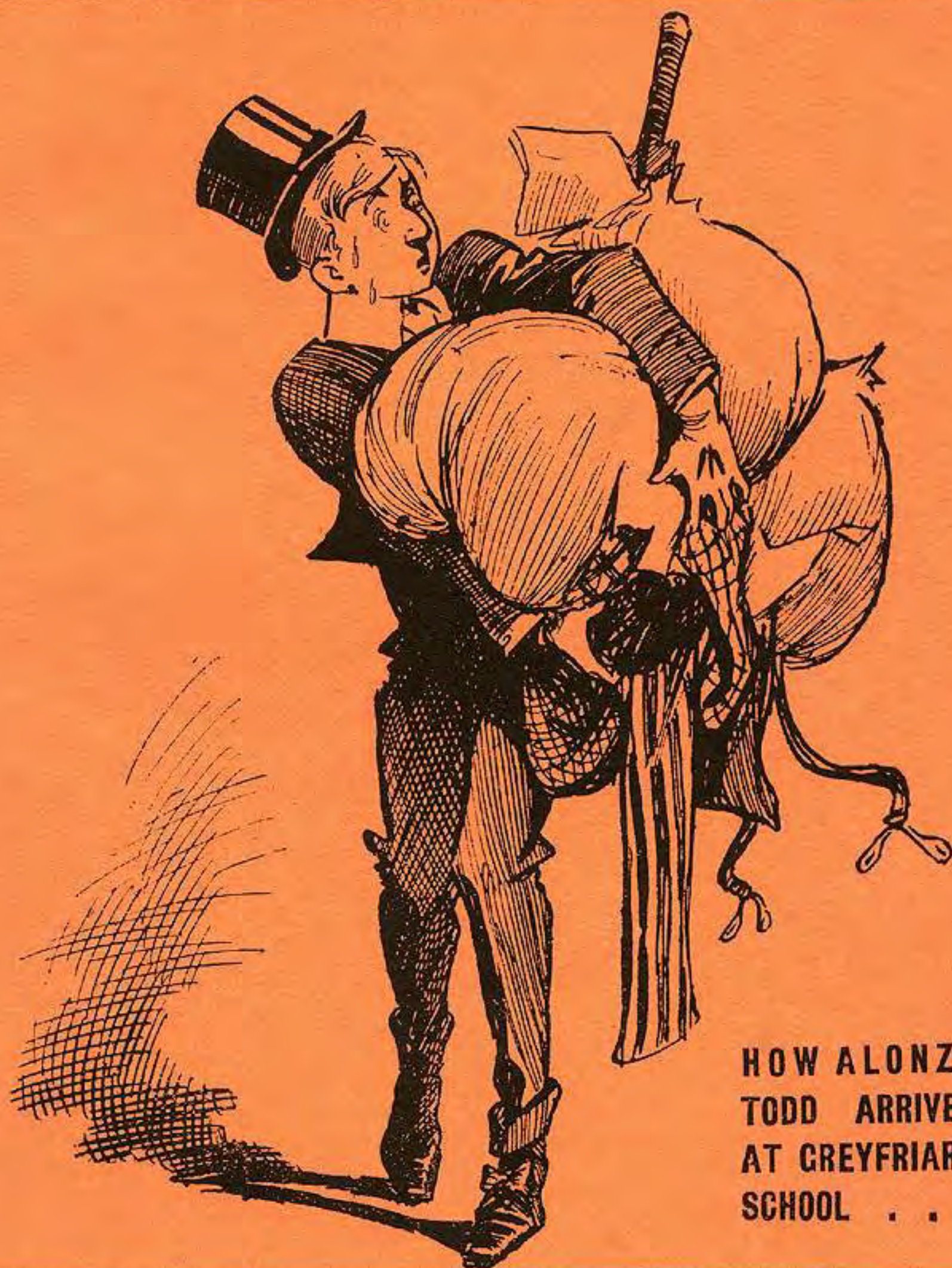


ALONZO TODD—"THE DUFFER OF GREYFRIARS."

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Harry Wharton & Co.

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Surprise for the Remove.

"DID you ever?" said Bob Cherry, in a tone of deep disgust.

And Harry Wharton said:

"No, I never!"

And Frank Nugent chimed in:

"Well, hardly ever!"

And Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, declared, in his fearful and wonderful English, that the hardly-ever-fulness was terrific.

The four chums of the Remove Form at Greyfriars were standing on the steps, sunning themselves, and chatting, when the individual came in sight who had caused their surprised and disgusted observations.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at him, and looked at one another, and then they made the observations above.

The new-comer was a boy who looked any age between thirteen and fifteen.

It was a hot, blazing afternoon, and it was no wonder that the boy looked hot, and dusty, and fatigued, for he had evidently walked from the village of Friardale to Greyfriars School.

He came in at the school gates, and blinked round him in a

tired, uncertain way, and then started towards the School House.

He did not see the juniors standing on the steps. In the blaze of sunlight in the Close it was difficult to see anything, and the silk hat he wore certainly did not shade his eyes from the sun.

He was dressed in Etons, with topper complete. He carried under one arm a big bundle, tied up in brown paper, which was bursting open under the pressure of the articles crammed within.

There was an abundance of string and cord round that parcel; but it had all been tied in the most unscientific way, and the parcel had at least three separate openings where the paper had burst.

From one of them came the end of a cricket-bat protruding, from another dangled the sleeve of a shirt, and from the third there fluttered a gaily-coloured strip which could only have been the leg of the lower half of a pyjama suit.

Under the other arm the new-comer carried a large umbrella, which was rolled in so slovenly a manner that it looked a terrible gamp.

Such a personage had certainly never arrived before within the precincts of Greyfriars.

That it was a new boy was certain. Harry Wharton & Co.

knew that a new boy was coming, and this was evidently the individual.

But for a new boy to arrive at Greyfriars with his personal belongings carried in a brown-paper parcel under his arm was unheard-of.

"My only hat!" Bob Cherry remarked. "What is Greyfriars coming to?"

"You mean what is coming to Greyfriars?" grinned Nugent.

"The whatfulness is terrific!"

"This must be the new chap!" Harry Wharton remarked, his eyes fixed in great astonishment upon the tired, dusty new-comer, who was fagging across the Close in the blaze of the sun, panting and perspiring.

"Of course!"

"What did Bunter say his name was?"

"Todd."

"Oh, yes—Todd. This must be Todd! My only hat, where does he spring from?"

"I wonder if he usually goes to school like this?" murmured Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" asked Tom Brown, coming out of the house with Hazeldene. "It's too hot to cackle! What a blazing sun!"

"There's a chap who enjoys it," grinned Nugent. "Look!"

Tom Brown looked.

"My only summer bonnet!" he murmured. "Who's that?"

"That's the new chap!"

"What's he doing with that parcel?"

"That's the way he brings his traps with him," grinned Bob Cherry. "Did you ever?"

Tom Brown cackled.

"No, I never did!"

"Must be off his rocker!" said Hazeldene, staring at the stranger. "He looks a duffer. Fancy fagging through this blazing sun with a parcel and an umbrella! Why didn't he take the hack from Friardale?"

"Must be soft!"

"Soft as cheese, I should say," remarked Bulstrode, the bully of the Remove, joining the group on the steps. "My hat! That chap is coming into our Form, too, I heard."

"Yes, he's in the Remove."

"We shall get some fun out of this," said Bulstrode, grinning. "Did you ever see such a soft chump?"

"Hardly ever!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Bunter! Look here! Here's a bigger duffer than you are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

Billy Bunter blinked at the new-comer through his big spectacles. Then he grunted.

"Huh! I've waited for that chap to arrive——"

"Do you know him, Bunter?"

"Know him!" said Billy Bunter, with a sniff. "Does he look as if he might be a friend of mine?"

"Oh, no," said Bob Cherry. "He looks decent enough."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I was waiting for him to come," said Bunter. "I meant to show him round, and——"

"And show him the way to the tuckshop?" grinned Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I jolly well sha'n't take up a chap like that!" said Billy Bunter. "Blessed ass! Fancy coming to school with your boots and socks in a brown-paper parcel! He must be dotty!"

"Looks like it."

"Yes, rather!"

The crowd on the School House steps was growing, and the juniors stared at the stranger as he came slowly across the Close, with keen interest.

The aspect of the new boy was certainly absurd, and the absurdity was added to by the fact that he was shedding articles from his big and bursting parcel, without being in the least aware of the fact.

He had left a boot, a sock, and a hat-brush at intervals on the path, and the pyjamas had by this time almost wholly escaped from the parcel.

He did not see the chuckling, grinning juniors yet.

The sun was in his eyes, and it was almost blinding, and the perspiration was pouring down from under his silk hat.

His laboured breathing could be heard by the juniors, though he was still at a considerable distance.

"Dear me! Who is that?"

It was Mr. Quelch's voice.

Mr. Quelch was master of the Remove, the Form Harry Wharton & Co. belonged to, and into which the new boy, as they were aware, was entering.

The Remove-master had just come from the Head's house, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—125.

and had caught sight of the stranger as he came under the elms.

The juniors ceased chuckling, and looked on with breathless interest.

Mr. Quelch was the soul of order and tidiness, and had a horror of anything slovenly, and the boys wondered what he would have to say to the stranger.

The Form-master stopped dead, staring at the unhappy new arrival.

Todd pounded on, and almost ran into Mr. Quelch before he perceived him.

"Stop!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, sharply.

The new boy stopped.

As he did so, the pyjamas finally escaped from the parcel and fluttered to the ground. They left a larger hole in the brown paper, and following them came a perfect cascade of boots, slippers, socks, and underwear.

The paper collapsed, and the parcel slid in fragments from under the new boy's arm, and his personal belongings lay scattered at his feet.

He clutched at them in vain, and then stood gasping.

Mr. Quelch looked at him as if he could scarcely believe his eyes.

"Boy," he gasped at last, "who are you?"

"Todd, sir!"

"Todd?"

"Yes, sir. Alonzo Todd!"

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry, hanging on to the stone balustrade. "Hold me up! My only giddy Panama! Alonzo!"

Mr. Quelch stared straight at the new boy.

"Todd? Then you are the new boy!"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Todd.

"And what do you mean by arriving at the school in this state?" thundered the Remove-master.

Alonzo Todd glanced down at his person, and glanced at his personal belongings, and glanced anywhere but at Mr. Quelch, and coloured deeply. He seemed to realise that there was something a little uncommon about him.

"I—I——" he stammered.

"Where is your box, sir?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Box, sir?"

"Yes, box!"

"If you please, sir, I haven't one."

"You—haven't one?"

"No, sir."

"And why—why haven't you one?" demanded Mr. Quelch, astounded. "How dare you come to the school in this absurd way? Surely your parents saw you provided with a box before you left home?"

The new boy blinked at him.

Mr. Quelch glanced round as an irrepressible chuckle broke from the juniors, and flushed. He realised that the scene was ridiculous, and that further questioning of the new boy had better be postponed.

"Wharton!" he called out sharply.

"Yes, sir?"

"Some of you help this—this boy to get his things to the dormitory. After that, you will show him to my study."

"Yes, sir."

And Mr. Quelch strode away with a frowning brow.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Innocent Victim.

HARRY WHARTON ran quickly towards the new boy.

Absurd as the whole affair was, Harry was good-natured, and willing to help, and he was sorry that the new-comer was in trouble with the Form-master.

Todd blinked at him in a dazed way.

It was evident that fatigue, and dust, and heat had confused his faculties. He pushed back his silk hat and mopped his brow with a handkerchief that had fallen into the dust, and was thick with it. He left a thick smear of dust over his face, and the juniors burst into a yell of laughter.

"Can I help you?" said Harry, smiling.

"Thanks!" gasped the new boy.

"You look hot."

"Yes; it's jolly hot."

"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," said Bulstrode, beginning to collect up the articles. "Help here, you fellows."

"Yes, rather."

"I'll take the boots."

"I'll have the pyjamas."

"Leave me the neckties."

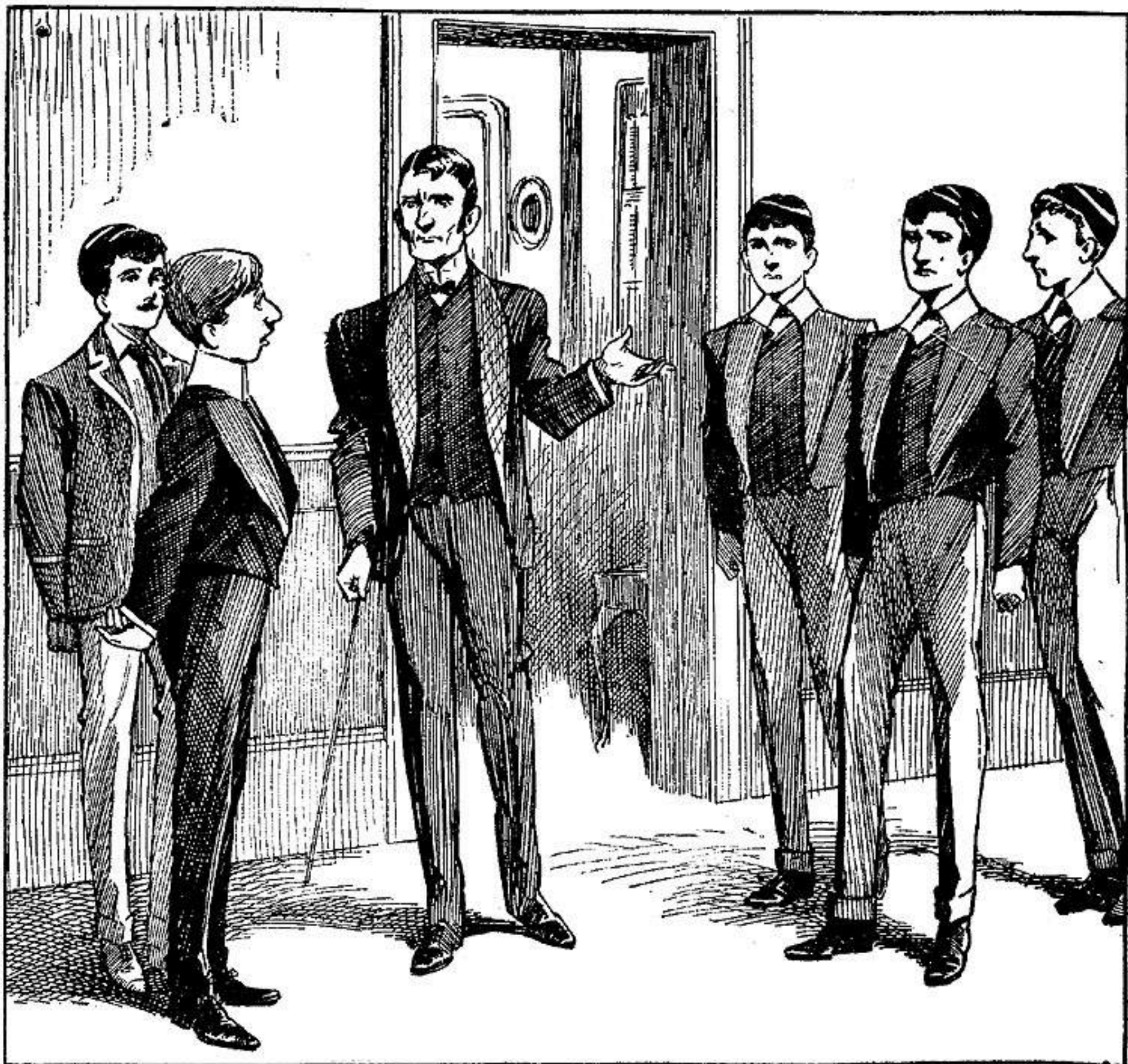
"Oh, Alonzo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What the dickens did you come like this for?" asked Harry. "You've put Quelch into a noble wax."

"Who was that chap?" gasped the new boy.





"You are a most extraordinary boy, Todd!" remarked Mr. Quelch. "Yes, sir!" said Alonzo Todd innocently. "I've been told so before, sir."

"Mr. Quelch, the master of the Lower Fourth—the Remove, you know."

"Oh, I'm going into the Lower Fourth!"

"Yes; I know it. You've made a jolly good beginning."

"I've done my best," said Todd, mopping his brow. "I came jolly near coming here with a box, you know, when I learned that it wasn't the thing."

"You learned what?" roared Bob Cherry.

"That it wasn't the thing," said Todd. "I met a fellow at the station—a fellow belonging to this school—and he told me that a new chap was always expected to arrive with his things in a brown-paper parcel."

"Phew!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What was the chap's name?"

"Skinner."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This is one of Skinner's little jokes," gasped Bob Cherry. "But fancy anybody being duffer enough to swallow such a yarn."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Isn't it true?" exclaimed the new boy.

"Ha, ha! Hardly."

"Well, I—I thought I'd better take his advice," said Todd, in dismay. "I've left a lot of things in the box at the station, to be sent for afterwards. I brought along those I thought I must have."

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of all the duffers—"

"Of all the cheerful chumps—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come in and get a wash," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Your face is like ink now. You've got mud on that handkerchief."

"Oh dear!"

"Carry his things in, you chaps!"

"We've got 'em," grinned Bob Cherry. "This way, Alonzo!"

"Thank you!"

The juniors swarmed into the House, chuckling.

Wingate, of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, met them in the hall, and he stared in blank amazement at the extraordinary procession of juniors carrying boots and socks and pyjamas and combs and brushes and neckties.

"What on earth does this mean?" Wingate exclaimed.

"He's the new kid, Wingate."

"But what—"

"Somebody's been japing him."

Wingate grinned.

"Well, get all that rubbish out of sight!" he exclaimed.

The juniors trooped upstairs with Alonzo Todd and his belongings. The new boy sank down on a bed in the Remove dormitory, and gasped.

"It's hot!" he exclaimed.

NEXT
WEEK:

"HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Go hon!" said Nugent. "What did you walk from the station for in such a blaze? Why didn't you take the hack?"

"Skinner told me I must walk. He said it was strictly forbidden for juniors to take the hack."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Skinner is a giddy Ananias," said Bob Cherry; "and you'd better not believe everything that's told you, either."

"Rather not!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The collected belongings of Alonzo Todd were deposited upon a bed, and the juniors left the dormitory, still laughing.

Todd proceeded to wash himself, and two or three fellows the more humorous spirits of the Remove—stayed behind to lend him further aid.

The simplicity of the new fellow was extraordinary, evidently, and Bulstrode and his friends joyfully realised that here was a subject for japing such as had not come in their way for a very long time.

"I'll come back and take you to Mr. Quelch's study," said Wharton, as he went out.

"That's all right," said Bulstrode. "I've got to go there to take an impot., and I'll show Todd the way."

"Oh, all right, then!"

And Harry Wharton & Co. went downstairs.

They were chuckling over the absurd arrival of the new boy. As they reached the school door again Skinner, of the Remove, came in. He was grinning. He nodded to Harry Wharton & Co.

"New chap arrived here?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Brown-paper parcel—big umbrella?"

"Yes."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner. "Did you ever see such a giddy chump? I told him that was the way a junior had to come to Greyfriars, and he swallowed it whole."

"It was funny," said Wharton. "All the same, I don't think it's a good idea to tell lies for a joke, Skinner. A jape's different."

"Oh, rats!" said Skinner. "Where is he now?"

"In the dorm."

Skinner went upstairs. Wharton sat down on the stone balustrade of the steps, in the shade of the big elm-tree.

"Rather a curious kid, that new chap," he remarked.

"He must be awfully simple."

"He'll get his eyes opened if he stays here," said Nugent, laughing. "I rather like his looks, too. He looks very decent and good-natured. But he must be a frightful chump!"

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Buzz away, Bunter!"

"Yes; but I say, what about standing a feed to the new chap?" suggested Bunter. "It would be only hospitable, and if you fellows care to do it, I'll undertake to do all the shopping and cooking for you."

"Go hon!"

"I'll go down to the tuckshop now, and get in the things," said Bunter generously. "I don't mind the trouble. I'd do more than that for fellows I like."

"Go it, then," said Bob Cherry.

"How much shall I spend?" asked Billy Bunter, his eyes gleaming behind his spectacles.

"Oh, I don't know!" said Bob gravely. "How much do you think will be needed for a really good, stunning feed?"

"Well, I could get in a really decent one on five bob."

"Make it five bob, then."

"It would be better for ten, of course."

"Then make it ten."

"Of course," said Billy Bunter eagerly, "if you want to do the thing in really good style, it would be better to expend, say, a pound."

"Good!"

"Shall we say a pound?"

"Certainly!"

"Right-ho, then! Hand it over!"

"Hand what over?"

"The pound."

"What pound?"

"The pound I'm to expend!" roared Bunter.

"My dear chap, I haven't a pound!" said Bob Cherry blandly. "Of course, it's your idea to stand a feed, and you're going to find the pound."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter blinked at the chums in almost speechless indignation.

"You—you rotters!" he gasped at last. "I'm stony! I was expecting a postal-order this morning, but there's been some delay. You know jolly well that I've got no tin. Are

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you going to hand over the pound, or are you not going to hand over the pound?"

"Not!" said the Famous Four, with one voice.

"Yah! Of all the mean beasts—"

"Oh, take a little run, Bunter!"

"Yah!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away, simmering with wrath.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Kind Friends.

ALONZO TODD swamped water from the jug into the basin of the washstand, and swamped it over the side, flooding the washstand and the floor. The clumsiness of the new boy was evidently a good second to his simplicity. The juniors who remained in the dormitory—Bulstrode, Snoop, and Hazeldene—chuckled gleefully.

"Going for a swim?" asked Snoop, with a grin.

The new boy blinked round at him.

"Not now," he said. "I can swim; I'm a rather good swimmer, but—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see what you are laughing at," said Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a jolly curious thing," said Todd. "People often laugh when I speak, when I don't mean to be humorous at all. I've been told that I'm a born humourist."

