. The juniors approached rather gingerly. Herries looked round at them with a frowning brow.

"What silly ass said Towser was mad?" he demanded.

"Weally, Hewvies—"

"It was Gussy gave the alarm," said Tom Merry. "He was chasing Gussy, and he looked mad enough. Dash it all, Herries, he chased the Head across the quad—he'd have bitten him if Dr. Holmes hadn't got into the porter's lodge."

"The Head must have been looking at him, then," said Herries, with a grunt. "Towser doesn't like being looked at; it worries him."

"He chased us, too," said Monty Lowther.

"I dare say your face worried him," said Herries tartly.

"Why, you silly ass—"

"Somebody's let him loose," said Herries, "and somebody must have been tormenting him to make him in such a state. He was so excited he didn't know what he was doing. You know Brooke caught Levison tormenting him once. I shouldn't wonder if the cad has been doing it again. My hat, if he has, I'll—"

"Here comes the Head."

Dr. Holmes had seen Herries capture the raging bulldog, with horror and fear for what would happen to the junior. But when Towser was quiet it was clear that he had not been mad at all, but only wildly excited.

The Head left the porter's lodge and advanced upon the scene. His face was flushed and his eyes gleaming. It was not often that the kind old Head of St. Jim's was angry, but he was angry now. He had torn across the quad under the eyes of the whole school, and he knew that he had looked utterly undignified, if not ridiculous. There would be chuckling remarks in all the studies about the way the Head had sprinted with Herries' bulldog after him. The mere thought of the ridicule made Dr. Holmes turn hot and cold all over.

He had never been so incensed as he was now, as he bore down upon Herries.

"Herries! This is your dog?"

"Yes, sir," said Herries, with a grip on Towser's collar, and soothing his huge favourite. Towser seemed to get restive at sight of the Head, as though he had a strong desire to set his teeth in those august calves.

"I understood," said the Head, "that the animal was suffering from rabies. Is it not the case, Herries?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"Then there is no possible excuse for this—this ferocious outbreak," said the Head sternly. "There has been trouble about that dog before, Herries. I have done wrong in allowing such a ferocious creature to be kept in the school. The dog must either be destroyed or sent away from the school immediately. Take it back to the kennel and chain it up, Herries. I shall expect it to be removed from St. Jim's within one hour. If it remains after that time, I shall give orders for it to be instantly destroyed."

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Herries stared blankly at the Head.

"Destroyed!?" he exclaimed. "My bulldog—Towser—destroyed!?"

"Undoubtedly, Herries."

"My old Towser! Why, he's as harmless as a baby!" said Herries. "He's as gentle as a dove, sir. Obedient as—as a lamb, sir. Does everything I tell him. He'll eat anything, sir, and he's very fond of boys—"

Some of the juniors chuckled. Herries was a little confused, and he was certainly putting it in a way that might be misunderstood.

"No more, Herries. Take him away!"

"But—but I can't send him away from the school, sir!" stammered Herries. "What am I to do without old Towser?"

"Cannot!" thundered the Head.

"I—I mean, I'd rather not, sir."

"Herries, that ferocious animal is a public danger." Dr. Holmes raised his hand sternly. "If he is not gone from the school in one hour, he will be shot. I shall give orders to that effect."

"Oh, sir!"

"That will do, Herries."

And the Head swept away. Fellows were gathering round on all sides now that it was known that Towser was not mad, and that Herries had a grasp on his collar. Herries had succeeded in soothing his favourite into quietness. There was sympathy in a good many faces. The affection of Herries for his bulldog was well known, though not many fellows besides Herries could see any grounds for it.

"It's rough," said Kangaroo of the Shell. "But he'll have to go, Herries. You can't expect the Head to be chased across the quad by a giddy bulldog."

"Wathah not!"

"It's all Gussy's fault," growled Herries.

"Weally, Hewvies!" exclaimed the swell of St. Jim's, in surprise and indignation. "I fail to see how you make that out."

"You said he was mad, you chump!"

"He came wushin' at me suddenly, with his howlible jaws open," said D'Arcy, appealing to all present. "He was foam'n' howlible, and his eyes glawin'. Of course, I natuwallly came to the conclusion that he was mad. I wan for it."

"And we ran for it," said Tom Merry, grinning. "Mad or not, Towser was in an awful state, and he would have bitten anybody he could have got near. You saw the state he was in yourself, Herries."

Herries snorted.

"Yes, but you ought to have known he wasn't rabid. I knew he wasn't. Poor old Towser! He was upset. Somebody's been tormenting him. That's the only way to account for it. And I won't send him away from St. Jim's. Nobody will take care of him as I do. The Head will have to come round."

"I'm afraid he won't," said Blake.

"No fear!"

"Oh, rats!" said Herries. "Look here, Towser's chain is broken. You know what a jolly strong chain it was—you can see for yourself. He must have been tormented by somebody, and wanted to get at him badly. I shouldn't wonder if it was Levison again. You know the cad is cruel to animals. It ain't Towser that ought to be destroyed—it's Levison. The Head can have him shot if he likes. He's jolly well not going to have my bulldog shot!"

And Herries gripped the fragment of chain tightly, and led Towser, quite quiet now, round the School House, followed by most of the juniors.

Behind the School House, and near the woodshed, was a large shed where the juniors kept their pets, and which was known at St. Jim's as the "menagerie." Many of the fellows had pets, and they were not allowed to have them in the Houses. That shed had been specially constructed for the purpose, and there was plenty of room for cages galore.

Tom Merry uttered a sudden exclamation as they came in sight of the shed. On the roof a junior was crouched, with a pallor of fear in his face, and wild eyes. It was Levison of the Fourth, and it was evident that he had taken refuge there to escape from the bulldog.

"Levison!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

Levison glared down at them.

"Take that dog away, Herries!" he roared.

"Oh, you're there, are you?" said Herries, looking up at him furiously. "What have you been doing to Towser, Levison, you—you polecat?"

"I—I haven't been doing anything to him!" panted Levison. "I saw him loose, and bolted up here to get out of his way. He's not safe."

"You rotter! I know you've been worrying him," said Herries.

"I tell you I haven't!"

"What were you doing here at all?"

"I came here to see my white mice. Then that beast went for me—"

"I don't believe a word of it," said Herries grimly.

"Look here, Herries—"

"I believe you've been tormenting Towser. I'm going to chain him up, but I'm going to put on a long chain, so that he can reach you if you get down."

"You—you rotter!"

"Look at the way Towser is looking at him," said Herries. "Just look at his face, you fellows. Doesn't that show Levison has been hurting him?"

"Looks like it," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

And, indeed, at the sight of Levison, the bulldog's savage excitement seemed to be returning. His eyes glared, and he showed his teeth, and he made a vain effort to spring away from Herries in the direction of the shed. Levison turned white, though he was safe on the roof of the shed.

Herries entered the shed, and returned in a minute with a long, strong chain. He fastened one end to Towser's collar, and the other to the staple in the wall. The bulldog was secure now, and could not get loose, the new chain being too thick for the strongest dog to break. But he had ample room to keep guard over Levison.

The cad of the Fourth could not descend from the roof without getting within reach of Towser's teeth. And Towser's look was sufficient to indicate what would happen then.

Levison ground his teeth with rage.

"Will you take that dog away, Herries?" he yelled.

"No, I won't!"

"I'll complain to the Head."

"That won't hurt much; he can't be more down on Towser than he is now, thanks to you, you cad! You can stay there, as you've got there."

"I won't stay here! I won't—"

"Get down, then, if you like to risk it," said Herries. And he walked away.

Levison panted.

"You fellows! Take that bulldog into the shed—"

"Rats!" said the fellows all together.

"Wathah not!" said Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass severely upon Levison. "The evidence is not conclusive, Levison, but the presumption is

that you have been tormentin' Towsah. We know that you are capable of such wascally conduct, because Bwooke found you doin' it one day. You can wemain there. The Head has ordahed Towser to be sent away. I can't say I'm sowwy myself, as the beast has no wespect for a fellow's best twousahs, but it is wuff on Hewwies. You are a wottah, Levison. Wemain there and be hanged, deah boy!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy walked away, and the rest of the juniors followed, grinning. No one wanted to help Levison, and no one had any sympathy to waste upon him.

Levison was left alone, watching the bulldog—and the bulldog watching Levison.

Towser lay down, quietly enough, and closed his eyes as if asleep—but whenever Levison made a movement, Towser opened one eye. And Levison decided not to risk a descent from the roof of the shed. The results would have been too painful.

CHAPTER 3.

Looking for Pongo!

"ANYBODY seen Pongo?" D'Arcy minor—Wally of the Third Form—asked that question anxiously.

"Anybody seen Pongo?"

Wally was asking that question up and down the School House. He had been over to the New House, too, asking it, and nobody had been able to answer him. Pongo seemed to have vanished.

Wally came back to the School House, looking very worried. Pongo, the shaggy little mongrel, was the pride of Wally's heart, and was as dear to the scamp of the Third as Towser was to Herries. And Pongo was lost!

"Pongo gone?" asked Tom Merry, as Wally repeated the question to a group of juniors on the steps of the School House. "More trouble! Why don't you keep an eye on him?"

"Yes, rather!" said Monty Lowther humorously. "You should keep a watch on him, Wally, or a chain. Or a watch and chain."

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Wally crossly. "This is jolly serious. The Head is in a frightful wax about Herries' bulldog getting loose, and if there's any trouble over Pongo, he might have Pongo sent away, too. It's all Herries' fault, and that rotten bulldog—"

"What's that?" growled Herries.

"Pongo was in the menagerie," said Wally. "I hadn't put his chain on; he always keeps in his kennel, except—except when he—he doesn't—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You know Towser always goes for him if he gets the chance. Towser getting loose must have scared Pongo away, and now he's lost. There was a lot of trouble the other day through Reilly's monkey getting into the Head's garden, and if Pongo gets there and does any damage, the Head may not like it."

"Faith, and he's pretty sure not to loike it!" grinned Reilly of the Fourth. "My monkey didn't do much harm, but—"

"Better look out that he doesn't do any harm now," grunted Wally. "He's escaped."

"Phwat!"

"Towser frightened the whole menagerie out of their wits when he got loose. The rabbits were scared to death, and they'd have scattered if they hadn't been in cages. Your monkey has bolted. Anyway, he wasn't there when I went to look for Pongo."

"Oh, tare and 'ounds! It's all the fault of that rotten bulldog—"

"Rubbish!" roared Herries. "Towser wouldn't have bitten your filthy monkey! Towser is jolly particular what he bites!"

"But the monkey doesn't know how particular he is," grinned Monty Lowther. "And he can't be so particular, as he was going to bite Levison."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There'll be trouble over that monkey," groaned Reilly. "He's a little devil intirely when he gets loose. But he was tied up; I tied him up—"

"He's loose now," grunted Wally. "Perhaps Levison untied him. It would be his idea of a joke. You know you thumped him the other day for tormenting the monkey. That chap ought

"I believe he's in there somewhere," said Wally, joining Tom Merry. "I say, Taggy, my dog's lost—"

"Jolly good thing, too, Master Wally."

"You might look into the conservatory, Taggles, and see if he's there," suggested Tom Merry. "We don't want him to do any damage, you know."

Taggles grunted.

"I'll look," he said, "and if he's there, Master Merry, I'll give him such a larruping, he won't come there agin in a 'urry!"

And Taggles laid down the hose, and picked up a stick, and went into the greenhouse.

Wally's eyes gleamed.

"He's jolly well not going to touch Pongo!" he exclaimed.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Tom Merry.



As Towser, growling and snarling fiercely, dashed at Dr. Holmes, the Head turned and fled. "Oh dear!" he gasped. "Help! The dog is mad!"

to be suffocated. But the trouble is, I can't find Pongo. You chaps might help me look for him. If there's any more trouble while the Head's in such a wax, Pongo will get it in the neck."

Tom Merry & Co. willingly joined in the search for Pongo. The sentence had gone forth against Towser, and if Pongo was guilty of any lawlessness at the same time, it was pretty certain that he would get the same sentence. But Pongo was not to be found.

The juniors hunted in all likely and unlikely places—with the exception of the Head's garden. They were not allowed to enter there.

Tom Merry looked over the gate into the garden. Taggles was at work there with a garden-hose, and the Shell fellow called to him.

"Taggy, old man, have you seen Pongo?"

"No, I ain't, and I don't want to," growled Taggles.

"You—" He made a clutch at Wally, but it was too late. The fag was over the gate and dashing after Taggles.

There was a sudden uproar from the greenhouse. The angry voice of Taggles could be heard, and the loud barking of a dog. There was a crash.

"My hat!" exclaimed Manners.

"It's Pongo!"

The juniors scrambled over the gate, and rushed upon the scene.

It was a startling scene that met their gaze as they looked into the greenhouse.

Pongo, in his rambles, had discovered—or raided—a large bone, and he had retired to the seclusion of the greenhouse to worry it and enjoy it to the full. He had been, naturally, angry at the sudden entrance of Taggles, who announced his arrival with a smart cut from the stick. Pongo barked and growled, and fled. He seemed to have an impression that Taggles was after

his bone. He took the bone in his teeth, and fled round the greenhouse, with the angry porter after him.

"Get hout, you beast!" roared Taggles. "Get hout! Houtside, I say!"

He lashed at the dog again with the stick, and there was a crash. He had caught a flower-pot instead of Pongo with the stick, and the pot was reduced to fragments.

"Let him alone, Taggy!" roared Wally. "He'll come out quietly if you don't hit him."

"You get hout of this place, Master Wally. You ain't allowed in 'ere!"

Taggles had made another rush at Pongo. Pongo had dropped the bone now, and he scrambled away among flower-pots, reckless of the destruction he was causing. He scrambled upon a shelf to escape from Taggles, and a blow of Taggles' stick went through the window, shattering the glass.

Pongo barked furiously and leaped down and ran. Taggles laboured after him, lashing away.

They dashed out of the greenhouse, leaving wreckage behind them. Pongo had given up his bone as a bad job by this time, and was thinking only of escape. He took a short cut across the flower-beds, with deplorable results to the flower-beds. Taggles, in his rage, trampled after him, doing as much damage as Pongo. He came up with the mongrel and lashed at him, and smote a glass frame to fragments.

Wally ran at the school porter and butted him furiously. Whatever happened, Wally was not going to see Pongo thrashed. He butted the stout porter fairly in the back, and Taggles sprawled among glass frames, with crash on crash.

"Oh!" roared Taggles. "Ho! Groogh!"

"You rotter!" yelled Wally. "How dare you hit my dog!"

"Ow!" groaned Taggles. "I'm 'urt! Ow! 'Elp!"

"What is all this? What—what—"

It was the Head.

As the angry headmaster came down the garden path there was a wild rush of the juniors to escape.

The last of them had tumbled over the gate as Dr. Holmes came upon the scene.

Taggles was still sprawling among the smashed frames, and Dr. Holmes halted and looked down upon him with an angry frown.

"Taggles, get up immediately! How dare you get intoxicated and sprawl about in my flower-beds?" exclaimed the Head.

"Ow!"

"Get up immediately! You are discharged, Taggles! I will have no intoxication! I have spoken to you upon the subject before."

"Ow! Yow!"

"I have been loath to part with an old servant," said the Head, "but this passes all bounds. When I find you in a state of disgusting intoxication, sprawling among flower-beds—"

Taggles sat up in a broken frame.

"I ain't intoxicated!" he roared.

"Taggles!"

"It's that there dorg!"

"What dog?"

Taggles scrambled up. He looked so crimson and so wildly excited that the Head's suspicion certainly seemed reasonable. But for once Taggles had not been near the bottle.

"It's that dorg, sir—Master Wally's dorg, sir. He's been in 'ere, doin' hawful damage, and I was a-chasin' of him hout, and Master D'Arcy 'e pushed me hover there, sir."

The Head pursed his lips.

"Then you are not intoxicated, Taggles?"

"Ain't touched a blessed drop!" gasped Taggles. "Sides which, sir, I'm a teetotaler. It was that there dorg; and a nice lot of damndidge 'e's done!"

The Head surveyed the damage, and his frown grew darker.

"This passes all bounds!" he exclaimed. "I myself was nearly bitten by Herries' dog, and now my flower-beds are wrecked by D'Arcy minor's dog! It passes all patience."

"And the green'ouse, sir—simply wrecked!"

"I have been too lenient. I shall consider what is to be done. This cannot be endured."

And the Head stalked away in great anger.

Pongo had wriggled through the gate, and Wally had borne him off in safety. But the juniors who, on the other side of the wall, heard the Head's angry words, looked at one another grimly.

"There's going to be trouble!" said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah! It's wotten!"

"Faith, and I wish I could find my monkey!" said Reilly. "The silly baste ought to understand that this isn't the time to get lost."

"Reilly here?" called out Figgins of the New House, coming up at a run. "Oh, here you are! I've been looking for you. Your monkey—"

"Have you seen him?"

"Yes!" gasped Figgins. "He's in the New House, and he's got into Mr. Ratcliff's study, and he won't come out."

"Oh, help!"

And the juniors hurried over to the New House. Of all the persons at St. Jim's, Mr. Ratcliff, the Housemaster of the New House, was the very last person to be patient with Obediah Walker—that being the name of Reilly's pet. And just as the crowd of juniors rushed into the New House to look for Obediah, Mr. Ratcliff came out.

CHAPTER 4.

Mr. Ratcliff Loses His Head!

MR. RATCLIFF paused and looked at the crowd of excited juniors in the Hall of the New House, and his face set in a dark frown.

Frowns came more easily to Mr. Ratcliff than smiles. The master of the New House at St. Jim's was not a good-tempered or a kind-hearted man. The juniors paused. They had hoped to be able to capture Obediah and carry him off before Mr. Ratcliff discovered that he was in his study; but there was evidently no chance of that now.

"What are you School House boys doing here?" demanded Mr. Ratcliff. "I suppose this is some more of the folly I have heard too much of? You came here for a quarrel, I presume, with the boys of my House?"

That was just like Mr. Ratcliff. School House and New House at St. Jim's were always waging warfare to settle the never-to-be-settled question which was Cock House at St. Jim's. But the House rows and raids, though they sometimes ended in bloodshed—from the nose—were always carried on in a humorous spirit, and there was perfect good feeling on both sides. Mr. Ratcliff chose to regard them as quarrels, and to look upon them with an angry eye.

"Oh, no, sir!" said Tom Merry, restraining his intense desire to tell Mr. Ratcliff what he thought of him. "Certainly not, sir!"

"They—they came over with me, sir," said Figgins.

"Indeed! Then why all this air of hurry and excitement?"

"If you please, sir—"

Figgins halted. He didn't want to explain that Reilly's monkey was in Mr. Ratcliff's study. There was a chance yet that Obediah might get out undiscovered.

"Well, Figgins?" said Mr. Ratcliff grimly.

"You—you see, sir—"

"I do not see," said Mr. Ratcliff coldly. "You School House boys will leave this House at once. I do not approve of this endless friction between the

THEIR BRONCO IS A BIKE!

"Our tandem cycle's got hosses licked," say Shorty Collins and Puddenhead Wilkins, the cycling cowboys. "She don't need to be fed, she don't ever git tired, she don't put her foot in no pot-holes, and she don't ever bolt or stray. Nossir, it takes wise guys like us to find them sort of things out!"

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Houses. I have said so before. Kindly go."

And Tom Merry & Co. went. There was no help for it.

Mr. Ratcliff watched them out of the House, and then gave Figgins a lecture.

