

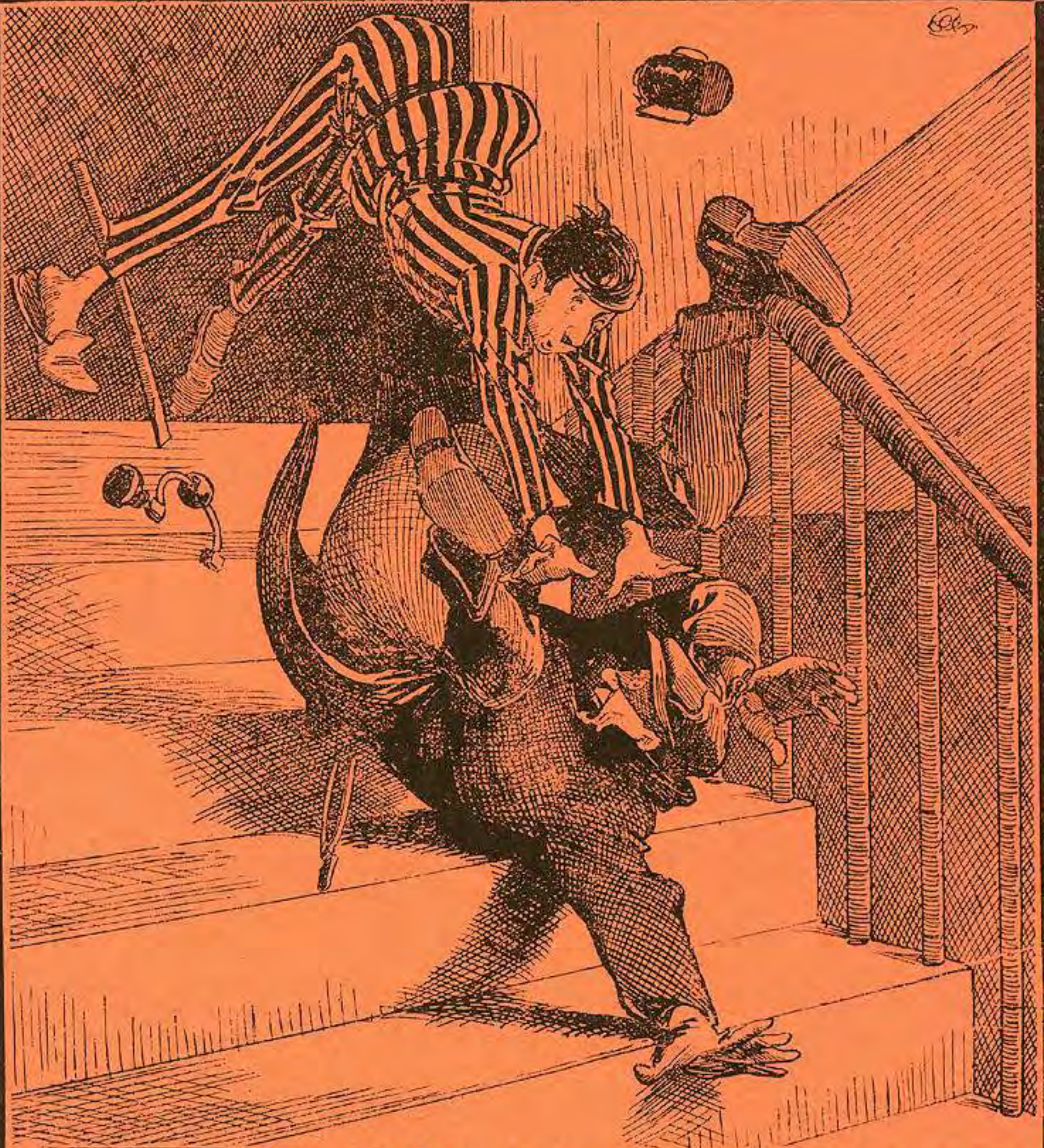
'Spoofing Alonzo!' A Laughable Tale of the Duffer of Greyfriars

Grand
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of
Harry
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School Tale of
HARRY WHARTON & Co.,
at Greyfriars.

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Rolling In It.

"JOHNNY, old man——"
"I say, John Bull——"
"My dear Johnny——"
"Can you lend me ten bob?"
"You might lend me a pound."
"Oh, I say, you fellows, do let the chap alone! I don't like to see you sponging on him like this. You might lend me a fiver, Bull, old chap!"
John Bull stood on the hearthrug in No. 14 Study, with his hands in his trousers' pockets. The sturdy, square-built junior looked very strong and solid as he stood there, with his back to the fire, looking at the crowd of fellows in his study.
There was a quiet smile on his face.

"Don't all speak at once!" he exclaimed. "Now, what do you want, Bunter?"
"I should like a fiver."
"Rats!"
"Only till my postal-order comes to-night," Billy Bunter, explained hastily. "I am expecting a postal-order——"
"Rubbish!"
"Oh, really, Bull——"
"What do you want, Skinner?"
"A pound," said Skinner promptly.
"And you, Stott?"
"Five bob."
"And you, Snoop?"
"Oh, half-a-crown will do for me," said Snoop.
John Bull laughed.
"Now, look here, I haven't any fivers to give away," he

remarked. "It's quite true that my aunt Tabitha sent me five hundred pounds in cash, to do as I liked with—"

Billy Bunter smacked his lips, as if the mere mention of such a sum of money made his mouth water.

"But I'm not giving it away with both hands," said John Bull calmly. "I'm willing to share round in reason, though. Hallo, Todd! What do you want?"

Alonzo Todd, the Duffer of Greyfriars, had dug a bony knuckle into John Bull's ribs. That was Alonzo's usual preliminary to making a remark.

"I wished to state, Bull, that I greatly approve of your determination to take care of your financial resources," said Alonzo. "I am sure that my Uncle Benjamin would regard your resolve with complete approval."

"Go hon!"

"I assure you that such is the case, Bull. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me—"

"Oh, cheese it, Todd!" interrupted Bulstrode.

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"Ring off!"

"Hallo, here come some more!" exclaimed Skinner, as Harry Wharton and Nugent and Bob Cherry came down the passage, and looked in at the crowded doorway.

John Bull grinned at the chums of the Greyfriars Remove. "What do you want?" he asked.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Only to give you a hand in kicking out these bounders, if you want us to," he replied. "Nothing else."

"Exactly!" said Bob Cherry.

And the Nabob of Bhanipur, whose dusky face could be seen grinning behind Wharton's, murmured that the exactfulness was terrific. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had not learned his English, in the first place, at Greyfriars!

"Thanks!" said John Bull. "I admit it is getting a bit on my nerves. I'm beginning to wish that my blessed Aunt Tabitha hadn't sent the money to me. She might have sent it to my Cousin Saul, and he would have been much more pleased."

"My dear man," exclaimed Ogilvy, of the Remove, "if the wealth worries you, hand it over to me. I'd spend it for you with pleasure."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, Johnny, you know, I'd mind it for you if you liked," said Bunter eagerly. "If you placed it in my charge, you'd always know exactly where to find it."

"Yes, in the tuckshop," said John Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Look here," said John Bull, indicating an empty tea-canister that stood upon the table, "you see that canister?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm going to shove cash into that canister, and leave it on my table," said John Bull, in his quiet tones. "Any fellow who needs any money can come and borrow without asking me."

"Oh!"

"A chap who's hard-up can take what he needs, and when he's in a position to pay, he can come and shove the money back," said John Bull. "Is that clear?"

"Good!"

"Ripping idea!"

"The rippingfulness is terrific!"

Harry Wharton laughed merrily.

"How long do you think the cash will last, at that rate, Bull?" he asked.

John Bull shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, it's an experiment," he said.

"It will be a jolly short one, I imagine."

"My dear Wharton!" exclaimed Alonzo Todd, in surprise. "You surely do not suppose that any fellow would take the money, unless he were really in need of it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows—"

The Famous Four walked away, laughing. Alonzo Todd's innocence was comic. Billy Bunter was not likely to leave much in the canister if he got a fair chance at it.

"When are you going to begin, Bull?" asked Billy Bunter eagerly.

"Presently."

"Why not begin now? You see—"

"I've got an imposition to finish. Now, do leave a chap in peace!"

The juniors, laughing, quitted the study. John Bull's scheme caused something of a sensation in the Form.

The Removites, naturally, were greatly excited at the knowledge that a fellow in their Form had £500 of his own, to do as he liked with.

Some of the seniors, in fact, had been excited about it, too.

The news had come to the Head's ears, and he had shaken

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his head very seriously over it. He wished that Aunt Tabitha had taken some other means of testing the steadiness of her favourite nephew's character.

John Bull settled down to his work.

Of all the juniors at Greyfriars, he was the least excited about the wonderful good fortune that had fallen to his lot.

But it would have taken a great deal at any time to disturb the equanimity of John Bull junior.

As a matter of fact, after the first novelty had worn off, Johnny had realised that there was no special pleasure in having more money than he could spend.

He had had enough before for his moderate needs, and now that he had too much, he could not eat more than his appetite allowed, or drink more than his thirst required, or read two books at once.

It was pleasant to have plenty of money; but, at the same time, it was quite possible to have too much of a good thing.

He finished his work, and then carried out his intention with regard to the canister.

He rattled shillings, half-crowns, and half-sovereigns into it until it was full almost to the brim. He had been gathering change from all quarters for the purpose, and now he crammed all he had into the canister.

Then, with his hands in his pockets, and whistling carelessly, he quitted the study.

Two or three fellows spoke to him as he went downstairs.

"Hallo, Bull!"

"Have you fixed up the canister?"

John Bull smiled.

"Yes," he replied.

The news was not long in spreading.

It was surprising what a number of fellows found cause to stroll in the direction of John Bull's study, with airs of exaggerated carelessness.

It was surprising, too, what a steady stream of juniors set in at Mrs. Mimble's little tuckshop across the quad.

All of them had ready cash—half-crowns, or five shilling pieces, or loose shillings, or half-sovereigns.

Such a steady stream of customers with cash had never occurred before in Mrs. Mimble's recollection as a business woman.

Bulstrode strolled into John Bull's study. Billy Bunter was just coming out. There was a guilty expression upon Bunter's face, and a furtive manner about him. He blinked at Bulstrode, and rolled away quickly down the passage.

Bulstrode went up to the table to look into the canister. As a matter of fact, Bulstrode generally had plenty of money of his own, but with John Bull's money flowing so freely, he could not resist the temptation to have some of it. If half-sovereigns were to be had for the taking, there was no reason that he could see why he shouldn't take one.

He looked into the canister, and scowled.

It was empty.

He turned towards the door, just as Skinner and Snoop and Hazeldene came in.

"Hallo!" grinned Skinner. "Fancy meeting you! Where's the canister?"

"There's nothing in it!"

"What?" howled the three juniors together.

"There's nothing in it."

"Nothing in it!" roared Hazeldene, who was in his usual state of being hard up. "Nothing in the canister?"

"Nothing at all!"

"I—I say, you haven't boned the lot, I suppose?" suggested Snoop.

Bulstrode scowled at him so fiercely that he started back, and wished that he hadn't spoken.

"No, I haven't," said the Remove bully savagely. "It's a rotten joke of John Bull's—most likely to pay us out for smashing his rotten concertina. It's a jape from beginning to end."

"The rotter!"

"The bounder!"

Bulstrode snapped his teeth.

"We'll put a stop to his giddy japing!" he exclaimed. "Come with me, and let's have him out!"

"Good!"

The four juniors rushed away at once in search of John Bull.

That unconscious youth was standing on the steps of the School House, looking out into the Close, where the snow still lay thick upon the ground, half melted into slush by the change in the weather.

He turned his head as he heard the four juniors coming tramping out. Their hostile looks warned him of trouble.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed. "What—"

He had no time to say more. They grasped him, and, in



"My word, I wonder what that was?" Alonzo Todd's still small voice broke the silence of the Remove dormitory, as the Duffer of Greyfriars sat up in bed, listening intently. (See page 8.)

spite of his fierce resistance, he was rolled down the steps, and into the muddy, slushy, half-melted snow.

"Ow!" he roared. "Ow! Yow! Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bulstrode. "Roll him in! We'll teach him to jape us! Roll the cad in! Ha, ha, ha!"

And rolled in it John Bull was with a vengeance, sputtering and struggling and gasping under the grasp of the vengeful juniors

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Billy Bunter's Treat.

"BUMP him!"
"Roll him over!"
"Squash him!"
"Give him another!"
"Yaroo!" roared John Bull. "Ow! Stop it! Groo! I'm smothered! Yow! Stop!"
"Thunder!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, stopping to look on. "I guess that's a high old time for Johnny Bull. Some."
"Yah! Ow! Rescue!"
"What on earth—"
"What the dickens—"
"Help! Rescue!"
"Roll him over!" roared Bulstrode.
"The roll-fulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton & Co. came running up. They shoved Bulstrode and his friends aside, none too gently.

Bulstrode turned a fierce look on the captain of the Remove.

"Hands off!" he shouted.

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

"What are you up to?"

"Mind your own business! Give him another roll, you chaps!"

Wharton stood over John Bull with his fists up, and a gleam in his eyes.

"That's enough," he said quietly. "If it's a jape, it's gone far enough. Give Johnny a hand up, Frank, old son."

"Right-ho!" said Nugent, laughing.

He helped the unfortunate Bull to his feet.

John Bull junior presented a shocking sight. Some of the juniors felt sympathetic. But all of them burst into a roar of laughter.

They could not help it. The spectacle was comic as well as tragic. John Bull was simply smothered with mud and slush from head to foot. His features and his clothes had disappeared under it.

Bulstrode stood back and grinned at him.

"Well, perhaps he's had enough," he said. "Ha, ha, ha!"

John Bull spluttered out mud and snow.

"You—you—you rotters!" he roared. "What do you mean? Are you dotty? What did you do that for?"

"One good turn deserves another," grinned Hazeldene.

"What do you mean? What have I done?"

"You've done us."

"And now we've done you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what did he do?" exclaimed Tom Brown.

Bulstrode snorted.

"He told us we could go and borrow something from the canister on his table if we liked, and when we went there, there was nothing in it."

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Nothing in it," echoed Snoop and Skinner. John Bull left off spluttering in his surprise. "What!" he exclaimed. "I left twenty-five pounds' worth of change in that canister."

"Rats!" Bull gouged the mud from his eyes, and advanced upon Bulstrode with clenched fists.

"Put 'em up!" he exclaimed. The Remove bully backed away. "Put 'em up!" roared John Bull.

"Rats! One good turn deserves another. You shouldn't have played such a rotten trick."

"Beastly rotten trick!" said Hazeldene. "You owe us an apology."

"I say," exclaimed Russell, bursting upon the group, "come along to the tuckshop. There's high jinks going on."

"What's happening?"

"Bunter—"

"Bunter! What about Bunter?"

"He's got his postal-orders at last, or else he's been robbing a bank. Got his pockets full of it; rolling in quids."

Harry Wharton burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha! That's where the money's gone. Bunter's collared the lot."

"Phew!"

"The phewfulness is terrific."

"My hat!"

"Just like Bunter."

Bulstrode's expression changed. He realised now that he had been a little hasty in jumping to conclusions. He remembered Bunter's guilty look as he sneaked out of John Bull's study.

"I—I—I fancy we've been rather—rather previous," he stammered.

John Bull did not reply. He turned and stamped away towards the tuckshop. The crowd of juniors followed him excitedly.

The shop was full.

Billy Bunter, sitting on the counter, with piles of eatables and drinkables round him, was filling himself up at top speed, beaming upon the crowd through his big spectacles, and standing treat royally.

Mrs. Mimble was serving as fast as her hands could move. For once in a way Billy Bunter was in funds, and could pay for what he ordered, and Mrs. Mimble turned quite a motherly eye upon him.

"That's right, you fellows!" Bunter was saying. "Wade in! It's my treat. Order anything you like. I've had a splendid remittance from a titled friend of mine, and it's my treat. More tarts, please, Mrs. Mimble! More cakes! More buns! More ginger-pop!"

"My dear Bunter, this is extremely generous of you. My Uncle Benjamin would—"

"Well, as a matter of fact, Todd, my intention is to be generous," said Billy Bunter. "Come on! Wade in! It's my treat!"

The fat junior broke off suddenly as John Bull, smothered with mud and snorting with anger, shoved his way into the shop. There was a yell of remonstrance at once.

"Keep off there!"

"Get away!"

"Keep your mud to yourself!"

John Bull said no word. He looked not to right nor to left. He strode straight up to the counter where sat the Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in a feeble attempt at a propitiatory smile.

"I—I say, Bull," he murmured, "I—I hope you've come to join in the feed, you know. I—I'd rather have you than any of the other chaps, you know. Oh!"

"Come down, you fat burglar!"

"Yah! Yaroo!"

John Bull threw his arms round Bunter, and dragged him off the counter. Bunter rolled on the floor in the midst of split lemonade and ginger-beer and jam-tarts.

There was a shout of angry protest from the fellows Bunter was treating.

"Hold on!"

"Let him alone!"

"Let Bunter alone!"

"He's standing treat!"

John Bull did not trouble to reply. He grasped the fat junior by the ankles, and dragged him wrong end upwards. Bunter's spectacles slid down his fat nose, and he gasped painfully for breath.

John Bull shook him hard, and as he shook, all sorts of coins rolled out of the fat junior's pockets.

Half-crowns and half-sovereigns, shillings and sixpences galore, scattered and rolled over the floor of the tuckshop.

"My hat! The chap's a walking gold-mine!" exclaimed Morgan.

"Where did you get all that tin, Bunter?"

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PLEASE NOTE!

"Ow! Oh, really—"

"He's collared the lot from the canister in my room," roared John Bull.

"Oh!"

"My word!"

"Greedy bounder!"

Bunter gasped chokingly.

"Ow! Leggo! I'm delicate! Yow! You—you said we were to help ourselves, you know. Yow!"

"I didn't say you were to help yourself to the lot," roared John Bull. "Outside!"

"Oh, really—"

"Empty your pockets—every coin, mind, or I'll kick you out."

Billy Bunter sat up, and, blinking with fright, turned his pockets out. He had about fifteen pounds about him in all.

"You chaps can have that for the treat, if you like," said John Bull, taking no notice of the money, "but Bunter goes out!"

"Oh, really, Bull— Ow!"

John Bull rolled the fat junior to the door, and rolled him out into the slushy snow.

By the time he had finished, Bunter's state was worse than John Bull's own.

But not a hand was extended to help Bunter. The treat was still going on royally in the tuckshop, and the fat founder of the feast, escaping from John Bull's hands at last, picked himself up, a mass of mud and slush, and fled for his life.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Man of the Mist.

HARRY WHARTON stood at the window of Study No. 1 in the Remove passage. He was looking out into the Close. A white mist dimmed the panes of the window, and through the mist the gaunt branches of the trees showed up dimly.

"Rotten evening!" said Nugent, with a yawn. "We'll miss the sprint to-night, Harry."

"The missfulness would be the wheezy good idea."

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"Better stick it out," he said. "We don't want those chaps in No. 13 outdoing us, for one thing. And we want to keep fit for footer. Fish has promised to show us some Yankee footer as soon as the ground's in condition."

"Oh, blow Fish!"

There was a kick at the door, and it flew open, and the ruddy countenance of Bob Cherry looked into the room. Bob was in running costume, and Mark Linley, who was with him, was similarly attired.

"Ready?" demanded Bob, in his stentorian tones, which could be heard in the furthest limits of the Remove quarters.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"These chaps are too lazy to come," he said.

"Oh, rats! Come out, you blessed slackers!"

"It's cosy here," said Nugent, yawning, as he leaned back in the armchair. "There's such a thing as overdoing exercise, you know."

Bob Cherry grinned, and strode into the study. He grasped the armchair by the back, and with a jerk of his powerful arms tossed Nugent out upon the hearthrug. Frank gave a roar as he bumped down.

"You ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Are you ready now?"

"Well, I suppose we may as well come," said Nugent, grumbling, as he picked himself up. "Come and change, you fellows."

"I'll eat the chestnuts while you're gone," grinned Bob Cherry.

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And in a few minutes the five chums were out in the Close, for the evening sprint round the old quad., which they very seldom missed.

Nugent shivered as he went down the steps.

"Beastly night!" he grumbled.

It was not a pleasant night. The Close was draped in mist, and, if it had been a less-known ground to the juniors, there would have been some danger of moving at more than a snail's pace.

"It's only for ten minutes," said Bob Cherry.

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Oh, get a move on, and don't grumble!"

The juniors ran lightly down the path.

They knew the ground as well as they knew their school books. Avoiding the main drive, in case anybody should be going to or from the gates in the mist, they skirted the school walls by the path under the trees.

The run soon warmed them up.

Dimly the shapes of walls and trees and buildings loomed up in the mist. It was late, almost time for the juniors to go to their dormitory, and only a few windows gleamed in the great building of Greyfriars.

"My hat!" exclaimed Wharton, slackening down, as the lights of the house disappeared in the mist. "We might be a mile from the house now."

The mist was dark, the silence deep.

The sound of a sudden rustling came to their ears in the stillness. They could see nothing but one another; but they knew, from the direction of the sound, that it was made by a movement of the ivy on the school wall.

Harry Wharton gave a start and nudged Nugent, who was next to him. The five juniors stopped quite still.

"Did you hear that?" muttered Wharton.

"The hearfulness is terrific!"

"It's somebody in the ivy," said Mark Linley, in a low voice.

"Somebody breaking bounds," said Bob Cherry, in equally cautious tones.

Wharton shook his head.

"It was somebody coming down this side of the wall," he said. "Not anybody climbing from inside. I'm sure of that."

"My hat!"

The juniors stood still and listened.

The thought that someone from the road was climbing the school wall, and entering the precincts of Greyfriars under cover of the mist, was a startling one.

Such a raider could hardly be coming for any honest purpose. It was too late an hour for any raid by the Court-field fellows.

But no sound followed the rustling of the ivy. It had died away, leaving silence.

"By Jove!" murmured Nugent. "I wonder —"

"It might be a thief!"

"Possible. But —"

"It's known in the village about John Bull's money," Wharton said, in a low voice. "News of that sort spreads quickly enough. I know the fellows were talking it over at Uncle Clegg's, and it's spread."

"Listen!"

It was a faint, indefinable sound from the mist. For a moment the boys thought they caught the sound of a low, hurried breathing, and then they lost it again.

Wharton set his lips.

"I'm going to see who it is," he said resolutely.

"Careful, Harry."

"You follow me."

Wharton advanced towards the ivy-clad wall. He had nearly reached it, and was aware of the dark mass of the wall looming above him, when he stumbled upon a crouching figure. He started back with a cry.

He heard a quick, hissing breath, and caught the sudden gleam of fierce, alarmed eyes, and then the figure receded into the mist.

"Here he is!" shouted Wharton.

He sprang forward in pursuit.

