

'WHERE IS THAT BALL?'

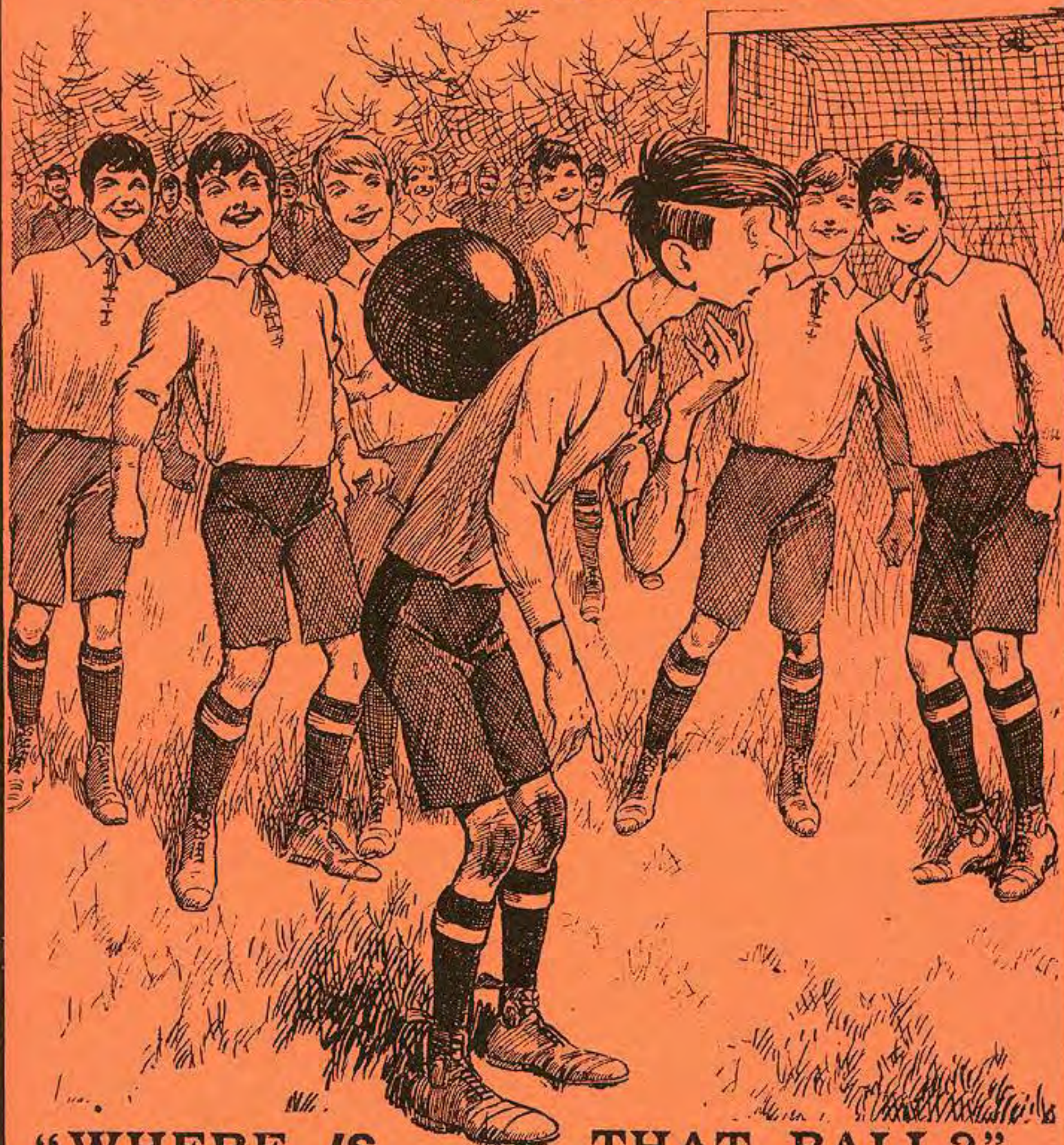
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No. 161. | The Complete Story-Book for All. | Vol 5.

"WHERE IS THAT BALL?"



"WHERE IS THAT BALL?"



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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

A Story of special interest, dealing with
Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.



A Complete School Story-Book, attractive to All Readers.

The Editor will be obliged if you will hand this book, when finished with, to a friend.

[Our Readers are informed that the characters in the following Story are purely imaginary; no reference or allusion is made to any living person. Actual names may be unintentionally mentioned, but the Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that no adverse personal reflection is intended.]



Alonzo, the Footballer.

A Splendid,
Long, Complete School Tale
of
Harry Wharton & Co. and
Alonzo at Greyfriars.

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Little Rag.

RAP!
Gosling, the porter of Greyfriars, growled, and rose from his comfortable chair by the cosy fire. Gosling did not like being disturbed. It was true that he was paid excellent wages for performing the porter's duties at Greyfriars College, but that made no difference to Gosling. He never heard a rap or a ring without grumbling.

Rap!
The knock on the lodge door was repeated before Gosling could open it.

"Oh, blow!" murmured Gosling, as he flung open the door. He would have liked to scowl, but as it might be someone in authority who had rapped at his door he worked up a dutiful smile instead. "Yes, sir?"

"Hallo, Gosling!" said Harry Wharton of the Remove cheerfully.

Gosling frowned.

It was Wharton of the Remove, looking very handsome and cheerful as he stood there in the clear March sunlight, with sparkling eyes and a flush of healthy colour in his cheeks. But that picture of healthy boyhood did not appeal to Gosling in any way. He did not like boys. His private opinion was that all boys ought to be drowned, or at least shut up in some secluded place where they could do no harm.

"Well?" grunted Gosling.

"Carrier been yet?" asked Wharton.

"No, sir!"

"When he comes, see if he's got a parcel for me."

"I s'pose if he's got a parcel for you, Master Wharton, he'll leave it 'ere," said Gosling, with a grunt.

"I suppose he will," assented Harry. "You'll see if he has one, won't you, and take care of it?"

"You're expecting a parcel, Master Wharton?" asked Gosling, thawing a little as he scented the possibility of a tip.

Wharton shook his head calmly.

"No, I'm not expecting one," he said.

"Why—what—?"

"But if one comes you'll have to see to it, you know," said the junior. "Ta-ta!"

And he walked away whistling.

Gosling gazed after him, with feelings too deep for words. Wharton wasn't expecting a parcel; he had called him from his comfortable seat by the fire to tell him that.

The porter slammed the door with a slam that could be heard half across the Close of Greyfriars, and went back to his seat, his pipe, and his glass of gin-and-water.

Harry Wharton glanced round as he heard the slam and grinned. Then he joined Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent of the Remove under the elm-trees in the Close.

"I've drawn him," he announced. "Your turn, Bob."

"Right-ho!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll teach him to report us. What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry strolled across to the porter's lodge. He knocked at the door with a loud knock.

There was some delay before the door was opened. But opened it was, and Gosling's unamiable face looked out.

"What do you want, Master Cherry?"

"Carrier been yet?"

"No!" snapped Gosling.

"Well, if he brings a parcel for me, take care of it, will you?"

"I s'pose so!"

"I'm not expecting a parcel," Bob Cherry explained blandly. "But if he brings one, just take care of it."

And Bob Cherry walked off.

Slam!

Five minutes later Frank Nugent knocked at the lodge door.

This time it was not opened. Gosling was beginning to "tumble" to the jape, and he did not leave the chimney nook.

Nugent put in his head at the lodge window and nodded cheerfully to Gosling, who looked round at him frowningly.

"Hallo, Gosling!"

"Hallo!" growled the school porter.

"Nice afternoon!"

"Blow the afternoon!"

"But it's ripping weather, considering the state of the weather," urged Frank.

Gosling snorted.

"You don't seem to be in a good or cheerful temper this afternoon, Gosling," said Frank, shaking his head at the porter.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," growled Gosling. "All boys ought to be drowned! And I'd lend a 'and, cheerful. Get hout!"

"Carrier been yet?"

"No!" roared Gosling.

"If a parcel should come for me——"

"Get hout!"

"You'll take care of it."

"Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"Of course, I'm not expecting a parcel," said Nugent airily. "But if one should come——"

Gosling reached out for the poker.

The junior did not stop to finish. He walked away rather quickly.

"Bust them boys!" murmured Gosling, as he settled down again. "Bust 'em! Wot I says is this 'ere—bust 'em! All boys ought to be drowned!"

Rap!

The porter gave a jump, and upset half his glass of gin-and-water over his knees, as the sudden knock came at the door. He gave a roar of wrath.

"Who's there?"

"Me."

It was the voice of Billy Bunter of the Remove.

"Go away!" roared Gosling. "Get hout! I'll report yer!"

Rap!

"Get hout, I say!"

Billy Bunter's fat face looked in at the window. The fat junior blinked at Gosling through his big spectacles, and nodded to him.

"I say, Gosling, has the carrier been yet?"

"You young rascal——"

"Oh, really, Gosling! You see, I'm expecting a parcel——"

"Get hout!"

"If the carrier brings me a parcel——"

Gosling made a rush towards the window. Billy Bunter promptly disappeared.

The porter sat down again, gasping. The jape was getting on his nerves. He had settled down to consume that gin-and-water in comfort internally. He had now taken it externally, and it was not so nice. The knees of his trousers felt clammy and sticky. Gosling snorted with wrath.

He knew very well what the jape was for. He had lately reported Wharton to the Head, and Wharton had had a narrow escape of being caned. As he had done nothing wrong in the first place, he naturally wanted to "get his own back," chiefly for the purpose of instructing Gosling that it would pay better to keep "hands off" the Remove—the Form of which Harry was an ornament.

"Blow 'em!" murmured Gosling, uncorking the gin bottle to add a further supply to the glass. "Bust 'em! All boys ought to be drowned!"

Gurgle-gurgle!

The pleasant sound of the liquid pouring into the glass consoled Gosling somewhat. He lifted the kettle from the hob to add hot water. As he did so there came a loud and thundering rapping at the door.

Rap! Rap! Rap!

Gosling started, and a stream of hot water shot across the table. The kettle knocked against the glass and knocked it over.

Gosling gave a shout of wrath.

He jammed the kettle down in the grate, and made a rush to the door. He flung it open, and made a clutch at the cheerful junior standing there.

But John Bull of the Remove was too quick for him. He popped back just in time, escaping the clutch of the angry porter, and stood grinning from a safe distance, prepared to dodge again.

Gosling stood in the doorway, glaring at him.

"Carrier been yet, Gosling?" asked Bull blandly.

"No!" yelled Gosling.

"If he brings a parcel for me——"

John Bull got no further. Gosling made a wild rush at him, and Bull skipped away, and vanished under the eaves.

Gosling returned to his lodge, breathing wrath and vengeance. He closed the door, but this time he did not return to his seat. He stood just inside the door, with a thick and heavy strap grasped in his hand.

Gosling was all ready for the next comer! The instant there was a knock at the door Gosling was ready to open it and grasp the new-comer—and then the strap would come on the scene. The last of the japers would have to pay for the sins of all the others, and there was no doubt that he would be sorry he had called.

There was a footstep outside the lodge.

Gosling's eyes gleamed under his bent brows. He grasped the strap more tightly, and stood ready for the spring.

Rap!

It was a knock at the door!

In an instant the door was flung open. Another instant and Gosling's grasp was upon the junior who had knocked.

It was Alonzo Todd of the Remove. Without giving the junior time to breathe a word Gosling dragged him forward, then changed his grip to the back of Todd's collar, and swung him round, and then brought the strap into play.

Swish! Swish! Whack! Whack! Whack!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Alonzo Gets What He Wants.

"OH! Ah! Yah!"

"Got you, have I?" roared Gosling. "Got you this time! I'll teach you!"

"Oh, dear!"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"My dear Gosling—oh!"

Whack! Whack!

Alonzo Todd struggled.

But Todd was not an athlete. The Duffer of Greyfriars, as Todd was called, was the best-natured fellow in the school, but he was not prominent in the athletic line. He was a child in the hands of Gosling.

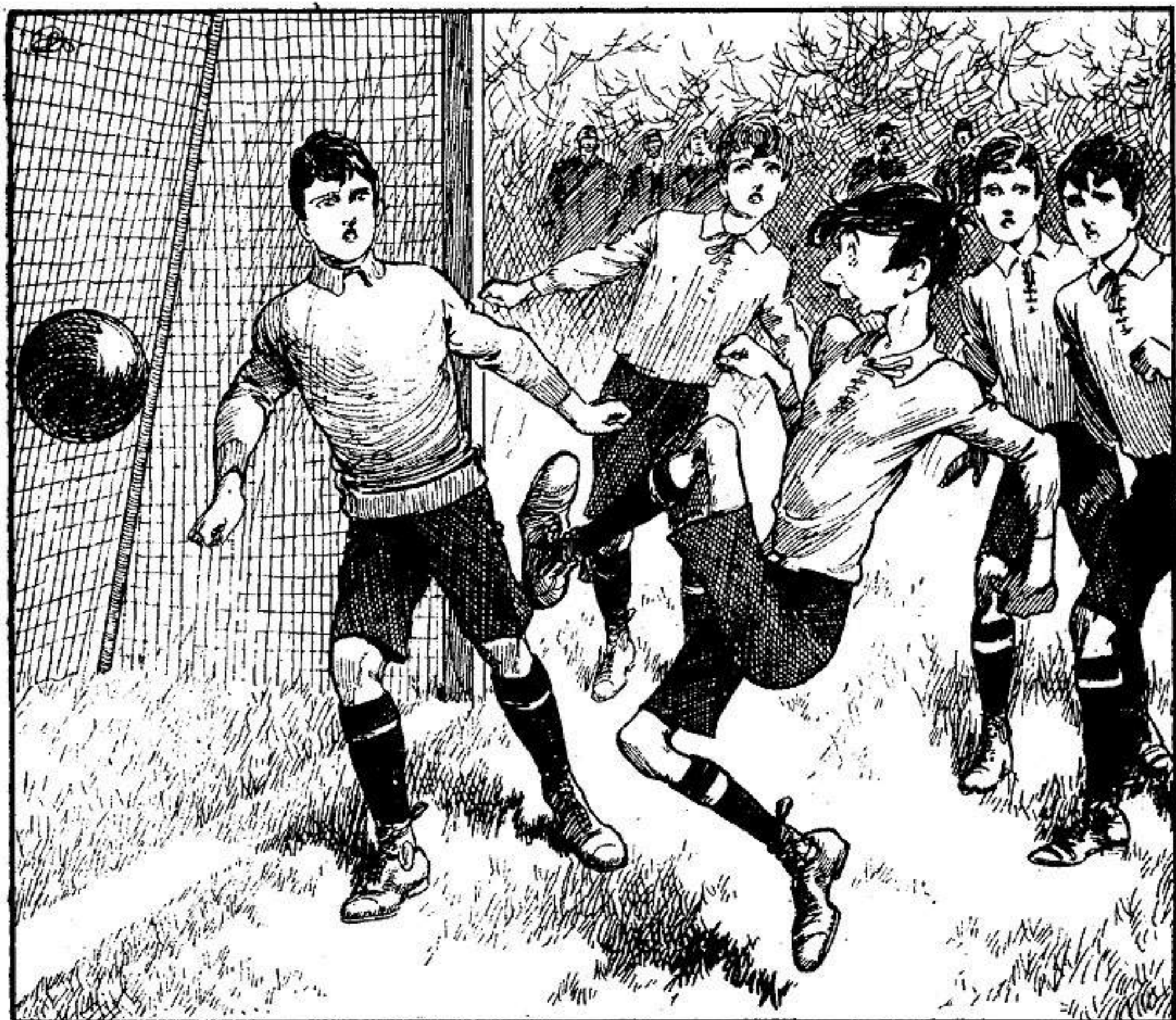
The angry porter laid on the strap without mercy.

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Ow! Yow! Yah!"

Alonzo roared, and Gosling whacked. The porter had quite forgotten that he had no right to take the punishment of a junior into his own hands. He had forgotten everything excepting that he had been japed and that he meant to make someone smart for it.

Whack! Whack!



With a whiz, Alonzo sent the ball crashing into the goal. It was his own goal; but a trifle like that did not matter to a footballer like Todd. "Goal! Goal!" shrieked the watchers in ecstasy.

"Yow! Rescue! Gosling has gone mad! Ow!"
"Gosling, what the dickens are you up to?"
It was a sharp exclamation from Wingate, the head of the Sixth, and captain of Greyfriars. Wingate came striding up angrily.
Gosling lowered the strap.
"Master Wingate—"
"How dare you strike Todd! Let him go at once!"
Gosling let Todd go. He did not care to dispute with the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate looked at him sternly.
"Now, what does this mean?" he rapped out.
"Wot I says is this 'ere—a man's patience can't be expected to stand it!" growled Gosling. "I'm only flesh and blood, ain't I?"
"Chiefly bones, I should say," replied Wingate, with a disparaging glance at the porter. "What have you been doing, Todd?"
"Which he's been—"
"Let Todd speak, please."
"I—I have been doing nothing!" said Todd, in bewilderment. "I am forced to the conclusion that Gosling has suddenly parted with his sanity. His conduct is not that of a man in possession of his normal senses."
"Don't be long-winded," said Wingate.
"My dear Wingate—"
"What did you do?"
"Nothing whatever. I knocked at the door to speak to Gosling, to tell him that I was expecting a parcel this afternoon from my Uncle Benjamin, and he rushed forth and

seized me and began to belabour me with that strap in the most unaccountable manner."

Gosling snorted.
"It was a lark!" he exclaimed.
"It certainly was not a lark on my part," said Alonzo.
"I am expecting a parcel from my Uncle Benjamin, and—"
"Rot!"
"My dear Gosling—"
"Which them busted boys has been coming hon and huff for howers," said Gosling, "and a-knockin' at the door and askin' me if the carrier 'ad been. So I caught the last of 'em and laid into 'im. Wot I say is this 'ere—"
Wingate grinned.
"You've been a little too hasty," he said. "Did you know that the other fellows had been japing Gosling, Todd?"
"Certainly not, my dear Wingate!"
"There was Wharton, and Nugent, and Ball, and Bunter!" growled Gosling. "And when I caught this young rip—"
"I have a strong objection to being called a 'young rip,' Gosling," said Todd mildly. "My Uncle Benjamin would never approve of such a term being applied to me. You see—"
"You've been too hasty," said Wingate grimly. "The best thing you can do, Gosling, is to tell Todd you're sorry."
Gosling snorted. But he did not care to defy Wingate. He knew that if what he had done was reported to the Head, there would be trouble for him.

NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

Another splendid long, complete tale of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"I'm sorry, Master Todd," he mumbled.
"Very well, Gosling; I forgive you," said Alonzo. "But pray be a little less hasty next time. Do not jump to conclusions too quickly, my dear Gosling. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that it is injudicious to jump to conclusions too suddenly."

Wingate laughed and walked away. Gosling retreated into his lodge stowling. He closed the door in Alonzo's face.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo Todd. "That's really rude of Gosling! He seems to be annoyed about something, too!"

He rapped at the door. Gosling opened it, with a face like thunder.

"We have not yet settled what I came about, Gosling," said Todd cheerfully. "Has the carrier been yet?"

"No!" growled Gosling.

"I am expecting a parcel by the carrier from my Uncle Benjamin. Will you take special care of that parcel when it comes, Gosling, and convey it to my study in the Remove?"

"Yes!" growled Gosling.

"I do not know what the parcel contains," said Todd, with a beaming smile, "but it is a gift from my Uncle Benjamin. I shall be so pleased—"

Todd broke off. The door had closed in his face again. The Duffer of Greyfriars blinked at the wood before his eyes in wonder.

"Dear me, how extraordinary of Gosling!"

He rapped again. After a little pause the door was re-opened. Gosling's face was furious. But after the words of Wingate he dared do nothing more than scowl, though he would gladly have kicked Alonzo Todd all the way to the School House.

"What is it?" he snarled.

"My dear Gosling, I had not finished. I was about to say that I shall present you with a small tip when the parcel is conveyed to my study. I trust you will bring it to me as soon as it arrives."

"Yes."

"Very good! You will be very careful with the parcel, Gosling, in case it contains anything of a breakable nature. I consider—"

Bang!

The door had closed again in Todd's face.

After regarding it with increased astonishment for some moments, Todd rapped, and rapped again. But this time the door was not opened.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "I entirely fail to understand Gosling this afternoon. It may be that the weather has affected his spirits. I trust he is not ill, Gosling!"

There was no reply. Alonzo moved along to the lodge window and looked in. Gosling met his inquiring gaze with a glare.

"Are you cross about anything, my dear Gosling?" asked Alonzo.

"I—I—I—"

"Or perhaps you are ill?" Alonzo Todd sniffed. "There is a smell of spirits here, my dear man—a decided scent of spirituous liquor known as gin. Dear me! Is that gin in the glass in your hand, Gosling?"

"It har," said Gosling, his hand trembling with rage till the gin-and-water danced in the glass—"it har!"

"Gosling! That accounts for your extraordinary behaviour!" said Todd, in great distress. "Gosling, you have taken to drink! Oh, my dear man, give it up while there is yet time! I wish my Uncle Benjamin were here to remonstrate with you, to beg you to abandon the primrose path of dalliance while there is yet time! My dear fellow—"

"Get hout!"

"My dear Gosling—my benighted but beloved fellow-creature," went on Todd, in the best manner of his Uncle Benjamin, "give it up! Throw it far from you, and hurl the temptation aside! Gosling—my dear Gosling! I beg and implore of you to give it up!"

Gosling simply stammered with rage. Todd was in deadly earnest. He did not mean to be cheeky, and it did not occur to him for the moment that it was decidedly cheeky for a boy of his age to lecture a man old enough to be his father, whatever he was doing. Alonzo never stopped to think of little things like that.

"You—you—you—" gasped Gosling, the gin and water splashing over his hand from the glass as his hand shook.

"There!"—exclaimed Todd, blissfully unconscious of the porter's rage—"there! Your hand is trembling, Gosling! It is a warning of the end! Reflect, Gosling—only reflect—and you will see yourself tottering to an early grave—grey, decrepit, old—abandoned by your friends—tottering with faltering steps to—to—in fact, to a drunkard's grave,

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Gosling! I beg and implore of you to avoid this awful fate while there is yet time!"

"You—you cheeky young himp—"

"My dear Gosling! Take my advice—which would be endorsed by my Uncle Benjamin if he were here"—urged Todd earnestly. "I beg and implore you, Gosling! Don't drink it, Gosling! Give it to me, and let me pour the vile stuff away! I beg and implore of you, Gosling! Give it to me!"