Figgins listened to it with great outward meekness, boiling inwardly. Then Mr. Ratcliff went to his study, and closed the door with a slam.

"Oh, my only hat!" groaned Figgins. "What's going to happen now?"

"What's the trouble?" asked Kerr, as he joined his leader with Fatty Wynn. In times of trouble the faithful Co. were always on hand.

"It's Reilly's monkey. He's in Ratty's study."

"Oh, great Scott!"

"I fetched Reilly in to persuade the little beast to come out," said Figgins. "He won't take any notice of anybody but Reilly. Ratty's dropped on us, and sent the School House chaps away. I don't know what will happen now."

"Trouble, I fancy," said Kerr, with a whistle.

The three juniors drew as near as they dared to Mr. Ratcliff's study door. They felt pretty certain that there would be trouble. Obediah was a very obstinate monkey, and very mischievous. He never took the least notice of anybody but Reilly. Indeed, the Belfast junior declared that that was why he had named him Obediah Walker, because he would never give in. And Mr. Ratcliff was not tactful with animals. He disliked animals almost as much as he disliked boys.

Mr. Ratcliff grunted as he sat down in his study. He was dissatisfied. He had reprimanded the juniors. But he was dissatisfied, because they had given him no excuse for inflicting lines or a caning.

Mr. Ratcliff pushed his long, thin legs under his table, and then started, and drew them out again hurriedly.

"Dear me! There is an animal in the room—"

There was certainly an animal under the table. It had taken refuge there when Mr. Ratcliff came in. The Housemaster jumped up and picked up a cane. He fancied that it was the House cat that had wandered into his study, and he intended to drive it out.

He threw open the study door, and poked under the table with the cane.

"Shoo, shoo, shoo!" he said. Chatter, chatter, chatter!

Mr. Ratcliff jumped. It was evidently not a cat. He stooped down and peered under the table, and started at the sight of two glittering eyes.

"Good heavens! It is some wild animal!" Mr. Ratcliff gasped.

He retreated hurriedly to the door. Monteith of the Sixth, the head prefect of the New House, was passing down the passage, and Mr. Ratcliff called to him:

"Monteith, kindly come here a moment!"

"Yes, sir," said the prefect, coming to the door.

"There is some animal in my study," said Mr. Ratcliff, in an agitated voice. "I saw two ferocious eyes. I—I— Perhaps some wild animal has escaped from a menagerie. It may be dangerous—"

"I'll see, sir."

"Take care, Monteith!"

Monteith stooped down and lifted the edge of the table cover. He started a little as he caught the glittering eyes, but he looked long enough to see what the animal was.



"My hat! It's a monkey!"

"A monkey!" exclaimed Mr. Ratcliff, astonished and greatly relieved. "Dear me! How could a monkey possibly get into my study? Surely no one in the House has a monkey?"

"There's been trouble among the juniors' pets, sir. A bulldog got loose, and scared some of the animals out. I think," said Monteith. "This monkey belongs to a boy in the Fourth Form. Shall I take it away?"

"Please do, Monteith. And I will see, too, that the owner is properly punished for allowing his monkey to get into my study."

Monteith reached under the table; but the monkey was not to be caught. He squirmed out on the other side of the table, and promptly swarmed up the curtains at the window. There, out of reach, he chattered at the prefect.

"Don't quite see how we're to get at him, sir," said Monteith.

"I think I can reach him with the cane," said Mr. Ratcliff, striding towards the window.

"I say, sir! Isn't it rather rough to thrash the little beggar?" said Monteith, as the Housemaster lashed at Obediah Walker with vicious cuts.

"When I want your advice, I will ask for it, Monteith," replied Mr. Ratcliff acidly.

"Oh, very well, sir!"

And the prefect bit his lip and left the study, leaving Mr. Ratcliff to deal with Obediah Walker unaided.

Lash, lash, lash!

Obediah Walker was just within reach of the cane, and Mr. Ratcliff's lashes made him chatter at a frightful rate. Obediah Walker scrambled along the curtain pole, and over the curtain, seeking to escape the cruel lashes. He made a leap from the curtain pole to the mantelpiece, with disastrous results to the clock. There was a terrific crash as the clock smashed down into the fender.

Mr. Ratcliff gasped with rage.

"I—I will flay the wretched beast!" he panted.

Lash, lash, lash!

Obediah scuttled round the study, with the Housemaster after him. In his terror the monkey did not seem to notice the open door, or perhaps the sight of Figgins & Co. in the passage frightened him from it. He scrambled

up the curtains again and sat on the pole, chattering with terror. Mr. Ratcliff lashed up to him, and caught him a terrific swipe across the back. The terrified monkey leaped down and landed on Mr. Ratcliff's head.

"Ow!" roared the Housemaster. "Help!"

He clutched wildly at the monkey.

But Obediah Walker, having got a hold, was not disposed to let it go. He fastened a grip of iron on Mr. Ratcliff's scanty locks.

"Ow! Oh! Help—help!"

There was a yell of laughter from the passage. Mr. Ratcliff, wild with terror himself now, rushed out of the study. The monkey was tearing his hair and hurting him, and Mr. Ratcliff did not like pain when he was the individual who got it.

"Help! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chatter, chatter, chatter! Fellows gathered on all sides at the sight of the Housemaster rushing along the passage with the monkey clinging to his hair and his shoulders.

A yell of laughter greeted the extraordinary sight.

"Help! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Ratcliff rushed into the quad range.

He was so frightened that he hardly knew what he was doing. Fortunately, Obediah Walker was frightened, too, and anxious to escape. He whipped off Mr. Ratcliff's shoulders, and vanished into the ivy on the wall.

The Housemaster stood clutching at his torn locks and panting for breath.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Monteith!" yelled Mr. Ratcliff. "How dare you laugh?"

"I—I— Excuse me, I— Ha, ha, ha!"

"Figgins! You are laughing! How dare you laugh! Take a hundred lines!"

"Yes, sir! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take two hundred lines! Take—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Ratcliff, beside himself with rage, rushed across the quadrangle to the School House. It was no use giving Figgins lines—he wanted to get at the owner of the monkey. And he burst into Dr. Holmes' study like a whirlwind, almost incoherent in his rage.

It was the last straw!

Ten minutes later there appeared a notice on the notice-board in both Houses which the St. Jim's fellows read with utter dismay.

CHAPTER 5.

An Indignation Meeting!

"ROTTER!"

"Yaas, wafah!"

"Beastly!"

"We won't stand it!"

"Never!"

A wildly excited crowd had gathered before the notice-board in the School House. There, in the handwriting of the Head of St. Jim's, was the notice:

"Notice to the school. Owing to the trouble caused by pets kept by junior boys, all such pets are ordered to be sent away from the school before twelve o'clock to-morrow morning. No junior boys will in future be permitted to keep pets of any description whatsoever. — J. HOLMES, Headmaster."

The senior boys who saw the notice grinned for the most part. Some of THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1436.

them were sympathetic. But no one was surprised. After the Head had been chased by Herries' bulldog, and his greenhouse and flower-beds had been wrecked by Pongo, and Mr. Ratcliff had had his last few locks torn by Obediah Walker, it was not surprising that a general and unsparing decree had gone forth against all pets whatsoever.

It would not have been quite just to exclude some pets rather than others. The Head had been just with a vengeance. He had excluded the whole show.

Not only Towser and Pongo and Obediah Walker, but the white rabbits, and the white mice, and the parrots, and the canaries!

It was overwhelming.

More than half the junior boys in the school kept pets of some sort or another. And their indignation was at boiling-point at this crushing decree.

For once St. Jim's was united. School House and New House agreed that it was not to be stood. Gore, Mellish, and Crooke, and other "outsiders" were at one with Tom Merry & Co. They all had pets.

"We won't stand it!" roared Kangaroo of the Shell. "I'm not going to send away my white rabbits."

"I'm not going to part with my white mice!" yelled Gore.

"And what about my parrot?" howled Kerruish.

"And my spaniel!"

"And my canary!"

"It's rotten!"

"Outrageous!"

"It's the limit!"

"Now, then, shut up, you kids!" said Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, coming down the passage. "You'd get into trouble if the masters heard you talking that rot."

The juniors surrounded Kildare at once.

"Kildare, old man, go and tell the Head we can't have it."

"He'll listen to you, Kildare."

"Put it to him that it's not playing the game, Kildare, old man."

The Sixth Former grinned.

"Can't be done," he said. "Those blessed pets have caused too much trouble. There's a lot of damage done in the Head's garden—"

"We'll have a whip round for it," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"The Head's been chased by a bulldog!"

"That's Levison's fault. He was tormenting Towser," growled Herries.

"Now Mr. Ratcliff's had his hair torn out by Reilly's monkey," went on Kildare.

"He was whacking him!" said Reilly indignantly. "Figgins told me—whacking him with a cane. Obediah Walker wouldn't stand that."

"Couldn't be expected to," said Bernard Glyn. "Why couldn't Ratty let him alone?"

"Go to the Head, Kildare, and explain to him—"

Kildare shook his head.

"As a matter of fact, I have spoken to him," he said.

"Good old Kildare!" said Tom Merry. "What did he say?"

"He said that all pets that were not removed from the school by twelve o'clock to-morrow morning would be destroyed."

"Destroyed! Oh, great Scott!"

"I should utterly refuse to have my canary destroyed."

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"There'll be trouble if anybody begins destroying Towser!" growled Herries.

"The best thing you kids can do is to take it quietly," said Kildare.

"Now, don't let's have any more fuss. If you speak disrespectfully of the Head, I shall have to cane you. Don't make me do it. I've done what I can for you, but the Head is really angry, and there's nothing to be done. Better grin and bear it."

And Kildare walked away.

"Kildare's a good sort," said Manners, "but he doesn't understand."

"Let's go to the Head!" howled Gore. "We'll go in a deputation—the whole giddy Lower School! They're not going to shift my white mice."

"Jolly good ideah!" said D'Arcy. "I am perfectly willin' to be the chairman of the deputation—"

"Oh, come off!"

"Weally, Gore, what is wequired for the chairman of a deputation is a fellow of tact and judgment—"

"Yes, and that bars you out!" growled Gore. "And if all pets are to be sent away, Study No. 6 will have to part with their pet lunatic!"

"Let's all go together," said Tom Merry. "Some of you run over and fetch Figgins & Co. The deputation ought to represent both Houses."

"Hear, hear!"

"Every blessed fellow ought to go!" said Mellish of the Fourth. Mellish kept pets himself, not because he was fond of them, but because he made little profits by selling them to other fellows.

"Where's Levison? Levison ought to come; he can jaw to the Head better than any of you."

"Levison's on the roof of the menagerie, and he's been there an hour," said Herries; "and he's going to stop there!"

"What on earth's keeping him there?" demanded Mellish, in astonishment.

"My bulldog's watching him!"

"Oh!"

"Levison started all this trouble by tormenting Towser," said Herries. "If Towser hadn't been worried, he wouldn't have broken his chain; and if he hadn't broken his chain, he wouldn't have got loose; and if he hadn't got loose, he wouldn't have scared Pongo and Obediah Walker out of the menagerie; and if they hadn't been—"

"My hat! That sounds like the House that Jack Built!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "This is the rotter who worried the dog who scared the monkey who scalped the Housemaster—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tain't a laughing matter!" roared Herries. "The Head's down on Towser because of Levison, and I think we'd better tell him. If he wants to send anybody away, he'd better send Levison. I think—"

"Here comes Figgins."

"Coming to see the Head, Figgy?" asked Tom Merry.

"What-ho!" said Figgins emphatically.

"Follow your leader, then!" said Tom Merry.

And the whole crowd of juniors followed the captain of the Shell to the Head's study. Knox, the prefect, met them in the passage.

"Clear out of here!" he exclaimed.

"How dare you approach the Head's study—a disorderly crowd! How dare you! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Knox was shoved aside, and he rolled over. Prefect or not, the juniors were in no mood to be bothered by Knox. The Sixth Former sat on the floor and

gasped, and the juniors swarmed on, some of them treading on Knox's legs by accident as they passed. Tom Merry knocked at the study door and opened it. An avalanche of juniors invaded the study.

CHAPTER 6.

Rather Exciting!

DR. HOLMES started up from his seat.

Tom Merry & Co. swarmed in breathlessly.

"Boys, what does this mean?"

"If you please, sir—"

"Leave my study at once, all of you!"

"Weally, Doctah Holmes—"

"We want to speak to you, sir," said Tom Merry respectfully. "It's about the pets, sir. It has come out that the bulldog had been tormented by a rotter—ahem—by a boy, sir, and that was how he came to break his chain—"

"Indeed! What boy was it?"

Tom Merry hesitated. It occurred to him, rather late in that day, that it would be sneaking to give Levison away to the Head. Cruelty to animals was an offence the Head would always have punished severely.

"Well, Merry!"

"I—I don't want to give the chap away, sir, but—we all know it—"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Have you proof?"

"Well, no, sir—"

"Does the boy in question admit it?"

"N-no, sir!"

"Then how do you know?"

"Ahem! We do know, sir—don't we, you chaps?"

"Yes, sir. We all know it."

"Yaas, wathah, sir!"

The Head made an impatient gesture.

"If this is the case, it is another reason why the pets should be sent away, if there are boys here who cannot be trusted to treat animals with common humanity!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, sir!"

That was an unexpected view of the case.

"That's all right, sir," said Herries. "We're going to make an example of the cad, sir, so that he won't do it again. We're going to pulverize him, sir!"

"We're going to smash him!"

"We're going to scrag him, sir!"

"What—what? I forbid you to touch the boy! How dare you utter threats of violence in my presence!" the Head exclaimed angrily.

"Oh crumbs! On the wrong track again!" murmured Blake.

"There have been outrageous scenes in the school to-day!" said the Head, breathing hard. "I have been attacked by a bulldog; my garden has been wrecked by a—wretched mongrel; Mr. Ratcliff has been attacked by a savage monkey—his hair has been torn out by the roots! An end must come to all this! I wish to be impartial. I shall make no distinction between one animal and another! All must be sent away from St. Jim's! I give you all until twelve o'clock to-morrow to send them away! That is all!"

"But, sir—"

"The matter is now ended, Merry!"

"If you please, sir—"

"Say no more, Figgins!"

"Weally, Doctah Holmes—"

"Silence!"

"We'll all promise to look after the pets, and see that they don't get loose any more, sir, and—"

"Leave my study!"

"You—you won't let them off, sir?"

"Certainly not! And any boy who

does not leave my study immediately will be caned!" said the Head angrily.

"Oh!"

The juniors crowded out of the study. There was no help for it. They rejoined the crowd in the passage. Knox, the prefect, was pushing his way through, to get to the study. He wanted to draw the Head's attention to the way he had been treated. But the juniors were fed-up with Knox. They were in a dangerous state of excitement, and if Knox had had a little more tact, he would have let them alone. But Knox was not gifted with tact.

"You young rascals!" the prefect said, between his teeth. "I'll report you all to the Head—every one of you! I'll—" "Oh, shut up!" said Tom Merry.

"What!" roared Knox. "Do you know you are talking to a prefect, Merry?"

"I know I'm talking to a silly chump!"

Knox made a clutch at Tom Merry. That was enough for the juniors. They piled on Knox, and rolled him over on the floor, and bumped him there, hard. They jerked his collar off, and split his jacket, and tore his tie off. They swarmed away, leaving the prefect on the floor, beside himself with rage, and utterly out of breath.

A noisy crowd gathered in the Hall again. Knox came staggering down the passage, and Kildare, who had been brought out of his study by the noise, stared at him.

"What on earth have you been doing, Knox?" he demanded.

Knox stuttered with fury.

"It's these young hounds—they've assaulted me—they've—"

"And we'll do it again!" roared Manners.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Kildare knitted his brows.

"This won't do!" he exclaimed sharply. "All of you go to your studies at once. Do you hear? Every boy to his study instantly!"

The juniors did not move.

As a rule, Kildare's word was law. Not only because he was head prefect of the House, and captain of the school, but because he was the most popular fellow at St. Jim's as well. But Kildare's influence was gone now. The fellows were in a state of great excitement, and they would not obey even Kildare.

"Do you hear me?" thundered Kildare.

"Yaas!"

"Then obey me!"

"Wats!"

Kildare jumped.

"What—what!"

"We're not going to our studies," said Blake determinedly. "If our pets are taken away, and we're ridden over roughshod, we'll jolly well go on strike!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Go to your studies!" shouted Kildare.

"Shan't!"

"Go and eat coke!"

It was the first time Kildare had been disregarded and disobeyed by the juniors. He could hardly believe his ears at first. He strode menacingly towards the mob of juniors, but they did not flinch. He laid a strong grasp on Tom Merry to take him away by force. Tom Merry resisted.

"Rescue!" bawled Figgins.

A dozen juniors piled on Kildare. They did not handle him roughly, as they had handled Knox. They liked old Kildare too well for that. But they

held him a prisoner, with so many hands grasping him that he could not stir. Kildare panted.

"You'll be sorry for this, you young rascals!" he exclaimed.

"I'll call Mr. Railton!" said Knox.

"Stop him!" shouted Tom Merry.

A score of juniors rushed after Knox; but he dodged them, and ran for the Masters' room. It was a new sight in the School House of St. Jim's—that of a prefect running from a mob of juniors. Knox tore open the door of the Masters' Common-room, and rushed in.

Three or four masters were there. Mr. Railton, who was talking to Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, swung round.

"What is the matter? What—what does this mean?"

The Housemaster could hardly believe his eyes as Knox rushed in, panting,



and the juniors halted at the open doorway, whooping.

"Dear me!" said little Mr. Lathom. "Is it a riot?"

Mr. Railton strode from the room.

The juniors gave way before him, and the School House master came striding into the Hall, where Kildare was struggling in the grasp of the rioters. The Housemaster's brow was black as thunder.

"What does this mean?" he asked. "Release Kildare at once! Instantly!"

The juniors looked at one another. They could not disobey the Housemaster. Matters had not got to that pitch yet. Kildare was released.

"It's all right, sir," he said; "they—they didn't mean any harm. They are a bit excited, sir, that's all."

"Good old Kildare!" said Blake.

"Go to your studies immediately!" said Mr. Railton sternly.

And the juniors went. With slow and reluctant steps they dispersed, muttering and whispering excitedly together.

"No boy is to leave his study till calling-over!" said Mr. Railton. "Any boy disobeying my orders will be severely punished. Go!"

And Mr. Railton was obeyed,

CHAPTER 7.

Trouble Brewing!

THERE were grim, glum looks among the St. Jim's juniors when they were assembled for calling-over that evening. They had remained in their studies until calling-over, by Mr. Railton's order; but the excitement had by no means died out. There was one name unanswered to when Mr. Railton read over the roll—the name of Levison of the Fourth.

Mr. Railton repeated the name as he glanced from the roll.

"Levison!"

But no voice answered the usual "Adsum!"

Mr. Railton finished reading the names, while the Fourth Formers grinned at one another. Levison was still on the roof of the shed behind the School House. Herries had grimly obeyed the order to remain in his study, which, naturally, prevented him from going out to release Levison from his peculiar imprisonment.

"Levison of the Fourth is absent," said Mr. Railton. "Does anyone know where Levison is?"

"Yes, sir," said Herries.

"Indeed!" said the Housemaster, with a sharp look at Herries. "You know where he is?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well! Where is he?"

"On the roof of the menagerie, sir."

"What!"

"On the roof of the menagerie, sir," repeated Herries calmly, as if supposing that Mr. Railton's surprised exclamation meant that he was a little deaf.

"What is he doing there?" asked the Housemaster.