"Ha, ha! So you are!"

Todd plunged his face into the cold water, and sponged away. He splashed Bulstrode, and sent a splash of water over Snoop's bed. Then he began to towel. Skinner came into the dormitory, and Todd blinked at him from the towel.

"Did you manage all right?" asked Skinner affably.

Todd looked reproachful.

"You didn't tell me the truth," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode.

"I've got to go to Mr. Quelch's study," said Todd. "I'm afraid I'm in for a row. Mr. Quelch expected me to arrive with a box."

Skinner rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"Then it's a new rule," he said. "I tried to help you—honour bright! I'm often getting into trouble myself through trying to help new kids."

"Yes; that's rough on Skinner," said Bulstrode solemnly.

"He's often got into trouble, as he says, just from excess of good-nature."

"Oh dear!" said Todd.

He evidently believed Bulstrode's statement. His first experience had not been sufficient to open his eyes to the character of the japers of the Remove.

"I'm sorry you've got to go in to Mr. Quelch," said Skinner regretfully. "But I'll make it all right for you."

"Can you?" said Todd eagerly.

"Oh, yes!" said Skinner reassuringly. "You've only got to get on the right side of Mr. Quelch at first, and he'll be your friend for life. He's very fond of me, just because I was tactful when I first came to Greyfriars. I was put up to it, you see, just as I'm putting you up to it."

"I say, that's awfully kind of you," said the new boy, groping with his collar. "I—I say, I've dropped my stud! Any of you fellows lend me a stud?"

"Here you are," said Hazeldene.

"Thank you so much. Now what must I do to get on the right side of Mr. Quelch, Skinner? I thought he looked very angry."

"He does get angry, too," said Skinner seriously. "If you don't put him in a good temper, I don't know what the results may be. You remember the case of young Robinson, Bulstrode?"

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"Yes, rather!" said Bulstrode, who had never heard of young Robinson before. "You mean the chap Quelch went for with an ebony ruler?"

"That's it," said Skinner. "Of course, they pretended that he fell off his bike and died of concussion of the brain, but—"

"But we all knew it was Quelch and the ebony ruler," said Snoop, with a shake of the head.

"He—he died?" said Todd shivering.

"Yes. It was hushed up, of course."

"But we all knew," said Bulstrode.

"Oh, yes!"

"How horrible!" gasped Todd. "How fearful! The man oughtn't to be allowed to remain a master at a public school."

"Well, he's all right if you handle him tactfully," said Skinner. "What you want is tact. Tact's the thing. Quelch is awfully fond of his grandmother—it's one of his best points. If a chap asks him after his grandmother at first, it touches his heart."

"Always," said Bulstrode.

"I've seen the tears in his eyes when he's spoken of her," said Skinner. "Then you want to take an interest in his father."

"His father?"

"Yes. I suppose you've heard that his father's in prison?"

"In—in prison!" exclaimed Todd, in horror.

"Certainly. Quelch would like you to ask after him. Just ask if his father is out of prison yet, or something of that sort. It will show that you take a decent interest in his family affairs."

"Oh, dear!"

"Then don't forget to be chummy as soon as you see him," said Skinner. "Did you slap him on the shoulder, or shake hands, when you first met him?"

"Oh, dear, no!"

"Then that was why he was mad," said Skinner, in a shocked tone. "If you are stand-offish with him, it always puts his back up. Mind, as soon as you go into his study now, shake hands with him, or give him a dig in the ribs, or something of that sort, in a really chummy way. He may pretend to be surprised at first—that's his way—but it's only his way. He'll be really pleased, and you'll see how well you get on with him."

"Yes, rather!" said Bulstrode.

"I say, it's awfully kind of you chaps to help me out like this," said the new boy, as he fastened his necktie.

"Not at all."

"We're good-natured chaps," said Snoop. "We were all new boys once, and had to be put up to some wrinkles, you know."

"Yes, that's how it is."

"Come on, if you're ready," said Skinner, "I'll show you the way."

And Skinner, with a face of owl-like solemnity, led the new boy from the dormitory. After washing, and brushing, and changing his collar, Todd certainly looked better. He was a nice-looking lad, with a fresh-coloured face and blue eyes, and an expression of simplicity upon his face that was evidently quite genuine.

Bulstrode, and Snoop, and Hazeldene followed, trying to keep grave. They all reached the door of Mr. Quelch's study, and Todd put up his hand to tap. Skinner caught it and pulled it back before he could do so.

"For goodness' sake don't make a howler like that!" he exclaimed. "Quelch would be offended if you stood on ceremony like that. Just throw the door open, and go right in, and say: 'How do you do, cocky?'"

Bulstrode nearly exploded.

"That's the ticket!" he murmured.

"Thanks, so much!" said Todd.

"Not at all. We'll go, but we'll be waiting for you round the corner."

And the juniors hurried off, not wanting to be anywhere upon the scene when the new boy greeted Mr. Quelch with that extraordinary greeting. Harry Wharton met them in the passage.

"Where's the new kid?" he asked.

Bulstrode chuckled.

"Gone to see Quelch," he said.

Wharton looked at the juniors closely.

"Are you japing him again?" he asked. "It's rather rough on the new kid, you know; he's an awful duffer."

"We've put him up to some wrinkles," said Skinner, chuckling. "It's all right. I haven't had such fun as this for a dog's age."

"You're not getting him into a row with Quelch, I hope?"

"Oh, that's all right!"

"But—"

"Rats!" said Bulstrode.

Harry Wharton hurried towards the Remove-master's study. He was just in time to see Todd, who had hesitated there for some minutes, throw open the door without knocking, and stride in.

"My hat!" gasped Harry.

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NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

EVERY
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. True Blue.

TODD strode into the study, and Mr. Quelch, who was seated by the open window with a book in his hand, started up and looked round.

He stared at Todd blankly.

For the moment the astounding nerve of the new boy, as he deemed it, in entering his study in that uncereceremonious manner, deprived him of the power of speech.

Todd smiled affably.

"How do you do, cocky?" he asked.

Mr. Quelch gasped.

Todd advanced towards him with outstretched hand.

"I hope your grandmother is well, sir," he said.

"What?"

"Is your father out of prison yet, sir?"

Mr. Quelch hardly breathed.

Todd, with a grin, grasped his nerveless hand, and shook it heartily.

Mr. Quelch submitted like a man in a dream.

Harry Wharton was looking in at the open door, and his face was as great a study as Mr. Quelch's. He thought the new boy must be mad.

"Boy!" gasped Mr. Quelch at last.

Todd smiled genially.

"Fine day, sir," he remarked. "Hope your grandmother is quite well."

"Boy!"

"Yes, sir."

"How dare you?"

"Eh?"

"Are you mad?"

"Mad, sir!"

"Are you insane?"

"Insane, sir!"

"You must be," said Mr. Quelch, rising with a brow like thunder. "How dare you enter my room without knocking?"

"Knocking, sir!" gasped Todd feebly.

"How dare you address me in such a disrespectful manner?"

"D-d-d-disrespectful manner, sir?"

Todd could see that something was wrong. Mr. Quelch was evidently in a towering rage. The new boy seemed unable to do anything but repeat the Form-master's words like a feeble echo.

Mr. Quelch almost snorted with fury.

"Todd! Boy! You must be insane!"

"Oh, sir!"

"How dare you—how—"

"I—I—"

Mr. Quelch grasped a cane from the table. It sang through the air with a humming sound, and Todd gave a gasp of dismay.

"Hold out your hand!" thundered the Form-master.

"Eh, sir?"

"Hold out your hand!"

"But, sir—"

Mr. Quelch did not give him time to finish.

He grasped Alonzo Todd by the shoulder, swung him round, and brought down the cane with a sounding thwack across the new boy's jacket.

Todd had had a brush down since coming in, but Mr. Quelch succeeded in getting a great deal of dust out of his jacket.

Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

Todd roared and wriggled in the grasp of the angry Form-master.

"Ow! Leggo! Yow! Yah!"

"Such astounding impertinence!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Take that! I have never heard of the like! Take that! Utterly unprecedented! Take that—and that!"

"Yow!"

"If you please, sir!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, stepping in.

"What do you want, Wharton?"

Mr. Quelch suspended the castigation of the new boy, to glance sharply at the captain of the Remove.

Wharton was very red, but he felt that he ought to speak.

"If you please, sir, Todd didn't mean any harm; he's been taken in."

"Taken in, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir. It was a jape."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch.

Wharton stepped back and closed the door. He had felt that he ought to speak up that much for the new boy, but he did not want to be asked the names of the japers. He could not have given them without sneaking.

Mr. Quelch laid down the cane.

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

He looked hard at the new boy, who was squirming and trying to rub his shoulders where the cane had fallen heavily.

"Todd!"

"Ye-e-e-es, sir."

"Were you induced to treat me with this astounding impertinence by another boy?"

"I—I—"

"Answer me!"

"I was told it—it would please you, sir," faltered Todd.

"I cannot understand such inexpressible stupidity on the part of a lad of your age," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "How old are you?"

"Fourteen and a half, sir."

"And you believed that you were allowed to address a Form-master as—as cocky?" the Remove-master exclaimed.

"I—I—"

"Someone told you so?"

"Ye-e-e-es, sir."

"Who was it?"

"A—a boy, sir."

"I suppose so; but what was his name?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You will remember his face, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, sir! I've a good memory for faces."

"Then you shall point him out to me," said Mr. Quelch.

Todd looked dismayed.

"Oh, sir, I—I—"

"Come with me!"

Mr. Quelch threw open the study door and strode down the passage. He came suddenly upon a group of Removites, to whom Bulstrode & Co. were detailing the jape, amid chuckles. There was a sudden silence among the juniors as Mr. Quelch appeared.

The Form-master smiled grimly.

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Is the boy here who deceived you in that outrageous manner?"

Todd was crimson and silent.

Skinner trembled.

He had not the slightest doubt that Todd would give him away, and it dawned upon him that the jape would have decidedly painful results. Harry Wharton stood silent. He felt that Skinner and Bulstrode deserved to be punished for having exposed the new boy to that thrashing in the Form-master's study, but it was a bad beginning for Todd to give the japers away.

Todd stood silent.

"You hear me, Todd?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Then answer me!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Is the boy here?"

"The boy, sir?"

"The boy who deceived you."

"Deceived me, sir?"

"Don't repeat my words in that ridiculous manner!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, exasperated. "Tell me whether the boy is here or not!"

Todd was silent.

"Todd, I am waiting for your reply!"

"Yes, sir! I hardly know what to say," said Todd, with an air of extreme reflection. "My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Never mind your Uncle Benjamin now! Answer my question!"

"Yes, sir! My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir! My Uncle Benjamin warned me before I came to school that I must never tell tales. Wouldn't it be telling tales, sir, to tell you which boy it was who—"

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Will you answer me?"

"I am afraid that it would be impossible for me to do so, sir, without becoming a tale-bearer, a character I abhor," said Todd, looking distressed.

"My only hat! What a giddy flow of language!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch looked hard at Todd.

The boy was certainly very singular, but it was evident that he was in earnest, and that his words were not intended for impertinence.

"You are a most extraordinary boy, Todd!" said Mr. Quelch at last.

"Yes, sir!" said Todd innocently. "I have been told so before, sir."

Mr. Quelch bit his lip to hide a smile. Angry as he was, there was something irresistibly comic in the innocence of Alonzo Todd.

"I should warn you not to believe too readily what is said

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to you," said Mr. Quelch. "I also appeal to the boys of my Form not to take an unscrupulous advantage of a lad who is evidently extremely inexperienced."

And the Form-master went back to his study, without making any further effort to get at the facts.

"Oh, dear!" said Todd.

Bulstrode slapped him on the shoulder.

"Well, you're a champion duffer, but you're decent!" he said. "I thought there was going to be a licking all round for us."

"So did I," said Skinner, with a breath of relief. "The Duffer is quite decent."

"We'll look after him," said Snoop. "Come on, kids!"

Todd shook his head.

"My Uncle Benjamin—" he began.

"Ha, ha, ha! His Uncle Benjamin!"

"Yes, my Uncle Benjamin warned me never to associate with untruthful boys," said Todd. "I shall not speak to you any more."

"What!" roared Bulstrode.

"You are an untruthful boy."

"Eh?"

"I shall not speak to you any more."

"My hat!" gasped Skinner.

"You are the most untruthful of all," said Todd. "I consider you a wicked boy."

"Oh, hold me up, somebody!" said Skinner.

"My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Warned me to beware of bad characters, and—"

"Bad characters!" howled Bulstrode.

"Yes."

"Do you mean to call me a bad character?"

Todd reflected for a moment. He evidently wanted to be quite just. Finally he nodded.

"Yes," he said. "I consider you a bad character. You are untruthful."

Bulstrode turned red as the juniors chuckled.

"I suppose you came to Greyfriars specially to look for a thick ear!" he exclaimed, striding towards the new boy.

"I'll oblige you! I'll—"

A hand grasped Bulstrode by the shoulder and swung him back.

"No, you won't!" said a quiet voice.

It was Harry Wharton's. The young captain of the Lower Fourth stepped between Bulstrode and the new boy, with a determined look upon his face.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The New Boy Causes Trouble.

BULSTRODE paused, his hands clenched, and glared at Harry Wharton. He was angry, and when he was angry Bulstrode was not an easy person to cross. But Harry Wharton was not afraid of him, as he had proved more than once before.

"Get out of the way!" said Bulstrode, between his teeth.

Harry did not stir.

"I won't!" he said. "You're not going to touch the new chap!"

"I'm going to do as I like!"

"Your mistake!" said Harry coolly. "You're not! You've japed Todd, and got him a licking. I think you might be satisfied."

"Yes, rather!" said Bob Cherry.

"Mind your own business."

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

Bulstrode trembled with rage.

"I'm going to lick him!" he said. "I don't care if I lick you first, Wharton!"

"You're welcome to try."

"Take that, hang you!"

And Bulstrode drove out his fist at Wharton's face. Harry's guard was up in a moment. He would never have been touched but for the unfortunate interference of Alonzo Todd. The new boy caught him by the shoulder to pull him back, and Bulstrode's fist passed under Harry's guard and caught him on the chin.

It was a heavy, jarring blow, and Harry gave a gasp and sat down with abrupt violence upon the floor.

He was dazed for the moment, and he sat there gasping.

"Oh, dear!" said Todd, looking distressed.

Bulstrode gave a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

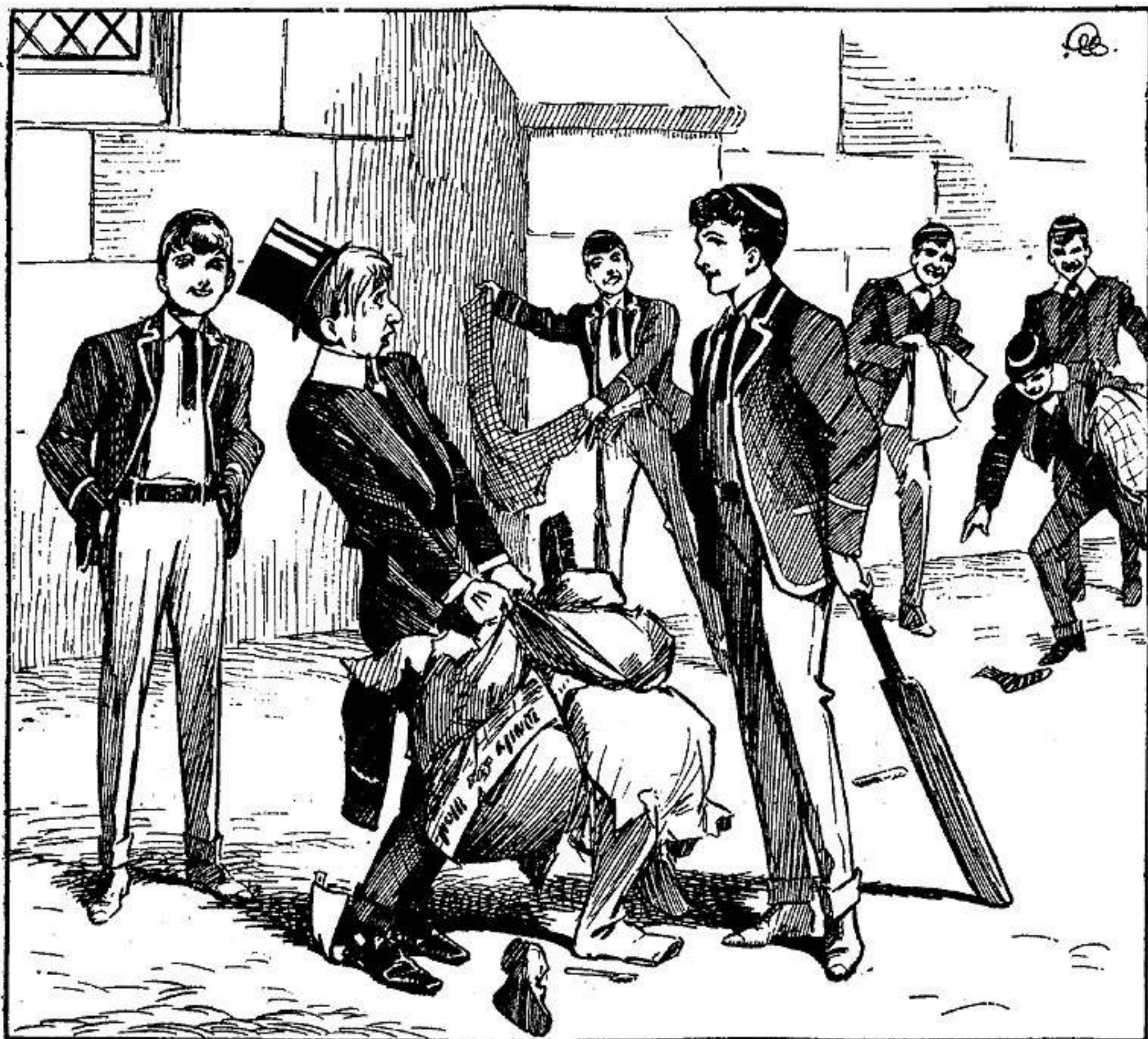
Harry scrambled up. He turned a wrathful glare upon the unhappy Todd, who was looking greatly distressed.

"You utter ass!" he shouted. "What did you do that for?"

"I—I—"

"Why did you collar me?"

"Collar you?"



"I've done my best," said the new boy. "I was jolly near coming here with a box, you know, when I learned that it was not quite the thing from a boy named Skinner."

"Why couldn't you keep off?"

"Keep off?"

"You ass! Why the dickens do you repeat like a giddy parrot?"

"A—a parrot?"

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

"I—I was trying to save you!" said Todd. "I—I am sorry I caused you to be hurt. I—I'm afraid I'm rather clumsy."

"Rather!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Wharton rubbed his aching chin.

"You unspeakable ass!" he said.

"I—I—"

"You'd better try that again, Bulstrode," said Wharton, striding towards the bully of the Remove. "Keep that dangerous lunatic away, Bob."

"What-ho!" said Bob Cherry, slipping his arm through Todd's. "You stay here, Toddy! You keep off the grass, Alonzo! You're dangerous!"

"My Uncle Benjamin said—"

"Blow your Uncle Benjamin! Dry up!"

Harry Wharton and Bulstrode were at it hammer and tongs now. The juniors stood round in a circle, and looked on with great interest.

Rows between Bulstrode and the Form-captain were not at all rare, and as they were pretty well matched, such contests were exciting and interesting to the Removites.

But this one was not destined to go on to a finish.

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NEXT
WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

Wingate came out of his study, with an angry look on his face.

"Cave!" exclaimed Tom Brown.

But the warning came too late.

Wingate strode up to the combatants, and took a firm grasp upon each of them by the collar behind. Then he knocked their heads together with a sharp rap.

"Ow!" gasped Harry.

"Yow!" roared Bulstrode.

"There!" said the captain of Greyfriars, releasing them.

"Perhaps you'll keep a bit quieter in the passage now!"

"Ow!"

"Yoop!"

"If I catch you at it again I'll warm you!" said Wingate. And he went back into his study and slammed the door.

Wharton and Bulstrode looked at one another rather uncertainly, and Bulstrode walked away with his friends, rubbing his head ruefully.

"Good old Wingate!" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, dear! I'm so sorry!" said Todd. "I really feel as if I were the cause of this."

"So you are!" growled Wharton. "Of all the blessed clumps that ever clumped, I think you're about the blessedest!"

"I'm sorry, you know! My Uncle Benjamin said—"

"Oh, your Uncle Benjamin can go and eat coke!" said Harry. And he walked away.

"Dear me!" said Todd.

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

The juniors dispersed, laughing, and Todd was left alone. A fat junior came along the passage, and blinked at him through a pair of spectacles. It was Billy Bunter, and he was looking for the new boy. But Bunter was short-sighted, and he did not recognise Todd even when he was close to him.

"I say, Linley, have you seen that new chap?" he asked.

"Did you speak to me?" asked the new boy. "My name is not Linley—it is Alonzo Todd."

"Oh!" said Bunter. "You're the fellow I'm looking for."

"Dear me!"

"I want to speak to you about a rather important matter," said Bunter, blinking at him. "I was expecting a postal-order this morning—a remittance for a rather considerable amount—from a titled relative. It hasn't come."

"Hasn't it?" said Todd.

"No. And the worst of it is, that I had just lent Wharton my last half-sovereign, and I'm stony broke," said Bunter.

"That is very hard."

"Yes, but the postal-order will be here this evening," said Bunter. "It will be in by the first post after tea. I was thinking that perhaps you could lend me a little off it, and I would settle as soon as the order arrives. I don't want it to be left over, as I'm a businesslike chap, and like to have things in order."

The new boy nodded.

"The postal-order is for five shillings," went on Bunter. "If you could lend me five bob, and take the whole order when it comes, it would be a great obligation to me, and I'd have you to tea in my study, too."