Gosling's arm jerked up.

Whiz!

A stream of warm liquid spurted into Alonzo's earnest face, and into his open mouth, and he staggered back, gasping and spluttering.

"Ow—ow—yow—o-o-o-o-o-och!"

Gosling had given it to him—though not exactly in the way Alonzo had meant.

Alonzo staggered away from the window, and Gosling, grinning fiendishly, closed it with a slam. Faintly through the closed window came the sounds of Alonzo:

"Gro-o-ro-o-o-o-o-o-o-oh—o-o-o-och!"

And Gosling grinned. It was a great comfort to him.

— — —

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Alonzo is not Quite Himself.

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were standing on the steps of the School House. They were chuckling over the success of their little jape on Gosling, and it must be confessed, too, that they were chuckling over the way the unsuspecting Alonzo had walked into the trap without knowing that a jape was on. It was so like Alonzo! The chums of the Remove had cleared off the scene as soon as Wingate had come up, not wishing to enter into an argument with the Greyfriars captain on the subject of japes. It was no good looking for trouble.

"What Gosling wants," said Bob Cherry, "is to be educated up to the point of leaving the Remove alone. What I says is this here—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The educatfulness of the esteemed Gosling should be terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, in his elegant English. "If we devoutly give our honourable attentions to Gosling, he will grow to understandfully know that the Remove should be treated with the august respect."

"Hear, hear!"

"Hallo—hallo—hallo!"

"What's the matter, Bob?" asked Harry Wharton, as Bob Cherry uttered that sudden, amazed ejaculation.

"Look at Todd!"

Bob Cherry raised his hand and pointed.

Alonzo was coming across the Close towards the house, and he was certainly acting in a peculiar way. His face seemed to be wet, as if some liquid had been spilt over it, and his eyes were blinking wildly. He was walking in an unsteady, uncertain sort of way, like a fellow not sure of his footsteps.

"What's the matter with him?" exclaimed Harry, in astonishment.

"Must be ill!"

"The matterfulness is terrific!"

"Todd—I say, Todd!"

A good many fellows came round to look at Todd. His manner and aspect were certainly surprising. He was looking dazed, and—and—was it possible?

"My hat," exclaimed Bulstrode, the bully of the Remove, "he's drunk!"

"Rot!"

"Rubbish!"

"He's been drinking!"

"Rats!"

"Can't you smell?" demanded Bulstrode. "Haven't you got a nose? Niff!"

There was no denying it.

Alonzo, as he came up the steps of the School House, brought with him a strong odour of gin—an odour there was no mistaking. The wind, as it blew past Alonzo, wafted the odour of gin into the faces of the juniors with a sickening effect. Nugent turned quite pale.

Harry Wharton caught Todd by the shoulder.

"Todd, old man!"

Alonzo looked at him dazedly. The fact of the matter was that some of the gin had gone into Todd's mouth, and some into his nose, and the fumes of the vile liquor had dazed him. He blinked in a very uncertain way at Wharton.

"Yes?" he mumbled. "Eh?"

"What's the matter?"

"Matter?"

"Yes. What's wrong with you?"

"Wrong?"
 "My hat," ejaculated Bob Cherry, "he's at his old game—playing parrot!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Todd, are you ill?"
 "Ill?" repeated Todd, vaguely.
 "Yes. What's the matter with you?"
 "Matter?"
 "Look here, Todd, you'd better come up to the dormitory," said Harry anxiously.
 "Dormitory!"
 Wharton had reason to be anxious. He did not suspect Todd for a moment of having drunk spirituous liquors. Even the most reckless outsiders in the Remove stopped short of that, with the exception, perhaps, of Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. But Todd was so simple, that it was quite possible someone had japed him by making him drink spirits under pretence that it was something else. Certainly he was in a dazed state, and was smelling vilely of gin.
 Todd shook his head vaguely.
 "Why should I go to the dormitory, my dear Wharton?" he mumbled.
 "You'd better," said Harry. "Come on! You don't want anybody to see you in this state."
 "State!"
 "Yes; you're not well."
 "Well!"
 "Oh, come on!"
 Wharton signed to Nugent, and he took Alonzo's other arm. They marched the Duffer of Greyfriars into the House.
 "I—I—I—" mumbled Todd vaguely.
 "Quiet, old chap!"
 "I begged and implored of Gosling to give me the gin."
 "What?"
 "You see, I begged and implored—"
 "My word!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Keep him quiet! He'd be expelled if this were known. The silly ass! Why did he ask Gosling for gin? And what a beast Gosling must have been to give it to him. He ought to be sacked for giving it to a boy."
 "I don't understand it."
 "You see," said Todd dazedly, "I begged and implored—"
 "Yes, yes, old fellow! Dry up!"
 "I begged—"
 "Yes, yes!"
 "And implored—"
 "Shut up!" whispered Harry Wharton anxiously, as he caught sight of Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, in the passage. "For goodness' sake, dry up, Toddy! Come on!"

The juniors ran Todd to the stairs, and forced him to ascend. Bob Cherry and Bull, and Tom Brown and Hazeldene, and Fisher T. Fish, and several more Removites, drew round Alonzo to screen him. Even if he had been, as Bulstrode ill-naturedly suspected, foolish enough to touch strong liquor, they would have tried to protect him from the results of his folly; but the general belief was that he had been cruelly japed. In any case, the Removites meant to rally loyally round and save a Form-fellow from getting into trouble.

Mr. Quelch glanced at the group of juniors going upstairs. He sniffed! Then he sniffed again in a most expressive manner, with a puzzled expression upon his face.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated. "What a most peculiar smell there is here! Do any of you boys notice it?"

Fisher T. Fish sniffed.
 "I guess so, sir," he said gravely. "Sorter horrid smell, sir. I guess so! Perhaps there's something wrong with the drains, sir."

"It is a smell of strong liquor, such as gin," said Mr. Quelch, sniffing away like a dog on a strong scent. "It is really very strange."

"Extraordinary, sir," said Bulstrode. "Now you mention it, sir, I can smell something myself, something like cloves, sir."

"It does not seem to me like cloves, Bulstrode."
 "Oh, perhaps it's bullseyes!"

"Bullseyes, Bulstrode!"
 "Yes, sir," said the burly Removite innocently. "I've got a packet of bullseyes in my pocket, sir. Perhaps you can smell them."

Mr. Quelch hesitated.
 "Perhaps so," he said. "The smell is like the smell of gin, but it is impossible, I suppose, that gin can have been brought into the House and spilled here."

"You fellows brought any gin in here?" exclaimed Bulstrode, looking round at the juniors who remained in the hall, with serious and solemn faces.

"Great Scott, no!" exclaimed Skinner. "What is gin, Bulstrode? An intoxicating drink, I believe."

Mr. Quelch gave Skinner a look which checked his risibility at once.

"It is most peculiar," said the Remove-master drily. "I need hardly say that if a boy were discovered with intoxicants

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in his possession, he would be flogged by the Head for such a wicked offence."

"And serve him right, too, sir."

Mr. Quelch passed on his way, looking very puzzled. The juniors grinned, but a little constrainedly; they were a little nervous about Alonzo. If he should be discovered! The matter was deadly serious.

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, nudged Bulstrode by the arm. The Remove bully looked at him.

"I want to speak to you," said the Bounder.

Bulstrode followed him aside, looking rather perplexed.

"Todd has been boozing," said Vernon-Smith, in a lowered voice.

Bulstrode nodded.

"Looks like it, or else he's been japed. Todd's quite idiot enough to drink whisky if somebody told him it was ginger-beer."

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"Well, I don't care whether he's been japed or not. He's simply reeling now. Look here, Wharton's in it, too. Wharton and the other rotters have been down on us hard enough for having a little fun now and then."

"I know they have, but what—"

"Now's our chance to get our own back," said Vernon-Smith, in an eager, low whisper. "Todd has been boozing, and Wharton's hiding it from the masters. If we could bring the Head in upon them—"

"You cad!"

Vernon-Smith started.

"What! What did you say?"

"Cad!" said Bulstrode coolly.

"You—you rotter!" hissed the Bounder. "Haven't we always been up against them? Haven't you been thick with me in trying to bring Wharton down a peg?"

"I draw a line at sneaking to the masters," said Bulstrode.

"But I tell you—"

Vernon-Smith paused. Bulstrode had turned upon his heel and walked away, leaving him still speaking. The face of the Bounder was dark with rage.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Looking After Todd.

"COME on, Todd! Buck up!"

"My dear Wharton—"

"This way to the dorm!"

"I am now recovering."

"Good! Get into the dorm.—quick! Loder's coming down the passage!"

"My dear fellows, I have no reason to avoid Loder. I—"

"Buzz him along!"

The juniors rushed Alonzo on towards the dormitory door. Loder, the prefect, was certainly coming down the passage, and his attention had been drawn towards the group of juniors.

Harry Wharton & Co. were on the worst possible terms with Loder, and the meeting was the most unfortunate that could have happened, if Loder discovered anything.

The prefect, coming from the opposite direction, quickened his pace, and had almost reached the door of the Remove dormitory when Harry Wharton & Co. arrived there with Alonzo.

"Wharton!" called out Loder. "What does this mean? Is this a rag?"

Wharton did not reply.

He rushed Alonzo into the room, and the other fellows crowded in, fast.

"Lock the door!" muttered Wharton.

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Bob Cherry slammed the dormitory door.

Just as Loder's hand was on the lock, Bob turned the key, and the click warned the prefect that he could not enter. He turned the handle, however, and shook the door, calling out angrily to the juniors.

"Open this door immediately."

The Removites did not reply.

Loder was quite within his rights as a prefect, of course, in ordering them to open the door, but they did not mean to let him see Alonzo in his state, or what they supposed to be Alonzo's state.

The chums exchanged startled glances.

"What on earth's to be done?" whispered Nugent. "If we don't let Loder in, he'll think he's caught us in something or other, and call in a master."

"Then we shall have to open the door."

"We can't let him see Todd."

"My dear fellows—"

"Shut up, Todd!"

Bang, bang, bang!

Loder was hammering at the door outside, and shouting to the juniors to open it. It was pretty clear that they could not long keep it shut.

"Get under a bed, Todd," said Harry quickly.

Todd blinked at him dazedly.

"Under a bed!" he stammered.

"Yes, at once."

"A-a—at once!"

"Yes, ass!" roared Wharton.

"My dear Wharton—"

"Shove him under!"

"M-m-my dear fellows—"

Alonzo was grasped and rolled under a bed out of sight.

The Duffer of Greyfriars was recovering now from the effect of the spirit fumes, though he was smelling as strongly as ever of Gosling's strong gin.

He did not know in the least what the juniors were alarmed about. As they released him, he popped his head out from under the bed.

"My dear fellows—"

"Get back, you ass!"

"But, my dear Wharton—"

Wharton ran at him, and Todd popped his head back. It cracked against the bed, and the Duffer of Greyfriars gave a wild howl.

"Yow!"

"Open the door, Bob."

"Right-ho!"

Harry Wharton bent down beside the bed.

"Keep where you are, Todd."

"But, my dear—"

"You'll get us all into a row if you show yourself."

"But why—"

"Quiet!"

"I will take your word for it, my dear Wharton. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Not a word!"

"Under the circumstances—"

Wharton kicked at Todd, and the Duffer was silent at last. It was time. The door was open, and Loder was striding furiously into the dormitory.

The prefect glared round at the juniors. He was infuriated at being kept out of the dormitory, but he did not know in the least what the juniors' motive had been. That something was to be concealed from him, of course, he guessed.

But he could not guess what it was. He had seen a surging mass of juniors in the passage, plainly in a state of great excitement. He had not specially noted that Alonzo Todd was among them, and he did not specially think of the Duffer of Greyfriars now, and so did not miss him.

The juniors all stood round, looking at him quietly. What fault to find with them Loder hardly knew. Yet he knew perfectly well that something was "on."

"You young rascals!" he exclaimed furiously. "How dare you lock me out of the dormitory?"

"Sorry, Loder. We've let you in, you see."

"Why did you lock the door?"

"To keep you out," said Bob Cherry innocently.

"I mean, why did you want to keep me out?"

The juniors looked at one another. They had not the least intention of telling Loder that. It was his business to find out, as a prefect, if he wanted to know. The Removites had not the least idea of helping him.

"Answer me!" roared Loder.

"I've nothing to say, for one," said Harry Wharton quietly.

"You refuse to tell me why you locked the door?"

"Oh, no."

"Then why did you lock it?"

"To keep you out."

There was a chuckle amongst the juniors, and Loder turned.

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crimson with rage. He realised that the captain of the Remove was making fun of him.

"I mean, why did you want to keep me out?" he exclaimed.

"We didn't want you in."

"Why not?"

"We're not fond of your company, Loder."

The Removites chuckled again, and Loder turned quite purple. He came towards Harry Wharton with his hands clenched.

Wharton met him with a steady look. If the prefect chose to cane him, he had to take it; but he would take no other form of ill-usage.

"Hands off!" he exclaimed.

Loder's hands were hard clenched. But the looks of the juniors were dangerous, too, and it was quite clear that if the whole crowd turned on Loder, he would be very roughly handled, prefect as he was.

"Wharton, you young cad, I'll report this to your Form-master! He can discover for himself what rotten mischief you were up to!"

"Very well."

Loder strode savagely from the dormitory. Alonzo Todd put his head out from under the bed.

"Can I come out?"

"No, get back!"

"My dear Wharton—oh!"

Alonzo popped back in time to escape a lunge from Bob Cherry's boot. A still, small voice proceeded from under the bed, but Alonzo did not show his head again.

"My dear fellows—"

"Shut up, Todd!"

"Yes, but—"

"Oh, dry up! Stay under the bed till we tell you. You don't want to get us all into a row, do you?"

"Certainly not, my dear Wharton; but—"

"Then ring off!"

"We shall have to keep out of sight," said John Bull. "If Loder tells Mr. Quelch, Quelch will come to the dorm., and he mustn't see Todd."

"Rather not!"

"The rather-notfulness is terrific."

"But will he tell Quelch?"

"Wait and see!"

Loder was striding away from the dormitory. He had gone with the full intention of reporting the matter to the Remove master; but ere he had reached the stairs, he reflected. What had he to report? That a number of juniors had locked him out of their own dormitory for a few minutes—and then let him in when he ordered them to do so? Mr. Quelch would pooh-pooh the matter—he would regard it as a boyish lark; even if he did not, from his knowledge of Loder's bullying proclivities, think that perhaps the juniors had ample reason to lock the Sixth-former out.

Loder slackened down his pace.

It was of no use going to Mr. Quelch. Just as he came to this decision, the Bouncer of Greyfriars stopped him in the passage. Loder frowned at him—the sight of any Removite was not pleasant to him then—but something in Vernon-Smith's look, as he glanced nervously up and down the passage, like a fellow in fear of being seen, aroused the prefect's curiosity.

"What do you want?" he exclaimed.

"One word with you, that's all," said the Bouncer in a whisper. "You won't give me away—to those rotters, I mean?"

"No; what is it?"

"You've been in the dorm.?"

"Yes."

"Did you see Todd?"

"Todd?" Loder thought for a moment. "No; he was not there!"

The Bouncer grinned disagreeably.

"He was there," he said.

"I did not see him."

"Then they must have hidden him, so that you couldn't see him."

"But why?" asked Loder impatiently.

"Because he's drunk!"

The prefect fairly jumped.

"Drunk!"

"Yes," said Vernon-Smith with a nod. "Drunk! He's been drinking, at all events, and can't walk straight. They've taken him up to the dorm. to conceal it, till the silly duffer gets over it. That's all!"

And Vernon-Smith hurried away, fearful of being seen talking to the prefect. Loder stared after him dazedly for a moment. Then a gleam of unholy joy darted into his eyes.

It was his chance at last!

For a long, long time he had waited and watched for a chance of catching Harry Wharton & Co. in some delinquency



Billy Bunter met Todd in full career, and something had to go. It was Alonzo! "Ow!" he gasped, as he rolled on the field. "Yaroo! Oh!" (See page 18.)

that could not be explained away—something that would bring down upon them the wrath of the Head in a way that there would be no escaping.

He realised the truth now—now that he had a clue. He glanced back towards the door of the Remove dormitory. A head had been put out—undoubtedly to ascertain whether the coast was clear. It popped back as Loder looked round.

The prefect smiled grimly. He had Harry Wharton & Co. in the hollow of his hand at last!

Without a moment's delay he hurried off to the Remove master's study.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

His Master's Voice.

MR. QUELCH laid down his pen and called out "Come in!" as a knock came at his study door.

The Form-master was annoyed at the interruption. His annoyance was not lessened when Loder, the prefect, entered. Loder's troubles with the Remove were frequent, and the Remove-master had plainly expressed his opinion once that the fault was as much upon the prefect's side as upon that of the juniors.

"Well, what is it now, Loder?" he asked with a stress upon the word "now," which gave a hint of his suppressed annoyance and impatience.

But Loder did not care. He had a case now that the Form-master was bound to take notice of, and report to the Head, whether he wanted to or not. Loder relied implicitly upon Vernon-Smith's statement; the Bouncer of Greyfriars had served him before. There was an understanding between the

black sheep of the Sixth and the black sheep of the Remove. Besides, Loder remembered a whiff of gin in the air, as he entered the dormitory—he had not noticed it specially at the time, but he remembered it clearly. All was clear to him, and he had a case in his hands now which would not only gratify his intense dislike of Harry Wharton & Co., but would redound to his credit as a vigilant prefect. He had been suspected of carelessness in his duties more than once; but unearthing a disgraceful case like this could not fail to be of advantage to him with the Head.

"Loder! What is it?"

"I have a matter to report to you, sir—"

Mr. Quelch raised his hand.

"Before you go any further, Loder, let me say that I do not wish to hear any reports upon frivolous matters. Unless it is serious—"

"It is so serious, sir, that unless you take notice of it, I shall at once proceed to the Head," said Loder.

There was a trace of insolence in Loder's tone, and the Remove-master flushed. He rose from his table.

"It concerns boys in my Form, I suppose, or you would not come to me?" he said.

"Quite so, sir."

"What boys?"

"Wharton, Nugent, Cherry, Bull, and several others—especially Todd!"

"Todd!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch in astonishment. "Surely Todd has been doing no harm? He is the simplest boy in the Remove."

"Or the deepest, sir," said Loder.

"Nonsense, Loder!"

The prefect smiled unpleasantly.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

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"Very well, sir; you will see for yourself. What I have to tell you that Todd is the worse for drink, and that Wharton and the rest attempted to keep me out of the Remove dormitory, so that I should not discover it!"

Mr. Quelch almost staggered.

"Todd! The worse for drink?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Absurd!"

"It is the truth!"

"Nonsense!"

Mr. Quelch spoke energetically. His manner could not be called polite. But the whole thing seemed to him so utterly absurd, that he could not conceal his impatience and, in fact, felt no desire to do so.

Loder turned very red.

"Very well, sir; if you do not choose to take the matter up, I will go to the Head!" he exclaimed. "Dr. Locke may think it important enough to look into." And the prefect swung angrily towards the door.

"Stop! Loder! I will come with you! But I say again, that I regard the whole matter as a silly mistake—a silly mistake, Loder! Understand me?"

"You will see, sir!"

"Oh, lead the way; it is all utter nonsense! Where are the boys?"

"In the Remove dormitory."

"Very well."

Mr. Quelch strode towards the stairs with an angry face and rustling gown; but, as he went, his expression suddenly altered—he gave a start. He remembered that strange whiff of gin he had caught in crossing the hall a short time before, and he remembered, too, that at the same moment, Wharton and a crowd of juniors had been going upstairs with Alonzo Todd in their midst.

The form-master was astounded—incredulous. Yet there certainly seemed to be something, after all, in the statement Loder had made.

The Remove-master hurried upstairs, anxious to ascertain the truth at once. Loder followed him, still with the same unpleasant look upon his face. He felt that he had caught the boys, and caught the master, too. Mr. Quelch would feel deeply such a disgrace to his form! Loder seemed likely to score all round.

Mr. Quelch reached the door of the Remove dormitory. It was shut, but it opened to his touch; the juniors had not locked it again. It was safer to keep Todd under the bed than to keep the dormitory door locked.

"Cave!" muttered Bob Cherry in alarm.

"My hat!"

"Quelch!"

The juniors looked in dismay at the rustling form of the Remove master. Loder had told him, after all. He had come! Of the information the Bouncer had given, the juniors, of course, knew nothing. They had imagined that Mr. Quelch had come to inquire into their conduct in locking a prefect out of the dormitory for a few minutes. Harry Wharton stepped before the other fellows. He was the leader, and it was his business to speak for the rest.

"Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch harshly. "Loder has made a most astounding accusation—an accusation I cannot credit. If it is true, however, the punishment that will follow will be a lesson never to be forgotten at Greyfriars!"

Wharton started. Mr. Quelch was, he thought, going it "pretty strong" for such a trifle as locking a prefect out of the dormitory. The surprise in his face softened the form-master a little.

"I—I don't quite understand, sir," faltered Wharton. "I knew we locked Loder out of the dorm., sir. But—"

"Where is Todd?"

"Todd, sir?"

"Yes. Is he here?"

Wharton stood speechless. He did not need the evil, triumphant look on Loder's face to tell him that Mr. Quelch knew everything. Wharton could not speak; and the other juniors were dumb. In the dead silence a still, small voice proceeded from under a bed.

"If you please, sir, I'm here."

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Only Ginger-Beer.

ALONZO TODD crawled out from under the bed. He rose to his feet, somewhat dusty and fluffy, and very red in the face. The other juniors stood like stone images, looking on. The game was up now, with a vengeance.

"I'm so sorry, Wharton," said Todd apologetically. "But my Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me never to disregard the orders of a master, and always to treat those in authority with great respect. Therefore, I could not remain in concealment when Mr. Quelch requested to see me. Upon reflection, you will observe—"

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"Todd!"

"Yes, sir."

"Come here."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

Todd approached the Form-master with a look of wonder. He did not know why Mr. Quelch looked so angry. He had been hiding under the bed, certainly, but that was not a crime. Besides, had he not shown himself immediately at the sound of the Remove-master's voice?

Mr. Quelch bent a stern, searching look upon the Duffer of Greyfriars.

The scent of spirits that Todd brought with him was fading, but it was still strong. His necktie and his jacket and waistcoat were soaked with gin. Mr. Quelch could not mistake the scent.

But Todd himself was quite recovered from the dazing effects of the fumes. Todd was quite himself again; and the absence of any sign of intoxication made Loder stare. The smell of gin—the hiding under the bed—what did it all mean, if Todd had not been drinking? Certainly it was easy to see that the Removites had imagined that to be the case. Loder had made a mistake—but only because Harry Wharton & Co. had made a mistake in the first place.