His outstretched hands grasped at a retreating figure, and he held on fast, though a savage curse in a deep voice warned him that he had a man, and a desperate man, to deal with.

"Come on!" he shouted.

The next moment a terrible blow stretched him on the ground. His chums, dashing up, fell upon him, stumbling over him helplessly.

The ivy rustled in the mist. Wharton dragged himself to a sitting posture, though his head was ringing from the heavy blow, and his nose was streaming blood.

"He's escaping!" he panted. "He's in the ivy! Collar him!"

The chums rushed on.

Harry Wharton staggered up. He could hardly keep his feet. His head seemed to be turning round, and lights danced before his eyes.

Nugent came back through the gloom.

"Got him!" exclaimed Harry.

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NEXT TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

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ONE
PENNY.

"He's gone!"

"Oh!"

Nugent caught Harry as he reeled. The other juniors came back with angry faces. The stranger, whoever he was, was gone, and the momentary glimpse had been too dim for them to hope to recognise him if they saw him again.

The juniors helped Harry Wharton to the house. As they entered the lighted hall, the crimson stain on Harry's face drew attention to the juniors from all sides. Mr. Quelch was standing at his study door, talking to Monsieur Charpentier, and he came towards the Removites instantly.

"Good heavens! What has happened?" he exclaimed.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Alonzo Keeps Watch.

M R. QUELCH gazed at Wharton in amazement and horror. The captain of the Remove tried to stand steadily upon his feet. He was recovering from the effects of the stunning blow he had received.

"It's—it's all right, sir," he exclaimed. "It's only my nose that's bleeding."

"But what has happened?"

Nugent explained. Mr. Quelch listened, with compressed lips.

"Take Wharton to the dormitory, and I will look into this," he exclaimed.

And Harry was helped upstairs, and in a few minutes he was in bed, and Nugent was bathing his injured face. His nose bled freely, and one of his eyes was darkly discoloured.

"My hat!" said Bulstrode. "You'll have an eye on you in the morning!"

"The eyes will be terrific, my commiserated chum!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur sorrowfully.

Wharton tried to grin.

"It's all right," he said. "I hope they'll get the chap who bowled me over, that's all."

But the man was not caught.

Mr. Quelch and Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, and three or four prefects, searched the Close as well as they could in the mist. Gosling, the school porter, brought out his mastiff, and, with the dog and several lanterns, the place was searched from end to end.

Broken ivy showed where a climber had crossed the wall in hot haste, but that was all that was discovered.

The mysterious intruder was gone.

Who he was, or what he wanted, no one could guess—unless he was a burglar. It was early for a burglar to attempt to visit the school. But Skinner suggested that he was taking advantage of the mist, and, perhaps, hoped to slip into the house before it was locked up, and secrete himself till it was safe to begin his depredations. In the rambling old buildings, where many rooms and garrets were unused, hiding-places abounded.

It was very probable that Skinner's suggestion was correct. There was great excitement among the boys, and some of them suggested that a watch should be kept all night.

But the heroes who were willing to sit up all night round study fires, with an excellent excuse for neglecting their work next morning, found such a scheme very much discouraged by their masters.

Mr. Quelch informed the Remove that the police had been communicated with by telephone, and that Gosling's bulldog was to be left loose that night, and directed the hopeful youngsters to go to bed as usual.

As they turned in, the juniors discussed the matter. The general opinion was that the story of John Bull's money had tempted some loafer in the village to essay the part of an amateur burglar.

"I say, you fellows, it's really not safe to have all that money about," Bunter remarked. "I suggest spending the whole lot of it to-morrow in a really stunning feed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter peevishly. "It seems to me a really ripping idea."

"It would—to you," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I don't suppose the chap was after my money at all," said John Bull quietly. "More likely, he's a regular burglar, and came here for the plate. I've heard that the Greyfriars plate is very valuable."

"It's worth thousands!" said Russell.

"Then that was his game; and he might have had it if Wharton hadn't happened to run into the rascal. That dodge of sneaking into the house in the fog, and hiding himself somewhere, was clever—and I've no doubt that that was his little game."

"Somebody ought to keep watch," said Bulstrode, with a wink at Skinner. "I suggest Todd, as Todd is such an obliging fellow. His Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon him to be obliging to other chaps."

Alonzo Todd turned a beaming smile upon Bulstrode.

"My dear Bulstrode, your statement is perfectly correct," he exclaimed. "That is precisely the instruction which my Uncle Benjamin has always endeavoured, I trust successfully, to impress upon my mind."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, then," said Bulstrode, with a grin, "my idea is that Todd should keep watch. He can sit with his feet in a basin of cold water, in case he should go to sleep."

"Ripping idea!" exclaimed Skinner.

"Splendid!"

Alonzo Todd looked dubiously at the grinning Removites.

"Don't you think I might catch cold?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess you might, Todd."

"I may be able to remain awake by sitting up in bed, and repeating the multiplication table to myself," said Alonzo; "or, perhaps you might like to remain awake, and talk to me on some interesting and instructive subject, Bulstrode."

"So I would, Toddy, but I'm not going to deprive you of the honour of keeping watch. You are going to have all the credit of it."

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"Not a word! I insist!"

And when the juniors turned in, Alonzo Todd propped himself up with pillows, and sat up in bed. Harry Wharton called over to him as he turned in.

"Go to sleep, Todd."

"I am keeping watch, my dear Wharton!"

"Don't be an ass! There's no need to keep watch. Bulstrode's only pulling your silly leg, you duffer!"

"Oh, shut up, Wharton!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "Why shouldn't Todd keep watch if he wants to?"

Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, entered the dormitory at that moment to put out the light. He stared at the Duffer of Greyfriars, sitting up in bed, and blinking at him with an amiable smile.

"What on earth's the matter with you, Todd?" he demanded.

"Nothing, my dear Wingate."

"Why don't you lie down, then?"

"I am keeping watch."

Wingate stared at him.

"What are you keeping watch for?"

"The burglar."

"The burglar's gone, if it was a burglar."

"But he may return, Wingate, and I should not like the college to lose thousands of pounds' worth of plate through any negligence on my part," said Todd mildly. "I am sure my Uncle Benjamin would not approve of it, either."

"You young ass!" roared Wingate. "Lie down!"

"My dear Wingate—"

The Greyfriars captain made a big stride towards Alonzo's bed. The Duffer of Greyfriars blinked at him, and decided to lie down.

"It is all right, my dear Wingate," he said hurriedly.

Wingate grinned.

"Go to sleep," he said; "and if I catch you keeping watch any more, I'll let you hear of it. Don't be an ass!"

And Wingate turned out the light and departed.

"I am afraid there is some slight difficulty in keeping watch as you suggested, Bulstrode," said Alonzo mildly. "Wingate does not seem to consider it necessary, and he apparently regards the idea with disfavour."

"Oh, rats! You stick it out!"

"Oh, very well; if you think—"

"Of course, I do!"

Alonzo sat up in bed again. He drew the bedclothes round his shoulders, for the night was very cold. The other fellows, after the usual chatter, dropped off one by one to sleep.

Alonzo watched alone. A bar of moonlight came in white and clear through the high windows.

Suddenly the Duffer of Greyfriars gave a start.

He had heard a sound in the silence of the dormitory.

It was a sound of the door opening.

He started, and listened breathlessly. Yes; there was no doubt about it, the door was opening, and there was the sound of a cautious footstep and a whispering of voices. The burglar was not alone, then!

Alonzo Todd trembled in every limb, and the perspiration poured down his face. But he remembered that his Uncle Benjamin had always impressed upon him to be cool and courageous in time of danger. He crept silently out of bed, and stole towards Bulstrode's bed to awaken him.

He gave a jump of terrified surprise as he came in contact with a dim figure in the gloom of the dormitory.

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PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's", and the Chums of Rylecombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

There was a sudden exclamation of surprise and annoyance from the person he had bumped into in the dark.

"Yah! Who's that? The beasts are awake!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Dear me!" gasped Alonzo. "It is not a burglar—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Collar the duffer!"

Alonzo Todd felt himself grasped by two or three pairs of hands, and rolled over on the floor, and then he gave a fearful yell as something wet and swampy came drenching over him.

Harry Wharton jumped up in bed.

"What's the row?"

"Yaroo!"

"Who's that?"

"Groo!"

"Go for 'em!"

It was the voice of Temple, of the Upper Fourth. Harry Wharton leaped out of bed.

"Buck up, you chaps!" he shouted. "It's a Form raid!"

— — —

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not Burglars.

THE Remove tumbled out of bed in hot haste. Alonzo's wild yell had awakened them, and at Wharton's warning they tumbled up at once.

Someone switched on the electric light, and the Remove dormitory was flooded with it. The sudden light disclosed a peculiar scene.

Seven or eight fellows belonging to the Upper Fourth were in the dormitory, in their pyjamas, headed by Temple, Dabney & Co. Alonzo Todd was sitting on the floor, drenched with ink.

He presented a shocking spectacle.

Wharton could not help laughing as he saw him. He understood at once how it was. The jokers of the Upper Fourth had had an idea of scaring the Remove by a night raid, no doubt hoping to make them think that burglars had arrived, after the alarm of the early evening. Alonzo having been on the watch, they were caught in the act, but the watchful Alonzo had suffered for his alertness.

"Oh dear!" murmured Alonzo. "I feel very wet, and—and I am sure this is ink on me! Oh dear! What would Uncle Benjamin say?"

"Go for 'em!" shouted Bob Cherry.

Temple & Co. retreated to the doorway.

Now that the whole Remove were awake and on the war-path, the handful of Fourth-Formers were so hopelessly outnumbered that they had nothing to do but to retreat.

But the Removites were not inclined to let them retreat in peace after disturbing their night's rest in this way.

"Come on!" roared John Bull.

"Wade in!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish.

They rushed upon the retreating Fourth.

Temple, Dabney & Co. backed out of the doorway, but before they could be gone, the Removites were upon them.

There was a wild and whirling conflict in the doorway and in the passage outside. For the moment the excited juniors had forgotten all about masters and prefects.

Pillows and bolsters whirled in the air, and fell upon heads and backs, and there were gasps and yells and shouts of defiance.

"Go it, Remove!"

"Buck up, you fellows!"

"The buck-upfulness is terrific!"

"I guess we'll lick those guys, some!"

"Go it!"

"Hurrah!"

"Here, let's get off!" gasped Temple. "The game's up!"

"Oh, rather!" panted Dabney.

And the Fourth-Formers went helter-skelter down the passage.

"After them!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Hold on! What about the prefects?"

"Blow the prefects!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on; chase the bounders!"

The Remove were tearing in pursuit.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were smitten with pillow and bolster from the rear long before they could reach their dormitory.

They rolled over in the passage, bawling to their Form-fellows for rescue.

"Rescue, Upper Fourth!"

"Buck up!"

"Oo-o-o-oh, rather!"

Fourth-Formers came pouring out of their dormitory. A battle royal raged in the passage. To and fro the combatants surged, furiously smiting and being smitten.

There was a shout from the stairs.



"Collar him!" The juniors rushed right at the ruffian, and piled upon him, dragging him, fighting fiercely, to the ground. (See page 26.)

"Stop that row!"

Loder, the prefect, came striding along the passage, with a cane in his hand and a furious expression on his face. Loder was the worst-tempered prefect in Greyfriars, and he was specially bad-tempered whenever any unruliness on the part of the juniors forced him to waste time, as he considered it, attending to his duties as a prefect. Loder liked the position, but he did not like the work.

"Stop it, you young scoundrels!"

Slash! Lash! Swish!

The juniors roared as the lashing cane came into contact with their bare limbs.

Loder was hitting out most recklessly. He did not seem to care how much he hurt the juniors. Fourth Form and Remove came in for his stinging slashes with equal impartiality.

The juniors yelled and roared and fled.

Limbs clad only in pyjamas were in no state to meet the lashes of that stinging cane.

Temple, Dabney & Co. bolted headlong into their dormitory, and slammed the door. The Remove were in worse case, as they were further from their quarters. They fled and hustled and squirmed along the passage, while the prefect dealt his reckless slashes to right and left.

Harry Wharton turned on Loder with a gleam in his eyes. A prefect at Greyfriars had a right to use the cane, but not to use it in that manner.

Wharton made a sudden spring, and wrested the instrument of punishment from the prefect's hand.

"Enough of that!" he said savagely.

Loder glared at him.

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NEXT
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"You cheeky young hound——"

Wharton tossed the cane down the staircase. Loder looked as if he would spring on him.

Wharton stood with clenched hands and gleaming eyes, and his chums gathered round him in a twinkling.

The prefect thought better of it. Perhaps, too, he had no time to expend in a dispute with the juniors. Loder had his coat and hat on, as if he were going out, though it was certainly a very curious hour of the night for a Greyfriars fellow to be going out.

"Get back to your dormitory!" he growled.

"We'll do that," Harry Wharton said curtly, "but hands off!"

"Get to bed!"

"Oh, rats!"

The juniors went back into the Remove dormitory. Loder glared into the room after them. He was in so great a passion that he could hardly speak.

"I'll report this to the Head in the morning!" he exclaimed.

Wharton looked at him with a curling lip.

"You may as well report what you are doing with a coat and hat on at eleven o'clock at night, as well," he said drily.

Loder started, and turned crimson.

"What do you mean, you cheeky young sweep?" he exclaimed.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

Loder did not pursue the subject. He stood with a red and angry face while the juniors went to bed.

Alonzo Todd blinked at him with a face of inky blackness.

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Loder stared at him in blank astonishment. In spite of his rage, he could not repress a grin at the sight of Alonzo's face.

"Do you mind if I wash before going to bed, Loder?" asked Alonzo. "One of those persons has most inconsiderately thrown a considerable quantity of an inky fluid upon me, and my skin is somewhat discoloured in consequence."

The prefect turned out the light, and slammed the door. "Oh dear!" said Todd. "I cannot help thinking that rather inconsiderate of Loder. I shall have to wash in the dark now."

"Lucky Todd was awake!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "One of us might have got that ink. I expect it was meant for you, Wharton."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Thanks awfully, Todd!" he said.

"Pray do not mention it, Wharton," said Todd. "I did not stay awake with the intention of saving you from being inked, but I am glad I have been able to oblige you! My Uncle Benjamin always said—"

"Good-night!"

"Yes; but he said—"

"Go to sleep!"

Alonzo Todd went on washing. It took him some time to get off the ink, and then it was not all gone.

"What on earth was Loder doing dressed to go out?" Tom Brown remarked, after thinking it out for some minutes.

"He was going out," said Wharton quietly. "Breaking bounds, of course, to go down to the Cross Keys. It's an old game of his. The row made him come up suddenly, and that's why he was so ratty. If it had been a little later, it would have meant a show-up for him, as he would have been out."

"The rotter! I say, Todd, are you going to keep watch again?"

"I—I think not, Brown. Under the circumstances I think I shall retire to bed, and go to sleep. I am somewhat fatigued."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo mopped his face and head with the towel. He was very wet. He had had to wash his hair as well as his face, and Alonzo had plenty of hair.

"Groo—groo!" he gasped, as he made his exertions. "My dear Bulstrode—"

"I'm going to sleep."

"I was thinking that you might care to give my head a rub for me, to dry it, as it is a considerable exertion to me."

"Rats!"

"It was really through your suggesting that I should keep watch, my dear Bulstrode, that this unfortunate accident happened, and—"

"Oh, get to bed!"

Alonzo rubbed at his head. It needed no small exertion to get Alonzo's mop of hair dry when once it had been thoroughly wetted.

"Skinner, my dear fellow, will you—"

Skinner snored.

"I say, Bunter—"

Snore!

"Dear me," said Alonzo, "I must remark that you fellows are very disobliging. My uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to do anything I could, at any time, to oblige anybody. Hazeldene, would you care to towel my head?"

Snore!

"My dear Bull, would you care—"

Snore!

"How very odd! I really—"

"Oh, I'll help you!" said Skinner, waking up suddenly.

"Come over here, Todd, will you? And I'll lend you a hand."

"I'm sure it's very kind of you, Skinner."

Skinner grinned in the darkness.

"Not at all, Todd. I've been thinking about what you've told us of your uncle Benjamin, and it makes me feel that I ought to be obliging."

"I'm so very glad to hear you say so, Skinner. It is so gratifying to have an elevating influence even upon a hard and unscrupulous character—"

"What!" roared Skinner.

"I trust you do not object to my speaking quite frankly, Skinner. My Uncle Benjamin told me never to flatter—"

"Oh, come over here!" said Skinner. "Squat down beside my bed, and I can reach your topknot."

"Thank you so much—"

"Oh, don't jaw!"

Alonzo Todd squatted down beside Skinner's bed. Skinner sat up in bed, and reached out to his washstand for the water-jug.

"Here's the towel, Skinner."

"Good! Here goes!"

"I'm so much obliged— I— Ow! Oh!"

Alonzo jumped up with a wild yell as Skinner's water-jug swamped its contents over his head and shoulders.

He staggered away, running with water.

"Ow! Yow! Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner. "I'm sorry! Ha, ha, ha! How did you come to do that, Todd? Ha, ha, ha! Come and let me have another try!"

"My dear Skinner—ow! Yow! I am very wet indeed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd sat on his bed and towelled away. He did not accept Skinner's second offer of assistance. He towelled and towelled till he was tired. The chuckling Removites had all dropped into slumber by the time he had finished.

"Dear me," murmured Alonzo, satisfied that his head was dry at last, and quite tired out with his exertions—"dear me! I consider Skinner a practical joker of a most inconsiderate and unpleasant kind. Although Uncle Benjamin impressed upon me to entertain kindly feelings towards everybody, I must confess that I cannot like Skinner's character."

And Alonzo went to bed.

He did not intend to keep watch any more that night. But the incidents of the night had made all his nerves lively, and he found it difficult to sleep. The thought of the burglar, too, was running in his mind; and as fast as he fell into slumber, he woke up again. A mouse could not stir behind the wall without Alonzo thinking of armed and masked burglars, and as the school clock tolled out the booming stroke of one, Alonzo started into broad wakefulness.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER,

Alonzo's Coup.

"MY word! I wonder what that was?"

It was Alonzo Todd's still small voice that broke the stillness of the dormitory. The Duffer of Greyfriars sat up in bed listening intently.

"Go't sleep, silly ass!" said a smothered voice from a near bed.

"I really couldn't think of such a thing with that noise going on," said Alonzo.

As the occupant of the bed had spoken a noise was heard, apparently coming from somewhere below. Alonzo's voice was eloquent with real alarm.

"Do you hear, you fellows?" he went on, in a loud whisper.

"Shut up, you cuckoo! It's only mice!"

"Mice, Skinner!"

There was a low chuckle from various beds.

"Yes, you idiot!" said Skinner, in a very much awake voice. "I suppose they've forgotten to take their boots off before they came in."

"What ridiculous nonsense, Skinner! How can you say such things—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo earnestly called upon the juniors to listen.

They did, and there could be no mistake about it.

"What do you think it is, you fellows?" asked Alonzo.

"Must be Mr. Quelch taking his boots off."

"Pray be serious, Ogilvy, if you please. What if we should all be murdered in our beds—"

"There'll be one of us done in, in his bed, if he doesn't dry up," growled Bulstrode, with deadly emphasis. "Someone tuck the ass in, for goodness' sake!"

"But don't you think we ought to inquire into this Bulstrode?" asked Alonzo. "You, as the biggest and strongest fellow amongst us ought to—"

"Go to sleep! You silly ass! It's only a burglar!"

"Burglar!"

"Yes. But you go to sleep. He won't come up here!" said Bulstrode testily.

"But—"

Alonzo broke off abruptly. A piece of soap had missed his ear by a hair. But whatever weaknesses Alonzo Todd may have possessed, giving up his purpose was not one of them.

"It's all very well, Bulstrode, to throw things at me. But what would my Uncle Benjamin say to me, if through a piece of negligence on my part anything happened to you this night—"

Alonzo paused to dodge a tin of blacking.

"And I consider it my duty to look into this," said Alonzo, stepping out of bed as he spoke.

"Bravo, Todd! He is a plucked one, though, you chaps!" said Skinner.

"Well, there's something in what you say, Todd," said Bulstrode, grinning in the darkness.

"Rather!" agreed Ogilvy, interpreting Skinner and Bulstrode's tone to mean that Alonzo was to be "encouraged."

"I thought you would agree with me in the long run, my dear fellows," said Alonzo. "Would you like to accompany me—"

"Oh, yes, rather! We, all of us, would," said Snoop. "But we're so sleepy."

A suppressed titter went all round the dormitory at Snoop's explanation.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, Snoop!" said Alonzo, pausing in his search for a weapon. "I shouldn't like anyone to lose his sleep for my sake. I say, you know—"

The dormitory resounded with deep snoring all at once. Alonzo was very much puzzled by it. He could not remember any people of his acquaintance developing such sound slumber in so short a time.

He was on the point of repeating his remark when the noise downstairs was heard once more.

"By Jove, chaps!" said Morgan, sitting bolt upright, and thereby "giving the game away" to use a popular expression. "I believe Todd's right after all. It must be a burglar!"

"Of course it's a burglar!" said Bulstrode crossly. "We agreed on that before. But what's the use of bothering? He won't come up here. We're all right—"

"I'm very sorry, Bulstrode," said Alonzo, striking a match to continue his search. "But I cannot associate myself with that sentiment. My Uncle Benjamin said it was my duty to protect others. Do you happen to have seen a cricket-stump about here?"

"Yes," said Skinner wearily. "It's behind my glass, Todd. Do be quick!"

"Certainly, Skinner! Thank you very much. I shall certainly disarm the burglar—"

Alonzo stopped as the word "burglar" appeared to remind him of recent events.

"I say, you're not what you call rotting me again, are you?"

"Not for worlds, Todd!" said Skinner. "How could we? We've nothing to do with the noise below, have we, Snoop?"

"Certainly not, Todd!" answered Snoop. "We should be obliged to Todd, chaps, wouldn't we, if he can prevent the villain coming up here?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Yes," said Alonzo, not quite convinced: "but you told me of a burglar last week, and it turned out to be M. Charpentier himself—"

"It's hardly fair to blame us for that, you know. How were we to know that M. Charpentier would come himself?" said Ogilvy.

The chuckling was suppressed with an effort. Apparently Alonzo thought he was on a "sure thing," so to speak, this time.

"Oh, come back to bed!" said Bulstrode, knowing very well that Todd was sure to persist in the opposite course.

"You mustn't go into danger."

He was right.

Alonzo's doubts appeared to vanish at once.

"Indeed, I shall do no such thing, Bulstrode," he said. "I am going to do my duty."

"Then let me advise you to blow out the candle, Todd," said Skinner. "Or it might warn him you were coming, you know."

"To be sure, Skinner. Thank you!" said Alonzo, putting himself into obscurity at once.

And amidst titters he opened the door noiselessly, and went out into the corridor. For a moment he was inclined to go back to bed. The chuckling almost convinced him it was another jape of Bulstrode's or Skinner's. But a sound below like the closing of a door turned his thoughts once more to the main issue. There surely couldn't be any doubt about it now. He went on grimly. Then another sound broke the stillness.

