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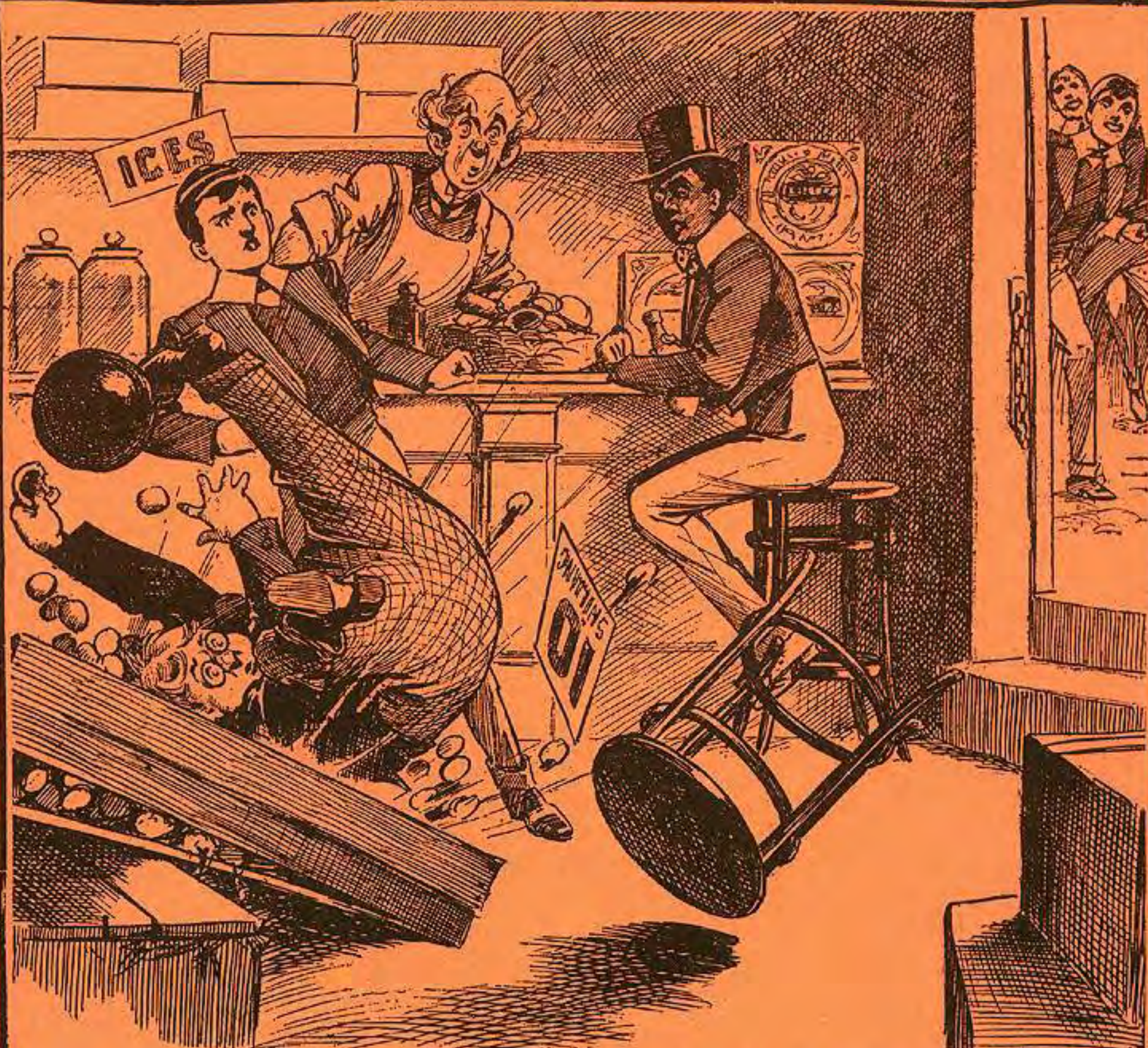
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By
Frank
Richards.



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The Chum from New Zealand

A Splendid, Long,
Complete School Tale
of Harry Wharton & Co.

BY
**FRANK
RICHARDS.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER. A New Chum.

"NEW ZEALAND?"
"So I hear."

"That's a jolly long way to come to Greyfriars,"
Bob Cherry remarked. "I wonder what the chap
will be like."

"And he's coming into the Remove?" asked Nugent.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"So Wingate says. He mentioned the matter to me, be-
cause—"

Wharton paused for a moment.

"I suppose he thinks I might look after the chap a bit at
first."

"Good! If he's a decent sort we'll look after him," agreed
Bob Cherry. "He's bound to be a bit strange in the place at
first, and Bulstrode & Co. will do their best to make things
warm for him, as they always do with new boys. Might as well
give Bulstrode a hint on the subject to start with."

"Or a licking," suggested Nugent.

Wharton laughed.

"We'll wait till he gets his ears up, anyway," he remarked.
"He may let the new chap alone, you know."

"What's his name, by the way?" asked Bob.

"Brown—Tom Brown."

"Stunning name," said Bob Cherry heartily. "British all
through. I wonder where he'll be put. The studies in the
Remove are all full up."

"Somebody will have to make room for another," said Harry
Wharton. "I'd have him in No. 1 like a shot, only we're four—
myself, Nugent, Hurree Singh, and Bunter. You're only three
in No. 13, Bob."

"Oh, we'll take him in with pleasure," grinned Bob. "We
don't have a chap from New Zealand every day. When is he
coming?"

"This afternoon, I understand, but I don't know by what
train. Might be on the look out for him, though."

"What-ho!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Those Upper Fourth chaps are starting footer," Bob Cherry
remarked, with a glance out of the hall window, near which the

group of juniors stood. "Temple has a new ball, and they're giving it an airing in the Close."

"Let's go and lend them a hand——"

"Or a foot——"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is that you, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, blinked reproachfully at the juniors through his big spectacles. Like most incessant talkers, Billy Bunter frequently found himself talking without finding a listener. His study-mates had compared Bunter to the little brook which went on for ever.

"Yes, Bob Cherry, it is," grunted Bunter. "You know jolly well it is. I say, you fellows, I'm going out——"

"Good-bye!"

"Yes, but——"

"We won't detain you, Bunter. Buzz off!"

"Look here——"

"You'll be late. Bunk!"

"Oh, really, Nugent. Look here. I've been disappointed about a postal-order this morning, and I'm stony. I'm going to meet somebody—somebody important—and if you fellows could lend me a half-crown——"

"What do you want a half-crown for to meet somebody?" demanded Bob Cherry. "You can walk to meet him, I suppose?"

"Yes; but he's coming a long way, and I think I ought to stand him a bit of a feed," explained Bunter. "He's bound to be hungry. It's really for the honour of Greyfriars. We don't want to look inhospitable, I suppose? As captain of the Remove it's really up to you, Wharton."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I can guess who will get most of the feed, Billy," he remarked.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"And I can guess that Bunter won't go further than the tuck-shop to meet him," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, you know! I'm going to the station."

"Chap coming by train?"

"Yes."

"Coming to pay you a visit?"

"Well, not exactly. You see—er," Bunter stammered, and grew rather red in the face. "You—er—see——"

"Yes, I see a fat duffer, who is trying to take us in," said Bob Cherry. "What's on the carpet? What idiotic secret are you keeping?"

"It's not exactly a secret."

Harry Wharton looked at the fat junior attentively. Bunter was evidently keeping a secret of some sort in connection with his visit to the station at Friardale. As Bunter was continually getting into scrapes, and expecting his study-mates to pull him out of them, his proceedings naturally had a certain amount of interest for the Removites.

"Look here, what's the game?" demanded Harry abruptly.

"Are you getting up to some new prank?"

"Oh, no, really, you know——"

"Who are you going to meet at the station?"

"A—a—a friend."

"You're keeping something dark."

"N-n-n-not exactly."

"You young ass!"

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I don't think you ought to pry into my private affairs like this," said Billy Bunter, wagging his head with an air of admonition. "You see, I've a right to do as I like, haven't I? I don't see why I should tell you all my affairs. You don't tell me all yours."

"It would be telling all Greyfriars."

"Oh, really, Wharton, look here. Can you let me have the half-crown? If you could make it five bob, it would be better, because the black chap may be hungry—ahem!"

"Black chap?"

"Oh, really, I—I—that was a slip. I—I——"

"You're going to meet a black chap?"

"Oh, no—that is to say, yes—I mean, can you let me have five bob?"

"No, money's tight."

"You can have it back to-morrow morning out of my postal-order."

"Here's a couple of bob," said Harry Wharton, tossing the shillings into the eager palm of the fat junior. "Now buzz off, and don't bother."

"Thank you, Wharton. I'll put this down to the account."

"Rats!"

And Billy Bunter buzzed off.

The chums of the Remove looked after him with somewhat puzzled looks.

"Blessed if I know what that young ass is up to," said Harry. "He seems to me to be off his rocker. He can't have a nigger friend. And if he has, why can't he say so plainly?"

"I suppose it's a yarn to borrow the tin."

Wharton shook his head.

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NEXT TUESDAY: "BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

"No, there's more than that in it. But never mind Bunter. Let's go and collar the footer from the Upper Fourth."

"Good egg!"

"Hallo, you youngsters!"

Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, met the juniors at the door.

"The Head has heard from the new kid's guardian, and it seems that he's coming by the four o'clock train. The Head suggested that he should be met at the station as he's a new kid and coming such a long way."

"Good idea, Wingate."

"I was going," said the captain of Greyfriars; "but it occurs to me that the kid might feel more at home if he were met by some fellows belonging to the Form he is going into—the Remove. What do you think, Wharton?"

"I'll go with pleasure," said Harry, smiling.

"Good! The four o'clock train at Friardale, mind."

"I'll remember."

The big Sixth-Former nodded and walked away.

The Removites turned out into the Close, where a crowd of fellows belonging to the Upper Fourth were "airing," as Bob Cherry expressed it, Temple's new football.

Between the Upper Fourth Form and the Remove—the Lower Fourth—there was a keen rivalry, which frequently led to scrimmages in the Close and the passages, and the occasion of the airing of Temple's new footer was an opportunity too good to be lost.

The Upper Fourth fellows were kicking and passing, getting into shape for the coming football season.

Harry Wharton grinned as he looked at them, and gave the signal whistle, which brought the Remove fellows from all parts.

"On the ball!" yelled Bob Cherry.

And the Removites bore down upon Temple, Dabney & Co. Wharton hooked the ball away from Temple, and was off with it like a shot, leaving the captain of the Upper Fourth almost speechless with indignation.

"You—you Remove rotter!" gasped Temple. "After him!"

"Hurrah!"

"On the ball!"

The Removites rushed the footer off at top speed, passing from one to another as the Fourth-Formers made desperate attempts to recover their property.

As fast as one of them got near the fellow in possession of the ball, that fellow would pass it to another Removite, who kept the ball rolling literally.

It was Wednesday—a half-holiday at Greyfriars—and the Close was crowded. Fellows belonging to both Forms rushed up from all quarters.

"Hurrah!"

"On the ball! Pass!"

"Yah, you rotters! Give us our ball!"

"Thieves!"

"Rotters!"

"Hurrah!"

The din was terrific. Temple, who was getting wildly excited, clawed at Harry Wharton and dragged him over.

There was a yell from the Removites.

"Foul!"

"Where's the referee?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry pitched the captain of the Upper Fourth off, and sprang to his feet, gasping with laughter.

The Upper Fourth had never been so thoroughly ragged. The football went whizzing towards the gates of Greyfriars, and there was a rush of juniors after it.

Gosling, the porter, was standing near the gates, gazing with an eye of great disfavour at the juniors.

Bob Cherry saw him, and a gleam of fun came into his eyes.

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A School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co
By Frank Richards.

He put on a spurt, and gained possession of the ball. Bob Cherry was a sure kick at goal, and Gosling's portly figure was a good target. Bob kicked, the ball sailed through the air, and there was a yell.

"Goal!"
"Ow!" gasped Gosling, as the footer bumped on his chest.
"Ow! Yow!"
He sat down with violence and suddenness in the gateway.
"Goal! Hurrah!"
"Young himps! Wot I says is this 'ere——"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"On the ball!"

And the rush of the juniors passed over Gosling. The ball was kicked out into the road.

Half-past three rang out from the clock tower.

Harry Wharton's eyes gleamed, and he uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Come on, kids! It's near time to go to the station—let's take Temple's new footer to meet the new kid!"

"Bravo!"

"Good egg!"

"Hurray!"

And the Removites dashed down the country road—still "on the ball" with the Upper Fourth streaming after them in furious pursuit.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Little Joke on Bunter.

"I—I SAY, Skinner——"
"Hallo, haven't you gone yet?"
"N-no, I wanted to speak to you chaps first," said Billy Bunter, blinking at Skinner and Bulstrode through his big glasses. "You see——"

"Oh, buzz off! The train's in at twenty to four, and you'll miss it," said Bulstrode.

"That's all right—I can run to the station," said Bunter. "I'm rather good at running, you know, since I took up physical culture."

Bulstrode glanced at the fat, unwieldy form of the Owl of the Remove, and chuckled.

"Yes, you've got the build of a runner," he remarked. "I fancy I can see you on the cinder-path, going along like an elephant—I—I mean a locomotive. But look here, you'd better buzz off! I know for a fact the chap is coming by the three-forty, and you haven't too much time."

Bulstrode and Skinner were sitting on a stile in Friardale Lane, half-way between the school and the village. Billy Bunter had just come from the direction of the school, and he had stopped to speak to the two Removites. The fat junior appeared to be a little doubtful in his mind.

"Oh, I'll run!" he said. "That's all right. But—but I'm thinking about the chap I'm going to meet. You're sure about it?"

"Oh, yes, I know he's coming by the three-forty!"

"I don't mean that. About his being black, I mean, and

"Of course," said Bulstrode, with perfect seriousness. "All inhabitants of New Zealand are black—black as the ace of spades. That's why they're called Maoris. Maori is a—Sanskrit word meaning black."