"Certainly," said Todd.

He groped in his trousers pocket, and produced five shillings, and handed them over to Bunter.

The fat junior's eyes glistened as he took them.

Bunter was the most impecunious junior at Greyfriars, and the most relentless and unscrupulous borrower. He had reduced borrowing to a fine art. But he seldom or never found his work so facile as this.

"Thanks awfully!" he said. "By the way, I'm expecting, as a matter of fact, two postal-orders, the second one by the last post to-night. That will be for five shillings as well. Could you manage to cash both in advance, and take em both when they come?"

"With pleasure," said Todd.

"Good!"

Bunter's round eyes danced as he received the second five shillings. He was sorry now that he had not asked for a pound.

"You'd better come to tea in my study," he remarked. "No. 1, in the Remove passage. Remind me about the postal-orders when the post comes in, will you?"

And Billy Bunter hurried off, and made his way towards Mrs. Mumble's little tuckshop at a speed seldom equalled off the cinder-path.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Stands Treat.

HARRY WHARTON came into No. 1 Study and threw his hat into the corner. The handsome captain of the Lower Fourth was looking very ruddy. He had been at practice at the nets, but the weather was almost too hot for cricket.

"What ripping weather!" Nugent remarked, dropping a cricket ball upon the table. "I'm jolly hungry, too. Anything in the cupboard?"

"There's the bread and cheese," said Harry. "Half a plum cake, and the biscuits. Funds are a bit low."

"Jolly low with me," said Nugent, with a laugh. "My tin is all gone."

"The all-gonefulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Where's Bunter?" said Harry. "It's past tea-time, and he's usually here seeking what he can devour."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Oh, here he is!" said Nugent, turning to the door as the fat junior came in, with a basket in his hand. "Talk of angels!"

"You fellows going to have tea?"

"Yes, rather!"

"You'd like something decent for tea, I suppose—"

"Cheese it!" said Nugent. "We've got no tin for you to take to Mrs. Mumble's. There's bread and cheese, and that's all, except a chunk of cake."

"There isn't!"

"By Jove, there isn't!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, throwing open the cupboard door. "The cake's gone—and the bread, too, except a crust!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"You young cannibal!" roared Nugent, grasping the fat

junior by the shoulder. "You've scoffed all the tommy again."

"I—I—"

"Where's the cake?"

"I—I was awfully hungry, and I had to have a snack, and—"

"Where's the cheese?"

"Oh, really—"

"You—you blessed scavenger!" said Wharton. "We shall have to go down and get tea in Hall now—and we're late! They will have scoffed all the watercress and radishes. I—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Rats!" said Nugent, shaking him. "You fat cannibal! I—"

"Ow!"

"My hat! Look there!" exclaimed Wharton.

Bunter had dropped the basket as Nugent shook him. The lid came open, and a loaf, cake, and a jar of apricot-jam rolled upon the floor.

"Phew!"

"The phewfulness is terrific!"

"Corn in Egypt!" ejaculated Wharton. "Where on earth did you get that, Bunt? Who have you been plundering?"

"Oh, really—"

"He's been raiding somebody," said Nugent. "Never mind, he's brought the loot to the right place, and we'll help him hide it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Don't say anything, Bunter, it's all right!"

"Look here—"

"Turn out the grub!"

Nugent slammed the basket upon the table, and turned out the contents. The contents were plentiful and varied. There were rolls, cakes, biscuits, jam, jellies, tinned sardines, fresh eggs, bacon, ham, and sausages.

The chums of the Remove surveyed the collection with astonishment.

"My only hat!" said Wharton. "Where on earth did you get these, Bunter?"

"At Mrs. Mumble's."

"But she doesn't allow you credit."

"Oh, really—"

"If you've been raiding the tuckshop, you'll get into a row," said Wharton seriously. "If the things don't belong to you, you'd better take them back. It's different if you've raided one of our chaps—that's in the game."

"I've paid for the things."

"Paid for them!"

"Oh, really—"

"What have you paid for them with?"

"Money, of course!"

"Whose money?" said Nugent.

"Oh, really—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to cackle at," said Bunter, with an indignant blink. "I suppose I have some money sometimes? I've bought these things and paid for them."

"Where did you get the tin?"

"Oh, I've got resources," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity. "I know I've borrowed some tin of you chaps at times—"

"Ha, ha—you have!"

"I shall be able to settle it all up shortly. I've got resources. A fellow of my brain power need never really be short of money. By the way, I've got a visitor coming to tea, and I hope you chaps will behave yourselves."

"You cheeky young beggar—"

"You extremely cheerful and Bunterful asinine duffer!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur warmly. "The behavefulness of this study is esteemfully excellent, except in the case of the asinine Bunter."

"Who's the visitor, Bunt?"

"A new chap?"

"Ha, ha! Todd?"

"Yes, Todd. He seems a decent chap, and I'm going to take him up," said the Owl of the Remove, blinking. "I—oh, here he is!"

Alonzo Todd looked into the study.

"Come in," said Wharton, cordially.

"Thank you," said Todd. "I have been asked here to tea, I think."

"That's right," said Billy Bunter. "Come right in. You can help us get the tea, if you like. Will you fill the kettle?"

"Certainly!" said Todd, with a beaming smile. "It's very kind of you to have me to tea. I was feeling rather lonely. This is a very big place."

"We're glad to have you," said Harry, good-naturedly. "Let's get tea! Bunter has come into a fortune, I think;

anyway, he's standing a big feed, and you've come just at the right time. Fill the kettle at the tap at the end of the passage."

"Certainly!"

"I'll light the fire," said Nugent. "Buck up with the kettle, Todd!"

Todd picked up the kettle from the grate, and brushed it against Wharton's jacket as he took it away. Wharton looked after him with a curious expression. He had never seen anybody quite so clumsy as the new boy.

Todd went out into the passage with the kettle.

He found the tap at the end of the passage, and held the kettle under it and turned the tap on. Hazeldene came out of his study in Norfolk jacket and knickers. He was going to ride over to Cliff House to have tea with his sister Marjorie, a pupil of Miss Penelope Primrose at Cliff House School. He stopped, with a grin, as he saw the new boy.

"Hallo!" he said. "I hope Quelch didn't hurt you very much, Todd. We didn't really mean you to get hurt, you know."

Todd looked round. The water was running slowly from the tap, but the kettle was filling.

"Thank you so much!" he said. "It is very considerate for you to inquire. No, I was not hurt very much, and the pain has since abated."

Hazeldene chuckled. There was something curiously pedantic about the new boy's mode of speech—as if he found his models in books and not in the spoken language. That many words may be properly used in books which sound odd and absurd in speech, was a fact that had, evidently, never occurred to Alonzo Todd.

"What are you fondest of as an article of diet?" asked Hazeldene.

"Eh? Oh, I am very fond of jam tarts, and——"

"Oh! I thought you might be in the habit of swallowing dictionaries."

"Dictionaries?"

"Yes—and lexicons."

"Lexicons?"

The kettle was full by this time, and was running over, and the spout was pouring a steady stream of water over the edge of the sink upon the linoleum of the passage. The new boy had evidently forgotten the kettle, however, and the fact that the water was running.

Hazeldene saw it, but did not choose to enlighten him.

"Yes," he said. "I should think that was the only way you could get such a beautiful flow of language."

"Dear me!"

"You young ass!" roared Bulstrode, coming along the passage with a kettle in his hand. "Look at the mess you're making!"

Todd started and looked round, and sent a stream of water from the spout of the kettle over Bulstrode's waistcoat.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "I'm so sorry!"

Bulstrode roared.

"Ow! Yow! I'm drenched! Yah! I'll pulverise you!"

He rushed straight at Todd. The new boy dodged and sprinted back to No. 1 Study, with the kettle swinging in his hand, shedding water on all sides.

He dashed wildly into the study, and collided with Nugent, and the two rolled over on the carpet, and the kettle rolled on them. The water streamed over Nugent, and he yelled.

Bulstrode glared into the study.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he roared. "That's good! Ha, ha, ha!"

And he departed, satisfied. The new boy scrambled up, and Nugent did so more slowly. He was drenched with water, and there was a great smear of soot from the kettle across his face.

"You dummy!" he roared. "What did you do that for?"

"I'm so sorry! I——"

"I—I—I'll——"

"Hold on, Frank!" exclaimed Harry. "Honour the guest that is within thy walls, you know."

"I'll punch his head! I'll squash him! I——"

"I'm so sorry! You see——"

Wharton held Nugent back, or the unfortunate new boy would certainly have been damaged. Nugent was very excited, and with good reason.

"I say, you fellows, I don't think Nugent ought to be rude to my visitor," said Billy Bunter.

"You fat chump! What do you mean by bringing a dangerous lunatic into the study?" roared Nugent. "Don't you think you're idiot enough for one study?"

"Oh, really——"

"I'm so sorry," said Todd. "I'll get out if you like. I——"

"It's all right," said Wharton, laughing. "Keep cool, Frank. Go and change your waistcoat, and it will be all serene."

Nugent grunted.

"Oh, all right! But——"

"Buck up!"

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NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

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Nugent snorted and left the study. The new boy looked distressed.

"I'm so sorry," he said. "I am rather clumsy in some things, I know."

"Ha, ha, ha! I think you are!"

"The clumsiness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a grin. "I have never seen an esteemed idiot quite so clumsy."

"I say, you fellows, we want that kettle filled, you know."

"I'll fill it this time," said Harry; and he took the kettle along the passage.

He found the tap still running, as Todd had left it, and the floor in a flood.

Todd looked round the study.

"You're getting tea here?" he remarked. "How nice and cosy! I should like to help you so much. Please let me do something."

"Right-ho!" said Billy Bunter. "Shove those sticks over here, Darcy. Todd can light the fire."

"I shall be so pleased," said Todd.

"There you are, then. Buck up!"

And Todd started upon the fire. There was no doubt about the new boy's industriousness, and his desire to make himself useful, but whether his abilities were equal to his excellent intentions remained to be proved.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Todd Makes Himself Useful.

BILLY BUNTER liked to have somebody under his orders. Bunter had an idea that he was born to command; but, like so many men, he could never get anybody to understand the fact. But the new boy was willing to oblige, and to obey orders, and Bunter revelled in giving them. Unfortunately, Todd was more willing than able to make himself useful. The juniors had seen clumsy fellows before. Bulstrode was clumsy, and Bob Cherry seldom entered a room without knocking something over. But the new boy could have given them lengths and beaten them easily.

He crammed wood and paper into the grate, and lighted it with many matches. Then he crammed on coal, and then he re-raked the grate to clear out the ashes and get a draught up. The study was soon floating with ash-dust.

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Wharton, re-entering the study with the filled kettle. "This isn't a dust-raising competition, you know!"

"I'm so sorry," said Todd. "There seems to be quite a lot of ashes."

"No reason to distribute them over the study."

"Over the study!"

"Yes. Keep them in the grate."

"In the grate?"

"My only hat, if he isn't a blessed parrot!" said Wharton.

"Do you ever hear a sentence without repeating it, Todd?"

"Without repeating it?" asked Todd.

"Oh, shove the kettle on!"

"Certainly!"

Todd shoved the kettle on. He balanced it very insecurely on the summit of the crammed coal and wood.

Wharton glanced at it uneasily.

"Hang it, that's not safe!" he exclaimed.

"Not safe?" asked Todd.

"You blessed parrot! Take it off again!"

"All right!"

Todd reached out to the kettle, knocked it, and sent it sideways.

There was a terrific sizzling and sputtering in a moment.

"Oh!" gasped Todd. "So sorry!"

"You ass!" roared Wharton.

"The assfulness is terrific!"

"Get it off!"

"Off!"

"Yes, you parrot ass!"

Todd clutched at the kettle and dragged it off, spilling most of the contents in the process. The room was thick with blacks and the smell of water on hot coals, and Wharton threw open the window wide.

"My hat!" he gasped. "You'd better sit down and do nothing, Todd."

"I'm so sorry——"

"Rats!"

"My Uncle Benjamin said——"

"Blow your Uncle Benjamin!"

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Nugent, coming in. "What a smother! What's happened?"

"Todd's been making himself useful!" groaned Wharton.

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"My hat!"

"The usefulness is terrific!"

Nugent pushed Todd into the armchair. The new boy sat down rather suddenly.

"Really—" he gasped.

"Sit there," said Nugent. "You're dangerous!"

"I'm sorry I was clumsy—"

"Dry up!"

"He can break the eggs," said Bunter. "Better make him useful. Break the eggs into that basin, Todd, and mind you don't drop them."

"All right," said Todd, jumping up with alacrity. "My Uncle Benjamin told me always to make myself useful."

"A pity your Uncle Benjamin didn't show you how, too," said Nugent.

Todd took the eggs from the paper bag, and proceeded to break them on the side of the basin. The task was easy enough, but Todd was evidently born clumsy. He splashed the first egg over the table, and the second over Frank Nugent's waistcoat.

Nugent gave a roar.

"Look what you've done, you frabjous ass!"

"So sorry—"

Nugent seized the bag of eggs, and hurled himself upon the new boy. Todd might be "so sorry," but that didn't improve Nugent's waistcoat.

Biff!

Todd gave a fearful yell as the eggs broke on his head.

Yolk ran down his face in streams.

"There!" gasped Nugent. "There's some for you. Perhaps you'll be 'so sorrier' now."

"Ow!"

"You ass!" yelled Billy Bunter. "You've wasted the eggs! Why couldn't you biff him with a cricket-bat or something, you chump? There goes a bob's worth of eggs!"

"Yow!"

"Now we sha'n't be able to have any eggs for tea, and —"

"Yowp!"

"Hang it all, that's too bad, Nugent," said Harry, with tears of laughter in his eyes. "You shouldn't have wasted the eggs. And what about politeness to a guest?"

"Yarrah!"

"Well, he shouldn't be such a clumsy ass," said Nugent.

"Gerrooh!" groaned the unhappy Todd. "I'm smothered!"

"Take him away and wash him, Inky."

The nabob grinned.

"The washfulness is terrific."

He led the unfortunate Todd out of the study.

Nugent laughed a little uneasily.

"Perhaps I oughtn't to have biffed him!" he exclaimed. "But, hang it all, look at the state of my waistcoat! Did you ever see such a frabjous duffer?"

"Hardly ever," grinned Wharton.

"No need to waste the eggs," growled Billy Bunter. "Wilful waste makes woeful want, and I'm awfully hungry."

"Poof!"

"I'll tell him I'm sorry when he comes in," said Nugent, scraping the egg off his waistcoat. "Let's get tea ready before he shows up again, in case he wants to be useful."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chums set to work.

It was ten minutes before the new boy returned, newly swept and garnished, so to speak. He looked at Nugent in an extremely uncertain way.

"So sorry," said Nugent blandly.

The new boy grinned ruefully.

"Oh, it's all right!" he said. "My Uncle Benjamin says I'm never to bear malice."

"Your Uncle Benjamin seems to be a decent sort," said Harry Wharton. "Did he give you any more good advice?"

"Yes, heaps. May I pass you some tea?"

"No, thanks," said Harry hastily. "You might drop the cup on my trousers, or down Nugent's neck. Excuse me!"

"I like to be useful."

"Oh, you're a guest! It's all right if you're merely ornamental," said Nugent. "As a matter of fact, you're dangerous when you try to be useful, and we'd rather you didn't."

And Todd grinned and left off making himself useful.

The tea was a great success.

In spite of his almost unearthly clumsiness, the new boy was a very pleasant fellow, when he was not knocking things over.

Billy Bunter, as the founder of the feast, did the honours in quite a grand way.

The chums had not left off wondering where he had obtained so much money from. Bunter did not enlighten them; but they learned.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—125.

Mark Linley put his head in at the study door.

"Letter for you downstairs, Wharton," he said.

"Thanks!" said Harry.

"Any for me?" asked Billy Bunter, blinking round.

The Lancashire lad smiled. Billy Bunter was evidently expecting a postal-order—as usual. He shook his head.

"No," he said.

Linley passed on down the passage. Bunter grunted.

"More delay," he growled. "It's simply rotten. I'm jolly well going to write to the Postmaster-General about it."

"Hasn't your postal-order come?" asked Todd.

"Looks as if it hasn't."

"Then you won't be able to settle to-night?"

"That's all right," said Bunter, with an uneasy glance at the Removites. "I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent. "Has Bunter been borrowing tin of you, Todd?"

"Only ten shillings."

"So that's where you got your funds from, Bunt, you fat villain?"

"Oh, really—"

"It's all right," said Todd. "Bunter is expecting two postal-orders for five shillings each, and he's going to hand them over to me as soon as they come."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, shut up cackling, Nugent!" said Bunter, blinking indignantly at Frank. "You'll give the new fellow the impression that my word is not to be relied upon."

"Ha, ha! I should be sorry to rely on it!" yelled Frank. "Why, the fat young bounder has been expecting those postal-orders ever since he was the smallest size in fags, in the Second Form!"

"Oh!" said Todd.

"You'll never see your money again," said Nugent. "But you've got off cheap, if you learn never to lend Bunter anything."

"Oh!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Shut up, you fat impostor."

"I don't think you ought to give the new fellow the impression that his money's not safe," said Bunter. "It's as safe as if it were in the Bank of England. A fellow of my brains need never be without money. I can raise it."

"I hope you can," said Todd. "I haven't very much more."

"It's as safe as houses. What are you fellows giggling at?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here—"

"Dry up, you fat fraud," said Harry, rising from the table, "and don't lend Bunter any more money, Todd. We'll see this loan repaid, as it's been spent on standing us a feed; but you had better not lend him any more."

"Is he dishonest?" asked Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin told me never to have anything to do with dishonest boys."

"Dishonest!" roared Bunter. "I'll teach you to call me dishonest. I'll—"

"My Uncle Benjamin said—"

"Blow your Uncle Benjamin! I'm getting fed up with your Uncle Benjamin! I—"

Wharton caught the fat junior by the shoulder, and swung him into the arm-chair. Billy Bunter collapsed there with a gasp like escaping steam.

"It's all right, Todd," said Wharton. "Don't mind Bunter! And don't lend him any more money. Have you been put into a study?"

"Yes. No. 9."

Wharton gave a whistle.

"You'll be with Skinner, Snoop, and the Bounder—Vernon-Smith. Vernon-Smith's still away on a holiday, so you won't be bothered by him yet awhile. You'd better look out that Snoop and Skinner don't jape you."

And the new boy left No. 1, leaving the chums of the Remove to do their prep.

The juniors grinned when he was gone.

"Of all the funny merchants, I think that chap takes the cake," Frank Nugent remarked. "It looks to me as if he'll have a high old-time at Greyfriars."

"I rather think he will," Harry Wharton said, laughing, and the Nabob of Bhanipur remarked that the ratherfulness was terrific.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

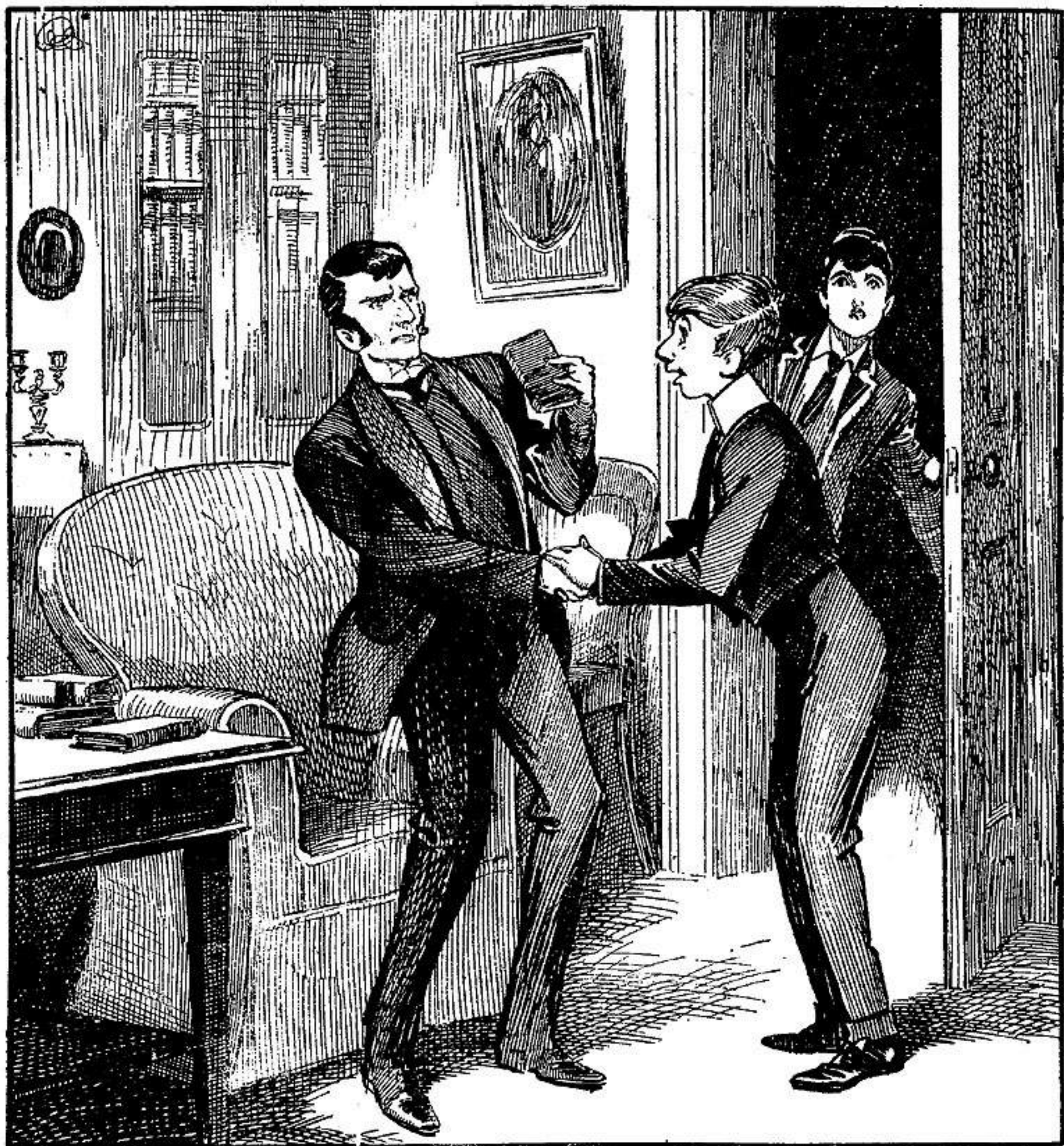
Not Quite.