"Surely that was a footstep?" thought Alonzo, peering cautiously into the darkness.

But he heard nothing but the echo of the cricket-stump clicking against the wall. Alonzo resolved to be careful. A thing like that would certainly give the burglar the alarm. He crept on. Surely that was the same sound again! Alonzo Todd strained every nerve to listen. Yes. There was not the slightest doubt. It was a footstep on the stairs. Very soft came the shush of his tread. But it was a tread, Alonzo was certain.

He moved forward again.

Instantly the footsteps below ceased.

"How very odd!" murmured Alonzo.

Grasping the cricket-stump tightly, he stopped. But the footsteps did not begin again immediately.

"I was deceived," thought Alonzo. "I'll get down to the next turning, and then wait there."

But before he could put his plan into execution, the foot-

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NEXT TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

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ONE PENNY.

steps sounded again. Alonzo's heart beat wildly as he noticed that they were softer than before. The fellow, whoever he was, was evidently a desperate ruffian, resolved to risk everything before he would give up his nefarious enterprise.

Alonzo listened but a moment to the footsteps. Then he crept on to the turning in the stairs. He made not the least sound, yet the footsteps below ceased while he made his descent.

He waited. Minutes passed, and not a sound disturbed the midnight calm. Alonzo began to think once more that his ears had deceived him, when he heard a slight movement at the bottom of the next flight.

Peering cautiously into the gloom, he discerned some large object. It moved!

His hair, standing on end, Alonzo began to wish himself well out of it. The indefiniteness of the thing on the stairs was too much for his nerves.

With an effort, he reflected that this was what he had turned out for. This was the time for him to be brave!

Then his heart almost stopped beating. "It" was coming up the stairs. There was the shush of stealthy feet again.

Alonzo clutched the cricket-stump desperately. Squeezing himself into the darkness of the angle of the stairs, his mind ran wildly on thoughts of how others had sold their lives dearly under similar circumstances.

A little window let in enough light from the moon to show him a figure, with cap slouched over the eyes, and carrying his boots in his hand, coming up the stairs in front of him.

Alonzo had hard work not to yell outright. But even as it was he could not prevent a squeak escaping him.

The man on the stairs paused a moment, then laughed slightly. The man, doubtless, was laughing at his being scared at the squeak of a mouse. On he came.

Nearer! Nearer!

Alonzo felt as if every step was forcing him into the bricks behind him.

Alonzo almost froze with horror as he thought that if he let this man pass, the fellows' lives in the dormitory would not be worth a button.

Taking his courage in both his hands, so to speak, he raised the cricket-stump high in the darkness and smote!

Using all his strength, Alonzo brought the cricket-stump down thwack across the fellow's shoulders.

A yell fit to wake a whole cemetery followed.

"Oh!—oh!"

Alonzo felt his blood run cold. Then he recollected his fearful position. This was no time for mercy. The man he had struck was clearly a dangerous ruffian.

Slog went the cricket-stump again!

The "burglar" this time uttered a truly terrifying yell.

"Oh—oh—oh!" Great Scott! What lunatic have they let loose in the coll—"

The man began to kick out right and left from where he stood. The Duffer of Greyfriars "edged" closer to the wall. He dropped the cricket-stump, and away it went down the stairs, clattering, followed by a pair of boots. The fellow had evidently dropped them after Alonzo's first attack. Alonzo was simply stiff with fear. If the man kicked him while he was in such a temper, it would not be far short of fatal for Alonzo. Why didn't the fellows come? They must have heard! A fist crashed against Alonzo's ribs, and he roared.

"Ow! Please go away! I won't tell of you."

"Todd! You young beast!"

And even in his terror Alonzo Todd recognised the voice of Loder.

Speech failed him for some seconds. But at last he managed to gasp.

"Yes, by gad! I'll make you gasp. You young sweep!" said Loder, savagely groping for Alonzo in the dark.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, Loder!" began Alonzo. "I didn't know you were looking for the burglar, too. Ow!"

Alonzo yelled as a hand just missed his cheek. He managed to elude the prefect, and darted to the next flight of stairs.

A peal of laughter was just audible from above. Loder heard it, and gritted his teeth.

"Sorry, are you?" he hissed.

"Yes. I am really, Loder. Oh—ow!"

Alonzo had just found the upward flight, when Loder made another dive in that direction, grabbing the hem of Alonzo's pyjamas.

The Duffer of Greyfriars gave himself up for lost. But the garment, luckily for him, gave way. Without waiting for any more, Alonzo flew up the stairs.

"Come here, you little beast! D'you hear!" shouted Loder.

But Alonzo was not likely to obey that command. He sprinted up the stairs with a pace he could never have put in on the level of the cinder-path. After him sprinted Loder, breathing fury.

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

No Vengeance for Loder.

ALONZO TODD burst into the Remove dormitory, panting, his torn pyjamas flying in the breeze. The Removites were all sitting up in bed in wonder, some in alarm. They had all heard the vague sounds that had alarmed Alonzo, but a rambling old place like Greyfriars was full of mysterious sounds at night, especially when a strong winter wind was blowing. They had not believed for a moment that there was a burglar. But the sound of the row on the stairs, and Todd's frantic flight into the dormitory, made even Wharton think that the man of the mist might have returned.

He sprang out of bed as Todd came rushing in.

"Todd, what is it? Is it a burglar?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, dear!"

"What is it, Todd? Have you seen somebody?"

"Somebody?" gasped Todd.

"Are you hurt?"

"Hurt?"

Wharton snorted with impatience. Todd was falling into the curious way he had when he was alarmed or confused of repeating what was said to him instead of giving a connected answer.

"Look here, Todd, answer me."

"Answer you?"

"Yes. What is the matter?" roared Wharton.

"Matter!"

Loder came tearing into the dormitory. Alonzo gave a gasp of alarm, and dodged among the beds.

"Oh! Oh, dear! Keep him off! He is going to be violent—I am convinced that he is going to be violent."

"Where's that young hound, Todd?" roared Loder.

"My hat! Oh, it's Loder!"

"Put on the light!"

"What's the row, Loder?"

The light was switched on. It showed Loder, in his stockinged feet, his face inflamed with rage. The juniors knew what must have happened—that Loder had been breaking bounds, and that Alonzo had met him in the dark and mistaken him for a burglar. Loder had left his hat and coat below, but the mud on his trousers showed that he had been out, if the juniors had not been convinced of that, otherwise.

The prefect was boiling with rage. It was the second trouble that night in the Remove dormitory. It was quite probable, too, that Loder had been losing—he usually did—at the card game at the Cross Keys; and, if so, it would not have improved his temper.

"Todd! Where's Todd?"

Alonzo Todd dodged behind Wharton. The prefect strode towards him.

"Hold on," said Harry Wharton calmly. "What's the row?"

"Stand aside!"

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to thrash that young cub within an inch of his life!" said Loder, grinding his teeth. "He's hit me with a cricket-stump, and raised a bruise as big as an egg on my shoulder."

"I'm so sorry! I mistook you for a burglar."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get aside, Wharton, or I'll knock you flying!"

"Line up, chaps!" said Wharton quietly.

Bob Cherry and Nugent, Tom Brown and Mark Linley, were out of bed in a moment. John Bull and Bulstrode joined them, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

The prefect gritted his teeth.

"Todd! Come here!"

Todd blinked at him over Wharton's shoulder.

"I—I'd rather remain where I am, Loder. I have a feeling that you are going to be violent. It was not my fault that I mistook you for a burglar. How was I to know that you were out looking for the burglar, too?"

There was a chuckle in the dormitory. Alonzo Todd was the only fellow there to whom it did not occur for what reason Loder had been out.

Loder made a movement as if to throw himself upon the juniors who stood there to defend Alonzo. But before he could do so, a stern voice was heard at the door.

"What is the matter here?"

It was Mr. Quelch's voice. The master of the Remove stood looking into the dormitory with a stern frown upon his face.

"Loder! Kindly explain this!"

Loder tried to control his rage.

"I have been assaulted by Todd with a cricket-stump, sir!" he exclaimed. "I am convinced that he was set on by the others to do it, probably by Wharton."

"Is that the case, Todd?"

"Oh, certainly not, sir! I went down thinking there was

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a burglar, because I heard a noise—the other fellows will bear witness that there was a noise——"

"Oh, yes, sir!" chorused the other fellows.

"When I found someone creeping upstairs and carrying his boots in his hand, sir, I naturally concluded that it was the burglar, sir," said Alonzo innocently. "I have already assured Loder that I am sorry for the mistake."

Mr. Quelch turned a very curious glance upon Loder, and the senior's cheeks became very red. His eyes dropped before the Form-master's.

"You were creeping upstairs carrying your boots, Loder?"

The prefect breathed very hard for a moment.

"Yes, sir," he faltered. "I—I heard a noise, too, and—after the alarm in the Close this evening, I—I thought it might be a house-breaker, and I—I came out to look."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch.

His manner did not indicate in the least whether he believed the prefect or not. But Harry Wharton thought that he could see disbelief in Mr. Quelch's face.

"It seems to have been a mistake, then," said Mr. Quelch quietly. "Under the circumstances, Loder, you cannot very well blame Todd."

The prefect set his lips. Now that a master had entered into the matter, he was only too anxious to have it dropped as soon as possible.

"Very well, sir," he said. "I thought that Todd knew it was I all along, and only pretended to make a mistake."

"My dear Loder, how could I know it was you in the dark?" exclaimed Alonzo. "Besides, I have already stated that I took you for a burglar. I trust you do not doubt my word. My Uncle Benjamin says that only untruthful and dishonourable persons are ready to doubt other people's statements in a hurry."

"You—you——"

"That will do, Todd," said Mr. Quelch, suppressing a smile.

"Go back to bed at once, all of you. Under the circumstances, Loder, I think you had better accept Todd's explanation and allow the matter to drop."

"Certainly, sir, if you say so," said the prefect submissively.

But he ground his teeth as he went down the passage. Mr. Quelch gave the Removites a severe look.

"Bray let there be no further disturbance to-night," he said. "And I think you had better give up looking for burglars, Todd. Good-night."

"Good-night, sir," said the Remove meekly.

Mr. Quelch closed the door. Then a long chuckle went through the dormitory from end to end.

"Dear me!" said Alonzo. "I really do not see anything to laugh at, my dear schoolfellows. I am afraid that Loder must have been somewhat hurt."

Strange to say, the Removites did not seem to mind. The chuckle became a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows——"

"Ha, ha, ha! Good old Alonzo!"

And the Remove chuckled themselves to sleep. Alonzo did not listen for any more noises that night.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Alonzo the Provider.

"FEED or no feed, I'm not going to let it interfere with footer," said Harry Wharton.

"Nor I," said Frank Nugent. "But something will have to be done. You can't have a feed without food, you know."

The chums nodded.

"Oh, any old thing would do for Bunter!" said Skinner.

"He has a digestion like an ostrich, to say nothing of a boa-constrictor. No, don't get excited, Bunter."

"Down, Bunter," said Nugent, grinning. "Time to complain when the grub is here."

"Poor Bunter!" said Bob Cherry, interrupting the Owl of the Remove, in his turn. "But don't worry. We won't send Skinner for the prog, so you're all right."

"Beasts!" began Billy Bunter.

Wharton made a movement towards him. The juniors laughed heartily as Billy Bunter hurriedly made for the door.

"Ring off, and don't be an ass, Bunter!" said Bulstrode.

"You're interfering with important business."

The chums of the Remove stared at Bulstrode. Billy Bunter blinked at him.

"By Jove! That's good for Bulstrode!" said Nugent.

"But you're quite right," he continued, turning to the burly Removite. "It is an important matter. Shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"Scat!"

"Really, Wharton, if you were not so rotten to me, I had a jolly ripping proposal to make!"

"All serene, Bunter!" grinned Bob Cherry. "But we don't want any more Christmas bust-ups!"

"Fatheads! If you'd got any sense, you'd listen to my stunning idea! Oh, really, Wharton! Hold hard!"

"I will, I assure you, Bunter," said the captain of the Remove, who had got Bunter's collar in his grasp. "Now," he continued, "out with that giddy idea, Bunter, if you please."

"Oh, really, Wharton, I don't know whether I shall now!"

"Bump him!"

"Ow! Oh! Really, Cherry! Really, Wharton! All right! I'll tell you!" shouted Billy Bunter. "To begin with, you all know that Mrs. Mimble is crooked to-day—"

"Let's bump the beast for speaking in such a manner of a lady," said Nugent.

"No time," said Harry Wharton. "Let the beast speak."

"I always said that Wharton had more sense than any of you," said Billy Bunter.

"Buck up!" roared the juniors.

"You want to have a feed!" said Billy Bunter, suddenly assuming a businesslike tone. "And as I said, Mrs. Mimble is crooked—I mean not very well to-day, and has shut up her shop. Now for my proposal!"

"And your execution if you don't go on at once," said Nugent determinedly.

"Well, there you are," resumed Bunter hurriedly.

"You've no time to get the things yourselves!"

"We've time to bump you," suggested Bob Cherry.

"And so you will require a messenger," went on Billy Bunter, putting his hand on his hip like one well satisfied with himself. "Well, there you are again. Feed wanted. You fellows no time. Mrs. Mimble's closed. Nothing for it but messenger down to Uncle Clegg's, in village. Give me, say, five pounds. Send me! I'll do you well!"

For a moment the chums stared at Billy Bunter. Then the impudence of the Owl of the Remove swept over them like an avalanche, and they fell on him hip and thigh—in common parlance, Bunter "went through it." He struggled to make his escape, and met with better success than he anticipated. Then he dashed out of the room at top speed, and fled along the passages, pursued by the boisterous laughter of the chums of the Remove.

"My dear Bunter! What a dreadful sight!" said Alonzo Todd, meeting him unexpectedly.

"Gerrouit! I'll take none of your cheek!" snarled Billy Bunter.

"Of course you won't, Bunter," said Alonzo. "What could you want with my cheek? But can I be of any assistance? My Uncle Benjamin said I was always to play the good Samaritan in cases of distress."

"Oh, hang your Uncle Benjamin, and the good Samaritan, too!" burst out Billy Bunter.

"Bunter! I'm shocked—nay, pained—"

"So am I!" said Billy Bunter heatedly, as Alonzo's words reminded him of what he had just gone through.

"Why, what is the matter, dear Bunter?" cried Alonzo, in alarm. "Pray tell me your woe."

"I've just been slugging those cads," said Bunter, shaking his ink-covered head in the direction of the common-room.

"Slugging, Bunter? Pray what is that?"

"Fighting!" shouted Billy Bunter savagely.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, Bunter!" said Alonzo. "But, really, you cannot expect me to believe that, you know. You couldn't fight Wharton and his friends by yourself, and you look as if you had just been through some fearful experience—"

"Oh! Do I?" bellowed the Owl of the Remove. "Well, you can take that, then!"

And he dealt Alonzo Todd a sounding blow in the chest, sitting the Duffer of Greyfriars on the stone floor of the passage. Striding over him, Billy Bunter went on to his study. Alonzo stared after him in amazement.

"I can't think what you struck me for, Bunter," he said. "But I shall certainly go and see whether you have hurt Wharton or any of his companions, in which case, I shall see that you are fittingly punished."

And Alonzo Todd trotted off to find Harry Wharton & Co. It did not take him long, for five minutes had not elapsed since Bunter's expulsion from the common-room, and they were there still, trying to arrange the feed.

"Ah, Wharton, I'm so glad to find you uninjured!" said Alonzo, as he came in. "Bunter is in a savage temper, and I feared he had done you a mischief."

"Ha, ha, ha! Good old Alonzo!"

Alonzo stared at them. Harry Wharton patted him on the back.

"I'm very much obliged by your good opinion conveyed in the last part of your remark, you fellows," said Alonzo. "But I fail to see any cause for laughter. Wharton might have been killed. Bunter has been slugging you, whatever that may mean, I understand."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the chums again. "Wharton might have been killed! Ha, ha!"

"It's all right, Todd," said Bob Cherry kindly. "We had to give that fat beast a little grueling for his cheek!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"Oh!" said Alonzo. "Then I'm very, very glad he didn't hurt any of you."

"Let's settle this feed business, for goodness' sake, kids. Who's to go?" demanded Wharton.

"I'll go with pleasure, if the fellows think I'm intruding," began Alonzo. "My Uncle—"

"Ha, ha, ha! We didn't mean that, Toddy, old son. We want someone to go to Uncle Clegg's, in the village, while we play footer."

"Oh, I see, Wharton!" said Alonzo, beaming on the company generally. "But I shall be very pleased to make my offer good even in that case. I'll go to Uncle Clegg's. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"By Jove!" interrupted Bob Cherry. "The very thing! Let's send old Alonzo, kids. An uncle by any other name would be a treat, wouldn't it, Todd?"

Alonzo Todd looked wonderingly at Bob Cherry, and the chums looked dubiously at Alonzo.

"We want some grub fetched from Uncle Clegg's, Todd," said Harry Wharton. "D'you think you can do it?"

"Oh, yes, Wharton!" Alonzo hastened to assure him.

"Especially if you require cereals. My Uncle Benjamin taught me all about Quaker Oats, bran-mash, and how to make gruel, and the right kind of caraway seeds to put in hot-cross buns. Why, what's the matter, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton made a wry face as Alonzo proceeded. Alonzo's menu wasn't very exhilarating. But evidently he was the only possible messenger. The fellows were all intent on footer. He looked round the circle of faces. He was glad to read that they were agreeable to trusting their luck to Alonzo. He turned with a serious face to Alonzo, jingling two sovereigns in his hand at the same time.

"We don't want any of the rabbit-food you mentioned, Todd," he began, "but we're much obliged for your offer to go, nevertheless. We would like something solid—"

"Nuts, shall we say, Wharton?" suggested Alonzo.

Harry Wharton grinned. If it hadn't been for the shortness of time, the chums would have scalped Alonzo for his unwitting reversion to the Darwinian theory.

"No, Todd. Hardly that," he said. "I meant things like—"

"Sausages!" said Nugent.

"And ham!" said another.

"Eggs! Jam-tarts! Meringues! Mince-pies! Kippers! Muffins! Bloater-paste!"

"Food, Todd," said Bob Cherry. "Think you can do it now?"

"Oh, yes, Cherry, thank you!"

"Here you are, then, Todd," said Harry Wharton, handing out the money. "Be careful, old son."

"Oh, yes, Wharton! You may rely on me!"

"Of course, if you should see any little thing you would like for yourself, get it, Todd," said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, thank you, Wharton! My Uncle Benjamin would like a packet of snuff, I'm sure. Thank you."

And without another word, Alonzo trotted off on his errand to Uncle Clegg's.

"Don't lose any time, Todd!" shouted Bob Cherry after him.

Alonzo returned him the sunniest of smiles, as much as to say he knew much better than that. And if a little vigorous walking could have borne testimony, Alonzo certainly meant it, for he arrived at Uncle Clegg's shop, looking as if he had just come out of an incubator.

"Good afternoon!" said Alonzo, raising his cap. "I've got two pounds, and I want some things for a feed."

"Let's see 'em!" said Uncle Clegg, thinking it was another practical joke by the chums.

But he instantly became the most obsequious of tradesmen when Alonzo showed him the two glittering coins.

"Ah'm! And what can I get for you, sir?"

Alonzo thought Uncle Clegg's voice so nice that he concluded he must have grossly misjudged him in the past. Uncle Clegg was inwardly dancing with excitement. To his mind, this was the softest thing that had come his way for years. Visions of unlimited old stock to be palmed off on the Duffer of Greyfriars careered through his brain.

"I think I had better have four pounds of sausages, please," answered Alonzo.

"Yes, sir."

Alonzo beheld four bundles of spicy mixture, those left over from two days before, on the counter before him. He couldn't help but notice something that made him sniff. But

ANSWERS

Uncle Clegg rushed him on to the next item, and he forgot all about it at once.

"Three pounds of 'am? Yes, sir. All the very best, these, sir!"

And Alonzo Todd wondered why the very best ham should necessitate carving off so many bones that seemed to have very little ham on them. But he stopped at wondering. In the trade, Uncle Clegg knew them as "shank ends."

"Some eggs next, if you please, Uncle—I mean Mr. Clegg," said Alonzo, in reply to the tradesman's ingratiating smile.

Alonzo put his head over the box Uncle Clegg drew him to. But he drew it back rather quicker. Alonzo had a keen sense of smell.

"Surely they are not quite fresh, Mr. Clegg?" he said.

"My dear sir, they are specially selected eggs. How can you? You—you hurt my feelings, Master Todd."

"Oh, I'm so sorry, Mr. Clegg! But I am under such a responsibility, you know."

"Yes, yes! Oh, yes, Master Todd, I understand that, perfectly."

"Yes, of course. If they are specially selected, I suppose that would dispose of any difficulty, wouldn't it?" said Alonzo.

"Oh, yes, certainly, Master Todd! But would you like to select them yourself?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Clegg," returned the Duffer of Greyfriars apologetically. "I'm sure there's no need now."

The wily Mr. Clegg smiled.

"Three dozen, Master Todd?" he said. "Four dozen for three-and-six?"

Alonzo Todd "bit" again, and Uncle Clegg took good care to put the eggs as far away from him as possible. A nearer acquaintance with them was only desirable for Alonzo after he had left the shop.

"And what else, Master Todd?" said the grocer, in a voice more oily than his butter. "Three of sausage, three-and-six, three of 'am's four, four dozen higgs is three-and-six—an' cheap—makin' a total in all of eleven shillings, sir. Any sardines, jam, jam-tarts, pilchards, blacking, macaroons, meringues, nail-brushes, special mixtures, brawn, calves'-foot jelly, bottled ditto, saveloys, polonies, corned beef, braised veal, turnips, carrots, Indian corn, Everton toffee, lemon flavoured, almonds, marmalade, metal polish, acid-drops, sponge-cakes, treacle, syrup? We should close at three to-day, Master Todd, but I don't mind keeping open a little longer on your account."

Alonzo Todd gazed at Uncle Clegg with as much respect almost as he would give the Head himself. He thought a new side to the grocer's character had been opened to him. What an obliging man! Alonzo was very much impressed.

"I think I'll take a quantity of most of those things you have mentioned, sir," he said. But even Alonzo was wise enough to reflect that such things as blacking, nail-brushes, carrots and turnips, would not earn him the gratitude of the chums.

And Uncle Clegg washed his hands with invisible soap, as Alonzo staggered out of the shop, laden with the things Mr. Clegg said he wanted, and a good many things that he assuredly didn't.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Clegg!" said Alonzo gratefully. "I'm sure the fellows will be delighted with these things."

Uncle Clegg hid his mouth behind his hand for a moment.

"I hope so, Master Todd."

But hope told a flattering tale, so to speak.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Fish Plays Footer.