Billy Bunter swallowed this statement whole. Bunter was rather given to making imaginative statements himself; and like most persons who lean to deceit, he was easily taken in himself.

"Yes, but—but the Colonists?" he said argumentatively. "They can't all be black——"

"My dear chap, it's the effect of the sun!" explained Bulstrode. "As soon as a chap lands in New Zealand, it begins. In a year he's quite black. In two years he has woolly hair."

"Oh, really——"

"Fact, I assure you. You can find it all in Fozzleum's Geography. People born there are born black—black as the inside of a hat. But you'll see for yourself when you meet this Maori chap."

"It's jolly curious, isn't it?" said Billy Bunter.

"Well, yes, come to think of it, it is," assented Bulstrode.

"I hear they're very nice chaps—very generous with their money; and this one who is coming to Greyfriars is as rich as Croesus."

Bunter's eyes glimmered behind his spectacles.

"Is he really, Bulstrode?"

"Yes. His father owns goldmines and diamond mines in—Poppa-Galla-Gogga-wallah," said Bulstrode, rather hazily.

"You've seen that on the map, of course?"

"N-n-no, I don't remember."

"It's a famous place. This chap's father is as rich as half a dozen dukes, and I hear that he allows the kid a couple of pounds a week pocket-money. That's the sort of chum you ought to have, Bunter."

Bunter's eyes gleamed. He thought so, too. Such a chum would be a godsend to the impecunious junior; the most relentless borrower in the lower school.

"I hope I shall get on with him all right, Bulstrode."

"You're sure to. You've only to put on that winning

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TUESDAY: "BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

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manner of yours—that pleasant society manner that marks you out from other fellows in a drawing-room."

"I really think I am a little distinguished in a drawing-room, Bulstrode, you know."

"Yes, rather. You know what the girls at Cliff House think about you," said Bulstrode. "I won't tell you what I've heard Marjorie Hazeldene say about you, or you'd think I was a flatterer. But a girl can't help noticing it when a fellow has a fine, full figure, and the manner of a man of the world."

"I—I suppose not," assented Bunter.

"It will be the same with this Maori chap. He will be charmed with the first representative he meets of the real British aristocracy," said Bulstrode, with an air of deadly seriousness, while Skinner seemed to be afflicted with a pain in his inward regions. "You see, old chap, you have the true manner of the De Bunters—you are descended from the De Bunters, I believe——"

"I—I believe so, Bulstrode."

"And you are bound to impress him. Then you ought to look after him—stand him a feed, and so on. Don't ask him to spend anything—be very careful to keep off the grass in that respect. Generosity's the word. You'll make a good impression on him, and he'll chum up with you. Then you're all serene."

Billy Bunter almost purred. The idea of being the close chum of a millionaire's son was very fascinating.

"I suppose you've raised some tin, as I told you?" said Bulstrode.

"Yes, Wharton let me have a couple of bob, and I've raised two more on my camera with Snoop. I've sold Bob—ahem—my pocket-knife to Stott for four bob, and Wharton's—I mean an old cricket bat for four bob as well. That makes twelve."

"Jolly good!"

"If you fellows could lend me a few——"

"Awfully sorry," said Bulstrode hurriedly, "we're broke. Otherwise, we should have jumped at this chance of chumming up with a millionaire, ourselves."

"I—I suppose so."

"Better buzz off, Bunter! The train will be in in five minutes now."

"All right—I'll run."

And the fat junior started towards the village at a rolling run. He disappeared round a bend in the lane; and then Bulstrode and Skinner looked at one another, and grinned. The grin became a laugh; and the laugh a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode.

"Ho, ho, ho!" giggled Skinner.

"The young ass!"

"The frabjous duffer!"

"But I say," murmured Skinner, "will Snoopey be able to keep it up, you know? It's about the funniest rag I've ever heard of, but——"

Bulstrode chuckled.

"Oh, that's all right! Snoop can do it! It's only a question of blacking his face and hands like a nigger minstrel—and Bunter's too short-sighted to see it, or to know his features again. He often takes one of us for another, even without our faces being blacked."

"Snoop can work it all right, and it will be a jolly good feed for the lot of us," grinned Bulstrode. "It will come like corn in Egypt now, when we're all stony. Bunter has raised twelve bob, and twelve bob means——"

"Ha, ha! A royal spread!"

"Exactly!"

"I say, you don't know exactly when the real Maori is coming, do you?" said Skinner, struck by a sudden thought. "It won't do for the two of them to run together on the station platform, you know."

"Phew! I never thought of that! He might be coming by this very train. Bunter'll have to take his chance, and so will Snoop. Let's get along to the tuck-shop in Friardale, anyway, to be ready for them."

And the two Removites, still chuckling over the "jape," strolled down to Friardale, and waited in Uncle Clegg's tuck-shop for the arrival of Billy Bunter and the remarkable New Zealander he was to welcome to Greyfriars.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. The Coloured Gentleman.

BILLY BUNTER came up to Friardale Station at a breathless run, and ran into the Friardale porter in the vestibule. He staggered back against an automatic machine, and gasped for breath.

"Is the three-forty in yet?" he jerked out.

"Ow!" said the porter.

"Is the three——"

"Br-r-r-r!"

The porter was rubbing his waistcoat, where Billy's head

had smitten him, apparently causing him considerable inward pain. He glared at Bunter, but the glare was quite lost upon the short-sighted junior.

"I want to meet the three-forty——"

"Oer-r-r-r!"

And the porter, having worked up an expression of anguish in expectation of a tip by way of compensation, and having received no tip—Billy Bunter had a conscientious objection to tipping, or indeed to parting with money at any time if he could help it—he resumed his normal expression and walked away, leaving Bunter's question unanswered.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter. "I've a jolly good mind to report him to the company and get him sacked."

And the fat junior found his way to the platform. The train was not in yet, however, and Bunter had to wait several minutes for it. He filled in the time by extracting chocolates from a machine on the platform, and eating them. When at last the train came puffing in, Bunter's mouth was full of chocolate, and his lips liberally smeared with it. The three-forty train at Friardale was only a local, and the new boy at Greyfriars would have found it difficult to come from London upon it; but Bunter never thought about that. If the Maori was on the train, it was all right. And Billy Bunter blinked up and down the row of carriage windows as the train steamed in.

Several passengers alighted, and walked towards the exit of the platform. Bunter blinked at the last to alight, who stood staring up and down with a strange and inquiring air.

He seemed to be a youth about Bunter's own age, but as black as the ace of spades. He was dressed in Etons, and wore the regulation silk topper; but his face was as black as his hat. His hands were encased in gloves and could not be seen. He looked up and down the platform, and Bunter hurried towards him.

"I say, you know——"

The stranger blinked at him.

"I'm Bunter!" explained the fat junior. "William George Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove. I suppose you're Brown?"

The stranger nodded.

"Tom Brown, of New Zealand?"

"I see Brown."

"Blessed if he doesn't speak like a nigger, too, like a nigger minstrel," murmured Bunter. "I don't know about chumming up with this chap. He's blacker than Inky. Still, if he's rich, I suppose it would be only hospitable to look after him."

"I've come to meet you," explained Bunter. "We thought it would be only decent for one of the principal chaps in the Form to come."

"I see glad."

"Curious thing, I seem to know your voice," said Bunter, blinking at the stranger. "I suppose I can't have met you before. You look awfully like a Christy minstrel, if you'll excuse my saying so."

"You tink so?"

"Well, come on. I suppose you're hungry after your journey?"

"Berry hungry."

"Where's your box?"

"M-m-my box!"

"Yes. I suppose you haven't come all the way from New Zealand with only the clothes you stand up in!" exclaimed Bunter, in amazement.

"N-n-no!" stammered the new-comer. "You see, it's coming on."

"Oh, I see! Good! That will save trouble. Come on, and have a feed at the tuck-shop before you go to the school."

"You're berry good."

"Not at all. I'm always kind to new boys. As you come from such a distant place, of course I feel it a duty to look after you."

"Berry much good."

"Come on. You give up your ticket here. It's all right, porter, I've only been on the platform to meet this gentleman."

The porter, who was also the ticket-collector, looked at the two, and grinned. He could see what was quite invisible to the short-sighted junior—that the New Zealander's dark complexion was only grease-paint. But that was no business of his. His business was with Bunter. He was remembering that collision in the station entrance, and the tip that had not come off.

"It ain't all right," he remarked.

"What do you mean, porter?"

"Strangers ain't allowed on this platform."

"I've only been to——"

"Ticket, please," said the porter, allowing the dark youth to pass the barrier, and detaining Bunter there.

"But I haven't a ticket."

"Then you'll have to pay from the station you came from."

"I haven't come from any station!" roared Bunter. "You saw me go on the platform yourself."

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"I ain't seed nothing," said the porter obstinately. "If you're a trespasser you'd better look out! Ticket, please!"

Bunter snorted, and drew twopence from his pocket.

"Take that, then."

"From what station?" asked the porter stolidly.

"It's a tip you idiot!"

"Railway servants ain't allowed to take tips," said the porter. "From what station?"

Bunter simply glared. The porter at Friardale made much more by tips from the Greyfriars fellows than he received from the railway company. But Bunter's tips were too few and far between to be worth troubling about.

"Well, from Lindale," said Bunter, naming the first station that came into his mind.

"Fare from Lindale twopence-ha'penny," said the porter grimly.

"Look here, you idiot——"

"Passengers ain't allowed to abuse a railway servant in the discharge of his dooty," said the porter. "A complaint will be sent your 'Ead-master."

Bunter added the extra halfpenny to the twopence, and passed on, snorting. The dark youth had wandered away towards the entrance, and Bunter was afraid of losing him. The porter grinned after the fat junior, and grinned at the 2^d. in his palm. He had given Billy Bunter his quid pro quo.

Bunter joined the new-comer, and they left the station together. Bunter slipped his arm affectionately through that of the dark youth.

"This way to the tuck-shop," he said. "There are some friends of mine there—jolly fellows that you'll like."

"Me berry glad."

"We thought we'd give you a bit of a welcome," said Bunter, "I'm standing a feed."

"Berry much good."

"I hear that your pater's awfully rich," went on Bunter, perhaps a little hastily, for he wanted to be really assured on that point before he expended the twelve shillings; and he blinked inquisitively at the New Zealander.

The black youth nodded.

"Berry rich," he said—"berry, berry rich."

"That must be ripping for you."

"Berry ripping."

"I suppose you have all the pocket-money you want?"

"Oh, no. Fader allow me only a pound a week."

"A pound a week!" shrieked Bunter, with visions of unlimited feeds dancing before his eyes.

The new-comer nodded.

"Den he sends me tips as well," he remarked.

Bunter pressed his arm lovingly.

"I can see that you and I will get on," he remarked. "I took a fancy to you at first sight. You're just the fellow I wanted to chum with."

The black youth grinned.

"I see berry glad."

"That's all right. I'll see you through. I'll teach you to box if you like, and show you how to take photographs. Hallo, what's all that row?"

The new boy glanced up the street, and hastily backed into a shop doorway. Down the old High Street of Friardale came a wild and noisy crowd. They were the juniors from Greyfriars.

Well ahead were the Famous Four, with the ball at their feet, and they were keeping the ball rolling in fine style. Round them surged the Removites, and after them came the Upper Fourth, red with rage. Temple, Dabney & Co. had been making great efforts to recapture their new football; but in vain, and the chase had extended all along the lane to Friardale. Wharton's object in going to the village the Fourth Formers did not know, but they would have followed him across the whole county rather than have given up the struggle for the footer.

The new boy seemed strangely anxious to keep out of sight of the Greyfriars fellows. But black faces were too uncommon in Friardale to escape notice. Bob Cherry and Linley stopped too, Nugent rushing the footer on amid a crowd of Removites.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "What's the game?"

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Cherry, I don't quite understand you!"

"What's that?"

"I wish you wouldn't allude to my friend Brown so disrespectfully, Cherry. This is the new boy from New Zealand."

"What!" yelled Wharton and Bob Cherry together.

"This is Brown."

"It isn't—it's black."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The black youth was making frantic signs to the Removites not to give him away. They did not recognise him for the moment, but they knew very well that his black complexion had been laid on before a glass.

"It's Brown from Taranaki," said Billy Bunter. "I've chummed up with him because I consider it my duty to look after a stranger from a distant part of the Empire."

"My hat! Here's Bunter as a patriot now."

"I hope I am patriotic, Wharton. I believe in strengthening the bonds of Empire, and—and hands across the sea, you know, and—and that sort of thing. I am going to chum up with Brown."

"You utter ass!"

"I don't mind his being black. All New Zealanders are black."

"What?"

"It's the climate, Bulstrode says."

"Bulstrode! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I'm going to look after this chap, and I don't care if he's as black as your hat. I like him."

"Ha, ha, ha! This is what you were borrowing tin for, was it—to stand the stranger a feed, eh?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Well, you know I like being hospitable."

"I suppose Black's—I mean Brown's—rich?" said Wharton, grinning.

"He has a pound a week pocket-money," said Bunter importantly, as if he already felt a considerable portion of that pound in his own pockets.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That accounts for Bunter falling in love at first sight," grinned Bob Cherry—"that accounts for this chap being regarded as black but comely. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Well go it, Bunter! They're all black in New Zealand, are they?"

"Yes. You remember the Rugby footballers—I didn't see them, but I remember they were called the All Blacks."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see what you're cackling at!"

"Ha, ha, ha! You'll see soon. Go ahead with your New Zealander."

And the chums of the Remove ran on in pursuit of the footballers, who were nearly at the station by this time. They were laughing almost too much to run.

"My hat!" said Wharton. "This isn't so rotten as most of Bulstrode's japes, either! It will serve Billy right for sucking up to a rich chap—as he supposed."

"Supposes, yes!" roared Bob Cherry. "Ha, ha, ha! Fancy his being idiot enough to believe that New Zealanders are black!"

"Ha, ha, ha! He'd believe anything when he's on the track of a feed."

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter piloted his new friend to the village tuck-shop, where Bulstrode and Skinner gave the New Zealander a most effusive welcome.