LODER, the prefect, looked into the junior common-room at half-past nine, and scowled at the Removites.

"Bed!" he said curtly.

"Go hon!" said Bob Cherry.

"Cut off," said the prefect angrily. "I've got no time to waste on you."



The new boy smiled affably as he grasped Mr. Quelch's hand. "I hope your grandmother is well, sir," he said.

Alonzo Todd looked round.

"Who is that chap?" he asked Bulstrode.

"Loder," said Bulstrode. "He's a nice chap—awfully nice. His manner is against him, you know; but he's got a heart of gold. If you look closely at his face you'll see that there's a sweet and gentle expression in his eyes."

"Indeed."

"Don't you notice it now?"

"No," said Todd, after a careful examination of the far from prepossessing features of the bully of the Sixth Form. "I really cannot say I do. He does not strike me as being a nice fellow at all from his expression."

"Appearances are deceitful," said Bulstrode. "I tell you he's really the best-tempered fellow in the college. Nothing he likes so much as being treated in a clumsy way. Go and shake hands with him. As you're a new fellow, he expects it."

"Do you think so?"

"Sure of it, dear boy. Ask him if he'd like a smoke, and whether the beer is good at the Cross Keys."

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NEXT
WEEK:

"HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

"Very well."

Loder looked at the new boy as the latter came towards him. The juniors were hastily getting ready for bed. Loder was not sweet-tempered, and was not to be trifled with.

"Well, who are you, and what do you want?" demanded Loder, with a glare at Todd, which certainly did not bear out Bulstrode's statement that he was a good-tempered fellow.

"Please, I'm Todd."

"Oh, you're Todd, are you? Sweeney Todd?"

"He, he, he!" cackled Snoop, who made it a point to laugh at any joke made by a prefect or a master. "Funny! He, he, he!"

"Stop that row," said Loder. "If you want to cackle like a barnyard fowl, you can leave it till I'm gone, Snoop."

"Oh!" said Snoop.

"I—I say," said Todd timidly, "would you like a smoke, Loder?"

Loder stared.

His little habit of smoking in his study was a dead secret—

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except to those who knew it. To have it referred to like this in the crowded common-room was a surprise to Loder. He gazed blankly at the new boy, wondering where Master Todd found his nerve.

"What did you say, Todd?" he said, in measured tones.

"Would you like a—a smoke?" said Todd, "and—and is the beer good at the Cross Keys?"

There was a gasp from the juniors.

Loder stood dumbfounded.

"My only hat!" said Temple, of the Upper Fourth. "Is that chap looking out specially for a chance to be slain?"

"Must be," said Fry, of the same Form.

"Oh, rather," said Dabney.

Bulstrode was chuckling gleefully. He had hardly believed that even Alonzo Todd would be so simple as to say the things to Loder. But there was evidently no limit to the simplicity of Todd.

"You young hound!" broke out Loder, at last. "You——"

Todd started back in dismay.

"Excuse me," he said, "I—I——"

Loder reached out and grasped his ear. Todd yelled as that appendage was twisted, with the cruel force Loder was accustomed to use in such inflictions.

"Ow! ow!" wailed Todd. "Yow! Leggo!"

Loder twisted his ear savagely before he let it go.

"You'd better learn not to be so funny," he remarked.

"There's no room at Greyfriars for juniors who are so very funny with prefects."

"Ow!"

"Get to bed."

The Removites streamed up to their dormitory.

Most of them were grinning; but Todd did not smile. His ear was burning, and he caressed it tenderly and disconsolately as he went upstairs.

"How curious that Loder should be angry," he said to Bulstrode, as they entered the Remove dormitory. "I said only just what you told me to say."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode.

Todd looked at him suspiciously.

"Were you deceiving me again?" he demanded.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You are an untruthful boy, Bulstrode."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My Uncle Benjamin says——"

"Oh, ring off, Uncle Benjamin," implored Skinner. "Let's have Aunt Sempronia for a change."

"I have no aunt of that name," said Todd innocently. "I have an aunt Priscilla, who lives at Clapham, and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I really fail to see the cause of your laughter. I was not joking."

But the juniors evidently saw cause for laughter, for they yelled.

"This merchant will make things funny if he stays here," Bob Cherry remarked, as he kicked his boots off. "He's too funny to live. I think."

"The funniness is terrific."

The Remove turned in, and Loder put the lights out, and replied with a grunt to the cheerful good-night of the juniors.

The door closed, and the Remove were in darkness.

Then a voice was heard from Skinner's bed.

"I say, Todd. Toddy, old man."

Alonzo Todd sat up in bed.

"Yes, Skinner," he said.

"Have you said good-night to the Head?"

"Good-night to the Head?"

"Yes, parrot."

"Oh, dear! No."

"Great Scott!" said Skinner, in alarm. "You'll get into a fearful row. How did you come to overlook it?"

"I—I did not know it was customary," faltered Todd.

"My hat! Where were you brought up. Still, it's not too late. Jump up, and shove your trousers on—you needn't trouble about anything else—and cut off to the Head's house. You'll find him with Mrs. Locke. Say good-night to both of them."

"Dear me!"

Todd jumped out of the bed. The delighted juniors heard him groping for his trousers in the dark.

"Will it—will it be quite sufficient if I put my trousers on, Skinner?" he asked. "Perhaps I had better dress."

"No, no, that would spoil it. It would give the Head the impression that you hadn't been to bed, and he would cut up rusty at once," said Skinner. "Just your trousers and pyjamas."

"Oh, all right."

"And buck up, old chap."

"I shall certainly lose no time. I should be so sorry to be considered at all discourteous by the Head."

And Todd started towards the door. Harry Wharton sat up in bed. He was laughing; but although a jape was a

jape, he did not consider it fair that Todd should be exposed to the doctor with his pyjamas tucked into his trousers.

"Come back, you ass!" called out Wharton.

"Eh?"

"Come back! Don't be an ass."

There was a yell of protest from the juniors at once. They did not want the jape spoiled.

"Shut up, Wharton."

"Ring off."

"Let him alone."

"Mind your own business."

"Rats!" said Wharton. "The Duffer's been licked once to-day—that's enough. Come back and get into bed, Todd. Can't you see they're pulling your leg?"

"Oh, dear," said Todd.

He came back.

He slipped off his lower garments and went to bed, while Skinner grunted discontentedly. Skinner was very humorous, and he seldom stayed to reflect whether his little jokes were likely to be painful to others or not.

Todd sat up in bed.

"Skinner," he called out.

"Hollo, Duffer!"

"I regard you as a most untruthful boy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My Uncle Benjamin says——"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"Ring off!"

"I repeat, my Uncle Benjamin says——"

A bolster whirled through the air, and swept Todd off his bed, and he rolled on the floor. He gave a roar that rang through the dormitory.

Then he crawled into bed again, and curled up. Nothing more was heard that night of his Uncle Benjamin.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

No Snacks.

ALONZO TODD was the first up the next morning in the Remove dormitory. When the rising-bell clanged out on the fresh morning air, and Harry Wharton sat up and rubbed his eyes, he glanced towards Todd's bed. It was empty, and the new boy was not to be seen in the dormitory.

"Hollo!" exclaimed Harry. "Where's Todd?"

"Eh?" said Bob Cherry sleepily. "Blessed if I know!"

"He's not here."

"Then there's a strong probability that he's somewhere else."

"Don't be an ass! Is this another of your japes, Skinner?"

"Eh?" yawned Skinner.

"Hollo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!" said Bob.

Todd came into the dormitory, dressed, with a towel over his arm, and his face glowing and healthy. He smiled at the surprised juniors.

"Where on earth have you been?" demanded Harry.

"Down to the river," said Todd. "I always have a swim in the early morning, in good weather. It was ripping!"

"Well, you're a giddy early bird," remarked Nugent. "You look all the better for it, too. So you can swim?"

"Yes."

"Without getting drowned?" asked Skinner, with an air of great interest.

"Certainly," said Todd, looking at him in surprise. "If you reflect for a moment, Skinner, you will see that that question is absurd. If I were to get drowned, that would be the last occasion upon which I should swim, and I should not be here to answer your question."

"Go hon!" said Skinner.

And the juniors chuckled as they turned out of bed. Todd was evidently a serious and thoughtful person, and quite unaware that a remark might have a humorous side.

The Remove dressed and went down. Todd confided to Harry that he was hungry after his swim, and ready for breakfast, which, however, was not ready yet. Billy Bunter heard the remark, and he came up to the new boy quite affably.

"Pretty peckish, I suppose?" he remarked.

"Yes," said Todd.

"I'll show you the way to the tuckshop if you like," said Bunter. "It's a good idea to get a snack at the tuckshop before breakfast; it—it gives you an appetite, you know."

"Gives you an appetite," said Todd.

"Exactly. Would you like to come?"

"Certainly."

And Billy Bunter led the new boy away to the tuckshop. Mrs. Mumble looked a little grim as she found that the ring at the bell heralded the arrival of Billy Bunter. Bunter was her best customer—and her worst. He would

willingly have taken the whole of the contents of the little shop off her hands; but as he would not have paid for a single article, he was not the kind of customer she most desired to see.

"Well, Master Bunter?" she said, with asperity. Billy Bunter blinked at her through his big spectacles. "Good-morning, Mrs. Mimble!" he said affably. "Good-morning!" said the dame, shortly enough. "I'm showing the new fellow round," explained Bunter. "He has lots of money, and I thought he ought to spend it here, you know, and not at the tuckshop in the village. I believe in supporting home industries, Mrs. Mimble."

The good lady thawed considerably. "What will you have, Todd?" asked Bunter, with a wave of his fat hand. "What would you like?"

"Well, I'm feeling rather hungry," said Todd.

"Try the ham patties."

"Certainly."

"And a beefsteak-pie—cold, but very good."

"Yes, rather!"

"And some ginger-pop?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Don't keep us waiting, please, Mrs. Mimble."

The good dame looked from one to the other.

"Who is paying for these things?" she asked. She knew William George Bunter of old.

"Well, you see, I'm really paying, but the post isn't in yet, so I haven't been able to get my postal-order," said Bunter. "Todd is paying temporarily."

Mrs. Mimble looked fixedly at Todd.

"Really," said Todd, "I should be very pleased—"

"That's all right," said Bunter. "Mrs. Mimble is a very suspicious and unbusinesslike woman. She can't understand that the whole of modern commerce is built up on a system of credit. Better hand out half-a-crown to begin with."

"But—"

"No good wasting time, you know. The breakfast bell will go soon."

"Yes, but—"

"Say a couple of bob," said Bunter. "You can get a decent shack for that. I'll settle up out of my postal-order before morning school."

"The fact is, I haven't any money till you've settled up," said Todd. "I'm so sorry, but I lent you all I had."

Bunter snorted.

"Well, you ass," he said, "why couldn't you say that before? Are you expecting a remittance?"

"Not till Saturday," said Todd.

"Well, you chump!"

"Really, Bunter—"

"You frabjous ass!" grunted Bunter. "Lot of trouble you've given me for nothing. I say, Mrs. Mimble, as my postal-order is coming by the first post this morning, I suppose you can let me have a cold beefsteak-pie on account?"

"Certainly not, Master Bunter."

"Oh, really—"

"Good-morning!"

And Mrs. Mimble went back into her little parlour, with a sniff. Billy Bunter blinked after her, and blinked at Alonzo Todd, and grunted discontentedly.

"Well, you are a chump," he said. "Fancy coming stony to a school like this. Have you anything you can sell? What's that tie pin worth?"

"I don't know."

"Look here, come with me, and I'll take you to Temple, of the Upper Fourth. He's strong on tie-pins, and he'll buy it."

"But I don't want to sell it," said Todd mildly. "It was a present from my Uncle Benjamin, and my Uncle Benjamin says—"

"Oh, blow your Uncle Benjamin!" growled Billy Bunter; and he rolled discontentedly out of the tuckshop.

"Fed?" asked Nugent, as he came into the School House.

"No; that new ass is stony. I suppose you couldn't lend me a bob till the morning post gets in, could you, Nugent?"

"Right!" said Nugent.

"Eh?"

"You've guessed right," said Nugent. "I couldn't."

And he walked away chuckling.

Bunter snorted, and went into the dining-room, to wait impatiently for breakfast.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Burnt.

BREAKFAST arrived at last, the Greyfriars fellows taking their places at the long tables. There was a suppressed buzz of talk at the Remove table. Harry Wharton & Co. were discussing the coming afternoon, which was a half-holiday, as the day happened to be Wednesday. Todd sat down beside Billy Bunter, the fat junior giving him a far from cordial blink as he did so.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—125.

NEXT
WEEK

"HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

Mr. Quelch glanced down the table, and the buzz of talk ceased.

Breakfast for the juniors at Greyfriars consisted of bread-and-butter and eggs and tea. Those of the boys who liked to spend the money could add to the fare, and pots of jam and marmalade and bloater paste, and so forth, marked the places occupied by the wealthier youths. The allowance being one egg each, there was naturally a great deal of bread-and-butter consumed, the juniors filling up with the "door-steps," as they facetiously called the bread-and-butter.

Bunter blinked at Todd as the latter took up his egg-spoon.

Billy had demolished his egg in next to no time, and cast a hungry glance upon his neighbour's property. When Bunter was hungry, he was unscrupulous; and he was generally hungry. The fact that it is good to rise from a meal without feeling quite full was unknown to Billy Bunter, and he would have laughed it to scorn if he had known it.

"Todd!" he whispered.

"Eh? Did you speak, Bunter?"

"Yes. Mr. Quelch wants you to close the door."

"Certainly," said Todd, who was always willing to be very obliging, as the boys of Greyfriars had already discovered.

He rose from his place and went to the door. It was standing wide open, to allow the fresh air of the summer morning to circulate freely.

Bunter had Todd's egg on his plate in a twinkling.

"You young brigand," whispered Bob Cherry, across the table.

Bunter did not reply.

He had the egg scooped out in a twinkling, and it travelled down his capacious throat in less than record time.

Todd closed the door, and was turning back towards the table, when Mr. Quelch called out to him sharply.

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir!" said Todd.

"What have you closed that door for without orders?"

"I—I thought you wanted me to, sir."

"I really do not see why you should think so, when I have not spoken a word on the subject," said Mr. Quelch tartly. "Open it at once."

"Open it, sir?"

"Yes, at once, and do not repeat my words in that ridiculous way."

"Repeat your words, sir."

"Boy! Open that door, and take your place!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Take my place, sir! I—I mean, certainly, sir."

And Todd opened the door again, and sat down in his place at the table, looking very flurried and confused.

Bunter had finished Todd's egg, and set the empty egg-shell upside down in the egg-cup, so that it looked exactly as Todd had left it.

The juniors watched Todd with interest.

He sliced the top off his egg, and in doing so crushed in the shell, and then he stared at it in blank amazement.

"Dear me!" he said.

Mr. Quelch looked sharply down the table.

"What is the matter?" he rapped out.

"Nothing, sir."

"Then be silent."

"Yes, sir; but—but this is a most extraordinary egg, sir," said Todd. "It consists wholly of the shell, sir, without any contents."

"Nonsense!"

"It is a fact, sir. It is surprising that they did not notice it in the cooking, as it must have weighed very lightly."

A chuckle swept along the table. It died away under Mr. Quelch's stern eye.

"Todd, you are a most absurd boy," said Mr. Quelch.

"If your egg-shell is empty, it is because someone has removed the contents. You should not have left the table without permission. Say no more."

"S-s-say no more, sir?"

"Silence!"

"Ye-e-es, sir," said Todd, jumping.

And he said no more about the egg. Billy Bunter was wiring into bread-and-butter with an expressionless face.

Todd ate bread-and-butter, too, but it was a savourless diet, and he looked round for something to improve it. Bulstrode was helping himself from a jar of apricot jam, and Todd nodded to him affably.

"Pray pass the jam when you've finished, Bulstrode," he said politely.

Bulstrode stared.

"What's that?" he demanded.

"Pray pass the jam when you have finished."

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"No fear!"

"Dear me!" said Todd. "Will you have the kindness to pass the jam, Skinner?"

Skinner chuckled, but made no other reply. He was sitting next to the bully of the Remove, and it would have been hardly prudent for him to pass Bulstrode's jam to anybody.

"Oh, dear! Pass the jam, please, Snoop."

"Rats!" said Snoop.

"You are a very rude boy," said Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin says—"

"Cheese it!"

"No, that was not what my Uncle Benjamin said. He said—"

"Shut up!" whispered Nugent. "You'll have Quelch down on you if you keep on jawing."

"Oh, please pass the jam, Stott!"

"Rats!"

"Then I will take it!"

Todd reached across the table and seized the jam-pot. Bulstrode, scarcely able to believe his eyes at this piece of open brigandage, grasped it too.

"Please let go!" said Todd.

"Leggo, you young burglar!"

"I want the jam!"

"It's my jam!"

"What is that dispute there?" asked Mr. Quelch, frowning.

"He's trying to take my jam," stuttered Bulstrode, almost speechless with indignation. "He's t-t-trying to collar my apricot jam."

"Todd, you must not take Bulstrode's jam. It is his private property."

"His private property, sir?" said Todd, repeating the words, as seemed to be a habit of his when he was flurried.

"Yes. Leave it alone."

"Certainly, sir. I did not know. Bulstrode, I am so sorry."

"Br-r-r-r!"

Todd receded into his chair again. His elbow swept Bunter's teacup out of the saucer, and deposited it upon Bunter. The teacup had just been refilled.

Bunter gave a wild yell as it dropped upon his trousers. He jumped up, sending his chair flying backwards.

"Ow! Yow! Yowp! Yaroo!" he roared.

"Dear me!" gasped Todd. "Did I do that?"

"Yow!"

"I am so sorry."

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

"Yaroo!" yelled Bunter. "I'm scalded! Yow! I'm wet! I'm burnt! Yoop!"

"So sorry—"

"You are a curiously clumsy boy, Todd," said Mr. Quelch. "Take your seat. Bunter, stop at once making that ridiculous noise."

"Yow! I'm burnt!"

"You may go and dry yourself. Todd, if you are so clumsy, I shall have to consider whether to cane you. It is extraordinary."

"Cane me, sir?"

"Yes, unless you mend your ways."

"M-mend my ways, sir?"

"If you repeat my words again, Todd, I shall give you an imposition."

"An—an imposition, sir?" stammered Todd.

"Take fifty lines!"

"Fifty lines, sir?"

"A hundred lines!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, reddening. "Now, another word, and I will cane you!"

Todd's lips were moving, but Bob Cherry grasped his arm, and made him keep silent. The unfortunate new boy was silent for the rest of the meal. The Remove grinned when Mr. Quelch was not looking. The new junior was certainly the completest and most thorough-going "duffer" who had ever come to Greyfriars, and the whole Form looked forward to his first appearance in the Form-room with great anticipations.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

In Class.

TODD took his place in class with the rest of the Remove after prayers. As he was so complete a duffer in everything else, the Removites fully expected him to be a duffer at his lessons: but in this they were mistaken. Todd soon showed that he knew quite as much as the average Removite; and when he had his self-possession, he did very well.

But self-possession comes of self-confidence, and of confidence in himself the new boy had very little. He was easily flurried, and when he was flurried he was absent.

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mind, confused, and clumsy. And so the Remove's anticipations of "fun" were not left unrealised.

Mr. Quelch was a tactful man and a clever teacher, and he realised at once the peculiar nature of the boy he had to deal with, and he handled him well, and easily made him do his best.

But there was a French lesson that morning, and Monsieur Charpentier, who generally had trouble with his Lower Fourth class, found them more troublesome than ever that morning.

The little Frenchman came in with his usual beaming smile and graceful bow, a smile and a bow which Mossoo considered truly Parisian, as they doubtless were, but which afforded endless amusement to the rough-and-ready fellows in the Remove. They would imitate Mossoo's bow in the common-room amid shrieks of laughter.

"Bon jour!" said monsieur, in his charming way, as he bowed; and the class responded with "Bong jour, Mossoo!"

The little Frenchman went to his desk. Meanwhile Ogilvy was whispering to Todd. Now, if it had been Skinner, even Todd would have grown suspicious by this time; but Ogilvy he did not know.

"You've met Charpentier before, I suppose?" said Ogilvy.

Todd shook his head.

"No, I have not even seen him," he said.

"Good! Then I'm glad I've warned you. Don't forget to embrace him."

"Embrace him?"

"Yes. I suppose you've heard that Frenchmen embrace one another, and kiss one another like a set of blessed girls?" said Ogilvy.

"Ye-es, I have heard so."

"Well, Mossoo always expects to be greeted in the French fashion by a new pupil," said Ogilvy. "You have to hug him, you know, and kiss him on both cheeks."

"Dear me!"

"Yes, he expects it," said Snoop. "It's not English, but it's French, and of course he sticks to his native customs."

"How curious!"

"Well, it's his way. I should advise you not to forget it, as he's awfully strong on politeness, and he can never forgive a chap for neglecting it."

"Thank you so much!"

"Not at all!" said Ogilvy. "Always glad to help a new chap who doesn't know the ropes."

"Shall I—shall I go now?"

"Better get it over at once."

Todd rose from his seat.