FOOTER had been stopped at Greyfriars for some time by the weather. It was the first time the juniors had been able to play the game out of doors since the beginning of the term. And footer indoors had led to all sorts of trouble. In the keen winter sunshine, the Removites enjoyed the first game of the term. Fisher T. Fish offered to keep his promise to show them how they played football "over there." But Fish's kind offer was not accepted.

"Another time, my son," said Harry Wharton. "Another afternoon! We haven't got too much time, as it is."

"I guess I could show you some things," said Fish.

"Some swank, among other things," suggested Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess—"

"Oh, come on, and play up!"

The juniors played up. Fisher T. Fish looked on, with a grin upon his keen American features which told of his lofty

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confidence in his own abilities to do better if he should be put to the test.

Wharton was giving John Bull a trial. He fancied that the sturdy, powerfully-built new junior would be very valuable in the defence. And John Bull showed that he could play at back.

Two full elevens, selected from the Remove, were playing, and John Bull was left-back in Wharton's team.

Bulstrode, who was a forward on the other side, came charging down upon him, with the ball.

John Bull blocked the way.

Bulstrode was a big, heavy fellow, and he had a little way of making use of his size and weight against smaller fellows in the football-field. His charges were strictly fair, but neither kind nor considerate. There was a grin on his face as he charged down the back. He had an inward idea that in this practice match he would be able to pay off some old scores against John Bull junior.

Bull did not waver from the charge.

Biff!

Bulstrode shouldered heavily into him.

The back did not turn a hair. He stood like a rock, and Bulstrode went crashing down from the force of his own charge.

John Bull stood as firmly upon his feet as if he were planted there. Bulstrode bumped on the ground with a loud gasp.

There was a yell of laughter from the fellows who were looking on.

All of them had seen what Bulstrode had intended to do, and all of them were pleased to see Bulstrode rolling on the ground, and John Bull standing undisturbed.

While Bulstrode rolled over, John Bull cleared with perfect coolness, and the game went surging away to midfield.

Bulstrode sprang up furiously.

"You—you rotter!" he roared.

Bull looked at him calmly.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

"Shut up, Bulstrode!" shouted Wharton, across the field. "It was your own fault, and it serves you jolly well right."

Bulstrode gritted his teeth.

"Of course, I expected that of you, Wharton!" he exclaimed savagely.

"You'll get the order of the boot if you don't shut up, and play up," said the captain of the Remove curtly.

And Bulstrode thought upon the whole that he had better do both. But he gave John Bull a savage glance, which did not seem, however, to affect that youth at all. The new junior played up coolly and steadily, quite regardless of Bulstrode. And Bulstrode did not charge him again.

The practice match ended as dusk descended upon the Close, and the juniors trooped off, flushed with their exertions.

"You call that footer, I guess?" Fisher T. Fish remarked.

Harry Wharton stopped, and looked at him. The American junior, in spite of the lessons he had received, showed no diminution of his "swank." Perhaps it was a part of the nature of Fisher T. Fish.

"You've guessed right," said Wharton.

"Then you ought to see us play over there!" drawled Fish.

"I've no doubt it would be a sight for gods and men and little fishes," said Harry Wharton drily. "Cheese it, Fish, old man. You can't play footer for toffee, I'm pretty sure of that."

Fisher T. Fish shrugged his shoulders.

"I guess I could show you some," he remarked.

"Well, come and show us now," said Frank Nugent suddenly. "It's not too dark. Come and dribble the ball up the field against a couple of backs, and if you do it, I'll eat my Sunday topper."

"I guess I could beat your team on my lonesome, if I half-tryed," said Fisher T. Fish cheerfully.

"Rats!"

"Oh, come off!"

"Let's see you do it," said Harry Wharton. "Look here, we'll put a single back to stop you, and no goalkeeper. I'll be the only forward, and I'll give you a start of six yards. And if you put the ball in the goal, I'll stand you a new footer as a prize."

"Done!"

Fisher T. Fish strolled on the field.

Nugent glanced at Harry Wharton, and gave a soft whistle.

"You're giving him a soft thing if he can do anything at footer at all," he remarked.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"We'll see," he replied.

He stepped on the field. He stood behind the goal, and the ball was placed to give Fisher T. Fish six yards start of him.

John Bull went down towards the other goal to play back. With only one man, six yards behind him, and only one man in front, Fisher T. Fish's task should not have been difficult, if his play was anything like equal to his talk. And his confident manner showed that he fully imagined that he would win that little contest hands down.

"Blow up, Brown!" exclaimed Harry. "Are you ready, Fish?"

"Yep."

Torn Brown blew a shrill blast on the whistle.

Fish started off with the ball. He had started before the whistle ceased to ring; but Harry Wharton was after him like a shot.

There was a shout of laughter from the onlookers. Fisher T. Fish's dribbling was about the clumsiest performance they had ever seen on the junior ground. Even Billy Bunter's play was not worse.

But Fisher T. Fish dashed on, evidently quite satisfied with his style.

Harry Wharton grinned as he ran after him. In two strides he knew that he could overtake the American whenever he chose. He closed up behind the panting Fish, and tapped him on the back of the head amid roars of laughter from the spectators.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take the ball away!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton passed Fish, and easily hooked the ball away from him, and dribbled it across the field. Fisher T. Fish stopped, and panted and stared after him.

"Great snakes!" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is that how you play footer over there, Fish?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Fishy!"

Harry Wharton, laughing, passed the ball back to Fish. It caught the American junior on the chest, and he sat down. The juniors roared again.

"Take the ball, Fishy!" yelled Wharton. "Go on, and beat John Bull!"

Fisher T. Fish scrambled up.

"I guess I can do that!" he panted.

"Ha, ha! Go it, then!"

Fisher T. Fish dribbled the ball goalward.

John Bull stood ready for him, waiting. There was a quiet grin on John Bull's face. No one, excepting Fisher T. Fish, fancied for a moment that the American would succeed in passing the solid, sturdy back.

"Go it, Bull!"

John Bull made a sudden movement. Fish was endeavouring to swerve clumsily round him, but Bull was on the ball in a moment. Almost without an effort, he cleared, and sent the leather whizzing to midfield.

Fisher T. Fish stopped, apparently astounded to find that the ball was no longer at his feet. The Removites yelled with laughter.

John Bull put his hands in his pockets, and walked off the field, grinning. Harry Wharton picked up the ball. The juniors laughed themselves hoarse. Even Fisher T. Fish looked a little sheepish as he came off the field.

"Jevver get left?" asked Bob Cherry. And there was a fresh roar.

"I guess I'm not used to the ball, and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But you should see us play over there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish could not proceed. The laughter was too great. He sniffed, and swaggered away, leaving the Remove footballers yelling. Fisher T. Fish mightn't be able to play footer; but one thing was quite certain, there was nothing that could lower his excellent opinion of himself, or shake his firm belief in his own powers.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Feed.

"ANYBODY seen Todd? Has he come in?"

"He's in," said Russell. "I saw him come in with a big parcel a quarter of an hour ago."

"Good! I'm ready for the feed."

All the juniors were ready for the feed. Football in the keen, winter air gave them a good appetite. They were quite prepared to do full justice to the good things Alonzo Todd had so obligingly fetched for them from Uncle Clegg's, in Friardale.

"I suppose he's put them in the study," Harry Wharton remarked. "My hat, I'm hungry!"

The juniors changed out of their football things; and then Harry Wharton & Co. hurried to the study.

There was a huge parcel and two or three smaller ones on the table.

"Here they are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Good!"

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NEXT TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"Ripping!"

"The rippingfulness is terrific."

"It was really very obliging of Todd," said Wharton. "I've got a first-class appetite, and as Mrs. Mimble has chosen to-day to fall ill we should have had nothing but tea in Hall. And what is that after a game of footer?"

"No good!"

Bob Cherry cut the string of one of the parcels and unwrapped the paper. A cracking sound within showed what the parcel contained.

"Careful, Bob! They're eggs; and you've broken one."

"Never mind, there's lots more," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "But—but——"

He broke off abruptly.

His features were twisted up into a very peculiar expression, and he was sniffing in a most suspicious way.

"What's the matter, Bob?"

Bob Cherry sniffed again.

"Can't you smell it?" he demanded:

"Smell what?"

"Something jolly peculiar."

The chums of the Remove sniffed.

"Ahem! Yes. It's like——"

"I say, you fellows, the grub's come," said Billy Bunter, blinking into the study. "I'm ready for the feed if you are. I say—h'm!—h'm!—what's the niff?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"It's the eggs!"

"Phew!"

"But Todd wouldn't bring shoppy eggs!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "We gave him plenty of tin, and he was told to get the best of everything."

Bob Cherry did not reply. He opened the packet. Then the full strength of the contents burst upon the juniors.

Two of the eggs were broken. It was fortunate that no more had suffered. The chums of the Remove would certainly have suffered, too.

Nugent turned quite pale, and he stepped to the window quickly and threw it open to its fullest extent. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh fanned himself. Billy Bunter blinked at the eggs till it seemed as if his little round eyes would start through his spectacles.

"I—I—I say," he exclaimed, "they—they won't do even for cooking! You—you couldn't even put them in a pudding to give to the poor!"

"M-m-m-my word!"

"The ass!" said Wharton, frowning. "We might have guessed this! Uncle Clegg has palmed off a lot of rotten eggs on him—you know what a deep old bounder Clegg is!"

"The old brigand! Why—ugh! M-m-m-m-my word!"

"Let's see the other things."

The chums opened the other parcels in great uneasiness.

Peculiar odours exuded from the packets as they were unfastened and smote upon the expectant noses of the juniors.

The wonderful purchases of Alonzo were spread out to view. Rancid butter, stale ham, scented beef and brawn, mouldy cake, dusty raisins—the assortment was very varied—but all the things were alike in one respect—they were evidently gathered from Uncle Clegg's oldest stock, to be palmed off upon the guileless Alonzo.

The chums gazed at the collection with feelings almost too deep for words.

They had come in from the football-field, famished in expectation of a ripping feed. It was too late for tea in Hall, and the school shop was closed.

The disaster was crushing. Too late they realised that they might have known better than to send Alonzo to deal with such an extremely wily old gentleman as Uncle Clegg.

Uncle Clegg was known to be sly; and he was annoyed, too, at getting so little of the Greyfriars boys' custom, as they usually patronised, of course, Mrs. Mimble's little shop in the Close. Uncle Clegg had certainly got his own back now, and turned an honest penny into the bargain.

"My hat!" said Harry Wharton at last. "My only hat!"

Bulstrode looked into the study.

"Got the things?" he asked. "Why, what—how—Phew!"

"What's that lot?" demanded Skinner, who had been one of the contributors to the feed. "You—you don't mean to say that Todd has brought that lot of rot for us to eat?"

"I say, you fellows——"

"It's a jape!" howled Bulstrode.

"The Duffer's japing us!"

"The japefulness is terrific."

"The—the villain! My word——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Alonzo Todd came up the passage and looked into No. 1

Study, with a beaming smile upon his face. The Duffer of Greyfriars was evidently quite satisfied with himself, and glad to have obliged his friends in the Remove.

"I hope you like the things I have bought for you?" he remarked, rubbing his hands with satisfaction. "My dear fellows, I assure you I was delighted to be of service. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to help others, and to be obliging, whenever I could. I hope you will always allow me to make purchases for you in this way. You must not think it is a trouble; it's quite a pleasure—"

"Then there's some more pleasure for you!" roared Bulstrode.

He picked up an egg and hurled it at Alonzo with deadly aim.

Smash!

"Ooooh!"

The egg broke on Alonzo's chin. The Duffer of Greyfriars staggered back in great alarm and astonishment.

"My dear Bulstrode—ugh!"

Smash! Smash!

Bulstrode's action was the signal for a general attack. The exasperated juniors did not for a moment give Alonzo full credit for his excellent intentions. Excellent intentions were of no use to them at the moment.

They pelted him with the eggs.

Eggs and mouldy bunches of raisins and mouldy cake and whiffy jam-tarts fairly rained upon Alonzo Todd.

He staggered back under the shower, gasping and grunting, with smashed eggs clinging to his face, his hair, and his clothes.

"Oh!" he gasped. "My dear fellows— Oh, my dear Bulstrode—ow! My dear Nugent—groo—ugh! Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

"Let him have it!"

"Ass!"

"Fathead!"

"Hurray! Let him have the lot!"

Alonzo staggered down the passage. The juniors crowded in the doorway of the study, and the last of the eggs and the jam-tarts were hurled after him.

"My word!" gasped Alonzo. "W-w-what would my Uncle Benjamin say? Oh, dear, I cannot but consider this very, very ungrateful! Ow! Ooooh!"

Another and another egg caught him on the back of the neck as he fled.

He rushed downstairs.

A deep voice was heard, and Bulstrode gave a gasp of alarm.

"Cave! That's Quelch!"

The juniors melted away. At the foot of the staircase Alonzo Todd encountered his Form-master.

Mr. Quelch gazed in amazement at the shocking spectacle.

"Who—who—what is it?" he gasped.

"Oh, sir—"

"Boy! Who are you? How dare you? Ooooh! Oh! Ugh! What a terrible, terrible perfume! Boy, go—go at once! Run away immediately!" exclaimed the Remove-master, turning quite pale.

"Bless my soul! I—I feel positively sick! Go!"

Alonzo Todd was only too glad to go.

He dashed away, and, forgetting him of a bath-room, he dashed into one, and, without stopping to take his clothes off, he tumbled into a bath and turned on both taps. His clothes needed washing as much as he did.

"Oh dear!" gasped Alonzo, as the warm water flooded over him, and the scent was drowned under it at last. "Oh dear! W-w-what would my Uncle Benjamin say? I—I will really not try to oblige the fellows again!"

Alonzo Todd required a great deal of washing. As for his clothes, they had to be aired for a week before the scent of the fine selected eggs from Uncle Clegg's left them.

Meanwhile, the disappointed juniors were only a little consoled by the ragging of Alonzo. They had to make a very scanty tea, and

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as they made it, and thought of the feed they might have had, their wrath rose to white-heat against Uncle Clegg.

A bright idea occurred to Bob Cherry.

"Look here, you chaps, we can get a pass from Wingate!" he exclaimed. "Let's pay a visit to Uncle Clegg."

"What on earth for?" growled Bulstrode. "I suppose we're not going to deal with him after this!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"That's exactly what we are going to do," he said. "We'll deal with him—in the way the awful swindler deserves."

"My hat! Good!"

There was a shout of approval at once. Harry Wharton, without a word, rushed off to Wingate's study. It all depended upon whether he could get a pass out of gates from the captain of Greyfriars. Needless to say, he would not be able to state the reason for the projected visit to Friardale. But Wingate did not always ask questions.

In three minutes Harry Wharton was back, and the juniors looked at him eagerly.

"What luck?" demanded half a dozen voices.

Wharton held up a paper.

"Pass out of gates for six!" he said.

"Hurray!"

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Cheap Eggs!

UNCLE CLEGG, the genial provider of Friardale, sat in his seat behind his counter in the village tuckshop, and smiled. Uncle Clegg had done a good stroke of business that day. Two golden sovereigns lay in his till, and he had disposed of ancient and mouldy stock to the value of perhaps four or five shillings in return for those two sovereigns.

Uncle Clegg, not being troubled by many scruples in the way of business, was not worried in his conscience by the way he had earned those two sovereigns. Indeed, the Greyfriars fellows often declared that Uncle Clegg had no conscience at all, or that, if he had one, it had become useless from want of practice. Uncle Clegg sat and smiled, and wished for more customers like Alonzo Todd.

More customers were coming—but they were not like Alonzo Todd!

There was a tramp of feet, and six juniors came into the little shop, and Uncle Clegg looked up, peering over his newspaper.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked grimly at the astute old gentleman.

Uncle Clegg felt a little uneasy. He knew, of course, that Alonzo could not have taken so large a supply of provisions for himself alone, and he guessed that Harry Wharton & Co. had come down to speak about the swindle.

But as Wharton and his friends usually dealt at the school shop, Uncle Clegg had not much to lose by offending them, and he meant to brazen the matter out.

"Good-evenin'!" he said gruffly.

"Good-evening, Uncle Clegg!" said Harry Wharton, very politely. "Nice cold evening, isn't it?"

"Cold enough!" grunted Mr. Clegg.

"How are the eggs?"

"Hey—wot eggs?"

"These eggs! Fresh to-day?"

"All my hegge is fresh!" said Uncle Clegg. "If you've come to complain about those supplied to Master Todd—"

Wharton looked astonished.

"Complain!" he exclaimed. "What could have put that idea into your head, Uncle Clegg?"

"The idea-fulness is terrifically wrong!" the Nabob of Bhanipur remarked. "The complainfulness is far from our esteemed thoughts!"

"What-ho!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "My dear uncle, so far from complaining, we've come to buy some more eggs!"

"Exactly!" chimed in Nugent. "Some more nice fresh eggs, just like those you sold to old Todd!"

Uncle Clegg looked very dubiously at the juniors.

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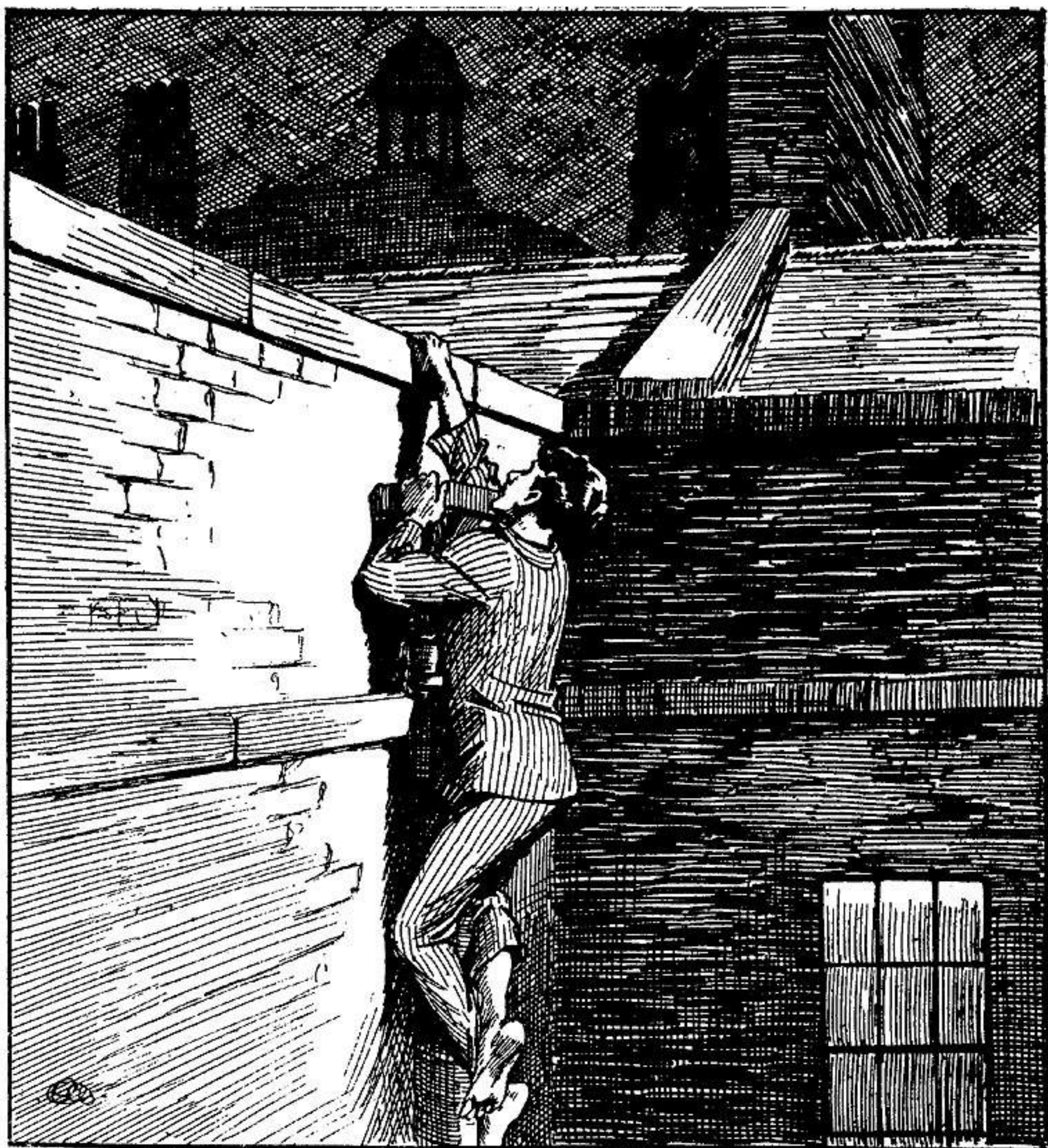
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Wharton clambered up the drain-pipe quickly. On the roof, in the shadow of the chimney, a desperate man was crouching. "He's here!" shouted Wharton, as he caught sight of the crouching figure. (See Page 17.)

He had fully expected complaints, and the idea that the juniors wanted more eggs like those he had sold to Todd was amazing. What they could want them for was a mystery. They could hardly intend to eat them.

"I—I've got plenty of the heggs, just the same," said Uncle Clegg. "I'll let you young gentlemen have them at twelve a shilling."

"Then we'll take twelve," said Harry Wharton. "That will be two each, you fellows."

"Right you are, Wharton!" said Uncle Clegg. "Certainly, Master Wharton!" said Uncle Clegg. "I could let you have a better quality at eight a shilling—"

"My dear uncle, I specially want the same quality that Todd had!"

"H'm! The—the fact is, perhaps you'd do better to take

another quality," said Uncle Clegg hesitatingly. "I can give you a good egg for—"

"Same quality as Todd's!" chanted the juniors together.

"Oh, very well, young gents! Look here," said Uncle Clegg, leaning across the counter, "if you young gents are getting in these eggs for a jape, as you call it, I can supply you with some really strong ones—horrid strong!—at fifteen a shilling!"

The Greyfriars fell "s looked at one another and grinned.

"Well, as a matter of fact, it is a sort of jape," said Wharton. "You're right, Uncle Clegg!"

"The rightfulness of the esteemed Avuncular Clegg is terrific!"

"Hand out the strongest you've got!" said Wharton, throwing a shilling on the counter. "Never mind about

wrapping them up, Uncle Clegg; we'll carry them just as they are. We sha'n't be carrying them for long."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Very well, young gents!"

Uncle Clegg handed out fifteen eggs that certainly looked as if they had been in stock for a very long time, and smelt so, too. If the shells had burst, they would have simply talked, as Bob Cherry put it.

"There you are, young gents," said Uncle Clegg, with a beaming smile. "Which I hope you'll have plenty of fun out of your little joke with them heggis!"

"Thank you, Uncle Clegg! That's very kind of you!"

"Good-evening, young sirs!"

"By the way, Uncle Clegg, you were having a little joke with Todd, of course? You were only pulling his leg, weren't you?"

"I don't hunderstand you, Master Wharton."