Mr. Quelch's brows slowly relaxed.

"Todd!" he rapped out.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Have you been drinking?"

"Drinking, sir?"

"Yes, drinking. Answer my question."

"Yes, sir."

"What! Todd! You have been drinking?"

"Yes, sir."

Loder's face cleared again. It was all right, after all. Harry Wharton & Co. looked hopeless. Certainly Alonzo should not have prevaricated; but he was not called upon to give himself away like this.

Mr. Quelch frowned in a puzzled way. He could not understand Alonzo.

"You have been drinking, Todd?" he repeated.

"Certainly, sir. But—"

"How long ago?"

"Half an hour, sir, or perhaps only twenty minutes. I could ascertain by asking Mrs. Mimble, if it is important to know the exact time, sir."

"Mrs. Mimble!"

"Certainly, sir—in the tuckshop, you know, sir."

"Were you drinking in the tuckshop?"

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"Todd, I—I hardly understand you! Do you mean to imply that Mrs. Mimble, who keeps the school shop, supplied you with the drink you have consumed?"

"Yes, sir."

"Impossible!"

"My dear sir—"

"I cannot believe it," said Mr. Quelch. "Mrs. Mimble is a respectable lady, and would never supply intoxicating drinks to a junior. It is impossible!"

"In-in-intoxicating drinks, sir!" stammered Alonzo.

"Yes, Todd. I say it is impossible."

"Indeed, I hope so, sir. If intoxicating drinks were sold at the school shop, sir, I am sure my Uncle Benjamin would not approve of my remaining at Greyfriars, sir. He would be shocked at the idea—nay, disgusted."

"Todd, what do you mean? Do you now deny that you obtained the drink you have consumed at Mrs. Mimble's?"

"Certainly not sir."

"You obtained there the drink of which even now your clothes are smelling so vilely?" the Form-master exclaimed.

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Once for all, Todd, tell me what drink you obtained at Mrs. Mimble's."

"Ginger-beer, sir."

"What!"

"Ginger-beer, sir," said Todd, in wonder.

"You—you—you obtained ginger-beer at Mrs. Mimble's?"

"Certainly, sir," said Alonzo, beginning to wonder if Mr. Quelch was quite right in his mind. "Mrs. Mimble sells ginger-beer—very good ginger-beer, sir. I find ginger-beer a harmless and refreshing drink, and my Uncle Benjamin—"

"Never mind your Uncle Benjamin now, Todd. When you replied that you had been drinking this afternoon, did you mean that you had been drinking ginger-beer?"

"Certainly sir," said Todd innocently.

The juniors grinned. They could not help it. Alonzo was quite innocent of any intention of causing a mystification. It was only Alonzo's way.

Mr. Quelch drew a deep breath.

"You have been drinking ginger-beer, Todd?"

"Yes, sir."

"Nothing else?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"What else?"

"Water, sir. I had some water soon after dinner."

"Nothing else?"

Alonzo Todd reflected. He did not remember anything else for the moment. But his Uncle Benjamin had always impressed upon him to be exact in his statements. And he did not want to deceive the Form-master unintentionally.

"No, sir," he said at last. "I do not recall anything else."

Mr. Quelch watched him closely.

"You have not been drinking gin, Todd?"

Todd jumped.

"Gin, sir!"

"Yes."

"Gin! Did you say gin, sir?" gasped Alonzo.

"Yes, I said gin."

"Certainly not, sir. Surely you do not suspect me of such a horrible and extremely reprehensible habit?" exclaimed Alonzo, in dismay. "My dear sir, it would be impossible for any boy trained by my Uncle Benjamin to drink gin, sir. The same remark applies to whisky, brandy, four ale, or any other similar beverage."

It was Wharton's turn to stare now. He knew that Alonzo was telling the truth; there was no doubt about that. But whence had come that reek of gin about the person of the Duffer of Greyfriars, if he had not been drinking gin and spilling it over himself? Harry had believed that Todd had been japed into doing it. But that he had not done it at all was a surprise.

"Todd," rapped out Mr. Quelch, "if you have not been drinking, how comes it that you are smelling of gin, sir—or, rather, reeking of it?"

"Oh, sir, I see! That was not my gin, sir."

"Whose was it?"

"Gosling's, sir. I saw him in the act of mixing gin-and-water, sir, for the purpose of drinking it; and I am sure that there was considerably more gin than water in the glass, sir. I remonstrated with Gosling—"

"You—you did what?"

"I remonstrated with him, sir. I begged and implored him not to follow the downward path, sir. I begged him to give me the gin, in order that I might hurl it away, sir, and remove the terrible temptation from his path."

"You—you extraordinary boy! And what did Gosling do?"

"He misunderstood me, sir, and instead of handing the gin to me, he threw it at me, and it splashed all over my face and clothes, sir. Some of it went into my mouth, sir, and I was feeling quite sick and stupid, sir. The taste of it was very horrible."

Mr. Quelch looked fixedly at Todd.

The Remove juniors tried to contain their merriment. But they could not. They burst into a sudden roar of laughter that rang through the dormitory.

Then Mr. Quelch's stern face relaxed into a smile.

"An absurd mistake has been made," he said. "Loder, you see, I suppose, that you have fallen into a most ludicrous error."

Loder did not reply. His feelings were too deep for words. He was only anxious, at that moment, to come across Vernon-Smith. He left the dormitory without a word.

"You are a most extraordinary boy, Todd," said Mr. Quelch, after a pause. "I hardly know whether to punish you for the trouble you have caused—"

"Have I caused any trouble, sir?" asked Todd innocently.

The juniors gurgled, and Mr. Quelch coughed.

"You have, Todd. I—"

"I'm so sorry, sir."

"I shall look over it, Todd. I— In fact, the matter may end here. It was a most absurd mistake; you—you are an extraordinary boy. Change your clothes, Todd, and get rid of that vile smell of spirits."

"Oh, certainly, sir! My Uncle Benjamin would—"

But Mr. Quelch was gone. Todd turned to the juniors with a wondering gaze.

"My dear fellows, I am quite in the dark as to the cause of all this excitement. Why did you wish me to hide under the bed? Why—"

But the juniors were in no state to reply to Todd's questions. They were rolling on the beds, yelling with laughter, and almost in a state of hysterics.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Uncle Benjamin's Gift.

PARCEL for Master Todd!"

Gosling came grumpily into the Remove passage as the juniors came down from the dormitory. Alonzo Todd had a fresh and shining face from a recent wash, and a clean collar on, and there was no trace of the scent of gin about him now. Not that that would have been disagreeable to Gosling. Gosling's nose detected pleasures in the scent of gin that he would have found wanting in a garden of roses.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

"My dear fellows, here is the parcel I went down to inquire about," said Alonzo Todd. "Thank you so much for bringing it up, Gosling. Please place it in my study. I should be glad to present you with a small tip, but I have lent my money to Bunter, and the postal-order he promised me in return has not arrived yet."

Gosling snorted, and set the parcel down in the passage.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," he exclaimed, "I'm tired!"

"I'm so sorry, Gosling," said Todd anxiously. "Do you think there is anything wrong with your health? You do not do very much work, and so I do not see why you should be tired, unless it is the effect of strong liquor— Gosling, please do not go; I was going to give you some advice."

But the Greyfriars porter had not waited for the advice.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

He ran after Gosling to the stairs, and called down:

"Gosling—I say, Gosling!"

Gosling turned his head.

"Wot's that?"

"Carrier been yet?" asked Bob Cherry blandly. "I'm not expecting a parcel—"

Gosling stamped away.

Alonzo Todd had picked up his parcel. It did not weigh very much, and, apparently, contained clothing of some sort, to judge by the feel of it. Alonzo went through his pockets.

"I remember now that I promised Gosling a small tip," he remarked. "I'm so sorry I have no money. Perhaps you would lend me twopence, Wharton?"

"Here you are!"

"Thank you, so much!"

Todd took the twopence, and hurried after the porter. Gosling was out of the house, and tramping back to his lodge. Todd called after him.

"Gosling! Stop, my dear fellow!"

The porter stopped.

"I intended to present you with a small gratuity," panted Alonzo.

Gosling's face brightened up considerably.

"Thank you kindly, sir!"

"I must be assured, however, that you will not spend it in drink," said Todd, keeping the twopence in his fingers. "If I thought that the gratuity would be wasted in riotous living, Gosling, I could not conscientiously present it to you. My Uncle Benjamin would not approve of my doing so."

Gosling repressed a snort. He had thought of sixpence or a shilling, but Todd's way of speaking made him think that the Duffer of Greyfriars held at least a half-crown in his hand—perhaps five shillings.

"I'll be wery careful of it, Master Todd, sir," said Gosling meekly.

"You are sure of that, Gosling?"

"Sartin, sir!"

"You will not expend it in purchasing a bottle of gin or whisky, or both?" asked Todd.

Needless to say, the Duffer of Greyfriars was not well informed upon the prices of gin and whisky.

"Ho, no, sir!"

"You will not allow it to induce you to visit the public house, when otherwise you would not have done so, Gosling?"

"Ho, no, sir!"

"Then I can present you with this gratuity with a clear conscience?" said Todd, with a happy smile. "Here is the twopence, Gosling, my good man."

"T-t-tuppence!"

"Yes; pray take it. You are welcome to it, Gosling."

Gosling took the twopence. He was speechless. He was greatly inclined to hurl the two pennies full in Todd's beaming face. But twopence, after all, represented a drink at the Cross Keys.

Gosling choked back his wrath, and hurried away with the twopence. Todd returned to the School House in a cheerful frame of mind, convinced, after all that Gosling had said, that the twopence would be well spent, and not wasted in riotous living.

John Bull had taken the parcel into No. 14 Study, and it was lying on the study table when Alonzo returned.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the study, talking to John Bull. The third number of "John Bull's Weekly" was under way, and the editorial staff were discussing it. Billy Bunter was lingering outside the study door, and he tapped Alonzo on the arm as the Duffer of Greyfriars came up.

"I say, Todd, you know, there's a parcel for you—"

"My dear Bunter, I am perfectly aware of that," said Todd. "I have just presented Gosling with a small gratuity for conveying the parcel here."

"I suppose it's a parcel of tuck from home?"

Todd shook his head.

"I regard that as extremely improbable, Bunter. My

Uncle Benjamin would not be likely to send me any indigestible articles of a comestible nature."

Billy Bunter grunted.

"Look here, isn't there anything to eat in that parcel?"

"I think not, my dear Bunter."

"Oh, rats! Blessed if I wouldn't drown an uncle like that!" growled Bunter. "Look here, open it and see."

"My dear Bunter—"

"Oh, open the parcel!"

Alonzo went into the study. He cut the string of the parcel, nearly cutting off a finger in the process. Todd was not to be trusted with knives. Then he opened the layers of brown paper upon the wet sheets John Bull had just written, and there was a roar from the editor of the junior weekly.

"You fathead!"

"My dear Bull!"

"Look! You've blotted my papers!" roared Bull.

"I'm so sorry—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"I am perfectly willing to discuss the matter with you, my dear Bull, but I cannot answer inarticulate grunts," said Todd mildly. "If you will have the goodness to make your remarks intelligible—"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" demanded Bob Cherry, staring in amazement at the contents of the parcel, which had rolled out on the table.

"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Footer duds, by George!"

"Good old Uncle Ben!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a footer rig-out that was contained in the parcel from Todd's Uncle Benjamin.

Todd looked at it in surprise; Bunter in profound disgust. Bunter had an unexampled appetite, but even Billy Bunter could not eat a jersey, footer shorts, or a pair of football boots. There was evidently nothing of any value to Billy Bunter in the parcel from Uncle Benjamin. It was, as the advertisements say, of no value to anyone but the owner.

"Dear me!" said Alonzo. "This is very kind of my Uncle Benjamin, but— Dear me! I was far from expecting this."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I remember telling my Uncle Benjamin that I had a great ambition to become a footballer, but that my first efforts in that direction had not been crowned by success," said Todd. "Hence, I have no doubt, this kind gift. My Uncle Benjamin is a most generous man."

"With a giddy taste in colour," said Nugent, looking at the contents of the parcel.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed ass, I call him!" grunted Bunter.

"My dear Bunter—"

But Billy Bunter had rolled away. The gift of Uncle Benjamin had no interest for him.

Alonzo Todd wore a very pleased expression. He was evidently much gratified by the kind thoughtfulness of his Uncle Benjamin.

"There's a letter in the parcel," said Wharton—"pinned to the bags. Don't leave the pin in the bags."

"Dear me! I did not observe it."

Todd opened the letter. He read it out to an admiring circle of juniors.

"My dear Nephew,—I have bestowed considerable reflection upon the subject mentioned by you, and, after due consideration, I regard it as eminently desirable for you to enter into the juvenile sports of the scholastic establishment to which you belong. These juvenile sports may be somewhat unworthy of the serious attention of a reflective youth like yourself, but, at the same time, it is undoubtedly the case that sportive contests assist the physical development of the body, and add to the muscular powers.

"This is a department which the thoughtful and considerate will by no means wholly neglect; for, although intellectual attainments are of an immeasurably greater value, yet it is desirable to possess the mens sana in corpore sano, and this laudable end may be attained with greater facility by a due attention to physical exercise.

"I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that it will be advisable and, indeed, advantageous for you to adopt the sportive contest known as football, and hence I am despatching a complete outfit of the required garb. I have also communicated with your head-master, requesting him to ascertain that you are installed in the football team of your Form.

"Trusting that you are observing carefully the rules of health which I have endeavoured to inculcate, and that you are not neglecting your studies, I remain, your affectionate uncle,
BENJAMIN TODD."

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"Hurrah!" gasped the juniors.

"Is it not an exceedingly kind and affectionate letter?" said Todd, beaming.

"Yes, rather."

"Now we can see where you get your beautiful flow of language from," said Frank Nugent. "It was inculcated by your esteemed uncle."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton was looking thoughtful. There was one passage in the letter of Uncle Benjamin that had struck him.

"Your uncle is writing to the Head about this," he said.

"Yes, my dear Wharton."

"Asking him to see that you are put in the Remove footer team."

"Quite so."

"Well, it can't be did! Your Uncle Ben may be first-rate as an uncle, but he doesn't know anything about footer," said Wharton. "You can't play for toffee!"

"But I shouldn't think of playing for toffee, my dear Wharton! I object strongly to any stake on the game, regarding it as partaking of the nature of gambling. Toffee, certainly, is not so serious a stake as money; but, at the same time, I should decline to play for toffee, and I am sure my Uncle Benjamin would uphold me in this decision."

The juniors yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear schoolfellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean, you can't play at all!" roared Wharton. "You can't play footer."

"But I can learn."

"You've tried."

"I admit that my previous efforts have not been crowned with eminent success," said Alonzo. "But one swallow, my dear Wharton, does not make a summer. I have no doubt that I shall, with a fair amount of practice, play football in a way that will astonish all beholders."

"Oh, you can do that now!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Trotter, the page, put his head in at the door.

"'Ead wants to see Master Wharton," he said, and vanished.

"Another row, I suppose!" growled Wharton.

And he made his way to the Head's study.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Place in the Team.

DR. LOCKE wore a slightly perplexed expression when Wharton presented himself in his study. He did not look, however, as if there was going to be trouble, and the captain of the Remove was relieved. But something was evidently causing the Head of Greyfriars to wrinkle his brows.

"Ah! Come in, Wharton!" he said. "I sent for you. I have had a letter—"

"Yes, sir?" said Wharton, as the doctor paused.

"From a relative of Todd," said Dr. Locke.

"Oh!"

Wharton understood.

"I understand, Wharton, that you are the head of the Lower Fourth Football Club, and captain of the Form team," said Dr. Locke.

The Head, although not an athlete himself, kept very well informed on those matters in Greyfriars.

"Yes, sir," said Harry.

"I have received a request from Mr. Todd," said Dr. Locke, "a very peculiar request. He is desirous of his nephew playing in a Form match with the team."

"Oh, sir!"

"What is your opinion of Todd as a footballer?"

Harry Wharton could not help smiling as he remembered some of Alonzo's exploits at footer practice.

"He can't play for toffee, sir; I— I mean, for nuts—that is to say, he can't play, sir!" said Wharton, a little confused.

The Head smiled.

"He has been tried?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"He does not take to the game?"

"H'm! Well, sir, he takes to it, and seems to like it, only he's such a duffer, sir. He simply can't play the game, sir."

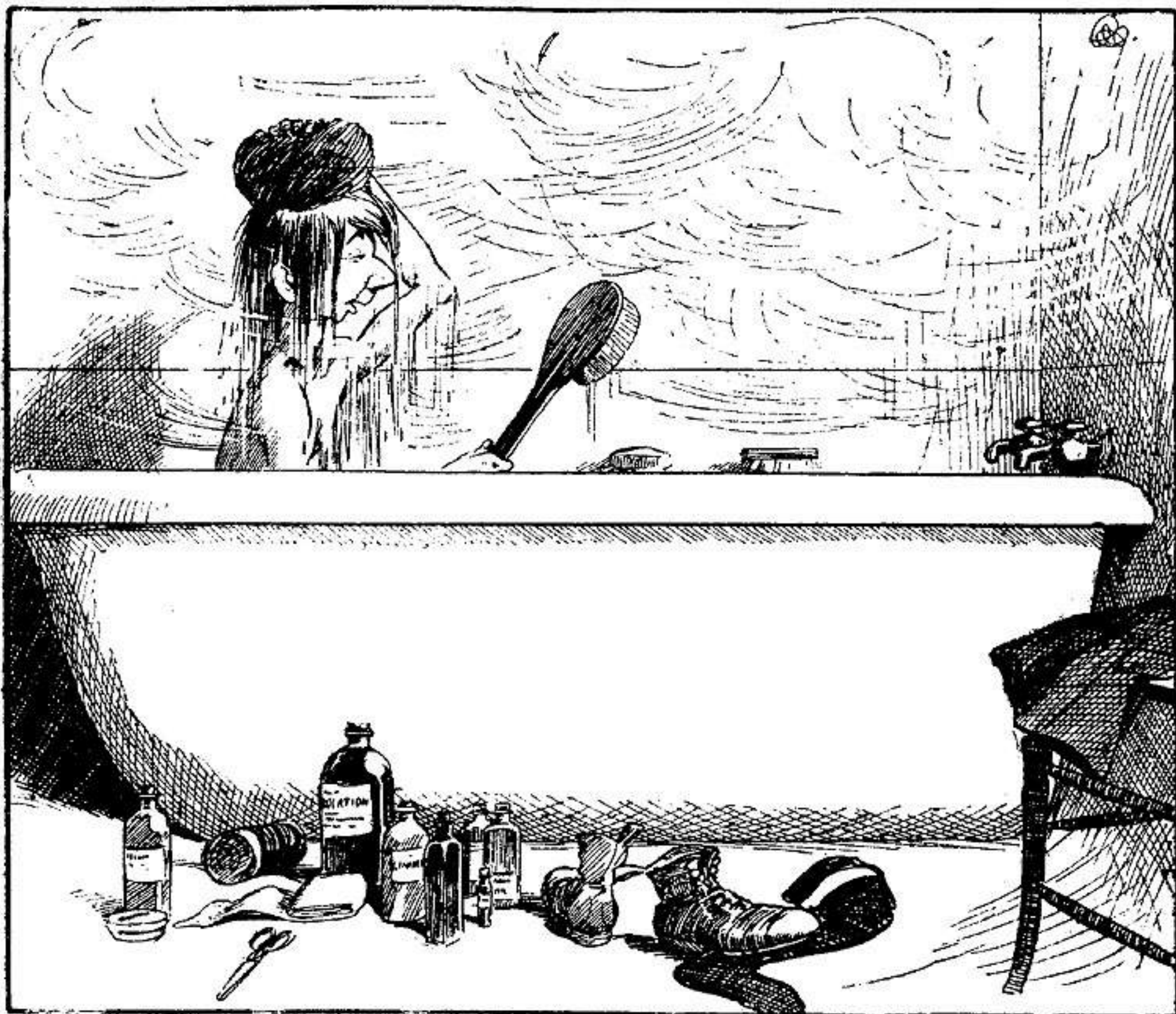
"Then—ahem!—you would not care to play him in a match?"

Wharton stared.

"It would mean losing the match, sir."

The Head pursed his lips.

"Now, Wharton," he said, "I am far from wishing to



After the match Alonzo locked himself up in the bath-room, swamping himself with hot water and rubbing his bony limbs with embrocation. (See Page 26.)

interfere in matters outside my province. I am sure you understand that. But I am placed in an awkward position by this letter from Mr. Todd. Mr. Todd evidently does not quite understand the game of football, and its—er—traditions. He thinks that any boy can play in a football team, just as if he were—ahem!—playing marbles. It is quite probable, judging by his letter, that he does not know that a football team contains a limited number of players—and—ahem!—he probably imagines the whole Form turning out to play football at once."

Wharton smiled.

"At the same time," said the Head, "I do not wish to reply to Mr. Todd that what he requests is impossible."

"I suppose not, sir."

"Would it be possible, therefore, to play Todd in a single match, Wharton?" asked Dr. Locke.

Wharton was silent.

The Head could have ordered him, if he had chosen; and it was kind and considerate of him to put his wish in the form of a suggestion. At the same time, it had the weight of a command. Wharton could hardly refuse to oblige the Head.

But he thought with deep dismay of the prospect of Alonzo playing in a Form match.

True, the Remove had once played Alonzo, by way of a joke, against an incompetent team. But that was a different matter.

"Well, Wharton?"

"I suppose we could play him once, sir."

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

"You would oblige me by doing so, Wharton."

"It shall be done, sir."

"Thank you, Wharton! Of course," said the Head, with a smile, "I do not suggest your playing Todd in an important match, if he is not fit. But could you not arrange a match which will be of no great importance—a match with another form at Greyfriars, for instance, and not with an outside team. Then if Todd's play should lead to defeat, it will not count as a defeat for the school."

Wharton brightened up.

"Yes, sir! We'll play him in a match with the Upper Fourth."

"I think that will do."

"It's settled, then, sir."

And Wharton left the study.

"Well?" asked half a dozen voices, in the passage outside. Wharton's chums were waiting for him there. "Licked?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"No," he said, "it wasn't a row."

"What was it, then?" asked Bull

"Alonzo!"

"Alonzo?" repeated several voices.

"Yes; the Head's got Uncle Ben's letter."

"Oh!"

"And he's asked me to play Todd in a footer match."