"Sitting on the roof, sir."

There was a chuckle, and Mr. Railton frowned.

"I mean, what is he on the roof of the shed at all for, Herries?"

"He can't get down, sir."

"Why not?"

"He's afraid of Towser."

"Do you mean to say that he has been on the roof of the shed ever since the bulldog broke loose?" asked Mr. Railton, in astonishment.

"Yes, sir."

"You have placed the dog there, I presume, for the purpose?"

"Yes, sir," said Herries stolidly.

"And why?"

"To punish him, sir."

"I do not know what Levison has done, Herries, but you must not take the law into your own hands in this way. You will take five hundred lines, and you will go and release Levison at once. Do you hear? You should have done so before."

"I couldn't do so before, sir."

"Do you mean that the dog is out of your control?"

"Oh, no, sir! You ordered me to remain in my study, sir," said Herries. "Of course, I couldn't disobey your order by going out to release Levison."

Mr. Railton looked fixedly at the junior; but Herries was looking quite simple and innocent.

"You will go at once, Herries!" said the master at last.

"Yes, sir," said Herries.

And he went. He grinned to himself as he made his way round the School House in the dark. Levison had been in his uncomfortable position for some hours, and he was probably beginning to wish that he had left Towser alone. There was a rattle of the chain as Towser came to rub his nose against his master's legs. The sleepless bulldog had

kept watch and ward faithfully, and Levison had not dared to venture down. The pale face of the cad of the Fourth peered down at Herries from the darkness of the shed roof.

"Is that you, Herries?" asked Levison in a voice trembling with rage.

"Yes, you rotter!" growled Herries. "Will you take that rotten dog away?"

"Yes, that's what I've come for. I dare say you're getting cramped up there by this time," said Herries cheerfully. "Serve you right."

He led Towser back to his kennel and shortened the chain. Levison slipped down from the roof and ran. The cad of the Fourth was indeed cramped, and he was tired and hungry. His face was white with rage as he came into the School House. A crowd of juniors had gathered to see him come in, and they laughed at him. Levison gave them a bitter look.

"I'm going to see Mr. Railton about it!" he exclaimed.

"Mr. Railton knows all about it now; Herries told him," said Blake contemptuously.

Levison scowled, and went directly to Mr. Railton's study. He knocked, and the Housemaster's voice bade him enter.

"I had to miss calling-over, sir," said Levison. "I hope you will excuse me, as I couldn't come. I was being watched by Herries' bulldog, and couldn't get down off the roof of the shed. Herries set him to guard me."

Mr. Railton fixed his eyes very keenly on Levison.

"Why did Herries do this, Levison?" he asked.

"It was a rotten trick, sir," said Levison. "He fancied I had something to do with Towser getting loose and starting all the trouble. Anybody could have seen that Towser broke his chain himself. He's done the same thing before."

"You did not interfere with the dog at all?" asked Mr. Railton, still with the same keen look upon Levison, which made the cad of the Fourth feel extremely uncomfortable.

"Certainly not, sir!"

"You had not been tormenting the dog?"

"Oh, sir, of course not! I am very kind to animals, sir."

"Very well, Levison, you are excused for missing call-over. You may go."

And Levison went. Mr. Railton remained looking very thoughtful. The Housemaster, as a matter of fact, didn't approve of the Head's sweeping order, but it was not his business to say so to Dr. Holmes. He simply had to carry out his instruction—which was to see that all the junior boys' pets were removed from St. Jim's by twelve o'clock on the following day. Mr. Railton had already telephoned for a van to come to the school the next day to remove the animals.

The excitement in both Houses was undiminished when the boys went to bed. In the Fourth Form dormitory in the New House, Figgins & Co. were very eloquent on the subject. But the School House Fourth Formers devoted most of their attention to Levison when they were in the dormitory. Although there was no actual proof on the subject, the fellows all felt pretty certain that Towser had been tormented by the cad of the Fourth, and that that had started all the trouble.

Levison went to bed in a sullen temper. Outsider as he was, he could not help being affected by the black looks his Form-fellows gave him. His chum Mellish was avoiding him as much as the others. Mellish was not the

fellow to stand by a friend in times of distress.

Some of the Fourth Formers proposed tossing Levison in a blanket, and bumping him, and frogmarching him, and spread-cagling him, while more humorous spirits advocated boiling him in oil.

Levison lay in bed listening to the various suggestions, quaking, and he was glad enough when the voices died away and the juniors fell asleep.

When the rising-bell clanged out in the morning, and the school turned out, there was only one matter occupying all minds.

Would the Head change his mind?

During morning lessons that day the boys thought of little else, much to the detriment of their lessons.

When the third lesson was over, and they swarmed out into the quadrangle, they had proof enough that the Head had not changed his mind.

The van had arrived.

And the order had gone forth for the prefects to superintend the removal of the pets, and to see that not one of them remained within the precincts of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 8.

Exodus!

TOM MERRY & CO. proceeded to obey orders, with grim and savage looks.

There seemed to be no other way out of it.

The Head's command that the pets were to be taken away was direct and emphatic, and without open rebellion in the school it could not be disobeyed.

Some of the fellows were prepared even for that length, but most of them had not yet been excited to such a pitch. The Head was popular with the boys, and they all respected him highly. He had made a mistake this time; there was no doubt about that. But to disobey his orders and set his authority at naught—that was a big order, as Jack Blake remarked.

Besides, could such a position be held if it were taken up? It might lead to expulsions, and that was a serious matter. If anything were done, it would have to be done by all the fellows standing together, so that one would not be more to blame than another, and an organisation required time. Meanwhile, there was nothing to do but to bear it, even if they did not grin.

Cages after cages were carried into the big van; kennels and boxes followed. Mr. Railton had made arrangements for the pets to be taken care of in Rylcombe for the present, till they were ultimately disposed of. But their owners did not want to part with them. Some of the animals gave trouble. Towser showed his teeth at the sight of Pongo, and Pongo yelped defiance.

"Keep that blessed mongrel away from my bulldog, young D'Arcy!" said Herries crossly. "You know Towser doesn't like him!"

Wally snorted.

"Keep your rotten bulldog away from my terrier!" he said.

Then it was Herries' turn to snort.

"You call that a terrier?" he demanded.

"Yes, I do, ass! What do you call it?" demanded D'Arcy minor warmly.

"Some sort of a rotten mongrel," said Herries. "Blessed if I believe it's a dog at all, from its looks!"

"You silly ass!"

Gr-r-r-r!

Bow-wow!

Towser made a leap, and the chain

was dragged from Herries' hand. With a rush the bulldog was upon Pongo.

"Stop 'em!" yelled Wally.

"Go it, Towser!"

"Go it, Pongo!"

Towser and Pongo were both in the van, rolling over in dire conflict.

Cages and boxes were knocked right and left by the struggling animals, and there was a terrific din. The monkey was squalling, the parrots yelling, and dogs barking, and all sorts and conditions of animals and birds were uttering all sorts and varieties of noises.

Wally threw himself upon the fighting dogs and tried to rescue Pongo; Herries grasped his bulldog's collar and strove to drag him off. The uproar was deafening. Mr. Railton came hurrying to the spot.

"What is this dreadful noise about?" he asked. "Keep those dogs quiet!"

"Get 'em out of the van!" yelled Clifton Dane. "You've knocked my cage over! Look at my parrot!"

Screech, screech!—from Polly.

Herries dragged Towser into his kennel by main force and chained him up. Pongo was disposed of in another kennel and chained. With the width of the van between them, the two dogs snarled at one another. But the scared animals and birds were not to be quieted; the uproar continued. Mr. Railton cast a worried look into the van.

"Are they all here?" he asked.

"Yah! Whiskers! Get your hair cut!"

Mr. Railton turned crimson.

"Who was that? How dare you address me!"

"Yah! Old funny face!"

"What—what—"

"Go home! Go home! Go and eat coke!" Screech!

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.

Mr. Railton gasped. He could not see that it was the parrot who was addressing those disrespectful remarks to him.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "I—"

"It's my parrot, sir," said Clifton Dane. "He doesn't know you're a Housemaster, sir. Of course, he wouldn't say that to you if he did."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose he does not," said Mr. Railton, with a frown at the Canadian junior. "But you should not teach your parrot to say such ridiculous things, Dane."

"Screech! Britons never shall be slaves!" shrieked the parrot. "Hurrah! I want some rum hot! Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Ratcliff, the master of the New House, came down to the van. Unlike his fellow Housemaster, Mr. Ratcliff was distinctly pleased. He was glad to have all the pets sent away—indeed, he would have been glad to have all the boys sent away, too, if the school could have been carried on without any.

"Ah, I trust we shall now soon be relieved of the wretched pets!" said the New House master. "It is high time, I consider—high time!"

"Yah! Go and chop chips! Get your hair cut!" said the parrot.

"What?" gasped Mr. Ratcliff.

"Funny face! Funny face! Oh, my eye, what a nose!"

Mr. Ratcliff turned scarlet. The juniors yelled with laughter, and Mr. Railton could not help smiling.

"It is only the parrot, Mr. Ratcliff," he explained.

"It is—it is outrageous!" said the New House master angrily. "Certainly it is high time that the wretched creatures were sent away, if they are taught such—such vulgarity."

"He, he, he! Here's old Ratty! Look at old Ratty!" yelled the parrot.



Pongo took a short cut across the flower-beds to escape the enraged Taggles, and the porter trampled after him, doing as much damage as Pongo. Taggles lashed at the mongrel with his stick, and there was a terrific splintering of glass as the stick smote a glass frame!

Clifton Dane turned red then. He had taught the parrot to say all sorts of things, very amusing to the juniors, but hardly likely to be gratifying to Mr. Ratcliff. He had never expected Mr. Ratcliff to form part of Polly's audience.

"What—what is the wretched bird saying?" gasped Mr. Ratcliff.

"Yah! Old Ratty! He, he, he! Old sneak! Yah!"

"Good heavens!"

"Go and bury yourself! Go home! Go and eat coke! He, he, he!"

"This—is beyond all bounds!" panted Mr. Ratcliff. "To whom does this wretched and disgusting bird belong?"

"It's mine, if you please, sir," said Clifton Dane meekly.

"Did you teach it to say those things, Dane?"

"I—I suppose he picked them up from me," admitted the Canadian junior.

"You have dared to teach a bird to say those things about a Housemaster?" Mr. Ratcliff thundered.

"About a Housemaster, sir?"

"Yes. That parrot was directly referring to me!"

"He hasn't mentioned any names, sir," said Clifton Dane, looking astonished.

"How do you know he means you by Old Sneak, and Old Funny Face, sir?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Ratcliff gasped. He reached out and boxed Clifton Dane's ears. There was a shriek from the parrot.

"Hurrah! Pile in—pile in! Go for him—go for him! Give him beans! Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think all are in now," said Mr. Ratcliff, trying not to laugh. "Driver, you know where to take them."

"Yessir."

"Good-bye, boys! Hurrah!" yelled the parrot. "Keep your pecker up!

Keep her moving! Who cares for old Ratty? Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Screech! Yah! Old sneak! Old sneak! Old sneak! Yah! Hurrah!"

And the van rolled away, with the parrot still shrieking.

"I shall report this to the Head!" exclaimed Mr. Ratcliff. "It is outrageous—disgraceful—dastardly!"

And the incensed Housemaster stalked away, with his gown fluttering in the wind in his haste.

"My hat!" said Blake. "Old Ratty got it in the neck that time. He knows what we think of him! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors laughed loud and long. Mr. Ratcliff had indeed been treated to an unexpected revelation of the estimation in which he was held by the St. Jim's juniors.

But the laughter soon died away. The pets were gone, and the juniors visited the menagerie, and looked at the empty places with heavy hearts.

Tom Merry & Co. were angry and indignant.

And when the time drew near for afternoon school the juniors of St. Jim's were not thinking of lessons. They were holding an indignation meeting in the Junior Common-room in the School House, and feeling was running very high.

CHAPTER 9.

A Strike Meeting!

"GENTLEMEN—"

"Hear, hear!"

"I rise to make a few remarks—"

"The fewer the better," growled Gore.

"This is the time for doing something, not javing."

"Order!"

"Gentlemen of the School House and the New House—"

standing on the table in the Common-room, and there were throngs of fellows round him, New House as well as of his own House. "Gentlemen, I put this question to the meeting—are we going to stand it?"

"Never!"

"Gentlemen, Blake of the Fourth has suggested a strike. I don't, as a rule, think much of suggestions from Fourth Form kids, but—"

"Oh, go home!" roared the Fourth.

"Who are you calling kids?"

"Yah!"

"Order!"

"Gentlemen, I think that Blake's suggestion is a good one. Strikes are the order of the day. Other people go on strike, and why shouldn't we? There is an old saying that one should strike while the iron is hot."

"Hear, hear!"

"Therefore," said Tom Merry, "I suggest that the meeting do adopt and endorse the suggestion of Brother Blake, that the juniors of St. Jim's go on strike, and refuse to work any more until the masters have agreed to their demands."

"Hear, hear!"

"Although suggested by a Fourth Form kid—"

"Yah!"

"I consider it a jolly good idea! Now, who's for a strike?"

"All of us!" roared Blake. "Hands up for striking!"

A forest of hands went up.

Nearly every fellow in the crowded room was evidently in favour of a strike. The juniors were carried away by excitement, and hardly cared what they were doing. If they were licked they did not care. Expulsion was the punishment they dreaded; but the Head could not expel the whole of the Lower School. And if the juniors all stood together one or two could not be picked

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out for the severest punishment. The Head might be a beast, but he was a just beast, as Figgins remarked.

"Everybody who is against the strike can say so," said Tom Merry. "No compulsion will be used in the matter. Only, any fellow who opposes the strike will be bumped, jumped on, and frogmarched round the quad. Every fellow is as free as the wind to speak his mind without fear or favour."

There was no dissentient voice raised. Perhaps the prospect of being bumped, jumped on, and frogmarched round the quad was not attractive enough.

"Then this meeting is unanimous in declaring a strike!" demanded Tom Merry.

"Hear, hear!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"No lessons till the pets are brought back," said Tom Merry. "Any fellow going into the class-rooms when the bell rings will be scragged, and bumped, and jumped on, but not otherwise interfered with. Only peaceful picketing allowed."

"Bravo!"

"Britons never shall be slaves! What's the good of ruling the waves if we're to be bullied and tyrannised over in school? The Head's a good sort—a jolly good sort—and we all respect him. But he's put his foot in it this time. The masters are all right, except Selby, who's rather a rotter, and Ratty, who's a beast!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We've got nothing against them. They can go into the Form-rooms and give one another lessons if they like."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But no fellow in this school, from the Shell downwards, goes to lessons until the pets have been brought back. That's agreed?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Yaas, wathah! I am quite willin' to take up the posish of stwike leadah. What is weaquahed for a stwike leadah is a fellow of tact and judgment."

"There aren't going to be any leaders, ass! Leaders would be picked out and expelled. Every fellow is equal to every other fellow, and there isn't any lead. You will all obey my orders, that is all."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Cave! Here comes Kildare!"

There was a sudden hush in the Common-room. Kildare of the Sixth looked in at the door, a serious expression upon his handsome face.

"Do you kids know that the bell has gone for classes?" he asked.

There was no reply.

"The bell has gone," said Kildare. "Go to your Form-rooms at once!"

Silence! Not a junior present made a movement to obey. Kildare looked astonished at first, and then a frown gathered upon his brow.

"Do you hear me?" he asked sternly.

Silence.

"Will you obey?"

Then there was a shout:

"Never!"

CHAPTER 10.

On Strike!

KILDARE seemed at a loss for a minute.

He had never looked upon such a determined array of faces. The juniors were in deadly earnest. It was not mere bravado—and Kildare could see that. Tom Merry & Co. meant business.

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"You had better go," said the captain of St. Jim's at last. "This kind of thing will do you no good, you know. You can't disobey orders. Now, buzz off to your Form-rooms like sensible fellows, before the masters come and make you!"

"They can't make us."

"What?"

"We're on strike!" explained Tom Merry.

"On—on what?"

"Strike! S-t-r-i-k-e—strike!" said Tom Merry categorically. "Strikes are the order of the day. Everybody who's dissatisfied nowadays goes on strike. We're dissatisfied, and we've gone on strike. We're not going to have any more lessons until the pets are brought back to St. Jim's. We've all agreed that Britons never shall be slaves! No more lessons!"

"Wathah not!"

"You can't keep this up," said Kildare, looking worried. "If you don't go to the Form-rooms, the masters will come and fetch you. Then there will be trouble."

"We're ready!"

"Trot 'em along," said Blake; "we'll see!"

"Now, look here—" began Kildare.

"It's no good, Kildare," said Tom Merry resolutely. "We've been treated with injustice, all because of a rotten trick played by an awful cad. You know it, only you can't say so, being a prefect. Mr. Railton knows it, only he can't say so. The Head's in the wrong. We all respect the Head, and wouldn't do anything to worry him. Only we're not going back to lessons until our just demands are conceded. That's the way you put it in strike manifestoes, I think. Our just demands—"

"If you don't go into the Form-rooms at once, it will be necessary for me to report to Mr. Railton that you refuse to obey."

"Go ahead and report, then—"

Kildare hesitated a moment more, and then walked away. The juniors looked at one another grimly. There was less noise now, but no less resolution. The fellows knew that they had committed themselves to a very serious step. But there was no thought of surrender. They felt that they were in the right.

"Now, look out for fireworks!" murmured Monty Lowther.

The juniors waited. There was a rustle of a gown in the passage, and the master of the School House strode in. Mr. Railton was looking very stern; all the sterner, perhaps, because, in his heart, his sympathies were with the juniors.

"Kildare reports to me that you refuse to go into the class-rooms," he said. "I trust there is some mistake. I cannot believe that you would be guilty of such insubordination. Please go into lessons at once!"

Not a fellow moved.

"You hear me?" asked Mr. Railton.

"Yaas, sir!" said D'Arcy.

"Then obey me!"

"We're on stwike, sir!"

"Nonsense! Go to your lessons immediately."

There was no movement. No junior seemed anxious to catch Mr. Railton's eye. But none of them stirred. Their minds were made up.

There was a long pause. Mr. Railton had not brought a cane with him; perhaps because he was conscious of the fact that he could not cane the whole of the Lower School. And in

case of resistance, a struggle between a Housemaster and a swarm of junior boys would be too dreadfully undignified.

"I hardly know how to deal with you," said Mr. Railton. "Am I to understand that you refuse to obey my orders?"

"We're on strike, sir, until the Head agrees to let the pets come back."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You surely cannot expect the Head to yield to threats of this sort?" said the Housemaster. "If you wish to influence the Head, it is only by submission to proper authority, and by cheerful obedience."

"Will that bring the pets back, sir?"

Mr. Railton did not answer that question.

"Now, boys, enough of this nonsense!" he said. "I am willing to excuse your—ahem!—excitement, if you return to your duty at once. Go to your class-rooms!"

There was no stir.

"I do not wish to bring the Head into this matter if it can be helped," said Mr. Railton, after another long pause. "I will give you five minutes to reflect before reporting the matter to him. In five minutes I shall expect you all to be in your places in the Form-room."

And Mr. Railton departed. He left a grim silence behind him. There were looks of wavering in some faces now; but the majority were grimly determined, and their determination settled the matter for the waverers. The juniors remained in the Common-room, with their eyes upon the clock as the five minutes ticked away.