Billy Bunter slapped down a handful of silver on the counter, and gave his orders with the air of a prince. It was a time to be generous when he was chumming up with a chap who had a pound a week pocket-money as well as tips.

"Come on, chappy," said Bunter affectionately to the New Zealander—at whom Uncle Clegg was staring blankly—"come on, order what you like!"

"You're berry good."

"Not at all," said Bulstrode, "Bunter's doing the right thing—he always does. Wire in, kids, and let's do Bunter honour. Bunter's the real sort of a chap to stand a feed!"

And Bulstrode, Skinner, and the dark youth "wired in," and the way they travelled through the "tuck" was amazing.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Unfortunate.

"ON the ball!"

"Go it!"

"Pass, there—you duffer—pass!"

"On the ball!"

Outside the station raged a terrific struggle for the possession of Temple's new footer. The run down the long lane had not made the energy of the Greyfriars juniors abate in the least. The Upper Fourth were determined to get their ball back, and the Removes were determined to keep possession of it till it suited them to part with it. And when the crowd of excited juniors swarmed round the station the struggle was keen. The villagers came to their doors to look on, and a crowd collected to watch. The village policeman caught sight of the scrimmage from a distance, and quietly strolled in the opposite direction. He had no mind to be accidentally rolled over in the gutter, and scrambled over by forty or fifty excited youths.

"On the ball!" roared Wharton. "Play up, Remove!"

"Hurrah!"

It was the Famous Four's object to send the ball into the little station in order to retain possession of it while they waited for the train to come in with Tom Brown of Taranaki—the real Brown.

The Upper Fourth soon saw what they were at, and ranged up to prevent them, so that Temple, Dabney & Co. found themselves keeping goal at the station door.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

EVERY
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ONE
HALFPENNY.

Again and again Wharton & Co. sent in the ball, and the defenders cleared, and the Fourth Formers tried to rush it away up the street. But the Removes always rallied and brought it back again.

In the excitement of the struggle no one heard or heeded the sound of a train coming into the station.

The four o'clock train had arrived, but the fellows who had come to meet it were thinking of anything but that.

The struggle was at its hottest, and the attack on goal was hard and hot, when a stranger appeared on the scene, from the interior of the station.

He was a lad of about Harry Wharton's age, and of much the same size—perhaps a little more stoutly built—but very active and agile, too. He had a round, boyish face, extremely sunburnt, with a pair of dark eyes, that seemed capable of staring the broad sun of noon in the face; so strong, and steady, and keen was their glance. The expression of his face was happy and good-humoured, and there was a gleam of fun too, in his eyes.

The lad came down to the station entrance, and looked out in great amazement at the scene: Temple and Co. grouped in the doorway, and the Famous Four pelting the ball in at them, a crowd of Upper and Lower Fourth boys swarming round with excited faces and wild yells.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated the newcomer.

Dabney had retired into the station for a few minutes to dab his nose with a handkerchief. He had met the incoming footer with his nose—and stopped the ball—but his nose had suffered considerably.

The newcomer tapped him on the shoulder, and Dabney blinked at him over his crimsoned handkerchief.

"Excuse me," said the sunburnt lad. "Will you tell me what's the matter?"

"Form row," said Dabney briefly.

The other looked puzzled.

"What's that?"

"We're licking the Remove."

The stranger seemed to understand.

"Oh! You belong to Greyfriars School?"

"Oh, rather!"

"I'm a new boy."

"Oh, are you?" said Dabney, without taking much interest in the matter; and he mopped away fiercely at his streaming nose.

"Yes; I believe I'm going into the Lower Fourth—that's the Remove, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Dabney. "Go and eat coke, you cheeky Remove waster!"

Tom Brown laughed—a hearty, wholesome laugh that was good to hear.

He stepped towards the doorway, leaving Dabney mopping his nose, and looked out. It was easy for him to distinguish the Remove from the Upper Fourth. They were younger boys, though the difference was not great; and their shouts, too, showed who they were. The New Zealander looked with great interest on the struggle.

"On the ball!" roared Wharton. "Buck up, Remove!"

There was the shriek of an engine in the station, and Bob Cherry gave a jump.

"That's the train going out!" he exclaimed.

"Blow the train!"

"But the New Zealand kid——"

"Oh!"

"He must be there."

"Come on, then."

Wharton and Cherry made a rush for the station door. Temple and Fry jumped in their way; but the Removes did not close with them.

"Pax!" exclaimed Wharton. "We're here to meet a chap—a new kid coming from New Zealand—we want to get on the platform."

"Rats!"

"We want to meet Brown——"

"Bosh! Give us our ball!"

"Now, look here——"

"It's not pax till you give us our ball."

"But——"

"Go and eat coke!"

"It's all serene," said Tom Brown, quietly, stepping forward. "I'm Brown—I'm the chap from New Zealand—and awfully obliged to you for coming to meet me."

Harry Wharton nodded, and glanced over him quickly. He noted the keen eye, the sturdy form, with satisfaction.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "You're coming into our Form. Line up!"

"Right-ho!"

"On the ball!" shouted Wharton. "Back to Greyfriars—on the ball!"

"Hurrah!"

"Buck up, Remove!"

The Removites dribbled the footer away, and Temple, Dabney & Co. rushed in pursuit. Temple robbed Nugent of the ball, and sped away with it. A lithe form shot past him like an arrow, and the ball was fairly taken from his toe with lightning speed. Temple hardly knew that it was gone till he saw that active form speeding away down the lane, with the ball bounding in advance.

Harry Wharton gave a shout.

"Bravo, Maori!"

It was the New Zealander who was "on the ball."

The Removites gave him a cheer, and dashed after him. A swarm of excited juniors went down the street. They swarmed outside the tuck-shop, where it unfortunately happened that a waggon, coming down the street, stopped the New Zealander's pace. The Upper Fourth buzzed round the boy from Taranaki.

"Collar the ball!" shrieked Temple.

But Tom Brown was not to be robbed of the leather. As the Fourth-Formers closed upon him, he kicked for safety, taking the door of the tuck-shop as a goal.

The leather flew, and true to its aim, it bounded in at the tuck-shop door. There was a swarming rush of juniors after it.

From within the shop came a fearful yell.

Billy Bunter was sitting on a cane stool, eating jam tarts and talking, when the ball came in. There was a big box of eggs behind Bunter, and he was tilting the stool backwards and forwards as he talked and ate. He was telling the greatly impressed black youth about his surprising powers as a physical culturist and a performer in the gym; and no thought of danger crossed his mind.

He gave a jump as the ball came in.

The leather struck a wall and rebounded—and caught the fat junior full upon the chest!

"Ow!" yelled Bunter.

He went over backwards, his tarts flying far and wide.

There was a terrific crashing and smashing as the plump form of the junior bumped into the box of eggs.

"My only hat!" gasped Bulstrode. "Here's a giddy go!"

"Ow!"

"My word!" said Skinner. "Eggs are cheap to-day."

"They'll have to be paid for," hooted Uncle Clegg.

"Ow! Help! Help! Yow!"

The doorway was blocked with eager juniors in pursuit of the ball. They saw Bunter's plight; and they yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter, sprawling helplessly in the box of smashed eggs, blinked and roared.

"Ow! Yow! Help! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

How the Chum from New Zealand arrived at Greyfriars.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help!"

Harry Wharton came in, and seized Bunter's outstretched hands, and tried to drag him from the box of eggs.

But the box was not wide, and the plump form of the Falstaff of Greyfriars was jammed into it.

"Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! You're jerking my fists off—yow! Help! Go easy! Don't be a beast! Yah!"

"Here, lend a hand, some of you chaps!"

"Right-ho," exclaimed Tom Brown.

He took one of Bunter's arms, and Harry took the other. They yanked at the fat junior, and Bunter, grunting, came out of the box like a cork from a bottle.

There was a roar of merriment as his back was seen.

He was smothered with eggs from neck to knees.

Broken eggs streamed all over him, and made lines down the legs of his trousers to his ankles. The interior of the egg-box resembled a soup tureen.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "What beast kicked that ball at me?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Brown. "I'm sorry! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you waster!"

"I'm—ha, ha, ha—jolly sorry!"

"Yes, you look it," remarked Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh added that the lookfulness was terrific.

"I am really sorry," gasped Tom Brown. "I'll pay for the clothes! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you worm!" gasped Bunter. "Who are you? You don't belong to Greyfriars. I say, you fellows, bump him over. You're not going to let a rotten stranger muck up a Greyfriars chap like this, are you?"

"But he is a Greyfriars chap, Bunt; he's the new kid from New Zealand."

Bunter forgot the eggs in his surprise.

"What!"

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NEXT TUESDAY: "BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

"It's Tom Brown, of Taranaki."

"Rot!" exclaimed Bunter, warmly. "You know all the people in New Zealand are black. That's why they're called the All Blacks."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Besides, the New Zealand chap is here. Where is that black chap?" exclaimed Bunter, blinking round the shop.

"Where is he?"

The pseudo New Zealander was quietly making for the door. But the doorway was so crammed that the disguised joker could find no exit. Removites were cramming it, keeping out the Upper Fourth, who were clamouring for their ball.

Bulstrode and Skinner were roaring with laughter. The truth was coming out now; but they did not care. Bunter had expended his twelve shillings, raised by such various means, and the feed was over.

Tom Brown caught hold of the black youth's shoulder and jerked him back into the middle of the tuck-shop. Brown was looking surprised, and he wanted an explanation.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed. "So you're the chap from New Zealand, are you?"

"I—I—I—"

"Of course he is!" said Bunter indignantly. "If you chaps knew anything about geography, you'd know that the people in New Zealand are All Blacks—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You utter ass!" said Tom Brown.

"Look here, you outsider—"

"I'm Tom Brown."

"Rats!"

"This is a chap who has been japing you."

"Oh, really, you know—"

"It—it was only a joke," gasped the joker. "It was only a joke up against Bunter. He, he, he!"

"M-m-m-m word!" gasped Bunter. "I—oh—Scoop!"

Tom Brown had jerked his prisoner over to the counter, where was a basin of water, with a dish-cloth in it, with which Uncle Clegg had been washing pastry-plates.

Tom seized the cloth, and rubbed it hard over the disguised junior's face.

The hard rub removed enough of the colouring to reveal a big patch of the junior's face, and he was recognisable even to the Owl of the Remove.

"Snoop!"

"He, he, he!" giggled Snoop. "Here, lemme alone, you New Zealand lamb. It was only a jape."

The New Zealander released him. The crowd of juniors simply roared. The expression of Bunter's face as he stared at Snoop was too funny for words.

"I—I—I say, you fellows, I've been done," gasped Bunter at last. "I—I've been dished. I've blued twelve bob on feeding these chaps—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He told me he was Tom Brown, and was allowed a pound a week pocket-money—"

"He, he, he!"

"I've treated him, and—"

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared Bulstrode. "It was a ripping feed, too, Billy. We're grateful."

"What-ho!" giggled Skinner. "I pass a vote of thanks."

"You—you beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've taken me in!"

"You frabjous ass! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

But Bunter's indignant voice was drowned in the roar of laughter. Uncle Clegg tapped him on the shoulder, and Bunter blinked at him angrily.

"What do you want, hang you!"

"Paying for them eggs," said Uncle Clegg, grimly.

"Go to the dickens! It wasn't my fault!"

"You broke them eggs—"

"It's all right," said Tom Brown, interposing. "I'll settle. It was my fault, as I kicked in the ball. Take it out of that."

Uncle Clegg's grim visage relaxed at the sight of a sovereign. He gave the New Zealand junior his change, and meanwhile, Nugent had sorted the football out from the corner it had rolled into. Outside the shop, Temple, Dabney & Co. were still clamouring. Tom Brown took the footer and put it under his arm.

"We'll give them a run to the school," he said. "I play Rugger at home in New Zealand. I'll show them a three-quarter's run."

"Right: we'll back you up."

"Buck up, Remove!"

ANSWERS

A School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By Frank Richards.

"Hurrah!"

"I say, you fellows, how am I to get home in this state?"

"Ask us another, Billy."

"I've been done out of twelve bob——"

"Serve you right for being a greedy young rotter!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Come on, you chaps! Rush them!"

"I say, you fellows——"

But no one heeded Billy Bunter. The Removites rushed the Upper Fourth, and fought a clear way to the street, Tom Brown still with the ball under his arm.

The Fourth-Formers tackled him on all sides, but Tom Brown went up the street as he might have gone up a Rugger field, the ball under his arm, and flooring his opponents right and left.

He gained the lane that led to Greyfriars, with a fleetness that made it far from easy for even the Famous Four—the best runners in the Remove—to keep pace with him. There he dropped the ball.

"Come on!" he shouted, waving his hand.

And away they went at top speed up the lane.

The rushing and running had fagged out most of both Forms, and only the chosen spirits on either side stuck to the game. The Famous Four, with Mark Linley and Tom Brown, were all of the Remove who remained "on the ball," while only five or six of the Upper Fourth contested it with them as they bore down upon the gates of Greyfriars.

But Temple, Dabney & Co. were determined not to yield. They would never have heard the last of it if they had allowed the Remove to remain in possession of the ball. They fought it out to the bitter end.

Cooling was careful to keep out of the way as the dusty, excited juniors came streaming in at the gates, the Removites still keeping the ball, and passing it to one another in fine style as they came in.

"Come on!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Let's get it into the house, and up into the Remove passage!"

"Right-ho!"

"The right-ho-fulness is terrific!" panted Hurree Singh.

If the juniors had not been wildly excited, they would not have been quite so reckless. They rushed the ball across the Close towards the Schoolhouse. The Fourth-Formers panted after them. Only Temple and Dabney were in at the death; and of the Remove, only Wharton, Cherry, and the New Zealander were still on the ball. Bob Cherry was rolled over by a charge from Temple, and he gasped on the grass, too breathless to rise again. Wharton was tackled by Dabney, and he passed the footer to Tom Brown.