"You don't mean to keep the two pounds, after handing him out a lot of rubbish worth only a few shillings, if it's worth anything at all?"

"Which that sale's hover and done with, and if the young gent. wasn't satisfied, he should have said so at the time!" said Uncle Clegg truculently. "I hain't no more to say in the matter!"

"But Todd may be satisfied, but we ain't!" said Nugent. "You see, it was our money that you spoofed Todd out of!"

"I hain't no more to say!"

"You don't feel inclined to make reatitution?"

Uncle Clegg glared.

"Good-hevening!" was his reply.

"You don't want to send the money back to Todd?"

"Good-hevening!"

"Your last chance, uncle!"

"You said you 'adn't come 'ere to complain!" said Uncle Clegg doggedly.

"We haven't! We're offering you a chance to clear your conscience, you old sinner!" said Bob Cherry.

"Good-hevening!"

"Is that all you've got to say?"

"Good-hevening!"

The chums of the Remove exchanged glances.

"Fire away!" said Tom Brown.

The juniors grasped the eggs, taking one in each hand.

"Very well, Uncle Clegg!" said Harry Wharton, with a grin. "That sale to Todd, as you say, is over and done with. We don't want to revive it. We only want to impress upon you that it isn't safe to sell eggs like these!"

"The unsafefulness is terrific!"

"Go it!"

Whiz!

Smash!

An egg shot through the air, and burst upon Uncle Clegg's prominent nose.

He started up with a yell. Too late, he realised what was the "jape" to which he had so kindly lent his assistance.

"Yow! Huh! Groo! Help!"

Whiz! Whiz!

Smash! Crash!

Uncle Clegg simply staggered in the narrow space behind his counter. He threw out his arms wildly, and knocked stock to right and left. A tin canister of Special One-and-Six Blend rolled over and emptied itself into a dish of Best Fresh at 1s. 2d. Tins of condensed milk and salmon steaks were hurled to right and left.

"Ow!" roared Uncle Clegg. "Perlice! 'Elp!"

Whiz! Whiz!

Crash! Biff! Smash!

Eggs plastered upon Uncle Clegg, upon his head and his face and his chest and his ears.

The small, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh would have said, was terrific.

The unfortunate spoofer made a rush for the door of his little parlour behind the shop.

Whiz! Whiz! Whiz!

The eggs followed him fast, smashing on his head and the back of his neck, the contents running over his hair and his collar in a sticky mess.

Whiz! went the last egg, bursting on Uncle Clegg's ear, as he staggered into the parlour and slammed the door.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared with laughter.

The punishment of Uncle Clegg had been severe. The scent in the shop was terrible, and they were glad to escape into the open air. But Uncle Clegg had kept those very eggs to palm them off on the guileless, and he deserved no sympathy.

"'Elp! Perlice!" roared Uncle Clegg, from behind his closed door.

"Go for him!" roared Wharton.

The key turned in the lock instantly. The juniors crowded

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out of the shop, laughing loudly. The fat form of P.-o. Tozer, who represented law and order in Friardale, loomed up in the dusky gloom.

"Wot's the matter 'ere?" he demanded.

Wharton pointed into the shop.

"It's Uncle Clegg," he explained. "His sins have found him out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Police-constable Tozer looked suspiciously at the juniors—he knew them of old. Then he strode into the shop, and Harry Wharton & Co. tramped off quickly towards Greyfriars.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Burglar.

HARRY WHARTON and his chums paused more than once, as they tramped on towards the school through the winter gloom, to laugh over the punishment of Uncle Clegg. The tuckshop-keeper was still in possession of their two sovereigns, but he had paid pretty dearly for his unscrupulousness. As for any chance that he might complain to the Head, the juniors cared little if he did. It would come out that he had swindled Alonzo, and Dr. Locke would be sure to take a lenient view of the matter.

The juniors felt that they had avenged Alonzo and themselves; and, as Nugent observed, the jape was almost worth the two pounds.

Gosling, the porter, snorted as he opened the gate to let the juniors in.

"Which I don't like your larks, that's wot I say!"

"Eh, what's the matter with you?" asked Nugent.

"Wot I says is this 'ere, a young gent as is a young gent would come in by the gate, and not go clambering hover the hivy at this time of the night," said Gosling.

Wharton stared at the school porter.

"Who's clambering over ivy?" he demanded. "We've just come straight from the village."

Gosling blinked at them suspiciously.

"Which somebody was climbing over the hivy," he said. "He scuttled hof when I came by with my lantern."

"Well, it wasn't one of us."

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Might have been Loder," Nugent remarked, in a low voice, "at his old tricks; but it's early for him to have been breaking bounds."

Gosling caught the words, which were not intended for his ears.

"Master Loder—hey?" he exclaimed.

"Mind your own bizney, Gosling!"

The juniors walked on towards the School House. The Close was very misty, and the lights from the school windows glimmered and twinkled dimly through it.

There was a cloud of thought upon Harry Wharton's face. He was thinking of the mysterious encounter in the Close with the unseen man who had got away. Was it possible that the unknown man was again within the walls of Greyfriars.

"Look here, you chaps," Wharton exclaimed. "I don't believe it was Loder! It's more likely to be that burglar, or whatever he was, that we ran into the other night."

"My word! I didn't think of him!"

"We'll have a look round before we go in."

"Good!" said Tom Brown. "There's a quarter of an hour to bedtime."

The mist was less thick than it had been on the occasion of the previous search in the Close. Yet, looking for a lurking intruder in the wide grounds and rambling buildings of Greyfriars was a great deal like searching for a needle in a haystack. But luck was in the way of the juniors. There was a sudden, sharp exclamation from Mark Linley:

"This way, you fellows!"

"What is it?"

"Look!"

The juniors were under the trees at the side of the building. Moonlight was struggling through the mist. Outside a window upon which the moon glimmered a dark figure was blackly silhouetted.

It was a ground-floor window, and gave upon a passage connected with the kitchens.

The juniors knew it well; they had broken bounds from that very window not so very long ago. Wharton drew a deep, hard breath.

"That's the man, as sure as a gun!"

"The giddy burglar!"

"Yes, rather!"

"My hat! We've got him!"

"Or else he's got us!" grinned Bob Cherry. "He may have a revolver, you know, like those blessed foreign chaps who shot the policemen. We'd better get some sort of weapons before we go for him."

"One of you out off and call Wingate!" whispered Wharton. "You go, Frank! We'll watch the villain, and not touch him unless he tries to get away."

"Right you are!"

The chums of the Remove watched the burglar. The window where he stood was not overlooked by any other, and but for the search the juniors were making the burly rascal would certainly never have been observed.

The window was not fastened, and the man's object was quite clear to the juniors—he intended to get into the house while entrance was possible, and conceal himself somewhere in the rambling building until it was safe for him to venture out upon his nefarious work.

The juniors watched him silently.

But perhaps some slight sound reached the man's ears, or perhaps the mere suspicion of the criminal made him look round.

The chums heard him draw a quick, hissing breath.

Wharton gritted his teeth.

"He's seen us!"

The black silhouette detached itself from the window. Harry Wharton ran forward.

"He's not getting away, armed or not!" he muttered.

"Collar him!"

"Right-ho!"

"The collarfulness is terrific!"

The man stood at bay, with a savage look upon his face, as the five juniors ran at him. He was a powerfully-built man, with a hard, bulldog face and glinting eyes. The moonlight gleamed on the eyes and the face for a moment, and the juniors saw it clearly.

The man drew back a pace, and cast a wild look round him.

He had not spoken a word.

The wall of the house was behind him, and the juniors cut off his escape. To his left an outhouse projected from the main building, and the blank wall seemed to offer no chance to a climber.

But the man was desperate.

He made a sudden bound, and leaped upon the wall of the outhouse, and dragged himself up. Harry Wharton dashed after him, and clutched at his foot.

He missed it by inches as the housebreaker dragged himself up. He heard a gasping breath from above.

"Done yer!"

The man disappeared in the gloom of the building.

Harry Wharton gave a loud shout.

"This way! Burglars!"

A light flashed in the Close. Nugent, with Wingate and two or three Sixth-Formers, came dashing up. The master of the Remove was with them, with a cricket stump in his hand. Voices called from the distance, and lights flashed. All Greyfriars was alarmed.

"What is it, Wharton?" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"The burglar, sir!"

"The same man?"

"I believe so, sir."

"Where is he?"

"He climbed up on the roof here, sir."

"Spread round, and see that he does not escape on the other side!" exclaimed the Remove-master quickly.

The boys ran to obey.

Half a dozen lanterns were on the scene now, glimmering through the misty night air. No sign of the burglar could be seen, and the general impression was that he was still upon the roof of the outhouse, where a mass of chimneys afforded concealment.

"He's still there, I believe, sir," Wharton exclaimed.

"Listen!" said Mr. Quelch.

The fellows listened. No sound could be heard on the hard, winter air. If the burglar was still on the roof he was lying very close.

"He may have escaped further," said the Remove master, at last.

"Shall I get up and see, sir?"

Mr. Quelch hesitated.

"How can you get up, Wharton?"

"I can climb the drain-pipe, sir."

"I cannot allow you to run the risk—"

"It won't be a risk, sir. I can slide down if he shows himself. You can keep the light on me, and watch for him to show up."

"Very well, Wharton."

Harry Wharton did not wait another second. He clambered up the pipe. From a certain height he would be able to see whether the burglar was hiding behind the chimney-stack.

He clambered up quickly.

On the roof, in the shadow of the chimney, a desperate man was crouching, with a pale and desperate face.

"Burn you!" he muttered. "Burn you, I—"

Wharton caught the savagely-muttering voice.

"He's here!" he shouted.

There was a scrambling sound as the ruffian clambered away over the roof. For a moment he was seen by all below.

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY.

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ONE
PENNY.

"There he is!"

Wharton clambered on the roof.

"Come back!" shouted Mr. Quelch.

"I can corner him, sir—"

"Come back! I order you!"

Harry Wharton obeyed. He had forgotten, in his excitement, the terrible danger he would be in if he followed the desperate man upon the roof.

The burly form of the ruffian disappeared in the gloom.

Harry Wharton dropped lightly to the ground beside the Form-master.

"You might have been killed!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch severely. "Remain here, some of you, while I have the roofs searched. They can be reached from the trap-doors within."

"Very well, sir."

And the juniors watched and waited. But the burglar did not return that way, nor was the search a successful one. In the misty winter darkness the ruffian had managed to slip down unobserved by some rain-pipe, and he had escaped a second time. Was he likely to return and make a third attempt?

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Stumped.

SOME of the Greyfriars fellows took pokers or cricket stumps to bed with them that night. Alonzo Todd asked Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, to lend him a gun. Mr. Prout was a great sportsman, and he had quite an armoury in his possession, and he was always glad to talk guns to anybody who would listen. He would have talked guns to Todd for hours, but lending him one was another matter.

"Are you used to firearms, Todd?" he asked.

"Oh, no, sir!" said Todd.

"Have you ever fired off a rifle?"

"Oh, no, sir! My Uncle Benjamin considers firearms dangerous."

"So they are—to you!" said Mr. Prout, laughing. "I shall certainly not lend you a gun to take into your dormitory, Todd. You would probably shoot yourself."

"Oh, sir, I have not the slightest tendency to commit suicide—"

"I mean by accident."

"Oh, I see, sir! Of course, I should be very careful. I should be very sorry indeed to cause any fatalities among my Form-fellows," said Alonzo.

The Fifth Form-master laughed.

"Upon the whole, Todd, you had better take a poker if you require a weapon," he said.

"Very well, sir."

And Alonzo took a big kitchen poker to bed. He showed it to the juniors in the Remove dormitory.

"What on earth are you going to do with that?" asked Harry Wharton.

Todd blinked at him.

"It is in case the burglar should return," he said.

"I guess the burglar won't come back," said Fisher T. Fish; "and if you hit Loder with that, Todd, you'll brain him."

"I shall be exceedingly careful not to brain Loder if it can possibly be helped, Fish."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared John Bull. "If it can't be helped, I suppose Loder couldn't complain."

"He couldn't complain after he'd got that poker on his napper, anyway," said Bob Cherry. "He'd be past complaining, I should think."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The pastfulness of the honourable Loder would be terrific! I thoughtfully consider that the esteemed Todd should not be allowed to have a weaponful poker."

"Hear, hear!"

"Better put it away, Toddy," said Wharton. "You'll only hit the wrong party, you know."

"My dear Wharton—"

"Put it under your mattress, anyway."

Alonzo Todd shook his head.

"Impossible, Wharton! My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to remember the motto of the Boy Scouts—'Be Prepared.' I assure you that the poker will be quite safe in my hands."

"I dare say the poker will," grunted Bob Cherry. "But what about us?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows, I can handle the poker quite safely. I have had some practice with the singletick," Todd explained. "You see, I can wield it most effectively."

He flourished the poker, making passes at an imaginary

burglar, to show how well he handled it, and there was a rush of the juniors to get out of danger.

"You ass!" roared John Bull. "Put it down."

"My dear Bull—"

Crash!

The poker smashed into Todd's washstand basin, breaking the jug, and there was a rush of water at once. Todd blinked in dismay at the wreckage.

"Oh, dear! Really—"

"Put that poker down!" roared the Remove, with one voice.

"My dear schoolfellows, I was only showing you—"

"Put it down!"

"I assure you—"

"Take it away from him!" shouted Snoop. "It'll fly out of the idiot's hands in a minute, and brain some of us!"

"My dear Snoop—"

"Collar him!"

"Bump him!"

But nobody showed any great desire to collar Todd while he was flourishing the poker. He was too dangerous just then.

The door opened, and Loder, the prefect, looked in, with a scowl on his face. He gazed at Todd, going through his mysterious singlestick evolutions with the poker, petrified for a moment, and then roared at the Duffer of Greyfriars.

"Put that poker down!"

Todd started, and the poker flew from his hand. The juniors were dodging wildly among the beds for safety. The poker whizzed through the air, and smashed a pane in the dormitory window, and fell into the quadrangle outside.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Alonzo.

"Lucky it's too late for anybody to be passing underneath, you howling ass!" roared Nugent.

"My dear Nugent—"

Loder advanced into the dormitory.

"You dangerous young lunatic!" he exclaimed. "You'll be charged with that pane of glass. If I see you with a poker or anything of the sort again I'll pulverise you! Get into bed."

"My dear Loder—"

"Get into bed!" roared the prefect.

"I wish you would not raise your voice in that way, Loder. It disturbs my nerves, and, besides, my Uncle Benjamin always said that it was common to raise one's voice—"

The prefect ran towards Alonzo Todd, and the Duffer of Greyfriars dodged round the bed.

"It's all right, my dear Loder," he exclaimed. "I'm going to bed."

And he turned in.

Loder, with a dark face, extinguished the light and left the dormitory. Since the encounter with Alonzo on the stairs, when the Duffer of Greyfriars had taken him for a burglar, the prefect had not ventured to break bounds. He knew that Mr. Quelch's suspicions were aroused, and he had to be very careful for a time to keep up appearances. He put it all down to the account of Alonzo Todd.

Alonzo's still, small voice was heard, as soon as the ill-tempered prefect had retired.

"My dear fellows—"

"Oh, go to sleep!" exclaimed Bunter.

"My dear Bunter—"

"I say, you fellows, something ought to be done to stop up that pane," Billy Bunter exclaimed peevishly. "There's a draught."

"Awful!" said Bob Cherry sympathetically. "It must be unspeakable for you, Bunter—never had a whiff of fresh air in your life, if you could help it, did you?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"My dear fellows," said Todd, "I will keep watch to night, if you like, in case the burglar should come back."

"Oh, go to sleep!"

"That is hardly grateful, Bulstrode. I suppose one of you fellows will lend me a cricket-stump?"

"Go to sleep!" roared John Bull.

"But I must have a weapon if I am to keep watch, and my poker has unfortunately flown out of the window. If one of you fellows will lend me a poker, or tongs, or cricket-stump, I will cheerfully keep watch for the remainder of the night."

"I've got a cricket-stump," said Bulstrode.

"Can I have it, my dear Bulstrode?"

"Come and get it."

"Oh, certainly!"

Alonzo Todd stepped out of bed, and groped his way towards Bulstrode. He blinked at the dim bed in the gloom of the dormitory.

"Where are you?" demanded Bulstrode, sitting up in bed, with the cricket-stump firmly grasped in his right hand.

"Here I am, my dear Bulstrode."

"Well, here's the stump!"

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PLEASE NOTE!

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Thwack!

"Yow!"

A fearful yell rang through the dormitory. The Remove bully had brought down the stump across Alonzo Todd's shoulders with a terrific smite.

Alonzo jumped up, yelling.

"Ow! Yaroo! Groo! Oh! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode.

"My dear Bulstrode—ow! Yow!"

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

"Ow! I am considerably hurt!" Bulstrode, I regard your act as treacherous. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked—nay, disgusted. Yow! Ow!"

"Come and have the stump," said Bulstrode.

"Yow! I refuse to come near you. I am hurt! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd crept back to bed. It was some time before he slept; but he did not keep watch in the Remove dormitory that night.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bulstrode Does Not Feel Well.

BULSTRODE turned over in bed, and yawned, as the rising-bell clanged out in the frosty air of the morning.

"Oh, blow that bell!" he exclaimed. "I believe Gosling gets up specially early some mornings to do us out of a few minutes."

Bob Cherry laughed as he turned out of bed.

"Catch Gossy getting up at all if he could help it," he remarked. "He's more likely to be a few minutes late."

"I'm not going to turn out yet," grunted Bulstrode.

"Rats!"

"I tell you—"

"What's the good of talking rot?" demanded Bob Cherry. "You know jolly well that you've got to turn out like the rest of us?"

"Nice polite way Bob has of putting things," Nugent remarked.

Bob Cherry snorted.

"Well, what's the good of the duffer swanking about not getting up?" he exclaimed. "He'll get up fast enough when Quelch looks in, if he doesn't now."

"The fastfulness will be terrific."

Bulstrode scowled. His habit of swanking, though not so pronounced as that of Fisher T. Fish, often led him into making declarations he found it hard to sustain afterwards. He gave Bob Cherry a most unpleasant look.

"Well, I jolly well won't get up for half an hour yet, anyway," he exclaimed.

"Bosh!"

"You'll see."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

Bulstrode closed his eyes again.

Alonzo Todd blinked at Bulstrode in a dubious sort of way. After turning it over in his mind, he approached the bedside of the Remove bully.

"My dear Bulstrode," he exclaimed. "I trust you will think better of this reckless decision, and decide to rise with the rest of us."

Bulstrode snored.

"You cannot deceive me by producing that unpleasant reverberation in your nasal organ," said Todd. "I am perfectly aware that you are awake, Bulstrode. I urge you to rise! My Uncle Benjamin always told me—"

"Oh, go away!" snorted Bulstrode.

"I was about to remark that my Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me, that early to bed and early to rise was the most satisfactory method of preserving one's health, accumulating riches, and enlarging the understanding."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Good old dictionary!"

"My dear Cherry!"

"Let me alone!" growled Bulstrode. "I'm not getting up yet."

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"Get away!"

"But I assure you, my dear Bulstrode—ow!"

Alonzo Todd staggered back as a foot shot out of Bulstrode's bed, and caught him on the chest. He sat down with some violence upon the floor of the dormitory.

"Ow! Huh! My dear Bulstrode—"

"Buzz off, you ass!"

"I decline to have anything more to do with you, Bulstrode. My Uncle Benjamin says—"

Bulstrode grasped a pillow, and Todd fled.

The burly Removite settled down again, not to sleep, but to affect slumber. He had some inward doubts now, but sheer bravado would not let him give way.



Todd had quite forgotten that he had nothing but his pyjamas on, and that it was a cold night. Excitement kept him warm as he dashed after the burglar. "This way," he shrieked. "Help! He's going! This way! I've got him!" (See page 27.)

"I guess you're playing the giddy ox," Fisher T. Fish remarked. "You'd better get up, and get out, Bulstrode."

"Oh, rats!"

"Don't be an ass!" said John Bull. "You'll have Quelch or a prefect after you if you don't turn out."

"Bosh!"

"Please yourself," said Bull, with a shrug of the shoulders.

The Removites left the dormitory, leaving Bulstrode still in bed. The burly junior shifted uncomfortably.

He had said that he would remain in bed half an hour after rising-bell, and bravado kept him from breaking his word; but he was feeling very uneasy.

Ten minutes more had to elapse before the half-hour was up, and Bulstrode hoped that those ten minutes would pass without even a prefect or a master visiting the dormitory.

But that hope was to be disappointed.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, looked in, and came over towards the junior's bed. Bulstrode's heart quaked inwardly.

The Form-master stood looking down on the junior.

"Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode snored.

"Are you asleep, Bulstrode?"

Another snore.

Mr. Quelch lifted the cane he had in his hand, and made a motion of bringing it down across the junior's shoulders. Bulstrode squirmed out of the way in a twinkling.

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch, lowering his arm. "You were not asleep, then."

Bulstrode sat up in bed with crimson cheeks.

"I—I—I—" he stammered.

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

"You were attempting to deceive me, Bulstrode."

"I—I—I—"

"Why have you not risen with the rest?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"I—I don't feel quite well this morning, sir."

"Oh! What is the matter with you?"

"A—a sort of faint feeling."

"Indeed! Perhaps it is through laziness," suggested Mr. Quelch. "It may be caused by lying in bed after rising-bell, Bulstrode."

"I—I don't think so, sir."

"Perhaps it is caused by want of exercise."

"Oh, no, sir!"

"We will see."

Mr. Quelch raised his cane, and began to cane Bulstrode across the legs through the bedclothes.

"Ow!" roared the junior. "Yow! Yaroo! Oh!"

Lash! Lash! Lash!

"Yaroo! Oh!"

Bulstrode squirmed out of bed on the other side, yelling with pain.

Mr. Quelch regarded him across the bed, with a pleasant smile. The Remove bully stood rubbing his legs and blinking.

"Do you feel better now, Bulstrode?"

"Yow! No, sir!"

"Ah! I have not caned you sufficiently, I see," remarked the Form-master, making a motion to go round the bed towards Bulstrode.

The Remove bully hopped away.

"I—I—if you please, sir, I—I meant yes!" he gapped. "I feel ever so much better, sir; in fact, quite well now."

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums
of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"You are quite sure?"

"Ye-es, sir. Quite, sir," stammered Bulstrode, with a very nervous glance at the cane.

"Very well, Bulstrode," said Mr. Quelch, with a smile. "I will take your word. You will kindly appear at the breakfast-table at the usual time."

"Ye-es, sir."

And Mr. Quelch quitted the dormitory. He left Bulstrode groaning and rubbing his legs, and scowling fiercely. But the Remove bully made it a point to go down in time for breakfast. He met Alonzo Todd on the stairs, and the Duffer of Greyfriars gave him a sympathetic smile.