The new junior had heard of peculiar French customs, and, as a matter of fact, he had spent a holiday at Boulogne, and seen some of them. He remembered having seen Frenchmen kissing one another for good-bye at a railway-station.

He stepped out before the class.

Little Monsieur Charpentier glanced at him inquiringly as he approached. The French master was not much taller than Todd, but he wore a frock-coat and a straight collar, and whiskers which were the extreme of elegance. He was a very neat and dapper little gentleman, and half a dozen fellows in the Remove could have knocked him into a cocked hat with the gloves on, as they knew very well.

"Vat is it?" he said. "Vat is it zat you vant?"

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

"Oui?"

"I'm Todd, sir."

"Oui! You are Todd! Very vell."

The little Frenchman did not seem to expect to be embraced. But Todd meant to go through with it. He was feeling very confused, with the eyes of all the class upon him. But he knew what to do, and he did it.

He advanced closer upon the master, who surveyed him with astonishment.

"Vat—Ciel!"

Monsieur Charpentier uttered that ejaculation as Todd threw his arms round his neck.

The little Frenchman staggered back.

"Ciel!" he gasped. "Mon Dieu!"

The Remove gasped.

Todd embraced the little Frenchman, and—Monsieur Charpentier being paralysed with astonishment, and incapable of resistance—kissed him solemnly on both cheeks.

The little Frenchman staggered.

"Mon Dieu! He is mad!" he panted.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The cheerful ass!" gasped Bob Cherry. "This is another jape."

"The japefulness is terrific."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Zat you release me!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier.

"It is zat you are mad!"

Todd released him



"I do not want to have anything to do with you, Bulstrode," said Alonzo Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin warned me to beware of bad characters."

He had expected to be hugged and kissed in return. He did not like the idea, but he was nobly prepared to go through with it.

The little Frenchman's astonishment and excitement surprised him.

"You—you absurd poy!" gasped Mosscoo. "How dare you! You kees me!"

"Kiss you, sir?"

"You kees me! You are absurd! You are mad!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Anybody would have to be mad to want to kiss Mosscoo, I think."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ciel! I have neffer seen such a poy! Todd, vat have you to say?"

"Say, sir?" stammered Todd.

"Ciel! He repeat my words like ze parrot."

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"Parrot, sir!"

"Ze—ze stupid boy!" Monsieur Charpentier picked up a pointer off his desk. "Hold out ze hand viz yourself, Todd."

"M-m-my hand, sir?"

"I zink zat I cane you."

"Oh! I—I was trying to please you, sir," stammered Todd. "I—I thought—"

"Hold out ze hand."

Todd unwillingly held his hand out. Ogilvy jumped up. He had been willing to jape Todd, but he was not like Skinner. He would rather have owned up than allowed the duffer of Greyfriars to suffer for his fault.

"Hold on, sir!" he exclaimed.

"Vat—vat you say, Ogilvy?"

"He—he's been japed, sir," said Ogilvy, turning very

red. "A fellow told him to do that, sir, because it—it would please you."

"Ciel!"

"It's just as I say, sir."

"Ze boy must be stupid," said Monsieur Charpentier.

"I zink zat I not cane you, Todd, but I varn you to be more careful."

"Thank you so much, sir!"

"You goes to your place, Todd. Ogilvy, vich is zat boy who tell Todd?"

"I—I'd rather not say, sir."

"I command you to say at vunce!"

"It was I, sir."

"Oh! You vill come out here, Ogilvy!"

The Scottish junior unwillingly obeyed. He received three cuts with the pointer, and went back to his place wishing that he had not been quite so humorous.

"Silly ass!" whispered Skinner. "Why didn't you keep your mouth shut?"

"Oh, rats!" growled Ogilvy.

Monsieur Charpentier proceeded with the lesson. Todd having brought himself prominently into notice, Mossos gave him some attention, as he was a new boy. Todd was evidently not strong in French, and some of Monsieur Charpentier's questions puzzled him.

"Ven I say viz myself, dois-je live, vat is it zat I mean, Todd?" Monsieur Charpentier wanted to know.

Todd looked puzzled.

"Shall I tell you?" whispered Skinner.

"Please!" murmured Todd. "Thank you so much."

"It means—What price frogs?"

"Dear me!"

"I am waiting for ze answer, Todd," said Monsieur Charpentier. "You must not speak to Skinner. Vat is it?"

"What price frogs, sir?"

"Vat?"

"What price frogs, sir?"

"Todd!"

"What price—"

"Silence!" exclaimed the French-master, as the Remove burst into an irresistible roar. "Todd, I zink zat you are ze most foolish garcon zat ever vas! Skinner!"

"Yes, sir?"

"I zink zat you tell Todd zis absurd answer."

"Oh, sir!"

"Did you, Skinner?"

"Did I, sir?"

"Yes, did you tell Todd?"

"Well, sir—"

"Answer me viz directness, Skinnair!"

"No, I didn't, sir!" said Skinner, driven to the lie direct.

Monsieur Charpentier frowned portentously.

"I zink zat you speak falsely, Skinnair. I have notice pefore zat you was a most untruthful garcon. Todd, I zink zat Skinnair tell you?"

"I hope, sir, you will not punish Skinner, who was very kindly trying to help me out of a difficulty," said Todd. "My uncle Benjamin says—"

"Never mind your uncle Benjamin now, Todd. Skinner tell you zat absurd ting to insult your master. You will stand out here, Skinnair!"

And Skinner stood out, and was introduced to the pointer, and went back to his place with his hands tucked under his arm-pits, and performing the most extraordinary contortions.

And the Duffer of Greyfriars was not japed again that morning.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Dressy!

BOB CHERRY stood before the glass in the end study in the Remove passage, and gave his necktie a wrench.

Then he gave it another wrench in the opposite direction. Bob Cherry's collar was strong enough, but it was not built to stand usage like that. It crumpled, and a stud flew out and disappeared.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob.

He groped for the stud.

Mark Linley, his study-mate in No. 13, came in at the open doorway.

He glanced down at Bob, on his hands and knees with his head under the fable, in considerable astonishment.

"What are you up to, Bob?" he asked.

Bob extracted a red and glowing face from the folds of the table-cover, and blinked dustily up at the Lancashire lad.

"My blessed stud's lost!" he said.

"I can lend you one," said Mark, laughing.

"Thanks, awfully!"

Bob rose to his feet, breathing hard, and dusted the knees of his trousers. He accepted Mark's stud, and fastened his collar, and made another attempt with the necktie.

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"How does that look?" he exclaimed, turning a flushed face towards Mark.

"Right enough."

"Is the tie quite straight?"

"Not quite."

"Put it straight, will you, there's a good chap?"

"Certainly!" said Mark, laughing.

He put the tie straight. Bob Cherry surveyed it in the glass, and looked a little more satisfied.

Then he unrolled a brown-paper parcel, and took out a waistcoat with pink spots on it, and a flowery design in light green.

Mark looked at the waistcoat in surprise.

"What are you going to do with that?" he asked.

Bob blushed.

"I'm going to wear it," he said.

"Oh!"

"I've had it sent down by post," explained Bob. "Chap was advertising fancy waistcoats in the best taste. Self-measurement form sent free. I thought I'd have one, as I wanted to look rather dressy this afternoon."

"Oh!"

"Ripping waistcoat, isn't it?" said Bob, whose eye was not, perhaps, the most artistic possible. "Like the colour?"

Linley coloured. He couldn't in conscience praise that waistcoat, but he would not have put his chum out of conceit with it for anything.

"The green is very pretty," he said.

"What do you think of the spots?"

"They're pink," said Mark.

"And there's a bar of blue, you see," said Bob. "Plenty of colour, eh?"

"Heaps!"

"Too much, do you think?" asked Bob anxiously.

"Well, that depends upon personal taste, of course," said Mark.

"I shouldn't like Marjorie to think that there was anything over-dressy about me, of course," said Bob, putting on the waistcoat.

"Marjorie Hazeldene?"

"Yes. We're going over to Cliff House to tea, you know. We haven't seen Marjorie since we came back from Switzerland."

"I hope you'll have a good time."

"Aren't you coming?" said Bob. "We're all going, you know, and I suppose Marjorie will expect you. Anyway, you'll be welcome."

"No. I'm working up for the Grant Exam.," said Mark.

"I shall be digging into Greek all the afternoon. Mr. Quelch has promised to give me an hour."

Bob Cherry yawned.

"You're welcome to the Greek," he said. "Give me the open air. Now, what do you think of this waistcoat, now I've got it on?"

"It's very striking," said Mark.

"Yes, isn't it?" said Bob, with much satisfaction. "I think it will look all right. What do you think about going in a top?"

"Matter of taste."

"Of course, I'd rather wear a straw or a cap—especially a cap—any chap would; but it's a question of looking sufficiently dressy," said Bob musingly.

Mark laughed.

"I should recommend the straw on a blazing day like this," he said.

"Well, perhaps you're right."

Bob Cherry put his jacket on, leaving it open to show the gorgeous colours of the waistcoat, and went down the Remove passage. Bob was not what one would have called handsome, but he was very healthy and wholesome-looking—but he did not improve his appearance by attempting to be dressy. From an artistic point of view, the fancy waistcoat was not a success.

Several juniors whom he passed in the Remove passage stared at it. Skinner put his hand up to his eyes as if overcome by the effulgence of the colours.

Bob looked into No. 1 Study.

"You fellows ready?" he said.

"Waiting five minutes," said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, sorry! I couldn't get my blessed necktie right," said Bob. "Come on!"

Wharton looked at his waistcoat, Nugent looked at it, and Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh looked at it. None made a remark.

"Notice my waistcoat?" said Bob Cherry complacently.

"Rather stunning, ain't it?"

"Awfully stunning!" said Nugent.

"The stunfulness is terrific!"

"That chap D'Arcy of St. Jim's generally sports a fancy waistcoat," said Bob confidentially. "It was really that that

gave the idea to me, you know. This has rather the same effect as D'Arcy's waistcoat, hasn't it?"

Wharton was looking at his watch.

"High time we were off!" he exclaimed, without replying to Bob's question.

"All right, I'm ready!"

The Famous Four went downstairs. Bulstrode met them on the stairs, and suddenly cackled and clung to the banisters, as if in need of support. Bob Cherry stared at him.

"What's the matter with you?" he demanded.

"Oh, my eyes!"

"Eh?"

"Where did you dig up that waistcoat?"

"Look here—" began Bob wrathfully.

But Bulstrode shaded his eyes with his hand.

"I e-can't!" he gasped. "You'll blind me! Take it away!"

"You utter ass—"

"Take it away!"

The juniors dragged Bob Cherry on. Bulstrode was in danger just then of having his head taken into chancery.

The juniors left the schoolhouse. Alonzo Todd was seated on the stone balustrade outside, in a straw hat, a flowing pink tie, and a pair of tan shoes. He rose up as the chums of the Remove came out. Hazeldene was sitting beside him. He grinned at the juniors, and grinned again as he spotted Bob Cherry's wonderful waistcoat.

"Ready?" said Hazeldene.

"Here we are!" said Harry.

"Todd's coming," said Hazeldene. "You fellows don't mind?"

"Of course not!" said Wharton.

"Thank you so much!" said Alonzo Todd. "I shall be so pleased to be introduced to the young ladies at Cliff House. It is very kind of Hazeldene."

"Not at all!" said Hazeldene, colouring.

"Yes, but it is! I am very grateful! I was feeling rather lonely, you know," Todd explained, "and Hazeldene has really come to the rescue."

"Good!" said Wharton, glancing at Hazeldene a little curiously. It was not exactly like Hazeldene to take a great deal of trouble over a stranger. But for the fact that he was Marjorie's brother, Hazeldene was not the fellow the Famous Four would have picked out to chum with. "By the way, Todd, you've had your ten bob, I think?"

"You mean the ten shillings I lent to Bunter?"

"Yes."

"Yes. He repaid me this morning," said Todd. "His postal orders have, unfortunately, not arrived, but he had obtained money elsewhere."

Wharton smiled. He had had a remittance himself, and he had found the money for the repayment of the loan; and he had told Bunter to return it, with the direst threats of what would happen to him if he did not faithfully do so. But there was always a doubt about Bunter in money matters, hence Harry's question to the new boy.

"I was very glad to be repaid by Bunter," went on Todd.

"I was really stony, you know, and if Bunter had not repaid me, I should not have been able to—"

"Come on!" said Hazeldene abruptly.

"Well, keep it in your pocket now," said Wharton. "I should advise you not to be so ready to lend your money about."

"In my pocket!"

"Yes; that's the safest place."

"Yes; that is a good idea, but it is impossible, as I have already lent the money again," said Todd.

"Well, of all the asses!" said Bob Cherry. "Who's plundered you this time?"

"Plundered me!"

"Yes, ass!"

"Dear me! I am sure Hazeldene will return the money quite as honourably as Bunter did," said Todd. "I really do not like you implying any doubt of the matter."

Wharton looked rather grimly at Hazeldene, who coloured to the roots of his hair. Hazel's kindness in taking the new boy over to tea at Cliff House was now explained.

But it was not Wharton's business, and he made no remark.

"Let's get off!" he said abruptly.

And the juniors strolled down to the gates. Ogilvy met them there, and he gazed at Bob Cherry with great interest.

"Would you mind my asking you a question, Cherry?" he asked.

"No," said Bob.

"Where did you get that waistcoat?"

And Ogilvy ran off, laughing, before Bob could reply. Bob Cherry turned a very red face upon his comrades.

"Isn't this a jolly good waistcoat?" he asked.

"Oh, ripping!" said Nugent. "Come on!"

They went on. But there seemed to be some kind of doubt struggling in Bob Cherry's mind now, and he did not look so satisfied as they walked down the leafy lane.

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NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

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ONE
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THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Todd Causes Trouble.

CLIFF HOUSE lay basking in the sunshine.

The juniors of Greyfriars reached the garden-gate, and Harry Wharton opened it, and the click was followed by the sound of a girlish voice.

"Marjorie!"

Miss Clara Trevelyan was looking from the elms. At her call Marjorie Hazeldene joined her. The two girls came to meet the juniors.

Harry Wharton & Co. had not seen Marjorie since their return from their holiday in Switzerland, and they were very glad to see their girl chum again. Marjorie was looking as fresh and sweet as ever, and she shook hands with the juniors very cordially.

"I am so glad to see you," she said.

"And tea's ready!" added Miss Clara. "Buck up!"

"Oh, Clara!"

"Well, buzz!" said Miss Clara. "The kettle's been boiling on the spirit-stove for a dog's age, and we're all ready!"

Marjorie laughed, and followed her friend with the juniors. In a quiet and secluded corner of the long, shady garden of Cliff House the girls had prepared tea for their visitors. There was a little table set with a gleaming white cloth, and chairs were ranged round it, and there was bread-and-butter and watercress and jam and cake galore.

It was tea-time, and the walk from Greyfriars had made the juniors hungry, too. They were quite prepared to do justice to the tea.

Alonzo Todd had been introduced, and he had blushed very much as Marjorie shook hands with him. Bob Cherry was watching Marjorie out of the corner of his eye, to see whether she was struck with his waistcoat. But Marjorie did not even appear to observe it, though it certainly was striking enough.

"I rather think this waistcoat is a success, Frank," Bob remarked in a whisper to Nugent.

"Think so?"

"Yes. You know, the true test of taste in dress is that people shall not observe what you are wearing," said Bob. "Now, my waistcoat hasn't caught the eye—What are you gurgling about?"

"Nothing."

Bob Cherry looked suspicious.

Miss Wilhelmina Limburger, the German girl, joined them, while Miss Clara was making the tea. The kettle was singing away on the spirit-stove. Alonzo Todd watched Miss Clara. He was burning to make himself useful.

"Please allow me!" he said, as Miss Clara was lifting the teapot to the table.

Miss Clara nodded.

She allowed Todd to take the teapot, and he conveyed it towards the table. He caught his foot in something, and he lurched forward.

Wharton gave a shout of warning.

But it was too late!

Todd crashed forward upon the table, and there was a crash as cups and saucers shot off to the grass, and the teapot smashed down into the centre of the white cloth, and broke into a dozen pieces.

There was a splash and a flood of hot tea over the cloth. Two or three of the juniors received splashes, too.

"Oh!" gasped Todd. "I—I'm so sorry!"

"You frabjous ass!" muttered Nugent.

"Oh!" said Miss Clara.

Marjorie did not say a word.

Todd stood up, covered with blushes and confusion, and surveyed the wreck. A wreck it was, with the white cloth changed to a drenched rag, the teapot broken, and half the crockery in fragments.

The juniors were aghast.

Marjorie made a splendid effort.

"Never mind!" she said. "It is—is nothing!"

"I'm so sorry!"

"You burbling chump!" said Wharton, in an undertone.

"It's—it's all right!" said Miss Clara. "Don't worry!"

"I tink tat it is not all right," said Miss Limburger. "Te goot tea is wasted, and to grockery proke!"

"I'm so sorry! Really—"

"It is nothing. But we shall have to ask you to wait for your tea," said Marjorie, forcing a smile.

"Yes; just a few minutes," murmured Miss Clara.

ANSWERS

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

Todd looked as if he would have been glad for the earth to open and swallow him up, and so did the other juniors. Bob Cherry's private opinion was that what he needed was something lingering, with boiling oil in it.

The juniors set to work to help repair the damage.

They gathered up the crockery, and helped Marjorie take off the soaked cloth; but Todd's attempts were gently but firmly suppressed.

Bob Cherry drew him aside with a grip on his arm, and an extremely firm expression upon his face.

"I don't want to hurt your feelings, Toddy," said Bob Cherry, "but you're not going to make yourself useful! You're too useful—you're too dangerous! Just you keep off the grass, and let things alone!"

"But—"

"No buts! Stand quite still—just breathe, and don't do anything else!"

"But—"

"Mind, if I catch you helping again, I'll help you—out of the garden on your back, whatever the girls think!" said Bob.

Todd looked unhappy.

"I know I'm rather clumsy," he admitted.

"Rather!" said Bob. "Great Scott! Look here, don't jaw! Stand quite still, and don't get near anything! My hat! You ought to be kept in a cage; that's the only place where you'd be safe!"

And he left Todd standing there.

The new boy obeyed him and did not attempt to help again, while the table was supplied with a new cloth, and fresh crockery was brought from the house.

Miss Clara made fresh tea in a fresh teapot, with a side-long glance at Todd, which was not at all appreciative.

The new boy was blushing very much. Not until the tea was quite ready was he allowed to come to the table. Then Bob Cherry grasped his arm, led him to a chair, and sat him down in it, as if he had been an infant.

"There's your place!" said Bob. "Sit beside me, and don't move!"

Marjorie smiled.

"I'm so sorry!" murmured Todd.

"That's all right!" said Harry. "But don't do it again!"

And the tea commenced.

It was evident that Todd was nervous. But he was being awfully careful now. Perhaps overcarefulness was likely to lead to trouble, too. But the juniors soon forgot Todd and his unhappy propensity to knock things over in the chat that ensued over the cheerful tea-table. They had been away some time, and they and the girls had much to say and to tell one another.

Marjorie was interested in Switzerland, and Harry Wharton & Co. wanted to know all that had been going on during their absence, and so they had plenty to talk about, and an hour passed very pleasantly, during which time the tea-table was denuded of most of its eatables, and the tea-cups were filled and emptied and refilled several times.

After tea they were going to have a stroll down by the river, and as half-past five rang out from the church clock Marjorie rose to her feet.

Todd rose as the juniors followed her example, and caught his knees in the tablecloth. The table lurched.

"Oh dear!" gasped Todd.

"Look out!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Oh!"

"My hat!"

For the second time that afternoon a cascade of crockery descended upon the grass. Miss Clara gave a little cry.

"My word!" said Hazeldene.

"Great Scott!"

Todd stared at the ruins.

"I—I'm so sorry!" he stammered.

Bob Cherry grasped him by the arm, and hurried him to the gate. Todd went breathlessly, unable to resist Bob's powerful grip.

The sturdy junior ran him out of the gate into the road, and pointed in the direction of Greyfriars.

"Cut off!" he said curtly.

"Eh?"

"Buzz off!"

"Buzz off!" stammered Todd.

"Yes; get back to Greyfriars!"

"To Greyfriars!"

"Yes!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Get away! Run! Buzz! Bunk! Hurry up and make yourself scarce!"

"Make myself scarce!"

"You—you giddy parrot! I'll—"

Bob Cherry brandished a fist like a leg of mutton, and Todd dodged and ran. Bob went back into the garden with a flushed face.

"Is your friend gone?" asked Miss Clara, with a peculiar smile.

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"Yes," said Bob. "He—he thought he'd better get back early."

"Oh!"

And the juniors and the girls went out for their stroll without the company of the Duffer of Greyfriars. But they were destined to meet that unfortunate youth.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Fast Colours.

THE afternoon was very hot, but it was shady and pleasant under the trees by the rippling Sark. There were a good many Greyfriars fellows up and down the green banks, and many of them looked enviously at Harry Wharton & Co., walking with the bright-faced, brightly-dressed girls of Cliff House.

"We'll go back by water," said Bob Cherry, as they came up past the boat-house belonging to the school. "That's a good idea, Marjorie?"

Marjorie nodded.

A boat was being rewed towards the wooden landing-stage. The juniors glanced at the rower. It was Alonzo Todd, the new boy, who was already known far and wide as the Duffer of Greyfriars.

Wharton looked at him in some surprise. Todd pulled very well, and it was evident that he was not such a duffer afloat as he was ashore.

"He rows well," Nugent remarked. "Looks as if we might put him in the Remove crew, Harry."

"I was just thinking so," said Wharton. "But I'll be bound that the boat would sink or turn turtle if that blessed Duffer got into it. It's not his fault, I suppose—it's his misfortune; but he is an awfully clumsy ass!"

"The clumsiness is terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Look!"

The juniors looked—with interest.