The lad from Taranaki rushed it door-wards, and kicked, just as Temple made a clutch at him. The ball rose in the air and sailed into the wide doorway, just as Mr. Quelch, the Master of the Remove, came out to see what the disturbance was about.

The result was inevitable!

Biff!

"Goal!" gasped Bob Cherry. "My only chapeau!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Score for the Remove.

MR. QUELCH staggered back into the house, and disappeared from view for a moment.

There was the sound of a heavy fall within, and of a football bouncing away. The Removites stood petrified.

Tom Brown chuckled.

"Goal!" he ejaculated. "That's the second!"

"What!"

"That's the second goal—and both flukes! Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat! Do you know who you've goaled?"

"Haven't the faintest idea."

"It's Quelch—our Form-master,—Master of the Remove!"

"Phe-e-e-w!"

Mr. Quelch reappeared in the doorway. The Remove-master was usually a quiet and somewhat cold individual; but on the present occasion he showed very visible signs of excitement.

He was almost stuttering with wrath, and for some moments he could not make himself intelligible.

"Boys!" he gasped at last. "Boys!"

Tom Brown raised his hat, with an expression of contrition upon his handsome, sunburnt face.

"I am very sorry, sir."

"We are sorry——" began Wharton.

"Leave it to me," whispered Brown. "I'm a new boy; I shall get off more lightly than you would."

Wharton could not help being struck by the solid sense of that remark. It showed that the lad from Taranaki had all his wits about him.

Tom Brown came towards the wrathful Remove-master with a contrite expression, which was blended with the most perfect innocence.

"I am sorry, sir—so sorry! I hope the footer did not hurt you?"

"Boy!"

"If you please, sir, I'm the new boy."

"Boy!"

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NEXT TUESDAY: "BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"

ONE
HALFPENNY.

LIBRARY.

"Tom Brown, sir, of Taranaki, North Island, New Zealand."

"Boy!" gasped the Remove-master.

"I didn't see you before I kicked, sir. I hope it didn't hurt you?"

"It did hurt me," said Mr. Quelch, severely. "But that is not the point. How dare you kick a football into the public doorway of a school?"

"Oh, sir!"

"You must know that you are not allowed to do anything of the sort here."

"Oh, sir!"

"I do not wish to be hard upon a new boy, especially one coming from such a distant place," said Mr. Quelch. "but you must know——"

"Yes, sir."

"You deserve to be caned most severely."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch looked a little puzzled.

"However, as you are a new boy—and considering that you have lately arrived from New Zealand, I do not wish to cane you immediately upon your arrival at the school."

"Oh, thank you, sir. You are very kind!"

"You will be more careful in the future. Wharton and Cherry, you will take a hundred lines each. You were kicking the ball here, although it was Brown who sent it into the house."

"Yes, sir," said Wharton and Cherry, meekly.

Mr. Quelch went back into the house. Tom Brown smiled at his new friends, and hurried in after the Form-master to look for the footer. Upper Fourth and Remove had been gathering on the spot, and a crowd followed Tom Brown in. But the New Zealander was the one to pick up the ball, and Harry Wharton linked arms with him and rushed him up to the Remove passage.

The Upper Fourth followed fast; but on their own ground the Removites were invincible. The ball was kicked along to No. 1 Study, and kicked into it; and Temple, Dabney & Co. strove in vain to reach even the study door.

"Yah!" roared the Upper Fourth. "Give us our ball."

"Come and fetch it!"

"Yah! Rotters!"

"Who scores this time?"

"The Remove!" roared the Lower Fourth.

Harry Wharton held up the football—which was not looking so new as it had looked—so that Temple could see it across the heads of the crowd of Removites who barred his path to the study.

"Here you are, Temple."

"Hand it over, you rotten fag!"

"Say 'please,' pretty, and you can have it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple did not say "please, pretty"; he snorted with wrath. The Upper Fourth attempted a rush, but it was in vain.

"Are you going to ask for it nicely?"

"No!" roared Temple.

"Are you going to admit that the Remove scores?"

"No!"

"Well, we score all the same. I'm going to chuck this ball out of the window, and you Upper Fourth worms can go and wriggle for it."

"Gimme that ball!"

"Rats!"

And Harry carried the ball into the study, and tossed it from the open window into the Close. The Upper Fourth, with many threats and cat-calls, dispersed, and the Removites were left to chuckle over their victory.

Temple, Dabney & Co. found their footer in the Close, but they did not feel inclined for any more punting about. They had had enough of that.

The Remove chums were fagged, too. Harry Wharton pushed Tom Brown into the arm-chair in No. 1 Study, and sat on the table himself. Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh sat down, breathing hard, and Mark Linley sat on the window-sill. Nugent had not yet come in. For some moments nothing was heard in the study but the sound of gasping for breath.

"Well, it was a jolly good jape," said Wharton at last.

"You've had a rather exciting reception at Greyfriars, Brown."

Tom Brown laughed.

"Yes, rather. I like it."

"You see, there are a good many rows between us and the Upper Fourth. They have a fancy that they can walk over the Remove."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?"

"It looks to me as if the Remove have a fancy for walking over them."

"Well, we have to keep our end up, of course. Otherwise, we're very peaceable chaps. By the way, I daresay you're hungry after your journey!"

"Getting that way."

"You can have tea in Hall if you like, but we'd like you to

come to tea with us," said Harry Wharton. "Would you care to?"

"Yes, rather. Where do you have tea, then?"

"Here, in the study."

"That must be jolly comfy."

"It is; cosy, you know. Not too much space, but, after all, so long as there's enough, that's sufficient."

"Yes; enough is generally sufficient, I believe," grinned Tom Brown. "Can I help you? I know how to light fires, and to cook damper."

"H'm, I don't know about the damper, but you can light the fire," said Wharton. "I think we'll get a wash and a brush first, after that tussle. I feel as if I'd collected up most of the dust on the Friardale road."

"Same here."

"This way, then."

Harry Wharton led the way to the lower passage where stood the row of bath-rooms, all of them empty at this time, though there was generally a rush for them in early morning. Billy Bunter came into the study after they were gone, and blinked discontentedly round. Bunter was in a decidedly bad humour.

He had been completely done, and for a youth who prided himself upon his cunning, that was unpleasant in the first place.

Then he had expended the twelve shillings, which had been so difficult to raise; and Bulstrode, Skinner, and Snoop had certainly consumed more than their share of it. In the belief that he was making friends with the richest junior at Greyfriars, Bunter had been generous. It was the first time in his life that he had been generous, and he repented him sorely now.

He had tried to get back the cost of that reckless feed from Bulstrode, but the bully of the Remove had explained to him very clearly that it was not to be done. He declared that in the first place it was too good a joke to be spoiled. In the second place, it was a lesson to Bunter. In the third place, the money spent hadn't belonged to Bunter at all. In the fourth place, he would see him hanged first. Bunter did not wait to hear a fifth or sixth reason; he snorted and gave it up.

Bunter had changed his clothes, and left his eggy garments in the dormitory. He fully meant to get about double the cost of them from the New Zealander.

But the chief thing that bothered him was that he had expended time and money in making up to the disguised Snoop, and had allowed the real fish to pass through his net. What chance had he now of chumming up with the New Zealander, who had found so many friends, and found them so soon?

Bunter was disgusted all round.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Third Goal!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. came trooping into No. 1, looking very fresh and clean after their wash and as hungry as hunters. Billy Bunter blinked at them discontentedly.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Anything in the cupboard for tea, Billy?"

"Nothing."

"Where's the cold rabbit pie?"

"I had to have a snack——"

"And the beefsteak pudding?"

"I was hungry——"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"May as well say at once that you've scoffed the whole show," he said. "Never mind; we're in funds, and we want something extra special for the new kid. You can go down to Mrs. Mumble's and do some shopping, Bunter."

Billy Bunter brightened up wonderfully.

"I say, that's a jolly good idea, Wharton. You chaps can lay the table and boil the kettle while I'm gone. I'll do some shopping for you with pleasure. I could get in a stunning feed for a sovereign."

"You'll have to manage to do it on less than half that, Billy."

"Oh, really, Wharton! I don't think you ought to be stingy on an occasion like this. It isn't every day that we have a fellow-Briton from the most distant part of the sun upon which the Empire never sets—I—I mean the Empire upon which the sun never sets. You see, at a time like this people ought to rally round the old flag."

"Good idea, but if rallying round the old flag means standing you more grub than is good for you, Billy, I'm not doing any rallying at present."

"I say, you fellows——"

"Go and lay that out," said Wharton, laying nine shillings on the table, which he had collected among the others. "Do the best you can with it."

"If you are going to be mean——"

"It's quite enough, ass, and all we have, too."

"It's no good talking to you, I suppose. I never knew a chap so awfully close with his money. I'll do my best."

"You go with him, Nugent, and help him carry the things in."

"Oh, really, it's not necessary; I can manage——"

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"You go with him, Nugent, and see that he doesn't scoff the grub."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Buzz off."

And Nugent put his arm through Billy Bunter's and led him from the room. The juniors set to work preparing tea. It was congenial work to hungry lads with healthy appetites. Tom Brown lent a hand willingly enough, and soon showed that he knew how to be useful. He had the fire going in a very few minutes, and Wharton having told him where to obtain water, he filled the kettle and put it on. It was soon singing away cheerfully. Bob Cherry laid the cloth, and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh cut bread-and-butter at express speed. Mark Linley, who was Bob's study mate in No. 13, came in to tea, and he brought with him a dish of saveloys from No. 13 study.

"Every little helps," grinned Bob Cherry. "Here comes Bunter. Behold, he is weary and heavy laden! Did you keep an eye on him, Nugent?"

Nugent chuckled.

"What-ho! I had to stop him about every ten seconds from taking a snack."

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"You know I did, you young boa constrictor."

"My hat!" said Tom Brown, with a glance round the study.

"This looks awfully jolly, you chaps. I like Greyfriars." No. 1 Study did indeed look very cosy, with the firelight gleaming on the shining crockery, and the table groaning, as a novelist would say, under the weight of goodly viands.

"The jollyfulness is terrific," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"I suppose I shall be shoved into one of these studies?" said Brown.

"Oh, yes. Not a study to yourself, you know; you share it with two or three other chaps—perhaps four. There are four of us in here; there used to be five with Cherry. He was shoved out into a new study at the other end of the passage because he made so much row with his feet."

"Look here——" began Bob Cherry.

"Well, because he made too much row, anyway. He digs in the end study with Linley and Wun Lung."

The New Zealander stared.

"Who on earth's that?"

"A Chinese kid—you'll like him. There are only three in that study, so you may be put in there. I'd like to have you here, and if Bunter changed into No. 13, it might be managed," said Wharton, thoughtfully.

"Bunter jolly well won't do anything of the sort," said Bob Cherry emphatically. "No Bunter in my study, please. Besides, I want Brown—he looks all right. He'll help us to keep our end up. No. 13 is top study in the Remove, you know, young Brown."

"Rats!" said Nugent. "No. 1 is top study. Don't tell the new kid any of your fearful yarns, Bob."

"Look here, Nugent——"

"Rats!"

"I'll jolly well——"

"Peace," said Wharton. "Never mind who's top study just now, while we're having tea."

"Yes, but if Cherry says——"

"If Nugent says——"

"Oh, cheese it. Look here, Bob, I don't see why you shouldn't have Bunter. He's a jolly good cook. You must admit that."

"Yes, and he eats pretty nearly all he cooks, too."

"You can keep an eye on him."

"My dear chap, I wouldn't take him at a gift."

"Brown would like to come into No. 1——"

"Oh, no; he'd like to come into No. 13."

"Stuff! You've no right to accuse the new kid of having bad taste already——"

"You ass——"

Tom Brown laughed heartily.

"You're awfully good," he said, "I should like to come with both of you. But isn't the matter settled by the Form-master or the Head?"

"Oh, yes, but if you asked him, and we backed you up, he'd let you come in, I dare say. If Bunter changed into No. 13——"

Billy Bunter glared through his spectacles. He did not like being disposed of as if he were a dog that could be shifted from one kennel to another without being consulted.

"Look here, you fellows——" he began wrathfully.

There was a general exclamation of "Shut up, Bunter!"

"I shan't shut up! I——"

"Look here, Bunter, don't you bother when we're talking things over," said Harry Wharton, severely. "I'm jolly well going to ask Quelch if Bunter can't be put into No. 13, and——"

"I shall jolly well kick him out, anyway."