"Phew! How did you get out of it?"

"I didn't get out of it."

"What!" shouted Bob Cherry. "You haven't agreed to play Todd—Todd—in a match!"

Another splendid long, complete tale of Harry
Wharton & Co. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

"Yes, I have."

"Well, you ass!"

"You fathead!"

"You chump!"

"You frabjous ass!"

The juniors did not spare their comments. Wharton laughed.

"Don't play the giddy goat," he said, "I couldn't refuse the Head, could I, when he made a point of it?"

"Well, I suppose not. But—"

"It's rotten."

"You know what Todd is, it would be better to play four or five men short, than to play Todd. He's fatal."

"I know all that, but it can't be helped. We'll play him against the Upper Fourth. I'm going to fix it up with Temple and Dabney," said Wharton. "We'll put Alonzo through a bit of practice first, too."

"Lot of good practice will be to that duffer," snorted Bob Cherry.

"Well, it can't make him any worse."

"Ha, ha! No, that's impossible!"

"My dear fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's the bounder! Todd, you worm, you're going to be played in a Form match."

Alonzo beamed.

"I'm so pleased, you fellows. I'm sure you will never regret it, Wharton. I have a feeling that, given an opportunity, I shall shine forth as a very great player."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows, I—"

"You'll have to practise," said Wharton.

"My dear Wharton, I shall be very pleased to practise. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that practice makes perfect, and that experience makes fools wise."

"Experience hasn't had that effect on you yet."

"My dear Cherry—"

"I'll go and speak to Temple," said Wharton. "Our match with Highcliffe for Saturday afternoon is scratched, and we'll fix this up for Saturday if we can."

"Good egg!"

And Harry Wharton, with several of the juniors, made his way to Temple's study, in the Fourth-Form passage.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Friendly Call.

TEMPLE, Dabney & Co. were at home. Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth, was reclining in an arm-chair, in an attitude, as a novelist would say, of easy and unaffected grace. Dabney was sitting on the end of the fender, attending to the important business of roasting chestnuts. Fry was sitting on the table, swinging his legs. Scott was staring out of the window. All four of the Fourth-Formers looked round as Wharton knocked at the study door and walked in with Nugent and Bob Cherry.

"Hallo!" said Temple, slightly turning his head.

He did not rise; that would have been too great an honour to the Removites. The Remove was the Lower Fourth, a step below the Upper Fourth in degree, and Temple, Dabney & Co. affected to regard the Removites as mere infants, as if they had belonged to the Second or Third Forms. This was an affectation on the part of Temple, Dabney & Co., that frequently led to the punching of heads.

"Hallo!" said Dabney, turning a very red face from the fire. "Hallo! What do you kids want?"

"Not manners or sense, or we shouldn't come here," said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

Temple sat bolt upright.

"If you kids have come here to be cheeky—"

"Rats!"

"Eh?"

"And many of 'em!"

Temple rose.

"Pax," said Harry Wharton, laughing, "we haven't come for a rag. Look here, Temple, what are you doing on Saturday afternoon?"

Temple rubbed his chin reflectively. Temple was a somewhat tall and slim fellow, with a firm belief in his aristocratic appearance. He affected a somewhat swellish manner, and frequently assumed the position of looking upon life generally as a great bore.

"I really don't know," he drawled. "Are we doing anything on Saturday afternoon, you fellows?"

"I'll look in my engagement-book, if you like," suggested Fry.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Oh, come off!" said Wharton. "Look here—"

"There was the drag we were going to have to Courtfield," said Scott.

"Ah! Yes."

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"Or else a drive in my uncle's car," said Fry.

"True."

"Or a pull up river, you know," Dabney remarked.

Temple yawned.

"Yes, we're simply neck deep in engagements, Wharton," he said. "I really don't know whether we could do anything for you on Saturday afternoon. But what is it you want—let's know that."

"Je swank, tu swanke, il swanke," murmured Nugent.

"Nous swankons, vous swankez, ils swankaient—"

The Fourth-Formers turned red as Nugent, in an apparently absent-minded manner, went on conjugating the verb.

"Oh, shut up!" said Fry.

"Oh, rather!"

"We're open to play you at footer on Saturday afternoon, if you've nothing on," said Wharton. "That's all. But if you're going to Courtfield in a drag, and driving in your uncle's motor-car, and pulling up a river, all at once—"

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"I don't know whether we can continue to play these chaps," said Fry. "We have the dignity of the Fourth Form to consider."

"Rats!"

"Oh, come off, Fry! Don't play the goat, you know."

"I—I—I—"

"Look here," said Temple, "we'll let you know if we can play you. We've so many engagements that—"

"Piffle!"

"What!" roared Temple.

"Bosh!"

"Chuck those kids out!" roared Temple.

The four Fourth-Formers drew together. So did the three Removites. The odds were on the side of Temple, Dabney & Co., but the juniors certainly looked very formidable as they stood shoulder to shoulder. As a matter of fact, there was no fellow in the Upper Fourth who could have licked Harry Wharton, and a good many of the Fifth might have tried it in vain.

"Oh, let 'em go!" said Temple loftily. "These Remove kids are really beneath our notice. Run away and play."

"Rats!"

"Get out of the study."

"Look here, are you going to play on Saturday afternoon?" demanded Wharton. "It looks like being decent weather, and I know you've no match on."

"Oh, yes, we'll play!" said Temple. "It will do you kids good to give you another licking. It may keep you in your place."

"Kick-off at half-past two?"

"Yes, if you like."

"Good; that's settled!"

"And now run away," said Temple—"or, rather," he added quickly, as he caught sight of a group of Upper Fourth fellows in the passage outside the doorway, "you'd better say you're sorry for having been cheeky here, before you go."

"Rats!"

"Stop them, you chaps!" shouted Temple.

Three Fourth-Formers stood grinning outside the doorway—Harris, and North, and Grimes, of the Upper Fourth. They evidently meant to block the way of the Removites. Taken between two fires, Harry Wharton & Co. were in a serious position.

"Now, then, are you sorry?" asked Temple grinning.

"No fear!"

"Are you going to climb down?"

"Not much."

"Then we'll jolly well bump you!"

"We made it pax—"

"But we didn't!" grinned Fry. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rather! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here—"

"Are you sorry?"

"No!" roared Wharton.

"Then we'll make you sorry. Collar them!" roared Temple.

Harris and North and Grimes rushed in. The three Removites promptly dodged round the table, and for a second there was a pause. Six Fourth-Formers stood together on one side of the table, three Removites on the other.

Temple broke into a chuckle. He and his party were between Harry Wharton and the door, and there was no escape for the Removites.

"You'd better climb down!" grinned Temple.

"Oh, rather!"

"Rats!"

"Rush 'em!" shouted Temple.

Harry Wharton's eyes gleamed. He grasped the side of the table, and with a sudden heave, sent it spinning over on its side towards the Fourth-Formers. A torrent of books

and papers, plates, and other articles, shot over the legs of the Fourth-Formers. The table fell with a crash, and, as Temple & Co. leaped away from it, the juniors made a rush for the door.

Only Fry had the presence of mind enough to grapple with them, and he seized Nugent, who dropped him with a drive on the nose.

The next moment Harry Wharton & Co. were outside the study.

There was a yell of wrath in Temple's room. The floor was littered with papers and books and broken crockery, and splashed with ink. Temple, Dabney & Co. made a furious rush after the juniors.

"Buzz off!" said Wharton.

And the Removites rushed down the passage. In a few seconds they were in their own quarters. The Fourth-Formers pursued them as far as the Remove passage, but there the Lower Fourth turned out to meet them—and Temple, Dabney & Co. promptly beat a retreat.

A yell of derisive laughter from the Remove followed them.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Todd's Goals.

"MY dear Wharton—"

Harry Wharton and Nugent and the Nabob of Bhanipur were busy with their preparation, when Alonzo put his head into the study.

Wharton sighed. When Alonzo began to talk, he seldom left off if he could help it.

"Yes, Toddy!" said Harry patiently.

"I have not come to interrupt you, Wharton," said Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me not to interrupt fellows who were working. I should be sorry indeed to be the unintentional cause of your wasting time, my dear Wharton."

"What do you want?"

"I was about to proceed to explain," said Todd. "In the first place, I trust I am causing you no inconvenience by speaking at this moment—"

"Would you mind coming to the point?"

"Oh, certainly! But under the circumstances—"

"Get on with the washing!" roared Frank Nugent.

Alonzo Todd looked puzzled.

"I—I am not doing any washing, Nugent," he replied.

"If I were engaged in any laundry work of that description, I should certainly progress with it to the best of my ability. But you are under a misapprehension. I am not—"

"Chump!"

"My dear Nugent—"

"The chumpfulness of the esteemed and ludicrous Todd is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Shall I hurlfully chuck the honourable inkpot at his esteemed napper, my worthy chums?"

Alonzo looked alarmed.

"My dear Inky—"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet. He took Todd by the shoulder in a firm grasp. Todd looked at him in great surprise.

"My dear Wharton—"

"Come to the point," said Harry, shaking him. "What do you want?"

"My d-d-d-dear— Oh!"

Shake, shake!

"Y-y-y-yaroo!"

"Now, what do you want?"

"I—I— You see, I am about to indulge in some footer practice!" gasped Todd. "I want you to lend me a footer, please. My Uncle Benjamin did not send me a football along with the clothes. The clothes, of course, are essential, but I regard a footer as being still more essential, and somehow my Uncle Benjamin overlooked it. Perhaps—"

Wharton took his second-best footer out of the cupboard.

"Catch!" he said.

"Oh, certainly! I— Yoop!"

Biff!

Alonzo caught the footer on his nose, his hands coming up too late. It rolled out into the passage, and Todd blinked after it.

"My dear Wharton—"

"How are you going to practise after dark?" demanded Nugent. "You'd better not get kicking the ball about in the passages. You'll have the prefects after you."

"I am going to practise in my study, Nugent."

Nugent roared.

Wharton closed the study door, closing Alonzo out into the passage. The Duffer of Greyfriars picked up the footer and walked along to his own study.

No. 14 was unoccupied just then. John Bull and Fisher T. Fish had done their preparation, as had Alonzo. Alonzo's two study-mates had gone down, and the Duffer of Greyfriars had the study to himself. It was a favourable opportunity for footer practice, but the study could hardly be considered a favourable spot.

The study was roomy, as junior studies went. But it was hardly roomy enough to prioritise kicking for goal.

Alonzo, however, was blind to little considerations like that. Alonzo was keen on footer, and bent upon proving himself quite fit to take his place in the team on Saturday. There was no time to be lost if he was to get into form before the match, and he could not afford to wait for daylight. A little kicking at a mark on the wall would be excellent practice for goal-getting.

So Alonzo thought, at all events.

He had chalked a mark on the study wall, between two framed pictures belonging to John Bull. He planted the ball on the carpet, and took careful aim. Then he kicked.

His foot swung past the ball, swept into the air, and he sat down on the carpet. He gave a grunt as he landed there, with a loud bump that rang outside the study.

"Ow! Oh, dear!"

The door was opened. Bob Cherry and Mark Linley, from the next study, looked in. They were looking alarmed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob. "What on earth's the matter—an accident?"

"N-n-no," gasped Alonzo—"certainly not! I was practising kicking the ball, Cherry, and somehow my foot missed it. Then the floor of the study appeared to rise and knock against me with considerable violence; but this, of course, must have been an optical illusion."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall, however, try again," said Alonzo, rising rather painfully to his feet. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that, in case of lack of success in the first essay, it is advisable and judicious to try again."

"I should advise you to try somewhere else," said Mark Linley, laughing. "You will do some damage to the furniture if you kick a footer about the study, Todd."

"My dear Linley, I cannot afford to waste time. I am playing in the Form match on Saturday, you know," said Todd, with a touch of importance in his manner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Cherry—"

"You had better practise downstairs."

"I was going to practise in the common-room, but Bulstrode raised some absurd objections. However, I shall do no damage here. Watch me."

"Ha, ha! We'll watch—rather; from the passage, though. Come out, Marky!"

"What-ho!"

The juniors preferred to watch from the passage. Alonzo was not safe at close quarters when he was kicking a footer about.

Todd placed the ball very carefully on the carpet, and judged the distance with his eye, and kicked.

This time his foot struck the ball, by some weird chance.

Biff!

The ball whizzed!

Crash!

"Oh, dear!" ejaculated Alonzo.

He stared in dismay at the picture, upon which the ball had crashed. The glass was in fragments on the floor, and the picture was burst through the back of the frame.

The juniors in the passage yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dear me! I have missed the mark!"

"Go hon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What on earth's the matter?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, coming along the passage with a crowd of other fellows.

The crash of the smashing glass had been heard far and wide.

"Only Todd practising footer."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I will keep on till I succeed!" gasped Alonzo, placing the ball again. "It would be unworthy of the training I have received from my Uncle Benjamin to allow myself to be beaten by a mere sphere of leather."

"Ha, ha, ha! You're more likely to be beaten by Johnny Bull when he sees that picture!" yelled Nugent.

Biff!

Alonzo kicked the ball again. Again his foot, wonderful to relate, smote the leather instead of missing it and soaring in the air. The leather flew.

Crash!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goal!"

Alonzo blinked.

"Dear me! That is not a goal! I was not aiming at the other picture, my dear fellows. I was attempting to kick the ball to the chalk mark on the wall. This is quite an accident."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is more a subject for sympathy than for merriment, my dear fellows!" said Todd. "Those pictures belong to John Bull, and I believe he places some value upon them, as they were sent to him by his Aunt Tabitha. It is very unfortunate for Bull; and, indeed, if it were not so pressing for me to get on with my practice, I should kick the ball no more in the study."

"Oh, don't leave off yet!" implored Bob Cherry. "You haven't smashed the clock yet!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And there's the looking-glass——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Cherry——"

"Go it, Toddy!"

"On the ball!"

"Bravo, Todd!"

Thus encouraged, Alonzo took his third kick at that obstinate footer. Again the ball refused to follow the prescribed course. Perhaps Alonzo put an unintentional spin on it. At all events, the ball flew sideways with a whizz, and caught the clock on the mantelpiece fairly on the dial.

Crash-ash!

Smash went the clock, right back through the looking-glass, smashing that, too. There was a shattering shower of glass fragments on the floor.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Todd.

The juniors roared.

"Goal! Goal! Hurrah!"

John Bull and Fisher T. Fish came scudding along the passage. They had learned that something was going forward in their study. They pushed their way through the cram of yelling juniors in the passage.

"What's the matter?" gasped John Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's only Alonzo."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bull and his chum burst into the study. They gave one wild look round the study, which looked like a wreck. Then they gave one look at Alonzo, who was calmly placing the footer for another kick.

Then they rushed at him!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

No Room for Practice.

BULL grasped Alonzo by the ears. Fisher T. Fish caught him by the hair. They dragged him away from the footer, and his toe swept past it harmlessly.

"Ow!" yelled Alonzo. "My dear friends, you are hurting me! Yow! My ears are excessively tender, and my hair is——"

"Ass!"

"Fathead!"

"My dear fellows——"

"What have you been doing?" roared Bull. "Look at my pictures!"

"Look at my clock!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish.

"I have been practising footer. I——"

"You silly guy!"

"My dear Fish——"

The crowd of juniors were choking with laughter. It did not seem funny to Fish or to Bull, whose property had been destroyed. But to the rest of the Remove it was the joke of the season. They roared!

"Let him keep on!" yelled Bob Cherry. "There's the bookcase left, and the window!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The——the dangerous ass!" gasped Bull. "What do you mean by playing footer in the study, you frabjous, benighted chump?"

"I require practice."

"Look at my pictures!"

"I'm so sorry, Bull; but I assure you that it was an accident. You must not imagine that it was a joke. All these fellows will bear out that I was aiming the footer at the chalk mark. It struck the pictures entirely by accident—an accident for which I cannot account."

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look at that clock!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I brought that clock all the way from New York. New look at it!"

"That doesn't matter," grinned Tom Brown. "It was only an American clock, you know; it wouldn't tell the time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's just as good as it was, except for appearance," said Nugent.

Fisher T. Fish snorted.

"I guess that was a first-rate clock," he exclaimed. "It was all O.K.; it would do everything except—except keep time. Todd will have to pay for that clock, I guess."

"Dear me! How much was it worth, Fish?"

"Twenty dollars."

"Oh, dear!"

"Twenty pence, you mean," said Harry Wharton.

"I guess I can't replace that clock under twenty dollars."

"Indeed, Fish, I shall be very pleased to pay for the clock, if it is ever in my power to do so," said Todd. "I do not anticipate that such will ever be the case, but if I ever have the means, I assure you that I will willingly pay for the clock."

"You—you burbling ass!"

"My dear Fish——"

"Get out of the study, you dangerous chump!" exclaimed John Bull. "You're not worth licking, or I'd—I'd jump on you. Get out!"

"But——"

"Outside, fathead!"

"But I have not finished my footer practice, my dear Bull. I suppose a fellow has a right to practise in his own study?" said Todd mildly.

"You—you—after the damage you've done!" gasped Bull.

"I'm very sorry for that, of course, but——"

"You—you—you——" Bull was almost speechless.

"My dear Bull——"

"Play your concertina to him, Bull," suggested Hazeldene. "He'll buzz off fast enough then."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you get out?" shrieked Bull.

"I am sorry to have to decline acceding to a request made by a personal friend," said Todd. "But under the circumstances, it being so necessary for me to obtain practice for the Form match, I cannot cease just at present, Bull. I waited for you to finish your preparation before commencing. Pray excuse me if I continue."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

John Bull did not waste any more words upon Alonzo Todd. He made a sign to the American junior, and they seized upon the Duffer of Greyfriars again. He was rushed to the door.

The juniors there crowded back to give them room.

"Oh!" gasped Alonzo. "My dear Bull, pray do not be rough! My dear Fish, I beg and implore you to be good-tempered! Bad temper, my dear Fish, is the bane of—— Yow! Yow! Ow!"

"I'm going to practise footer, too," said John Bull grimly.

"If Todd can practise in the study, I can, I suppose."

"Oh, certainly, my dear Bull. That is only fair. I have no objection."

"The doorway is the goal," said Bull, "and Todd is the ball."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Bull——"

John Bull kicked.

Alonzo did not rise to the kick like a footer, but it was a goal all the same, for Todd shot right through the doorway.

Crash!

"Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd alighted on his hands and knees in the passage, the juniors kindly crowding back to give him room to fall.

"Goal!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows—— Ow! I beg—yow!—and implore—groo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Place the ball for another kick, Fishy," said John Bull.

NEXT WEEK:

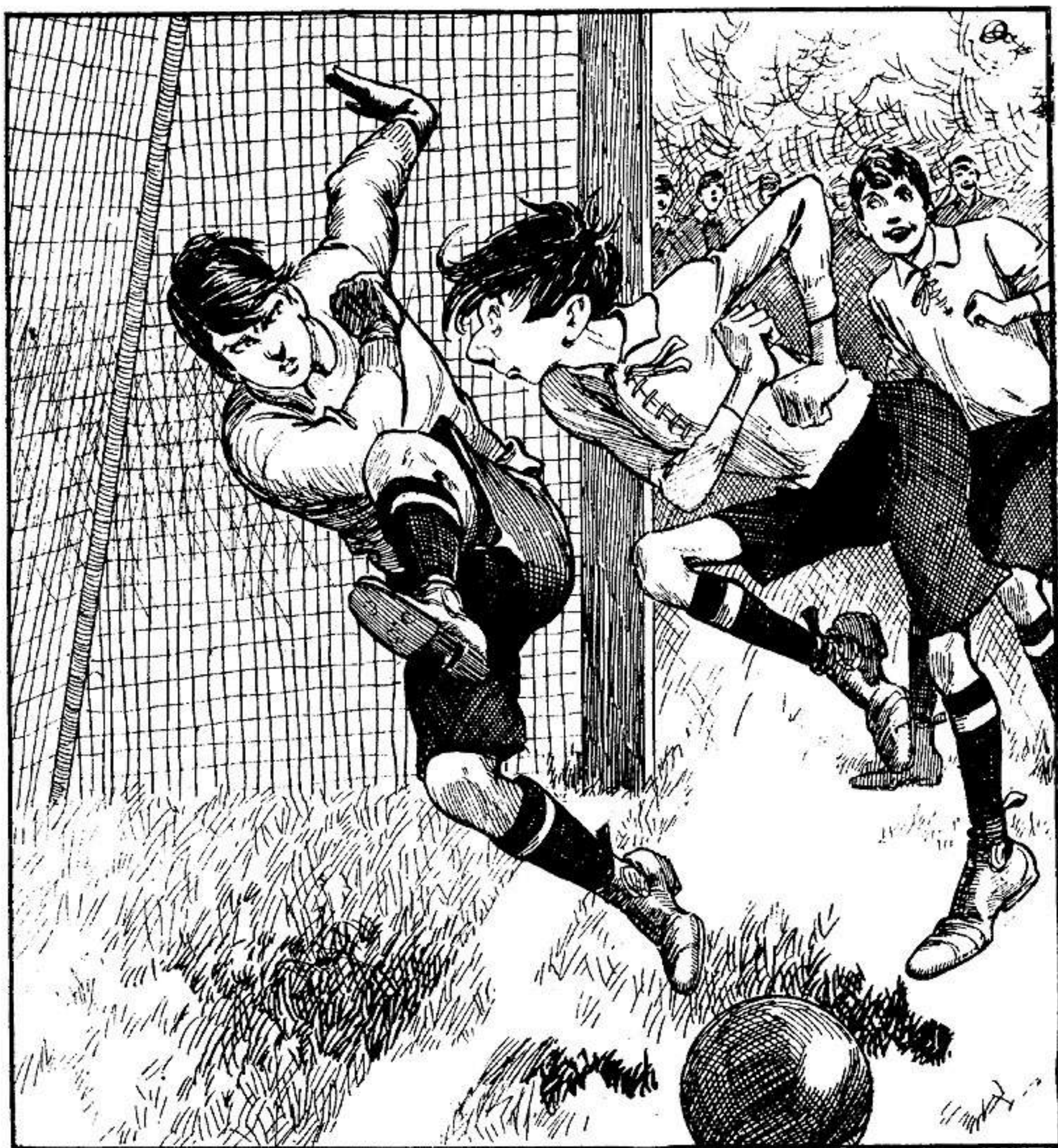
"WINGATE'S CHUM."

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Right at his own goalkeeper Alonzo charged. John Bull gave a yell as he fell backwards and the ball rolled into the net. "I've done it!" gasped Alonzo. (See page 26.)

"Surely!" grinned the American.

