



# The VANISHED ELEVEN!

FRANK RICHARDS

*Keen rivalry has always existed between the Remove and the Upper Fourth Form at Greyfriars, but never was it more keen than in this topping long tale—when the Remove Eleven vanishes!*

## THE FIRST CHAPTER

### A Very Good Offer!

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

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

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

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

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

"Certainly not!" said Fry.

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

"What-ho!"

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

There was a buzz of voices in Harry Wharton's study. The cricket committee of the Remove were meeting there. A great occasion was at hand—the Remove match with the junior eleven of St. Jim's. It was a very great

occasion—the principal fixture of the cricket season for the Greyfriars Remove. But however busy Harry Wharton & Co. might be with their discussion in the study, it was quite certain that all the Removites there must have heard Temple's smite on the door. It could have been heard at the other end of the Remove passage.

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

Thump!

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

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

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

"Get out!"

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

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

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

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

"Right again! There's the door!"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Well, ask them."

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

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

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

Temple grunted.

"By rights," he repeated, "St. Jim's ought to be playing us. There never was a separate Remove team till Wharton came to Greyfriars. As captain of the junior eleven, I used to play a few Remove fags sometimes. Wharton took the bit in his teeth, and made up a rotten eleven in the Lower Fourth, and started getting up fixtures with other schools and places. Our opinion is that it was like his cheek."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Awful nerve!" concurred Fry.

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

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

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

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

"Bow-wow!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"And we say that it's a rotten state of affairs when the St. Jim's team comes over here to play a fag team instead of the junior eleven—that's us!" pursued Temple. "Tom Merry, having fixed up the match with you kids, can't very well throw you over, however much he'd like to. Though it stands to reason that he'd rather play a team of the same age and standing as his own. Now, I'm willing to be accommodating. We're not going to stand this state of things. That's settled. If St. Jim's come here to-morrow, they're

going to play the junior eleven—not a fag team scratched out of the Lower Fourth. We've decided that. The question is whether you fellows are willing to be accommodating, too. We're willing to play five Removites in the match. Five of the Remove and six of the Fourth. We regard that as a generous offer."

"My hat!"

"The hatfulness is terrific."

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

"It isn't your match," explained Temple, with great patience. "Properly speaking, the St. Jim's junior eleven should play the Grey-