A skiff with two Sixth-Formers—Loder and Carne—in it was pulling across the river, and Loder shouted to the new junior to clear out of the way.

Todd looked round.

"Do you want to run us down?" roared Loder.

"Eh?"

"Get away!"

"Really—"

"You ass!"

"Really," said Todd, resting on his oars, "I have the right of way, and—"

Bump!

Loder's bow crashed into the boat, and in the shock Loder rolled over the back of his seat.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "You'd better travel, Toddy!"

"Buzz off, Todd!"

"He'll have you!"

Loder picked himself up with a red and furious face. He grasped a boat-hook, with the evident intention of inflicting personal damage upon Todd.

But Todd had taken warning.

He was pulling for the bank as if for dear life.

The juniors on the towing-path waved him encouragement, and shouted.

"Go it, Todd!"

"Buck up!"

"Put your beef into it, old man!"

Todd rowed hard.

The seniors' boat was in hot pursuit, and if Loder had caught the unhappy Duffer just then there was no doubt that he would have damaged him.

But Todd was pulling well, and his craft shot to the bank, and the bow jammed into the mud and grass and rushes.

"Jump out!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly.

Todd scrambled towards the bows.

Bob Cherry held out a hand to assist him, and Todd grasped it, and at the same moment his foot slipped on the gunwale.

"Oh!"

Todd rolled sideways into the water with a sounding splash, instinctively tightening his grasp upon Bob Cherry as he did so.

Splash!

"Oh! Groo-oo!" gasped Bob.

Todd went right under water, and Bob floundered over him, half under, chest downwards.

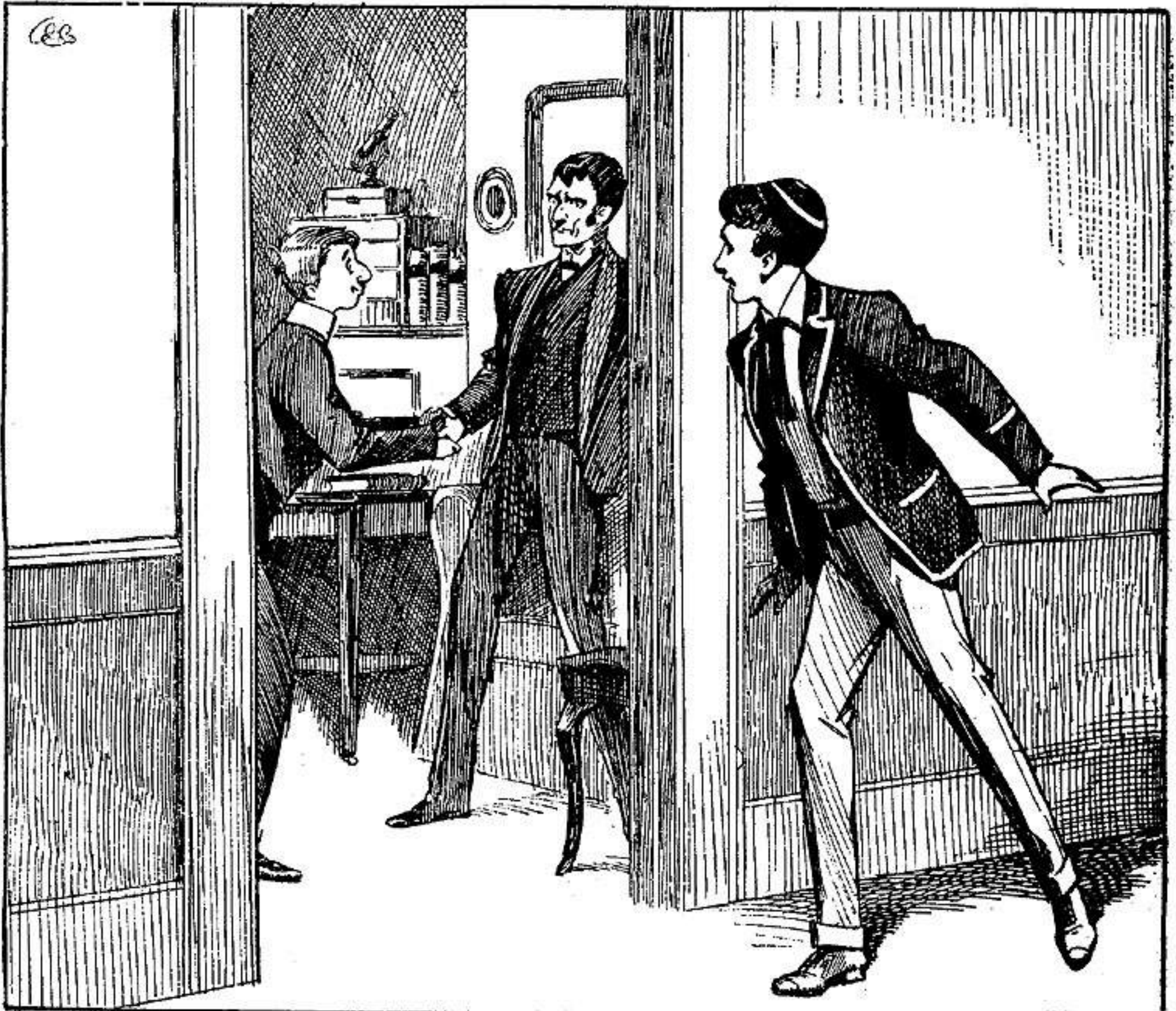
The juniors gave a yell of laughter. It was so exactly what Alonzo Todd might have been expected to do.

Loder and Carne backed.

They burst into a loud laugh.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good!" exclaimed Loder.

And—thinking, perhaps, that the new junior was punished enough—Loder and Carne pulled away. Bob Cherry scrambled to his feet, and stood up in the shallow water, which rose to



"Fine day, sir," remarked the new boy. "Is your father out of prison yet?" Harry Wharton was looking in at the open door, and his face was as great a study as Mr. Quelch's. He thought Alonzo Todd must be mad!

his watch-chain. He had a grasp upon the Duffer, and he dragged him up, too.

Todd was gasping and stuttering.

Bob Cherry was gasping, too, and for some minutes he was speechless with wrath. He had dressed himself with such care for that walk with the Cliff House girls, and now—

He glanced down at his clothes, and shuddered. That fancy waistcoat—it was soaked, wringing wet, and, worst of all, the colours were beginning to run.

"You—you frabjous ass!" gasped Bob Cherry at last.

"You burbling idiot!"

"I—I'm so sorry!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. "He's so sorry! He always is!"

"The sorryfulness is terrific!"

"The dangerous jabberwock—"

"I—I'm sorry, you know! It was most unfortunate!" gasped the Duffer. "But pray don't lose your temper, Cherry! My Uncle Benjamin says—"

"Blow your Uncle Benjamin—"

"But he says—"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

Bob Cherry dragged himself out of the water. He was in a shocking state. His boots were full of mud, his trousers streaming, his clothes all drenched, and all of them, too, beginning to show stains of colour from the fancy waistcoat.

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NEXT
WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

"Well, you are a picture!" said Harry.

Bob grunted.

"Why doesn't somebody suffocate that burbling ass!" he exclaimed. "It's a rotten shame to spring a dangerous duffer like that on people!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm so sorry!" mumbled the Duffer, as he scrambled from the rushes. "I am in as bad a state myself! I—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

Marjorie and Clara were trying not to laugh, but they could not help smiling. Bob Cherry's appearance was certainly comic. His white trousers were changed to a kind of muddy grey, and on the grey showed streaks of pink and green from his waistcoat.

"I think I'll get back," said Bob Cherry. "You will excuse me, Miss-Marjorie?"

"Certainly!" said Marjorie. "I'm sorry, Bob!"

"Yes, it's rotten!"

And Bob Cherry started off disconsolately towards Greyfriars.

Todd followed him timidly. He ventured to tap Bob on the arm after a few minutes. There was no doubt that the Duffer was sorry for the disaster—regrets followed his blunders as regularly as clockwork.

"I say, Cherry—"

Bob turned on him warmly.

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"You keep off, you ass!" he exclaimed. "Don't come near me! You're dangerous!"

"But—"

"Yah! Buzz off!"

And Bob strode away wrathfully. He didn't want the duffer of Greyfriars at close quarters; he had a feeling that something more might happen.

A general grin greeted Bob as he came into the Close. It was pretty full of fellows, and they nearly all gathered round to look at Bob.

"He's been taking a bath with his clothes on!" remarked Temple of the Upper Fourth, with a chuckle.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"And look at the giddy colours!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You should always have fast colours in a fancy waistcoat, Cherry!" said Ogilvy, with a serious shake of the head.

"Well, they're fast colours," said Skinner. "They run fast enough!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, buzz off, you asses!" said Bob, pushing his way through the crowd.

"Look at the giddy striped trousers!" grinned Elliott. "Pink and green! My only hat! There's enough colour in that giddy waistcoat to dye a whole laundry!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look out! He's on the warpath!" giggled Nugent minor of the Second Form. "Look at the giddy war-paint!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry strode on with a crimson face.

Mr. Quelch met him in the hall, and stared at him in astonishment, as well he might. He made Bob a sign to stop.

"What, in the name of goodness, have you been doing, Cherry?" he exclaimed.

"Falling in the river, sir."

"But—but how did you come to be that extraordinary colour?" said Mr. Quelch, surveying Bob's clothes in astonishment.

"I—I think the colours have run, sir."

"Oh!"

Mr. Quelch glanced at the famous waistcoat, and turned away with a smile. Bob Cherry hurried upstairs to the Remove dormitory.

There he stripped off the soaked garments. Everything he wore under the waistcoat was glimmering with various colours, and his skin was as gaudily coloured as that of a South Sea Islander.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob. "I wonder if those colours will ever come out? This is the last time I shall sport a fancy waistcoat!"

And he relieved his feelings a little by kicking the offending waistcoat from one end of the dormitory to the other. Then he set to work to wash off the colours, but it was a long time before he succeeded.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Todd Changes his Clothes.

ALONZO TODD stood on the stairs, and hesitated. He knew that Bob Cherry had gone up to the Remove dormitory, and he did not care to follow him there.

Bob was in a wrathful state of mind, and did not look safe at close quarters. But the Duffer was soaked from head to foot, and it was necessary for him to get rubbed down and to change his clothes.

"You'd better get your things off," said Morgan. "You'll get a cold, you chump!"

"Yes, but—but—"

"He'd better keep clear of Cherry," said Ogilvy, who had seen the disaster on the river bank. "He'll get slain if he goes up to the Remove dorm."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I do not wish to quarrel with Cherry," said Todd, blinking at them through mud and water. "I—I am very sorry for the accident, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, come this way!" said Bulstrode. "I'll show you where you can rub down, and get a change of clothes."

"Thank you so much, Bulstrode!"

And the new junior followed Bulstrode. The other fellows grinned. They were pretty certain that Bulstrode had some jape in his mind, to which the innocent Alonzo was to fall a victim.

"This way!" said Bulstrode.

"Thank you!"

Bulstrode led the way upstairs to Mr. Quelch's bed-room. He threw open the door, and ushered Todd into the room very politely.

Todd looked round him in surprise.

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It was a large and very pleasantly-furnished room, and Todd could not help being surprised at such a room being devoted to the use of the juniors.

"Whose room is this, Bulstrode?" he asked.

"It's a dressing-room used by the Lower Forms," said Bulstrode calmly. "It comes in useful on occasions like this. If you want anything—hot water, and so on—just ring the bell, and Buttons will come up."

"This is really very nice!"

"Oh, you'll find Greyfriars a very nice place when you get used to it," said Bulstrode.

"I am sure I shall. It is very thoughtful indeed of them to have a nicely-furnished dressing-room like this for the use of the juniors."

"Yes, isn't it?" grinned Bulstrode.

And he went out, and closed the door.

"Dear me!" murmured Todd, as he began to strip off his wet clothing. "This is very nice, and indeed I think I have misjudged Bulstrode. He certainly has a misdirected sense of humour, and he is not wholly truthful, but it is very kind of him to bring me here. Upon the whole, I will ring for the page."

And he touched the electric bell.

Trotter, the house page, came up in a couple of minutes, imagining, of course, that it was Mr. Quelch who had rung.

He stared at Todd in blank amazement.

Todd looked at him benevolently.

"Ah! You are the page?" he said.

"Ye-es," stuttered Trotter.

"I want you to take my wet clothes away to be dried," said Todd. "Please also bring me some hot water as I am in need of a wash!"

"D-d-does Mr. Quelch know you are here, sir?" he gasped.

"Really, I am not aware!"

"But—but—"

"Please fetch me the hot water!"

Trotter went away like a Buttons in a dream.

He returned in a few minutes with a hot-water can, still looking dazed, and then he took away Todd's wet clothes to be dried below stairs.

Alonzo Todd washed the mud and the slime from his person with much satisfaction, and rubbed himself into a healthy glow with Mr. Quelch's towels.

He upset half the can of water on the carpet, and splashed the bed, and knocked over a glass which broke at once, but there were no other casualties.

Having dried himself, it occurred to him that he had no new clothes to change into, and he rang the bell again.

Trotter reappeared. Trotter was quite unable to understand how a junior could be using Mr. Quelch's room and ringing Mr. Quelch's bell, but he thought he had better answer it.

"What have you done with my clothes?" asked Todd, enveloped for the present in Mr. Quelch's dressing-gown.

"I've given 'em to the housekeeper, sir," said Trotter.

"Good! I suppose they will be some time drying? I want you to bring me a change of clothing."

"Yes, sir."

"Go to the Remove dormitory, please, and get a suit of clothes and underclothing out of my box, also socks and boots!"

"Yes, sir."

"And kindly hurry!"

Trotter gaped, and went. As he closed the door Bulstrode put his arm through that of the youth in buttons, and drew him away.

"New chap in there?" said Bulstrode, with a nod of the head in the direction of Mr. Quelch's bed-room door.

"Yes, Master Bulstrode," said Trotter.

"He'll get into a row," said Bulstrode. "I advise you not to get mixed up in it."

Trotter looked dismayed.

"He's told me to fetch him some dry clothes from the dormitory, Master Bulstrode."

"You'd better not," said Bulstrode. "Better give the room a wide berth. Look here, Trotter, we're japing the Duffer, and you're to keep clear of it."

Trotter grinned.

"Yes, sir."

"Here's a bob for you. Now buzz off, and mind you don't hear him if he rings the bell any more," said Bulstrode, pressing a shilling into the willing hands of the page.

"Yes, sir," grinned Trotter, and he vanished.

In a few minutes Todd touched the electric bell again in Mr. Quelch's room. He thought that the page was a long time getting the clothes.

There was no answer to the bell.

Todd waited impatiently.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "The lad is a long time—a very long time! What can he be doing? Perhaps he has forgotten about the whole matter."

He pressed the bell again, and again.

But Trotter did not appear.

Todd opened the bed-room door, and looked out into the passage, keeping Mr. Quelch's dressing-gown closely about him.

The passage was deserted.

Todd was dismayed.

"Oh dear! What am I to do?" he murmured. "Bulstrode! I wonder if Bulstrode is anywhere about? Bulstrode!"

The burly Removite came round the corner of the passage. He grinned at the sight of Todd with the ample dressing-gown flowing on the floor round him and bunched up round his figure in fold on fold.

"Oh, here you are!" exclaimed Todd, in great relief. "Can you get me a change of clothes, Bulstrode? Trotter cannot hear me ringing."

Bulstrode chuckled.

"Certainly!" he replied.

"They're in my box in the Remove dormitory——"

The Remove bully looked very grave.

"Bob Cherry's in there," he said. "The fellows have been chipping him, and he's awfully wild. I don't think I care to go in."

"Oh dear!" said Todd, in dismay. "What shall I do?"

Bulstrode looked thoughtful.

"Well, I'll get some things for you," he said. "I don't want to leave you in the lurch, you know. I suppose you can change into anything, even if it isn't a very close fit, just for the present?"

"Oh, certainly!"

"Then wait a minute, and I'll do my best for you."

"Thank you so much!"

Todd withdrew into the room, and Bulstrode grinned and walked away. Todd waited in great impatience. He knew that it must be near the time for calling-over, as the dusk was falling upon Greyfriars, and he knew that it was serious to miss calling-over.

He was greatly relieved when Bulstrode opened the door hastily and threw a bundle in.

"There you are," said Bulstrode, withdrawing hastily.

"Buck up, or you'll be late for calling-over!"

"Thank you so——"

But Bulstrode was gone.

Todd picked up the bundle.

He looked dismayed as he spread the articles out on the bed. There was an old coat and waistcoat and a pair of ancient trousers and a coloured shirt. The coat had certainly been worn by a middle-aged man of stout build. It was of the morning-coat variety. The waistcoat was several sizes too large for Todd. The trousers were suited to the limbs of a Life Guardsman.

Todd looked at the clothes, and ran to the door to look for Bulstrode. But the Removite was gone. Todd called to him several times, but there was no answer, save the echo of his own voice in the empty passage.

He turned back into the room.

"Oh dear!" he murmured. "What shall I do?"

He stared at the terrible clothes. He certainly could not go down to calling-over in the flowing dressing-gown.

But those clothes!

He looked from the window. Boys were coming in from all sides for calling-over. It was very nearly time.

He hesitated and pondered.

Harry Wharton & Co. came in at the gates, evidently having seen Marjorie and Clara and Wilhelmina home to Cliff House, and they disappeared into the porch below.

The hour began to strike from the clock-tower.

"I—I shall have to wear these clothes!" murmured Todd. "It is dreadful, but there is really no alternative. It is very careless of Bulstrode to bring me such clothes, but I have no choice but to wear them. I am afraid they will look somewhat odd, but that cannot be helped."

And he donned the clothes.

The trousers descended a foot below his soles, and he had to roll up the legs of them in roll on roll, which certainly added to the peculiarity of their appearance. The waistcoat descended almost to his knees. The tail of the coat nearly touched the floor behind him when he put it on.

Todd looked at himself in the glass, and started.

The trousers being of a bright and large pattern in checks, added to their striking appearance, which would have been striking enough otherwise.

"Dear me!" said Todd.

There was a thump at the door.

"You'll be late!" called Bulstrode through the keyhole.

Todd ran to the door.

"Bulstrode! I say, Bulstrode——"

But the Removite's footsteps were dying away down the passage. Todd hesitated a moment or two more, and then, taking his courage in both hands, so to speak, he left Mr. Quelch's room, and followed Bulstrode.

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NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

EVERY
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Adsum.

"LOOK!"

"What is it?"

"Who is it?"

"My only hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Great Scott!"

"It's the Wild Man from Borneo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd blushed.

The fellows on the stairs, and in the passages greeted him with those exclamations and many others of a like sort, as he came down.

"I'm so sorry to be showing up like this, you fellows," he said. "You see, I've drenched my clothes, and these were the only ones I could get to change into."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" grinned Skinner. "This way for calling-over!"

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Frank Nugent. "Is the chap going into Hall in that rig? This beats Bob's fancy waistcoat."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, Toddy!"

"March in!"

"Won't Quelch be pleased?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd marched into Hall amid a crowd of laughing, chuckling juniors.

Gasps of astonishment on all sides greeted him. Wingate stared at him dumbfounded, too surprised to speak. He took his place unmolested in the ranks of the Lower Fourth.

Harry Wharton & Co., who had come in late, came scooting into Hall almost at the last moment. Wharton simply jumped when he saw Todd.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "What's that?"

"Ha, ha! That's Todd!"

"Todd!"

"Todd, the one and only! He's been changing his clothes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm so sorry——" began Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Who's taking call-over this time?" asked Hazeldene.

"Capper."

"Here he is."

Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth, entered the hall with rustling gown. He called for silence, and began to read over the names.

"Adsum!"

The answer was made incessantly, and Mr. Capper did not look up, and Todd began to hope that he would escape from the ordeal without his peculiar attire being observed.

But Mr. Capper happened to look up to see what the Lower Fourth were chuckling about, and he caught a full view of Todd.

He started up.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "What—what is that?"

"If you please, sir——"

"Man! Boy! Who—what are you?"

"If you please, sir, I—I'm Todd."

"What!"

"Todd, of the Remove, sir."

Mr. Capper stared at him. Then he adjusted his glasses, and stared again. It was clear that he could hardly credit the evidence of his eyes.

"Todd!" he gasped.

"Yes, sir."

"Todd! I—I have heard that you are a most peculiar boy. But—but how dare you?"

"I—I——"

"How dare you enter Hall in this ridiculous state, sir?" shouted Mr. Capper.

"I—I——"

"This is a deliberate insult to your masters, Todd."

"An insult, sir," stuttered Todd.

"Yes, a piece of the most outrageous impertinence."

"Outrageous impertinence, sir."

"Don't repeat my words, boy!" roared Mr. Capper.

"R-r-repeat your words, sir."

"Boy, I—I hardly know how to deal with you. I will send you to your Form-master. Boys, cease this unseemly laughter at once. It is no subject for merriment."

But the Greyfriars fellows seemed to think that it was, for they could not restrain their chuckles.

Mr. Capper pointed majestically to the door.

"Go!" he thundered.

"I, sir?"

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"Yes, you! Go to your Form-master's study—go at once! Go and report your own absurd conduct to Mr. Quelch, sir!"

"To Mr. Quelch?"

"Yes, and at once."

"At once, sir?"

"How—how dare you repeat my words in this ridiculous manner!" gasped Mr. Capper.

"Ridiculous manner, sir?"

"Wingate, please take that boy from the hall," said Mr. Capper, controlling himself with difficulty.

The captain of Greyfriars took Todd by the shoulder, and marched him out of the hall. Alonzo, in a very fluttered and dismayed state of mind, took his way disconsolately to Mr. Quelch's study.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Little Misunderstanding.

"COME in," said Mr. Quelch, as there came a timid tap at his door.

The door opened.

The Remove-master was busily writing, and his rapid pen hardly ceased to move over the paper as he glanced up.