Mr. Railton was looking very disturbed as he rejoined Kildare in the Form-room passage. All the prefects had gathered there, wondering what they were to do. Excepting for the prefects, the Upper School had gone into their Form-rooms. Mr. Ratcliff, who was master of the Fifth as well as Housemaster of the New House, came out of the Fifth Form Room with a sour look on his face.

"Is it true that the juniors are in a state of insubordination, Mr. Railton?" he asked.

"Quite true!"

"It is shocking—outrageous! I cannot help thinking that it is due to the leniency the Head has always shown."

"This is not a time or place to criticise the Head!" said Mr. Railton tartly.

"Perhaps not; but such is my opinion. And it is very singular to my mind that you lack proper authority over the boys of your House, Mr. Railton. I shall certainly see to it that the boys of my House obey orders, and go in to their lessons."

"The New House juniors are associated with the boys of my House in the matter," said Mr. Railton dryly. "I do not think you will be able to influence them more than I could."

Mr. Ratcliff's thin lip curled.

"That remains to be seen," he said. "Where are the boys of my House, may I ask?"

"In the Common-room in the School House with the others."

"I shall proceed there," said Mr. Ratcliff. "I hardly think that they will venture to defy the authority of their Housemaster."

"You will do as seems to you best," said Mr. Railton shortly.

"Most certainly I shall!"

Mr. Ratcliff fetched his cane out of the Fifth Form Room, and rustled away in a very stately manner to the Junior Common-room. The New House master was a very strict disciplinarian, and his

methods were drastic. His idea of keeping juniors in order was to deal out unlimited punishment. Mr. Ratcliff did not understand that there might come a time when his orders would be disregarded, and his punishments laughed at. He had a narrow mind that could never get out of its groove.

He stalked into the Common-room, and the rebellious juniors regarded him grimly. Mr. Ratcliff bestowed a sour look upon them.

"The boys of my House will go to their class-rooms at once," he said. "With the School House boys I have nothing to do. All New House boys out of this room instantly!"

The New House boys did not move. "You hear me?" said Mr. Ratcliff, raising his voice. "Figgins, I order you to go to the Form-room at once!"

Figgins did not seem to hear. "Figgins!" thundered Mr. Ratcliff. "Yes, sir!"

"Go to your Form-room!"

"If you please, sir, we're on strike!"

"How dare you make such an answer! Go to your Form-room!" said Mr. Ratcliff angrily. "Go to your Form-room at once! Redfern!"

"Yes, sir!" said Redfern.

"You are a scholarship boy here, Redfern," said Mr. Ratcliff. "In case of bad conduct, it is in the power of the Head to take away your scholarship. I suppose you know what you are risking by this insubordination—Lawrence and Owen, too?"

"I'm sticking in with the others, sir. The Head will treat me the same as the others. He's not a cad, sir," said Redfern.

"Bravo, Reddy!"

"Silence! I order all New House boys to their Form-rooms! Am I to understand that you disobey my orders?" demanded Mr. Ratcliff.

There was no reply. Mr. Ratcliff was left to draw what conclusion he pleased from the silence, and from the fact that the juniors of his House did not move. The Housemaster's face grew a dull red with rage.

"You disobey me?" he said. "Very well! I shall now cane most severely every boy who disregards my orders, beginning with you, Figgins. Go to your class-room!"

Figgins seemed rooted to the floor.

Mr. Ratcliff waited a moment—a short moment. Then he advanced upon Figgins, and grasped him by the collar and swished the cane in the air.

Kerr and Wynn closed up with dangerous looks; but Tom Merry's voice rang out:

"School House chaps to the rescue!"

There was a rush of feet. Many hands were laid upon Mr. Ratcliff—all School House hands, too, so that he could give no pretext afterwards for punishing boys of his own House, who would be in his power.

Tom Merry, Manners and Lowther, and Digby, Kangaroo, Herries, Reilly, Lumley-Lumley, and several more fellows, grasped Mr. Ratcliff at once, and he was wrenched away from Figgins.

Figgins grinned, and put his hands in his pockets. It was not necessary for him to resist the Housemaster. There were plenty of School House fellows ready to do that.

"Chuck him out!"

"Yaas, wafah; chuck Watty out!"

Bump!

Mr. Ratcliff alighted in the passage—on his back. He lay there sprawling and gasping, wondering whether an earthquake had smitten St. Jim's, or whether it was the end of the universe. Angry faces glared at him from the

JUST MY FUN



Monty Lowther Calling!

Hallo, Everybody!—There's a new physical culture film at the Wayland Cinema. The picture of health.

After being set to mow the Head's lawn as a punishment, Wally D'Arcy wished that he had mower power to his elbow!

Story: "As you see, the old well has two handles," explained the estate agent, showing the new tenant over the property. "Oh, how splendid!" exclaimed the tenant, a lady. "Which side do I turn for hot water?" Well—well!

Young Gibson wishes me to deny the rumour that he went to the oculist to get magnifying lenses put in a pair of spectacles, so that he could see over the shoulder of the chap in front of him in class.

A reader who says he plays cricket, football, golf, rides, shoots, fishes, plays tennis, badminton, and hockey, wants to know what to do with his spare time. What about swimming the Channel, old chap?

Unfortunate—the chap caught stealing 200 wooden legs who hadn't a leg to stand on!

From Third Form essays: "Christopher Columbus discovered the Black Hole of Calcutta in 1066."

"King Alfred burnt the cakes at the Great Fire of London."

"Sir Francis Drake was the barber who singed the King of Spain's beard."

Wally D'Arcy tells me it took Mr. Selby some time to write the

word "psychotherapeutic" on the blackboard. No doubt he needed a rest after that "long spell"!

In a law case, a witness said he had seen the accused leave the house with his own eyes. Very honest of him not to leave with somebody else's.

Story: "Haven't I seen you before?" snapped the drowsy magistrate. "Ho, yus," sighed the prisoner. "I was 'ere before you dozed off!"

How's this: "At last," sighed the novelist, "I have written something which I think will be accepted by the first magazine it is sent to." "What's that?" asked his friend. "A cheque for a year's subscription," replied the novelist.

"Horse Riding Keeps You Fit" runs a headline. Saddle your blues to a wild mustang—eh?

Then there was the chap who thought only fish lived in Finland.

Try this: "If I planted this pip, would an apple tree grow in time?" asked Blake of Digby. "I shouldn't be surprised," agreed Dig. "I should," grinned Blake; "it's an orange pip!"

Well, how's this: "Now we'll see a man eating tiger," said young Gibson's uncle at the Zoo. "Wouldn't you rather see a boy eating ice cream first?" asked Gibson hopefully.

"Film Stars Married in Camera" reads a headline. Must have been the world's smallest film stars.

Answer to everybody who asked: "In camera" means "in secret." Now it's out.

S O S. Has anybody found a wallet containing £50 in notes? Melish says he has lost it. But we suspect he is sounding a false "note"!

Finale: "So we decide not to operate?" asked the first doctor. "Yes," agreed the second doctor. "Now, what do we charge him for deciding not to operate?"

Chin, chin, chaps!

doorway, only too plainly telling what would happen if he ventured into the room again.

Mr. Ratcliff blinked at them as he sat up. He was in too great a fury to speak for some moments. He scrambled to his feet at last and made a dash at the crowd in the doorway, slashing recklessly with the cane.

There was a roar. Then hands were laid upon Mr. Ratcliff again, and the juniors swung him off his feet and rushed him down the passage.

Gasping and shrieking, helpless in the grasp of the young rebels, Mr. Ratcliff was swept along and tossed headlong into the Form-room passage, where he rolled breathlessly at the feet of Mr. Railton and Monteith.

The School House master and the prefect glared grimly at Mr. Ratcliff as he picked himself up. His gown was torn, he was dusty and rumpled, and he was stuttering with rage.

"I was afraid you would do no good, Mr. Ratcliff," said Mr. Railton quietly. "I must say that you have made matters worse!"

"I do not require your opinion, sir!" shrieked the New House master. "I am going to the Head! They shall be punished—flogged—expelled!"

He rushed away.

In the Common-room the juniors gathered again, excited and resolute.

As Monty Lowther remarked, they had fairly done it now. They had laid violent hands upon a Housemaster, and it was too late to think of turning back. The Head would be upon the scene now—it was Dr. Holmes himself that they had to deal with. And in spite of their courage and determination, there was an anxious look upon all faces as a step was heard in the passage, and an uneasy murmur ran through the room:

"The Head!"

CHAPTER 11.

Trouble in the Form-rooms!

DR. HOLMES came into the room, in the midst of a heavy silence. The Head looked pale and worried.

Perhaps, on reflection, he had realised that he had been harsh, but it was impossible to give way now. A headmaster could not submit to dictation from the boys in the Lower Forms of his school. It would be an end to all authority, and it was not to be thought of. But the revolt of the juniors placed the Head in a very awkward position. Heavy and incessant punishments went very much against the grain with him, but he had left himself no recourse now but to coerce the juniors into obedience.

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And it was very doubtful, too, if he could do it.

The juniors had expected the Head to stride in in angry mood, with a frowning brow and a cane in his hand. They were ready for that. But when they saw him looking pale, worried, and troubled, their hearts smote them. They had thrown Mr. Ratcliff out of the room without hesitation. But the most reckless young rascal there would never have dreamed of laying a finger on the Head. If any fellow had thought of such a thing, the other fellows would very quickly have stopped him, and in the roughest possible way. The person of the Head was sacred.

"My boys," said Dr. Holmes, with a tremble in his voice, "I am very much surprised—very surprised and very shocked and hurt—by this state of affairs. I am sure that you do not realise what you are doing—you do not mean to set your headmaster's authority at defiance. I am sure that you will not make it necessary for me to order a flogging for the whole of the Lower Forms, and to expel boys whom I should be sorry to see go from St. Jim's."

There was an uncomfortable silence. This was not the line the juniors had expected the Head to take, and it made them waver.

"I understand that there has been some—some excitement," said the Head. "You fancy you have a grievance. Rather than resort to extreme measures, I am willing to overlook the insubordination of which you have already been guilty. But I order you to go to your Form-rooms at once. I am sure that no boy here will think of disobeying me!"

There was a long pause.

"Go!" said the Head.

All eyes were turned upon Tom Merry. He was the leader, and it was "up" to him to say what should be done. Whatever he decided to do, the other fellows would back up most loyally. It was not easy for Tom Merry to decide. To climb down, without having gained their point, was impossible. But to make the kind old Head look ridiculous by directly disobeying him—that was not pleasant, either.

"Very well, sir," said Tom Merry at last. "We don't mean any disrespect by what we're doing, sir. Any fellow here who treated you disrespectfully, sir, would be jumped on at once. We've gone on strike because we've got a grievance, and we think—"

"I can't discuss that with you, Merry. You must go to your Form-rooms at once."

"We can't disobey you, sir. We will go."

The Head looked relieved.

"Very well; go at once!" he said.

And he quitted the room.

"Well, that's a rotten climb down, I must say!" growled Thompson of the Shell.

"Ripping strike leader we've got—I don't think!" sneered Gore.

"It's not a climb down," said Tom Merry quietly. "I'm not going to cheek the Head. He's made a mistake this time, but he's a brick—we all know that. Any fellow who cheeks the Head in my presence will get a thick ear!"

"Yaas, wathah! I should feel called upon to give him a feahful thwashin' myself," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Play the game, deah boys. The Head is a bwick, though he has put his foot in it this time."

"And we're not climbing down," said Tom Merry. "We've gone on strike against all lessons till we've won. We'll

go. You can take a horse to the water, but you can't make him drink. We'll go into the Form-rooms, but we won't do any lessons. It comes to the same thing. It doesn't matter twopence whether we're inside the Form-rooms or outside them. We're not going to do any lessons till the Head has given in!"

There was a chuckle in the crowded Common-room.

"Good egg!" said Blake heartily. "I can answer for it that there won't be any lessons in the Fourth!"

"And I'll jolly well see that there aren't any in the Third!" said Wally.

"And we'll look after the Shell!" said Tom Merry. "We can't cheek the Head! But the strike goes on just the same!"

"Hear, hear!"

And the juniors crowded out.

There was much relief among the Form-masters when the juniors were seen filing quietly into the Form-rooms. They flattered themselves that the trouble was over, but they flattered themselves a little too soon. The juniors were in as deadly earnest as ever. It was only the scene of the struggle that was changed.

Tom Merry & Co. took their seats in the Shell-room, and Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, came in. Mr. Linton had some tact, and he intended to go on with lessons as usual as if he had heard nothing whatever of the strike. But he discovered very quickly that the Shell were not yet subdued.

Mr. Linton's first remarks were received in stony silence. The lesson happened to be Roman history, but the Shell fellows were afflicted with bad memories, and had apparently forgotten all they had learned upon the subject. Not a fellow answered when Mr. Linton addressed him, and the Form-master began to understand.

"Merry!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir?"

"You do not seem to have brought your books."

"No, sir."

"Go and fetch them!"

Tom Merry did not move.

"Did you hear me, Merry?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then why do you not do as I tell you?"

"We're not doing any lessons, sir!"

"What!"

"We're on strike, sir!"

"Merry, how dare you!"

Stand out here!"

Tom Merry did not leave his form. Mr. Linton's face grew very red. He advanced to the Shell desks with a cane in his hand.

"Hold out your hand, Merry!"

"I cannot, sir."

"Do you wish me to lay the cane across your shoulders, Merry?" demanded Mr. Linton, breathing hard.

"No, sir."

"Then hold out your hand!"

"Can't, sir."

Swish!

The cane circled in the air and descended upon Tom Merry's shoulders. Tom gave a gasp. It was a doughty blow. The next moment Mr. Linton gave a roar. A book, hurled from the back of the class, caught him under the ear, and he staggered.

"Who threw that book?" he shouted.

"Yah!"

"Go home!"

All the Shell roared it out together. Mr. Linton stood transfixed for a moment. Then he brought the cane into operation.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Oh, ow, ow! Ow! Yow!"

Whiz, whiz, whiz!

Books and exercise papers, pellets and other missiles whizzed through the air in volleys, and Mr. Linton was smitten all over. A stream of ink from a squirt caught him in the eye. It ran all over his face, transforming him into a queer imitation of a nigger minstrel.

"G-g-good gracious!" stuttered Mr. Linton. "I—I— Oh—oh dear! This is outrageous!"

And Mr. Linton backed away in horror and dismay. The Shell were warming up to their work now. Books pelted at Mr. Linton in showers, and inkpots began to fly, and Mr. Linton fairly gathered up his gown and fled from the Form-room. A roar from the Shell followed him:

"Hurrah!"

CHAPTER 12. Going Strong!

"CAVE!"

"The Head!"

The Shell-room was in an uproar when the alarm was given. But the juniors quietened down as the Form-room door opened and the Head came in.

Dr. Holmes was looking more worried than ever. Mr. Linton had rushed into his study, red and breathless, and smothered with ink, to acquaint him with the revolt of the Shell. And the Head realised that the trouble was not over, although the boys had submitted to be sent into the class-rooms.

"Boys! Silence at once!"

The boys were silent.



"Help! Help!" shrieked Mr. Ratcliff, rushing along. Fellows gathered on all sides to watch the extraordinary scene.

"This outrage is disgraceful!" said the Head. "Every boy in the Shell will take five hundred lines, and will stay in for four half-holidays."

Grim silence.

"I shall take the Shell myself for the rest of the afternoon," went on the Head. "Now, if there is any further disorder, I shall be very severe. Go to your places."

The Shell looked to Tom Merry for guidance, and Tom made them a sign to obey. They were not to disobey the Head. Whenever Dr. Holmes was present in person, obedience was to be the order of the day. That was the game, and the fellows played it. The Shell had done enough for the strike, and Tom Merry knew that he could depend upon the Fourth and the Third to play their parts. As for the Second and the "Babes" they did not matter.

Under the stern eye of the Head, the Shell settled down to lessons; and, exasperated as he was by the revolt in the Lower School, Dr. Holmes could not help appreciating the compliment to himself implied in their conduct.

But Dr. Holmes could not be in two places at once; and it was very soon evident that he was wanted as much in the other Form-rooms as in the Shell.

Little Mr. Latham, the master of the Fourth, came dashing into the room before the Shell were through one lesson. There was ink on Mr. Latham's gown and on his face and on his glasses.

"Dr. Holmes," he gasped, "I appeal to you! I cannot manage the Fourth this afternoon; they are quite out of hand!"

The Head suppressed a groan.

"What is the matter, Mr. Latham?"

"The boys are in revolt, sir—actually in revolt! They refuse to do their lessons. I have been pelted with paper pellets and soaked in ink, sir! They are quite beyond my powers. I appeal to you for assistance, sir!"

"I leave you in charge of the Shell for the present, then, Mr. Latham."

"Very well, sir."

And the Head quitted the Shell-room. "Now, my boys," said Mr. Latham nervously, "pray keep order while the Head is gone—"

"Hurrah!"

"Silence, please!"

"Hip, hip, hurrah! No lessons! We're on strike!"

"Chorus, gentlemen!" roared Manners.

And the Shell started a roaring chorus which rang through the Form-room and the whole House.

Mr. Latham gazed on in helpless dismay. He was far from being able to deal with the unruly juniors.

The Head came back in ten minutes. He had suppressed the revolt in the Fourth Form Room, the juniors becoming docile at once in the actual presence of the Head.

But he found the Shell in an uproar. The Head's eyes gleamed; he was losing his temper now. He took the cane from the Form-master's desk.

"Silence!" he shouted. "I shall cane the whole Form!"

And he did. The Shell fellows passed the Head in file and were caned in turn, and that put their loyalty to Tom Merry's leadership to a very severe test. But they stood it, and when the Head ordered them back to their places, they went, rubbing their hands.

But now a new uproar was audible in the Form-room passage. The Head hurried out of the Shell-room, accompanied by Mr. Latham. The door of the Third Form Room was open, and a struggling mass of fags was visible.

Mr. Selby, the master of the Third, came hurtling out, and he sprawled in the passage. Mr. Selby was very unpopular in his Form, and Wally & Co. had not been sorry for the opportunity of squaring accounts with him.

The Head's eyes started as he saw the Form-master rolling on the floor, entangled in his gown.

He rushed down the passage.

"Look out! Here comes the Head!" gasped Wally.

The fags crowded back into the room, and Wally promptly locked the door on the inside. Mr. Selby staggered to his feet, stuttering with rage. The Head knocked at the door of the Form-room.

"Open this door at once!" he shouted.

There was no reply, but there was a sound of desks being piled against the door.

The Head gasped.

"Dear me! What is to be done? The boys are actually barring me out of the Form-room! This is—this is dreadful!"

"It is unbearable!" shouted Mr. Selby. "Send for the police, sir!"

"Nonsense, Mr. Selby!" said the Head sharply. "I'm hardly likely to send for the police and tell them that I cannot govern my own school!"

"The boys are quite out of hand! They have assaulted me! They would actually not allow me to cane D'Arcy minor—"

"Open this door, my boys!"

No answer.

"This is dreadful!" said the Head. "I'm afraid there is nothing for it but to expel the ringleaders. But it does not seem clear who are the ringleaders."

Mr. Selby rapped savagely on the Form-room door.

"Open this door at once!"

"Oh, that's not the Head's voice!" came a cheerful voice inside. "That's only old Selby! Give him a yell!"

And the fags yelled.

"Yah! Go home! Go and eat coco-nuts!"

"You young scoundrels! I will flog you—I will—"

"Rats!"

"Buzz off!"

"Go back to the monkey-house!"

Mr. Selby retreated, grinding his teeth. His authority over the Third Form at St. Jim's was evidently at an end for the present. What was to happen now?