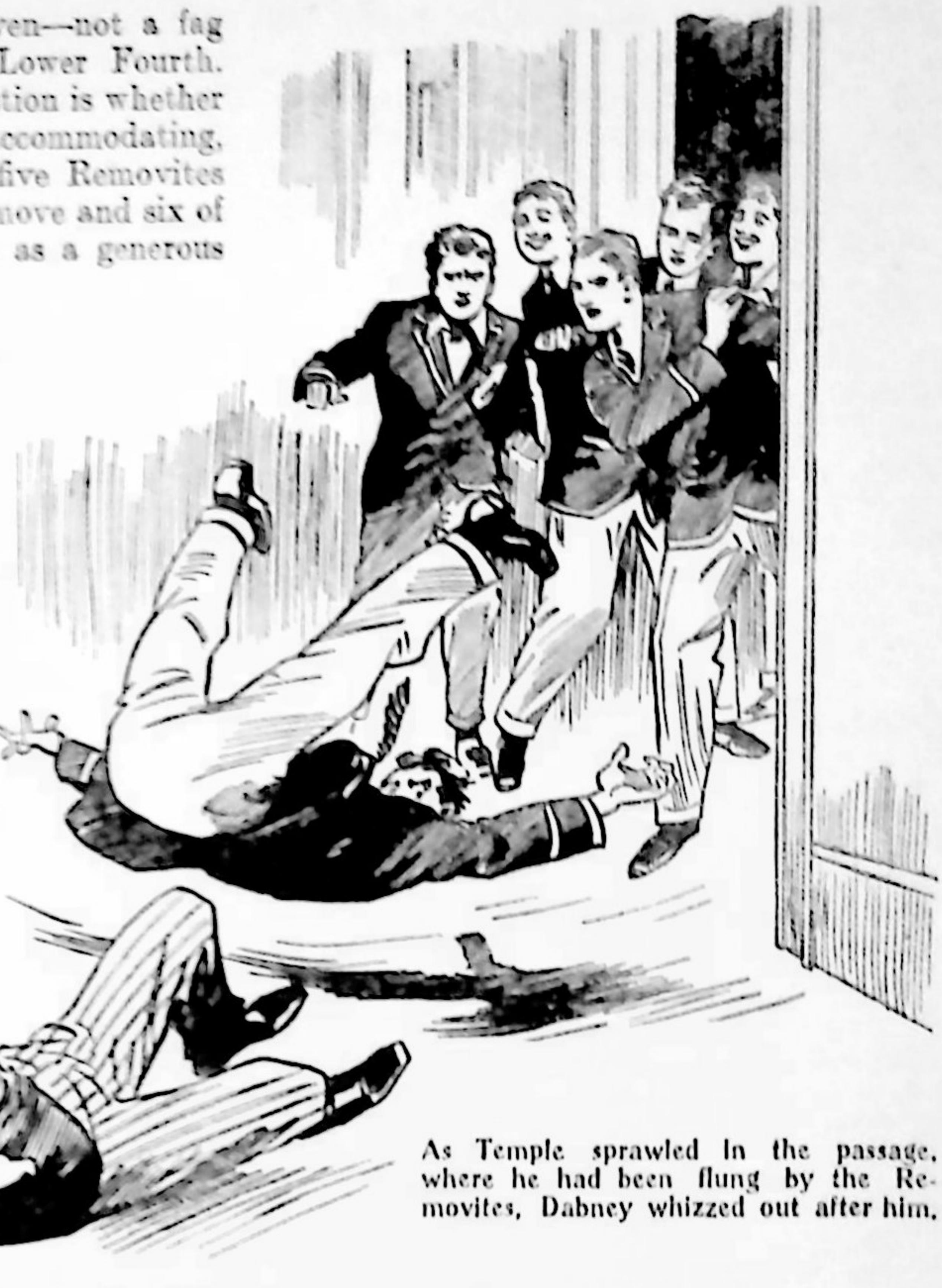


friars junior eleven. Wharton has wedged in with a fag team on his own. That's the state of things that has got to come to an end. We are going to propose a fair and friendly arrangement. Five Remove kids in the team—"

"Including the skipper?" asked Wharton, laughing.

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

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



As Temple sprawled in the passage, where he had been flung by the Removites, Dabney whizzed out after him.

Temple's coolness almost took their breath away.

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

somehow, to be put into their proper place and kept there.

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

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

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

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

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

"Cheek!"

"Nerve!"

"The cheekfulness is terrific!"

"Get out!"

"Buzz off!"

"Chuck them out!"

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

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

"Hear, hear!"

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

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

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites burst into a yell of laughter

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

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

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

Then the study door slammed.

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

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

And the Removites grinned and got on with it.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER Plotting a Plot!

THAT afternoon the Remove cricket eleven were busy at a practice match. Temple, Dabney & Co. stood looking on gloomily for a while. Then they retreated to the tuckshop, and there, over consolatory ginger-beer, they discussed their wrongs and the awful nerve of the Remove.

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

"Can't we?" said Temple darkly.

"I don't see how."

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

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

"But it can't be worked."

Temple looked round him, to make sure

that none but his faithful henchmen were within hearing, and lowered his voice.

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

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

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

Temple's companions stared at him.

"We should be justified in doing it," agreed Dabney. "But how the dickens is it to be done?"

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

"But they will be here."

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

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

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

"Ahem!" murmured Scott.

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

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

"Of—of course not!" murmured Fry.

"It would be a top-hole jape on the Remove if we could work it," said Scott. "They're

always japing us, and there's no getting out of the fact that they generally get the best of it. There was our play they mucked up—"

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

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

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

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

"Yes, yes; that's all right!"

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

"Yes, yes, yes!"

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

"Hear, hear!"

"And you fellows can contribute to the exes—"

"Hum!"

"Ahem!"

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

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

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

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

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "Temple's

cousin, being head of the motor works at Langham——”

“And keen to oblige his rich cousin!” grinned Scott.

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

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

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

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Not a Toss-up!

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

“All serene?” asked Smith minor of the Fourth.

Temple made him a gesture.

“Shurrup!” murmured Dabney.

Bob Cherry’s eyes were upon them at once.

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

“Go and eat coke!” said Temple, in polite reply; and he turned away.

“My offer’s still open,” called out Wharton.

“What offer?” asked Temple, turning his head.

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

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Rats!” said Temple. “Perhaps to-morrow you——”

He checked himself and strolled away with Dabney and Fry, without saying any more.

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

“Ha, ha, ha!”

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

“Playing a team from St. Jim’s to-morrow, I hear?” said Coker carelessly.

“Yes.”

“Rather an older team than your lot,” remarked Coker. “I hear that there are Shell fellows in the St. Jim’s eleven.”

“Your hearing is quite accurate, Coker,” said Wharton gravely. “There are.”

“A bit above your form, what?”

“Oh, no!”

“You don’t think you’re booked for a licking, then?”

“Not a bit of it!”

“Now, look here, Wharton,” said Coker. “I’ll tell you what I’ll do.”

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

“Ahem! The Fifth are playing to-morrow,



"The Fifth are playing to-morrow," said Coker. "I am not going to play for Blundell." "Then he may win!" remarked Nugent.

a Form match with the Sixth. I am not going to play for Blundell."

"Then he may win," remarked Nugent. Horace Coker frowned.

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

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

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

Coker was an original fellow in many ways, but never more original than when he played, or rather tried to play, cricket. What his game was like it was hard to say. Fellows hardly knew to what to compare it. Many similitudes had been used, but none of them did Coker's game justice.

What made Coker fancy he could play cricket was a mystery that had never been solved at Greyfriars, or, for that matter, would ever be solved. But there it was—Coker did fancy so!