"I'm so sorry, Bulstrode, that you've been caned," he exclaimed. "Of course, you deserved it, but that probably does not lessen the pain. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Oh, shut up, dummy!"

"My dear Bulstrode—"

The Remove bully gave Todd a push that made him sit down on the stairs. Alonzo sat there gasping for several minutes, and he was still looking a little breathless, and very indignant, when he turned up at the breakfast-table. Bulstrode was there in time, a fact which Mr. Quelch noted with a grim smile.

"I am glad to see you so perfectly recovered, Bulstrode," he remarked. "Early to bed, early to rise, makes us healthy, wealthy, and wise. There are no end to the benefits of early rising, my boys. I trust you will remember that, Bulstrode."

"Yes, sir," grunted Bulstrode.

"My Uncle Benjamin would be delighted to hear you say so, I am sure, sir," said Alonzo Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me—"

"Exactly, Todd. That will do!"

And the wisdom of Todd's Uncle Benjamin upon that particular subject was lost to the Remove. They did not mind.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Nice for Bunter.

"O H, I say! You look a picture, Todd."

"My dear Bunter, I'm glad you approve of my appearance," said Alonzo Todd, nodding to Billy Bunter's reflection in the glass.

The Owl of the Remove had "popped in" on Alonzo as that simple youth was involved in the process of an elaborate toilet.

Bunter for once in a way was not a flatterer. Alonzo did certainly look very nice. Billy Bunter wondered what it was for, as might be expected. Minding his own business was not one of Bunter's virtues.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, as he caught sight of a sealed envelope lying on the table.

"My dear Bunter, how strange you are this afternoon," said Alonzo.

"Yes," answered Billy Bunter—"I mean no, Todd! Really, you know, Todd. It was simply your—your killing appearance."

Alonzo looked doubtful for a second. Then he broke into a beaming smile.

"Oh, I'm so pleased you think so, Bunter! I have to go out on important business, and I wish to look my very best."

Alonzo paused to face the glass again for a moment while he straightened his bow. Billy Bunter was all attention. In his opinion "revelations" were forthcoming. And he was bursting with curiosity regarding the sealed envelope.

"Going out, Todd?" he said encouragingly. "It must be something important, I must say. That topper of yours is simply Al. 'Pon my word, Todd, the gloss of it dazzles my eyes!"

And Billy Bunter heightened the effect of his words by assiduously polishing his glasses, blinking the while at Alonzo.

"It is very important, Bunter. Wasn't it unfortunate for Bulstrode to lose the money?"

"Yes, rather!" assented Billy Bunter. "But—"

"Yes," said Alonzo, with a beaming smile, "but it is equally fortunate that his measures for its recovery have succeeded. Bulstrode has asked me to go for it, Bunter."

Billy Bunter was much relieved when Alonzo turned to the glass once more. The Owl of the Remove had been as ignorant of Bulstrode's loss as he was of Bulstrode's recovery of his property until Alonzo spoke.

But in Shakespeare's language he assumed a virtue, though he had it not. Alonzo would, no doubt, speak more freely if he pretended to know all about the matter. He coughed.

"You look ripping, though, Todd!" he said, blinking vigorously through his big spectacles.

An ordinary person would have detected the flatterer in a moment. But not so Alonzo.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 155.

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's", and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

"My Uncle Benjamin always advised me to be very particular to dress well whenever I might have business with the authorities."

"Authorities, Todd!" said Billy Bunter, really surprised.

"Surely you know that Bulstrode placed the matter in the hands of the police when he lost his five-shilling postal-order in the village, Bunter?"

"Ah, yes! Of course. What am I thinking of," said Billy Bunter, glancing covertly at the sealed envelope on the table.

"And—"

"And that is Bulstrode's letter to the police-station in the village. Police-constable Tozer has sent him word that he has found the postal-order, and that Bulstrode may have it if he will call for it. But he is too busy just now, you know, so he asked me as a favour to undertake the business, Bunter."

And Alonzo turned to the glass to perfect his appearance before immediate departure for Friardale.

A quick observer would have noticed a curious expression flit across Billy Bunter's face.

But when Billy Bunter suddenly threw himself into a chair, assuming an appearance of utter prostration, even Alonzo noticed that Billy Bunter, as reflected in the looking-glass, looked very alarming.

Alonzo left off putting in his final touches hurriedly.

"My dear Bunter, whatever is the matter?" he asked.

Billy Bunter looked at Alonzo as if he were choking.

"Oh, dear," cried Alonzo, "what a fearful thing. Is there anything I can do for you, my dear Bunter?"

Bunter wagged his head from side to side, still keeping up the hideous expression for reply. A curious gurgling sound came from his fat throat.

Alonzo was alarmed. And well he might be. Alonzo was afraid to leave him and run for assistance for fear he might get worse. Alonzo did not quite know Bunter yet.

"My dear, dear Bunter," he said, almost tearfully, "what can I do—"

A dreadful gurgling sound issued from Billy Bunter's mouth. But Alonzo Todd caught the word water, and notwithstanding Bunter's terrible plight, he resolved to get it.

Making a hurried search, he at last unearthed a basin. Pursued by the unearthly moaning of Billy Bunter, he fled to the tap at the end of the passage.

Hardly had Alonzo got outside the door than a perceptible recovery might have been noticed in Billy Bunter.

Making a dive to the table, he secured the sealed envelope, putting it in his pocket, after noting that it was addressed to P.-c. Tozer, Police Station, Friardale. While Todd was filling the basin with water, Bunter scuttled downstairs with the sealed envelope.

Billy Bunter intended to borrow that five shillings.

"I can easily pay it back to Bulstrode on Saturday. I expect a postal order that day, and it's really only cashing it in advance," he muttered.

But though this "elastic" morality seemed to satisfy Billy Bunter, he resolved to avoid Bulstrode. He mightn't understand business—Bunter's idea of business, at all events.

"And I'm so jolly hungry," he said to himself as he hurried to the gates. "And Bulstrode will have done Alonzo in before I get back."

"Done Alonzo in" was Billy Bunter's own peculiar metaphor for Alonzo Todd falling sacrifice to Bulstrode, while he, Bunter, had a good feed in the village.

And Billy Bunter whistled a lively tune, some of it—he was not particularly musical—as he got on the road at last.

He strode along quickly. Alonzo might raise the alarm when he missed the letter from the table. Once he was tempted to open the envelope. Perhaps Alonzo had made a mistake in the amount. There might be ten shillings to draw instead of five. But the fact of the sealing-wax was a difficulty. Billy Bunter could not very well break the seal. The police would naturally be suspicious.

As it was, P.-c. Tozer was not likely to be any more gracious than he was wont. And Billy Bunter hoped that the famous Friardale arm of the law would be absent for once, and he, Bunter, would have his business attended to by the sergeant in charge. But the Owl of the Remove had no luck.

When he got in the main street of Friardale a few minutes later all his doubts were set at rest.

From the doorway of a building a short way up the street, a considerable expanse of dark blue cloth and silver buttons protruded itself. Billy Bunter's face fell. There was no mistaking the owner of such portly dignity.

P.-c. Tozer was "at home." A shining belt that ran round the "equator" of the general mass of blue cloth and silver buttons—two huge hands, stuck with thumbs down into belt, proclaimed the fact aloud, so to speak, that the constable was in a weighty mood.

Chancing to look down the street at that moment, he espied Billy Bunter. Instantly, in common language, "his back was up." He had once made "a case" of Bunter, and he had no objections to doing it again.

"Now, then, there! What are you up to—eh?"
"Nothing, really, Mr. Tozer," replied Billy Bunter, in an ingratiating tone.

"That'll do! None of your impudence!" said P.-c. Tozer.
"Oh, really, Mr. Tozer," replied Billy Bunter, "I have only brought you this letter!"
And, suiting the action to the word, Billy Bunter brought the letter out of his pocket.
"It's from Bulstrode, you know."
"I don't know nothin' about that!" he said. "But give it here! Come on!"

Billy Bunter gave the letter to P.-c. Tozer. The policeman tore it open. He read it. The effect was disastrous—especially for Billy Bunter. As the constable read, his face changed colour rapidly. Red, blue, black, purple, the latter especially, all colours seemed alike to P.-c. Tozer.

Then he turned with a face like thunder to the Owl of the Remove. Executing what he evidently thought a smart movement, but which was really reminiscent of an elephant, he got Billy Bunter between himself and the police-station wall.

Billy Bunter blinked in amazement and dismay at the excited face of the fat constable. He had never deemed it possible for anybody to look so purple without having an attack of apoplexy.

"I—I say—" he gasped.
"You—you—you—" stuttered P.-c. Tozer.
The fat policeman seemed in too great a rage to speak. He brandished the letter before Billy Bunter's alarmed face, and seemed greatly inclined to dance.

"You—you—you—" he gasped.
"Oh, really, Mr. Tozer!"
"Colney Hatch—hey?" roared P.-c. Tozer. "I'll show yer!"

The infuriated constable thrust the letter almost into Bunter's face. Bunter gave a yell as he read it. For this is what he read:

"Please go back to Colney Hatch, Tozer, old chap! Your face worries us!"

Bunter simply gaped.
Too late he realised that the sealed letter and the story of the lost five shilling postal order was an elaborate scheme on the part of Bulstrode for pulling the leg of the innocent Duffer of Greyfriars.

Alonzo, all unsuspecting as usual, had been prepared to deliver that letter into P.-c. Tozer's hands; and Bunter had done it instead!

The fat junior gasped.
"I—I say," he panted, "I—I didn't know—"
"Colney Hatch—hey?" roared P.-c. Tozer. "My face worries you—hey?"
"I—I didn't know—"
"Kim 'ere!"

The large hand of the policeman grasped Billy Bunter. P.-c. Tozer made a knee by resting one foot on the station step. Billy Bunter was yanked across that knee face downward. A big and heavy hand rose and fell.

Spank! spank! spank!
Billy Bunter roared.
"Owl! Help! Yaroooh! It wasn't me! I won't do it again! Owl! Help! Murder!"

Spank! spank! spank!
P.-c. Tozer overbalanced himself with the force of that last spank, and he reeled on the station steps. Bunter rolled to the ground. His spectacles slid off down his nose, and he grasped them in a fat hand. Without waiting to replace them he fled.

P.-c. Tozer staggered to his feet.
"Kim back!" he roared.

But Bunter did not accept that kind invitation. He sprinted on to Greyfriars with a speed he could never have shown on the cinder-path.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER. Brave Bunter.

"TODD!" roared Bulstrode.
"Todd!" echoed Skinner.
"You've not gone!"
"You bounder!"

"My dear Bulstrode," said Alonzo Todd, "I've been looking for you for such a long time. I have a most unfortunate incident to report to you. The letter—"

"My letter to Tozer?"
"Exactly. The letter is lost!"

"Lost!" roared Bulstrode.
"Yes, indeed," said Todd, almost tearfully. "Bunter came into my study while I was dressing to go out, and he was taken with a sudden illness."

"Do you mean that Bunter's boned the letter?" roared Bulstrode.

"Certainly not, my dear Bulstrode. He was taken with a sudden faintness, and I rushed away to obtain water for him."

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY, The "Magnet" LIBRARY, ONE
PENNY.

"He was japing you, you ass."
"My dear fellow, I am sure I shall not suspect Bunter of anything of the sort without proof. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Hang your Uncle Benjamin!"
"Under the circumstances, Bulstrode, unless you speak more respectfully of my uncle, I cannot consent to continue this conversation," said Todd, with dignity.

Bulstrode grasped the Duffer of Greyfriars by the shoulder.
"Where's that letter?" he roared, shaking Todd till his cap fell off. "Where's my letter to Tozer, you chump?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, coming up.
"Hands off, Bulstrode! What's the matter now?"
Todd gasped for breath.

"I was attempting to explain to Bulstrode that his letter is lost," he panted. "Bunter was taken ill in my study, and when I returned with the water he was gone, and the letter had vanished. It is quite possible that the burglar has been here again, perhaps in disguise, as it is still daylight."

"Fathead!"
"My dear Bulstrode—"
Bulstrode made a rush at the Duffer of Greyfriars. He had taken a great deal of trouble to plant that jape upon Alonzo, and now it was all "up."

Todd dodged behind Harry Wharton.
"My dear Bulstrode, I trust you will not be violent," he exclaimed. "My Uncle Benjamin always cautioned me to—"

"Lemme get at him!" roared Bulstrode.
"Cut off, Todd!"
"Oh, certainly, Nugent!"

Alonzo Todd cut off. Bulstrode made a movement to follow, but the Famous Four lined up in his way.

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton quietly.
Bulstrode snorted.
"The—the ass!" he exclaimed. "He's spoiled one of the rippingest japes, by letting that ass Bunter get the letter."

"What on earth is it all about?"
"I planted a letter on Todd to take to P.-c. Tozer," growled Bulstrode. "He thought it was about a postal-order I'd lost."

"And what was it really about?"
"It was a message to old Tozer asking him to go back to Colney Hatch."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"It would have been pretty rough on poor old Todd if he had delivered that letter," said Harry Wharton.

Bulstrode sniffed.
"It would have been a good jape," he replied. "I suppose Bunter's taken the letter now, and that's an end of it. Anybody seen Bunter?"

"He went out more than an hour ago," said Ogilvy.
Bulstrode started.

"Did you notice which way he went?" he exclaimed.
"Yes; towards the village."

"My only hat! He may have taken the letter, if he got the story from Todd. It would be just like him to try and bone the postal-order."

The juniors roared.
"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!"

Every eye was turned upon the Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter came grunting and limping up to the School House, as if he had hardly sufficient strength left to put one foot before another.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where have you been, Bunter?"
"Seen Tozer?"

"Did you take the letter?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Bunter blinked at the grinning group of juniors, and grunted.

"I say, you fellows—"
"Did you take the letter?" roared Bulstrode.
"Oh, really, you know—"

"Have you been to see Tozer?" demanded Bob Cherry.
"Yes," gasped Bunter. "I—I thought I'd take the letter, and save Todd a lot of trouble. You know what a good-natured chap I am."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"You took the letter!" gasped Bulstrode. "My hat! This is better than Todd having taken it. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.
"What did Tozer say?"

"Was he pleased?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He was a beast!" grunted Bunter. "He has assaulted and battered me, and I'm going to—to consult with the solicitor of a titled friend of mine about taking out a summons."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled on into the House, snorting with indignation. The juniors simply shrieked with laughter.

If Todd had taken the note, and had been severely handled by the fat policeman, many of the fellows would have felt sorry for him. But no one felt sorry for Bunter. They all knew perfectly well that Bunter had meant to "borrow" the supposed postal-order—a kind of "borrowing" that sometimes leads to the treadmill. And all were agreed that Bunter fully deserved all that he had received.

If there was one sympathetic person, it was Alonzo Todd. He met Bunter as the latter came into the junior common-room, and greeted him with a most painful and commiserate expression upon his face.

"My dear Bunter," he exclaimed, "you look as if you were in pain."

Billy Bunter grunted wrathfully.

"I jolly well am in pain!" he snorted.

"I'm so sorry, Bunter. Can I do anything to help you?" asked Todd. "By the way, Bunter, did you see what became of the letter I left in my study?"

"Fathead!"

"My dear Bunter——"

"Chump!"

"Really, I begin to fear that you are going out of your mind, Bunter. I have heard that excessive over-eating sometimes has that effect. But—— Oh!"

Billy Bunter could not go for Bulstrode. But he very badly wanted to go for somebody, so he made Alonzo Todd serve his turn. With a sudden and unexpected upper-cut, he sent the Duffer of Greyfriars staggering.

"Ow!" gasped Alonzo Todd.

He sat down suddenly and stared at Bunter. Billy Bunter danced round him, brandishing his fat fists.

"Get up!" he roared. "Get up, and have some more!"

"My dear Bunter——"

"Yah! Coward!"

"Hallo! A fight—a fight!" roared a dozen voices, and there was a rush of fellows from all sides. A fight between the Owl of the Remove and the Greyfriars Duffer was likely to be worth watching.

Bunter was greatly encouraged. Todd's unwillingness to fight urged him on. He brandished his fists, and gave Todd another tap as he sat on the floor.

"Coward!" he bellowed. "Get up! Yah! Come on!"

"My dear Bunter, my Uncle Benjamin——"

"Yah! Come on!"

Alonzo staggered to his feet.

"My Uncle Benjamin has always warned me never to fight, Bunter, if it can possibly be avoided," he exclaimed.

"I should be sorry——"

"Yah! Coward!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Pitch into him, Todd!"

"I'll hold your specs, Bunter!"

"I'll hold your hair, Todd!"

"I say, you fellows, he's jolly well got to fight!" shouted Bunter. "I'm going to give him a licking. Make him come on. Yah! Coward!"

"My dear Bunter my Uncle Benjamin——"

"Coward!"

"Always impressed upon me never to fight——"

"Yah! You're afraid!"

"Unless my courage should be questioned, which would be a good reason for using violent methods towards an insulting person," said Todd. "Under the present circumstances, I think I shall be justified. I will therefore fight you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pile in, Duffer!"

Billy Bunter dropped his hands, and backed away. Strange to say, all his truculence passed away in a flash as Alonzo Todd began to roll up his sleeves.

"I—I don't know that I want this to go any further," he muttered. "I—I think I'll let the matter drop. I say, you fellows, lemme pass."

But the laughing juniors closed up, and pushed the Owl of the Remove back as he sought to escape from the ring.

"No, you don't!" said Ogilvy coolly. "You were howling to Todd to come on a minute ago."

"Oh, really, you know——"

"Come on, Bunter!" said Todd, having now quite finished his preparations. "Pray come on! I trust I shall not hurt you very much. Dear me! Why does he not come on?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here he is!" roared Tom Brown, dragging the fat junior forward. "Go it!"

He hurled Bunter towards Alonzo. Alonzo's fist came into contact with the fat junior's nose, and Bunter rolled on the floor.

He remained there, groaning.

"Dear me! Are you done?" exclaimed Alonzo, in astonishment. "Have I licked you?"

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Bunter only groaned by way of reply. The juniors burst into a roar of laughter. They pushed chairs and mats over Bunter, and left him. The fat junior groaned dismally. Alonzo Todd, the much-injured and much-forgiving, was the only one who lent him a hand. He dragged Bunter out from under the mats and chairs.

"Beast!" said Bunter.

"My dear Bunter——"

Bunter snorted, and rolled away. Alonzo Todd gazed after him more in sorrow than in anger.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Knocked Up.

"I WON'T! You can do it, Skinner!"

"Oh, rats! You're funking it, Bulstrode!"

It was close upon bed-time, and to all appearances Bulstrode and Skinner were having a heated argument about something. That part of the Remove passage echoed with the noise. A passer-by would have concluded it was the beginning of a fight.

"If you tell me I'm funking it, I'll——"

"You'll what?" retorted Skinner. "You'll what, Bulstrode?"

"Well, never mind!" answered the burly Removite sulkily. "Don't be such a rotter, and take it on as you said you would——"

"Rats!"

"Rats to me!" roared Bulstrode. "I'll skin you! Quick, Skinner!" he concluded, in a whisper. "I can hear him coming up now. Quick! Put up your hands! We must look as if we were going to chew each other up."

"Oh, will you?" said Skinner, putting himself in an attitude of self defence. "We'll see, though!"

And in a few seconds the two plotters were going through a very good imitation of a ding-dong fight, abusing one another soundly, so that the person approaching on the stairs could not fail to grasp what was on.

"My dear fellows! What an unseemly exhibition. Pray desist."

It was the dulcet voice of Alonzo Todd. As he gained the top step, he stood horrified at what he saw.

"Keep back," roared Bulstrode, "or you'll get hurt! Get out of this while I slay Skinner!"

"Indeed, I shall do no such thing, Bulstrode. My Uncle Benjamin would be pained—nay, shocked, to think that I was resorting with fellows who fought like wild cats——"

"Well, why don't you bring your Uncle Benjamin here to bring Bulstrode to his senses, you ass!" exclaimed Skinner, making a vicious dive at his adversary.

"Oh, don't do that, Skinner! It's really naughty, you know, to look so murderous! Can't you settle it without fighting?"

"Well, I don't mind," said Bulstrode, "if Skinner wouldn't be quite so barmy about a trifle."

"Oh, all right!" said Skinner, in apparent disgust. "I said all along, Bulstrode was funking."

"That's not the way to end a quarrel, Skinner," said Alonzo mildly. "But my Uncle Benjamin said I was always to pour oil on troubled waters. If I can be of any use in the matter, pray command me. I really cannot stand by and see you fight like this——"

"Well," broke in Bulstrode. "Skinner was trying to get out of something he's taken on——"

"I'm not!" shouted Skinner. "You know Mr. Quelch told you to do this giddy knocking up bisney——"

"Knocking up?" said Alonzo Todd wonderingly.

"Yes, Todd," said Bulstrode. "Skinner is to go round in the morning at five o'clock, and knock up all the masters."

"Dear me! Then the solution of the matter appears to me quite simple, Bulstrode. So that you shall have no further need to quarrel, I will take the duty up myself."

Bulstrode and Skinner were not prepared for such an "easy" thing as this. As they looked at Alonzo's benign countenance they had hard work not to burst into peals of laughter.

"All right, Todd," Skinner said, with apparent reluctance. "But you won't fail us, will you?"

"You may rely on me," said Alonzo. "I think my Uncle Benjamin would be glad I have taken away the cause of your quarrelling. I'll turn in now, if you don't mind. Good-night, Bulstrode and Skinner!"

The plotting pair could hardly trust themselves to speak, but they managed to return the compliment, and Alonzo Todd went off to bed, well satisfied with himself.

Bulstrode and Skinner followed him when they had had time to laugh it off.

And when Skinner woke up next morning, as he promised Bulstrode, he kicked his heels with delight, and stuffed the

bedclothes into his mouth. Alonzo Todd had awakened Bulstrode to assure him that "he was going to do it." Bulstrode had not counted on being awakened himself, and Skinner had a good laugh all to himself as Alonzo departed on his journey.

It did not take Alonzo Todd long to reach Mr. Quelch's door. He judged it best to begin with the Remove-master.

He knocked.

There was no response. He knocked again. This time he was answered by a smothered sound like something coming up to breathe.

"Time to get up, sir!" said Alonzo, putting his mouth obligingly near the keyhole.

"What's that?" returned the sleepy voice of Mr. Quelch.

"Time to get up, sir!" repeated Alonzo, very respectfully.

"Go away!"

"But, sir, it's—"

"No, it isn't! Don't agree with you. Go away!"

"Time to get up, sir, really. I am—"

"I don't believe you. G'way! What do you want coming here in the middle of the night for? Get out!"

The rest of Mr. Quelch's remarks were lost under the bedclothes. Alonzo essayed another feeble tap on the door, but he got no more reply than a smothered yawn. Turning away, Alonzo Todd bent his steps towards the sleeping apartment of Mr. Capper, the Upper Fourth-master.

"I'll adopt a different course this time," he murmured to himself. "Uncle Benjamin used to say it was a very bad thing to awaken people too suddenly."