The Head stopped as he passed the door of the Fourth Form Room. He had placed two prefects in there to keep the Fourth in order, as Mr. Latham had given it up. A terrific uproar was going on in the room, and the Head looked in in dismay.

Knox and Rushden, the two prefects, were sitting on the floor, tied back to back, and unable to get up, and looking crimson and furious. The Fourth Formers were executing a war-dance round them.

"Boys!" thundered the Head.

"Bai Jove! It's the Head again!"

The war-dance came to an end. Rushden and Knox looked up helplessly at the Head. They had been overcome by force of numbers, and they had simply not had a chance against the Fourth.

The Head breathed hard.

"Boys! How dare you! Untie Knox and Rushden at once!"

"Yaas, sir. Always obey your ordahs, sir."

The two prefects were untied. They stood looking sheepish. The Head was about to speak again, when there was an uproar from the Shell-room.

He hurried back to the Shell.

The room was in the wildest disorder. Mr. Linton's desk had been overturned in the middle of the Form-room, all the canes that could be found had been broken into pieces, and the Shell were roaring and yelling at the top of their voices.

"Silence!"

Silence followed.

"Merry, I fear you are the ringleader in this—"

"We're all in it together, sir," said Kangaroo.

"Hear, hear!"

"It's a strike, sir!" shouted the Shell fellows. "We only want justice!"

"Silence! Go back to your places! You are deprived of holidays for the rest of the term—the whole Form. The next boy who makes a noise will be flogged."

The Shell settled down quietly enough now.

But the moment the Head had turned his back on them there was a fresh outbreak. Loud yells answered from the quadrangle. The Fourth Formers had marched out of their Form-room, and were in the quad, laughing at the prefect who ordered them back.

The Head gave it up in despair.

The Lower School was utterly out of hand, and they could not be flogged.

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message with the frightened monkey clinging to his head, and yells of laughter followed the Housemaster's flight.

into obedience, because they had shown quite plainly that they would resist.

School was dismissed for the afternoon. It was the only thing that could be done, and it was a bitter pill for the masters to swallow.

But it was a great triumph for the juniors.

Dismissed from lessons more than an hour before the usual time, they crowded out into the quadrangle, shouting and cheering and parading. And the seniors, who were still grinding away in the class-room, listened enviously to the sounds of freedom. The strike at St. Jim's was going strong!

CHAPTER 13.

From Bad to Worse!

DR. HOLMES was in his study. He looked pale and worn.

Outside, in the quadrangle, the yells and cheers of the juniors rang far and wide, and the sounds penetrated into the Head's study. He listened to them with a gloomy brow. He seemed to have lost his hold upon the old school he had ruled so long and so well. He shrank from the only practical method of dealing with the revolt—unsparring expulsions and unlimited floggings. To call in outside help against his own boys was too bitter and humiliating. And to "sack" the boys he suspected of being the ringleaders—that would be to send away the boys he liked best—the fellows who were a credit to the school.

Mr. Railton entered the Head's study with a grave brow. He gave his headmaster a glance of concern. Dr. Holmes looked white and ill.

"I am afraid this is very serious, sir," said Mr. Railton. "The juniors are utterly out of hand!"

"This must be put down!" said the Head, frowning.

"I suppose so, sir. I suppose—"

Mr. Railton hesitated.

"Well, Mr. Railton? Say what you wish," said the Head wearily. "You have a right to offer me advice, and I can depend on you."

"I suppose you could not reconsider your decision—about the boys' pets, sir?" Mr. Railton suggested.

"Impossible!"

"The boys hold the view that all the trouble was caused by a certain lad tormenting the bulldog in a cruel way. If the bulldog had not got loose, the other animals would not have done so. The whole trouble seems to have been caused by one cruel lad. The boys consider it unfair to punish the whole for the fault of one."

"Unfair, Mr. Railton?" said the Head, frowning.

"That is how they look at it, sir."

"Is there any proof against the boy in question, Mr. Railton?" asked Dr. Holmes, after a pause.

"Unfortunately, it appears not. But I know who the boy is, and I cannot think he is incapable of it. He is the worst boy in the Fourth Form."

"What is his name?"

"Levison."

"Levison," said the Head. "The boy who plotted against Brooke of the Fourth, and was almost expelled?"

"Yes, sir. And I have heard indirectly that the trouble between Brooke and Levison on that occasion was caused by Levison tormenting the dog, and Brooke interfering. That shows that the boy Levison is capable of such actions,

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and lends colour to the suspicion against him now."

"But it would be grossly unjust to condemn a lad upon suspicion, Mr. Railton, especially as all the other boys are so prejudiced against the lad Levison."

"I cannot help thinking that their suspicion is well-founded, sir; and if it should prove to be so, it would be an honourable ground for deciding to change your sentence, sir—if you decided to do so."

The Head looked very thoughtful. He realised that he had acted hastily, and had placed himself in a false position. Any honourable means of retreat would be welcome. It was impossible to retreat before the attitude of the boys. But if it could be made clear that Herries' bulldog had been tormented into that outbreak, and that the whole trouble had been caused by Levison, it would be a good reason for



rescinding the sentence against the animals, and then the "strike" would stop of its own accord. There was no disguising the fact that the authorities of St. Jim's were "up against" a very serious difficulty.

"Perhaps you are right, Mr. Railton," said the Head, after a long pause. "If it could be clearly proved that this boy Levison was to blame, then perhaps I would reconsider my decision. But until he is proved guilty I cannot rescind my sentence against the juniors' pets."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Railton, and he left the study.

The rest of that day passed in a state of suppressed excitement in the school. The young rebels had been successful so far; the strike was going strong. Lessons had been abandoned that afternoon for the Lower Forms. What was to happen on the following morning? Would the strike die out of its own accord, and the boys turn up in the class-rooms as usual? Or would the strike go on? Tom Merry & Co. had quite made up their minds about it. The strike was going on.

And the boys having once got out of hand, matters went from bad to worse. When bed-time came the juniors remained in the Common-room, and a

prefect who stepped in to remind them that it was bed-time was pelted with books and ink-balls till he retired. It was not till after ten o'clock that the juniors went up to the dormitory; and then they spent a considerable time in leap-frogging in the dormitories before they turned in.

All was quiet at last, however.

In the morning the rising-bell clanged out at the usual hour, but the Lower School did not get up. As there were to be no lessons, there was no need to rise, and the juniors yawned and turned over for another snooze.

They came down very late. When the chapel bell rang they turned up for morning prayers, as usual, in good order. They were on strike, but, as Arthur Augustus remarked, there was no reason for being guilty of bad form, and it would have been bad form to cut prayers. Dr. Holmes did not take prayers as usual that morning; perhaps he did not care to face his unruly pupils. When the bell rang for classes the juniors were in the quadrangle, and they showed no sign whatever of going into the Form-rooms.

A cricket match was soon in progress between the juniors of the School House and the New House. Other fellows played fives or rounders, and some strolled about doing nothing. At dinner-time the juniors crowded cheerfully in to dinner, and dinner went on amid a babble of voices, very different from the usual ordinary meal-times.

"Looks as if we're going to have it all our own way," Jack Blake remarked, as they strolled out into the quad after dinner. "I wonder the Head doesn't do something. He can't let us go on like this for ever. Suppose one of the governors should drop in?"

"Phew! There would be trouble—for the Head more than for us," said Manners.

Tom Merry looked serious.

"We don't want that," he said. "The Head's made a mistake, but I'd rather chuck up the strike than cause him real trouble. He's a good sort."

"The Head will have to toe the line sooner or later," said Figgins confidently. "You should see Ratty now. Ever since we chucked him out he's quite tame. Goes about pretending not to see us. He doesn't interfere."

"Selby wants them to send for the police," said Mellish.

"Let 'em all come!" said Lowther.

"Yaas, watah!"

"But I wonder what the Head's doing?" said Tom Merry uneasily. "We haven't seen him all the morning."

"He looked pretty seedy yesterday," said Manners. "I hope he's not ill. I suppose this has upset him a lot."

"Oh crumbs, I hope not!" said Tom. And all the young rascals looked extremely serious.

If the Head should be so upset by the outbreak as to become ill, that would put quite a different complexion on the matter.

"Bai Jove," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully, "I think I'll go and ask Waiton!"

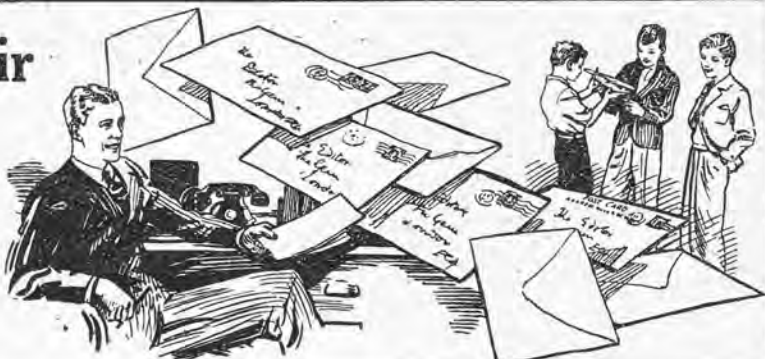
"It's ripping to be free all day, though," said Fatty Wynn. "Look at those Fifth Form bounders going into class. They're going to have an afternoon with Ratty, and we're going to play cricket."

And the strikers gave the Fifth Formers a yell as the latter went into their Form-room. Cutts of the Fifth gave the juniors an envious look. On that sunny afternoon, Cutts would very willingly have cut lessons himself. But

(Continued on page 13.)

The Editor's Chair

Let the Editor be your pal!
Drop him a line to-day,
addressing your letters:
The Editor, The GEM,
Fleetway House, Farring-
don Street, London, E.C.4.



HALLO, chums! "Let's have another exciting cricket story," wrote a reader to me this morning. "I think Martin Clifford's best stories have featured our popular summer game."

It's curious that I should get that letter to-day, for I was preparing the next St. Jim's yarn for publication, and it is a cricket story. The season has only three or four more weeks to go, and I had planned to run another cricket yarn before it ended. Therefore, next Wednesday you will have in your hands

"THE TRAITOR!"

and it's as gripping a story of the cricket field as Martin Clifford has ever written for us.

The St. Jim's first eleven is due to play the Wallabies, an Australian side touring this country, and there is no little keenness amongst the seniors to get into the team. No one is keener than Gerald Cutts of the Fifth. But it is not for the honour of playing for his school that makes Cutts eager to figure in the eleven. The black sheep of the Fifth has ulterior motives, for there is heavy gambling on the game, and Cutts stands to lose far more money than he can pay if St. Jim's wins. Hence his eagerness to play in the match—with the object of seeing that the school loses!

By cunning scheming Cutts gets his place in the eleven—and what result his traitorous game has you will discover when you read this powerful story. Look out for it.

"THE FAMOUS FOUR!"

Every reader who writes to me makes a point of praising the great yarns of the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. These stories have been featured in the GEM now for fifteen weeks, but if it had been fifteen years, they could not have won more popularity. But, believe me, chums, the best of these early stories have yet to come.

For instance, the next story of the Greyfriars chums is particularly exciting. It deals with the return of Melchior and Barengro, the two gipsy ruffians whom the chums of the Remove

were responsible for sending to prison for kidnapping. The two gipsies have escaped from gaol, and they go into hiding in the ruined chapel near Greyfriars. But Harry Wharton, who has most to fear from the gipsies, little knows this when one afternoon he goes to explore the ruined chapel!

Readers' prize jokes and more wit and humour from Monty Lowther complete our next grand number. Book your copy early, chums!

THE OLYMPIC GAMES!

Gathered in Olympic Stadium, Berlin, at the present time, are the pick of the world's athletes, representing 53 nations in the greatest of all international sporting contests. Not since the first Olympiad was staged in Athens in 1896 has so much interest been taken by the competing countries. In that electric atmosphere in Berlin, with thousands of spectators from all parts of the world urging on their country's representatives, the competitors, trained to the minute, are keyed up to give of their last ounce of endeavour to win for the honour of their countries.

The challenge for supremacy in games and sports grows fiercer at each Olympiad, and it is no wonder that world records are broken quite often. At Los Angeles, in 1932, where the games were last held, eight world's records were set up in the field and track events, and nineteen games records were established. In only four events was the previous best not beaten. Great Britain was successful in two of the races, T. Hampson setting up a world's record for the 800 metres with 1 min. 49½ secs., and T. W. Green winning the 50,000 metres walk. B. Eastman, of U.S.A., however, has since clipped ½ of a second off Hampson's time.

Great Britain's challenge at the Olympiad now in progress is as strong as it's ever been, and no country's representatives could be keener and

fitter. At the end of each event, the national flag of the winner is hoisted, so let's hope the Union Jack is fluttering aloft more often than any other nation's emblem.

THE PETROL-LESS CAR!

Something new in cars has been invented by a Japanese. No petrol is needed to work its engine! Its motive power comes from a clockwork motor. To take it out for a run you have to wind it up like a clock. The car is only in the experimental stage, and the model the inventor has designed will only do about forty miles at one winding. It is not stated how long it takes to wind it up, but I should imagine that that's where the snag comes in with this type of car. It would be awkward, to say the least, if your motor ran out of power in the midst of heavy traffic, and you had to wind it up for about ten minutes before you could shift it!

THE WONDER MACHINE!

Have you heard of the "Bina" Informator? It's about the most marvellous machine ever invented, for it can answer any question you like to ask! This wonder machine is installed in Regent Street, London, and its service is free. It's certainly a boon to strangers in the Metropolis, as well as to Londoners themselves.

Say you want to find out how to get to a certain place, you just tell the attendant, he presses a button, and out comes your information in a little capsule. If you want to visit the places of interest in London, the "Bina" will supply you with a list of them. No matter what you want to know, the "Bina" is always ready with the information. It supplies thousands of answers a day, and it's in constant use from ten in the morning till eleven at night.

TAILPIECE.

Mrs. Bloggins: "How's your Alfie getting on with his violin lessons?"

Mrs. Snoggins: "Oh, splendid! His teacher says we shall be able to take the cottonwool out of our ears next week!"

THE EDITOR.

PEN PALS COUPON

8-8-36



A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest to each other. If you want a pen pal, post your notice, together with the coupon on this page, to the address given above.

James Antwi, Broadway South, 2, Post Box, Koforidua, Gold Coast; pen pals.

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it was miles beneath the dignity of a senior Form to think of joining in the outbreak of the juniors.

Fifth and Sixth went into class, as usual. The juniors roamed about the quadrangle free as air. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came upon Mr. Railton as he was going to the Sixth Form Room to take the top Form that afternoon.

Mr. Railton gave the swell of St. Jim's a stern glance.

"What do you want?" he asked curtly.

"Pway excuse me, sir," said D'Arcy. "I should like to inquire about the Head? I twust he is all wight?"

"You can hardly be concerned about that, D'Arcy, as you seem to be doing your best to cause him trouble and worry."

"Oh, weally, sir—"

"The Head is not well," said Mr. Railton. "He is keeping to his room to-day. Otherwise, measures would have been taken to bring you young rascals to your senses."

"He is not ill, sir?" said Arthur Augustus in dismay.

"Yes."

"B-but it is not sewious, sir?" gasped D'Arcy.

"I hope not, D'Arcy."

And Mr. Railton passed on.

The swell of St. Jim's went out into the quadrangle with a very grave face. Blake caught him by the arm.

"Waiting for you, you ass!" he exclaimed. "We've got to bat."

Arthur Augustus shook his head.

"I don't feel quite inclined for ewicket, deah boy," he said. "I've just heard fwom Mr. Waiton that the Head is ill."

"Not really ill?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Staying in his room?"

"Yaas."

"That's why we've not seen him, then," said Monty Lowther, with a whistle. "Oh, I say, this is rotten, you know!"

The juniors all agreed that it was rotten. The cricket match died a natural death; no one wanted to play. The juniors were very serious now. There were very few of them who did not care for the fact that the Head was ill.

"But we can't give in," said Tom Merry. "Might as well have toed the line all along if we're going to give in now."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Can't possibly give in," said Herries. "I'm not going to have my bulldog sent away. I'm not giving in till Towser comes back."

"Weally, Hewwies, considewin' that that wotten bulldog has no respect wathewah for a fellow's twousahs—"

"Oh, rats!" said Herries. "It was all Levison's fault!"

Tom Merry's eyes gleamed as a new idea occurred to him.

"If it could come out that it was all Levison's fault, I think it would work round all right," he said.

"Only you wouldn't catch that cad ownin' up!" said Blake bitterly. "He's glad to see us on fighting terms with the Head, and he doesn't care if the Head's ill. The more trouble we all get into, the better Levison likes it."

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "I think we might speak to Levison. He can't be wottah enough not to care about the Head bein' seedy. Suppose we appeal to his bettah feelin's, and wequest him to stop all the bothah by ownin' up?"

"He wouldn't do it."

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"He might be made to," said Tom Merry quietly. "There are ways and means. Let's look for Levison. I fancy we've hit on the solution at last. Levison is going to see the Head, and own up that he caused all the trouble."

"And if he won't—"

"We'll scrag him until he does."

"My hat! What a ripping idea."

"But I considah that we ought to appeal to his bettah feelin's first, deah boys. You leave it to me."

"You can appeal to his better feelings, if you like," said Tom Merry.

"and then I'll appeal to his other feelings—with a cricket stump. Come on."

And they went to look for Levison.

CHAPTER 14.

A Licking for Levison!

LEVISON was in his study. The juniors found him there, and the smell of tobacco as they opened the study door showed that the cad of the Fourth was at home. Levison was seated in the armchair, with his feet upon the table, smoking a cigarette, and several cigarette stumps lay in the fender. He did not take it from his mouth as Tom Merry came in. He stared insolently at them through a haze of smoke.

Tom Merry snorted, and Arthur Augustus coughed. Tom Merry strode right over to Levison, jerked his cigarette from his mouth, and threw it on the floor, and put his heel on it. Levison jumped up with an exclamation of rage.

"You interfering cad—"

Tom Merry gave him a rough push on the chest, which made him sit down in the armchair again quite suddenly.

"Shut up!" he said. "A fellow can be decent, even if he's on strike. Smoking's not allowed."

"You're the right one to preach, aren't you?" sneered Levison. "You're turning the school into a bear-garden, and making the Head ill."

Tom Merry flushed.

"Well, we think we're in the right," he said. "And that's just what I've come to speak to you about. You know the Head isn't well?"

"Yes, I know it."

"And you don't care?"

"No," said Levison coolly.

"Pway allow me to speak, Tom Mewwy. It was agweed to appeal to Levison's bettah feelin's. Levison, deah boy, I twust you have got some bettah feelin's!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

D'Arcy's eyes gleamed for a moment. Then he restrained his temper. He had determined to be gentle to Levison, in order to stir his better feelings—if he had any.

"Now, Levison, deah boy, listen to me! You have caused all the trouble, and you can put an end to it by ownin' up. If you go to the Head or Mr. Waiton, and admit that you were to blame in the first place, the trouble will be ovah. The Head would allow the pets to be bwrought back, and we should all expwess our wewget to the Head, and go back to work."

"And everything in the botanical department would be lovely," said Monty Lowther.

"Pway don't intewwupt me, Lowthah. In the cires, Levison, it is up to you to mend mattahs. You can do it. We can't inform about you, as that would be sneakin'. And, besides, we have no actual pwroof of what you did, apart fwom the fact that you are well known to be a feahful wottah."

"Look here—" began Levison fiercely.