He grasped Todd and jerked him up. But Todd did not wait to be used as a footer a second time.

He jerked himself away from the American junior, and bolted.

John Bull slammed the door of the study after him. Todd did not stop till he reached the end of the passage. He picked up the footer and put it under his arm, and stopped Harry Wharton as the latter was going back into his study.

"My dear Wharton, you recognise the necessity of my obtaining practice, I believe, before I play for the Form on Saturday?" he said.

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"Perhaps you would not mind if I practised in your study?"

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Wharton roared.

"I rather think I should mind," he exclaimed. "You must go a little further, Toddy. Ask Vernon-Smith; he's a nice, polite chap."

And Wharton went in and closed his door. Todd turned to Vernon-Smith, who was standing at the door of his study. Vernon-Smith wore a sulky scowl on his face. Ever since the incident in the dormitory the Bounder of Greyfriars had been dodging Loder. He had heard from several quarters that Loder wanted to see him; but knowing how the incident in the dorm. had ended, Vernon-Smith did not want to see Loder. He guessed well enough what the prefect wanted him for.

He did not expect to be able to dodge Loder all the time, however, and he had a very unpleasant meeting in prospect when it should happen.

Consequently Vernon-Smith was not in a cheerful or good temper. He scowled at Todd as the latter came up to him.

"If you please, Vernon-Smith, would you mind if I practised footer in your study?" asked the Duffer innocently.

"Oh, come in!" said the Bounder, stepping back.

"Thank you so much, Vernon-Smith. I—"

"You want kicking, I suppose?"

"Certainly! I—"

"Well, here you are."

The Bounder seized Todd as he entered the doorway, and swung him round, and planted his foot heavily behind him. Todd flew into the passage again.

He bumped down, and then twisted round and gazed in great astonishment at Vernon-Smith.

"Yow!" he gasped. "My dear Smith—"

"Want some more?" asked the Bounder, with an unpleasant smile.

"Groo! N-no! I want—"

"You can have as much footer practice of that sort as you like," said the Bounder. "I'm rather in form, and I'll keep it up for an hour, if you like."

Alonzo Todd did not accept the offer. He tucked the footer under his arm, and walked down the passage. Every fellow shut his door as he saw him coming. The Duffer of Greyfriars was left alone with his footer in the passage.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo. "I do not like to consider anyone selfish or inconsiderate, but certainly there is a want of enthusiasm on the subject of my footer practice. Perhaps, however, I may be able to put in some practice in the passage."

He placed the ball, and kicked it along the passage. He chased the elusive footer up and down the passage several times. He was quite warming to the work, and thinking that really, upon the whole, the passage was superior to a study as a place for practising kicking, when doors opened all along the passage, and indignant juniors swarmed out.

The Remove were mostly doing their preparation, and football practice in the passage was not conducive to brain-work.

They said nothing to Alonzo. They had already learned that the Duffer of Greyfriars was past argument.

They hurled themselves upon him. They whirled him along the passage, and rolled him downstairs, and hurled the footer after him. Then they returned to their studies, more contented in mind.

Alonzo picked himself up dazedly at the bottom of the stairs.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "Either the fellows are indulging in a very rough form of joke, or they are cross about something. Dear me!"

Alonzo did not know which it was. But he knew he had better not return to the Remove passage. He tucked the footer under his arm, and wandered away in search of fresh fields and pastures new.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Unaccountable Behaviour of Mr. Quelch.

ALONZO TODD wore a thoughtful and indeed somewhat worried look the next morning in the Form-room.

He had not succeeded in getting any more footer practice, so far.

Somehow or other, fellows did not want him to practise in their studies, or in the passages, or in the common-room, and he had had to leave the intended practice undone.

It weighed upon his mind considerably.

Having, by the intervention of his esteemed Uncle Benjamin, been admitted to the Form team for the match on Saturday, he naturally wanted to do the Remove credit.

Without practice, however, he was not likely to put up a very good game. Although Alonzo was, as a rule, very attentive to his lessons, and careful of his work, he could not help feeling that just at present footer practice would be of more use to him than Latin irregular verbs.

Having decided that in his own mind, and reflected upon it, he determined to put it to Mr. Quelch. When he was called upon to construe, he rose in his place, but he did not render a version of Virgil.

"If you please, sir—" he began.

Mr. Quelch looked at him sharply.

"Construe, Todd," he said.

"If you please—"

"If you have not prepared, Todd—"

"You see, sir, I—I want to mention quite another matter, sir," said Todd.

Mr. Quelch started.

"This is no place to mention other matters, Todd," he said. "You are here to work. Construe!"

"Oh, certainly, sir; but I have been selected to play in the Remove team on Saturday, in the form match, sir—"

"What!"

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"The form match against the Upper Fourth, sir. I have been asked to play. I think that as I am out of practice, sir, I require some extra time for that purpose."

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir. Under the circumstances, sir, I have—"

"Boy!"

"I have decided, sir, to ask you if you would mind my missing lessons this morning, so that I can put in some extra practice at footer, sir?"

Mr. Quelch gasped.

So did the Remove. Alonzo Todd was full of surprises; but he had never surprised them so much as this.

"Todd!" gasped the form-master at last.

"Yes, sir."

"Take a hundred lines for impertinence!" shouted Mr. Quelch. "Now construe!"

Todd looked astonished.

"A hundred lines, sir?"

"Yes!"

"For impertinence, sir?"

"Yes!" shouted the Remove-master. "Construe!"

"But it was certainly not my intention to be impertinent, sir," said Todd in bewilderment. "My uncle Benjamin, sir, always impressed upon me never to be impertinent."

"Todd!"

"I'm so sorry, sir, that you have mistaken my remarks for impertinence. I merely wished to request you to allow me—"

"Todd!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

"Take two hundred lines!"

"Oh, sir!"

"And stay in after school this afternoon to write them out, Todd!"

"Oh, sir! That will interfere with my football practice, sir," said Alonzo in dismay.

Mr. Quelch looked as if he were going to foam at the mouth. He picked up a pointer and strode towards the class.

"Todd!" he shouted.

"Yes, sir."

"Come out here before the class."

"Oh, certainly, sir."

Todd came out. He was looking very much surprised. He wondered what Mr. Quelch was excited about, and whether something had happened that morning to annoy him.

"Hold out your hand, Todd!"

"M-m-my hand, sir?"

"Yes; at once!"

Todd gasped.

"B-b-but what I—what have I done, sir?"

"Will you hold out your hand, Todd?"

"Oh, certainly, sir; but—"

Todd held out his hand.

He received a swipe across the palm which nearly doubled him up, and he gave a yelp that echoed through the form-room.

"Ow!"

Mr. Quelch lowered the pointer. He was breathing hard through the nose. He was inclined to give Todd the thrashing of his life; but he restrained the inclination. Mr. Quelch was a just man, though liable to attacks of sharp temper.

"Go back to your place, Todd!" he rapped out.

"Ye-e-es, sir."

Todd went back to his place, considerably hurt, and very much surprised. He sat down, and Mr. Quelch called on the next boy to construe. That reminded Alonzo that he had not construed, and he jumped up.

Alonzo was a dutiful fellow. He would not have missed his work for anything, unless with the permission of the Form-master to go and practise footer instead. Mr. Quelch had really passed him over now because he had been punished; but Todd did not think of that. Todd often did not think of things, when he was managing matters unrequested.

"If you please, sir—"

"Sit down, Todd."

"Yes, sir; but—"

"Todd!"

"I have not construed, sir."

"Sit down!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Nugent dragged the Duffer of Greyfriars down into his seat.

"My dear Nugent—" began Todd.

"Shut up, you ass!" whispered Nugent.

"But, really—"

"If you interrupt the lesson again, Todd, I shall detain you for the next half-holiday," said Mr. Quelch angrily.

"Oh, sir!"

"Silence! Go on, Skinner."

Skinner went on construing. Even Todd was silenced by Mr. Quelch's threat. For the next half-holiday was Saturday,

and if he were detained then, he would be prevented from playing in the form match; and if that happened, Todd would have been very sorry for the Remove.

"My dear Nugent," he whispered. "Is anything the matter with Mr. Quelch this morning? He seems quite cross about something."

Nugent chuckled.

"It is very odd," said Alonzo.

Mr. Quelch's keen eye wandered round in Todd's direction, gleaming.

"You were talking, Todd?"

"Yes, sir," said the truthful Alonzo.

Mr. Quelch coughed.

"Ahem! Then don't talk again in class, Todd."

"Certainly not, sir."

And Todd didn't.

When the class was dismissed after morning lessons, Todd looked very puzzled as he went out. He was still in the dark as to the cause of the Remove-master's unaccountable ill-humour. He nudged Wharton as the form poured out into the passage.

"My dear Wharton!" he exclaimed. "Do you think that Mr. Quelch is possibly ill?"

Wharton stared.

"Ill? No! He looks fit enough. Why?"

"Then how do you account for his odd behaviour this morning? If he is not ill, something must have occurred to make him very cross," said Alonzo seriously.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Wharton——"

"Ha, ha! You occurred," explained Wharton.

"My dear——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton walked on, laughing. Todd hurried after him.

"I am going to have some footer practice now, Wharton," he said. "Are you fellows playing? If so, it will be much better for you all to practise with me, as I shall be in the team on Saturday."

"Oh, all right," said Harry Wharton resignedly. "Get into your duds."

"Oh, certainly."

And in a very short time Alonzo had changed into the footer outfit so kindly sent him by his Uncle Benjamin, and had joined the chums of the Remove on the junior football ground.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Todd Sticks to the Ball——

"HERE he comes!"

"Here's Bloomer II!"

"Here's the giddy International!"

These remarks, and more like them, punctuated with chuckles, greeted Alonzo Todd as he arrived on the footer ground, and threw off his coat. Alonzo's exceedingly slim limbs showed up to great advantage in football garb. Alonzo could not be called athletic; indeed, the clothes, slim as they were, were hardly filled out by Alonzo. His calves brought many a grin to the faces of the onlookers.

But Todd was in deadly earnest.

Harry Wharton and a dozen other fellows were going to practice, and they had formed up in sides of seven. Bob Cherry captained one seven and Wharton the other, and Todd was added to Wharton's party.

"Lemme see," said Harry, wondering where he should put Alonzo so as to be least bothered by him. "Lemme see; where do you play?"

The Remove, of course, were not taking Todd's football at all seriously. They knew that Alonzo was not a footballer, and never would be a footballer. His playing was simply a travesty all the time. Some of them tried to keep their faces serious, but without much success.

"Play?" repeated Todd. "Where? Anywhere you like, my dear Wharton. I remember Bulstrode said once that I should make a good centre goal-keeper, and I should be equally successful as left wing outside-right back. But it is for you to decide."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows——"

"I suppose you'll be forward?" said Wharton.

"I trust not, my dear Wharton," said Alonzo. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me never to be forward."

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

"Oh, shove him anywhere, and get on," said Bob Cherry.

"We've only got forty minutes."

"Right-ho! Make him forward."

"I say, you fellows——"

"Oh, buzz off, Bunter! No time to bother with you now!" said Wharton impatiently. "One duffer is enough at a time!"

"My dear Wharton——"

"Look here!" exclaimed Bunter, blinking indignantly at Wharton through his big spectacles. "If Todd can practise,

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ONE
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I can practise. You know jolly well what ripping footballer I am; and as a member of the form club, I protest against being kept in the shade by sheer personal jealousy on the committee."

"Oh, ring off."

"I'm jolly well going to be given a chance of showing what I can do," said Bunter wrathfully. "If I show up well in practice, you can't keep me out of the team. I shall appeal to the form."

"You fat chump!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Oh, let him play," said Bob Cherry. "He'll make the sides even if I have him and you have Alonzo. One idiot in each team."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"All serene, then," said Harry. "Tumble in, Bunter; you're in Cherry's team."

And Bunter, with a great air of importance, rolled on the field with the junior footballers.

A crowd of fellows looked on, grinning.

With the Owl of the Remove playing on one side and the Duffer on the other it seemed very probable that there would be fun.

The footer was kicked off, and the play began.

The fellows had imagined that Todd, who simply could not play, would be left standing, and would hardly interfere at all with the other players.

But they did not know Todd yet.

Todd was in serious earnest—serious, not to say deadly. Todd meant business. Todd was after the ball all the time. He captured it many times—chiefly from his own side. He charged several players down—all on his own side. But what were trifles like that to Alonzo Todd?

The footballers were soon laughing too much to run much.

"My hat!" Wharton gasped. "That ass will be the death of me! Ha, ha, ha!"

The crowd roared.

"Hurrah, Todd!"

"Bravo, Alonzo!"

"Go it, Duffer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Todd "went it!"

He went it with a vengeance. Gallantly he charged down the field. He bumped over two of his own players from behind, and captured the ball from Wharton, who was about to kick for goal. The crowd yelled.

"Hurrah!"

"Go it, Todd!"

"You—you giddy ass!" gasped Wharton.

"Todd!"

"Stop!"

"Oh! Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo did not stop.

He had picked up the ball as if he were playing Rugger, the distinction between Soccer and Rugger being too trivial to occupy a great brain like Alonzo's.

Ball under arm, he charged down upon Bob Cherry's goal.

Tom Brown was there, looking out. It was quite by chance that Todd charged towards the enemy's goal. He was quite as likely to charge down to his own. But Bob's goal happened to be nearer.

The backs closed upon Alonzo, and he had to dodge them. He swerved off away from the goal, and tore away towards the touch-line.

The players stood and yelled. The crowd were almost in hysterics.

"Come back, Todd!"

"Drop that ball!"

"Kick it, you fathead! Drop it!"

"Hands!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Hands! Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd paid no heed.

"Stick to it, Todd!" yelled the delighted crowd. "Stick to the ball!"

And Todd stuck to it.

From his own side, and the other side, he kept it successfully, and dodged every attempt by any player to stop him or to recover the ball.

"Stick to it, Todd!" rose the roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Nugent collared the elusive Todd at last. He wrenched the footer away from him, and flung it to the players, amid a shriek of merriment.

Todd gasped.

"Oh, dear! I am quite breathless! I kept the ball away from them all right, Nugent! Dear me! You have let Wharton get it now!"

Frank choked.

"Oh, you ass! You frabjous ass! Go home!"

"My dear Nugent!"

NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

Another splendid long, complete tale of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Frank rushed off. His side were bearing down to the enemy's goal. Todd was not to be left out of the conflict. He rushed after Nugent. Billy Bunter was in the way, and he was rushing on blindly.

He met Todd in full career. Todd was an extremely light weight, and Bunter was an exceptionally heavy one. When Billy Bunter and Alonzo crashed together something had to go.

It was Alonzo. "Ow!" he gasped. "Yarrah! Oh!" Todd rolled on the field. Bunter rolled over him, and a series of painful gasps came from the Duffer of Greyfriars.

"Oh! Help! Yow! Groo! Ugh! Oh!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Roll on him, Bunter! Ha, ha, ha!"

The other players rushed up and dragged Bunter off. The fat junior was quite out of breath, and gasping like a landed fish. He sat and pumped in wind.

"Ow!" he snorted. "Yow! I say, you fellows, that dangerous ass ought to be boiled! Yah! I'm not going to play this rotten game any more! Yow!"

— And Billy Bunter rolled away off the footer-field. But Alonzo was made of sterner stuff.

"I—I think I will rest for a few minutes," he panted, "then I shall recommence, my dear fellows! Ugh!" And Todd rested.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

And the Ball Sticks to Alonzo.

THE Removites, when they had finished laughing—which was not for some minutes—went on with the footer practice. Certainly they got on much better without either Alonzo or Billy Bunter. The time allotted for the practice had almost expired when Alonzo Todd announced himself ready to recommence. He had been pumping in air with loud and vigorous gasps, and he seemed to have his wind back at last.

The juniors were about to come off the field when Alonzo joined them.

"My dear fellows, I am ready now," he said.

Harry Wharton grinned.

"We're finished, Toddy."

"My dear Wharton, I have really had very little practice—"

"But we've got to go and change for dinner."

"I trust you will not depart till I have had a little practice, Wharton," said Alonzo. "I should not regard it as being considerate."

Wharton rubbed his chin thoughtfully. Todd's practice at footer was a sight for gods and men, but it was possible to have enough of a good thing.

Bob Cherry walked off the field with the footer under his arm while Todd was remonstrating with the Remove captain. The other fellows followed him. Skinner, the humorist of the Remove, tapped Bob Cherry on the arm.

"Get that ball out of sight," he said.

Bob stared at him.

"Why?"

"Because I want to palm this one off on Todd."

Skinner held out a footer by the tag. Bob stared at it. It was covered all over the outside with a slimy, sticky substance. Bob touched it with his finger, and his finger stuck to it, and he had to jerk it away again.

"What on earth—" he began.

"Liquid glue!" explained Skinner.

"My hat!"

"It's awfully sticky—sticks to anything," said Skinner, with a grin. "I want to see Todd practise with this ball."

Bob Cherry burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It will be fun," said Skinner. "Give him another run before dinner, and give him a chance of sticking to the ball, or the ball sticking to him."

Bob Cherry laughed, and put his own footer out of sight under his coat. Alonzo Todd was not observant, and he was not likely to see that one ball had been changed for another.

"My dear Wharton—" he was saying.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Does Todd want to go on?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"Let's get on the field again, then."

"But there's no time."

"Make it five minutes."

"Good egg!" chorussed the other footballers, who had observed the sticky footer in Skinner's hand.

Wharton looked puzzled for a moment, and then he caught sight of Skinner's footer, and laughed.

"Oh, all right!" he said.

"My dear Wharton, I am glad you have decided to do

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the considerate thing," said Todd. "I really think that you will be glad yourself when you reflect upon it. My Uncle Benjamin says that—"

"Get on, Todd!"

"Oh, certainly! I—"

"Are you ready?"

"Quite ready, my dear fellow. Pass!"

"Here it comes!"

Bob Cherry had taken the ball from Skinner, and he threw it to Todd. Todd made a rush at it and kicked, and, of course, missed. He kicked again, and the ball rose in the air on his foot, but, strange to relate, it did not leave his boot, but stuck to it.

Todd gasped.

The crowd of juniors roared. They had "tumbled" to the little joke on Alonzo at once. The sight of the ball sticking to Alonzo's boot was screamingly funny.

"Dear me!" gasped Alonzo. "Really— Ah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat!" ejaculated Nugent. "That chap's magnetic—the ball can't get away from him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stick to it, Todd!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd simply gasped, and gasped again.

"It is really remarkable!" he exclaimed. "The ball appears to be sticky. It was certainly not sticky when I was playing with it before."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is either some remarkable illusion or else the ball has certainly become sticky," said Todd. "Dear me! It is very odd indeed!"

"Oh, kick, you duffer!"

"Pass—pass!"

"Don't stick to the ball, Todd! Pass!"

"My dear fellows—"

"Pass!"

Todd tried to detach the ball from his boot. He succeeded, but it stuck to the turf, and he had to jerk it away. Then he kicked it again, and it parted from his boot this time.

"Dear me! There you are!"

Bob Cherry captured the ball.

The players crowded round Alonzo, and hustled him on, and Bob Cherry slammed the ball upon his back in the middle of his football jersey.

It stuck there as if it had been pinned.

There was a yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stick to it, Todd!"

"Dear me! I—"

"Where's the ball?" shouted Bob Cherry. "Have you got it, Todd?"

"Indeed I have not, Cherry! I cannot see it," said Todd, blinking round, and quite unconscious of the fact that the ball was sticking on his back. "I have no idea where it is, my dear Cherry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look for it, then."

"Oh, certainly! But—"

"Lost ball!" howled Tom Brown.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look for the ball, Todd!"

"Find it, you duffer!"

"My dear fellows—"

"Find that ball!"

"Find it, Todd!"

"Where's the ball?"

"I shall be only too pleased to find it," said Todd. "It must, of course, be near to us somewhere. As it is so sticky, it is probably sticking to something."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Seek it, Toddy!"

"Find it! Good dog!"

Todd searched for the ball.

He hunted high, and he hunted low. The rest of the fellows stood round and yelled. The sight of Alonzo hunting up and down the field for the ball while it was sticking to the back of his footer jersey, was irresistible.

They shouted themselves hoarse. Todd was a little puzzled by their merriment. He did not see anything comic in losing a football. But he knew that the juniors often laughed over things that did not appeal to him as funny—his Uncle Benjamin, for instance. So he searched on.

The yells of laughter rising round the junior ground had

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attracted attention, and fellows came from all sides to see what was going on.

They joined in the yelling. It needed only a glance at Alonzo to set anybody shrieking with laughter. Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, came over to learn the cause of the unusual excitement; and he simply roared.

"Oh! Todd again! Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd looked round.

"My dear Wingate——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I really do not see why you are so amused, Wingate—you and the other fellows. I am looking for a lost ball. The ball is sticky, for some reason, and it has probably become stuck to something where I cannot see it."

The juniors roared.

"I fear that I shall have to abandon the search," said Alonzo. "I fail entirely to see the ball about here anywhere."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look behind you!" yelled a junior.

Alonzo whisked round.

"It is not there, my dear Russell."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's behind you now!" roared Bulstrode.

Round went Alonzo again.

"Dear me! I cannot see it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows——"

"It's behind you, Todd!"

"But—but——"

At this moment the stickiness of the ball ceased to hold it. Perhaps it was drying, or Alonzo's motions detached it. The ball rolled down his back and dropped on the grass.

Alonzo whisked round in amazement as he felt it gliding down, and stared blankly at the ball as it lay at his feet.

"D-e-e-car me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was—was stuck to me—to my jersey!" gasped Todd. "How very odd! How very odd, too, that you fellows did not happen to notice it! Dear me!"

The fellows did not reply to that remark. They staggered away almost in hysterics.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Quite Fit.

HARRY WHARTON'S brows were wrinkled a little as he stood at his study window looking out. From the footer-ground in the distance came a sound of shouting, and amid it could be distinguished the words:

"Bravo, Temple!"

"Wherefore that worried look?" asked Frank Nugent, as he buttered the toast, glancing round at his chum.

"The Upper Fourth are hard at practice," said Wharton.

"It will do them good—they need it!"

"Yes."

"We shall lick them on Saturday!" said Frank.

"The lickfulness will be terrific!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur, pausing in pouring out the tea to make that remark. "The esteemed Fourth have not a single honourable earthly against the august Remove, my worthy chums!"

"Well, we generally lick them," said Harry, knitting his brows. "But Temple knows that Todd will be playing for us this time. He's getting his team into the best possible form, to snatch a victory."

Nugent nodded.

"And he'll have a chance, with Todd on our side," he said. "Well, the rest of us will have to play up at top form, that's all."