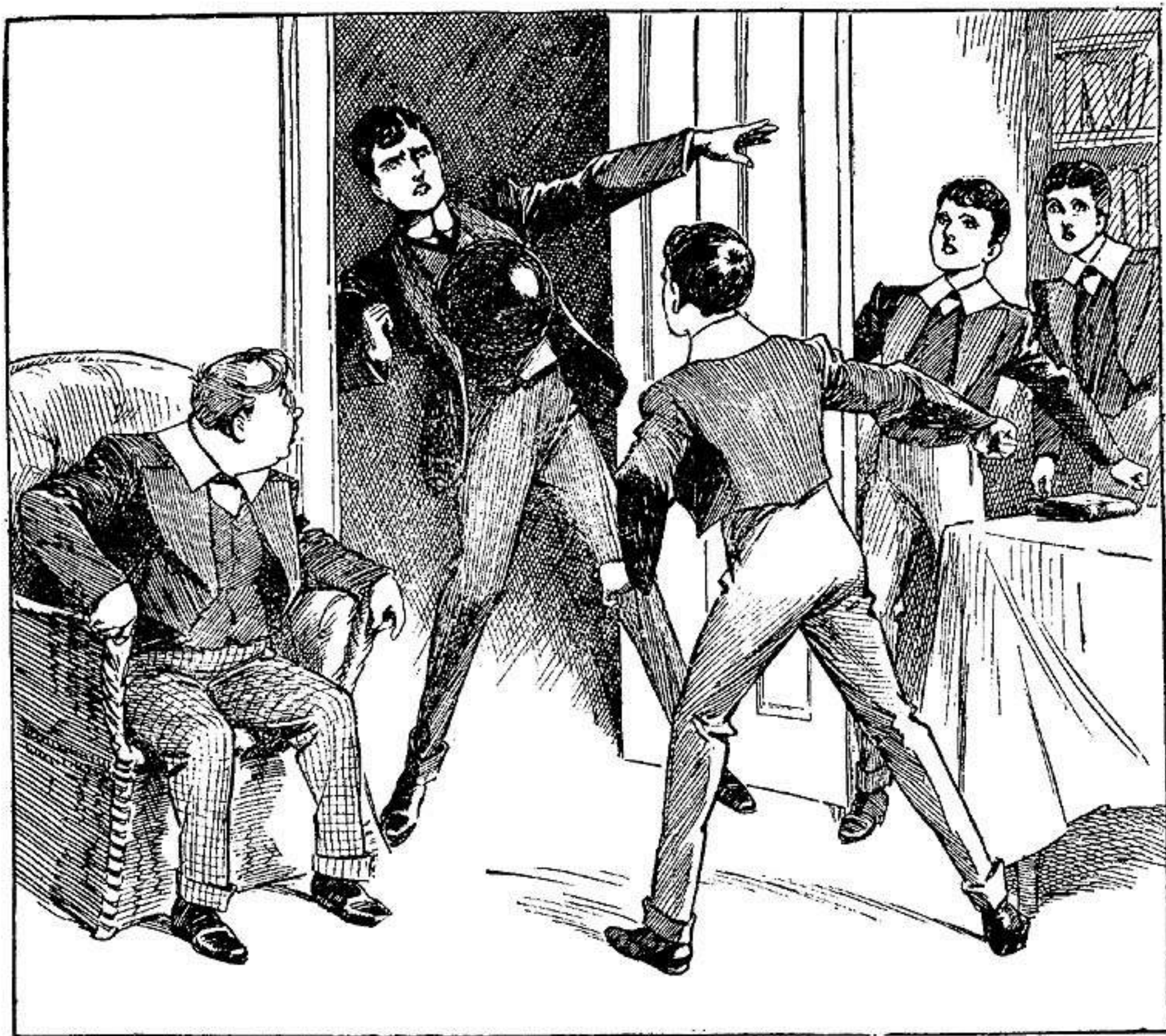
"He's a good cook," urged Wharton.

"Well, if he's a good cook, why don't you want to keep him?"

"Well, you see, he's rather a pig——"

"Well, do you think I want a pig in my study?"

"One more wouldn't be noticed with the rest."



Tom Brown faced the door and took the ball in his hands. He dropped it on the floor, and, as it rose, he kicked. "You—Oh!"

Bob Cherry jumped up in wrath. He remembered that he was a guest in No. 1 Study now, and sat down again.

"The dropfulness of the esteemed subject would be the good wheeze," suggested Hurree Jamset Rain Singh, peaceably.

"I rather think so too," grinned Tom Brown.

"What about footer for the coming season?" said Nugent, grinning, to change the subject. "Can you play footer, young Brown?"

Tom Brown laughed his merry laugh.

"What-ho!" he said, "Rugby, of course; what game do you play here?"

"Soccer. We'll teach you soccer."

"Or, I'll teach you Rugger," suggested Tom Brown. "It's the better game, you know."

"Bosh!"

"I've played it all my life, and I ought to know," said Brown, warmly. "I'll show you fellows how to play. Anyway, it's a good dodge to play both kinds."

"Yes, there's something in that."

"I suppose you haven't a Rugger ball in the place?" asked Tom Brown, with a slight sniff, glancing round the study.

"No, I think not," said Wharton, laughing. "Still, it would be good fun to learn to play Rugger, and we'll get a ball, by all means."

Tom Brown had finished his tea, and he rose from the table. He picked up Harry Wharton's football from the bookshelf.

"You see, there's a jolly lot more in Rugby," he explained.

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"You can't drop a goal in your old game, for instance. When I played for the Taranaki Terriers I was considered rather a dab at dropping a goal. I'll show you if you like, with this ball."

Wharton jumped up in alarm.

"Here, hold on, old chap; you're so jolly unlucky with your goals," he exclaimed, "and this is a small room for footer. It was all very well to biff Bunt into the eggs—that was funny—"

"Was it?" snorted Bunter, "I didn't see anything funny in it."

"And you got off pretty easily after goaling Quelch on the chest. But you've given us enough goals—you have really."

"The enoughfulness is terrific."

"I'll drop the goal against the door, if you like," said Tom Brown. "Lightning never strikes three times in the same place. The ball will bounce back from the door, and won't hurt anything."

"Oh, all right—go ahead."

Tom Brown faced the door, and took the ball in his hands. He dropped it on the floor, and as it rose, he kicked.

It was a splendid drop kick, and it sent the ball straight at the door. If the door had remained shut, the footer would have bounced from it as Brown expected. But he was certainly unlucky with his goals, for, just as he kicked, the door opened wide and Wingate, of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars looked in.

"You— Oh!"

Wingate sat down in the doorway!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bulstrode's New Study-Mate.

TOM BROWN stared blankly at Wingate, and Wingate stared blankly at Tom Brown. Bob Cherry burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha! You were going to drop a goal, kid—and you've only dropped a prefect! Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat!" gasped Tom. "I'm sorry."

"The sorrowfulness of the esteemed Maori is continual and terrific!" murmured Hurree Singh.

Wingate staggered to his feet.

"You cheeky young sweep—"

"I'm sorry!"

"Do you know I'm captain of the school—head of the Sixth?" roared Wingate. "Why, I'll scalp you—I'll pulverise you!"

"It was an accident——"

"Are you the chap who biffed Mr. Quelch with a footer?"

"That was an accident, too."

"You've had too many accidents," said Wingate, taking the new junior by the collar, and twisting him round, and applying his boot with considerable force to his person. "I think you ought to allow yourself one accident a day at the most."

"Ow!"

"I think that you won't have any more accidents for some time to come, now."

"Yow!"

"There!" said Wingate, stopping. "I think that's enough, as you're a new boy."

"Ow! It's more than enough, thank you," gasped Tom Brown. "I'm jolly glad that I'm not an old boy."

Wingate grinned. He had had a sudden shock, but his wrath never lasted long. He liked the New Zealander, too, for the plucky way he had taken his punishment.

"I came here for you," he said. "I suppose you're Brown, the kid from—from—what is it—Borriobool-Gha?"

"Taranaki," said Tom cheerfully.

"That's it! Mr. Quelch wants to see you—he's your Form-master. Go to his study—here, I'll take you there. Don't bring a footer."

Tom Brown grinned, and followed the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate looked at him once or twice curiously, as they went downstairs. New boys at a big school like Greyfriars generally showed some signs of nervousness, or at least of being subdued. There was very little of that sort about Tom Brown. Greyfriars might have belonged to him, and the whole county might have been his private estate, to judge by his easy manner.

"I was going to give you a few tips, as you've come such a long way," Wingate remarked, "about getting on here, and holding your own. But it seems to me that you are able to look after yourself pretty well."

"I've usually been able to do so," assented Tom modestly.

"Well, you don't seem very downhearted, anyway."

"I'm never downhearted."

"Good! You seem to have made friends already, too."

"Yes; jolly decent chaps they seem, too," said Tom Brown heartily. "I like Greyfriars. I say, I'm really sorry I biffed you with the footer. My luck seems to be out."

"Oh, that's all right," said Wingate. "I should recommend a little more care in the future, as all the prefects here aren't as good-tempered as I am."

"I hope they all haven't had as much practice at kicking goals as you seem to have had," Tom Brown remarked.

Wingate laughed, and stopped at Mr. Quelch's door and tapped. He opened the door, and signed to Brown to go in.

"Here is the new boy, sir."

"Thank you, Wingate."

And Tom Brown entered the Form-master's study, to go through the usual ordeal of a new boy. But he went through it calmly and coolly enough. Mr. Quelch found him "all there," and the new boy quite satisfied him. The Form-master referred to a list on his desk.

"Ah! You will go into No. 2 Study, Brown," he said. "There are only two boys in that study at present, and there will be ample room for you."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom.

And he withdrew from the Form-master's study. He went slowly back to the Remove quarters. He was disappointed at not being put into No. 1 or No. 13, but he knew that he could not argue about the matter with the Form-master. Exigencies of space determined the matter as far as Mr. Quelch was concerned.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the New Zealander came into No. 1. "Get through all right?"

"Right as rain, thanks!"

"Do you know which study you are going into?"

"Mr. Quelch says No. 2."

There was a general falling of faces. Tom Brown looked round enquiringly.

"I'm sorry not to be with some of you chaps," he remarked.

"But is there anything up against No. 2 Study?"

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

"It's Bulstrode's room."

"Bulstrode?"

"Yes, the big chap you saw in the tuck-shop—the chap who was japing Bunter."

"He's a beast!" remarked Bunter.

"Well, it can't be helped," remarked Harry Wharton. "It may be possible to change later, if you don't get on with Bulstrode. You'll find Hazeldene, the other fellow in there, all right. If your things have come from the station, you may as well get installed there, and we'll lend you a hand."

"Right-ho!"

Tom Brown's box was in the dormitory. His books and personal belongings—including a Rugby footer—were unpacked, and the chums of the Remove helped him to convey them to No. 2 Study.

They were engaged thus when Bulstrode came in.

The Remove bully looked a little surprised at seeing so many fellows in his study, and he looked at them with considerable disfavour.

"Having a party here?" he asked.

"We're helping Brown shove his things in."

Bulstrode stared.

"Blow Brown and his things. What the dickens is he shoving them into my study for?"

"He's to come in here."

Bulstrode grunted.

"Oh, hang! Blessed if I see why he should be shoved in here. There are other studies up and down the passage, without bothering me with the boulder."

Tom Brown's eyes gleamed. It was not so much the words as the way they were uttered, that angered him. Bulstrode seemed to be going quite out of his way to be as offensive as possible.

"Well, it won't be any more pleasant for me than for you, if that's a specimen of your manners," said the New Zealander. "I shall feel a great deal as if I were shoved into a cage at the Zoo with a bear."

Bulstrode glared at him.

"Do you know who you're talking to?" he demanded. "If you're not jolly civil, you'll go out of this study on your neck."

"Rats!"

"What?"

"And many of them!"

Bulstrode made a movement towards the New Zealander. Harry Wharton quietly stepped into his way.

"None of that, Bulstrode," he said quietly. "If you make yourself disagreeable to a new chap who's just come from a distant country, you'll hear of it!"

"Oh, let him come on," said Tom.

"You're not going to fight him, Brown. You can do that later, if you like; but you don't want a fight on your hands the first evening at Greyfriars. Bulstrode is going to behave himself, or else he's going to get a Form licking that he won't forget in a hurry."

The Remove bully forced a laugh.

"Keep your wool on," he said. "I don't want a row."

"Keep off the grass, then!"

And Bulstrode grunted and was silent.

READ

"FIGHTING MAC"

THE SPLENDID FOOT-
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OUT ON THURSDAY
ONE HALFPENNY

A School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By Frank Richards.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

More Woe for Bunter:

BILLY BUNTER looked into No. 2 Study later in the evening. Bulstrode was sitting there, in the arm-chair, with his feet on the fender, reading. Bunter blinked at him over the top of the chair.

"I say, Brown——"

Bulstrode grunted.

"I say, Brown, I wanted to speak to you very particularly. I couldn't do it while all those fellows were about, and I wanted to catch you when Bulstrode wasn't here."

The Remove bully grinned.

The short-sighted Owl of the Remove evidently mistook him for the chum from New Zealand, who had, as a matter of fact, gone out with Harry Wharton & Co.

As Bulstrode was rather curious to know what the Owl wished to say to Brown, which he—Bulstrode—was not to hear, he said nothing, and allowed Billy Bunter to rattle on.

"I say, Brown, you might stop reading for a minute. I wanted to warn you against Bulstrode. He's a rotter! He's the worst bully in the Remove, and he's always playing some mean trick. The other chap in this study, Hazeldene, isn't much better. And don't have too much to say to the chaps in my study. They're no good, though I don't really like to say it about them. I've rather taken a fancy to you, and I am quite willing to chum up with you."

Another grunt.

"I will look after you, and show you the ropes," went on Billy Bunter. "As for Bulstrode, if he bullies you, I'll make him sit up. I'm a ripping ventriloquist, you know, and I could easily get him into a row by imitating his voice. I've made fellows sit up like that before. I——"

"Have you?" said Bulstrode.

Bunter nearly fell upon the floor as he recognised the voice.

"Bulstrode!"

"Yes, you young villain."

"Oh! Oh, really, Bulstrode——"

The burly Removite rose from his chair, and towered over the startled Owl.

"So you want to warn Brown against me——"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode——"

"I'm the worst bully in the Remove, am I?"

"I—I say——"

"You'll make me sit up?"

"I—I——"

"I'll jolly well make you sit up, for a start!" said Bulstrode, seizing the fat junior by the collar with one hand, and taking up a cricket stump with the other.

Billy Bunter wriggled in his grasp.

"Ow! Leggo! Help!"

"Why, I haven't touched you yet!" cried Bulstrode in disgust.

"Ow! Help!"

"You young beast——"

"Help! Yow! Help!"

Bulstrode brought the cricket stump down upon Bunter's plump person, and Billy yelled in earnest.

"Ow! yow! wow!"

The door of the study opened. Tom Brown of Taranaki stood in the doorway, looking on at the scene in astonishment. Billy Bunter was hopping round Bulstrode, and the cricket-stump was following him as he hopped; and the fat junior was letting out a yell at every step.

"Here, chuck that!" exclaimed Tom.

Bulstrode glared at him.

"Mind your own business!"

"It is my business," said the New Zealander resolutely. "You're not going to larrup that kid with a cricket-stump. Let him alone."

"Get out!"

"Rats!"

"I'll larrup him as much as I like."

"You won't!"

"Ow! Help! Yow!"

"Put that stump down!"

"Go and eat coke!"

The New Zealander advanced upon Bulstrode. The Remove bully had to release Bunter to face him.

"Stand back!" he said thickly. "You'll get hurt."

"Let that kid alone, that's all."