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

"What's that?"

"We're not willing."

"Look here!" roared Coker.

"Have a heart!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.  
"Our eyes couldn't stand the strain."

"Look here," went on Coker, ignoring Bob's remark, "do you want to beat St. Jim's or not?"

"We do," said Wharton; "and you can help us to do it—"

"Good!"

"By keeping off the grass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

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

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

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

"I don't!" smiled Wharton.

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

"Team's full up!"

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

"Then your supposer wants oiling!"

"What!"

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

"You cheeky fag—" roared Hobson.

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

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

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

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER

### The Telegram!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Master Wharton—"

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

from coming it would be a bitter disappointment to the Remove.

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

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

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

The message ran:

"Wharton, Remove, Greyfriars.

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

"MERRY."

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

"The bigfulness must be really terrific!"

"Motor-coach, perhaps," said Nugent. "I should have thought it would be quicker to come by train."

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

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

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

"It is rather queer."

"Well, they know we have a whole holiday to-day, and that we've nothing to do but wait for them till they come," remarked Tom Brown. "After all, it will be rather

a treat. We don't get a long run in a motor-coach every day."

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

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

"That settles it!"

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

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

"Better go!"

Harry Wharton nodded.

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

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

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

"Right-ho!" said Harry. He looked at

his watch. "Plenty of time to walk down to Courtfield for the next train. And we can call in and tell them that we shan't want the brake after all at the station."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

Bagged!

"THERE'S the car!"

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

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

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

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

"The squeezefulness would be terrific."

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

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

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

The juniors crossed over to where the car was standing.

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

"Are you the young gentlemen from Greyfriars School?"

"Yes."

"Then it's all right."

"But where are Tom Merry and the rest?"

"In the other car," explained the chauffeur.

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

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

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

"All serene."

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

"The other car is larger, sir," said the chauffeur, as if reading their thoughts—which was not difficult, as a matter of fact—from their expressions. "The other car takes sixteen quite comfortably."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Harry.

"Some of us could walk to where the other car's waiting. Is it very far?"

"About three miles and a half, sir."

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

The juniors crowded into the car. There certainly wasn't much room. Eight of them were able to sit down, and the other three had to sit upon knees. But, as Bob Cherry remarked, it was lucky that one of them



Wharton's face looked a little puzzled as he read the message from Tom Merry, for the letter contained an unusual request.

wasn't Bunter. Nothing was so bad but that it might have been worse.

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

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

"Oh!"

The chauffeur closed the door and mounted to his seat. The engine began to snort. Harry

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

However, they did not put their feelings into words.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"The flyfulness is terrific."

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

"Oh, don't grumble!"

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

"Nor from me."

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

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

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

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

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

"Let him alone," said Tom Brown.

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

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

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

"Oh, don't be a beast!"

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

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

"The queerfulness is—"

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

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

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

"Speak to him."

Wharton thumped on the thick glass. He thumped almost hard enough to break it. But the chauffeur did not heed. He must have heard; but he paid no attention. He sat with his eyes steadily before him, never slackening for a moment. He was evidently a good driver. But at the speed at which the car was going, it would have been decidedly dangerous for the man to take his eyes off the road in advance for a single moment.

"Is he dotty?" exclaimed Frank Nugent,



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WALKING THE PLANK!

11A

exasperated. "Why doesn't he slack down and let us speak to him?"

"Another milestone!" said Bob.

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

"Might as well be in an oven."

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

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

"Another milestone."

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

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

The juniors were looking at one another very queerly now. The chauffeur had distinctly told them that the "other car," with Tom Merry & Co., was three miles and a half from Langham. Now he had taken them ten miles; and was still going ahead.

What did it mean?

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

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

"He won't!"

"And he won't slack down!"

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

Another mile—and another. The car was on a lonely road now, racing across a solitary heath. And the chauffeur fairly made it fly. Another mile—another—another—another! Fifteen miles from Langham. It was quite clear that they were not going to meet another car that had broken down on the road. The man had not told them the truth. Why he should have deceived them was simply

## WALKING THE PLANK!

AMONG the records of Greyfriars School there is no more thrilling story than that of the adventure of Jim Blackett and Tony Dewsbury in the year 1784.

Jim Blackett was the son of Sir Jeremy Blackett, Chief Justice of Jamaica, and Sir Jeremy sent for his son to pay him a visit as he was himself unable to come to England. The matter was arranged with the Greyfriars authorities, who also permitted Blackett's friend, Tony Dewsbury, to accompany him. The two boys were in the Sixth Form. Jim was a slight fellow of medium height: Dewsbury was a big boy of seventeen, absolutely fearless and the best boxer at Greyfriars.

The chums embarked upon the good ship Syracuse, and all went swimmingly until they were two days' sail from Kingston, when they encountered a strange vessel, which hoisted the Jolly Roger, and laid them aboard before an effective resistance could be organised.