"Yes. I suppose we can't blame Temple—they want to win. But we have always kept up the record of beating the Fourth."

"We'll beat them yet!" said Frank cheerily.

"Well, you've seen Alonzo at practice," said Wharton, and in spite of his uneasiness, he laughed at the recollection. "He will be a fearful trouble to any side."

"But he may be just as much trouble to the other side."

"I don't know. If he fouls anybody there's a penalty, and if he uses his hands we shall be called to order. Wingate is going to referee the match, and you know how keen he is. He'll reckon it's our fault for playing a duffer if anything goes wrong. We don't want the Upper Fourth to beat us with a list of penalty goals."

Nugent laughed.

"No, we don't. But there's no stopping Todd now—he's bound to play."

"It's hard cheese."

"Beastly hard! The Fourth will crow if they lick us, and when they're crowing they'll forget to mention that we had the Duffer of Greyfriars on our side. It's rotten! But it can't be helped, so pass the toast."

Harry Wharton, as footer captain of the Remove, felt the matter keenly enough. He did not want a Form-licking to

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ONE
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count against his team. The Head, although he kept himself well informed upon the subject of athletics generally at Greyfriars, did not fully understand the politics of the junior school. The Remove, though a lower Form, always prided itself upon beating the Upper Fourth, and it had done so in the Form matches, almost invariably, since Harry Wharton had come to Greyfriars. And Harry, naturally, had the honour of his Form to heart, and did not want to score a licking. But with Alonzo Todd in the Remove ranks, he did not know what else he could look forward to.

But he had promised the Head, and it was useless to repine. All the Remove could do was to play their hardest in the match, and attempt to score in spite of the assistance of Todd—or, at least, to make it a draw.

But Temple, Dabeny & Co., realising that their chance had come of scoring off the Remove, were practising as they had never practised before. Every spare moment of the day was giving to shooting, or passing, or dribbling. The Fourth-Formers were sticking to the game in a keen way that brought a word of commendation from Wingate himself. Wingate had always regarded the Upper Fourth rather as slackers, but he had no fault to find with them now. They were sticking to the game as if they were preparing for a League match.

Wharton had plenty of confidence in his team, with the exception of Alonzo. As for Alonzo, he knew that many miracles would be wanted to make a side win when they had Todd to help them.

There was a tap at the door as the chums began tea, and Alonzo Todd came in. He smiled cheerfully at the juniors.

"Excuse me, my dear fellows!" he remarked. "Pray remember that I do not wish to find fault with you, you know——"

"Hey?"

"I do not desire in the least to find fault with you, but would it not be better to be on the footer-ground, practising, than—well—slacking in a study?" said Alonzo, reprovingly.

The chums of the Remove stared at him.

Slacking!

They could hardly believe their ears. There were few fellows at Greyfriars—or at any other school—who less deserved that charge than Harry Wharton & Co. They worked hard, and they played hard. Wharton was always heavily down on slackers, and it had never occurred to him that the charge might be brought against himself. He simply stared at Alonzo Todd as if he wanted to eat him.

The Duffer of Greyfriars went on cheerfully:

"Far be it from me to set up to rebuke you, Wharton. I repeat, that I do not want to find fault with you. You see, my dear Wharton, my Uncle Benjamin has always impressed upon me never to be too quick in fault-finding; but really, with the footer match coming off to-morrow afternoon, I think that your time would be better spent in footer practice. I am ready to practise at any time."

"You—you ass!"

"My dear Wharton——"

"You bony, undeveloped, clumsy apology for a fatheaded chump!" roared the indignant Wharton. "Slacking! By Jove!"

"Ahem! These rude expressions——"

"Slacking! My hat!"

"But why not stick to footer practice, and——"

"You chump! We've had enough for to-day!" shouted Wharton. "There's such a thing as overdoing it, and making your men stale, fathead!"

"My dear——"

"And we're in top form, too, and quite able to lick twice our weight in Fourth-Formers!" said Wharton. "The only weakness on our side is a silly duffer who is going to play for us!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The silly dufferfulness of the honourable and esteemed Todd is terrific!"

Todd blinked at them.

"You are quite mistaken, Wharton. I am firmly convinced that I shall be a tower of strength to the side. I should not play otherwise. I have a conviction that Greyfriars will be astonished by my play."

"Very likely!" growled Wharton.

"But it is necessary to stick to work," said Todd firmly. "My Uncle Benjamin always said that one should stick to work. I really think, Wharton, you had better hurry over your tea and come out to the footer-ground while there is some daylight left."

"Ass!"

"Buzz off, Toddy!"

Todd shook his head. Kind and good-natured as he was,

NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

Another splendid long, complete tale of Harry
Wharton & Co. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

the Duffer of Greyfriars could be very obstinate when he liked.

"I'm so sorry, you fellows, but I am bound to press this point. I cannot regard it as right of you to slack—"

"To what?"

"Slack!" repeated Todd firmly. "Under the circumstances, as a member of the Remove team, I feel bound to remonstrate with you. Besides, the habit of slacking, of lazing about, once allowed to grow, is exceedingly difficult to get rid of. I beg and implore you, my dear fellows, not to become slackers!"

"Fathead!"

"Opprobrious epithets, my dear Wharton, cause no fractures to the vertebrae, as the old proverb says," said Todd.

"Chump!"

"My dear fellows, once more, ere it is too late, I beg and implore of you not to become slackers! Oh, my dear fellows, I beg—Yah!"

The chums of the Remove had had enough of Alonzo's remonstrance. With one accord they sprang from the tea-table and hurled themselves upon him.

Alonzo was seized in three pairs of hands, and whirled up off the floor, with his head swimming, and his arms and legs wildly lashing the air.

"Oh!" he roared. "Yar-o-oh! My dear fellows—groo—"

"You ass!"

"You fathead!"

"The fatness of the esteemed head is terrific!"

"Sling him out!"

Alonzo struggled. But his struggles were not of much use. The chums of Study No. 1 whirled him through the door, and hurled him forth.

The Duffer of Greyfriars went sprawling along the passage.

He sat up six yards away and blinked dazedly at the chums.

"Now then," roared Wharton, "does that look like slacking? Or do you think we are pretty fit?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow!" gasped Alonzo. "Yow!"

"Do you think we're fit? Or shall we give you another sample?" demanded Wharton.

"Yow! It's all right!"

"You're satisfied that we're quite fit?"

"Groo! Yes!"

"That we're not slackers?"

"Yow! Yes!"

"Good! Mind, if you come into the study again we'll give you another sample!" said Wharton warningly. "For your own sake, Todd, I beg and implore of you to keep your silly napper out of this study."

"Groo!"

The chums of the Remove went into their study and closed the door. Todd rose slowly and painfully to his feet.

"Oh!" he murmured. "Ow! I am quite sore, and I think I have several bruises on my person. They are very rough indeed—groo!—but certainly they seem to be quite fit physically—in fact, very strong indeed! Ow! I must find some embrocation! Yow!"

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Best Quality Gin.

BULSTRODE was having tea with Tom Brown and Hazeldene. There was unusual peace in the study, owing to the fact that Bulstrode was in a decidedly good temper.

Bulstrode, somewhat to his surprise, had been selected by Harry Wharton to play back in the Remove team on the morrow. As a rule, Bulstrode was not played. His swaggering manners and his quick temper made him an undesirable recruit. But he had been on his good behaviour lately, and, as Treluce was not quite up to the mark this time, Wharton had put Bulstrode's name down. Hence the genial smiles that glowed upon the face of the burly Removite, and the unusual geniality of his manners as he sat at the tea-table. He was standing that tea to his study-mates, and the table was quite laden with good things.

The three were feasting quite merrily when Todd looked in. Bulstrode and the rest had heard the bumping in the passage, and recognised the voice of Alonzo, and they were not surprised to see him looking dusty and dishevelled.

"Hallo!" said Bulstrode, with a grin. "Come in! Sit down and have some tea, Todd."

Todd stared at Bulstrode. He could not help being surprised by the genial kindness of the Remove bully. But he shook his head.

"Thank you, Bulstrode. But I did not come to tea. I wondered if you could lend me a bottle of embrocation?"

"Hey?"

"I have none, unfortunately, and I have just received several bruises," explained Todd. "I require some embrocation to rub them with. I believe you keep some in your study."

"So I do."

"I should be very glad to borrow some, Bulstrode; or I will pay you for a small quantity," said Todd.

"Rats!" said Bulstrode. "I don't want you to pay for it, fathead. You can have the stuff—only don't take it all! I'm playing in the match to-morrow, and I may need some."

"Thank you so much, Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode rose and took a large bottle from the cupboard and loosened the cork.

"What can you put it in?" he asked.

"Unfortunately, I have no receptacle for the fluid, my dear Bulstrode; but if you lend me the bottle I will—"

"You'll drop it in the passage and spill the lot, I expect," said Bulstrode. "I know you."

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"Buzz off and get a bottle from somewhere," said Bulstrode. "I'll give you some if you like, but I'm jolly well not risking this bottle in your paws."

"You see—"

"Gosling will give you an empty bottle," said Tom Brown. "He's always got lots."

"Oh, thank you, my dear Brown! I will be back shortly, Bulstrode."

"Right you are!"

Bulstrode replaced the bottle in the cupboard, and sat down at the table again.

Alonzo Todd hurried away. He descended the stairs, and crossed the Close in the gathering dusk to the school porter's lodge.

Todd never remembered offences, and he had quite forgotten his little trouble with the porter of the previous day.

He knocked at Gosling's door, and the porter opened it, with a surly face.

"If you please, Gosling—"

"I don't!" grunted Gosling.

"My dear Gosling, I am about to request a small favour of you. By the way, Gosling, I trust you expended that gratuity in a judicious manner?"

Gosling smiled sarcastically.

"Do you mean the tuppence, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, Gosling. You should not despise a gift because it is of small dimensions. My Uncle Benjamin would tell you—"

"I ain't spent it at all, sir!"

"Indeed, Gosling! I am very pleased to see that you have contracted habits of thrift and economy."

"I'm a-savin' of it up, sir," said Gosling, with a face like a wooden image. "I'm goin' to live on the hinterland of it, sir, in my hold hage, sir, instead of askin' the Guv'nment for a hold-age pension, sir. I don't approve of them hold-age pensions, sir."

"Ahem! My dear Gosling—"

"I've invested 'arf of it in Consuls, sir," went on Gosling gravely. "Consuls being so low now, it was a good chance to invest, sir. The other 'arf of it I've stored up in barrels, sir, in the cellar."

It dawned upon Todd that the porter was being humorous. He changed the subject.

"I have called to request the loan of an old bottle, if you have one, Gosling," he said. "Brown says you have lots of old empty bottles—"

"Himpudent young rip!"

"I see nothing impudent in Brown's remark, Gosling."

"Which I ham, and always was, a teetotaller!" said Gosling indignantly. "A hempty bottle I may 'ave once in a while—that's hall!"

"I do not know whether Brown was referring to bottles which had contained intoxicating liquors, Gosling. However, such a bottle would serve my purpose—which is to borrow a little embrocation from Bulstrode. Such a bottle, if carefully washed out, would not harm the fluid."

"I sells them old bottles at tuppence each, sir."

Alonzo felt in his pockets.

"Here is tuppence, my good man. Pray give me a bottle. Kindly rinse it out, so that there will be no trace of the vile liquor left to injure the embrocation."

"Suttin'ly, sir!"

Twopence each was a good price for old gin bottles, and Gosling was quite satisfied. As a matter of fact, Gosling had quite a number of those old bottles, which he would have been very glad to sell off at the same price.

A bottle that had contained, according to the label, finest quality gin was rinsed, and handed out to Todd, and the

Duffer of Greyfriars left the lodge with the bottle under his arm.

He returned to the School House, and to Bulstrode's study. Bulstrode looked round as he came in.

"Got the bottle?" he asked.

"Yes, my dear Bulstrode. It is a bottle that has previously contained intoxicating liquid, but it has been washed, and no trace of the vile stuff remains."

"Well, you can take some of the stuff."

Alonzo took the embrocation out of the cupboard. He removed the corks from both bottles, and essayed to pour some of the embrocation into the gin bottle. There was a gush of the liquid over Bulstrode's tablecloth.

Bulstrode gave a yell.

"You ass!"

"I'm so sorry——"

"You champion ass! Give it to me!"

"I think I can manage it——"

"Give it to me!" roared Bulstrode.

"Oh, very well, my dear Bulstrode, if you insist——"

Todd handed the bottle to Bulstrode, inadvertently sending a gush of embrocation up his sleeve.

Bulstrode stamped with fury.

"You—you chump! I—I'll give you some more bruises to embrocate!" he roared.

Todd dodged round the table in alarm.

"M-m-my dear Bulstrode——"

Bulstrode mopped the fluid out of his sleeve with his handkerchief. His usual good-temper had almost failed under the strain. But he poured some of the embrocation into Alonzo's bottle, and then put his own bottle away.

"There you are," he growled. "Now get out of the study, you chump!"

Alonzo picked up the bottle.

"Thank you so much, Bulstrode! Perhaps one of you fellows would care to rub my bruises for me?" Todd suggested mildly. "It is much easier work than rubbing them oneself."

"Yes, I can see myself doing it!" said Bulstrode. "Buzz off!"

"Would you care, Hazel——"

"I don't think!"

"You, Brown——"

"Ask me next Christmas," said Tom Brown.

"My dear Brown, the bruises will be quite gone by then, and——"

"You'd better be quite gone in two seconds," said Bulstrode, picking up the poker. "If you're not there will be a dead idiot in this study!"

Todd retreated to the door.

"Ahem! My dear Bulstrode——"

Bulstrode made a pass with the poker, and Todd stepped out quickly into the passage and closed the door hastily behind him.

He ran into a senior who was coming along the passage as he did so. It was Loder of the Sixth.

Loder started back, with an angry exclamation, and was about to cuff Alonzo when he caught sight of the bottle in the junior's hand.

"I'm so sorry, Loder!" gasped Alonzo.

And he hurried on. He knew Loder too well to remain within arm's length of him.

The prefect did not speak; he only stared blankly, with a gleam of spiteful triumph coming into his eye.

For as Todd stepped back after colliding with him Loder had seen the bottle plainly in the light of the gas-jet overhead. And on the bottle was a label, and the label read:

"Best quality gin."

No wonder Loder stared!

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Loder Sees it All!

LODER stood as if dumbfounded.

Best quality gin!

There was no doubt about it—no possibility of doubt. Alonzo Todd had been accused the day before of drinking gin, and had cleared himself to the perfect satisfaction of the master of his Form.

Loder, too, had had to be satisfied. Todd's tale had hung together so well. He had been looking out for Vernon-Smith since, to lick him for giving false information.

But now a light had broken on Loder! He saw it all!

Vernon-Smith had told him the day before that Todd had been drinking. Todd had cleared himself. But Smith had told the truth, after all, and it was Todd who had lied cunningly to escape punishment—backed up by Wharton and the rest, of course. Or, rather, he had deceived Wharton and the rest—for Wharton had certainly believed Todd to be under the influence of intoxicants.

Loder had said that Todd was not the simplest, but the deepest fellow in the Remove. He had now the satisfaction of knowing that he was right.

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NEXT TUESDAY: "WINGATE'S CHUM."

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Todd was deep—oh, so deep! The depth of his depravity, indeed, rather staggered Loder, who was rather depraved himself.

Loder saw it all!

Todd had succeeded the day before in pulling the wool over the Remove-master's eyes, and in making him, Loder, look a fool.

But Loder's turn had come.

He had been right—right all along. Todd was a secret drinker; in the habit of indulging in so vile a liquor as gin in the secrecy of his study.

There could be no doubt about it. Had not Loder seen him, with his own eyes, carrying a bottle of gin along the Remove passage to his study?

"BEST QUALITY GIN."

The words seemed to be still dancing before the prefect's eyes.

Loder watched Alonzo along the passage. He saw the Duffer of the Remove go into the end study. He knew that Todd would be alone there, for Loder himself had just been to that study to see John Bull about an impot., and the room had been empty.

The young villain was evidently about to begin his secret guzzling.

Loder himself was reckless in many ways. Prefect as he was, he smoked in his study, and sometimes drank whisky-and-water, and played cards for money. These little relaxations he kept carefully from the knowledge of the masters, for he would certainly have been expelled for them if he had been discovered—as he richly deserved.

But even Loder was shocked at this depravity in a junior. For his own sins, like most of us, he could find excuses—while the same sins in others seemed utterly inexcusable.

It would be a service to Greyfriars—it would be doing his duty as a prefect—to get the young scoundrel expelled from the school. Incidentally, it would be a complete revenge for his humiliation of yesterday.

Loder's eyes gleamed as he turned to the stairs.

He did not mean to run Todd down alone. Todd had cunningly contrived to get out of the scrape yesterday; there was no telling what yarn he might invent for the Form-master afterwards. No. Todd must be caught in the act—fairly caught in the act of guzzling gin in his study.

Loder hurried down to Mr. Quelch's room.

Mr. Quelch was there, and not very pleased to see Loder. He asked the prefect as politely as he could, however, what he wanted.

"It's about Todd, sir," said Loder.

Mr. Quelch made an impatient gesture.

"What is it now, Loder?"

"The same as before, sir."

"What!"

"Drinking, sir."

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet, and looked steadily at the prefect.

"I cannot understand this at all, Loder," he said. "You brought a ridiculous and unfounded accusation against Todd yesterday, and gave me trouble, and placed me in an absurd position. You cannot expect me to take notice of a similar childish accusation which you choose to make to-day."

Loder sneered.

"If you decline to take up the matter, sir, I can only go to the Head," he replied.

Mr. Quelch sat down again.

"Go to the Head, if you please," he replied. "I decline to take any notice of the matter. Your accusation is ridiculous."

"Todd is at this moment drinking gin in his study, sir."

"Nonsense!"

"I have every reason to believe——"

"More nonsense!"

"Then I shall go to the Head, sir. It is my duty as a prefect——"

"If you consider it your duty as a prefect, Loder, to go to the Head, pray do so," said Mr. Quelch. "Kindly shut the door after you."

Loder, flushing with anger, withdrew, and closed the door with unnecessary force. He was determined to do as he had told the Form-master, and he turned his steps at once in the direction of the Head's room. Such an opportunity of denouncing Todd was never likely to occur again.

Dr. Locke had not yet left his study, and Loder found him there. The Head was about to go to his house for dinner.

"What is it, Loder?" he asked. "Unless you have to see me about some important matter, will you leave it till the morning? I am somewhat pressed now."

"The morning will be too late, sir."

"Bless my soul! What is it, Loder? You are looking very serious."

"I have found one of the Remove boys, sir, in a delinquency—"

"Ahem! Surely Mr. Quelch is the person you should report that to, Loder," said the Head, glancing at his watch.

"Mr. Quelch refuses to take notice of the matter, sir."

"Dear me!"

"The boy is Todd, sir. Yesterday he was found in a dazed state, smelling of gin—"

"Good heavens, Loder!"

"I drew Mr. Quelch's attention to the matter, sir, and Todd somehow contrived to satisfy him. But now, sir, I have just discovered Todd taking a bottle of gin into his study."

"Loder!"

"I assure you that it is the fact, sir. He is even now drinking that liquor. Mr. Quelch declines to take up the matter, so I had no resource but to come to you."

"You are quite sure, Loder?"

"Quite sure."

"You have not been over-suspicious—"

"I saw the label on the bottle, sir."

"Bless my soul! I suppose I had better see into this. I will come with you, Loder."

"Thank you, sir!"

Dr. Locke followed the prefect. Loder's eyes gleamed with triumph. Todd would be expelled now, for certain, and the prefect's humiliation of the previous day would be avenged; and it would be a blow at Harry Wharton as well. Loder stood to score all along the line.

Dr. Locke was looking distressed. Such a report of a boy in a lower Form was amazing and shocking. He could hardly believe it; and the fact that Mr. Quelch had refused to take notice of the matter increased his doubt. Yet Loder's statement had been clear and explicit; he had seen the bottle of gin.

At all events, the matter had to be looked into. Dr. Locke sincerely hoped that it would turn out to be a mistake.

Loder reached the door of the end study in the Remove passage, and threw it open. Several Removites, surprised to see the Head in their quarters, were following at a respectful distance.

"Something's up," said Tom Brown, looking out of his study. "Here's His Nibs. Come on."

The Head sailed on to the end study. As Loder flung open the door, Dr. Locke looked in.

There was a slight exclamation from within the study. The sudden opening of the door had startled Alonzo.

"My dear fellows—" he began.

Then he recognised the Head, and was dumb.

Dr. Locke stared at him blankly.

There was a peculiar smell in the study—the smell of embrocation. Todd was sitting on a cushion, with one trouser-leg rolled up to the knee. Beside him, on the floor, was a bottle labelled "Best Quality Gin."

Todd had been rubbing a bruise on his calf. He blinked up at the Head in surprise, and then, remembering that he had to rise in the Head's presence, he jumped up, and stood awkwardly, with his trouser-leg still rolled up.

Loder gasped.

He had fully expected to see the junior drinking gin, or gin-and-water. He was astounded to see him rubbing a bruise on his leg with embrocation. But there was the gin-bottle—there was the evidence!

"There it is, sir!" he exclaimed.

Loder pointed to the bottle.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head.

"That is the bottle, sir."

Alonzo blinked at it.

"The—the bottle!" he exclaimed.

"You see for yourself now, sir."

"Todd!" thundered the Head.

"Ye-e-es, sir!"

"Todd, how dare you, sir?"

"Dare, sir!"

"Yes. You—you have ventured, Todd, to introduce a bottle of gin into your study—you have been drinking, Todd!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Boy—"

"B-b-but I have not been drinking, sir," stammered Todd, in bewilderment.

"I am glad I have arrived, Todd, in time to stop you from committing that wickedness," said the Head sternly. "You have drunk nothing from that bottle?"

"From that b-b-bottle, sir?"

"Yes, Todd."

"Certainly not, sir. It—it is not meant to be taken internally, so—so far as I know, sir!" stammered the bewildered Todd.

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir."

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"Do you mean to say that you did not bring that here to drink?"

"Drink, sir! Certainly not, sir."

"Then for what purpose did you bring it here?" demanded the Head.

"To—to—to rub my bruises, sir."

"Bruises! Of what use is gin for that purpose?"

"G-g-gin, sir!"

"Yes, Todd."

"B-b-but there isn't any gin in that bottle, sir," said Todd, a light breaking upon him at last.

"What?"

"It's not gin, sir."

"What is it then, Todd?"

"Embrocation, sir."