"The worm wants a licking."

"You've licked him enough, then."

"Not half enough. I——"

"Here, cut!" exclaimed the New Zealander, pushing Billy Bunter towards the door.

Billy Bunter gladly scuttled away, and Bulstrode sprang forward to stop him. Tom Brown got in the way.

The next moment they were grasping one another.

"You confounded cad!" said Bulstrode, between his teeth. "I'll show you——"

"Go ahead, then!"

Bulstrode struggled hard to throw his opponent. But Tom Brown's arms were round him with a grip like that of bands of iron.

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NEXT TUESDAY: "BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

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Surprise was as great as rage in the face of the Remove bully. The New Zealander looked active and strong, but Bulstrode had never dreamed that strength like this was hidden in his limbs.

The Remove bully gave up trying to throw him, and tried to release himself; but he found that equally impossible.

The grip round him was closing tighter and tighter, and it seemed to Bulstrode that his breath would soon be cut off.

He fought hard for liberty; but he could not relax that grip.

The smiling face of Tom Brown looked into his. The New Zealander was breathing a little hard, but otherwise showed no sign of strain.

"Had enough?" he said pleasantly.

"Hang you!"

"Very well." The grip tightened.

Bulstrode gasped for breath, and collapsed in the iron grasp.

"Let go, you beast!"

"Had enough?"

"Yes; hang you!"

"Will you make it pax?"

"No!" roared Bulstrode.

"Good!" Tighter and tighter grew the vice-like grip.

"Ow! Leggo!"

"Will you make it pax?"

"No! Yes!"

"I don't want a fight on my first evening at Greyfriars," smiled the New Zealander. "Bad form, you know. Make it pax—I think that's what you call it—till to-morrow at least."

"Yes."

Tom Brown's arms dropped to his sides. Bulstrode staggered to a chair, and sat down in a collapsing heap.

"You—you beast!"

"Sorry. You would have it."

"I'll lick you for that to-morrow."

The New Zealander laughed.

"Right-ho! I'll be ready."

Bob Cherry looked into the study.

"Have you got that footer, Browney?"

"Shan't be a minute."

"Well, hurry up!"

And Bob Cherry departed. Tom Brown looked into a box, and picked out a Rugby football. Then he left the study, without another word to Bulstrode.

Billy Bunter was waiting for him in the passage. He pulled the New Zealander by the sleeve.

"I say, Brown—it is Brown, isn't it?"

"Yes; what do you want?"

"I want to speak to you very particularly. I want to warn you against——"

"That's all right. Thanks; I'm in a hurry."

"Yes, but I want——"

"I've got to get to the dormitory. We're going to play Rugby."

"Oh, really, Brown! Wait a minute. Look here, I'm short of money——"

"Sorry; it's not my fault."

"I didn't say it was; but this is how the matter stands. I've got a postal order coming by the first post in the morning, but I'm short of tin to-night. Will you let me have five bob, and have it back to-morrow morning?"

"Yes, here you are."

Tom Brown—who did not know Billy Bunter yet—passed the shillings into his hand, and hurried on. Billy looked at the shining shillings, hardly able to believe his eyes. Bunter was a merciless borrower; but all the fellows at Greyfriars knew him too well to lend him money. A new boy at Greyfriars was always a windfall to Bunter; he generally contrived to make a good deal out of him before the hapless new-comer discovered his little ways.

Bunter blinked at the five shillings, and blinked after Tom Brown. Then he ran after the New Zealander.

"Brown! I say, Brown!"

"Can't stop!"

"But I say—it's important!"

"Sorry!" And the New Zealander ran on to the stairs leading up to the Remove dormitory. Bunter put on a desperate spurt, and overtook him on the stairs.

"I—I say, Brown, just a second!"

He grabbed the New Zealander by the jacket, and stopped him. Tom Brown looked round impatiently.

"Buck up! what do you want?"

"The—the postal order I'm expecting to-morrow is for ten shillings. Can you let me have the other five now? That will really be cashing the postal order in advance."

"Sorry—no!"

"But I say——"

"Rats!"

And the New Zealand junior jerked himself away and dashed on. Billy Bunter made a jump after him, missed his footing, and rolled down the stairs.

"Ow! yow! ow!"

Bunter bumped at the bottom of the stairs. He had thrown out his hands wildly to catch at the banisters, and the shillings had flown in every direction. Bunter sat up and groped for his glasses, which had slid off his nose.

"Ow! Groo! Where are my glasses?"

"I'll help you look for them," said Snoop of the Remove, coming up. Bunter jumped up at once. He knew the sneak of the Remove, and he did not think that the scattered shillings were safe with Snoop there.

Snoop grinned. The traces of the paint were still visible about his ears. He had heard the clink of falling money.

"It's all right, Snoopey; you needn't wait," gasped Bunter.

"Have you dropped any money?"

"No. Oh, no."

"Sure?"

"Quite sure," said Bunter, who was particularly anxious that Snoop should not help him to look for the shillings. "That's all right."

"I thought I heard some money fall."

"Oh, no."

"Good!" said Snoop. "Then this boblet doesn't belong to you."

He picked up one shilling, and then another. He could see them easily enough, while Billy Bunter was still groping for his spectacles.

Bunter gave a yell of alarm.

"Here! That money's mine, Snoop!"

"How can it be yours?" said Snoop, picking up a third shilling. "You told me just now that you hadn't dropped any."

"I—I meant——"

"By George! here's another."

"It's mine."

"Rot! Another still! I'm in luck—I've found just five bob."

"It's mine! I just dropped it."

"You told me you hadn't dropped any."

"That was because——because——"

"I'll tell you what," said Snoop generously. "We'll have a feed with this five bob, and you shall have as much as I have."

Bunter glared at him.

"Why, you rotter, that's mine! It's all mine!"

"Bosh! How could it be yours when you didn't drop any?"

"I did drop it!" yelled Bunter.

"You're lying now, or else you were lying then," said Snoop.

"You can't expect me to believe you. Look here, you can come and share a feed at Mrs. Mimble's with this tin, or you can go without. Take your choice."

Bunter glared—but glaring was useless. Snoop had too much effrontery for an indignant glare to make any difference to him.

"You—you rotter, Snoop!"

Snoop chuckled.

"Are you coming?"

"Ye-es, I suppose so."

And Billy Bunter went, on the principle that half a loaf was better than no bread. It was a very good feed in the tuck shop, and every penny of the five shillings was expended; but it was Snoop who consumed the lion's share.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The First Rugby Match of the Season.

TOM BROWN burst into the Remove dormitory with the Rugby ball under his arm. Harry Wharton & Co. were there, with Ogilvy, Morgan, Elliott and several other fellows of the Remove. It was getting late in the evening; but the proposition to have a little Rugby in the dorm. had been hailed with acclamation.

Mark Linley had played Rugby at home in Lancashire, and Morgan in Wales; but they were the only Removites besides Brown who knew anything to speak of about the game. But the rest were willing to learn. And it was fun, anyway.

"Here he is!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, as the New Zealander came in. "Now, then——"

"Line up."

"The line-upfulness is terrific."

"How many of you can play Rugger?" asked Tom Brown.

"Two," said Wharton: "Linley and Morgan. We all have a pretty good idea of it, though."

"Good! Form up the sides. Linley had better captain one side, and I the other."

"Right you are."

The sides were soon formed. Goals were arranged at opposite ends of the dormitory. The ball was kicked off, and the somewhat peculiar match commenced. The footer field was rather incommoded by beds and boxes and washstands, but there was a great deal of excitement in dodging the obstacles.

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TUESDAY:

"BILLY BUNTER'S WINDFALL."

The fun was soon fast and furious.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh, always thoughtful, had kicked off his boots, to make less noise; but he rather regretted his thoughtfulness in the first scrum, when Bob Cherry trod on his feet.

Bob Cherry's boots were of a good size, and he had not removed them.

The unfortunate nabob squirmed out of the scrum and rolled on the floor, assuming a remarkable attitude, as he tried to clasp both feet at once in his hands.

"Man hurt!" shouted Nugent, blowing a cab whistle.

"Stop the game!"

They crowded round the Indian.

"Hurt, Inky?"

"Where is the pain?"

"Ow! Ow! In my esteemed feet," groaned the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The august boots of the honourable Cherry came down upon them with an esteemed cosh."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I thought I felt something under my feet," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The hurtfulness is terrific."

"Sorry! You see——"

"It is all right. I will take a short restfulness on my esteemed bed, and will watch the playfulness of the game."

And the Indian climbed to the comparative safety of a bed, and sat there nursing his damaged toes while the game was resumed.

Nobody, after that, followed the nabob's example of removing his boots. The consequence was that there was a considerable din in the Remove dormitory.

As the Remove studies were underneath, it did not matter so much; had a Sixth Form-room been below there would have been an angry prefect on the scene in a very few minutes. But the noise reached many ears, and among them, the ears of Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth.

While the Rugby match proceeded in the Remove dormitory, a crowd of Upper Fourth fellows gathered in the passage outside, and Temple opened one of the doors slightly to peep in and see what was going on.

The Removites within were far too busy to see that.

Temple grinned at the sight that met his eyes. The Removites were swaying and scrambling in a decidedly irregular scrum, and seemed to have been transformed in a huge heap of legs and feet.

"They're playing footer," said Fry, in wonder.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Cheek! Footer in the evening—indoors!"

"Oh, the Remove have cheek enough for anything!" said Scott. "They'll have Quelch or a prefect up here soon."

"We had better interfere, I think," said Temple, gravely.

"Good! They want a licking."

"Hold on! You remember the little game they played with us this afternoon? This looks like a chance of tit for tat."

"Good egg!"

"Wait till the ball comes near the door, and I'll cut in and collar it," whispered Temple. "We'll make the Remove sing small this time."

The Fourth-Formers grinned gleefully.

The affair of the football of the afternoon was still rankling very sorely in their memories, and they were eager to give the Remove tit for tat.

Temple pushed the door a little wider open, and the Upper Fourth fellows watched their opportunity.

The Removites had no idea they were there. They were too busy. The informal Rugby match was growing very exciting.

Tom Brown had the ball, and was making a run up the field, and Mark Linley had tackled him.

Brown struggled desperately to get away from the Lancashire lad, but Mark's tackle brought him down—with a bump that was rather painful. The floor of the Remove dormitory was harder than the ground of the football field.

Tom Brown passed to Harry Wharton before he went down, and Harry caught the ball; but he was tackled and bowled over by Bob Cherry the next moment, throwing the ball towards Nugent, who was near the door.

Nugent wasn't ready for the pass, and the ball missed him and swooped against the wall near the door, dropping within a few feet of Temple.

That was Temple's opportunity.

He darted into the room and picked up the ball in a twinkling, and was out again into the passage before a hand could be raised to stop him.

Bob Cherry gave a wild yell.

"Hallo! hallo! hallo! Who's that?"

Temple & Co."

"Upper Fourth rotters!"

"They've got our ball!"

"After them!"

Harry Wharton leaped up and rushed to the door. After

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him in a stream went the Removites. The game had come to a sudden termination. It was a question now of dealing with the Upper Fourth, and recovering Tom Brown's ball.

The Removites rushed into the passage.

"After them!" yelled Wharton.

"Come on!" shrieked Tom Brown.

And down the passage with a rush went the juniors. Temple & Co. were well ahead, Temple with the oval ball under his arm making for the stairs.

The Fourth-Formers dashed down the stairs, with the Lower Fourth hot on their track. Wharton, Tom Brown and Bob Cherry slid down the banisters at lightning speed, and reached the bottom at the same time as the raiders.

They hurled themselves upon Temple.

But the odds were against them, and they were dragged off and rolled over, and the raiders left them gasping.

Down the Remove passage went Temple & Co., shouting victory.

But the din had brought Removites from all quarters, and the passage ahead was blocked. Stott and Skinner and Russell and Trevor and half a dozen more of the Remove had poured out of their studies, and the retreat of the Upper Fourth to their own quarters was cut off.

With Removites before, and Removites behind, Temple & Co. were in danger of losing the captured trophy, and getting a tremendous licking into the bargain.

"Stop them!" roared Wharton.

Temple snapped his teeth.

"Come on! Rush the bounders!"

The Fourth rushed on. There was a scrimmage in the passage, but more and more Removites joined in, and the pursuers were on the scene now. Temple & Co. had all their work cut out to hold their own. They were driven up to the end of the passage by overwhelming numbers, and penned up there against the doors of the box-room and No. 13 Study.

There they made a last stand.

Temple was still clutching the footer, determined not to give it up; and the Removites gave him their chief attention.

"Got him!" shouted Bob Cherry, throwing his arms round Temple's neck in a most affectionate way. "Collar the footer!"

Temple wrenched himself away, and went with a bump against the door of No. 13.

The door flew open, and Temple rolled helplessly into the study, with Bob Cherry rolling over him.

Removites and Upper Fourth rushed and rolled in after them, and in a second the study was crammed with fighting, struggling forms.

The room was a good size, for a junior study, but there was no space for the excited combatants who poured into it.

They bumped against the table, and sent it flying—and they bumped on the bookcase, and brought it over with a crash.

In the midst of upset furniture, scattered books and papers and flowing inkpots, the struggle went on with undiminished vigour.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Turned Out.

"BUCK up, Remove!"

"Sock it to 'em!"

"On the ball!"

"Hurray!"

The din in the crammed study was greater than it had been in the dormitory above. And the scene was one of indescribable confusion.

Temple and Bob Cherry staggered into the window, and an elbow crashed through the panes. An excited youth dragged the ashpan from under the grate, and scattered the contents over the Removites—his own friends getting as much of the ashes, however. Fry had Ogilvy on the floor, pouring ink over his head. The juniors were so excited with combat that, as a matter of fact, they hardly knew what they were doing.

Temple was still holding on to the ball. Fry and Dabney and Scott rallied round him, and their friends were hurled forth from the study. But the four still held together, and now they were penned in a corner, with the Remove hemming them in.