The pirate ship was the "Happy Venture," commanded by one Jesse Starkins, a cut-throat villain of evil reputation. Short work was made of the captain and crew of the Syracuse, and when the pirates had had their pick of her cargo, the ill-fated vessel was scuttled, Blackett and Dewsbury being hustled aboard the Happy Venture. Then Starkins discovered the identity of Blackett's father, and he forthwith swore the boys should walk the plank. A plank was therefore rigged, and Blackett, bound and blindfolded, was driven at the point of a cutlass to the very edge. Dewsbury, however, by taunting the pirates with cowardice and offering to fight every one of them with bare fists, caused Starkins to countermand the proceedings. That night Dewsbury fought eleven members of the pirate crew in succession, and he was still standing on his feet when the battle was called off.

Two hours later, in thick fog, the Happy Venture ran right under the guns of H.M.S. Thunderer, a line-of-battleship, and was captured without a shot being fired. Blackett and Dewsbury were, of course, rescued, and six months later were back at Greyfriars, little the worse for their adventure.

inconceivable. But he had. There could be no doubt about that.

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

"Impossible!"

"Then what does it mean? This car was waiting for us by their orders—as we know by their telegram. And—and the windows being fastened, and the cover being jammed, it looks like a put-up job. And the chauffeur won't stop. Why shouldn't he stop?—unless he's been ordered not to."

"Great Scott!"

"But—but—"

Bob Cherry shook his head decidedly.

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

"Then what does it mean?"

"Goodness knows—unless—"

"Unless what?" snapped Bulstrode irritably.

"Unless the man's mad!"

"My hat!"

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

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

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER

Not a Joy-ride!

On rushed the car.

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

Mile after mile fled under the racing wheels.

Twenty miles from Langham!

What could it mean?

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

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

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

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

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

"I know that."

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

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

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

"He must be mad!" growled Johnny Bull.

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

Harry Wharton nodded.

"But if he isn't mad, it's a jape," he said.

"And who can be japing us excepting Tom Merry?"

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

Wharton started.

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

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

"Then who?"

"Somebody who used his name."

The juniors looked at one another, impressed by the Bounder's reasoning. Their first impression had been that the driver had taken leave of his senses. But the Bounder's theory was certainly more plausible. Tom Merry & Co. would not have played such a trick on them. But if somebody else had used Tom Merry's name—an easy matter in sending a telegram—

"You see, it wasn't a letter from Merry," said the Bounder. "We know his writing, or some of us do. And a paper wouldn't be in a hurry to commit forgery, for the sake of ever so good a jape. But anybody could have put the name of Merry at the end of a telegram. He might even

reckon that he was putting on that signature as a pun—meaning that he was merry at taking us in. A sort of joke."

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

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

"But it wasn't Tom Merry," said the Bounder with conviction. "Somebody sent that telegram, and arranged for the car to be at



Temple smiled broadly as the Remove eleven streamed away towards the gates.  
"Swallowed the giddy bait, hook and all!" he muttered.

Langham ready to meet us. And Tom Merry doesn't know a syllable about it, I bet you!"

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

"Exactly!"

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

"That's so!"

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

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

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

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

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

"Yes, rather!"

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

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

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

"Oh, crumbs!"

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

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

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

"Oh, the rotter!"

"The cad!"

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

"Yes, yes."

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

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

They owed their present plight to Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Fourth. Temple had wanted to bag the match, and had failed. He had determined that the Remove should not play St. Jim's. And this was the result.

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

Already they were more than twenty miles out of Langham—that is to say, well over forty miles from Greyfriars. And if Tom Merry & Co. were coming by train in the usual way they would be arriving at Greyfriars now. And there would be no Remove team there to play them. What would be the feelings of

the St. Jim's fellows when they reached Greyfriars and found that the home eleven had vanished could not be imagined. There would not be a word of explanation for them. Harry Wharton & Co. had had no doubts when they started. Only themselves had seen the telegram, and all the other fellows being in the Form-room at the time, they had mentioned it to nobody. The Saints would be utterly mystified by the unaccountable action of the Remove eleven in vanishing just before the match, and nobody at Greyfriars would be able to furnish the slightest explanation.

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

"The beyondfulness is terrific!"

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

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

Bob Cherry gave a yell.

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

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

"The rotter!"

"The swindler!"

"The beastly spoofe!"

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

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

"The joyfulness is truly terrific."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Then the man spoke for the first time.

"Let go my shoulder, sir!"

"Stop!"

"Against orders, sir."

"Whose orders?"

"My employer's, sir."

"Who is your employer?"

"Against orders to talk, sir."

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

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

it if they could, and grin and bear it if they couldn't.

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

"Can't, sir!"

"Look here. We'll give you a quid to chuck it!"

"Against orders, sir."

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

"Against orders, sir."

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

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

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

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

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

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

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

Vanished!

"HEAH we are, deah boys!"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Weally, Lowthah—"

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

"Then you must be famished," said Tom Merry sympathetically. "Let's get over

to the bun-shop, by all means, before our champion bowler perishes of hunger!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

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

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

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

"Just two or three more——"

"Rats!"