"Oh!"

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Loder Does not Score.

DR. LOCKE looked at Todd in silence for some moments. The Duffer of Greyfriars stood, red and confused and alarmed; but there was no guilt in his look. It was evident that his statement was true. Even Bunter would not have told a lie that could be immediately disproved by a glance at the bottle. But the Head intended to make sure.

"Hand me that bottle, Loder!" he said.

The prefect, without a word, handed him the bottle.

Loder was almost pale. He realised by this time that he had made another "bloomer"—a bloomer more terrific than the last.

He could see that Todd was quite innocent; that his wicked suspicions had been perfectly groundless. And Loder would have given a week's pocket-money at that moment for the floor to open and swallow him up, and drop him into the study underneath.

But that was not likely to happen. Loder had to lie upon his bed as he had made it; he had to see the matter through.

The Head sniffed at the bottle.

There was no smell of gin to it; but there was a very strong smell of embrocation.

Besides, in the light, he could see the thick, whitish liquid in the bottle, and there was no doubt that it was not gin.

"That will do, Loder," said the Head.

Loder put the bottle down.

"Todd," said the Head, rather at a loss for words, "you have caused Loder to fall into—er—a misapprehension. You realise that you made a mistake now, I suppose, Loder?"

"Yes, sir," muttered the prefect.

"How did you come to have the gin-bottle, Todd?"

"Yes, let him explain that," said the prefect quickly. It seemed for a moment that there might be a chance for him yet.

"I bought it, sir," said Todd. "I required a bottle, as I wanted to borrow some embrocation of Bulstrode. I gave Gosling twopence for the bottle."

"H'm! I suppose Gosling would bear out your statement."

"Oh, certainly, sir; so would Bulstrode."

"Yes, sir," said Bulstrode, who was among the juniors crowding round the door of the study. "It's quite correct, sir. Brown told Todd to go and get a bottle from Gosling, sir, and he brought it to my study for the embrocation."

"Hazeldeane and I can both prove that, sir," said Tom Brown.

The Head nodded.

"Thank you, my boys. I have no doubt upon the subject. I should advise you, Todd, however, not to use a bottle of that sort for any purpose again, as it is likely to give rise to suspicions if seen in your possession."

"Certainly, sir."

"You have made a mistake, Loder. I commend your zeal, but—but I should really be glad if you would avoid wasting my time on—er—another occasion. Dear me! I shall have kept my dinner waiting."

And the Head rustled away.

Loder looked round at the grinning faces of the juniors. He looked at Alonzo. Gladly the prefect would have run amuck among the juniors, hitting out right and left. He could have jumped on Alonzo with pleasure, but it was hardly a safe thing for him to attempt with an overwhelming crowd of the Remove around him.

"This is the second bloomer, Loder," Harry Wharton said coolly. "Perhaps you'd better let Todd alone after this."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder scowled fiercely.

"You cheeky young hound—"

"Better language, please!" said Harry. "You've twice tried to fasten a rotten, cowardly accusation on Todd. It wouldn't take much to make us frog's march you along the passage and roll you down the stairs."

"Hear, hear!"

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific!"

"If you dare to touch a prefect—"

"Oh, we dare, if you're ass enough to make us," said Wharton scornfully. "And you're not in the Head's good graces, or Quelch's, either. I dare say they'd say you deserved it if you reported us."

Loder ground his teeth.

"My dear Loder," said Alonzo, "you have been very suspicious and unpleasant, and have caused a great deal of trouble, but I forgive you. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that I must forgive my enemies, however base and rotten they were—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder gave the Duffer of Greyfriars a furious look and turned to the door. Todd followed him, with a very earnest face.

"Loder—my dear Loder! Pray listen to me! This meanness of character from which you suffer can be cured by serious, earnest efforts on your part. You are going the way to grow up into a very bad man, Loder. If you go on in your present way, Loder, I should not be surprised if you became a convict, or a politician, or something of that sort. Loder, I beg and implore you, before it is too late—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder stamped furiously away down the passage. He would have wiped the floor up with Todd, only that he could see plainly that the crowd of Removites were only waiting for an excuse for collaring him. He stamped away instead. But Todd, when he was in earnest, was not to be put off so easily.

Regardless of the fact that his trouser-leg was turned up, and that embrocation was running down his calf into his sock, Todd followed the prefect down the passage.

"Loder! My dear Loder!"

The prefect strode away without turning his head. The delighted juniors crowded after Todd.

"Go it, Toddy!" roared Bulstrode. "Pitch into him!"

"Play up, Todd!"

"Give him firstly, secondly, and ninthly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Loder!" panted Todd, dashing after the prefect, who had almost reached the stairs. "For your own sake, my dear Loder, I beg you to pause and reflect! I beg and implore you, Loder—"

Loder turned round. With one mighty swipe he sent Alonzo Todd whirling along the passage. The Duffer of Greyfriars collapsed among the feet of the other juniors.

There was a yell from the Remove.

"Go for him!"

"Sock it to him!"

The juniors made a rush at Loder.

Loder gave one furious glare, and was half-inclined to face the rush and hit out. But he was only half-inclined, and that half-inclination lessened as they rushed towards him.

He turned round and ran for the stairs, with the Remove whooping behind.

"Yah!"

"Roll him over!"

"Rotter!"

"Kick him out!"

Loder ran for the stairs, and descended them at a pace little in keeping with his dignity as a prefect. And the Remove sent a yell of derision after him.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Great Expectations.

THE next morning Alonzo Todd seemed to be walking on air.

The other fellows who were to play in the Form match of the afternoon did not seem to be particularly exhilarated by the prospect. But Todd was in high feather.

Having obtained admittance to the Form team, all he had to do was to play up like an International, and beat the Fourth-Formers hollow.

And that was the programme Todd had mapped out.

Whether it would come to pass was another matter. Wharton had done his best with Todd. He had explained to him that hands were not allowed in the Soccer game. Todd had listened patiently. He promised not to use his hands if the other fellows didn't. Wharton had assured him that they wouldn't.

Todd seemed doubtful. He explained that it was so much simpler to pick the ball up and carry it than to kick it, or even to dribble it. You were so likely to get your feet entangled in dribbling the ball—at least, Todd was likely to.

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"WINGATE'S CHUM."

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ONE
PENNY.

But Wharton solemnly promised him a prize thick ear if he used his hands.

Todd gave way on the point. He said that the laws of the game did not appeal to him as very sensible, under the circumstances, but he would do his very best to oblige Wharton. His Uncle Benjamin had, in fact, always impressed upon him to be obliging.

So that point was settled.

Wharton also tried to make Todd understand that he should not charge his own side, and should not deprive his comrades of the ball. But here an unexpected trait of obstinacy in Todd's character developed itself.

He argued the point. He was not easily to be convinced.

"Suppose I see a worse player than myself fumbling with the ball," he suggested, as they discussed the matter on Saturday morning, just before lessons. "Suppose you, for instance, Wharton—"

"I!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Yes, you! I do not say I am a better player than you are," said Todd modestly. "I hope I am not a swanker like Fish, for instance—"

"I guess—"

"Pray do not interrupt me, Fish. Suppose, I say, I should happen to excel you, Wharton, and I see you wasting time with the ball when I could score. Surely, under those circumstances, I should be justified in taking it from you?"

"I—I—I—"

"Or suppose you, Cherry, are fooling with it, and I could make a better use of the football," Todd suggested.

Bob Cherry turned purple.

"Oh, kill him, somebody!" he gasped.

"Or Nugent may be playing the goat—"

"The what?" yelled Nugent.

"The goat!" said Todd innocently. "I may see a chance, perhaps, of scoring several goals, and Nugent may be in the way. Then—"

"If you come near me when I'm on the ball," said Nugent impressively, "there will be a dead duffer on the football-field."

"Oh, not at all! I should not charge you so severely as all that—"

"What!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Your life would not be in any danger, Nugent. I should simply—"

Nugent was crimson. He pushed back his cuffs in a very suggestive manner.

"Where will you have it?" he demanded.

Todd looked bewildered.

"Have what, my dear Nugent?"

"A punch!" roared Nugent.

"But I don't want—"

"It isn't a question of what you want, but of what you're going to get!" said Frank wrathfully. "You frabjous ass—"

"My dear Nugent—"

"Hold on, Frank!" said Harry, laughing. "Of course, Todd ought to be slain twice a day, on an average. But—"

"My dear Wharton—"

"Oh, ring off, Toddy! You make me tired!"

"But under the circumstances—"

Under the circumstances, the chums of the Remove walked away. Todd turned to Fisher T. Fish, who was grinning.

"My dear Fish, was Nugent annoyed about something?"

"Ha, ha, ha! I guess so!"

"I'm so sorry! I suppose somebody said something to offend him. People should be more careful," said Todd, with a shake of the head. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to be very careful of people's feelings, Fish."

"Ha, ha, ha! I guess you prance off with the whole biscuit factory—some! Did your Uncle Benjamin ever advise you to buy a gag, Todd?"

"Certainly not!"

"Then he's a careless uncle, and somebody ought to speak to him about it."

"My dear Fish—"

But Fisher T. Fish was walking away. Alonzo looked after him in surprise. The bell rang for classes, and the juniors went into their Form-room. Todd was absent-minded that morning. He was thinking of the afternoon's match, and he gave Mr. Quelch some very queer answers. Among other things, he informed the astounded Remove master that ancient Gaul was divided into three parts, of which one was inhabited by centre-forwards, another by half-backs, and the third by those who, in their own language, were called goalkeepers, and in ours referees. This was very mixed, even for Todd, and it earned him a hundred lines when Mr. Quelch had recovered from his astonishment. Mr. Quelch

had never heard Caesar construed like that before, and he didn't want to hear it any more.

But lines were nothing to Alonzo that morning.

He could write out the lines after the match. The play was the thing just then, as our national poet remarks, though Shakespeare, of course, was not referring to football.

Lessons were over at last, and the Remove turned out into a bright, clear, cold afternoon. It was ideal weather for football, and in spite of their distrust of Alonzo, the Remove players looked very cheerful.

When the time came near for the match Alonzo Todd changed into his footer clothes, and probably his Uncle Benjamin would have been proud to see him at that moment. Alonzo looked in the glass at his reflection with pardonable pride.

Wharton looked in for him. Todd turned round with a genial smile as the captain of the Remove appeared at the door.

"My dear Wharton——"

"Time!" said Harry.

"Certainly, my dear Wharton! I am quite ready. I trust I am not of a boastful nature, or given to magnifying my personal qualities," said Todd modestly, "but I really do think that my figure shows off rather well in football clothes."

Wharton looked at the exceedingly slim limbs of the Duffer, which were exposed to his view, and grinned.

"My dear Todd, there isn't another chap in Greyfriars who looks like you," he said.

"Do you really think so, Wharton?"

"I do!" said Harry solemnly.

"You flatter me——"

"Not at all! Come on!"

"Under the circumstances——"

"Exactly. Buck up; we can't keep the Upper Fourth waiting. They'll be saying that we're funking the match!"

And Wharton rushed his valuable ally downstairs at a pace that took his breath away. The rest of the team were already on the field when they arrived there, and the clock in the tower was indicating nearly the half-hour after two.

Temple, Dabney & Co. grinned genially at Wharton.

"You're ready?" asked Temple.

"Yes, rather!"

"It's hard cheese on you," said Fry sympathetically.

"You're going to have an awful licking, you know."

"Rats!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Bosh! Play and don't jaw!" said Bob Cherry, politely.

And the players went on the field.

Wingate, of the Sixth, who had nothing special to do that afternoon, had consented to referee the match. He was already on the ground. Wingate made the juniors think much more of their sports by taking an interest in them, and the Remove keenly appreciated his kindness. Wingate looked at Alonzo.

"So you're playing?" he said.

"Yes, my dear Wingate. It is really by wish of my Uncle Benjamin, but I hope to me of great service to my Form this afternoon."

Wingate granted.

"Line up, you kids!" he said.

The teams were ready. Quite a crowd had collected round the field. Junior matches, as a rule, did not get seniors among their spectators. But the fame of Alonzo the Footballer had gone abroad. Fifth and Sixth-Form fellows came to see how he was going to play.

Courtney and Loder and Carne and several more of the Sixth stood in a group, and there were Blundell and Bland and Coker, and a great many more of the Fifth. As for the Remove and the Upper Fourth, they were there almost to a man.

The Fourth Form expected to win hands down. The Remove would not have been surprised at such a result under the circumstances, but they meant to give Temple, Dabney & Co. a tussle, at all events.

Temple won the toss, and selected his goal, giving the Remove the wind to play against.

Alonzo Todd had been stationed at centre-half. He was about as suited to play centre-half as to play centre-forward, or anything else; but Wharton, after due reflection, had decided that he would do least harm there.

Just as Wingate put the whistle to his lips, Todd came out of his place and nudged Wharton in the ribs.

"My dear Wharton——"

"Go back!" rapped out Wharton.

"But I say——"

"Shut up!"

"It occurred to me, my dear Wharton, that you might like me to kick off, and——"

"I'll kick you off if you don't shut up!" roared Wharton.

There was a shout from the crowd.

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Todd's beginning!"

"Watch Todd!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo looked round in surprise. He was pleased, upon the whole, with the shouts. They showed that he was the cynosure of all eyes—as indeed he was. The attention of everybody round the ropes was fastened upon him.

"Go it, Todd! Play up!"

"Stick to the ball!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Phip!

The whistle rang out, and Harry Wharton kicked off, and the game started—a game that was destined to be remembered at Greyfriars.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Goal.

HARRY WHARTON had decided upon his tactics, and told his men; and the Remove began with quick rushing, and kept it up. Scientific football, which Wharton was rather addicted to as a rule, was impossible with a player like Todd in the ranks. Todd could be thoroughly relied upon to break up any combination his captain attempted. It was a time for kick and rush and heavy attacking, and as Temple & Co. were not really up to Remove form, there was a good chance of those tactics succeeding.

The Remove forwards were soon bringing the ball up the field, against the wind, and the Upper Fourth, and Todd was left standing.

Of his duties he had but the vaguest idea. His only thought was to get at the ball and slam it into a goal. Wharton had warned him that he needn't mind about getting goals; so long as he helped to defend, it would be all right. But Alonzo Todd knew better than that.

He knew better, and besides, he wanted to distinguish himself. And there is no doubt that the encouraging shouts from the onlookers helped to bring up Alonzo in the way he should not go.

For the crowd wanted to see fun. They wanted to see Todd on the ball, and they were soon gratified.

"Go it, Todd!" roared the spectators. "Let Todd have the ball! Go it, Alonzo! Wipe up the ground with them! Why don't you give Todd a chance?"

And Todd rushed into the thick of it.

The Remove were right up to the Fourth-Form goal now, attacking hotly. Fry, in goal, had all his work cut out to save.

The Remove pelted in the leather. The defence seemed nowhere, and Fry would soon have fallen to the hot attack—but for Alonzo!

Alonzo rushed in where angels feared to tread, so to speak.

He shouldered Nugent off the ball from behind, and captured it, and kicked it out into midfield, clearing as neatly as a Fourth-Form back could have wished.

The Remove had had a good chance of scoring, but Todd had soon put an end to that.

There was a yell of wrath from his comrades, and a shriek of wild laughter from Temple, Dabney & Co.

The crowd roared.

"Hurrah!"

"Well cleared!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Encouraged by the cheers, Todd was simply burning to cover himself with glory. He was after the leather like a flash.

Bulstrode, at back, rushed in to clear, but Todd met him in full career, and sent him spinning to the earth, falling across him. The crowd roared:

"Bravo! Well stopped!"

"Todd! Todd for ever! Hurrah!"

Temple rushed in and sent the ball on, and the Fourth-Form forward got away, and brought the leather right up to the Remove goal.

John Bull was between the posts on the alert, and it was well that he was. He had plenty to do before the Remove defence rallied again.

Harry Wharton grasped Todd by the shoulder.

"Todd! You ass! Chuck it!"

"What!"

"Keep out!"

"But——"

"Chuck it, I say!"

"But you told me——"

"I tell you to chuck it!" yelled Wharton.

Todd blinked at him.

"Oh, very well, my dear Wharton. But you told me not——"

But Wharton did not wait to hear more. He was wanted elsewhere. The tussle was hot before the Remove goal, and but for John Bull's splendid defence, it would have cost the Remove dear.

But Bull was as steady as a rock. The leather could not get past him, in spite of the efforts of the Fourth. There were loud cheers for John Bull as he cleared four or five times in quick succession.

"Bravo, Bull!"

"Buck up, Johnny!"

"Well cleared!"

Bulstrode succeeded in clearing at last, and the struggle went to midfield. Alonzo was by no means done yet. He rushed blindly after his comrades and hurled himself into the tussle. Wharton was shoved over as Todd charged him from behind. Todd was far too excited to remember instructions now, even if he had understood them. He charged Harry Wharton out of the way and captured the ball—with his hands!

Lifting it high into the air, he hurled it far in the direction of the Upper Fourth goal.

There was a yell of indignation from the Fourth at once.

"Yah! Foul!"

"Hands!"

"Hands! Yah!"

"You ass!" yelled Wharton, as the referee's whistle went, though Wingate was laughing almost too much to blow it. "You frabjous ass! What are you doing?"

Todd looked at him in amazement.

"I—I was doing just as you told me, Wharton!"

"What! I told you no hands!"

"Why dear Wharton! You told me to chuck it!"

"Hey?"

"You told me to chuck it!" said Alonzo, in wonder. "You spoke quite distinctly. I appeal to Cherry, he heard you. Cherry, did not Wharton tell me to chuck it?"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.

"Now I have chucked it, Wharton complains. It is really very unreasonable of you, Wharton, and if my Uncle Benjamin were here—"

"Oh, you burbling jabberwock!" groaned Wharton.

"My dear Wharton—"

"When I said chuck it, I mean chuck it, not chuck it!" roared Wharton—not very lucidly, it must be confessed.

"My dear—"

"Play up! They've got the ball!"

Wharton did not remonstrate with Todd. It was worse than useless evidently. Todd was bound to produce a crop of free kicks for the Fourth anyway.

The Duffer of Greyfriars stood out of the tussle for some minutes now, pumping in breath. He was hardly up to the required form for the match, and that was a blessing to the Remove. So long as Todd was idle, they went ahead. The ball was slammed into the Fourth-Form goal, in spite of Fry's efforts to save, and the first score was for the Remove. The Remove fellows round the ground shouted with glee.

"Goal! Hurrah!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

But the other fellows in the crowd wanted fun, not football. They yelled encouragingly to Alonzo, only anxious for him to begin again. It was close upon time for the interval now, and they felt that they were missing fun.

"Go it, Todd!"

"Pile in, Alonzo!"

"No slacking there! Play up!"

Alonzo played up. He felt that he could not disappoint the spectators, who were evidently looking to him for great things. True, his comrades did not seem to appreciate his aid at its proper value. But that wasn't Todd's fault. A fellow could only do his best.

"Hurrah!" roared Skinner. "There goes Todd! Bravo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd was in the thick of it now. The tussle had swayed down into the Remove half, and the Fourth-Formers were striving to get at Bull's goal. They received an unexpected aid from the Duffer of Greyfriars.

Alonzo captured the ball from Tom Brown, and sped off with it. Wharton tried to stop him, but in vain.

Alonzo was off—fairly off!

He was heading for the nearest goal. It happened to be his own, but a trifle like that did not matter to a footballer like Alonzo.

He was too excited, as a matter of fact, to think or care about that. Right on he rushed, while a roar grew and strengthened round the field.

John Bull seemed dazed for a moment. He could not believe that even Todd could intend to put the ball through his own goal. But Todd was on his mettle now, and Bull was dazed one moment too long.

Whiz!

Bull sprang at the ball too late! It crashed into the net, and an hysterical yell rose from the crowd:

"Goal! Goal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"WINGATE'S CHUM."

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ONE
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The Remove players yelled, roared, stamped, shrieked. They could have slain Alonzo. The whistle went—the first half was over.

The score was goal to goal, for that goal counted for the Upper Fourth. Temple, Dabney & Co. yelled with laughter, but they claimed the goal. Todd turned round to his comrades with a beaming smile.

"My dear fellows, what did I tell you? Are you not glad that you played me now?"

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

"Go it!"

THE Remove players did not answer Alonzo. They had no words adequate for the purpose. There were no words in the dictionary that would serve. They tramped off in grim silence. But the crowd were not silent. They cheered Todd to the echo. Such a feat was seldom, or never, seen on a footer-field, and Todd deserved a cheer.

He followed his comrades off, rather puzzled by their silence. He tapped Harry Wharton on the shoulder as the captain of the Remove team sucked a lemon.

"My dear Wharton—"

"Oh, don't talk to me!" said Harry, shaking his hand off. Todd looked hurt.

"I trust I have not displeased you in any way, my dear Wharton," he said. "I have certainly done my best. I thought you would be pleased at having a goal to add to the score."

"To the other side's score, you ass!" growled Bob Cherry.

"My dear Cherry—"

"Fathead!"

"I really—"

"You put the ball through our goal!" grunted Wharton. "I suppose it's no good talking to you! What you want is suffocating! Shut up!"

"But—but does it make any difference, Wharton?"

Wharton burst into a laugh. He could not help it.

"Yes, ass! You scored a goal for the Fourth, that's all! We were one to nil, and now we're level—one to one—owing to your goal!"

"Oh, dear! I never intended anything of the sort!" said Todd, in great distress. "Perhaps I have yet something to learn about the rules of the game!"

Bob Cherry gave a snort.

"Yes, perhaps you have!" he growled.

"The perhapsfulness is terrific!"

"I—I will be more careful in the second half," said Todd.

"You may rely upon it, my dear Wharton, that the same thing shall not occur again. I'm so sorry—"

"Time!" said Bulstrode.

The players went into the field again. Todd's appearance was greeted with a roar of laughter and cheering from the crowd.

"Play up, Todd!"

"Give Alonzo a chance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd was looking very keen. It was a slight accident about scoring at the wrong goal, of course, but otherwise, Todd felt that he had reason to be satisfied with his play.

Anyway, he knew the right goal now. He wouldn't score at that goal again! Todd had not observed—he was not very observant—that the teams had changed ends. That was another of the little rules of footer that he was not acquainted with. What had been his own goal had become the Fourth-Form goal, but Todd wasn't aware of it. He meant to score at the goal opposite to the one he had scored at first, and was quite blissfully ignorant that that would be the Remove goal now.