They were backed up against the wall which separated the study from the box-room—a thin wall of lath and plaster, of no great strength. As the Removites rushed upon them, and the Fourth-Formers were bumped heavily against the wall, there was an ominous creaking. The excited juniors did not notice it.

"Gimne that ball!"

"Rats!"

Harry Wharton closed with Temple.

They whirled to and fro, and went with a bump on the wall as the Removites crowded forward to collar the last defenders.

Crash!

A huge gap appeared in the wall, and there was a crashing of falling laths and a wild tearing of paper.

Temple and Wharton, still in one another's grip, went reeling through the gap, and three or four juniors bumped helplessly after them.

"My only hat!" gasped Nugent. "The wall's given!"

"Help!"

Harry Wharton staggered up. The footer was in his grasp

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at last. He tossed it to Tom Brown, and the New Zealander caught it.

"We've got it!"

"Hurray!"

"My hat! there'll be a row about this!" gasped Wharton. "No hiding a thing like that. Fancy the rotten wall giving way. It must have been very weak!"

"Rotten!" said Bob Cherry. "I wonder if we could patch it up?"

Temple staggered to his feet. He was dishevelled and dusty and exhausted, but the prospect of a serious row over the burst wall put an end to the scrimmage.

"I—I'm sorry!" he panted.

"Can't be helped. We shall have to face the music," said Wharton, with a shrug of the shoulders. "You fellows clear out!"

"Cave!"

"Here's Quelch!"

"Oh! Now look out for hurricanes!" murmured Bob Cherry. "This is where the row begins, my beloved 'earers.'"

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, stood in the doorway. He seemed transfixed by what he saw.

The juniors stood silent, dusty, disordered, and waited for the storm to break.

"It is, I presume, what you call a 'rag,'" said Mr. Quelch. "I must make you learn somehow that a 'rag' must be kept within bounds. I shall punish you all most severely. Who started this struggle?"

There was no reply.

Mr. Quelch waited a few moments, and then went on.

"Very well; I will take it that you are equally to blame. Your punishment will be equal, then. You will all come to my study before bedtime, and receive six cuts each with the cane. You will do a hundred lines of Virgil each to-morrow. Brown, as a new boy, is excused the caning, but he will do the lines!"

"Yes, sir," said Harry Wharton.

"You will take your property out of this study, Cherry," said Mr. Quelch. "It cannot be occupied again until it has been repaired, which may take some time."

"Yes, sir."

"You will go back to your previous quarters in the interval. Perhaps the discomfort of overcrowded quarters will make you realise the necessity of keeping order. Now disperse at once."

Mr. Quelch stalked away, and the juniors dispersed.

Temple grinned at Wharton as he went.

"Well, it was fun, anyway," he said. "It's pax now; we'll lick you cheeky kids another time."

Bob Cherry looked round the wrecked and dismantled study with a glance of regret. He had grown attached to his quarters in No. 13.

"Well, I shall have to come back into No. 1 with you for a bit, Wharton," he remarked; "and Wun Lung will go back with Bulstrode, and Mark with Russell and Lacy—till this room is repaired. No. 13 Study is wiped off the list for a bit, and I'm willing to admit that No. 1 is top study—so long as I'm in it."

"And after," grinned Nugent.

"Oh, no; when I get back into No. 13, No. 13 will be top study again," said Bob Cherry, cheerfully.

"Rats! It never was top study."

"Look here, Nugent!"

"Look here, Bob Cherry!"

Harry Wharton interposed.

"Don't begin another row now, for goodness' sake!" he exclaimed. "We've had enough of that for one evening. Let's go and get a wash, so that we can look decent to take our licking from Quelch."

Wharton tapped Tom Brown on the shoulder. The New Zealander had a swollen nose and a black eye, but he grinned at Wharton with perfect good temper.

"You're getting an exciting first day at Greyfriars, Brown."

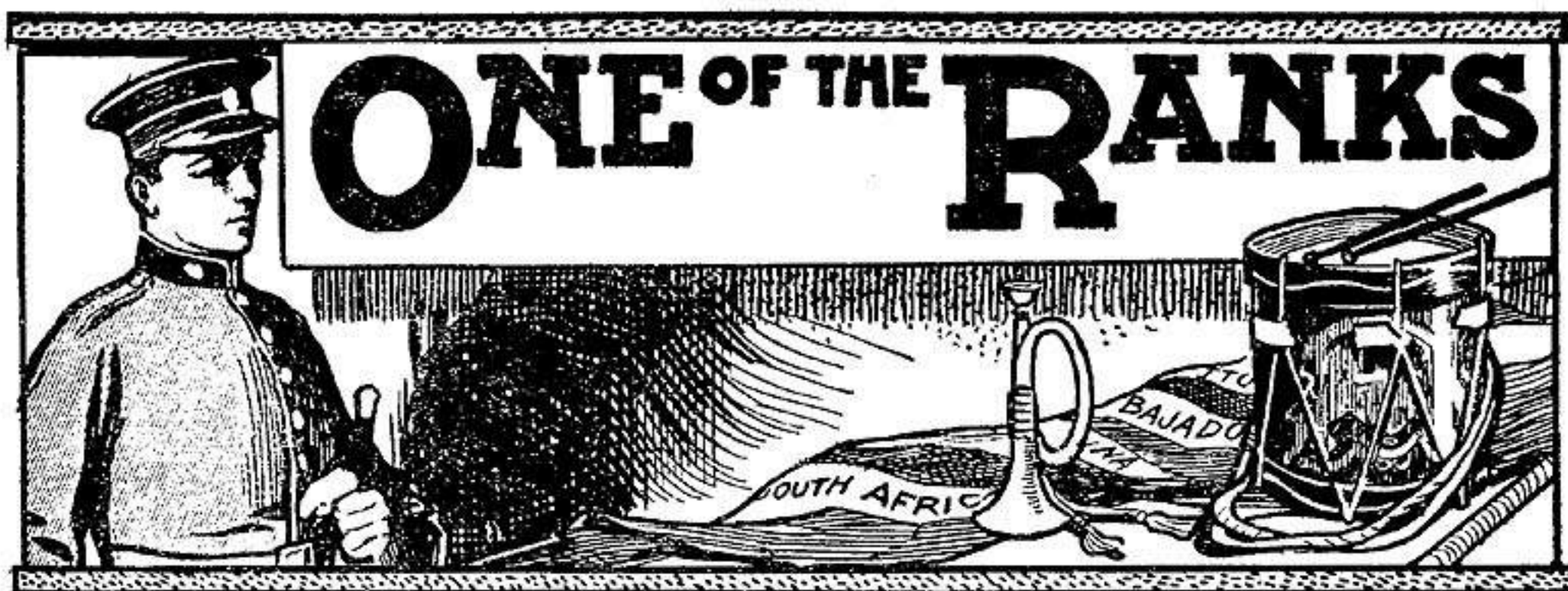
"Yes, rather—but I like it!" grinned Tom Brown.

The juniors took their respective lickings manfully, and listened with great meekness to some strong remarks Mr. Quelch made on the unruliness of the Remove. They went up to the dormitory that night with tingling palms, but feeling quite satisfied with themselves for keeping their end up against the Upper Fourth.

The next day Bob Cherry resumed his old quarters in No. 1 Study, and the Famous Four were united again, and for a time nothing more was heard of the burning question as to which was top study in the Remove.

THE END.

(Another long, complete tale of Harry Wharton and Co. next Tuesday, entitled: "Billy Bunter's Windfall," by Frank Richards. Please order your copy of "The Magnet Library" in advance. Price One Halfpenny.)



A Splendid Tale of Life in the British Army.

A BRIEF RESUME OF THE EARLIER CHAPTERS.

Ronald Chenys is forced to leave Sandhurst through the treachery of his step-brother, Ian, and enlists in the Wessex Regiment under the name of Chester. Unfortunately for Ronald, Ian joins the Wessex as a subaltern, and, assisted by Sergeant Bagot and Private Foxey Williams, does his best to further disgrace Ronald. The unscrupulous Bagot, however, gets caught in his own toils, and is publicly degraded to the ranks. Mad with rage and hate he snatches up a rifle and jams a live cartridge into the breech, glaring murderously at Ronald the while. There is a shout of alarm from the whole barrack-room.

(Now go on with the story.)

A Terrible Ordeal.

Ronald, the first to realise that Bagot was beside himself, for they were standing eye to eye, stood white as marble but steady as a statue.

Two bed-cots separated him from Bagot. He was wondering how he could clear these quickly enough to grip the muzzle of the weapon before the madman could swing it to his shoulder; but, while wondering, he never removed his gaze from the other's face for an instant.

There is a strange power in the human eye, so it is said—power to shake, to unnerve, and ultimately to quell. It was a slender hope to cling to, but for Ronald there seemed nothing else, until someone roused himself to come to his rescue. One move on his own part, or even an ill-timed rush by his comrades might precipitate his fate.

Click! Click! The breech had closed. Bagot's chance had come. His victim stood upright and defenceless not twelve feet from him, and he was one of the best rifle-shots in the battalion. He could scarcely miss him if he tried. He raised the muzzle of the rifle, his cheek sank slowly to the butt, and his right eye glinted along the sights as he took his devilish aim.

And still no one in the room had stirred, and not a finger was raised to help.

The perspiration stood in icy dew on Ronald's forehead. His lips were parched and dry. He would have moistened them with his tongue, only he feared that the least movement on his part might break the slender spell on which all his hope of life was resting.

"I shall count 'three,'" said Bagot thickly. "One, two, three—"

A shudder ran round the room, and some closed their eyes, expecting a sharp report to follow.

"Just like that," added Bagot, with a maniacal chuckle, enjoying the terror he was inspiring—"just like that, Chester. One, two, three, and then our score will be settled. Get ready! Wait for the word three, remember!"

He spoke as if he were instructing some squad on parade. "One!"

On the other side of Bagot a man had stooped forward suddenly on the cot on which he was sitting. It was the only promise of help in the whole room. Ronald did not lift his gaze to see who it was, or what he was doing.

"Two!"
The man beyond had crept forward, still crouching, and, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 86.

by his noiseless, catlike tread, it was evident that he had waited to remove his heavy boots. Swiftly he had closed in on Bagot from behind, yet moved without a sound.

The ex-sergeant's jaw tightened as he steadied his rifle for the final aim. His lips curved to speak the fatal word. Then the crouching figure behind straightened, and sprang upon his shoulders.

Bagot was flung forward on his face, dashed to the floor by the sudden impact. The rifle clattered from his startled fingers, but, fortunately, did not explode.

The next instant Ronald had cleared the two cots between like a hurdler, and had rushed to his comrade's assistance. It was to Tony Truscott that he owed his escape from certain death.

The struggle was short and sharp. Bagot, breathless and half stunned as he was, fought like a tiger. Then suddenly his head dropped back, and he lay limp in their arms. There was foam upon his lips, his jaws were clenched like a vice, and his eyes rolled in their sockets.

"Hallo, what's all this" asked Colour-sergeant Jones, entering the room suddenly, and surveying the huddled group upon the floor, and the scared faces of the men standing by.

There was no non-com. present, as it happened, and No. 4 section kept silence, each waiting for someone else to make the terrible accusation of attempted murder.

All eyes turned naturally to Ronald, now kneeling beside the man who, only ten seconds ago, was about to shoot him down where he stood, defenceless. Bagot's head was pillowed upon his elbow, and he was wiping the froth bubbles from the blue lips with his own handkerchief.

"Who is that lying there?" demanded the Flag, coming forward. "What has happened?"

"It's Bagot, poor chap!" answered Ronald, thrusting the fallen rifle out of sight with his foot. "I think he has been taken with a fit. Tony"—he caught his rescuer's eye just in time to stifle the revelations which he could see were on the point of being blurted out—"get me some water, old chap; and somebody reach me down a blanket for a pillow."

Tony looked at Ronald, gaping with amazement; but it needed only one glance to see that Ronald's mind was made up, and that he meant to suppress the news of Bagot's dastardly crime if he could.

The rest were as bewildered as he, but they had the sense to hold their peace. While Tony dashed off for a bowl of water, others lent a hand to lift the wretched man on to his bed.

"It's a case for hospital, that's evident," said the colour-sergeant. "Is Corporal Kedge not here? Then, Chester, you had better stay in charge. I'll report the matter as I pass. After you've seen to that, come to me, on that matter I was speaking to you about yesterday."

The colour-sergeant went out as Tony returned. Ronald gripped his rescuer's hand in silent gratitude. Then he reached under the bed, where he had kicked Bagot's rifle, and, opening the breech-bolt, took out the round of ball-cartridge, slipping it into his pocket.

"Now, look here, you fellows," he said quietly, turning to his comrades, who had gathered round, "if it is anyone's business to say anything about this unfortunate affair, it is mine. Personally, I mean to keep my lips sealed absolutely upon the matter, and I hope and expect that you will do the same."

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"Poor Bagot here"—he turned to the rigid form upon the bed—"has had a rough time of it of late. It may have been his own fault, but it has been a cruel and bitter time, all the same. Goaded, finally, beyond endurance by your chaff, his brain became unhinged for the moment, and he was no longer responsible for his actions. Remember that, and be merciful. When he recovers, it may be that his mind will be an utter blank so far as this incident is concerned. If so, well and good. I shall betray nothing by word or sign, and I trust that you will do likewise, if not for his sake, at any rate, for mine."

A murmur, half of admiration, half of resentment, that one so guilty should go unpunished, was suppressed as the door opened, and two hospital orderlies came in.

Bagot was lifted on to the stretcher and carried away, still insensible, and Ronald followed, to depart in search of his colour-sergeant.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said someone, as the door closed. "Don't he fairly take the biscuit?"

"Anged if I don't think if Bagot had blown his head off he wouldn't just have said, 'Sorry, old chap, my fault entirely! Don't mind me!'" added Mouldy Mills.

"E's a marvel—a puffick marvel!" agreed Hookey.

Meantime, the object of this whole-hearted admiration had been conducted by Colour-Sergeant Jones before his captain.

Ian Chenys happened to be engaged in conversation with Captain Carthew as they entered.