"Just one more!" pleaded Wynn.

"Take his other arm, Kerr."

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

"It's a good long walk, I believe," said Blake. "Two miles or more. We don't want that just before playing. I think there's a

The Greyfriars Juniors exchanged glances as they crowded into the car. There certainly wasn't much room for eleven cricketers.



local train to Friardale, which is near Greyfriars. If we can catch it——"

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

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

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

"Good egg!" said Blake heartily. "It's

Gussy's treat. Order up the giddy motor-cars, Gussy, and count out your spare cash!"

"I did not mean—"

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

"Weally, Blake—"

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

"Wats! Heah, taxi!"

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

"Bai Jove! Pway don't ewush me!" said Arthur Augustus, who was crowded between Lowther and Noble. "Kangy, deah boy, you are squeezin' me!"

"Sorry!" said Noble, without moving.

"Weally, Kangawooh—"

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

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

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

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

"Weally, Blake, you ass—"

"Here's Greyfriars!"

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

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

In spite of Blake's little joke, the juniors "whacked out" the cost of the taxicabs and the vehicles rolled away. Then the cricketers looked round them. They had expected Harry Wharton & Co. to be in sight.

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

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

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

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

"Portah, deah boy—"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Blessed if I can understand it!" said

Tom Merry. "It beats me! I suppose they'll be coming in pretty soon!"

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

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

"Good idea!"

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

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

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

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

"Bai Jove! It's simply wotten!"

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

"Yaas, wathah!"

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

"Must be dotty!"

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

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

"May as well ask in the tuck-shop,"

## ALONZO'S AILMENTS!



Because instead of sugar I bought soda,  
And mixed it up in Loder's ginger-beer,  
I was savagely attacked by this same Loder,  
And rendered hors de combat for a year!  
He treated me with disconcerting roughness,  
And thrashed me till I had to gasp for air;  
Had I possessed my cousin Peter's toughness,  
I never could have stood the wear and tear.

He administered a clip on my auricular,  
Which caused a pained ejaculation—"Yah!"  
Now, as you fellows know, I'm not particular;  
But this is going just a bit too far.  
My optic organ also—I admit it—  
Was subject to his venomous attack,  
Abating no ferocity, he hit it  
And transformed it to a pretty shade of black.

I own no sort of fistical ability,  
So Loder, striking harder than before,  
Reduced me to a state of great debility,  
And left me writhing helpless on the floor.  
Yet, not content with this attempt to flatten me,  
He raised his foot, and with a sneering gibe,  
Connected with that part of my anatomy  
Which modesty forbids me to describe.

He stamped on all my digital appendages  
(I mean my fingers and my thumbs, of course)  
Until I screamed aloud for lint and bandages  
Which made the bully laugh in manner coarse.  
But, giving me no palliating unction,  
He punched my nose, and took me by surprise;  
This made my nasal organ cease to function,  
And brought the tear-drops streaming from my eyes.

I described a parabola through the ether,  
And landed on my cranium in the grate;  
The bully and his chums went out together  
And left me to the tenderness of fate.  
They came and took me to the sanatorium;  
From there I write this motto short and clear:  
If you would live in peace, heed my exordium,  
And never mix a prefect's ginger-beer.

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

"Shurrup!"

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

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

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

### Something Like a Success!

TEMPLE, DABNEY & Co. came out of the Fourth Form-room with cheery smiles. Morning lessons were over, and the juniors were free for the rest of the day.

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

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

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

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

"I'm Tom Merry," he said.

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

"We haven't played yet."

"What!"

"We haven't seen anything of the Remove," said Tom Merry sharply. "We've been here over an hour, and, as nobody turned up, we've been knocking the ball about to amuse

ourselves. Better than doing nothing."

Cecil Temple looked extremely astonished.

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

"That's what we want to know."

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

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

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

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

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

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

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

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

"Yaas, wathah!"

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

"It's extraordinary."

"Rather too extraordinary for my taste," growled Blake. "It looks to me as if Wharton has made fools of us."

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

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hold on!" said Temple pacifically. "I

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

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

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

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

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

"Oh, rather!"

Tom Merry & Co. exchanged glances. Certainly they did not want to travel the great distance from St. Jim's and not get a match. They did not want to return to St.

Jim's and tell the fellows there that they had been fooled, and had not played. Temple's offer came really at the right moment.

"Well, that's not a bad idea," said Tom Merry. "I must admit we feel pretty keenly being treated like this by the Remove, but of course we've nothing up against the



Tom Merry tossed with Temple for choice of innings, won the toss, and elected to bat.

rest of Greyfriars. We don't want to be rusty. Are the Second Eleven free to play to-day?"

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

"Certainly!" said Fry. "We should!"

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

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

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

"Delighted!" said Temple heartily.

"Oh, rather!"

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

"It would have been sickening," said Blake.

"Simply wotten, deah boys!"

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

"Good enough!"