"You have done a gweat deal of harm, but it is in your powah to set it wight. It is up to us to remain on stwike till we get the pets back; but now the Head is ill, it puts a diffewent complexion on the mattah altogethah. Levison, deah boy, you can do all that is wanted. You can stop the twouble by ownin' up, and takin' your lickin' like a man."

"You silly ass—"

"I appeal to your bettah feelin's, Levison," urged Arthur Augustus. "Ewery chap has some bettah feelin's, howevah gweat a wottah he is. Now Levison, deah boy, let your bettah feelin's wise to the occasion."

"Oh, shut up!" growled Levison.

"The Head is ill, you know."

"I don't care twopence whether he's ill or not!"

"If this wow goes on, he will vewy likely become worse."

"I don't care!"

"Levison"—Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass very severely upon the cad of the Fourth. "If you weply in that stwain, Levison, I shall be dwiven to the conclusion that you have no bettah feelin's."

"And perhaps when you've come to that conclusion you'll shut up," suggested Levison, "and then you'll clear out."

"Bai Jove! Tom Mewwy, deah boy, I am afwaid you were wight, and the awful wottah has no bettah feelin's at all. I leave him to you."

"Get out of my study!" said Levison.

"We've given Gussy a run," said Tom Merry grimly. "But I knew it wouldn't do any good. But there are other ways. Levison, we know that you tormented Towser, and caused all the trouble. You're going to own up to the Head."

"I'm jolly well not!"

"We'll give you an opportunity of doing it of your own free will."

"Rats!"

"That's your answer?"

"Yes."

"Right! This is where the persuasion begins. Lay him across the table, you fellows, and I'll put in some whacks with this stump. He's got feelings of some sort, better or worse, and we'll appeal to all of 'em, if we break a stump over him."

"Hear, hear!"

Levison made a wild spring for the door; but the study was crowded with juniors now, and Levison had no chance to escape. Blake, Lowther, Figgins and Redfern seized him, and the cad of the Fourth, struggling wildly, was whirled across the table, and held face downwards there, still resisting and yelling.

Then Tom Merry raised the cricket stump. There was a terrific yell from Levison as it descended.

Whack!

"Yaroooh!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Oh, oh, oh, oh! Ow!"

"Say when!" said Tom Merry grimly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooh! Ow! Help! You rotters! Yah! Lemme alone! Help!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Oh, help! Stoppit! Chuck it! Yah! Oh!"

"You've only got to say when you want me to leave off," said Tom Merry, pausing to take breath. "You're going to be thrashed till you own up!"

"I didn't touch Towser!" shrieked Levison, almost sobbing with pain and rage.

"Liar!" said Herries grimly. "We know you did. We know that Brooke caught you once, tormenting him, didn't you, Brooke?"

"Yes, I did; and jolly well thumped him!" said Brooke of the Fourth. "And you all know how he tried to get even with me, and nearly got me sacked from St. Jim's for his rotten trick. If he didn't do it this time, he did it then, and so he deserves the licking, anyway."

"Hear, hear!"

"Are you going to own up, Levison?"

"No!" yelled Levison.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Ow—ow! Stop it! I'll own up! Yow! Ow!"

Tom Merry ceased the castigation. Levison was squirming wildly in the grasp of the four juniors. He had never had a thrashing like that before, though he had deserved dozens of them.

"The truth, mind!" said Tom Merry.

"I—I didn't mean to hurt him," moaned Levison. "And I didn't think the beast could break his chain—Ow!"

"Jolly sure of that!" grunted Herries. "You wouldn't have dared to touch him, you funk, if you'd thought poor old Towser had a chance of getting at you."

"What did you do?" demanded Blake.

"I—I only tickled him with a pin in the end of a stick," said Levison, gasping. "He wasn't really hurt, only—"

"You rotter!" roared Herries. "You—you stuck pins in my bulldog! I'll—"

"Hold him!" said Tom Merry.

"Let me get at him!" yelled Herries, as the juniors dragged him back. "I'll smash him! I'll pulverise him! Stuck pins in Towser! The cowardly beast! I'll slaughter him! Let me go, Blake, or I'll punch your silly head! I tell you I'm going to smash him!"

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Let me go, you idiots! I'm going to—"

"Shut up!" said Tom Merry. "Levison's had a licking, and he's going to own up. The beast makes me feel sick, but you can let him alone. He's been licked, and if he owns up to the Head, that will make it square."

"I tell you—"

"Oh, sit on him, somebody!"

Levison was held back from Herries by main force. Levison had slid off the table now, and he was looking very white. If Towser's master had succeeded in getting at him just then, the cad of the Fourth would have had reason to be sorry for himself.

"Shut up, Herries!" said Blake.

"It all depends on Levison whether Towser comes back, you know. Are you ready to go to the Head, Levison?"

"I—I can't!" stammered Levison. "If I told the Head, he'd expel me—you know how hard he is on cruelty to animals, as he would call it—"

"What do you call it yourself, you cad?"

"Well, I didn't really hurt him—"

"You must have hurt him a lot to make him so excited," said Blake.

"You tortured him—that's what it amounts to—like a cruel beast, as you are. A chap who would hurt a dog is capable of anything. I jolly well wish the Head would sack you. Anyway, you're going to own up and chance it."



As Dr. Holmes looked into the Form-room an amazing sight met his gaze. Knox and Rushden were sitting on the floor, tied back to back, and the Fourth Formers were executing a war-dance round them!

"I—I can't—"

"Lay him over the table again," said Tom Merry quietly.

Levison backed away in terror.

"Let me alone! I—I can't go to the Head now—he's in his room—"

"Mr. Railton will do."

"He's taking the Sixth this afternoon."

"The Sixth can go and chop chips. If you're ready, we'll take you to Mr. Railton at once. If you are not ready, we'll lick you till you are. Now—"

"Hands off, you beasts! I'll go!"

"Mind," said Tom Merry warningly, "we shall all be with you when you own up. If you don't make it fair and square, we shall settle with you afterwards. What you've had will be nothing to it. I give you my word, if you don't make it square with Railton, you'll be licked till you can't stand."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I'll do it!" growled Levison sullenly.

"Then come on!"

And Levison left the study in the midst of a crowd of juniors.

CHAPTER 15.

All's Well That Ends Well!

MR. RAILTON was busy with the Sixth when there was a tramp of feet outside, and a knock at the door.

The door opened, and the School House master looked round, and stared at the crowd of juniors who appeared in view. The Housemaster's face grew very stern. For the moment he concluded that the strikers intended to invade the sacred precincts of the Sixth Form.

"Go!" he exclaimed, striding towards the door. "How dare you come here!"

"If you please, sir—" said Tom Merry.

"How dare you!"

"Levison wants to speak to you, sir. He wants to confess!"

Mr. Railton's expression changed. He could see now that this was not an invasion. He stepped into the corridor, and closed the door. His eyes were fixed upon the cad of the Fourth, but Levison was careful not to meet them.

"What is this?" he asked.

"Levison's ready to own up that he caused all the trouble, sir," said Figgins.

"If—if you please, sir," stammered Levison, with an apprehensive glance at the juniors round him.

Levison would gladly have explained what had taken place in his study, and have appealed to the Housemaster for protection. But he dared not. He knew what to expect afterwards if he did not play the game, and he played it—sorely against his grain.

"I am ready to hear you, Levison," said the Housemaster coolly.

"I—I—I was to blame," said Levison, seeking for words. "I—I've been thinking it over, sir, and—and I want to own up. I feel that it is my duty to clear up the trouble if I can, sir."

"This is quite right and proper, Levison, and I hope you are speaking sincerely."

"It—it was my fault that Towser broke out the day before yesterday, sir. I didn't hurt him—I mean, I didn't mean to hurt him. I was just having a little game with him, sir, but he got excited—"

"You mean that you were tormenting the bulldog to such an extent that he became enraged and broke his chain?" said Mr. Railton.

"Well, ye-es, sir," said Levison helplessly.

"You were guilty of a cowardly action, Levison. In consequence of your rascally conduct, Levison, the poor animal might have been shot."

"I am very sorry, sir."

"You have caused a great deal of trouble, Levison, by an act of cowardly cruelty. I suppose you know that you will be severely punished for this?"

"As—as I'm owning up, sir, I—I thought you might look over it, and—"

"I cannot look over such an offence as cruelty to animals, Levison. You did not know that your act would have such consequences as it has had; but you know that you were guilty of wicked conduct. And you must have tormented the poor animal in a very cruel way to throw him into such a state of excitement, and to cause him so great an effort as to break his chain. You are a thoroughly bad boy, Levison, and I can promise you that you will be soundly flogged. But for your bad conduct, none of this trouble would have arisen—though there is no excuse for insubordination!" added Mr. Railton, with a stern glance at the strikers.

Tom Merry & Co. looked somewhat sheepish.

"We—we're all sorry now the Head's ill, sir," stammered Tom Merry. "If—if you'd explain to him, sir, how Levison caused all the trouble, I'm sure he'd let us have the pets back, as—as—as—"

"You cannot think of coaxing your headmaster, Merry. But I will promise you this much, that now I know the facts of the case, I will place them before the Head, and do my utmost to have your wishes granted—but upon condition that you all return to your duties at once, and that this folly ceases!"

There was a short silence. The juniors looked at one another. Give up the strike and surrender, and trust to Mr. Railton's influence with the Head! It was a big thing to ask of the young rebels, in the full tide of success as they were. But Tom Merry was keen enough; he had an idea that the strikers' demands would be granted, and that Mr. Railton's object was to "save the face" of the headmaster. What Dr.

CONSOLATION!



"You can't see?" said the man of immense proportions. "Just keep your eye on me and laugh when I laugh!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to N. Burgess, c/o The Keswick Hotel, Keswick, Cumberland.

Holmes could not possibly concede to rebels he might with perfect propriety grant to boys who had returned to their duties. Tom Merry understood.

"Very well, sir," he said; "and—you'll tell the Head that we're all sorry we've given him trouble, and we hope he will forgive us."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And we're all sorry he's ill, sir!" said Figgins.

"And that we never for a minute meant any disrespect to the Head by going on strike, sir," said Blake anxiously. "I think the Head ought to know that."

Mr. Railton smiled.

"You have very peculiar ideas of respect," he said. "However, I will explain to Dr. Holmes. Now go back to your Form-rooms."

"Certainly, sir!"

Mr. Railton went at once to the Head's house, and the juniors retired. Gore of the Shell sniffed contemptuously.

"Rotten surrender, I call it!" he said. "That's because you're a silly ass!" said Tom Merry politely. "The Head can't give in; it would be too awful a climb down for him. But it's pretty plain that if we save his dignity for him

we shall get what we want."

"We could always go on strike again if we don't!" said Herries.

"Exactly! We wanted the pets back, not to score over the Head. I should be jolly sorry to score over him, even if we could."

"Yaas, wathah! Bad form, deah boys."

"Rot!" said Mellish. "We could have brought him to his knees if we'd held out."

"You wouldn't want to if you weren't a beastly cad, Mellish!"

"Hear, hear!"

"I'm going back to lessons, for one!" said Tom Merry. "We've gained our point, and it would be fatheaded to keep on strike after that."

"Hear, hear!"

In ten minutes all the juniors of St. Jim's were in their Form-rooms.

The masters discovered the fact, and they came in to take their various Forms, looking a little uncertain at first.

But even Mr. Selby, the master of the Third, was tactful enough to take matters as they were, and to make no allusion to the past.

And most of the fellows were particularly good, and particularly respectful that afternoon, in order to show that they could be good when they liked. They had gone on strike for a principle, not for the sake of ragging, and they wanted to make that fact quite clear.

An unexpected calm had descended upon St. Jim's.

After last lesson the boys were dismissed, as usual, and they came swarming out of the Form-rooms, anxious for news.

A shout from Wally of the Third announced that there was a new notice on the board. The juniors crowded round to read it. The notice was in Mr. Railton's hand, and it brought tidings of great joy to the readers. It ran:

"It having transpired that the recent outbreak was caused by an act of cruelty on the part of one boy, who has now confessed, the headmaster has now consented to rescind his order for the exclusion of the junior boys' pets from the school. In view, also, of the fact that the junior boys have voluntarily returned to their duty, they will be pardoned for their recent insubordination, on condition that they apologise publicly to the headmaster."

"Three cheers for the Head!" shouted Tom Merry.

"Hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

"Yaas, wathah! The Head's a bwick! Huwvah!"

And there was satisfaction in all faces. Some of the more truculent youths were inclined to "jib" at the idea of a public apology to the Head. But most of the fellows felt—very rightly—that they were well out of what might have been a very serious scrape.

"It's up to us to apologise, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus. "We have wagged the Head."

"Most unusual conduct," said Monty Lowther solemnly. "It's more the rule to wag the tail than the head—"

"Oh, don't be funny, Lowthah! When I say wag, I don't mean wag, as you know vewy well. I mean wag—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course, we shall apologise to the Head," said Tom Merry. "It's the least we can do. And the pets are coming back!"

"Hurrah!"

"And here they come!" shouted Figgins.

There was a rush to the door. The

PEN PALS

(Continued from page 17.)

Ronald C. Vannoey, 53, Goldsmith Road, Higham Hill, Walthamstow, London, E.; science, stamps; overseas.

Bruce Brochie, 42, Moorland Avenue, Great Crosby, Liverpool, 23; stamps; overseas.

Miss Eileen Marshall, 50, Crediton Road, Custom House, London, E.16; girl correspondents; age 16-19.

Wong Chin Wah, 19, Market Street, Ipoh, Perak, Federated Malay States; stamps.

Lim Ton Kuan, c/o Chop Tong Hong, 69, Rodger Street, Kuala Lumpur, Federated Malay States; age 15-20; snaps, stamps.

Ian G. Rankine, 52, Windsor Avenue, Woodville, South Australia; age 13-15; stamps.

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T. Chilman, Bank House, Bellingham, North Tyne; age 12-15; stamps; overseas.

Michael O'Hare, 41, Trinity Street, Islington, London, N.1; old "Nelson Lees."

Laurence Smith, 92, Hartley Avenue, Delph Lane, Leeds; age 13-16; sports of all kinds.

Wilton Mai, c/o P.O., Hamilton, New Zealand; age 15-16; films, cigarette cards.

N. Ridland, 30, Riversdale Crescent, Murryfield, Edinburgh; age 19 up; films, aviation, fencing, sports.

Frank Coackley, 6, Homes St., Cheshire; pen pals; age 13-16.

R. Radford, 109, Rock St., Bulwell, Nottingham; age 12-14; overseas; sports.

Miss Dorothy McDougall, 1082, St. Cecile St., Three Rivers, Quebec, Canada; girl correspondents; S. Africa, India, Egypt, South Seas.

van was in sight. Mr. Railton had evidently telephoned an order when he put the notice on the board, ready to meet the eyes of the juniors when they were dismissed from classes.

There was an uproar from the van as the juniors surrounded it; the barking of Pongo and the growling of Towser, mingled with the squawling and shrieking and screeching of the other animals and birds, but it was music to the ears of the juniors.

Herries dragged out his bulldog and fondled him affectionately. Pongo snuggled into D'Arcy minor's jacket, whimpering with joy. Reilly captured his monkey, taking care to keep a tight hold on him. Clifton Dane took out his cage with the parrot in it, and Polly screamed an ear-splitting welcome to her master.

"Hurrah! Polly wants sugar! Old Ratty! Old sneak! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here's the Head!"

All eyes turned on the doorway of the School House. The Head had come down, and the juniors' hearts smote them as they saw how pale and worn he looked.

Arthur Augustus set the example; he advanced towards the Head.

"Pway allow me to apologise most humbly for my wecent webellious conduct, Dr. Holmes," he said, "and also to thank you for your great kindness in allowin' us to have our pets back to the school."

"Hear, hear!"

"We all apologise, sir!" said Tom Merry.

"All of us, sir!"

"And we hope you know that we didn't mean any disrespect, sir," said Blake, quite anxious upon that point.

The Head frowned a little.

"Your conduct has been what I can only call outrageous," he said. "It has caused me very much pain and anxiety, and—"

"Oh, sir, we're sorry!"

"Vewy sowwy indeed, sir!"

"I accept your assurance upon that point," said the Head. "If anything of the kind should occur again, I shall be compelled to take stern measures. If this rebellion had continued you would have put me to the pain of expelling boys whom I should be very sorry to see leave this school. But upon your promise to make up for your disorderly conduct by good behaviour in the future, I shall forgive you."

"We all promise, sir!"

"Very well, the matter is ended now."

"Hurrah! The Head's a brick—the Head's a brick!"

Dr. Holmes looked round in astonishment. It was very flattering, no doubt, to be regarded as a "brick" by his boys, but it was "cheeky," to say the least of it, for anyone to address him in that manner.

"Good old sport!" went on the shrill voice, as Clifton Dane vainly tried to quiet his parrot. "Old sport! Polly wants sugar—Polly wants sugar! Go and eat coke! Hurrah!"

There was a yell of laughter.

"Dear me!" said the Head in amazement. "Who—who is that?"

"It is the parrot, sir," said Mr. Railton, laughing in spite of himself.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head. The parrot screamed again.

"Hurrah! Give 'em beans, boys! Pile in—pile in! Polly wants sugar! Levison's a rotter—Levison's a rotter! Go home!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Polly wants sugar! Poor Polly—poor old Polly! Hurrah! The Head's a brick! Give him some sugar! He's a brick!"

The Head laughed heartily.

"Please take the animals away," he said. "I must observe that that parrot is a very clever bird. Whom does he belong to?"

"He's mine, sir!" said Clifton Dane.

"Did you teach him to say those things?"

The Canadian junior coloured.

"Well, sir, I—I suppose he picked them up through hearing the fellows talk in my study. He picks up things very quickly, sir."

"In your study?" said the Head. "I understood that the pets were not allowed in the studies, Dane!"

"Oh, my hat!" said the junior in dismay. "I—I— My goodness, sir! I—I—"

The Head smiled.

"There is no harm in your having a parrot in your study sometimes, Dane," he said kindly; "I give you my permission to do so. I am afraid dogs and monkeys cannot be allowed in the studies, but a parrot can do no harm."

"Oh, thank you, sir!"

"Hurrah!" shrieked the parrot. "Give him some sugar! The Head's a brick! Give him some sugar, boys!"

The Head retreated into the House, laughing.

The strike at St. Jim's was over, and, as all the fellows agreed, all was well that ended well.

THE END.

(Next Wednesday: "THE TRAITOR!"—a powerful long yarn of school sport and adventure, featuring a St. Jim's senior who played to lose in a cricket match. Don't miss this great yarn!)

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.....BC36

WHO IS THE UNKNOWN THAT HAUNTS THE GREYFRIARS REMOVE? READ HOW THE GHOSTLY RAIDER IS RUN TO EARTH!

THE GHOST of GREYFRIARS!

WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK.

When someone unknown starts to raid food from the Remove studies at night, Harry Wharton & Co. decide to put a stop to the prowler's activities. They discover that the raider haunts the ruined wing of Greyfriars, and when the juniors are searching there, a white, ghostly face, with glaring eyes, is seen looking at them! Next moment it is gone!

Harry Wharton & Co. have to give up the search, and so they prepare to lie in wait at night for the ghost, when he raids the studies again. Unknown to them, however, Bulstrode, the bully of the Form, and Hazeldene, who think Bunter is responsible for the grub-raiding, adopt the same plan.

Taking up a position in the darkness of the Remove passage, Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Nugent wait for the raider to appear. They hear a creak on the stairs leading to the ruined wing. Then suddenly faint footsteps are heard in the passage, and two dim figures appear. The three juniors promptly collar them, and two terrified cries ring out in the night!