"Ah, Private Chester! I hear from Colour-Sergeant Jones that you are anxious for promotion, and are ready to take a lance-stripe in No. 4 section," said the captain.

This was news to Ian. He could scarcely conceal his consternation and petty spite that good fortune should have fallen to his stepbrother so early. The half-smothered exclamation which rose to his lips made Captain Carthew turn in mild surprise.

"I was contemplating recommending Private Chester for the rank of acting lance-corporal, Mr. Chenys. I take it you have no objection to offer?"

"I, sir!" exclaimed Ian, with a deprecating laugh, which only added to the unmistakable venom of his tone. "Oh, no, sir; not if you have decided already. Personally, however, from what I know of this man, I should scarcely have recommended him for promotion. He is—"

"Yes, go on," said Captain Carthew, looking up and perceiving Lieutenant Bob halted in the doorway.

"Oh, well, I have no desire, of course, to appear as if I were trying to blacken Private Chester's prospects," said Ian lamely, dropping his eyes under the basilisk gleam of Lieutenant Bob's eyeglass.

"But go on, please. You have something to say, Mr. Chenys, and I must insist that you say it," persisted Captain Carthew coldly.

"Very good, then, sir!" retorted Ian, in desperation. "I should say he was a dirty and slovenly soldier, unreliable and insubordinate, and the centre of every riotous outbreak, of which we have had so many of late. I would draw your attention, too, sir, to the fact that, though he has only been in the Service a few months, he has not a clean defaulter-sheet."

"You refer, of course, to the mysterious affair that night in the fog, Chenys?" said Lieutenant Bob.

Ian scowled back at him across the room.

"Ah, I happen to have stumbled upon the truth of that little business," continued Bob Fairly. "If I may venture, sir—to Captain Carthew—"I should like to say that I do not think that that should be allowed to stand in Chester's road."

Ronald, who had turned pale with shame and anger at this perfidy of his own flesh and blood, shot a grateful glance in his lieutenant's direction.

Captain Carthew looked from one to the other, and then coughed drily.

"You will attend to-morrow morning at the orderly-room, Private Chester. Meantime, I will recommend your name to the colonel. You can go."

Ronald retired on the heels of the colour-sergeant. A minute later Ian emerged, livid with rage, and made for his quarters.

"What time was it you arranged for me to meet that Polish wrestling chap?" he demanded of Foxey, who was busy laying out a suit of mufti for his master.

"Any time after five-thirty," was Foxey's reply. "I told him you were a gent who was anxious to take a few lessons in wrestling, and he seemed precious glad to have the chance. Fact is, that lickin' Chester gave 'im has just about put the tin hat on his career as a champion. All 'is contracts at other 'alls have been cancelled, they tell me, and 'ere he is stranded in Woolchester, broke to the wide. 'E's as 'appy as a lark about it. All 'e's longin' for now is to meet our young friend so that 'e can fall on 'is neck and kiss 'im—I don't think!"

Ian uttered a nervous laugh at this.

"Well, we'll see if we can't arrange an opportunity," he said, as he doffed his regimentals. "Any other news?"

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Lieutenant Bob gets another Clue, and Gussie Smythe regains his Liberty.

It was Mrs. Conger's At-home that afternoon, so that the carriage containing the two young ladies whose toy terrier Rough and Ronald had rescued between them was not the last to pass the barrack gate.

"He was a tall young fellow," said the prettier girl of the two, describing the encounter later for Lieutenant Bob Fairly's benefit. "Fair-skinned and blue-eyed. He spoke, too, like a gentleman, yet he was only a private."

"Tall, fair-skinned, blue-eyed, private," repeated Bob, doing his best to give the matter his attention, but finding it difficult with so much beauty before him dazzling his senses. "Tall, blue-skinned, fair-eyed. No, sorry, that's not it. I'm getting mixed. Let's see now. Tall, you say—fair, and a private. H'm! 'Pon my honour, I really don't know who it could be, Miss Cosgrave, but I could inquire."

Cosgrave! No wonder Ronald thought he had seen those eyes somewhere before! They were Cosgrave's to the very twinkle. Old Cos of the Coll., the very best chum he had ever had in his life. So this must be Cosgrave's sister!

Lieutenant Bob knew Cosgrave, too. They were old acquaintances; but Fairly had finished his Sandhurst days before either Cosgrave or Ronald had entered.

"But the dog was his, he said," persisted Miss Kitty Cosgrave, while Bob wished the man to the deuce. "You must know the dog, at any rate. Such a quaint little beast, dressed up in a red tunic."

"What, you mean Rough—Guard-room Rough? And the man is his master—eh? Why, of course! Fair hair and blue eyes. That must be Chester—Ronald Chester!"

"Oh, I don't think that was the name," said Cosgrave's sister, with a little note of disappointment.

"I'm sure of it—that is, if we're both hunting the same fox," said Bob.

"Oh, I don't mean that! I mean the name of my brother's greatest chum at Sandhurst. It was a name like Challis, if I remember right."

"Chenys, perhaps," suggested Bob.

"Yes, of course. How silly of me to forget! It was Chenys."

"Well, that is young Chenys standing over there talking to the old parrakeet in the snuff-coloured silk. He has just recently joined from Sandhurst," said Bob.

"No, that's not the man. He's not a bit like this photograph," said Cosgrave's sister.

"Photograph!" echoed Lieutenant Bob, wondering what the dickens all this feminine flutter was about.

"Yes, I ought to have explained, of course. Dick, my brother, was for ever talking at one time of a great chum of his at college—Ronald Chenys. He was going to bring him home with him to spend their leave together, but always something stood in the way. At last—there was some mystery about the whole thing, I know—Mr. Chenys left Sandhurst, and soon afterwards died. Dick was awfully cut up over it, and he's never spoken of him since. The poor fellow's photograph hangs in Dick's room to-day, though, and what runs in my mind is that the man who came to our rescue this afternoon was the very living image of that portrait. Ronald Chester, you said his name was? Ronald Chester—Ronald Chenys. They do sound wonderfully alike, don't they?"

"By Jove, they do!" agreed Lieutenant Bob, flicking a handkerchief out of his sleeve, and falling to polishing his eyeglass. It was plain that he was interested.

He had always made up his mind that there was some mystery attaching to Chester—in fact, Ronald admitted it frankly.

"Did this chap Chenys have a brother?" he asked.

"Yes; but Dick never said much about him. Evidently he was not quite Dick's sort. Dick can be peculiar about his choice of friends, you know."

"Yes, I know," said Lieutenant Bob, with something like a sigh. Cosgrave had always regarded him as an empty-headed ass, and never took much trouble to disguise his opinion.

Bob fixed his monocle in his eye, and took a long look at Ian on the other side of the drawing-room.

"I wonder now," he said softly to himself—"yes, I wonder! If this theory is correct, it explains a very great deal. Lance-Corporal Chester, according to this, is Lieutenant Chenys' brother. He is supposed to be dead—in fact, he must know himself that everybody is under the impression he is defunct; yet he chooses to lie low under an assumed name as a common Tommy in the ranks. Why should he do this? What can be his motive? I'll get Cosgrave to come over some day, and then see what happens. Or, won't that be poking my nose too much into other people's business?"

The advent of Colonel Conger at that instant directed the conversation to other topics. A little while later, Miss Cosgrave and her friend took leave of their hostess, and Lieutenant Bob, having duty to attend to, saw the girls into their carriage. After that he strolled over to his skipper's quarters, and was just in time, it will be remembered, to hear Ian open the sluice-gates of his malice on Ronald's head, in a vain attempt to thwart his promotion.

That evening Ian met the Polish wrestler at the Roebuck Hotel, but what was arranged—if anything was arranged at all—even Foxy could not discover, try as he would.

At any rate, Pushoffsky announced that for the present he had decided to abandon the music-hall stage, and open a school of wrestling and ju-jitsu in Woolchester; and the general opinion was that, with so many young officers with means quartered close by, he could not have chosen a better spot for the venture.

Ronald's appointment to the rank of lance-corporal was confirmed by the colonel in the morning, and ten minutes later he had sewn a single "skater" on his right sleeve, and was receiving the congratulations of his friends.

But it was "Yes, corporal," and "No, corporal" from this time forth, and the most particular of all to give the young non-com. the respect due to his rank were Mouldy, and Hookey, and Spud, and other veterans, who might well have been expected to resent the promotion of so young a lad over their heads.

A day or two after, Augustus Smythe emerged from his temporary retirement in the Garrison Provost Prison, and his first act was to go straight to Ronald and make a handsome apology for his cowardly conduct in not taking the blame of his bayonet charge on his own shoulders from the start.

Needless to say, Ronald accepted the apology like a sportsman, and Gussie returned to duty with a light heart.

His "seven days hard" had been very hard indeed, for he spent most of that time at shot drill, crank exercise, or oakum-picking, with brief intervals of relaxation in the shape of burnishing and holystoning prison bars and floors, until steel and brass shone like silver and gold, and plank and stone were like driven snow.

Shot drill consists of picking up a twenty-four-pound cannon-ball from a small wooden block, advancing five paces, and setting it down on a similar pedestal placed to receive it. The blocks and shot are spaced round in a circle. The prisoner walks five paces to the succeeding one with empty hands, picks up the shot lying there, and takes it on another stage.

He continues this exhilarating pastime for an hour and a half, with halts of five minutes at fifteen-minute intervals. At the end of it his backbone feels as if it had come unjointed in several places, and all the loose ends were joggling the most tender parts of his anatomy.

Crank exercise is even less exciting. It consists of turning a handle fixed to the wall of the cell so many thousand times a day, the number of revolutions being recorded on a dial for the prisoner's encouragement and information.

Ten thousand revolutions—a common task—will take a strong man six or seven hours to complete, working more energetically than any organ-grinder.

Gussie, however, survived this miniature purgatory, amusing himself the while by devising new and improved methods for slaughtering the Provost-Sergeant when he became once more a free citizen.

By the third day he had invented some hundred and twenty novel and distinct forms of torture, any single dozen of which would have won him fame and fortune as an executioner in the Middle Ages. Finally, he discarded the lot, and returned to his original scheme, which was a simple but effective combination of ju-jitsu, boiling lead, steel spikes, and petrol.

Occasionally he would change the topic of his meditations, and dream of the time when he would be colonel of the Wessex Regiment, having been exalted to that rank for excessive smartness on parade, and dazzling gallantry upon the field.

The modern soldier, he decided, must have brains, and be able to use them. He admired Ronald, for instance, for his wiliness in extracting the map of the enemy's out-post line from the enemy himself. That was smart and original. He—Augustus Smythe—could also be smart and original if he tried. He meant to prove that on the occasion of the next field-day.

Gussie's Bright Idea.

A field-day was ordered in due course. All the troops in the district were detailed to take part, and some five battalions of infantry, a regiment of cavalry, and two batteries of guns were divided into separate armies—dubbed Blue and Red—and marched on to Kit Heath to do battle with each other.

The Wessex were in the Blues in more senses than one. It was a raw and bitter day, the dip in which they halted was sodden with rain, and there was a prospect of a couple of hours of inactivity before they could get on the move again.

According to the "scheme," the Blues were an invading force advancing on Woolchester, and the Reds had thrown themselves across their path to intercept them and beat them back.

B Company was at the head of the Blue advance-guard, which was supposed to have just arrived.

A few scattered rounds of blank had already announced that the Blue "points and flankers" had tumbled into the hornet's nest, and soon they came straggling in to report that the route was blocked by an enemy in strong force.

Scouts were now ordered to be despatched to find out all about the Reds, and where and how they were posted; and, to Gussie's joy, Colour-sergeant Jones detailed the left file of B Company for its share of this work. Gussie was rear-rank man, and he was ordered forth with his mate to take Captain Carthew's instructions.

They were only a repetition of what has been stated, with a reminder to use their eyes and their wits, and to separate and take different routes.

Now, amid his many inventions conceived during oakum-picking and crank-turning, Gussie had conceived one simple device for penetrating an enemy's defences and inmost secrets.

It was merely to seek out some neutral cottage or farmhouse on the battlefield, find a friendly labourer who would lend him a suit of clothes for the price of a drink, and, disguised in these, walk coolly into the lion's jaws, examine all his teeth, and come out again to report.

Such a cottage as he had imagined lay directly in his track, and, with infinite cunning, he stalked his way towards it. It was essential that he should not be seen to enter, or the enemy would be on the watch to see who came out.

Ducking down behind the pigsty, he crawled on all-fours between two rows of straggly cabbages, and gained the door. The cottage was empty. He knocked, coughed, and stamped, but no one came.

"Just my luck!" groaned Gussie.

"I wonder if I dare?" he asked himself. "The owner couldn't eat me, anyway, if I did borrow a suit, so long as I brought it back, and gave him sixpence besides. My own kit and rifle would serve as a deposit, and that would be worth five times the price of his duds. I'll chance it!"

(Another instalment of this fine serial next Tuesday.)



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The Editor

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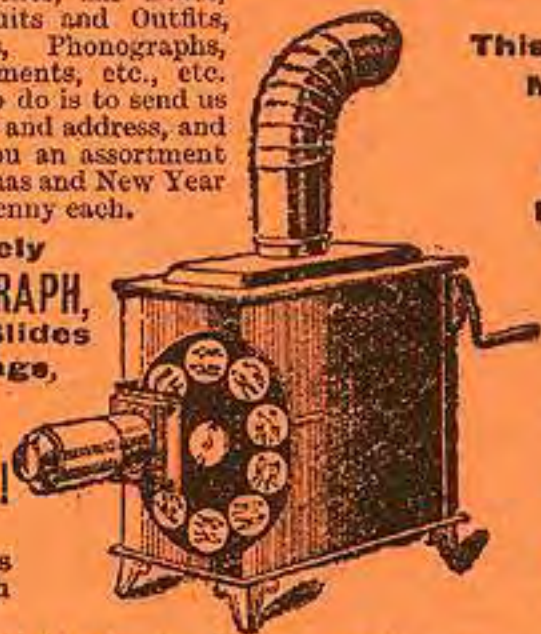
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