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

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

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

"Wharton cleared off! What rot!"

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

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

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

"Great Scott!"

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

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

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

"It didn't turn up, anyway."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"No more Remove for me!" said Lowther.

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

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

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

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

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

Tom Merry received their apologies cheerily

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

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

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

"What price the Remove now?" he murmured.

Fry chuckled.

"I wonder where they are?" he murmured.

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

And certainly it looked like it.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER Getting It In the Neck!

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

The car slowed a little as a policeman was sighted at a corner, and Johnny Bull smashed

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

And the car rushed on.

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

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

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

What would the visitors think? What could they think? That they had been deliberately slighted, at least. Probably they had gone away again, angry, and determined to have nothing more to do with the Greyfriars Remove. Of course, Wharton could explain to them afterwards. But the match was hopelessly sacrificed. Or perhaps the Saints were playing Temple & Co., if that was the intended outcome of the Fourth-Form plot.

Wharton gritted his teeth at the thought.

But what was to be done?

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

The smashing of the car windows had let in air, but it was insufferably hot in the packed car. Bright sunshine was streaming down upon them. The juniors perspired and grunted and growled. When they passed through villages they shouted out to the

passers in the streets, and there were many stares after the car with broken windows, packed with yelling schoolboys.

But the car fled so fast that interference was impossible. And the cunning chauffeur avoided towns, picking unfrequented roads with a thorough knowledge of the country. Probably the people who stared at the car regarded the affair as a "joy-ride" of an unusually rowdy description. That a chauffeur was really driving off a car crammed with schoolboys against their will was not likely to occur to anyone. The smashed windows and the shouting probably caused the party to be set down as a particularly rowdy and noisy gang of joy-riders.

And still the car sped on its way.

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

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

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

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

Vernon-Smith's jaw set squarely.

"We're going to stop this, at any risk!" he said. "I'd rather risk my neck a dozen times than be made a fool of like this. Look here, I can drive a car! I've driven my father's car dozens of times. If we can get that brute under I can take the car back to Greyfriars. We're going to stop him!"

"I say, Smithy—"

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

"But—" began Bulstrode.

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

He took out his pocket-knife. It was a combination knife, with all sorts of tools in it. Vernon-Smith opened the gimlet that was



Mud and slime smothered the unhappy chauffeur as he stood up in the ditch. "Groogh! Ugh! Gug-gug-gug!" he spluttered.

attached to it. The other fellows stared at him in surprise and some alarm.

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

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

"My hat!"

"Draw it mild, old man!"

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

"Stop!" said Vernon-Smith quietly.

"Can't, sir!"

"Very well; how do you like that?"

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

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

"Smithy—"

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

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

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

"I'll risk that!"

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

"Right-ho! Go ahead!"

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

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

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

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

Vernon-Smith had solved the problem.

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

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

"Hurrah!"

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

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

## THE TENTH CHAPTER

On the Home Run!

"COLLAR him!"

"Bump him!"

"Rag him!"

"Squash him!"

Hands were laid on the chauffeur on all sides. His struggles were quite unavailing against so many. The juniors bumped him down in the road. His goggles were dragged off, and, to the surprise of the juniors, his beard came off with them. The face of a young man was revealed, and there was sufficient facial resemblance to Temple of the Fourth for the juniors to guess who the man was.

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

The chauffeur grinned faintly.

"Yes!" he gasped.

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

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

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

"Can't say."

"Can't you? Bump him!"

Bump! bump! bump!

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Look here!" exclaimed Teddy, in alarm.

"I'm not going to trust my car in the hands of silly schoolboys!"

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you can't take my car!"

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

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

"How far are we from Langham now?"

"About fifty miles."

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

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

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

"No fear!"

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

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

"You should have thought of that before, my pippin! You can get back any way you like—excepting in the car. And you're going

to be jolly wellragged first! There's a ditch quite handy—that's a bit of luck! Shove him in!"

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

Splash!

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

"Groogh! Ugh! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

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

"Grooh-hooh!"

"All aboard!" said Vernon-Smith.

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

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

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" he chortled.

"Groogh!"

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

"Groogh!"

The car buzzed away.

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

But Harry Wharton & Co. did not waste any further thoughts upon Teddy. They had the car in their hands at last, and Vernon-Smith was a good driver. He did not tear

along as Teddy had done, but he kept the car at a good speed, going back on the road they had travelled, and slowed down as he spotted a milestone.

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

"Just on one o'clock."

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

"What about driving to Greyfriars?" asked Nugent.

The Bounder shook his head.

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

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

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

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

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

"My treat!" said the Bounder, as he took

the tickets for the express. "It was my idea to take the train."

"Oh, rot!" said Wharton warmly. "I—"

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

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

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

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

"Yes, rather!"

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

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

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

"Hear, hear!"

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

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

Not According to Plan!

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

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

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

of the vanishing eleven, Temple would be able to say loftily :

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

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

There was an "only."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The enraged Remove eleven rushed on the cricket-field, collared Temple, Dabney and Fry, and proceeded to bump them.