But it ceased to move, and he gave a jump that scattered blots over the sheet, as he caught sight of the weird figure at the door.

Mr. Quelch could hardly believe his eyes.

He looked at the glaring check trousers, the coat with its tail dragging to the ground, and simply gasped.

"What—what—what is that?"

"If you please, sir—"

"Please! I don't please!" shouted Mr. Quelch. "How dare you come to my study like that, boy! You are Todd. I presume, though I can scarcely recognise you in that absurd garb."

"Yes, sir. I'm so sorry. I—"

"What do you mean?"

"Mean, sir?" stammered Todd, beginning to repeat what was said to him, as he always did when he was startled and nervous. "Mean, sir?"

"Yes. Why have you come here?"

"Come here, sir?"

"And in that absurd attire?"

"Absurd attire, sir."

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet, and picked up a cane.

"Come here, Todd!" he rapped out.

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"Now, have you any explanation to make?"

"Explanation, sir?"

"Yes. Quick!"

"I—I'm so sorry, sir—"

"Why did you come here in that attire?"

"Mr. Capper told me to, sir."

Mr. Quelch jumped.

"Mr. Capper!"

"Yes, sir."

"He told you to come here in those ridiculous clothes."

"Yes, sir."

"Impossible."

Todd stared. He did not see anything impossible about it, and he did not see that Mr. Quelch was misunderstanding him.

"Yes, sir. A lot of fellows heard him tell me to come, sir."

His face was so open and frank that it was impossible to doubt that he was in earnest. Mr. Quelch was astounded.

He laid down the cane.

"Now, listen to me calmly, Todd," he said. "Your statement is incredible. You tell me that Mr. Capper told you to come to my study?"

"Yes, sir."

"In those absurd clothes—just as you are?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is amazing. Mr. Capper must be ill. You may go, Todd. Take off those ridiculous things at once, and dress yourself properly. I—I will speak to Mr. Capper."

"Yes, sir."

And Todd departed gladly enough. He had expected to be punished, though he felt that he really did not deserve it. He left Mr. Quelch in a most puzzled and perplexed frame of mind.

"I cannot understand this," muttered the Remove-master. "Is it possible that Mr. Capper has been drinking? That is the only possible explanation, if he really instructed the boy to come here in that ridiculous manner. Todd seemed to be telling the truth; he is a fool, but he seems to be a truthful boy. I really cannot understand it at all."

And Mr. Quelch left his study, and went to look for Mr. Capper. He found the master of the Upper Fourth leaving the hall after calling-over. Mr. Capper was still looking a little excited and irritated.

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"A most extraordinary thing has just happened, Mr. Capper," said the Remove-master. "Todd, the new boy in my Form, came to my study—"

"Ah," exclaimed Mr. Capper, "you have seen him."

"Yes. He came to me in the most ridiculous attire, and told me that you had instructed him to do so."

"Yes."

"Of course, there is some mistake."

"Not at all."

"You—you sent him."

"Certainly."

Mr. Quelch almost staggered.

"You—you instructed the boy to come to my study in that absurd get-up!" he exclaimed. "I really do not understand this, Mr. Capper."

"I fail to see anything incomprehensible about it," said Mr. Capper tartly. "It seems to me the most natural thing for me to do."

"What! To send a boy to my study in an absurd attire, Mr. Capper?"

"Certainly, as he belongs to your Form."

"But—but, Mr. Capper?"

"Well?" said Mr. Capper snappishly.

Mr. Quelch looked at him closely.

"My dear sir, had you not better go and lie down?" he suggested gently.

The Fourth Form-master stared at him.

"Lie down!"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I should think you know the reason," said Mr. Quelch, with his eyes fixed upon Mr. Capper's flushed and excited face, which certainly seemed to bear out the Remove-master's suspicion that Mr. Capper had been drinking. "It will be better for the boys not to see you, or the Head either."

"Better for the Head not to see me," said Mr. Capper dazedly.

"Yes, certainly."

"And why?" said Mr. Capper. "If I did not know you so well, Mr. Quelch, I should certainly suspect that you had been drinking."

"Mr. Capper!"

"Mr. Quelch!"

"Your absurd conduct—"

"What!"

"Your absurd conduct in sending a boy about dressed in that manner, is inexplicable—unless you have been drinking," said Mr. Quelch firmly.

"Drinking."

"Yes, sir."

"Drinking," repeated Mr. Capper dazedly. "Do I hear you aright, Mr. Quelch. Drinking! I can only conclude, sir, that you are intoxicated."

"What!"

"Yes, sir, intoxicated," said Mr. Capper angrily. "I noticed a wildness in your eye when you stopped to speak to me, now that I think of it."

"Mr. Capper!"

"Mr. Quelch!"

"Goodness gracious, what is the matter?" exclaimed Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form, looking out of his study. "Mr. Capper! Mr. Quelch!"

"Really—"

"Really—"

"Is it possible that you are disputing," said Mr. Prout, in amazement, "and in the passage. There are boys looking at you from the staircase. Pray step into my study."

Mr. Quelch coloured, and stepped into Mr. Prout's study. The master of the Upper Fourth followed him in, looking very angry and excited. Mr. Prout closed the door, and adopted a soothing and conciliating manner.

"Now, gentlemen, gentlemen," he said, "what is the matter?"

"Mr. Quelch insinuates that I have been drinking—indulging in strong drink," explained Mr. Capper, as if Mr. Prout might not otherwise understand what drinking was.

"Surely not."

"Let Mr. Capper explain his extraordinary conduct on any other hypothesis," said Mr. Quelch crushingly.

"But—"

"My conduct," flamed out Mr. Capper.

"Yes, sir, your conduct."

"It is perfectly clear to me that Mr. Quelch is intoxicated, and I refuse to hold a discussion with a man under the influence of liquor," said Mr. Capper.

"Mr. Capper!"

"Mr. Quelch!"

"Sir!"

"Sir!"

"Gentlemen—gentlemen," said Mr. Prout, "pray be calm! What has happened? Pray explain."

"I leave it to Mr. Quelch to explain himself, if he is in a condition to do so."

"Mr. Capper!"

"Mr. Quelch!"

"I will explain," said the Remove-master heatedly. "Mr. Capper, on his own admission, has deliberately instructed a boy belonging to my Form to come to my study in the most ridiculous attire."

"Impossible!"

"Mr. Capper admits it."

"Certainly," said Mr. Capper. "What else was I to do?"

"Dear me," said Mr. Prout. "This is extraordinary!"

"Most extraordinary," said Mr. Quelch. "That a gentleman of Mr. Capper's age and position should instruct a lad to dress himself in an absurd manner, and then—"

"What!" yelled Mr. Capper.

"You heard what I said, sir."

"Do you imagine, sir, that I instructed the lad to dress in that manner?" gasped the Upper Fourth-master. "Did he tell you so?"

Mr. Quelch started.

"No, he did not tell me so, but you have practically said so, and—"

"I said I sent him to your study, sir."

"Yes, in that ridiculous attire."

"It was because he was in that attire already!" bawled Mr. Capper.

"Oh!"

"He came into Hall to calling-over dressed in that manner."

"Oh!"

"And I sent him to you to be punished."

"Oh!"

Mr. Prout smiled.

"Ah, now we are clearing up the matter," he remarked.

"The boy appears to have misled you, Mr. Quelch."

Mr. Quelch looked very pink.

"Unintentionally, I think," he said. "The foolish lad did not explain the circumstances; he led me to suppose—ahem!—it is very absurd. I am sorry for my suspicion, Mr. Capper, but really—"

"Then I withdraw what I said," said Mr. Capper. "That dreadfully stupid boy is the cause of the misunderstanding."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Prout.

"He should be very severely punished," said Mr. Capper.

"He came into the hall, and answered to his name at calling-over, clad in that absurd way. It was a piece of the most astounding impertinence."

"I will see him at once," said Mr. Quelch.

And he went to look for the Duffer of Greyfriars, with an expression upon his face that boded no good for the Duffer when he found him.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bulstrode in the Wars!

HA, ha, ha!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Wasn't it funny?"

"Comic!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wasn't Capper wild?"

"Shrieking?"

"Yes, rather! And I wonder how Quelch took it."

Bulstrode & Co. were almost in convulsions of merriment. They were sitting on the lower stairs, and almost weeping. Todd's absurd display in Hall, and his visit to the Remove-master's study, amused Bulstrode & Co. very much. There seemed to be no limit to the new boy's capacity for being japed.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode. "What a figure he cut in Hall! Fancy the dummy going into old Quelch's room and using it as if it were his own!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And then dressing in the scarecrow rags I gave him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And then showing up at calling-over looking like Weary Willy or Tired Tim out of the casual-ward."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh it was gorgeous!" said Skinner. "I must say, I'm glad Toddy came to Greyfriars. It makes things jollier."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quelch hasn't seen his room yet, either. When he sees it—"

"Hush!"

"Eh! It's as good a joke on Quelch as it is on the Duffer, and—"

"Hush, you ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner's face was fixed with terror.

Mr. Quelch had come out of the Fifth Form-master's study, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—125.

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ONE
PENNY.

and walked towards the stairs, without the juniors seeing him. He was standing regarding the group with a grim expression upon his face, and how long he had been standing there they did not know. They had been too occupied with their merriment to notice him.

The laughter died away.

How much he had heard they could not guess, but he had certainly heard enough to put him on the scent.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Quelch. "It is somewhat injudicious to discuss such matters, Bulstrode, in so loud a voice in this place."

"Oh!" gasped Bulstrode.

"You seem to have a remarkable sense of humour, Bulstrode, and the new junior and myself have alike been victims of it," said Mr. Quelch. "I think, Bulstrode, that you would do well to learn to keep your sense of humour within bounds."

"Oh, sir!"

"You will take five hundred lines, Bulstrode, and stay in on Saturday afternoon to write them out," said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh!"

And the Remove-master turned majestically away.

"My only hat!" said Skinner. "Quelch has come down heavy this time!"

"Never mind, the jape was worth it," said Snoop.

"Was it?" said Bulstrode savagely. "You haven't got to do the lines."

"No, that makes a difference," grinned Skinner. "Hallo! Here comes the Duffer, clothed and in his right mind."

Alonso Todd was descending the stairs.

He had changed into a suit of his own clothes now, and looked normal once more. Bulstrode gave him a savage look. The Remove bully had only himself to thank for being gated on the half-holiday; he might have expected it. But he chose to lay the blame upon the new junior.

Todd looked at him reproachfully.

"I'm afraid you've got me into a row, Bulstrode, by giving me those rotten clothes," he said. "I expect I shall be caned."

"It's all right," grinned Skinner. "Bulstrode's been bowled out, and he's got the lines. You're all serene."

Todd brightened up.

"Dear me! That is very fortunate," he said. "It must be very gratifying to you, Bulstrode, to know that an innocent party is not to suffer."

"You ass!"

"Eh!"

"You frabjous duffer!"

"Really—"

Bulstrode grasped the Duffer of Greyfriars, and in another moment Todd's head was in chancery. He roared and struggled furiously.

"Ow! Yow! Help!"

A hand grasped Bulstrode by the collar behind, and he was swung round. He had to let go Todd, who went staggering away, and collapsed upon the floor.

Bulstrode turned furiously upon his assailant, thinking at once that it was Harry Wharton or one of the chums of No. 1 Study.

"You hound!" he snarled. "Let go! I—"

"What!"

Bulstrode turned white.

It was Mr. Capper.

The Fourth Form-master stared at him angrily. His grasp tightened upon Bulstrode's collar, but the burly Removeite made no further resistance.

"I—I—I didn't know it was you, sir," he stammered.

"I presume not," said Mr. Capper grimly. "I presume not, Bulstrode. But such language is not proper to be used, in any case, and neither is it right for a boy of your size to strike a younger lad in so brutal a manner."

"I—I—"

"If you interfere with Todd again, I shall see that you are punished severely," said Mr. Capper. "I despise you, Bulstrode. A bully is most contemptible."

And Mr. Capper released Bulstrode and went away.

The burly Removeite breathed hard. The other juniors were grinning. They had had to put up with too much of Bulstrode's temper themselves to feel much sympathy for him.

"The rotter!" muttered Bulstrode. "What the dickens was he sneaking about like that for?"

"Hush!" whispered Skinner.

"Rats! I don't care for Capper, and—"

"Hush, you ass!"

"Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode swung round in dismay. He was certainly in the wars that evening. It was the Head—Dr. Locke himself—who had come by just in time to hear his disrespectful allusion to Mr. Capper.

Bulstrode trembled.

"Bulstrode, how dare you allude to a Form-master in that manner? Follow me!"

"I—I—"

"Not a word! Follow me!"

And the Removite followed Dr. Locke to his study, and emerged a few minutes later twisting in the most uncomfortable manner. Bulstrode did not trouble the Duffer any more that evening. Duffer Alonzo Todd certainly was; yet it was equally certain that Bulstrode had come off second best in japing him—and Bulstrode had had enough for one time.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

In Scanty Attire.

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were up early the next morning for a swim in the Sark; but there was one who was up earlier. When Harry turned out, he found that Todd's bed was empty. The Duffer was gone out for his usual swim.

"We'll see how he does it," Bob Cherry grinned, as he pulled on his boots. "If he swims as well as he does everything else, it must be worth seeing."

And the chums grinned and agreed.

They went out of the school grounds and down to the river, through the grass thick and heavy with dew, in the rays of the rising sun.

Fresh and green looked the woods in the early light.

The Sark ran bright and rippling, catching the sun rays, gleaming among the rushes and singing over the pebbles.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There he is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

A form in scanty costume could be seen in the river.

It was the Duffer, swimming with powerful strokes.

In his present state the juniors could see that he had a sturdy frame, and was very well fitted for arduous exercises, if, as Bob remarked, he had only had sense enough. But for one thing he certainly had sense enough, and that was swimming.

He was a good swimmer.

He was going down with the current now, towards the island in the river. The island was connected with the bank on one side by a little wooden bridge, in a very shaky state, protected by a wooden railing that was more shaky still. It was a favourite point for racing among the Greyfriars fellows, from the boat-house to the island.

The Duffer reached the little wooden bridge and passed under it, and swam round the island, and then reappeared on the other side of the little isle, in the broad reach of the river that separated it from the Greyfriars bank.

Then he caught sight of Harry Wharton & Co. Harry waved his hand.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Go it!"

The Duffer grinned.

In the water he was far from being a duffer, and he had plenty of presence of mind. It was a case of a fellow being able to do one thing well, and having plenty of confidence in himself because he knew it.

The chums of the Remove plunged into the water as the Duffer came by.

"Race you back to the boat-house!" exclaimed Harry.

"Right-ho!" sang out Todd; and he paused for them.

The juniors were soon in a line, and they started fair.

Todd had already been swimming some time, but he was perfectly fresh, and he forged ahead at once.

Harry Wharton overtook him, and kept level, but Bob Cherry and Nugent dropped further behind, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh slowly tailed off. Mark Linley was the next to drop out of the race.

Wharton put all he knew into it to keep level.

The Duffer turned his head and smiled at him, and quickened his stroke and shot away. He had reached the wooden landing-stage, and was sitting on it, with his legs dangling in the water, when Wharton came up.

Harry put one hand on the planking to rest.

"You're a jolly good swimmer!" he remarked.

"I've had a lot of practice," said the Duffer modestly.

"I used to live by the seaside, and I was in the sea every morning, too. I—"

"Todd! Todd!"

The Duffer turned his head. Stott was coming towards the river, looking very excited and waving his hands frantically.

"Todd! Todd!"

"What is it?"

"Quick—quick! The Head wants you!"

"The Head!"

"Yes, quick!"

Harry Wharton had slipped back into the water to rejoin

his chums. Todd drew himself wholly upon the planks, and blinked at Stott.

"What does the Head want?" he asked.

"You—at once."

"Oh, all right!"

Todd ran towards the spot where he had left his clothes. Then he uttered an exclamation of dismay. The clothes were gone!

"Oh!" he exclaimed.

Stott waved his hand excitedly.

"Come on!" he shouted. "It's awfully important!" And he ran back towards the school.

"My clothes are gone!" shrieked the Duffer.

"Come as you are!"

"But—"

"Buck up!" And Stott vanished.

Todd looked round him helplessly.

He was dressed simply in a bathing-costume that did not err on the side of being too ample, and he was certainly in no fit state to present himself at Greyfriars—especially in the presence of the Head. He looked round despairingly for the clothes of the other fellows. Wharton & Co. had come down in shoes and ulsters, and they had left them in a thicket, carefully putting them out of sight, in case some joker should come along and play tricks on them. Todd could not see them, and Harry Wharton & Co. were out of hearing, swimming across the river.

"Oh, dear!" murmured Todd.

He glanced down at his extremely scanty costume, and hesitated.

From the gates, Stott waved an excited hand.

"Come on!" he shrieked. "There'll be a row!"

That decided Todd.

He dashed off towards the school, the water running down his bare limbs. Stott had vanished in at the gates.

Todd ran quickly into the Close.

It was deserted at that early hour, save by Gosling, who had just been ringing the rising-bell. Gosling stared blankly at the vision of Todd.

"My heye!" said the school-porter. "My heye! Wot I says is this 'ere—that ain't a state to go about in, Master Todd."

"I—I—"

"Suppose Mrs. Locke came out?" said Gosling. "My heye!"

Todd blushed all over at the thought. But if the Head had sent for him urgently, there was no time for hesitation, and he ran on towards the School House, leaving Gosling staring blankly.

"My heye!" murmured Gosling again. "Wot I says is this 'ere—my heye!"

Todd ran into the School House. There was a shriek.

An early housemaid, with broom in hand, dropped the broom and stared at the surprising apparition, and shrieked again.

"I'm so sorry!" gasped Todd. "I—I really beg your pardon! Can you tell me where the Head is? He sent for me in a hurry, and—"

"Oh!"

"I really beg your pardon—"

"Oh!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, coming downstairs. "What—what—what— Todd, you are a most extraordinary boy! How dare you come downstairs in—in bathing costume?"

"I'm so sorry, sir! I—"

"Go to the dormitory and dress yourself!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"But sir—"

"Go!"

Todd ran upstairs. The fellows dressing in the Remove dormitory greeted him with a yell of laughter. The humorous Stott was there, telling the story. Todd burst in, breathless and crimson.

"Here he is!" yelled Stott. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I have had a most painful experience!" gasped Todd. "Someone has taken my clothes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mr. Quelch was very angry at seeing me like this! It was indeed odd—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose I had better dress before I go to the Head—"

"You frabjous ass!" shrieked Ogilvy. "You'd better not go to the Head!"

"Oh, dear!" said Todd. "Is this a joke, then?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stott, I consider you a most untruthful boy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My Uncle Benjamin says—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Removites roared so loudly that Uncle Benjamin's views were quite lost to hearing.

TODD was called into Mr. Quelch's study when he came down. The Remove-master realised that the unfortunate Duffer of Greyfriars had been japed again, and he did not cane him. But he gave him a very severe lecture, and warned him to be more careful in the future. The Duffer promised to be more careful, though of what use his care would be was another question. The ease with which he could be japed in the most outrageous way was a great temptation to the humorous spirits of the Remove.

After morning school, Bulstrode tapped the Duffer on the shoulder as they came out into the passage.

"I suppose you know Wingate wants to see you?" he remarked.

"Wingate! No."

"Yes, look into his study as you go by. He wants you to play in the First Eleven."

"Dear me!"

"Just step in and tell him you're willing to play," said Bulstrode; "he'll be so pleased. There's his study."

"Certainly," said Todd. "I shall be very pleased to play in the First Eleven, and I think it is very kind of Wingate."

And he went towards the study of the captain of Greyfriars. Harry Wharton laughed, and caught him by the shoulder, and swung him back.

"You ass!" he exclaimed. "What do you think Wingate will say to you if you go into his study and offer to play for the First Eleven? You'll get slung out!"

"But—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Let him go, Harry—I want to see Wingate's face!"

"Really—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Really, Bulstrode, you are a most untruthful boy. I shall not rely upon any statement you make in the future," said Todd.

"Ass!" And Bulstrode walked away.

Todd did indeed seem to be waking up to the fact that he was liable to be japed at every turn, for he was on his guard for the next hour or two. At dinner he declined to take the head of the table while the Removites were waiting for Mr. Quelch to come in, smelling a rat in the invitation, and after dinner he refused to order out the Head's trap for a drive, though Skinner solemnly assured him that he had only to go round to the stables and give his orders.

He took a book, and strolled away by himself with the book under his arm, and Wharton saw him pull out to the island in the river in a skiff. There, perhaps, the Duffer considered that he was safe from japes.

The chums of the Remove went down to the nets for a little cricket practice. When that was over, they strolled down to the river to pass away the time till afternoon school. They threw themselves into the deep, thick grass by the towing-path, and Bob Cherry stretched out his long legs.

"This is comfy," he remarked. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter?"

"Ow!" grunted Hazeldene. "You've shoved your silly hoof into my ribs, that's all! Do you want the whole bank for your blessed big feet?"

"Oh, rats!"

"Well, keep your feet off my ribs!"

"Bosh! Keep your ribs off my feet," said Bob Cherry lazily.

"Don't make a row," said Nugent drowsily. "It's ripping here. Don't jaw. I think it's a mistake to have lessons in the afternoons."

"Or in the mornings either," grinned Bob Cherry.

"It is boreful to have them, either morningfully or afternoonfully," the Nabob of Bhanipur remarked. He was lying on his back, basking in the blaze of the sun, his dusky face glowing.

"They've got a half-holiday at Cliff House," Hazeldene remarked. "It's Miss Penelope Primrose's birthday."

"I wish it were the Head's birthday too," murmured Nugent.

"The girls are going to picnic somewhere, too," said Hazel. "I shouldn't be surprised if we see them come along."

Bob Cherry sat up suddenly.

"Likely to see Marjorie?" he asked.