And, taking the utmost precaution, Alonzo approached Mr. Capper's door on his toes.

Applying his mouth to the keyhole, he began in a mere whisper.

"I would not do it, really, sir, were it not that I am under the impression that it is your expressed desire to rise at five this morning. Will you be so good as to get up at once?"

Then Alonzo Todd stood up and waited. But he might as well have expected a reply from the door itself. Mr. Capper was a heavy sleeper, and his repose went on as calmly as if Alonzo had not been there.

"Time flies, sir, and I have other duties to perform," went on Alonzo. "Will you not oblige me, sir? I am doing this as gently as I can, I assure you."

The Duffer of Greyfriars accompanied this with a timid knocking. But still there was no response but the echo in the passage. Todd decided to go in and awaken Mr. Capper. The door was not fastened. He was at the Form-master's bedside in a moment more.

"I hope you understand, sir," began Alonzo, again, "that were it not that I have undertaken a duty, I would depart at once, and leave you in peace. My Uncle Benjamin said I was never to shirk a duty. Pray have the goodness to rise."

But Mr. Capper hadn't any goodness on this occasion. He still recked not of knockers-up, and slept on as deeply as a hibernating bear. Alonzo was rather nonplussed, but a second inspiration occurred to him. Why not shake the sleeper gently? The possible dangers of such a proceeding did not present themselves to Alonzo at that moment. His one thought was to do his duty.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said, as he began to shake Mr. Capper by the shoulder. And he was.

Mr. Capper, after the manner of deep sleepers, awoke with a great start, and, seeing a shadowy object at his bedside, made a dive for it. Alonzo roared as a fist crashed upon his nose.

Alonzo waited for no more. Like a flash he was out in the passage again, fleeing for his life. But Mr. Capper did not pursue. He concluded it was some junior idiotic enough to come with a complaint about something that might have occurred in the dormitory, and went to sleep again.

Alonzo paused when he thought he was safe. But he was resolved to do his duty. After turning over in his mind whether the first method of knocking up was not the best, after all, he approached Mr. Prout, the Fifth Form-master's door. He knocked boldly.

A roar like an angry lion answered him. Mr. Prout had a reputation for late suppers, and did not sleep well sometimes.

"But it's so important, sir," said Alonzo, feeling his knees giving way under him.

"Nothing is more important than my rest!" shouted the Fifth-master. "What do you mean, sir, whoever you are, disturbing me at this hour?"

"It is my duty, sir," answered Alonzo, trembling from head to foot. "I mean no harm, sir—"

"Don't talk to me of your duty, sir!" thundered the angry man. "What do you want? What is it?"

"Time to get up, sir."

"You dare to mock me, sir. Answer me at once, sir! Do you hear?"

"Perfectly, sir," returned Alonzo plaintively. "I understand that I am doing this at your request—"

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NEXT TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

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ONE
PENNY.

"What?"

"I understand it is your wish, sir, to be called at five o'clock in the morning, and—"

"My word! It—it must be some lunatic, or else some impudent joke!" gasped Mr. Prout.

He leaped out of bed.

With two bounds he was across the room, and had caught down a gun from the wall. He rushed to the door.

"Now, then!" he roared.

Alonzo Todd gave a wild look at the gun which the Form-master had raised to a level. Then he gave a terrific yell, and fled madly down the passage. The gun was not loaded, but the Duffer of Greyfriars did not know that. He raced away at top speed, and Mr. Prout, grinning, returned to his bed. He did not think that he was likely to be knocked up again by Alonzo Todd.

Nor was he!

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Knocked Down.

TODD dashed the length of the passage, and tore up the box-room stairs, and flung himself into a box-room, in his wild haste to escape. He shut the box-room door, and dragged boxes against it, and then listened with quaking nerves.

But there was no sound of pursuit.

"Dear me!" gasped Alonzo Todd. "What a fearfully narrow escape! Good heavens! I might have been shot! It is fearful to think of!"

And Todd trembled with cold and fright.

It was some time before he ventured to remove his barricade, and leave the box-room. But the clock striking the half-hour warned him that his duties were not yet done. Monsieur Charpentier remained to be called, and it was already half an hour later than the hour agreed upon by the amateur knocker-up.

"Dear me!" murmured Todd, as he left the box-room. "I shall have to apologise to Bulstrode and Skinner."

He descended the stairs cautiously.

The hour was still very early, and it was not yet light, and the earliest housemaid at Greyfriars was not visible yet.

Todd, looking out cautiously for Mr. Prout, made his way to the bed-room of the French-master. Nothing was to be seen of the Fifth Form-master, and Todd concluded that he had gone back to bed again. He did not intend to give Mr. Prout another call. The gun might go off this time, if he did!

He reached the door of Monsieur Charpentier's room, and raised his hand to knock.

Then he paused. The knock might as easily be heard in Mr. Prout's room as in Monsieur Charpentier's.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "I shall have to go in and awaken him gently. I trust I shall not startle him too much."

He opened the door quietly, and entered the French master's room.

Monsieur Charpentier lay sleeping the sleep of the just, blissfully unconscious of the fact that a kind-hearted youth was just going to rouse him from his balmy slumbers.

The room was very dark, for the window was closed, and the blind was down. Monsieur Charpentier, like most of his nation, had no great love for fresh air in bed-rooms.

Alonzo Todd peered to and fro as he advanced into the room. He knocked against the table, and then against a chair, and then there was a gasp from the corner of the room where the bed stood in shadow.

"Ciel!"

The noise had evidently awakened Monsieur Charpentier. Two black eyes glinted in the dark, dilated with fear. Monsieur Charpentier was awake, and he had awakened in a fearful fright at hearing someone moving in his room in the dark. His thoughts naturally ran upon the burglar who had made two unsuccessful attempts to break into Greyfriars of late. The little Frenchman's natural thought was that the villain had succeeded at last, and was now in his room.

"Mon Dieu!" murmured the French master, with the sweat running down his face. "Ciel! I am ze dead man! Ze ruffian have perhaps ze revolvers viz ten shots, and he keel me like rolling off ze wooden log so easy. I am lost!"

Monsieur Charpentier glared with terrified eyes at the dim figure in his room. His desperate grasp closed upon his pillow. He felt that he had one chance—to smite the burglar down, and fly before he could use his revolvers.

Whip! went the pillow through the air.

Alonzo Todd was about to speak. The swipe of the pillow caught him across the face, and he gasped instead.

"Grooh!"

He reeled back, fell over a chair, and rolled on the floor. Monsieur Charpentier was out of bed in a moment, but Todd rolled between him and the door, and the little Frenchman dared not attempt to pass him. He dodged round the table, keeping it between him and Todd.

"Help!" he gasped; but so great was his terror that his voice came out only in a husky whisper. "Help! A moi! Ze burglar—villain! Stand back viz you! Murdair!"

"My dear Mossos—"

"Vat! Ciel! I know zat voice!"

"Monsieur Charpentier!"

"Ciel! Zat is ze voice of Todd—zat foolish garcon, Todd!"

Alonzo staggered to his feet.

"My dear Monsieur Charpentier—"

"Todd! Zat garcon! Zat poy! Todd!"

"My dear—"

"Zen it is not a burglar!"

"Oh, mossos!"

"It is zat silly poy!"

"Oh, mossos!"

Monsieur Charpentier fumbled for a matchbox, and lighted his gas. Then he glared at Alonzo Todd.

Monsieur Charpentier was, as a rule, the best-tempered of masters, but his experience that morning in the small hours was quite sufficient to ruffle the kindest temper.

He squirmed round the table and placed himself between Todd and the door.

"Now, zen," he remarked, "we vill have ze explanation, please."

"My dear sir—"

"You comes and plays ze burglar in my room," said Mossos savagely. "Oh, no, I not zinks zat you steal anyzing!"

"Oh, dear!" gasped Alonzo.

"I zink zat you play ze rotten trick, zen."

"My dear sir, I was but doing my duty," said Alonzo meekly. "My Uncle Benjamin has always impressed upon me to be kind and obliging, and I have endeavoured to carry out his beneficent instructions to the best of my ability."

"Ciel! Vat vords zat silly garcon do use! Todd, is it zat it is obliging to vake a gentleman up viz himself in ze middle of the night?"

"But you wished to be called, sir."

"Vat?"

"You wished to be called at five o'clock, sir. It is now turned half-past five, and I shall have to apologise to Bulstrode for not more exactly carrying out the promise I gave him," said Todd, in distress.

"You—you silly garcon!"

"Oh, sir!"

"It is vat you call ze pull of ze leg!" roared Monsieur Charpentier. "I did not vish to be called, and you have been ze great fool."

"Oh, dear!"

"It is a shape!"

"I—I never suspected that it might be a jape, sir. Oh, dear! Then that is why Mr. Quelch would not get up, and Mr. Capper, and Mr. Prout were so annoyed."

In spite of his exasperation, the little Frenchman could not help bursting into a laugh at the idea that the Duffer had made the round of the House, knocking up the masters in turn at that unearthly hour.

"You—you silly shump!" he exclaimed. "I zink zat I speak to Bulstrode about zat. Go away at vunco; I canes Bulstrode instead of you. Go away!"

"My dear sir—"

Monsieur Charpentier made a lunge at Todd, and the Duffer of Greyfriars dodged out of the room. The Frenchman chuckled, and went back to bed again. Todd took his way disconsolately to the Remove dormitory.

He paused by the side of Bulstrode's bed, and gave the burly Removite a severe look.

"Bulstrode," he said, "you have deceived me."

Bulstrode snored.

"Skinner," said Alonzo solemnly, turning towards that humorous youth's bed—"Skinner, you have deceived me!"

Skinner snored.

Alonzo Todd sighed, and went to bed.

He did not wake till the rising-bell was clanging out; then he sat up as a pillow, hurled by Bulstrode, smote him and startled him out of the realm of dreams.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Alonzo, rubbing his eyes. "What was that? I felt a sudden shock. Surely this part of the country is not subject to earthquakes?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Did you call the masters, Todd?"

Todd blinked at Bulstrode.

"Yes, indeed I did, Bulstrode. I am sorry to say I have discovered that it was a jape on your part, and they did not wish to be called. I have been subjected to some unpleasant experiences."

Bulstrode roared.

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PLEASE NOTE!

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"It's all right, Toddy," he said, with tears of merriment in his eyes. "Quelch gave me a lecture on early rising yesterday, so I thought he ought to be called to-day. One good turn deserves another, you know. And if you were up to call Quelch, it was just as well to knock up the others. Early to bed, and early to rise, is the approved method of recouping one's health, accumulating property, and enlightening the understanding, as your Uncle Benjamin would say."

"Quite true, Bulstrode, and I trust you will not get into trouble over the matter," said Todd, in the most forgiving spirit.

Bulstrode gave a jump.

"Trouble! Why should I get into trouble over it?" he demanded.

"You see, I inadvertently mentioned your name to Monsieur Charpentier—"

"You silly ass!" roared Bulstrode.

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"You've given me away!"

"I certainly did not intend to, but—"

"Oh, you chump!"

"My dear— Yow! Yoop!"

Bulstrode's bolster came whirling through the air, and it caught Alonzo round the neck. He rolled out of bed with a loud bump. Half an hour later, Bulstrode was receiving "three on each hand," and realising that it was not always wholly satisfactory to improve the shining hour by spoofing Alonzo.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

The Face at the Window.

NIGHT had fallen upon Greyfriars once more—a dim, misty, winter's night, which made the fellows glad to stay in their cosy studies, or gather in groups round the fires in the common-rooms. In the junior common-room the talk had turned upon the attempts which had been made by the mysterious burglar to enter Greyfriars. Whether it was the famous Greyfriars silver plate, or the story of John Bull's sudden accession to wealth, there was no doubt that the man had been singularly determined in his attempt to burgle the school. Whether he was still in the neighbourhood was a question that was very interesting to the Greyfriars fellows.

His description had been sent to the police, and it was a very full one. His face had been clearly seen in the moonlight. From Scotland Yard it was learned that the description exactly fitted a criminal lately released from penal servitude, who had failed to report himself to the police at the necessary time, and whose whereabouts had been unknown. His name was Bill Frayne, and he was reputed one of the most reckless and skilful cracksmen in his honourable profession. The thought that a professional cracksmen, and a man who had served a term of penal servitude, was lurking about the school, gave the fellows a thrill as night descended. For the general opinion was that the fellow was not gone.

There were half a dozen police looking for him in the neighbourhood now, true. But a countryside like that round Greyfriars abounded with hiding-places. In the deep woods, or in the ruined chapel, or on the island in the Sark, or among the caves of the seashore, dozens of fugitives could have hidden themselves in safety. The police did not believe that the burglar would venture upon a third attempt, but the Remove fellows were of a different opinion.

"I think Alonzo ought to keep watch every night regularly," Bulstrode remarked solemnly. "He could take a nap in the Form-room during lessons every morning, to recuperate."

"Don't you think Mr. Quelch might object to that, my dear Bulstrode?" asked Alonzo.

There was a yell of laughter.

"Well, he might," grinned Bob Cherry. "You never can tell."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The mightfulness is terrific," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur, with a chuckle. "If the esteemed dufferful Todd keeps the honourable watch, I shall insistfully require that he does not arm himself pokerfully. It is too dangerous."

"Hear, hear!"

"My dear Inky—"

"Alonzo's not going to keep watch," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Bulstrode's only pulling your leg, Toddy. You go to sleep. You're safer that way."

"I should be perfectly willing to keep watch—"

"But we shouldn't—"

"My dear Wharton—"

"Bed-time," said Wharton, looking at the clock. "Go to bed, Toddy, and for goodness' sake don't keep watch. You get on our nerves."

Alonzo Todd shook his head sorrowfully. There could be

no denying that his attempts to oblige his Form fellows, and to perform little services for the world in general, sometimes ended in trouble. But was that a reason why Alonzo should neglect to carry out the precepts of his Uncle Benjamin? Surely not!

The Remove went up to bed. Loder tapped Alonzo Todd on the shoulder in the passage. The Duffer of Greyfriars blinked at him.

"Yes, my dear Loder?" he said.

"You'd better go to sleep to-night," said the prefect. "If you begin any more of your pranks, you'll get it in the neck."

"I trust you do not intend to break bounds to-night, my dear Loder?"

The prefect pulled his ear and strode away. Todd rubbed his crimsoned ear, and stared after Loder in surprise.

"Loder seems to be angry about something," he remarked.

"Have you done anything to offend him, Wharton?"

"Ha, ha! No."

"He certainly seems to be annoyed about something. I—"

"Oh, do come on, Toddy! You're too funny to live!"

"My dear Wharton—"

Wharton marched Todd into the dormitory. The Remove turned in, Alonzo wearing a very thoughtful expression upon his face.

He was evidently turning it over in his mind whether he ought to keep watch or not. The lights were extinguished, and the juniors were left to themselves.

"My dear Bulstrode—" came Todd's still small voice.

Bulstrode grunted.

"Would you care to come and arrange the pillows round me, so that I can sit up in bed in comfort?" asked Alonzo.

"What on earth are you going to sit up in bed for?" demanded John Bull.

"To keep watch."

"B-r-r-r-r!"

"If you would kindly explain what you mean by that unintelligible noise, Bull, I would endeavour to reply in suitable terms," said Alonzo mildly.

"Go to sleep!"

"But I am going to keep watch."

"B-r-r-r-r!"

"My dear Bull—"

"B-r-r-r-r!"

"I trust you are not ill, Bull. I should be very pleased to fetch you an emetic, or some cod liver oil, if you wish."

"B-r-r-r-r!"

"How very odd! My dear Bull—"

"Go to sleep!" roared a dozen voices.

"But I am going to watch."

"Then watch quietly."

"My dear fellows—"

"Shut up!"

And Alonzo Todd was reduced to silence at last. But not to slumber. The rest of the Form dropped off to sleep, but Alonzo Todd remained with wide-open eyes, staring into the gloom of the dormitory.

There was a glimmer of moonlight without, and it showed up the high windows of the dormitory, with here and there a leafless branch without outlined upon them.

Alonzo nodded off half a dozen times. That was only to be expected. But he started into wakefulness again every time the clock tolled out the hour.

Midnight!

Twelve strokes had boomed out, and Alonzo blinked at the glimmering windows with sleepy eyes.

He was beginning to think that perhaps it was not necessary, after all, to keep watch. He was very, very sleepy.

One!

Alonzo could have sworn, almost, that he had only closed his eyes for a second after hearing the twelve strokes of midnight, yet here was the booming hour of one startling him into wakefulness again.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "I really think that—that I must have a nap!"

Then he started.

A faint sound had caught his ears. Was it the sound of a branch brushing against the window in the wind, or—

In a moment he was at the window, blinking out into the pale glimmer of the light.

But there was nothing to be seen.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "I must have been mistaken. I was certain that I saw something at the window, and I certainly heard a sound, but undoubtedly I was mistaken. I think I will return to bed and recuperate myself for this lengthy vigil in balmy slumber."

It was very cold in the dormitory, and Alonzo's pyjamas did not keep him warm. He was about to leave the window, when something dark blocked up a patch of the glimmering light upon the panes.

Alonzo stood transfixed.

He could not move a limb—he could only stare. On the other side of the pane a human head had risen into view, and the man without and Alonzo within stared at one another through the glass.

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY.

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ONE
PENNY.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Catching the Burglar.

TODD did not make a sound.

He was too transfixed by terror. Only the thin sheet of glass separated him from the burglar who was looking in.

That it was the burglar, that he had really come back, there was no doubt. Alonzo could see the hard, cruel, savage face, the bulldog jaw and thick, cruel lips. The man was a criminal. And he was within three feet of Alonzo!

Terror froze the Duffer of Greyfriars.

But it slowly dawned upon him that he was in no danger. The burglar's head could be clearly seen by him, because it blocked up the light. But inside the dormitory was thick darkness, and the man would not be able to see an inch through the glass. All he could see by looking in would be his own reflection in the glass.

Alonzo breathed more easily as he realised it. The man was within three feet of him, and looking directly at him, but he could not see him, any more than if Alonzo had been a mile away. Todd, so far, was invisible.

The head disappeared from the outside of the window.

Alonzo Todd stood shivering for some moments, and then crept away to Harry Wharton's bed. He reached out, and grasped the captain of the Remove by the shoulder.

"Wharton! I say, my dear Wharton—"

"Groo!"

"Wake up, my dear Wharton!"

"Gro-o-o-oh!"

"Pray wake up!"

Todd shook Wharton so violently that he had no choice but to wake up. He sat up suddenly in bed, and the top of his head came into violent contact with Alonzo's chin, as the Duffer of Greyfriars bent over him.

Crack!

There was a gasp of agony from Alonzo.

"Oh dear!"

"Groo!" gasped Wharton, rubbing his head. "Yow! Oh! You champion ass! What are you up to? Was that a cricket-stump, you fathead?"

"Yow! It was my ch-ch-chin!"

"You frabjous cuckoo! What do you mean by japing a chap in the middle of the night? By George, I'll pulverise you!"

"Ow! I am considerably hurt! It is burglars, Wharton!"

Wharton snorted.

"Oh, go to bed! I'm tired of your giddy burglars! Have you been catching another prefect on the batter?"

"It is the burglar—the man Frayne! I knew his face at once—he was the same man who was dodging over the roof the other night!" said Todd, in a thrilling whisper. "I saw him on the outhouse in the moonlight, you know!"

Harry Wharton started up.

"You've seen the same man to-night, Todd?"

"Yes, Wharton; certainly!"

"You're not spoofing?"

"My dear Wharton—"

"Look here, Todd, if you've seen him, where is he?" asked Wharton, sitting up in bed, and still rubbing the crown of his head. Todd was still rubbing his chin. "You don't mean to say he's in the dorm?"

"Certainly not! He was looking in at the window!"

"My hat! He couldn't reach the window! You've been dreaming!"

"He had undoubtedly climbed the rainpipe, Wharton! I imagine that he has found the window too difficult to open, and has sought another mode of entrance, as he has disappeared. You see for yourself that he is gone," said Alonzo, with a wave of the hand towards the window, as if that proved everything.

"Yes; but I want to be sure that he was there!" grumbled Wharton. "You may have fancied it all, you know. You know what an ass you are!"

"My dear fellow—"

"Oh, cheeze it! I suppose I'd better get up?"

Harry Wharton turned out of bed, and began to dress. Several of the fellows had awakened, and Alonzo explained to them breathlessly what he had seen at the window.

The general opinion was that Todd had been dreaming, and that opinion was expressed with much frankness. But some of the fellows thought that the matter ought to be looked into, as Todd was so positive. As Bob Cherry remarked, it was quite possible—though improbable—for Todd to be right sometimes.

Half a dozen of the juniors dressed themselves. It was too cold to explore in pyjamas or nightshirts, but their dressing only went as far as trousers and slippers, with a jacket or two. The cricket-stumps and pokers were still in the dormitory, and the valiant half-dozen armed themselves.

"Please hand me a poker, as I am to lead you!" said Alonzo, nudging Bob Cherry in the ribs.

"Rats! You're not going to lead, and you're jolly well not going to have a poker!" said Bob Cherry. "You're not going to brain me, if I know it! Why don't you get into your clothes? You'll be frozen!"

"There is no time——"

"Bosh! Come on, you fellows!"

"You had better give me the poker!"

"Here it is!"

Bob Cherry jammed the end of the poker against Todd's chest, and the Duffer of Greyfriars sat down on a bed. Then the juniors explored the dormitory. Todd gasped on the bed for some seconds before he followed them.

Many of the other fellows were awake, but they preferred to wait in their warm beds to hear whether the alarm was a genuine one before they turned out.

Harry Wharton & Co. stepped out into the passage, and listened. There was no sound to be heard. A glimmer of moonlight fell in at a window on the staircase. It was very ghostly and eerie.

"M-m-my hat!" murmured Nugent. "It doesn't look inviting!"

"Let's get on!" said Harry. "We'd better look round as we're up."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh, "though the fatheaded dufferfulness of the honourable Todd is great!"

The juniors descended the stairs.

In the hall below there was a glimmer of light from the windows. The House was very still and silent.

Bob Cherry started suddenly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Listen!"

There was a sound on the landing above. It was a cautious footstep.

"What's that?"

"Only one of the fellows following us," said Wharton. And he called out, in a hushed voice: "Is that you, Todd?"

"Yes, my dear Wharton!" came a voice from the landing above. "Have you found the burglar?"

"No, fathead!"

"Where are you?"

"We're in the hall."

"Dear me! Are you sure that you are all in the hall, Wharton?"

"Yes, chump!"

"But I can distinctly see someone crouching on the staircase!" called out Alonzo. "I trust you are not playing any silly jape now, you fellows!"

"You can see—what?" panted Wharton.

A thrill ran through the juniors. If there was someone crouching on the stairs between them and Alonzo, it could only be one person—the burglar!