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

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

Tom Merry laughed.

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"Oh, blow Wharton!"

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

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

What would the fellows say to the junior who had cleared off a winning team by a trick, and played a losing game in their absence? It was not a pleasant reflection for Cecil Temple. Not only the Remove, but his own Form, and the rest of Greyfriars would be heavily down upon him. The one thing that

could justify to any extent his action was a victory. And already he realised that a victory was beyond the limits of possibility.

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

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

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER

### Wharton Turns Up!

"OVER!"

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

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

Temple's team was no good, and that was all there was about it. As a matter of fact, Cecil Temple's influence in the junior cricket club, and his position as skipper of the Second Eleven, were largely due to his wealth and

aristocratic connections, and not to his abilities as a cricketer or as a captain. Hobson of the Shell would have made a much better captain; and certainly he would not have selected a poorer team. Temple's powers chiefly lay in the line of swanking, and his idea of forming a team was to put his own friends into it, or fellows who were extremely civil to him. And his idea of cricket practice was to bat to an admiring audience. With such a skipper, the Second Eleven was not likely to do much. Against a strong team like Tom Merry & Co. they simply crumpled up.

Their fielding was "rotten" and good fielding was wanted now. Their bowling was weak, and only very good bowlers could have touched the St. Jim's wickets. When they came to batting, probably they would do much better. But they would not come to batting until the St. Jim's fellows chose to let them. Coker of the Fifth, who was looking on, remarked to Potter and Greene that St. Jim's could keep their wickets up for a month of Sundays if they chose; and, for once, Coker's chums agreed that he knew what he was talking about. Indeed, all the onlookers were grinning at the poor show made by the Second Eleven.

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

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

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

By that time the Second Eleven had been given so much leather-hunting that it looked as if they would have no breath left for batting, if they were ever allowed to bat.

Unless Tom Merry declared, certainly they would never bat at all. But as Tom wanted a win, he had decided to declare at the round figure of 200. Two hundred, as he calculated, could easily be knocked up by four o'clock, and then the home team could be polished off at the wickets in time for the visitors to catch the six o'clock train home.

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

"I'll declare after this over," said Tom Merry, when a four from Figgins had made up the required 200. There were still three more balls to the over.

Fry bowled again.

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

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

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

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

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

Temple's jaw dropped.

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

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

They rushed on the cricket-field.

There was a gasp of astonishment from Tom Merry & Co., a yell from the Greyfriars crowd. The returned eleven did not heed.

They collared Temple and Dabney and Fry, and dragged them over and bumped them in the grass.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

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

"Where have you been?"

"What does it mean intoirely?"

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

"Great Scott!"

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

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

"My hat!"

"What a rotten trick!"

"Oh, that's the limit!"

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

"Hurrah! Kick 'em out!"

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

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

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

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, as a matter of fact, we did," said Tom Merry bluntly. "Temple offered us a match with the Second Eleven, to save wasting the day, and we accepted. And after the way you didn't play us yourselves, I think it's pretty cool of you to clear them off the ground in this way!"

"Let me explain. Look at that!"

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

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

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

"But—but—I don't understand—"

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

"Bai Jove!"

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

"Of course—from the telegram. We

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

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

"Yaas, wathah!"

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

Tom Merry looked somewhat perplexed.

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

"No fear!"

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

"If you fellows are willing," said Harry. "We can make it a single-innings match, and I think there will be time. It would be rotten if we're done out of the match altogether. It's rotten for you chaps to have your match mucked up like this by Greyfriars



There was a yell of relief from Greyfriars as Harry Wharton brought off a brilliant catch. The Remove had won by a single run!

fellows. But you see that we personally were not to blame."

"Quite so! That's all right!"

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

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

"Right-ho!" said Tom Merry heartily.

"All serene! We're ready when you like."

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

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

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

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

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

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

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER

### A Fight to a Finish!

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

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

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

And Tom Merry was right.

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

Fifty runs had been scored when Wharton's wicket fell to Fatty Wynn, and the Greyfriars crowd cheered him as he went out. Peter Todd took his place, and Peter, who

was an extremely simple-looking youth, was not expected by the field to stand long against Fatty Wynn. But Peter, as his Form-fellows knew, was not nearly so simple as he looked. He proved to be a mighty man with his hands. His drives were tremendous when he had a chance, and the score went up by leaps and bounds under his hard hitting.

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

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

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

"Oh, yaas!"

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

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

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

"Get that chap out, or I'll boil you!" said

Tom Merry genially, as Fatty Wynn went on to bowl against the Bounder once more.

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

"Bravo, Fatty!" yelled the field.

"Last man in!"

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

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

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

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

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

The New Zealander grinned.

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

Harry Wharton led his followers into the field. If there was time to finish the match, he had high hopes of the result. He knew the hitting powers of Tom Merry & Co., but in Inky and Tom Brown he had two bowlers who were really marvellous.