"I shouldn't wonder."

Bob hastily dusted his jacket and put his tie straight. Harry Wharton smiled and jumped up. He had caught a glimpse of a bright dress and a summer hat on the other side of the river.

"Marjorie!" he exclaimed.

Marjorie, Clara, and Wilhelmina came out of the trees on the other side of the wide river. They nodded and smiled across the shining water. They were going towards the little wooden bridge that connected the bank with the island.

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ONE
PENNY.

They were carrying neat little baskets, and it was evidently their intention to picnic on the little isle.

"The Duffer's there," Nugent remarked, as he waved his cap.

"There he is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry with a grin. "He's going to make himself useful, as usual, I'll bet."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The usefulness will be terrific."

The form of the Duffer of Greyfriars emerged from the thicket on the island towards the wooden bridge on the further side of the river.

He had looked up from his book to see the girls carrying the baskets, and his chivalry was up at once.

He crossed the little bridge hastily, raising his straw hat to the girls.

"Pray allow me to carry your parcels!" he exclaimed.

Marjorie smiled a little distrustfully.

She had had some experience of the Duffer and his attempts to be useful, but she was too courteous to refuse.

"Certainly," she said.

The Duffer took her basket and held out a hand for Wilhelmina's, and took that. He could not hold out a third hand for Miss Clara's.

"I can manage all three," he remarked.

"Oh, all serene," said Miss Clara. "I'll look after this!"

"We're going on the island," said Marjorie. "It's a half-holiday at Cliff House to-day, and we shall have a picnic there."

"How nice," said Todd. "I wish we had a half-holiday too. I should like to help you."

Miss Clara gave a little giggle. She could not help remembering how the Duffer of Greyfriars had helped to get tea at Cliff House. Upon the whole, the girls were not sorry that the Duffer would be too busy that afternoon to help them.

Todd trod carefully over the little wooden bridge. The planks were certainly "rocky," and the hand-railing was little more than a delusion and a snare, for anybody's weight thrown on it would certainly have hurled it into the water.

Perhaps Todd was a little too careful.

He caught his foot in a hole in the planks, and stumbled.

Miss Clara uttered an exclamation.

"There goes the basket!"

Splash!

One of the baskets Todd was carrying shot into the water. The other rolled on the planks and Marjorie caught at it.

What happened next passed like a flash.

The girl brushed against the rotten railing as she caught at the basket, and it snapped and broke in a second, and Marjorie reeled on the edge of the planks.

The Greyfriars juniors on the opposite bank gave a simultaneous cry.

"Look out!"

Todd sprang to help Marjorie, but too late!

The girl had slipped from the planks.

Clara and Wilhelmina caught a glimpse of a white face as it rushed under the shining water, and in a second more Marjorie was whirled under the bridge by the current. Round the island the current ran strong and fast.

Todd, for a moment, stood paralysed.

Miss Clara caught him by the shoulder and shook him.

"Save her!" she shrieked. "Save her! Quick!"

"Good heavens!" stammered Todd.

Miss Clara waved her hand to Harry Wharton & Co., and shrieked. The juniors were already in the water, clothes and all, swimming frantically round the island towards the spot where Marjorie was being whirled.

But they knew they could never arrive in time. Their action was dictated by sheer desperation, not by hope.

All depended on Todd.

Todd seemed dazed.

But Clara's wild voice seemed to rouse him. He tore off his jacket and waistcoat, threw aside his cap, and made a dive from the bridge.

The dive carried him well on his way, and he came up and struck out with powerful strokes.

Marjorie was already twenty yards away down the river.

The girl could swim, and she was keeping afloat, but her clothes were soaked with water and dragging her down, and the current was strong and fierce.

The girls on the bridge watched her in anguish.

She was being swept down towards the pool—a deadly, dangerous spot on the Sark, where even a strong swimmer had little chance against the whirling currents.

"Oh, she will be drowned, she will be drowned!" cried Clara. "Save her!"

Todd was swimming his hardest.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

For Life or Death.

THE Greyfriars fellows who had japed and laughed at the Duffer would have been surprised if they could have seen him now.

Todd was a new fellow now.

He swam with powerful strokes, and though he knew well the peril of the current, there was not a sign of hesitation about him.

All his confusion, all his self-distrust, were gone now.

A girl's life depended upon him, and he was doing his best—careless of the risk he ran, careless of everything but the task in hand.

An observer would have said that he had no chance of reaching the girl before the treacherous current sucked her under, and she disappeared into the mazes of the Pool.

But the Duffer swam with wonderful strength.

Harder and harder!

Marjorie had not cried out. She had not lost her presence of mind, and she needed all her strength—all her breath, for this fight with death.

It seemed to her as if invisible hands were dragging her below the surface. Her clothes were weighted with water and dragging her down.

Her strength grew feebler in the struggle.

Once she went right under. She came up again, but with dizzy brain, and strange lights danced before her eyes.

Her senses were swimming now. The struggle could not last much longer.

Then a voice called out of the dimness around her.

"Buck up!"

It was the Duffer!

His grasp was upon her the next moment.

He drew her back from the shining water which was about to close over her again, and her face came up into the warm sunlight once more.

The current whirled them on, but Marjorie needed to make no effort now; a strong arm was supporting her.

"Cling to me," said Todd. "Catch on! It's all right."

Marjorie panted.

"It was all my fault," muttered Todd. "But I'll save you—I'll save you."

Marjorie did not speak.

She knew that they were being swept into the Pool, and her hope was almost gone.

The Duffer supported her, and strove to fight his way to the distant shore, where the grass waved and glistened in the sun as if in mockery.

But burdened as he was it was impossible.

As fast as he gained a little, an eddy of the current whirled him back, and he was swept onwards towards the Pool.

His breath was coming in catchy gasps now, and his face was white.

He looked into the white face that rested on his shoulder.

The girl's eyes were closed; her face was like stone.

She had fainted.

To let his insensible burden slide from him, to strike out and save himself—the Duffer of Greyfriars knew how easy that would be.

But he did not!

It was sink or swim together.

There were running figures on the bank now—men and boys who waved their hands and wildly shouted, but could not help.

At a great distance over the shining waters were other swimmers—too far off to render aid, though swimming their hardest.

Todd fought on with failing strength.

He was in the grip of the Pool now, and treacherous currents were sucking him on, and his senses were beginning to go.

There was a sudden shout from the bank.

"Pull! Pull!"

The Duffer hardly heard it; he did not know what it meant. Harry Wharton had thought of the skiff in which the Duffer had crossed to the island, and he had clambered into it and cast off, and he and Nugent were now at the oars, and making the little craft fairly fly over the water.

Down with the current, with two oars going like lightning, they swept.

"Buck up!" shouted Wharton. "Stick to it, Todd!"

Todd heard the words like one in a dream.

He knew that they meant help—rescue, if he could hold out long enough.

But the water was sucking him down, and a whirling sheet of green came up and over his head, and he was suffocating—suffocating!

A hand came down as if from illimitable depths and grasped him, and he was dragged away from death.

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He came up close beside the boat.

It was Harry Wharton who had grasped him, just in time. A minute more, and he and Marjorie were dragged into the boat—Marjorie insensible, Todd nearly so.

He collapsed into the bottom of the boat.

"Is she—is she safe?" he gasped.

"Yes."

"G-g-g-good!" gasped Todd.

Then he fainted, too.

Wharton and Nugent pulled to the shore. Harry waved his hand reassuringly to Clara and Wilhelmina, and they knew that Marjorie was safe. Ten minutes later Alonzo Todd opened his eyes, and stared round him blankly.

He was in bed in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars.

There were several people round his bed, and he blinked at them in wonder.

"Wha—what has happened?" he gasped.

"He's all right, now!" It was Mr Quelch's voice. "My brave lad!"

Todd gasped. He remembered in a flash.

"Miss Hazeldene? Is she all right?"

"Yes; she has already recovered."

"Jolly good!" said Todd, sitting up on the bed. "It was all my fault, you know—I know I'm an awful duffer. But I fished her out—I wouldn't have come out without her."

"You duffer!" said Harry Wharton. "You're dangerous, and you ought to be labelled dangerous! But you're a giddy hero, all the same!"

"Oh, rats!" said Todd.

But the Greyfriars juniors persisted in regarding Todd as a hero—as, indeed, he was. They rubbed him down, and helped him to dress, and there was quite a competition as to which of them should give him an arm downstairs.

Todd was the hero of the hour.

Bulstrode came up to him as soon as he was downstairs, looking very sheepish, as he generally did when he was doing a decent thing.

"You're a jolly good sort, Todd!" he said. "I'm sorry I japed you so much. You're a giddy ass, and there's no denying that, but you're true blue, and I'm sorry."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin says a chap should never bear malice, and I never do, you know. It's all right!"

It was some time before Marjorie left the care of Mrs. Locke. She had suffered more than the Duffer.

Todd waited anxiously for her to reappear.

She came down at last, with Wilhelmina and Clara. The picnic was quite off for that afternoon.

Marjorie smiled faintly at the sight of the Duffer.

He came towards her eagerly.

"I'm so sorry!" he exclaimed. "I was an ass—it was all my fault!"

"You cheerful chump!" said Hazeldene. "You ought to be put into a strait waistcoat! That's what's the matter with you!"

"He was very brave, Hazel," said Marjorie gently.

Hazeldene grunted. He had felt more than he cared to tell when he saw his sister in danger, and he could not readily forgive the Duffer for having been the cause of it. But Marjorie knew how much she owed the Duffer, and she gave him her hand with a frank smile.

"You were very, very brave," she said. "It was noble of you."

The Duffer coloured and stammered.

"I—I'm so sorry!" he stuttered confusedly. "I—I won't do it again! I—I mean—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

Marjorie laughed. The bell rang for afternoon classes, and the girls took their leave. Marjorie was little the worse now for her adventure, serious as it might have been. Todd looked after them dubiously as they went.

"I—I wonder whether I'd better ask permission of Mr. Quelch, and go and see them home?" he remarked to Harry Wharton. "Miss Hazeldene is not quite herself yet, and—"

"That you jolly well won't!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, grasping the junior by the arm and dragging him forcibly away towards the class-room. "You come on!"

"Really—"

"You're jolly well not going to look after Marjorie!" said Bob. "She'd never reach Cliff House alive if you did!"

And Todd was rushed into the Remove-room and planked down in his seat with a suddenness that took his breath away.

But from that day the Duffer—though he was always called the Duffer, and japed more than anybody else at Greyfriars—was one of the most popular fellows in the Lower School. For the fellows recognised the fact that, duffer as he might be, he was a hero as well.

THE END.

(Another long, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next Tuesday, entitled: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL," by Frank Richards. Please order your copy of THE MAGNET Library in advance. Price 1d.)



STANLEY DARE

The Boy Detective

INTRODUCTION.

Stanley Dare and Professor MacAndrew are reading in the paper of the case of an undergraduate of St. Martin's College, Cambridge, named Douglas Clayton, who is accused of the murder of a fellow undergraduate, when a hasty step is heard on the stairs outside. "Visitors," remarks the young detective.

(Now go on with the Story).

Stanley Dare is Retained on Clayton's Behalf—Footprints—On the Watch.

"There are two of them," added the professor. "The last man is wearing rubber-soled shoes."

"They must be coming to see either me or you," said Dare. "Ah, I told you so!" There was a sharp knock at the door.

"Come in!" Dare called out.

The door was pushed open with a swing, and there entered Wilfred Blount and Paget. The latter was in flannels, and wearing boating shoes.

"Mr. Stanley Dare?" said Blount, glancing at the young detective inquiringly.

"That is my name," replied Dare. "You have come to see me professionally, I suppose?"

"We have, unfortunately," returned Blount. "You will understand that when I say unfortunately, I mean that the visit is necessitated because a friend of ours is in trouble—very serious trouble."

"You must have come up by the first train from Cambridge this morning," said Dare.

"We did," answered Blount. "My companion had only time to jump into his flannels. But, pardon me, how do you know we came from Cambridge?"

"Your friend's cap has the college colours—blue and black—and the college badge—St. Martin's, if I am not mistaken," pursued Dare. "You have come to consult me with reference to the case of Douglas Clayton, who was arrested yesterday on a charge of murder?"

Then, seeing the look of astonishment on the faces of his prospective clients, he added:

"There is no need for me to make a mystery of my knowledge. I have read a short account of the affair in the morning paper."

"To be sure, I had forgotten that!" exclaimed Blount. "The papers have spread themselves out into half a column of headlines, an eighth of a column of facts, and three-eighths of surmises."

The young detective handed chairs to his guests, and then asked them for details. Blount glanced towards the professor, and in answer to the look of inquiry, the latter remarked:

"I'm a friend of Dr. Golightly, the principal of your college, young gentlemen."

"And I may add," said Dare, "that you may speak freely before Professor MacAndrew, as his advice and assistance have on many occasions been of the utmost service to me in difficult cases."

Blount bowed politely to the professor, and Paget observed that as Dr. Golightly was "one of the best," he was sure the professor would also come under that heading.

A slight smile twitched the corners of MacAndrew's mouth at the easy-going way in which the compliment was delivered. No doubt his thoughts carried him back at that moment to his own student days.

Wilfred Blount was the spokesman, and he gave an account of the terrible business with a clearness and conciseness that drew from the professor several ejaculations of approval.

The greater part of his recital is already familiar to the reader, but in conclusion he gave a description of the position of Latimer's rooms, and the manner in which the poison had been administered.

"It was Latimer's custom, I believe," he said, "always to

have a cup of coffee before going to bed. The coffee was made by his 'gyp' at a small spirit stove, and if Latimer happened to be late coming in, and the gyp had gone to bed, all he had to do was to put the coffee on the stove and make it hot again. On this particular night he was in a friend's rooms. He had his coffee, as usual. That is certain, because Sennitt, the gyp, had been in bed and asleep for some time."

"Did Sennitt wake up when his master entered the room?" asked Dare.

"He wasn't there. He had gone to his own quarters."

"So he does not know the exact time he returned?"

"No; but it was about two o'clock in the morning. It was ten minutes to two when Latimer quitted his friends' rooms. He had his coffee, as usual. That is certain, because the dirty cup was on his table. Moreover, on the dregs that were left in it being analysed, the presence of curarine was detected, and curarine, as, no doubt, you know, is a deadly poison."

"I ken that weel," said the professor. "Six drops in a cup of coffee would kill a man within three minutes."

"Douglas Clayton had about ten times that amount in his possession," pursued Blount. "It has all disappeared—phial as well; and as he had no occasion to go to the cupboard in which it was kept for at least three days before that fatal evening, he is not able to tell when it was taken, except that it must have been during those three days."

"Was the cupboard always locked?"

"Clayton assured me that it was always locked, and that he invariably kept the key himself. He had obtained the poison from a friend who had lately returned from South America, and was going to use it for some experimental purposes."

"Is Clayton a studious man?"

"Not as a rule. He studies by fits and starts; but he is more fond of rowing and cricket than study. He obtained the curarine, I believe, because he had to write a paper on certain alkaloid poisons."

"I have one more question to ask, Mr. Blount," said the young detective, "and a very great deal hinges on it. I want an absolutely certain answer, if it is in your power to give one. Surmise will not be of any use. Now, could Douglas Clayton by any possibility have entered Latimer's room that night—I mean, during Latimer's absence, without being seen or heard by someone, but particularly by his own or Latimer's gyp?"

"It would have been quite possible," replied Wilfred Blount slowly. "Provided he had a key to fit the door, for his own servant had a night off, and Latimer's servant had no occasion to remain hanging about the rooms after his master had quitted them."

"Then I am afraid we have a hard task before us, Mr. Blount, to prove your friend's innocence," returned the young detective gravely. "Everything is against him. Even motive can be proved. The accusation of theft, and the quarrel!"

"Yes," exclaimed Paget. "And his name has yet to be cleared in connection with the stolen money."

"When I discover who stole the money," said Dare, "I shall be on the high road to finding out who committed the murder."

"Then you will undertake the case, Mr. Dare?" exclaimed Blount.

"Certainly," replied Dare. "If your friend is innocent,

NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PERIL."

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he is the victim of as dark and foul a conspiracy as was ever hatched. It is no use mincing matters, Mr. Blount; he is in danger—very grave danger. Even if he escaped the extreme penalty of the law—for it is certain that he would be convicted on the evidence as it now stands—there is, or would be, still a sinister influence at work against him. For while he lives the guilty man can never feel safe."

"And the man who has committed the murder would not hesitate at committing another," commented Professor MacAndrew.

Blount and Paget had heard wonderful stories of the skill and daring of the young detective—still referred to as the boy detective, although he was just turned nineteen—and they believed that if anybody could save their comrade and bring the crime home to the guilty person, it was he; but after what he had said they felt their hopes sink, and they were gloomy and silent during the train journey down to Cambridge.

Professor MacAndrew accompanied them, for he had expressed his intention of visiting his old friend, Dr. Golightly. He was the first to break the silence, for even Dare was not in a talkative mood.

"I've been thinking, laddie," he said, "that ye ought to enter the college as an undergraduate."

Blount and Paget stared at him in amazement, but the young detective perfectly understood what he meant.

"It would certainly aid me in conducting my investigations," he said, "provided I could get leave of absence when I wanted it. But the necessary formalities which would have to be gone through before I could go into residence would take so long that the time would have passed when I could be of any service to my client."

"Have ye any objection to taking Dr. Golightly into your confidence?" asked MacAndrew.

"It is almost necessary that I should do so in any case," replied Dare. "I can imagine that he is a discreet man, professor, as he is your friend."

"Ay, ay, I ken weel he is discreet. And I'm thinking that ye might be entered on the books at once, in a sort of left-handed manner, ye ken. But ye must leave all that to me. I'll talk the doctor over. We'll gie it oot that ye're a student, say, from the University of Toronto, who wants to study for a term at an English University; that'll account for any little informality in your entrance. And if you dropped the name of Dare, and just ca'd yersel' Stanley, ye ken—"

"A splendid idea, professor," cried Dare; "if you can only arrange it with Dr. Golightly."

Needless to say, Blount and Paget entered into the scheme heart and soul, and were even planning to find a place for him in the college eight days before the train had reached their destination.

While they were discussing these matters Dare had opened his portmanteau, and taken from it a small "make-up" box, a wig, and a neat dark moustache.

"As it will be inconvenient to wear a disguise while I am a student," he said, "I must alter my appearance to-day, when I enter college as your guest. On no account let anybody know that I am a detective—excepting, of course, Dr. Golightly."

They had the compartment to themselves, and the two undergraduates watched him "making-up" with delighted interest.

In ten minutes time his features were completely transformed. The bronzed, smooth, boyish face had disappeared, and in place there was a sallow-featured young man of rather foreign appearance, with dark hair and moustache, and a pair of gold-rimmed eyeglasses balanced on his nose.

Arrived at St. Martin's College, the professor went straight to Dr. Golightly's lodge, while Dare accompanied Blount and Paget up to the former's rooms.

"Is Latimer's gyp in college now?" asked Dare.

"Yes, he is looking after another fellow. Do you want to see him?"

"Not yet. But I want to see Latimer's rooms. Can you get the key?"

"I can get it," said Paget. "The body has been taken away, but otherwise the rooms have not been interfered with."

"I am glad of that," replied Dare. "The clearing-up process that sometimes goes on after a tragedy very often destroys a valuable clue."

To every set of rooms in college there are two doors, a green baize one within, and a heavy oak one without. When a man shuts and fastens the outer door, so as to secure privacy, he is said to "sport his oak."

As Latimer's rooms were now unoccupied, the outer door was, of course, locked. Paget fetched the key and unlocked it, Dare entered, the others, at his request, remaining on the threshold.

The young detective examined the carpet and furniture thoroughly. There were three rooms—a sitting-room, a bed-room, and a gyp-room, the latter little more than a dark cupboard, where brushes and such-like articles were kept.

At the door of this room Dare was on his hands and knees examining the carpet through a powerful lens for a considerable time. At length he rose to his feet, and there was a gleam in his eyes which showed he had made a discovery of some importance.

"Does Clayton ever wear an old pair of rubber-soled shoes?" he asked. "The right shoe has a worn place, or a hole, nearly in the centre of the sole."

"He often used to wear an old pair of shoes such as you describe," replied Blount; "but I cannot answer for the worn place. The shoes are probably in his rooms now, so we can have a look at them."

"There is nothing more to be found out here," said Dare. "Lock the door again. I am curious to know what has become of that phial."

In Clayton's bed-room—his rooms being on the same floor—they found the old shoes, and, as Dare had suggested, the right one had a hole in the centre. The two undergrads looked blankly at it.

"Then Clayton must have been in Latimer's room after all," said Paget. "In his bed-room, for the gyp-room opens out of it, and that is where you saw the footprints. It is the only place where other persons have not been tramping about."

Dare gave an enigmatic smile.

"His shoes have been in there," he replied. "It does not follow as an absolute certainty that they were on his feet."

He would say no more on the subject then, but stood for a long time staring out of Clayton's window into the quadrangle in deep thought.

"Your rooms are right underneath those that were occupied by Latimer, I believe, Mr. Blount?" he said suddenly.

"Yes," replied Blount.

"I should be much obliged if you would allow me to sleep on your sofa to-night."

"With the greatest of pleasure," said Wilfred Blount. "My rooms are entirely at your service so far as the college regulations will allow."

The remainder of the day was spent by Dare in going over the college under the guidance of his two friends, for he had to keep up his character as a visitor. But he was gaining information, too, in a quiet, unobtrusive way.

The evening was spent on the river, for, above all things, it was necessary to prevent it becoming known that he was a detective.

When, after a light supper, he stretched himself upon the makeshift bed on the couch, it was not to sleep. He was alert and wakeful.

An hour passed. The college became quiet, and one by one the lights disappeared from the windows. He had extinguished his own light.

A deep-toned clock struck the hour of midnight.

(Another instalment of this detective story next Tuesday.)

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