"I can see someone! I—— Oh, he is moving! Dear me! Help!" screamed Alonzo.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Cheers for Alonzo.

BUMP!

Bump!

Crash!

Bumping, gasping, crashing, yelling!

What had happened?

Wharton, as he sprang furiously towards the stairs, knew what had happened. It was the burglar who had been crouching there. He had gained admittance to the house, after all, and the juniors had narrowly missed him. And the innocent Duffer of Greyfriars had unintentionally warned him that he was seen. Alonzo's voice, of course, was as clearly audible to the burglar as to Wharton and the rest. The man had made a desperate rush up the staircase, to attempt to pass Alonzo. He had run right into the Duffer of Greyfriars, who had grasped him, and they had rolled down the stairs together.

Bump, bump, bump!

A light flashed out in the hall.

Harry Wharton & Co. were rushing to the rescue.

"Ow!" gasped Todd. "Oh! Help!"

"Rescue, Remove!" roared Wharton.

A shout answered from the Remove dormitory. The fellows had heard the din, and were turning out in force.

Alonzo was struggling in the grasp of the burglar. But the ruffian had no desire to stick to Alonzo.

He rolled dazed on the floor from the stairs, but ere the juniors could seize him he had torn himself away from Todd, and had leaped to his feet.

Todd lay gasping on the floor. He had had all the breath bumped out of his body by the rough descent of the stairs.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Seize him! It's the burglar! Seize

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him, my dear fellows! Mind his revolver, if he's got one! Dear me! I wish I had a poker!"

"Collar him!" shouted Wharton.

With cricket-stumps and poker well to the fore, the juniors rushed at the burly ruffian.

Bill Frayne gritted his teeth hard.

There was a jemmy in his hand, but the weapons lifted to strike him down were too many for his jemmy. He sprang away, and rushed to the door.

But even as he tore at it, the juniors were upon him.

Wharton's stick crashed upon his wrist, and, with a howl of pain, the ruffian dropped the jemmy clattering to the floor.

"Collar him!" roared Wharton.

"Stand back!" hissed the man. "Stand back, or by——"

"Collar him!"

The juniors rushed right at the ruffian.

They seized him, and piled upon him, and dragged him down.

The ruffian fought fiercely, striking savage blows at his assailant, careless of the injury he did, and several of the lads reeled away, half stunned, from his fists. But the others were not daunted.

They piled on the ruffian, and had him down at last, and rolled and sprawled over him.

The din, needless to say, had awakened the whole house by this time. Masters and boys were swarming up from all sides.

"What's the matter?"

"What's the row?"

"Ciel!"

"Is it the burglar?"

"Only a jape of those young villains!"

"Mon Dieu! It iz ze burglar!"

"Phew!"

"Help!"

"Collar him!"

There were many hands now to collar the burglar. But the ruffian—with the prison gates yawning wide before his eyes, so to speak—made a terrible effort, and hurled off the fellows who were holding him before fresh hands could seize him.

He staggered to his feet, for the moment free.

His face was white and desperate, his teeth set, his lips drawn back and snarling like a wild animal's. He looked terrible, and it was no wonder that the juniors hesitated a second before they hurled themselves upon him again.

In that second the ruffian acted. He made a desperate spring towards the nearest window.

"Seize him!"

"Collar the brute!"

"After him!"

"My dear fellow, you had better surrender," said Alonzo. "I assure you——"

"After the brute!"

The ruffian had flung the window open. It was unfastened, and was evidently the window he had entered by.

Careless of hurt to himself, the man flung himself headlong out of the window, and rolled on the ground outside.

"He's gone!"

"After him!" yelled Wharton.

Harry leaped through the window. Bob Cherry was after him in a twinkling, and then Alonzo Todd. Todd was not to be left out. He scrambled through the window, and fell on Wharton, knocking him down just as he was getting up. Wharton reeled against Bob Cherry, sending him flying.

Alonzo collared Wharton with both hands.

"Got him!" he shrieked. "I've got him! Help! Help! I've got the wicked man! Help!"

"You ass!"

"My dear Wharton——"

"Leggo, you chump!"

"I'm so sorry——"

Wharton hurled Todd off, and jumped up. He looked round for the burglar. The man had dashed off instantly into the darkness. Whether his fall had hurt him or not, he was not too hurt to take flight.

"After him!" roared the fellows, as they poured out of the House by door and window.

Bob Cherry rushed in one direction, Harry Wharton in another. Alonzo Todd dashed towards the Head's garden. The burglar could not be seen; but, as it happened, it was Todd who took the right direction.

A crash of a glass frame came ringing to his ears, and showed that someone was fleeing through the garden.

Todd shouted back as he gave chase.

"This way! Follow me, my dear fellows! Help!"

The moon was sailing over the tree-tops, and a glimmering light fell upon the Head's garden, showing up the flower-beds and paths.

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's" and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

Todd caught sight of the burly form leaping through the shrubbery, heading for the wall that bounded the garden towards the Friardale Road, and he gave chase hotly.

Todd had quite forgotten that he had nothing on but his pyjamas, and that it was a cold night. Excitement kept him warm as he dashed along.

"This way!" he shrieked. "Help! He's going! This way! I've got him!"

There was a shout behind Alonzo. The other fellows had heard him, and were rushing after him.

But the ruffian had reached the wall now. Alonzo dashed after him as he dragged himself up by the ivy.

The Duffer of Greyfriars made a grasp at him, and missed. The moment after the man was gone. Todd heard him drop into the road, and the next moment there was a sound of rapidly running feet.

The man was gone! Alonzo Todd stood gasping and gasping, pumping in breath, with not another effort left in him. The fellows came crowding up.

"Where is he?"

"Got him?"

"He's gone, my dear fellows!" gasped Alonzo Todd. "He's gone. You are too late! However, I trust that he will realise the wickedness of his ways, and——"

"Br-r-r!"

"My dear Bull——"

"Well, he's gone!" said Harry Wharton. "No good chasing him down the road. I dare say the police will get him, after all. They are watching for him. Let's get back."

"Dear me, I feel very cold——"

"No wonder, ass, when you've got nothing on but your pyjamas!" exclaimed Nugent. "Get in, or you'll be frozen!"

"My dear Nugent——"

"Hurry up, you ass!"

The juniors rushed Alonzo Todd indoors. In the doorway Mr. Quelch met them. The Remove-master already knew that the burglar had escaped, and he knew, too, the part Alonzo Todd had played in the alarm.

He grasped the Duffer of Greyfriars by the hand and shook it heartily.

"I congratulate you, Todd!" he exclaimed. "But for this alarm, given by you, the house would undoubtedly have been robbed. The burglar had gained admittance, and would very likely have been undisturbed but for you. I hope he

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will be captured; but in any case we all owe a great deal to you."

Alonzo beamed with pleasure, forgetting his cold feet for a moment.

"Oh, sir," he exclaimed, "I am so glad that I have been of use! My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that I should be useful and obliging, and——"

"Exactly, Todd! And now you had better go to bed, or you will catch cold."

"Yes, sir. My Uncle Benjamin said——"

"Very good! Good-night, Todd!"

Alonzo was rushed off to the dormitory. Harry Wharton hurled him into bed, and Nugent and Bob Cherry piled clothes upon him. Alonzo was almost suffocated under the mass of bedclothes, and he projected a very red face from underneath the pile of blankets and gasped for breath.

"Thank you so much, my dear fellows!" he gasped. "But—but pray do not overdo it. My Uncle Benjamin does not believe in too many bedclothes. I consider——"

"Go to sleep, Todd."

"Oh, certainly, Wharton. But——"

"Go to sleep! I say," went on Wharton, "Todd has distinguished himself this time and no mistake. I think——"

"Just what I was thinking!" said Billy Bunter eagerly

"We ought to stand a big feed to celebrate it, and——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, you know——"

"I think we ought to celebrate it," said Wharton, ignoring Bunter. "We'll do it by agreeing for a week at least to leave Todd to blush unseen, and waste his sweetness on the desert air, as the poet says—I mean, for a week all chaps are to agree to leave off spoofing Alonzo."

And the Remove gave Alonzo a cheer, and the agreement was unanimous.

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete tale next Tuesday, entitled: "THE TEMPTER," by Frank Richards. Order in advance. Price one penny.)

GRAND NEW ADVENTURE SERIAL JUST STARTING.

Wolves of the Deep.

The Story of a Great Conspiracy, introducing Ferrers Lord and Ching-Lung.

By SIDNEY DREW.

READ THIS FIRST.

Rupert Thurston—a man of independent means—is driving along the Thames Embankment one night, when he hears a piercing cry for help come from the river below. He dives in to the rescue, but after a desperate struggle he is rendered unconscious. He awakes to find himself in a hammock on a boat. Sitting opposite him is a man who immediately addresses him by his name, and begins to describe his life to him.

(Now go on with the story.)

On Board The Lord of the Deep.

"How do you know," he asked, "what my life has been? I have never set eyes on you before. Who are you?"

The man smiled, and, turning away, opened a bottle of champagne. He filled a glass with the amber wine, and held it out to Thurston.

"Drink that," he said; "it will do you good. My name is Ferrers Lord. How I have learned all this does not matter now. You are a plucky youngster, and you ought to have a future before you. Have you any ambition?"

Thurston emptied the glass before he answered. The wine gave him new life. He sat up.

"You ask strange questions, sir. Like every other man, I would like to do something great; but I have had no chance."

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "THE TEMPTER."

Ferrers Lord laughed again, and the huge diamond ring he wore sparkled in the light.

"Every man ought to make his own opportunities, Thurston," he said, in his deep tones. "I like you, or I would have left you to the mercy of the river when I thought you dead. I am rich beyond man's wildest dreams of wealth. I can show you wonders that no other eye than mine has ever seen. You owe me your life. I want a man I can trust to aid me, to help me to explore the marvels of a hidden world beneath the ocean. Look!"

The long, rafted room shook and quivered. Thurston sprang amazed from the hammock as Ferrers Lord dragged aside the massive curtain. A dull green light filled the room, growing brighter. Suddenly the green gave place to dazzling sunlight, the room pitched and rocked, and he saw the white-capped waves rushing past the window. He staggered, staring dazedly at the tall figure before him.

"The sea!" he cried, hardly daring to believe his eyes. "Surely I am dreaming! What mystery is this?"

Ferrers Lord touched the button of a bell. The waves rose higher, and the strange green semi-darkness came again.

"It is no dream, Thurston," he said quietly, glancing at his watch. "I suppose it was somewhere between two and three when I had the good fortune to rescue you after your plucky dive. It is now nearly ten o'clock, so you have

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums
of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

been sleeping for a good many hours. Come and sit down before the fire and take another glass of wine."

Thurston obeyed, more puzzled and more amazed. The sickening motion of the room had ended, and the curtain had fallen once more. Ferrers Lord lighted a cigar, and, leaning back in a comfortable deck-chair, took a sip of champagne.

"I see I have surprised you," he said, "and I do not wonder at it. I must also apologise for the liberty I have taken in kidnapping you for a short time. Listen well to what I have to say, Mr. Thurston. I am going to show you something that will surprise you still more."

"First of all, I want you to give me your word that, if you refuse the offer I am about to make you, you will keep all you see a profound secret. Have I your promise?"

Thurston hesitated, and looked more keenly at his rescuer. He liked the stern, powerful face.

"You have my word," he answered.

"That is enough; I need no other pledge. You have seen that we are at sea, and, therefore, you know that we must be on board some vessel. You are on board the Lord of the Deep, my submarine vessel."

"Surely you are jesting?" he cried.

"I am far from jesting"—Ferrers Lord lazily blew out a ring of smoke. "This is—or will be, when it is completed—the state-room. At present, of course, it is quite unfinished; but when it is mirrored and upholstered, it will look very different. You look incredulous still. I will remove every doubt. We are close to where the German vessel Kaldersrath foundered a month or so ago. The divers are working there."

He stretched out his hand to press a bell into a bulk-head beside him. There was a deep, quivering drone that made the room vibrate.

"Sit tight, my friend!" said Ferrers Lord.

The strange boat leapt forward with a jerk that almost shot Thurston from his chair, and littered the hearth with sparks. The buzz of the throbbing engines increased as the vessel gathered speed. Again the curtain was raised; but at such a depth only a grey, dim light came through the thick, toughened glass of the window. A bell tinkled, and the hidden engines ceased to revolve.

"Look!" cried Ferrers Lord—"Look! And be convinced."

A beam of dazzling light went shooting through the dark water, and a cry of mingled astonishment and pleasure broke from Thurston's lips. He rushed to the window and flattened his face against the panes. Slowly the brilliant searchlight swept round, piercing the silent depths of sea with its knife of flame; then it halted.

There, lying upon a huge bed of seaweed, lay the ponderous German liner Kaldersrath—Ocean greyhound and floating palace. Ninety fathoms of water pressed her down, a gaping hole in her iron ribs told of the awful collision that had sent her shattered to the bottom. Strange fish, dazzled by the light, clustered like a flock of birds round the window, and stared curiously in with their goggle eyes. Ferrers Lord broke the strange silence.

"Are you satisfied, my friend?"

Thurston did not answer; his whole thoughts were concentrated upon the sight before him—this grim ocean tragedy. At such a depth the pressure of water was appalling. A few years ago no diver would have risked his life by trying to descend; but the advance of science had conquered, and the dauntless diver was at work upon his solitary task.

Suddenly from the dark rent in the Kaldersrath's plates appeared a strange figure. It was grotesquely human, but more like some uncanny monster of the deep than a living man. Bubbles shot up in streams from its helmeted head, and the light flashed upon a gleaming axe, an axe so heavy that in the air only a giant could have wielded it.

It stopped, clutching the guide-rope, its

three goggle eyes turned in stunned amaze upon the strange vessel. Then the uncouth figure strode forward clumsily, its lead-soled boots sinking deep into the ooze, and thrust its helmeted head close to the glass.

Ferrers Lord lifted the champagne, and held it invitingly before the window. The bearded face beneath the round brass helmet relaxed into a grin. He swung the axe above his head, grinning more broadly, and pretended that he was about to shiver the glass. His lips formed the words:

"Who on earth are you?"

Ferrers Lord took a sheet of paper and scrawled upon it: "I am the man who wrote to you on Friday. Did you receive my letter?"

An affirmative nod answered him. He wrote again:

"You will keep the appointment?"

There was a second nod, and Ferrers Lord waved his hand, warning the man to stand back.

He obeyed, and the light went out. Once more the curtain fell, once more the hidden engines throbbed and whirled as the little vessel bore her way ahead. Ferrers Lord relighted his cigar, and his dark eyes met those of Rupert Thurston.

"You are satisfied, my friend?"

"Satisfied?" cried the young man. "I am amazed—staggered! The whole thing is too amazing to be grasped. It reminds me of one of those yarns by Jules Verne that I loved to read at school. I still half believe it is a dream."

Ferrers Lord puffed at his cigar.

"You are right," he answered; "it would revolutionise the world—that is, if I cared to part with my secret. Think, for instance, of that marvellous fighting-machine, the splendid British Fleet, and the millions it has cost. In a week this little vessel could destroy it; in three months it could wipe out the combined navies of the whole world. The Lord of the Deep has a speed of nearly thirty knots, and I do not despair of making it either forty or fifty. I am monarch of the seas, Thurston, and, therefore, I am monarch of the land!"

"That is true," said the young man, with a slight shiver.

He looked more keenly at this strange man. What if he should misuse this awful power that could send the mightiest nations tottering to the ground like a house of cards? Ferrers Lord read his thoughts.

"You need have no fear, my friend," he said slowly. "I understand the thought that has crossed your mind. I am no madman, and you need not dread any misuse of this terrible power I hold. I am a Briton born, and proud to be a Briton. I love my island home, and my only ambition is to make it stronger and greater. When this little vessel is perfected, I intend to visit every sea, and study the wonders that are hidden there. Come, will you share this voyage with me?"

Thurston's cheeks flushed with excitement. He stretched out his hand, and Ferrers Lord pressed it in an iron grip. The bargain was sealed.

"You are an impulsive youngster," said the millionaire, "and very businesslike. I do not wish you to come for nothing, but we will arrange all that later. If you have digested all the Thames water you have swallowed, let us breakfast."

There was something fascinating in thus breakfasting in these unknown realms beneath the sea. Above them a hundred vessels laden with wealth were throbbing inwards towards the rich port of London, or thrashing outwards towards the very ends of the earth. Thurston ate ravenously, as every young Briton should eat. Ferrers Lord nodded approvingly.

"I admire a good appetite," he said, "and you have an excellent one. Look at our British workman and our British soldier. The first can do as much as any foreigner, and the second can fight as well as half a dozen put together. It is because they eat good food, and plenty of it. When a man tells me that the British workman who gets two pounds a week is extravagant because he does not save, and that the Germans can live well on a third of that sum, I know the man is a fool."

(Another long instalment of this thrilling new serial next Tuesday.)

For Next Week



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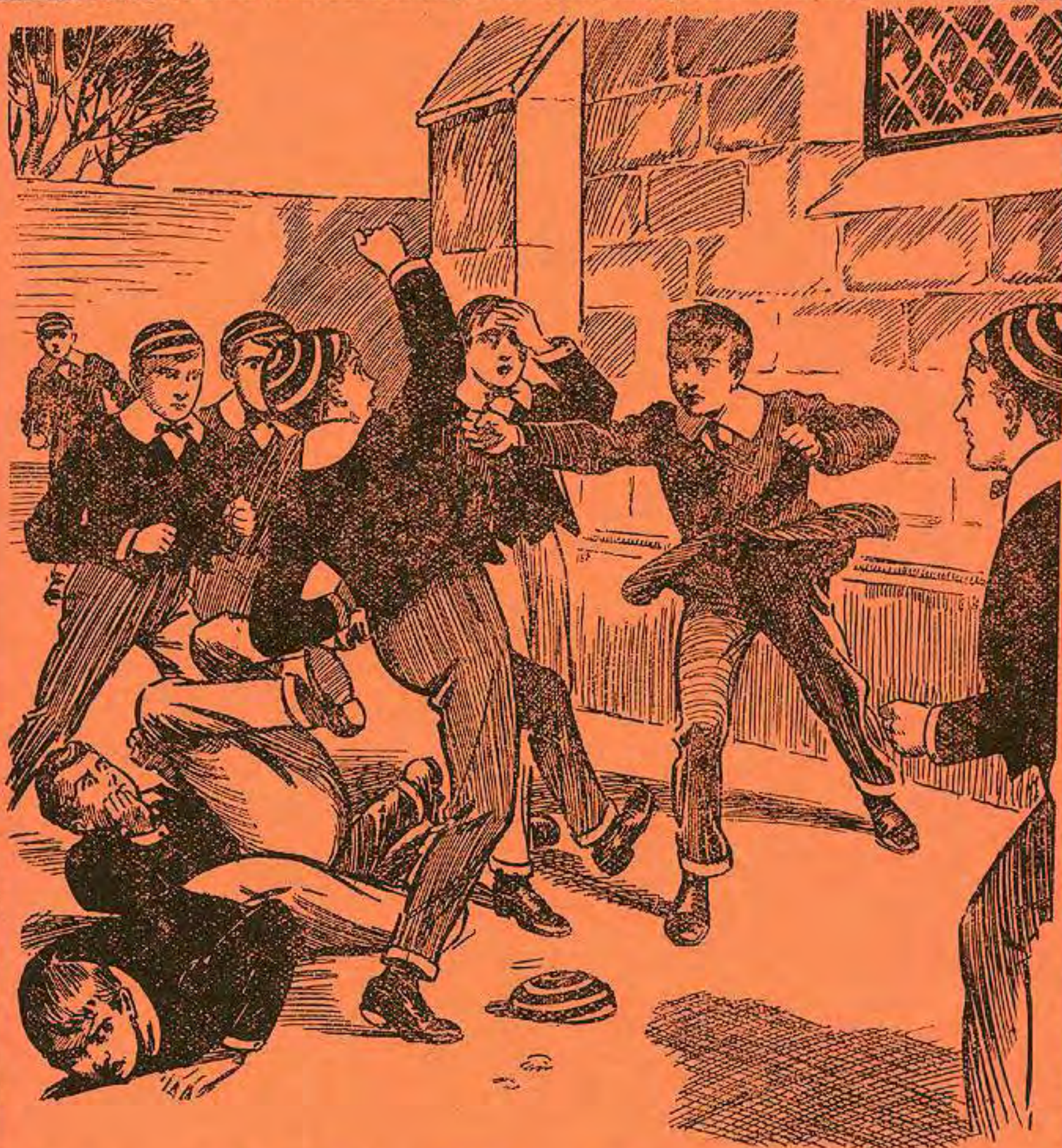
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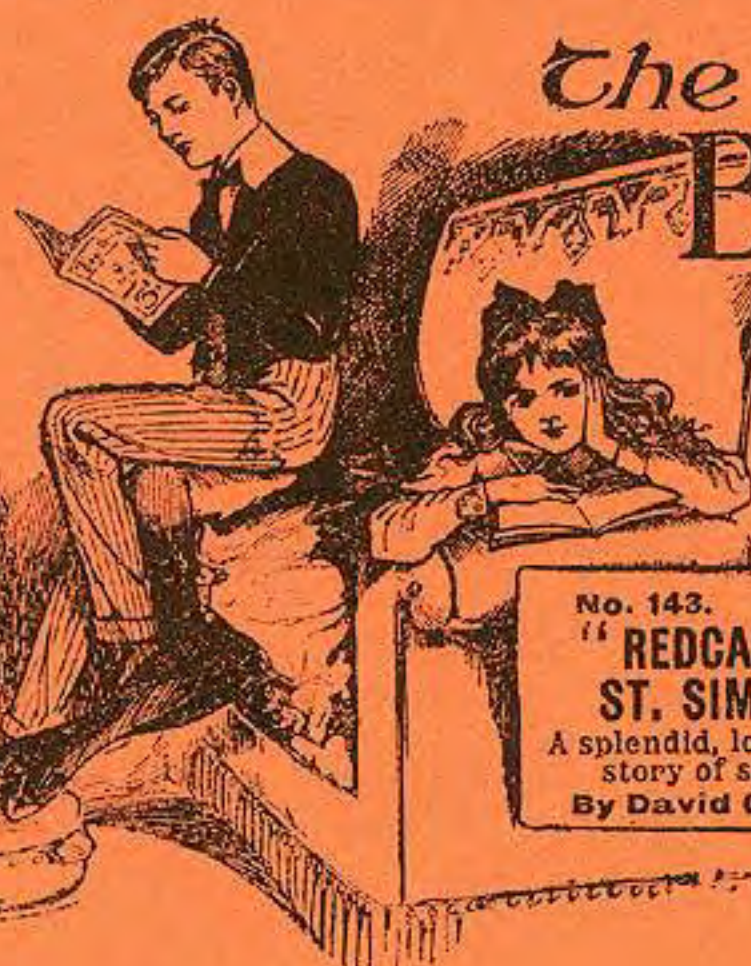
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