A Mutual Mistake!

"O W!"

"Ooooooogh!"

"Lemme gerrup!"

"What—how—who—"

"My only hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Here's a capture and no mistake! Why, they're Bulstrode and Vaseline!"

"Bulstrode and Vaseline!"

"The rotters!"

"So it was them all the time!"

"We've caught the rotters!"

"Geroff my chest!"

"Lemme gerrup!"

"Yes, we'll let you get up, you rotters! Show a light, Bob!"

Bob Cherry lit the gas in the passage, and it shone on Hazeldene—more commonly known as Vaseline in the Remove—and Bulstrode, lying sprawled on the floor, with Wharton and Nugent pinning them down.

The sudden attack in the darkness had startled the two Removites, but at present they were more enraged than scared, as they recognised whom their assailants were.

"You cads!" exclaimed Bulstrode fiercely. "Let me get up!"

"We've caught you!"

"We've caught you, you mean!" snarled Bulstrode.

"Eh?"

"I know very well what you three fellows were doing in the passage here. You can't take me in by this trick!" growled the bully of the Remove.

"What trick? What are you talking about?"

"This jumping on us suddenly when you saw we were bound to find you!" sneered Bulstrode. "I'm not a baby to be taken in so easily as all that. The whole Remove shall know to-morrow who it is steals grub from the studies!"

"Well, of all the cheek!" gasped Bob Cherry. "To try to turn it round like that when we've caught them in the very act!"

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By Frank Richards.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.")

Bulstrode glared at him.

"What do you mean? In the act of what?"

"Of going to raid the studies."

"Why, you utter idiot, we came down from the dormitory to watch for the grub-raider!" snarled Bulstrode. "We didn't expect to find three—"

"And we didn't expect to find two!"

"Wait a bit," said Harry Wharton quietly. "It looks to me as if Bulstrode is telling the truth."

"Accidents will happen!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Look here, Bulstrode, do you deny that you came down here to go through the studies and raid the grub?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes, of course I do!"

"You came down to watch for the raider?"

"Yes, we did."

The ghostly grub-raider of Greyfriars is at last cornered by Harry Wharton & Co., and great is the surprise of the school when his identity is revealed!

"Of course we did," said Hazeldene. "You surely don't think, Wharton, that we came to pinch the grub, do you?"

"Yes, I did think so, and I shouldn't be surprised at your doing it, either, Hazeldene," said Harry Wharton in his direct way. "But I shouldn't have expected anything of the sort of Bulstrode. If you say that you came down to look for the raider, and not to make a raid yourself, Bulstrode, I believe you."

"Well, that's what we came for."

"Then I'm satisfied."

Bulstrode and Hazeldene were allowed to rise. There was a savage sneer on the face of the bully of the Remove.

"You may be satisfied," he exclaimed, "but I'm not! What were you three fellows doing down here? That's what I want to know."

"I have already told you," said Harry Wharton quietly. "We were watching for the raider, and when you came along we thought we had him."

"Yes, so you say!"

"Does that mean you doubt my word?" asked Harry.

"Oh, it's not a question of any fellow's word, but of evidence," said the bully of the Remove. "I'm not going to make it a personal matter, and let you crawl out of it that way, Wharton. It concerns the whole Form. You three fellows have been found here—"

"So have you two, for that matter."

"That's different."

"I don't see how you make that out."

"Well, for one thing our study has been robbed twice, and we should naturally look for the rotter who did it. You haven't lost anything. If you have been doing the raiding yourselves, that accounts for your study being left alone. I thought you were putting young Bunter up to it. Instead of that, you're on the job yourselves. It's all pretty clear to me. You sneaked out of the dormitory to raid the studies—"

Harry's eyes blazed, and he clenched his fists. But Bob Cherry pulled him back by the shoulder.

"Hold on, Wharton!"

"Let me alone!" exclaimed Harry.

"Don't start rowing here in the middle of the night. You don't want to bring a master down on us, do you? Quelch would give it to us pretty stiff if we woke him up, especially after this afternoon."

"Quite right," said Nugent. "You can make Bulstrode take his words back, or else give him a hiding to-morrow, Harry."

Bulstrode sneered.

"Good! We'll see what the Remove has to say about it to-morrow," he said. "Come on, Hazeldene; no good waiting here now. We've discovered the thieves, and if there's anything taken now, we shall jolly well know who took it!"

"I don't think it was Wharton, really, Bulstrode," muttered Hazeldene, who was afflicted with a desire to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, a policy which frequently brought down upon him the wrath of both parties he tried to propitiate.

"Don't you?" retorted Bulstrode, turning on him. "I suppose you're going to take his side against me, you young cad!"

"Oh, no. I don't mean that!"

"Then shut up and come along."

Bulstrode and Hazeldene made their way upstairs again. The chums of the Remove followed. Bob Cherry turning out the light. The noise of the scuffle had, fortunately, not been heard. Harry Wharton's face was dark as he mounted the stairs. Bulstrode and Hazeldene entered the Remove dormitory, and Nugent and Bob Cherry were about to follow, when Wharton stopped them.

"What is it, Harry?" Nugent asked. "Close the door. I want to speak, and I don't want those rotters to hear."

Bulstrode and Hazeldene were in the dormitory, going towards their beds. Frank Nugent pulled the door shut.

"You've forgotten about the sound we heard just before Bulstrode came down," said Harry, in a low voice.

"By Jove! So we had."

"I'm convinced Bulstrode told the truth, in one respect. He really came down to look for the raider, not to collar anything himself."

"Yes, I rather think that much was true."

"And I believe that who ever it was we heard coming down from the box-room

MORE BIG THRILLS FROM THE EARLY SCHOOLDAYS OF THE CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS.



"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry faintly. "Look!" A white face, strangely and terribly white, with sparkling eyes, had made itself visible in the darkness. The three juniors started back. The apparition was a little too much for their nerves!

ten minutes ago is the rotter we are looking for."

"He must have heard the row in the passage."

"Yes; and it may have scared him off, or he may have taken cover to wait till we're all quiet in bed again."

"Very likely."

"That's why I came up with Bulstrode. We'll remain here for a bit and listen on the stairs. If the chap is still in the House, he'll make some sign presently. You're game to see this out to a finish, aren't you?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Then we'll see it through," said Harry Wharton determinedly.

"Good!"

"Come down the stairs quietly, and we'll listen for a sound in the passage. The place is so still that we're bound to hear him if he does go into any of the studies."

"Right you are!"

The chums of the Remove crept cautiously down the stairs again in their rubber shoes, making no sound.

On the second of the wide stairs they waited, and in silence listened intently for the faintest sound to break the stillness of the night.

It was long in coming.

From the night came at last the chimes of the half-hour—the peals indicating half-past eleven from the clock tower of Greyfriars.

The sound died away with many an echo amid the ancient buildings of Greyfriars, and silence, seemingly all the deeper, reigned again.

It was broken by a faint sound. It made the chums of the Remove start as much as if it had been a sudden clap of thunder.

It was repeated, and then they had no further doubt. Someone was moving in

the passage upon which the Remove studies opened.

They could see nothing, hear nothing but that faint, scarcely audible sound of stealthy footsteps in the dark. But that was enough for them.

Harry Wharton nudged his companions, and, with fast-beating hearts, the chums of the Remove crept forward from the stairs along the passage.

Face to Face!

HARRY WHARTON suddenly caught Bob Cherry by the arm and stopped.

"Look!" he muttered.

"My hat!"

In the dense darkness of the passage there was a glimmer of light. It came from under the door of one of the studies—that belonging to Skinner and Russell. The door was closed, but the light from underneath showed that there was somebody in the room. The mysterious depredator had closed the door to keep the light concealed while he raided the cupboard.

Harry Wharton smiled grimly.

"We've got him now!" he whispered.

"Rather!" muttered Nugent.

"He's shut himself up in the room, and we've got him cornered! We've only got to take care that he doesn't get away, that's all."

"Who on earth can it be?" muttered Bob Cherry. "My hat, I'm anxious to see him in the light!"

"So am I! Not a sound, you know. Come on!"

The three juniors stole down the passage towards Skinner's study, and stopped outside the closed door. There they listened intently for a sound within.

The light continued to glimmer from under the door, and as it was steady and did not move, the chums guessed that the raider had put on the light, and that it was not a light from a flash-lamp.

This seemed to knock on the head the theory that the fellow might be a stranger to Greyfriars. He must have known his way about pretty well to explore the rambling interior of Greyfriars without a light.

Sounds came from within the study—faint sounds, but clear enough to indicate the occupation of the unknown individual within. He was evidently removing articles from the cupboard, and the clink of crockery and the sound of a falling knife or fork were not to be mistaken.

The chums of the Remove hesitated for a second or two. Now that they were on the spot, almost face to face with the mysterious raider, they felt a strange thrill.

There was so much that was mysterious, inexplicable, about the whole affair. If the raider were a Greyfriars fellow, what had he been up in the box-room for before the raid? There was absolutely no explanation of that. If he were not a Greyfriars fellow, how did he know his way about the school so well? Yet, if he were an outsider, how came he to content himself with merely taking articles of food, when valuables were to be had easily enough when once the entry to Greyfriars was effected?

Harry Wharton set his teeth and laid his hand on the handle of the door. Even if the juniors were called upon to face some hulking ruffian—perhaps an armed man—he was not afraid.

"Come on, you chaps!"

The sounds within the study had suddenly ceased. Had the raider heard some faint sound and taken the alarm? It looked like it, for at the very moment that Harry Wharton opened the door, the light was turned off, and the room was plunged in darkness.

The chums were about to rush in, but as a wall of darkness rose, as it were, before them, they halted and hesitated in the doorway.

For a moment there was a tense and thrilling silence.

They could see nothing, but they knew that the unknown was there, within a few paces of them, hidden in the gloom—perhaps preparing to attack!

At the thought they recoiled a little. Wharton groped in his pocket for matches. There was a sound of quick breathing in the darkness of the study.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry faintly. "Look!"

A glimmer of white had made itself visible in the darkness. Starlight falling through the study window fell upon a white face—strangely, terribly white—with sparkling eyes.

The three juniors started back; the sudden and terrible apparition was a little too much for their nerves.

They started back into the passage; and the next moment there was the sound of running feet, and something brushed past them in the darkness and disappeared.

"What was that?"

"Was that you, Cherry?"

"I? No; I—"

"I've got him!" gasped Nugent, almost hysterically. "I've got hold of his arm! Lend a hand here!"

"Let go, you ass! It's my arm you've got hold of!"

"Your arm, Cherry?"

"Yes. Let me go!"

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"Sorry! Have you got him, Wharton?"

"No; he brushed past me. I nearly had him, but Cherry got in the way. But we won't lose him."

"I say, did you see his face?"

"Yes; it's got up with chalk."

"Oh, you think it's only chalk, then?"

"Did you think it was a ghost?"

"I—I—"

"Never mind talking now. After him! He's bound to make for the box-room, and we'll have him as sure as a gun!"

"Good! Come on!"

Harry Wharton led the way towards the box-room stairs at a sprinting pace. There was the sound of running feet and hard breathing from the darkness ahead. The raider had abandoned his loot in Skinner's study, thinking only of escape. But the chums of the Remove were close on the track, running for all they were worth. They knew every inch of the irregular passages of Greyfriars, and could venture to put on speed in the dense darkness.

They heard a stumble ahead.

Perhaps the stranger knew the way less than they did; perhaps his haste had made him stumble. The sound of a heavy fall reached their ears.

"We've got him!" gasped Wharton. "Come on!"

He dashed on in a spurt, and reached the foot of the box-room stairs. Without pausing a moment he dashed up them and into the box-room. There, fearful of falling over the lumber in the darkness, he halted, and then felt his way towards the little door leading into the hidden passage. There was no sound in the room, save what he made himself, and the door, when he reached it, was closed. Harry Wharton felt a thrill of triumph.

The fugitive could not have got ahead of him so much as that. Undoubtedly he had shot ahead of the raider and cut off his escape.

"Have you got him?"

It was Bob Cherry's voice from the door of the box-room.

"Not yet."

"Has he got through?"

"I'm sure not. I should have heard him open the door. We've got ahead of him. Show a light."

There was a scratch and a flare. Bob Cherry picked his way towards the gas with a lighted match between his finger and thumb, and lit it. Nugent came in and they hunted through the box-room. There was no trace of a fugitive.

"He's not here," said Nugent.

"That's plain enough," Bob Cherry remarked. "The question is whether he got ahead and escaped through the passage before we arrived here."

Harry Wharton shook his head decidedly.

"I'm certain that wasn't the case, Bob. We should have had him if he kept on after that stumble; we were so close. I thought he had kept on, and ran up here; but, as a matter of fact, he must have dodged away in the dark, and I passed him."

"Yes, I fancy that's the case."

"We're ahead of him," said Wharton grimly, "and we've got him shut up somewhere in Greyfriars. It's only a question of time, running him down now."

"He may go straight back to his dormitory," suggested Nugent. "As he seems to have left all his loot behind he has nothing to come here for. I suppose his usual dodge was to come here and hide it."

Harry shook his head again.

"There's more in it than that, Nugent. THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,486.

If he could go back to a dormitory, why should he make for the box-room in the first place when he ran? How was it we heard him running down from the box-room before the raid?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"Well, I know—at least, I can guess."

"What's your idea, then?"

"He's not a Greyfriars fellow," said Wharton, with conviction. "He's somebody who's hiding in the deserted wing for some reason or other."

Nugent whistled.

"I say, that sounds a little steep, Harry!"

"I don't care," said Wharton firmly.

"It's my theory, and it's the only one that covers the ground, too. Some fellow is hiding in the ruined wing, and, of course, he requires grub to live on. So he comes out at night, or when the fellows are in the class-rooms, and raids the studies."

"But how do you account for his knowing his way about the school so well?"

"Perhaps he's an old Greyfriars boy himself," suggested Bob Cherry. "An old boy would know the ins and outs as well as we do."

"Seems too steep for me," said Nugent, with a shake of the head.

"Have you any other theory to offer, then?" asked Harry.

"Oh, no; I don't undertake to explain it. It's a giddy mystery, and it's a size too big for me to tackle," Nugent confessed.

"Well, I believe I've hit the right nail on the head, though I can't account for the circumstances," said Wharton. "If I'm correct, we've only got to take care that he doesn't escape this way, and then we can run him down at our leisure."

"That's so. Quelchey was going to have a fastening put on this door."

"It hasn't been done yet, but there's a lock to the box-room door. We can lock it on the outside and take away the key, and then the chap will be done when he comes up here."

"Ha, ha! That's good!"

The Removites crossed to the box-room door. Harry Wharton took the key out of the lock. As he did so there was a slight sound on the stairs. Harry sprang through the doorway. He was just in time to see a dim form disappear.

"What was it?"

"He was on the stairs," said Harry Wharton. "That's proof enough. But he won't escape this way in a hurry, I imagine."

The light was turned out, and the Remove chums stepped outside the box-room. Harry Wharton reversed the key and locked the door on the outside. Then he slipped the key into his pocket. The escape of the mysterious night-prowler was cut off now with a vengeance.

"And now to run him down," said Harry Wharton grimly.

And the chums of the Remove descended the stairs from the box-room to commence the hunt for the mysterious raider.

Run Down!

BOOM! The first stroke was followed by eleven more. Midnight had rung out from the tower of Greyfriars, and still the three Removites were on the hunt. They had searched far and wide for the unknown raider, and had not seen or heard a sign or sound of him. He had vanished.

There was really nothing surprising in that, for Greyfriars was an ancient, rambling building, and there were a hundred nooks and crannies where a

fugitive might hide, and only be discovered by luck. The chums of the Remove could not have searched every hiding-place in a week.

The fugitive might have slipped into any of the dormitories, and might be hiding under a bed; but it was impossible for the chums to risk disturbing the sleepers in their quest.

Harry Wharton stopped at last as the final stroke of midnight boomed out through the gloomy night.

"It's no go," said Bob Cherry. "And I'm getting jolly tired. What price bed now?"

"Just what I was thinking," Nugent confessed. "But I don't want to give up if you fellows want to carry on. What do you say, Harry?"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"No good keeping on," he said. "I should have liked to run the fellow down, but there are a hundred places where he might have hidden himself. It's no go. And, anyway, we have discovered something. We know now that it can't be a Greyfriars chap. It's some fellow hiding in the ruined wing, though I'm blessed if I know what he can be doing it for, unless it's some tramp. And then it's curious his not stealing anything besides the grub. I suppose he'll get away by one of the lower windows. But after to-night I should hardly think he would have the nerve to visit Greyfriars again."

"That's pretty certain," assented Nugent. "We might capture him by waking the school and having a general hunt."

"We don't want to do that. I suppose he has no right to be here. But he isn't a thief, and we've given him an exciting time," grinned Harry. "Besides, he may have got out by a window on the ground floor already."

"Yes, that's possible."

"We've done about all we can do. Let's get back to bed."

This direction from their leader was gladly obeyed by the Remove chums. They were tired and cold, and now that the excitement of the chase had died out, there was nothing exhilarating in poking about in empty studies looking for a fugitive who, in all probability, wasn't there.

The chums returned to the Remove dormitory, and entered by the door nearest their own end of the room. There was a faint sound in the dormitory as they entered as of someone moving, but it was followed by complete silence.

"Hallo! Still awake, Bulstrode!" said Harry Wharton cheerily.

There was no reply.

"You awake, Hazeldene?"

No answer came from the cad of the Remove.

"Sulking, I suppose," grinned Bob Cherry. "Somebody is awake, anyway. I heard someone move—I know that!"

"It sounded like someone out of bed."

"Exactly!"

"I thought it came from this end of the dormitory, though," Nugent remarked.

"So did I."

Harry Wharton gave a slight start.

"I say, is it possible—"

"What do you mean?"

"He can't be here, surely?" whispered Wharton.

"He—who?" asked Nugent and Cherry together.

"The rotter you're hunting for."

The chums of the Remove gave a simultaneous jump at the suggestion.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob

Cherry. "That would be a bit of a surprise. But we thought he might have nipped into one of the dormitories, didn't we?"

"Yes. And why not this as much as any other?"

"True—why not?"

Harry Wharton's eyes were gleaming now. The thought of being successful in the hunt, after all, and unearthing the mysterious raider, was inspiring.

"Lock the doors, Cherry," he whispered. "If the rotter is in here, we'll soon have him out of wherever he's skulking."

"Good!" grinned Bob Cherry.

To lock the doors of the Remove dormitory and extract the keys occupied less than a minute. Meanwhile, Nugent had put on the light. Several fellows, awakened by the light, looked up blinking from their pillows, and demanded to know what the matter was. Bulstrode sat up in bed and growled.

"What on earth are you fellows up to?" he demanded. "Aren't you gone back to bed yet?"

"We look as if we haven't, don't we?" Bob Cherry remarked cheerfully.

"Turn that light out!"

"All in good time!"

"How do you think I can go to sleep with that light glaring in my eyes?" howled the bully of the Remove.

"Haven't thought about the matter at all."

"I'll jolly soon make—"

"Oh, shut up, Bulstrode!" said Harry Wharton impatiently. "We've been hunting for the raider, and we have an idea that he may be hiding in this dormitory."

"They are," sneered Bulstrode—"all three of them, and I could tell you their names."

"Oh, shut up! If any of you fellows feel inclined to join in the hunt, you can get up and lend a hand."

"By Jove, rather!" exclaimed Skinner, tumbling out of bed at once.

Russell and Morgan and several others followed his example.