And they did not disappoint him, though they surprised the visitors. From the first over it was clear that this was not to be anything like batting against Temple, Dabney, & Co.

Tom Merry opened the innings with Kangaroo, as before. Tom Merry had knocked up six runs when the New Zealander found his middle stump. And the Saints looked very grave as their skipper came out with only six runs to his credit.

Hat-tricks seemed to be at a discount, but the bowling was first-class. Neither Tom Brown nor Inky provided the much-desired three in an over, but they took wickets in very good style. Figgins was much surprised at being dismissed for twelve, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was simply astounded when Tom Brown bowled him first ball.

But the Kangaroo was making a splendid stand, and the Cornstalk kept his end up well against the bowling of the New Zealand junior. Kerr, at the other end, added fifteen runs before he fell. Lowther added twenty. But Kangaroo was scoring all the time.

Five down for 70!

Fatty Wynn was the next victim. He added only six. But when Redfern joined the Cornstalk, the fur began to fly again. And both Tom Brown and Inky found that they could not touch the wickets. The score had passed the hundred when Kangaroo was caught out by Mark Linley. Seven down for 102.

Another man down—and 115 runs. Another—with the figures on the board at 130. Jack Blake was last man in. Sixteen wanted to tie—seventeen to win! And the light still good. Many eyes were turned anxiously to the sky. But for twenty minutes yet, at least, the light was good enough, and in twenty minutes there was time for the great match to be won and lost.

Jack Blake was at the top of his form. He started the innings with a four, following that up with a couple of twos and a three, which brought Redfern to the batting end. Five wanted to tie—six to win! Plenty of light for that. There was no danger now that the match would be an unfinished one. The innings had been fast and furious from the start, and it was finishing in keen excitement. No more for the over; but in the next, with Tom Brown bowling to Redfern, there came a two—and then another two. The St. Jim's figures stood at 145, and another hit would do it.

The excitement was intense now.

Tom Brown took a grip on the round red ball. That ball, he knew, would probably do it, and he sent it down with all his skill in it.

Clack!

Redfern's bat gleamed and met the ball,  
and it fled on its journey, and the batsmen  
were running.

But someone else was running, too. It was Harry Wharton! And he was running with his eyes on the sailing ball—running like lightning—and his hand was ready, and the ball came down, settling, like a bird into its nest, in the palm of the Remove captain, and there was a yell of breathless relief from Greyfriars.

"How's that?"

Wharton held up the ball.

"Out!"

Greyfriars Remove had won the match by a single run!

Harry Wharton & Co. saw the St. Jim's fellows off to Courtfield in great spirits. It had been a close finish—very close—but the Remove had won. And in their delight at the great victory, they felt that they could afford to forgive Temple, Dabney & Co. for their trick. And they forgave them accordingly. And that evening there were great rejoicings in the Remove over the famous victory of the vanished eleven.

THE END

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## Parables and Parodies

By MONTY LOWTHER  
(*Of the St. Jim's Shell Form.*)

### GUSSY'S SARTORIAL SOLO

(*"I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby."*)  
I'll sing thee songs of flannelette  
And tales of fair cashmeah!  
For when the wethah's cold and wet  
Theah's nothin' beats good flannelette  
For cosy undahweah!  
Take my advice, you chaps, and get  
It now, while wintah's heah!

I'll sing thee songs of yellow spats  
And tales of patent shoes.  
I have a tip, deah boys, and that's  
Be vewy careful of yoah spats,  
Which colowing you choose!  
The coloahs always match yoah hats,  
Just plain and simple hues.

I'll sing thee songs of ovahcoats  
And tales of silken scarves.  
The fellah who on beauty dotes  
Will nevah let his ovahcoats  
Come down below his calves.  
And if you follow out these notes  
You don't do things by halves.

### LUMLEY-LUMLEY'S LAMENT

(*"Humpty-Dumpty."*)

Lumley-Lumley sat on a wall;  
Lumley-Lumley had a great fall;  
All the king's horses and all the king's men  
Would be shocked by the words that old Lumley used then.

### NON-STOP SKIMPOLE

(*"The Brook."*)

I come from haunts of Colney Hatch  
To lecture fellows daily;  
They call me names like "bandersnatch,"  
But still my chin wags gaily.  
I jaw from morn till night, I do;  
My talk is bright and clever,  
For men may come, and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

### THE FATE OF A CAKE

(*"Bridge of Sighs."*)

Take it up tenderly,  
Lift it with care,  
Fashioned so slenderly,  
Beautiful, rare.  
Made by a baker-man,  
Flavoured just right;  
At such a cake a man  
Screams with delight.

Oh, all ye deities!  
Buck up, you men!  
Waiting for tea it is  
In Study Ten.  
The cake of a million, it  
Calls forth our lust;  
Make yourselves ill on it—  
Eat till you bust.

Do not stand back, you men;  
On, Tommy, on!  
Show us your acumen—  
Dash it, it's gone!  
Some beast has shifted it,  
Raisins and all;  
Trimble has lifted it;  
We'll have tea in Hall!