Temple kicked off, and the second half began. The wind was now in favour of the Remove, and it was growing keener. And there was no doubt, too, that the Removes were lasting out the game better. They were in better form, and but for the aid of Alonzo there was no doubt that they would have beaten the Fourth hollow. As it was, however, Temple, Dabney & Co. had a good chance of snatching a victory to which they were not entitled on their form.

The Remove were soon pressing round the Fourth-Form goal, and the ball was sent in to Fry.

He fisted it out, and there was a yell from Alonzo:

"Hands!"

"Eh? What?"

"Hands!" shouted Alonzo. "I appeal to the referee! Wingate!"

Wingate blew his whistle.

"Now, then, what is it?" he exclaimed.

"Hands!" said Todd indignantly. "Wharton has told me that one must not use one's hands in this game! Fry has used his hands!"

"You duffer!"

"But I saw him, and I protest!" exclaimed Todd. "My dear Wingate—"

"You chump!"

"M-m-my dear—"

"You ass! Goalkeeper is allowed to use his hands in goal!" yelled Wingate. "Don't you know the game? Shut up! Play!"

"Dear me," murmured Todd, as the play went on, "I really have a few things to learn about football, yet! It is a most surprising game! Dear me!"

Todd was pushed out of the way by his comrades, and the attack was resumed on the Fourth-Form goal.

Fry defended well, and Temple & Co. tried to rally; but it was in vain. The ball went in from Nugent's foot with a whiz.

It passed Fry, and lodged in the net, and there was a roar from the Remove spectators:

"Goal!"

"Hurrah!"

The Remove were ahead again on the score, and unless Alonzo lent his aid they were likely to keep there.

For there was no doubt that the Upper Fourth were outplayed.

Temple, Dabney & Co. had "bellows to mend" now. Several of them were simply left standing, panting for breath.

But most of the Remove were as fresh as paint, and playing as hard as ever. Harry Wharton was a keen skipper, and he trained his men well. They were in uncommonly good form for a junior team—and every ounce of training tells.

Alonzo, gasping for breath, was left out of the tussle for some time, trying to recover his wind, and while he was idle the Remove scored again. This time it was Harry Wharton, who took his second goal.

Temple gave a grunt of disgust as the leather plumped into the net, whizzing past the ear of the helpless Fry.

"The game's up!" he growled.

It looked like it. The Remove were two ahead, and there wanted but twenty minutes more to play.

"There's a chance yet!" said Dabney.

"Can't see it."

Dabney pointed to Alonzo Todd.

"There it is!" he said.

Temple laughed.

"Good! I hope he isn't done! If he chips in again we shall have a chance!"

"Oh, rather!"

From the Fourth Form point of view the game depended upon Alonzo—not in a sense flattering to that wonderful footballer.

The teams lined up again, the Remove grinning and confident now. If Alonzo did his best, or his worst, he could hardly lose the match for them now, they thought.

But Alonzo was equal to what the Fourth Form expected of him. He joined in the play again as soon as he had his wind, and soon distinguished himself by clawing hold of Temple and bringing him down in the dreaded penalty area.

There was a yell of delight from the Upper Fourth.

"Foul!"

"Penalty! Penalty!"

"Dear me!" gasped Todd.

"Penalty! Penalty! Where's the blessed referee?"

The referee was there. Wingate's whistle rang out, and he had no option but to order a penalty-kick for the Upper Fourth.

Temple took the kick, and it was a good one, and it beat John Bull in goal. The Fourth Form roared as the leather landed in the net.

"Goal!"

"Hurrah!"

Wharton growled. He could have kicked Todd off the field with the greatest of pleasure. But that was useless—the game had to be played out. There were ten minutes more to run, and the Remove were still a goal ahead. Harry Wharton grasped the Duffer of Greyfriars by the shoulder as they walked back to the middle of the field.

"Todd, you ass!"

"My dear Wharton—"

"Keep out of the game! We've a good chance if you keep quiet."

"I fear that I could not do that, my dear Wharton. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that whatever is worth doing is worth doing well, and I feel that I am bound to do my best to score for the Form."

"Fathead!"

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The ball was kicked off again, and the sides closed in the struggle. The match was being very obstinately contested in the last eight minutes. Temple, Dabney & Co. hardly hoped to win. But they felt that they ought to be able to make it a draw, at least. They were fighting hard for the equalising goal.

Wharton and his men were content to defend. With Alonzo in their ranks, they did not care to risk attacking, as they were ahead on the score, and there were only minutes to go.

Wharton felt justified in packing his goal, under the circumstances, though, as a rule, it was his motto to hit hard all the time, and defend by attacking.

But he had counted without Alonzo.

The Duffer of Greyfriars was not to be bottled up. He was determined to distinguish himself. He was determined that his Uncle Benjamin should hear a glowing account of his first Form match. Already, in his mind's eye, Todd could see a paragraph in the school paper referring to himself: "The final goal was kicked amid tremendous excitement by A. Todd, who was playing for his Form for the first time." The thought of a paragraph like that made Todd glow all over. How proud his Uncle Benjamin would be! There was naturally no restraining Todd under the circumstances. He was bound to go ahead—and he did.

Temple was leading a hot attack on the Remove position, and Todd received the ball. He restrained his impulse to pick it up in his hands, which was really greatly to his credit. He dashed off with it.

The Fourth Form went whooping after him. Todd was headed off by the halves, and he came tearing back to his own goal. It is quite probable that Todd did not even know which end of the field he was at, in his wild excitement, and perhaps it did not strike him as peculiar that John Bull was keeping what he regarded as the enemy's goal. There was no accounting for the wonderful workings of a mind like Alonzo's. Whatever he thought, or did not think, he brought the ball back to the Remove goal with a rush, and hurled it in.

"My hat!" gasped John Bull.

He caught the leather, and was flinging it out, when Todd charged him.

Right at his own goalkeeper went the Duffer of Greyfriars. John Bull gave a wild yell as he was charged back into the net. He fell backwards, with Todd sprawling over him.

"I've done it!" gasped Todd.

"You have!" roared Temple. "Ha, ha, ha! Goal!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at Todd, as they stood panting. He came gasping out of the goal-mouth, his face beaming.

"My dear fellows, I'm so glad I have done this! I do not want you to praise me, you know. My Uncle Benjamin says that the desire for praise is a sign of a self-satisfied nature. But I really think that was rather neat, don't you?"

"You—you ass!" gasped Wharton. "That's our goal! You've scored against us again."

Todd jumped.

"My dear Wharton, you distinctly stated that the other goal was our goal. Do you not remember?"

"So it was, in the first half!" shrieked Wharton. "We changed ends at half-time, chump. Oh, you frabjous fat-head!"

"I—I was not aware of that. I suppose that is a rule I have not learned. I'm so sorry!"

"Oh, bump him!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Jump on him!"

"My dear Cherry—"

"Collar the villain!"

The exasperated footballers made a wild rush at Alonzo. Alonzo fled.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Wingate, laughing. "After all, you've drawn, Wharton—three to three—and that's to your credit, considering that you had Todd on your side. I suppose you won't play him any more?"

"Play him! I—I—I'll jump on him!" shouted Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove footballers looked for Alonzo when they went in. But Alonzo was locked up in a bath-room, swamping himself in hot water, and rubbing his bony limbs with embrocation.

They needed it! Alonzo Todd felt that he deserved a rest after the match, but the Remove would not have given him a rest if they had caught him just then.

But by the time Alonzo emerged from the bath-room, the wrath of the Remove had cooled down. All Greyfriars was laughing over the footer match, and the Remove players came to see the comic side of it themselves. After all, they had drawn with the Fourth, and upon the whole they felt that they could be well satisfied with their success, considering the aid they had received from Alonzo, the Footballer.

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled: "WINGATE'S CHUM," by Frank Richards. Order your copy now. Price One Penny.)

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[Our Readers are informed that the characters in the following Serial Story are purely imaginary, and it contains no reference or allusion to any living person. Actual names may be unintentionally mentioned, but the Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that no adverse personal reflection is intended.]

GRAND NEW ADVENTURE SERIAL JUST STARTED!

Wolves of the Deep.

The Story of a Great Conspiracy, introducing Ferrers Lord and Ching-Lung.

By **SIDNEY DREW.**

READ THIS FIRST.

Ferrers Lord is the possessor of a wonderful submarine, called "The Lord of the Deep." One night the model is stolen from him by Michael Scaroff, a Russian. Ferrers Lord, accompanied by his friend, Rupert Thurston, sets out on the track of the Russian. They are crossing the English Channel when their boat is fired on by an unknown vessel, but a battleship comes to their rescue. When they reach Calais Ferrers Lord is arrested for forgery and taken back to Dover on a false charge, there to be released. Lord declares it all to be Scaroff's handiwork, and decides to leave London at the earliest opportunity.

(Now go on with the story.)

What the Newspapers Said—Ferrers Lord Declines the Aid of the Law.

Ferrers Lord tossed a London daily over to Thurston, and pointed out the following paragraph:

"AMAZING OUTRAGE IN THE CHANNEL!"

"On another page will be found full particulars of one of the most amazing and dastardly outrages ever perpetrated in modern times. Mr. Ferrers Lord, the well-known millionaire scientist, left London for Dover last evening by special train. Eighteen miles from the port his train was maliciously wrecked, killing both driver and brakeman, and seriously injuring Mr. Rupert Thurston, the millionaire's travelling-companion. Both men, however, pluckily continued their journey, and embarked upon the yacht Violet for Calais.

"In the sharp gale, that delayed the mail-boat for several hours, the yacht was pursued and fired upon by an unknown vessel of the torpedo-boat-destroyer class. The yacht's signals brought H.M.S. Thunderbolt to the rescue, and the unknown pirate made off. Her shells had carried away the Violet's wheel, utterly disabling her, and killed several of the crew. The Thunderbolt, Venetia, and the cruiser Cormorant went in pursuit of the assailant, but without success.

"But the most amazing part of this amazing mystery comes from our Calais correspondent. It appears that Mr. Ferrers Lord was arrested on a trumped-up charge of forgery the very moment his disabled yacht was towed into the French port. The charge was preferred by the authorities of the Anglo-Russian Bank at the instigation of Prince Michael Scaroff, Russia's greatest statesman.

"Were it not for the law of libel, we would not hesitate to put two and two together. What is the meaning of this chain of dramatic events—the wrecked train, the terrible affair in the Channel, and the imputed arrest of one of our most famous countrymen? We look to Mr. Ferrers Lord to tell us what he knows of this evident conspiracy against his life, and to unveil this mystery of hideous crime."

Thurston laid down the paper.

"The fellow who wrote that," he said, "has certainly hit the nail upon the head."

"In a way, he has. Scaroff made a blunder in having me arrested, for that showed his hand. I suppose he thought I was close behind him, or that the other boat might miss me in the gale. I want to hush this up, if I can, and let it die a natural death. We can prove nothing against Scaroff, after all, and I do not want the law to meddle with my own affairs. I will be my own law, Rupert, and my own justice. I feel tired, if you'll excuse me. I have had a busy night."

He laid a rug over one of the arms of the seat, curled himself up, and fell asleep at once, like a tired child.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"WINGATE'S CHUM."

Thurston looked at him in admiration and awe. A man who could sleep so calmly after the tragic events of the night was indeed a man of iron.

The millionaire slept with the cigar still smouldering between his teeth, and Rupert busied himself with the newspapers.

"All tickets ready, please!"

They were entering the station.

At Charing Cross there was still another crowd, but no cheering. The millionaire and Rupert Thurston walked swiftly to the waiting carriage.

"King's Cross!" said the millionaire.

The carriage rolled away into the ceaseless roar and rattle of the London streets.

At Ferrers Grange—The Face in the Mirror—The Solitary Boat—Trapped.

The two men lunched on the Great Northern train, stretched their legs for a few moments at Grantham, and settled themselves comfortably for the rest of the journey. Five and a half hours after leaving King's Cross they reached Scarborough.

"You look fagged, Rupert," said the millionaire; "and we have a twenty miles' drive before us. I think I had better leave you behind for the night. You can come on afterwards."

Thurston was almost done up, but he shook his head at the suggestion.

"Don't worry about me," he answered. "I do feel a trifle off colour, but I may as well finish as I have got so far. I suppose that is your dogcart. You drive good cattle."

The fading sunshine was just beginning to crimson the sea as it broke dimly through the lowering clouds. A brisk, fresh breeze was blowing inshore, making the fishing-smacks stagger under shortened sail.

The dogcart spun away rapidly towards the open country, following the winding road along the cliffs.

Ferrers Lord drove at a breakneck pace, sometimes glancing over his shoulders at the gathering clouds.

"It looks like a squall," he said; "and I've had enough wetting lately to last for a long time."

The trap rattled on, as the first raindrops began to fall, but the sky cleared again, and the sun sank in the west in a golden furnace, throwing its last light-shafts over the sea.

The horse never fagged, and at length Ferrers Lord pointed forward with his whip.

"That is Ferrers Grange, Rupert."

The pointed towers of a large house loomed faintly above a cluster of trees. The trap was skirting the high wall of the park.

It passed the open gates, where the lodgekeeper and his family, dressed in their best clothes, were waiting to welcome the squire, rattled along a winding gravel drive, and stopped before the lordly grange.

Twenty-five or thirty servants were crowding the steps. Ferrers Lord gave them a curt nod, and hurried into the hall.

"Is Mr. Horton here?" he asked sharply.

"Yes, sir," answered a footman. "He's in the billiard-room, sir."

The burly diver was amusing himself by drawing hideous faces on the slate on the marking-board with a piece of billiard-chalk.

Another splendid long, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

He had just executed the ugliest of all, and scrawled "Kruger" under it, when he heard the millionaire's step behind him. He flushed like a schoolboy.

"Well, Horton," said the millionaire, "I see you are here before me. Have you examined the vessel?"

"I have, sir; and I think she's a real miracle. We only got in a couple of hours ago, but I got fifty men to work at once."

"Good!" said Ferrers Lord. "We will pay them a visit. Come this way, Thurston!"

To the left of the billiard-room opened a spacious conservatory. The millionaire passed quickly through it, and opened a door screened by palms and luxuriant ferns.

The fading light revealed a few winding steps that vanished into inky darkness.

"Wait a moment, Horton," said the millionaire; "the steps are steep and greasy."

He jerked down the switch of the electric light. They were in a huge cellar filled with barrels and wine-bins. Ferrers Lord reached a lantern, and, lighting it, unlocked a second door, showing a second flight of steps.

As they advanced the air smelt musty and damp, and huge rats ran squeaking into shelter.

Suddenly there was a crash behind them, and the millionaire sprang round.

"What was that?" he asked quickly.

"The door, sir. I suppose it has blown to."

There was no draught, not a breath of air, and the door was springless and stiff on its hinges.

For a moment Ferrers Lord paused irresolutely, and then turned away. By the yellow circle of light, Horton saw that the narrow corridor had been tooled out of the rock.

Here and there the roof had been propped up by huge beams, and a little subterranean spring ran merrily along a narrow channel in the centre.

Suddenly the diver paused, and uttered a cry.

"What is the matter?" asked the millionaire.

The character of the passage had changed. The damp walls were no longer grey, but ebony-black.

"Why, this is real jet!" gasped Ned Horton. "Tons and tons of it! There's a fortune here!"

"So I am aware," answered the millionaire; "but jet is not very valuable nowadays, though many a man makes a living here by searching the shore for pieces washed up by the sea. Please take the lamp while I light a cigar. What is jet to me, when I am master of the greatest of all treasure-chambers—the ocean? Wait, Horton, until you see the wealth I intend to show you and to share with you, if you serve me well—pearls, rubies, ambergris, ivory, and the gold of lost Spanish galleons and treasure-ships. You will snap your fingers at paltry jet!"

He puffed the cigar alight, and went on with quick, vigorous strides. After a mile the tunnel forked off into two directions.

Two finger-posts pointed out the way; the first reading—"To Devil's Cave;" the second—"To the Arsenal and Lone Wood Hill."

Ferrers Lord kept straight on, keeping the road to the cave. The air grew fresher and smelt of salt, and a dull roar came echoing along the tunnel. It was the roar of the distant surf. The tunnel gave a sharp turn, and they were in Devil's Cave.

"Christopher!" cried the diver, in surprise. "What's happened? Where's the sea?"

The huge cavern shone with the glare of spluttering arc-lamps hanging from its rocky roof.

The Lord of the Deep lay high and dry, echoing the ring of busy hammers. Men swarmed over her and round her, carrying beams and iron plates. Forges were hissing, red-hot iron glowing, and steam-saws biting through oaken planks.

"Christopher!" gasped the diver again. "Where's the sea? Where's the outlet? Has there been a landslide, sir? How are you going to get her out? I remember coming in, but this is a puzzler!"

On every side the cavern seemed walled in by solid rock. Ferrers Lord laughed.

"I have to take precautions, Horton," he said. "At low tide a few boats sometimes enter the other cave in search of lobsters and crabs. The entrance to the second cave—this one—is about thirty feet above your head, and about fifty feet square. Only my servants know there is an entrance at all; and years ago I covered it with a massive iron door, which I can open or shut, as I choose. The outer side is covered with a layer of rock, cemented to the iron, and overgrown with seaweed. What do you think of my underground works?"

"Miracle No. 2, sir," said the diver.

They went on board the submarine vessel to inspect the progress of the work.

A dozen men were busy upholstering and painting the state-room. A long, vicious-looking gun was swinging from a derrick, ready to be placed on its limber on the deck of the Lord of the Deep.

Not a single man raised his head as they passed along; they seemed to be toiling for their very lives.

Ferrers Lord rubbed his hands. Matters seemed going well at last.

"We shall see, my dear Scaroff," he muttered—"we shall see! If you build your boat on the Baltic, as I expect, it may have to swim on the Baltic for ever, unless you cart it by rail either to Odessa or Archangel; for to get out of the Baltic you will have to elude the Lord of the Deep."

He took out his massive cigar-case, with its monogram of diamonds.

"You smoke, Horton," he said. "Have a cigar! We must telegraph to London for more men. There is no time to waste."

Meanwhile, Rupert Thurston had been left alone. A footman bowed him to the smoking-room, brought him tea, and, placing a spirit-stand and soda-water beside him, bowed himself out.

Thurston drank the tea, settled the cushions comfortably, and, being completely tired out, went to sleep.

He woke as the clock was striking the half-hour after nine. The electric light had been turned on, and, opening his eyes sleepily, he saw his reflection in a tall mirror.

He dozed again, and opened his eyes once more. A strange shiver ran through him.

The mirror reflected his chair, the curtained floor, and half of a carved sideboard.

Peering from behind the curtain was a bearded, evil face. Rupert's eyes dilated as he gazed into the mirror. The curtain shook; the face vanished.

Thurston was wide awake now. His uninjured hand crept cautiously towards a heavy silver candlestick standing at his elbow.

Again the face appeared, and he withdrew his hand and stared at the mirror with half-closed eyes.

"A burglar!" he thought, not knowing what to do.

Crippled as he was, he was no match even for a child. He might raise an alarm; but could he prevent the man from escaping until help came. Thurston yawned and stood up, pretending to have seen nothing, and trying his best to act the part.

He crossed to the French-window, closed it, and turned towards the door. The curtain trembled once more.

Thurston's nerves were tough, and a man needs tough nerves to remain calm when he knows that in all probability a revolver is pointed at his heart a few feet away.

Humming a tune, he lighted a cigarette, and tossed the match into the grate.

But for his broken arm, he would have sprung at the curtain like a tiger and grappled with the hidden thief.

He paced up and down smoking, and kept his eye upon the reflection of the curtain and the curtain itself respectively.

(Another grand, long instalment of this thrilling serial story next week. Order your copy of THE MAGNET LIBRARY in advance. Price One Penny.)

For Next Week



"Wingate's Chum."

Quite a distinct change will be found in our next tale of Greyfriars, and I am sure you will all admire the Senior's pluck and Harry Wharton's idea.

The Editor

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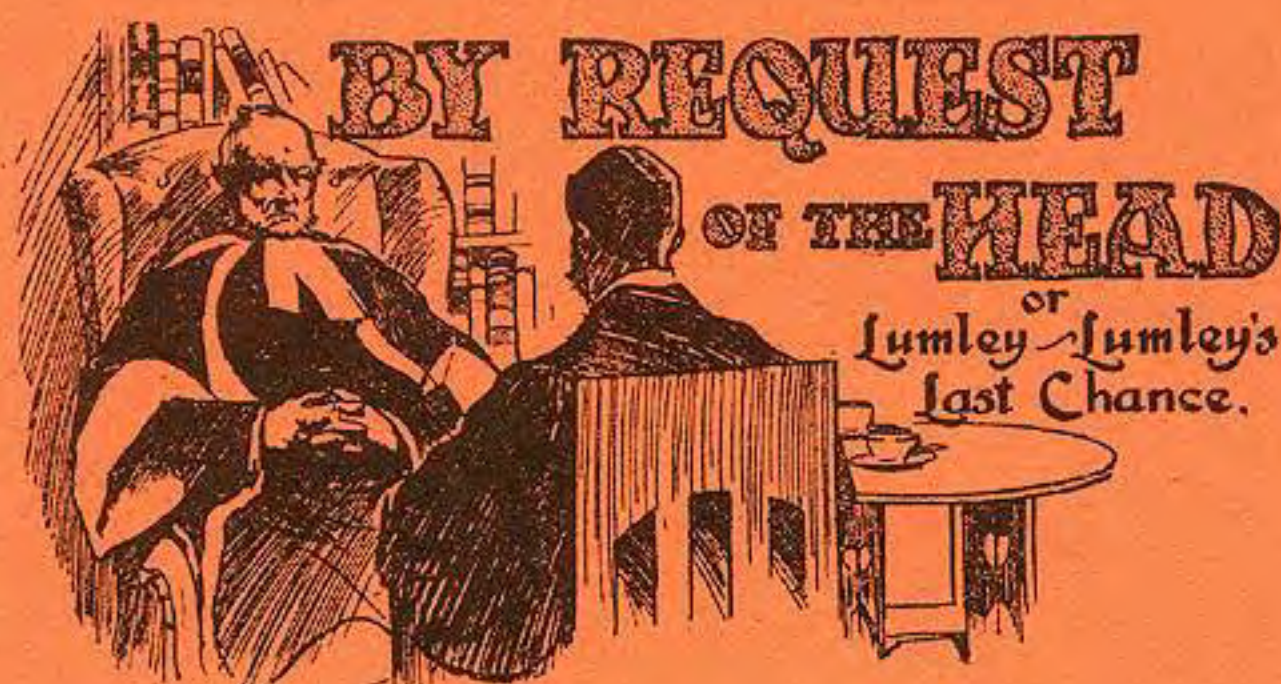
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