"Locked the doors all right, Bob?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Good! Now let's hunt for the rotter."

The Removites joined joyfully in the search. There were enough of them to eat the intruder, if he were there. No sound had been heard since the first alarm; but Harry Wharton was almost convinced that the fugitive was indeed in the dormitory, crouching under one of the beds.

If he were there, capture was only a matter of a few minutes, for there was no escape from the room.

The Removites went along the dormitory, each of them peeping under the beds, which formed the only places of concealment in the lofty, barely furnished apartment.

Harry Wharton went to his own bed, and stooped and lifted the coverlet. He jumped up again with a startled exclamation.

In spite of his feeling that the fugitive was near, he was startled to see the dim outlines of a crouching form under the bed. Bob Cherry looked across at him.

"Seen anything, Harry?"

"Yes."

"What?"

There was a general exclamation, and a crowding towards Wharton. Harry's face was pale with excitement now.

"Is he under your bed, Harry?"

"Someone is."

"My hat!"

Even Bulstrode was out of his bed

now, as excited as the rest. He joined the crowd with Hazeldene. Billy Bunter, as excited as anybody, was feeling wildly about for his glasses. The whole Remove came crowding round Harry Wharton's bed. There was no hope of escape now for the mysterious raider of the Greyfriars studies. Harry Wharton stooped again and threw back the coverlet.

"Come out!"

There was a gasp under the bed.

An Amazing Revelation!

"COME out!" howled the Greyfriars Remove as one boy. Another gasp under the bed, a sound of hurried breathing. The sound of a shifting body! But the concealed fugitive did not come out.

"Come out!"

"Reach under and lug him out!" said Bulstrode.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Hazeldene.

"He may have a knife!"

"Pooh! It's not a burglar."

"It's not a Greyfriars chap," said Bob Cherry quickly. "We don't know who it may be. Don't reach under till we do know."

"Right-ho!" said Harry Wharton.

"Bring me a poker from the grate, Bunter. I'll soon shift him with that!"

Billy Bunter ran up with the poker. Harry Wharton took it from him, and bent down to lunge under the bed, but he gave the hidden fugitive a last warning first.

"Will you come out? I've got a poker here, and I'll give you a dig that you'll remember if you don't show yourself."

There was a gasp again and a slim form came into view. It was that of a

lad, evidently no older than Harry Wharton himself, but he was totally unrecognisable to the Removites. He was dressed in Etons, but so thickly caked with dust and grime that the original colour of the cloth was hardly discernible.

But his face was most startling of all. It was deathly white, but now it was seen closely in good light it could easily be seen that the white was caused by a thick coating of chalk.

The mysterious figure rolled out from under the bed, moved at last by the threat of a lunging poker. The Removites stared at him in blank amazement. He picked himself up nimbly and stood in the midst of a circle of wondering faces.

"Who are you?"

A dozen voices asked the question. The stranger blinked dazedly round at the Remove.

Bob Cherry uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Look at his hands!"

There was a shout of astonishment from the Greyfriars Remove.

The stranger hastily thrust his hands out of sight, but it was too late. They had been seen. And those hands were a dark olive colour, and were evidently not those of an English boy.

"He's a nigger!"

"Or a Hindu."

Hindu! The word furnished the clue.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "It's Hurree Singh!"

"Hurree Singh!"

The name was exclaimed on all sides. Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the Hindu nabob, who had been in the Greyfriars Remove, and who had come to the school with the foreign pupils. He had left with them, and had not been seen

The MANDARIN'S VENGEANCE!

By Frank Richards

Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars, have faced many dangers together, but nothing so perilous, sinister and terrifying as they encounter in far-off China! The menace of the Mandarin Tang Wang and his terrible "Red Dragon" Tong hangs over their heads, for they stand between Tang Wang and his victim—Wun Lung, their Chinese chum! Here's a great yarn of schoolboy adventure in China!



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since, although he had been often spoken and thought of by the chums of the Remove.

The raider of the Greyfriars studies blinked and grinned. The grin had a strange effect on his curiously whitened face.

Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent seized hold of him in a twinkling.

"You young ass!"

"You silly young donkey!"

"You rank fraud!"

The Nabob of Bhanipur gasped. "Have the kindness to be less violent in your greetings!" he exclaimed.

If the Remove had any doubts, the hearing of Hurree Singh's beautiful variety of the English tongue would have removed them.

There was only one person they knew who could speak that kind of English, and that person was Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry and Nugent released the nabob at last.

"What is the meaning of this little jape?" asked Harry Wharton. "What do you mean by leading us a dance?"

The nabob grinned.

"My heart had the hungerfulness for the respected school where I was happy in the attachfulness of my chums," he said.

"Have you run away from the other place?"

"I never went there, my worthy chum."

"You never went there?"

The Removites stared at the nabob in astonishment. Hurree Singh sat down on the edge of Harry Wharton's bed and laughed.

"No. The respected establishment of the admired Herr Rosenblum has not had the distinguished honour of sheltering my noble person."

"But you left Greyfriars with all the foreign fellows, and we saw you off at the station, when you gave me that diamond as a farewell gift," said Harry Wharton, looking puzzled.

"That is trueful, but I left the train at the next station."

"My hat! And then——"

"I took the nextful train back."

"Of all the nerve——"

"I lingered about the vicination of the school till after dark, and then I sneaked in quietly," grinned the nabob. "Nugent had shown me over the ruined wing and I knew just where to hide."

"You young bounder! But what was your little game? Do you mean to say that you've been in hiding ever since the foreign chaps left Greyfriars?"

"That is the exactfulness of the case."

"But what was the game?"

"I did not wish to quit the schoolful dwelling where I made the chumfulness with my respected friends."

"And we didn't want you to go, either, old chap; but you can't stay without permission. You couldn't hang out in the ruined wing for ever."

"I did not think much about that. I thought that in time I might find a way of staying. I wrote to my guardian in London to tell him I wanted to stay, and that I would not leave Greyfriars of my own free willfulness."

"Ha, ha! And so it was you who raided the studies."

The nabob grinned gleefully.

"I had to have the foodful supply for the bodily wants," he explained. "I took the grubful supplies from the honourable studies, and a spirit lamp from one place, and a kettle from another, and other useful articles from otherful places, and I have been rather exceedingly comfy in the ruined wing."

"You might have broken your neck in some of those pitfalls."

"The breakfulness would be due to the carelessness, and my carefulness has been terrific," said the nabob. "I was inclined many frequent times to confide my secret to my chumful friends——"

"Why didn't you, you ass?" asked Nugent. "We'd have stood by you and helped you out, instead of chasing you up and down Greyfriars like a giddy burglar."

The nabob chuckled.

"Was it you who were chasing me to-night, my worthy chums? Of course, my knowfulness was limited, and I did not recognise you in the darkful gloom. But I never let on to you, as you express it in English, because I thought you might be questioned as to whether you knew of anyone who was in hiding, and raiding the grubful supplies in the studies. You would then have been placed in the situation of terrific difficulty."

Harry Wharton nodded.

Hurree Singh had acted in a thoughtful and considerate manner in keeping the secret of his presence in Greyfriars from the chums of the Remove.

If they had known, they would and could have helped him, but their knowledge would have placed them in a very awkward position had questions been asked.

"You were right, Hurree."

"Yes, I think I was correctful in keeping the secret," said the nabob. "If I had shown any want of confidence in my chums the apologise would be terrific. But that was not the sweet reasonableness of the matter at all."

"But what have you got that chalk daubed all over your beautiful countenance for?" asked Bob Cherry.

"That was in case I should be seen, and then the recognisableness would not be so easy," explained Hurree Singh. "Had anyone spotted a dark face like mine at any moment, the whole cat would have been out of the bagfulness, as the English proverb says."

"Good old English proverb!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"So I made my face whiteful with the chalk," grinned Hurree Singh. "I have once or twice been seen, but I think confidentially that no one has recognised a Nabob of Bhanipur under this disguisefulness."

"You're right there," said Harry Wharton. "I shouldn't have known you from Adam, even now, if I hadn't seen your hands and heard your voice. But, I say, what are you going to do now? You can't go back to the ruined wing."

"Why not?" asked Hurree Singh. "If all the persons here will keep the strict mumfulness which reveals the wise head, there will be no harm done by the little adventures and the chasefulness of the night."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I'm afraid it's asking too much of the Remove," he said. "Somebody would be bound to talk, and this affair would get out——"

"It's out already!" grinned Bulstrode. "Hark!"

There was a sharp rap at the door of the dormitory. The juniors looked at one another in dismay.

The Return of Hurree Singh!

"OPEN this door immediately!" It was the voice of Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove.

"Turn out the light!" whispered Bob Cherry.

"Back to bed! Buck up!" exclaimed Nugent.

"No good," said Harry Wharton quietly. "He's seen the light under the door; he knows the door's locked; and he's heard our voices. The game is up!"

Hurree Singh's chalky face wore a worried look.

"Do you think the masterful sahib has heard my talkfulness?" he whispered.

"I expect so."

"Then the gamefulness is up for me." "Looks like it. But he may not have heard. Pop under the bed again, and we'll see if we can stick it out."

"The wheeze is good."

The Rascal of the Remove!



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"Will you come out?" said Harry Wharton. "I've got a poker here, and I'll give you a dig that you'll remember if you don't show yourself!" There was a gasp under the bed, and a slim form came into view—a lad with a deathly white face!

And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh disappeared under Harry Wharton's bed again. The next moment Bob Cherry unlocked the door, and the master of the Remove made his appearance. Mr. Quelch was looking decidedly angry. "So I find you all out of your beds!" he exclaimed, glancing round. "I expected as much."

"Yes, sir," said Bob Cherry meekly. "Do not answer me in that impertinent manner, Cherry."

"No, sir."

"Cherry, you will take fifty lines."

This time Bob thought it better not to answer at all. Mr. Quelch turned to Harry Wharton.

"The punishment to-day seems to have had no effect on you, Wharton. I find the whole Form out of bed at past midnight, and I'm not surprised to find you dressed. Whose voice was it I heard just before I knocked at the door?"

"Mine, perhaps, sir."

"It was not yours. It was a voice I should have been certain belonged to a boy who was lately at this school, if it were possible that he could still be here. Is it within the bounds of possibility that the Indian youth, Hurree Singh, has been smuggled into the school in any way?"

The Removites were silent.

Mr. Quelch looked round him, and then fixed his eyes on Harry's face again. The strange suspicion in his mind had become a certainty now.

"Is Hurree Singh here, Wharton?"

Harry did not speak.

But it was not necessary, for Hurree Singh saved him from the difficult position by crawling out from under the bed.

Mr. Quelch gazed at the Indian lad in blank amazement.

"Who—who is that? What does this absurd masquerade mean?"

"If you please, worthy instructor sahib—"

"Hurree Singh!"

"I have the honourable pleasure of presenting my excellent respects to you, sahib," said the nabob politely.

"How—how—what—how do you come here?"

"I came in by the door, sir."

"How is it that you are at Greyfriars at all?"

"I had too great regretfulness at leaving the school where I happily dwelt in the respected study of my chums, sahib. I returned and hid in the ruined wing, and the whiteness of my face is of a disguiseful nature."

"I—I really—H'm! Wash your face, Hurree Singh, and get into your bed. It is vacant here. I cannot deal with the matter now. I shall take you before the Head in the morning. Boys, go to bed immediately."

The Remove quietly obeyed. Mr. Quelch put out the light and retired, the most amazed man in Greyfriars. The voice of Hurree Singh was heard after the door closed.

"It is all up now, my worthy chums. The upfulness is terrific. I fear that the headmaster sahib will send me forthwithfully away."

"We'll speak up for you," said Bob Cherry.

"Good wheeze!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "We'll go in a body to the Head, and ask him to keep Hurree Singh at Greyfriars."

"That is a ripping idea!" said Nugent. "We'll make a Form matter of it."

"I thank you from the base of my heart, my respectable chums!" exclaimed Hurree Singh gratefully.

"Good-night! The chaselfulness has fatigued my honourable carcass."

"Good-night, Inky!"

And slumber at last reigned in the Remove dormitory.

None of the Removites woke till rising-bell was clanging out on the morning air, and then it seemed like a dream to the chums to see the cheerful olive face of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh looking at them from the bedclothes.

"The topfulness of the giddy morning to you, my worthy chums!" said the nabob cheerily. "Can anybody lend me a suit of clothes? My own are in a condition of terrific dustfulness."

"You're about my size," said Nugent.

"I'll manage it. I hope they'll let you

stay, Inky. It does me good to see your brown chivvy here."

"And I'm gladful to behold the features of my respectable chum, though as features they are not much to gaze at," said the nabob. "You English have a proverb that 'association makes one satisfied with anything,' have you not?"

"Ha, ha, ha! That's one for Inky!" said Bob Cherry. "It's a pleasure to hear him chirping again. If the Head doesn't let him stay with us, we'll get up a mutiny in the Remove."

The Removites went down to breakfast, and Hurree Singh rather nervously took his place at the Form table with the rest. There were wide-eyed stares from the other tables at the sight of the Nabob of Bhanipur in his old place with the Remove.

As the boys left the dining-room after breakfast, Mr. Quelch made a sign to the nabob, who approached him meekly.

"You will go to the Head's study immediately after prayers, Hurree Singh."

"Certainly, sir! I hope—"

"You may go!"

Mr. Quelch walked away in the direction of Dr. Locke's study. The Head did not breakfast with the school, and the Remove master found him in his study. The Head was looking rather worried over a letter in his hand.

"Ah! Come in, Mr. Quelch!" he exclaimed, with a nod to the Remove master. "I have had another letter from Herr Rosenblum. He has not yet found the lad who left his party on the day the foreign boys left Greyfriars."

Mr. Quelch smiled slightly.

"You will remember my telling you, Mr. Quelch, that Herr Rosenblum wrote to me, the day after the boys left, to say that the Indian lad, Hurree Singh, had separated himself from the party en route to Beechwood, and had disappeared."

"I remember, sir."

"I was very much concerned, and I hoped that the lad had been found by

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this time. But I have a letter this morning to say that he is still missing, and the Herr expresses a most curious suspicion."

"Indeed, sir! What is that?"

"He mentions that the Indian lad had grown very much attached to his friends at Greyfriars, and that he seemed very restless at leaving, and thinks he may have some idea in his mind of returning here. He asks me if I will inquire if anything has been seen or heard of the boy in the neighbourhood of Greyfriars."

Mr. Quelch smiled again.

"Of course, such a thing is not likely."

"On the contrary, sir, it is not only possible, but it has actually happened," said Mr. Quelch.

Dr. Locke stared at the Remove master.

"Eh? Have you heard anything, Mr. Quelch?"

"More than that, sir; I have seen him here at Greyfriars."

"Bless my soul! Tell me all!"

Mr. Quelch explained. The Head listened in utter amazement.

"Dear me! I am astounded! I never heard anything like this before. And the boy has been hiding in the ruined wing for two or three days! Amazing!"

"Quite amazing, sir! I have ordered him to report himself to you after prayers, so that you can deal with him."

"H'm! He deserves a severe punishment. Yet it is hard that the boy should have to leave the school if he has grown so deeply attached to the place and to his friends here, Mr. Quelch."

"I was thinking so myself."

"It is really flattering to us and the school to some extent; although, of course, it would be impossible to justify such a proceeding."

"Exactly," sir. If it could be arranged with his guardian and Herr Rosenblum, it might be possible for him to stay."

"I must think about that."

The Head glanced at the Remove when they went in for morning prayers. The nabob was in his place in the Form, with his usual calm expression. After prayers, the Remove filed out, and while the rest of the Form went to the class-room, three of them remained with Hurree Singh. They were the chums of Study No. 1.

"We're coming with you to see the Head," said Harry Wharton.

Bob Cherry slapped the nabob on the back.

"We're going to back you up!" he exclaimed. "Come on!"

"What ho!" said Nugent. "We'll explain to the Head."

"The gladfulness of my heart will be extreme if the headmaster sahib gives the permissibility for me to remain with my esteemed chums," said the nabob wistfully.

Harry Wharton knocked at the Head's door.

"Come in!" said the deep but kindly voice of Dr. Locke.

The chums of the Remove marched in. Dr. Locke raised his eyebrows at the sight of four Removites instead of one. He coughed slightly.

"H'm! I believe only Hurree Singh was ordered to come to me," he observed.

"That is correct, sahib," said the nabob. "My chumful friends have come with all due respectfulness to explicate matters to your supreme judgment. They—"

"If you would allow Hurree Singh to remain, sir," put in Harry Wharton respectfully, "he is sure his guardian would consent, and Herr Rosenblum would not mind. We all want him with us, sir—all of us in the Remove."

"That's so, sir!" said Bob Cherry and Nugent together.

The Head smiled a little.

"Very well," he said. "You have done wrong, Hurree Singh, but I can find excuses for you, and I am very pleased to observe this attachment among my boys. I shall not punish you."

"The overflowingfulness of the esteemed gratitude—"

"Exactly! I will represent matters to the best of my ability to your guardian in London, and I hope the matter will end satisfactorily to all of us. That is all I can say at present. You may go back to the Form now."

"Thank you, sir," said four voices in unison.

And the chums of the Remove left the Head's study pretty well satisfied in their minds. The Head's manner had been encouraging, and they had little doubt that the matter would, as Dr. Locke put it, be arranged satisfactorily for all concerned.

"I think that the esteemed Head will arrange the matter nicely," said Hurree Singh, as they walked towards the Remove class-room. "I shall be happy to be placed out of the suspense, however."

The chums entered the class-room, and Hurree Singh took his old place, next to Harry Wharton. Mr. Quelch treated him exactly as if he had never left the Remove at all; but the fellows kept casting glances towards him, as if to assure themselves that it was really the Nabob of Bhanipur who was sitting

there, and not a ghost. They could not soon get used to the return of the nabob.

And after morning school, Hurree Singh had something to say to the Remove, which made even Bulstrode glad he was back again.

"During the lifelessness in the ruined wing, the spur of famine forced me to take the grubful supplies from the Remove studies," the nabob explained to a group of fellows in the passage. "It was with great regretfulness that I raided the studies, but I had no alternative resourcefulness. I spared the study of my esteemed chums—"

"You didn't spare mine!" growled Bulstrode.

"But you are not my chum," said the nabob. "Nor do I esteem you. I—"

"Are you looking for a thick ear?"

"Certainly not. I am at peacefulness with all the world, and I do not seek to enter into disputefulness with any esteemed rotter present. What I was going to say, when you interrupted me rudely, was that I had raided many studies of the grubful supplies, and that now I should be pleased to make the compensation. I would not insult the esteemed Remove by offering to make the cash payfulness, but I should be gratified if all the sahibs whose grub was taken would come and feed with me in the tuckshop this afternoon, and call for whatever they like."

"Bravo!" was the general shout.

"And to make the thing complete, not only the grubfully-raided sahibs, but all the rest of the esteemed Remove might honour me by their presence on the ludicrous occasion," said the nabob.

"Hurrah!"

There was no doubt of the heartiness of Hurree Singh's welcome back to Greyfriars, if he were allowed to stay.

And that evening all doubt on that point was set at rest by a communication from Dr. Locke. He had settled matters with Hurree Singh's guardian, an official at the India Office in London, and with Herr Rosenblum, and the nabob had full permission to remain at Greyfriars.

The news was received with loud cheers in Study No. 1, which were echoed in the Common-room when the news spread there. And so Hurree Singh became once more a member of the Greyfriars Remove, and an intimate of Study No. 1—to share the future fortunes of the chums.

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