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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Rebels.

CLANG! Clang!

The rising-bell at Greyfriars rang out sharply on the morning air. As a rule, it fell upon sleepy ears in the junior dormitories. But on this particular morning, in the Remove dormitory at least, there was not a single fellow asleep when the rising-bell clanged out.

The Remove were wide awake.

The School on Strike!

A Splendid, Extra-long,
Complete Tale of the
Chums of Greyfriars.

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS.

Some of them were up and dressed. Harry Wharton, and Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, were among the early risers. Bulstrode, the new captain of the Remove, was also up; and Bulstrode's face was wearing a worried look. Bulstrode was not finding the captaincy of the Remove a bed of roses by any means.

Clang! Clang!

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath as the bell clanged out.

"There goes the bell!" he said. "And now——"

"Now the fun is going to begin," said Bob Cherry. Wharton looked very grave. "It may be jolly serious fun for some of us, Bob," he said.

"Oh, we shall pull through all right, so long as we all stick together, and stand shoulder to shoulder," said Bob confidently.

Bulstrode came over towards them. The big, burly Removite, who had always been the bully of the Form, was looking strangely quiet and subdued. There was a weight of responsibility upon Bulstrode's shoulders now, and it had sobered him.

"I suppose it's settled what we're going to do, you fellows," he said, in a hesitating tone.

Wharton looked at him.

"I thought we settled it all last night," he said.

"Yes; but—"

"If you want to back out—" began Bob Cherry.

Bulstrode flushed.

"I don't," he said. "Nothing of the sort. But it's going to be a serious bizney, that's all. You fellows are going to back me up?"

"All along the line," said Harry Wharton heartily.

"Thank you!"

Most of the fellows in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars were looking serious. It was evident that something very momentous was impending.

The juniors were dressing themselves quietly. Even Billy Bunter, who generally made his voice heard at all times, everywhere, in season and out of season, was subdued. The Remove might have been contemplating some terrible deed, to judge by their looks. But they were all unanimous about it; that was clear, too.

Bulstrode seemed to make an effort to pull himself together. He was the leader of the Form; and only too many of the juniors were willing to carp and criticise if he showed the least sign of "funking."

"Buck up, old man," said Ogilvy. "We've got to go through with it, you know. It's no good thinking of backing out now."

Bulstrode turned upon him angrily.

"Who's thinking of backing out?" he demanded.

"Well, you are looking rather fishy, you know."

"Look here—"

"Oh, don't let us begin rowing among ourselves!" said Harry Wharton. "We shall need to stick together over this bizney."

"Yes, rather!"

"I'm not funkling it," said Bulstrode. "I know jolly well that I run the biggest risk of being expelled, that's all."

"Well, you would be captain," said Nugent. "You pushed Wharton out of the place; and you've only got yourself to thank."

"Let that alone, Frank," said Wharton. "What's the programme, Bulstrode? Are we going down now?"

"Hold on," said Bulstrode. "We'll have it settled plainly before we go down." He jumped on a bed. "Listen to me, you fellows!"

"Hear, hear!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Go it!"

"Buck up, Bulstrode!"

"Hurrah!"

Wharton smiled quietly. The more nervous of the juniors were trying to encourage themselves by shouting and cheering, like a lion lashing himself to fury with his tail.

But Bulstrode seemed to catch the infection, and his dubious expression vanished, and his eyes gleamed as he waved his hand to the crowd of juniors.

"Look here, you chaps, we've decided what to do. We're under a tyrant now at Greyfriars, and we're not going to stand it any longer."

"Hear, hear!"

"Dr. Locke's only been gone a short time, but the chap the Governors have sent in his place has made himself simply intolerable—"

"Hear, hear!"

"We were quite prepared to obey Mr. Lothrop, and to back him up properly, but he was down on us from the start. He's been down on the whole school, but on the Remove in particular. Are we going to stand it?"

There was a roar.

"No!"

"Never!"

The Removites were getting excited now. Bulstrode was getting excited to, with the eloquence of his own oration.

"The minute he got to Greyfriars," the Remove captain went on, "Mr. Lothrop began to meddle with our oldest customs and rights. He stopped us doing our prep. in our studies, and made us do it in the Form-room."

There was a deep groan for Mr. Lothrop, the new Head of Greyfriars.

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"Then he sacked our Form-master, Mr. Quelch—"

"Good old Quelch!"

"It was a rotten thing to do, because Quelch was only standing up for us. And it won't last, because I know jolly well that Quelch will be reinstated when Dr. Locke comes back to Greyfriars."

"Hear, hear!"

"But until that happens, have we got to knuckle under, and groan under the—despotism of that rank outsider?" exclaimed Bulstrode, getting more and more eloquent.

"Never!"

"Rats!"

"He has already canded the whole Form—for nothing. He's stopped us in the middle of a cricket-match, and made us leave it unfinished."

Another deep groan for the unsportsmanlike Mr. Lothrop. "He's gated us for the next half-holiday, so that we can't have the replay with Courtfield School."

Groan again!

"He's interfered with everything, right and left—punished us all, gated nearly everybody, and made life in general a giddy burden, ever since he shoved himself into Dr. Locke's place."

Groan!

"And we happen to know," went on Bulstrode excitedly, "we happen to know that this chap, this bounder Lothrop, was sacked from a school where he was master for bullying a junior—a brother of Coker of the Fifth here—"

"Shame!"

"And he was sent here over Dr. Locke's head by the Governors—they sent the beast here without consulting Dr. Locke at all—"

Groan!

"And we're expected to put up with him. My belief is, that Dr. Locke would be jolly well pleased if we wouldn't knuckle under."

"H'm!"

The juniors looked very doubtful at that. Yet there was something to be said for Bulstrode's view. Dr. Locke would certainly not have approved of the new regime Mr. Lothrop had established at Greyfriars. When he returned, he would undoubtedly reinstate Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove. He would restore the old privileges of the juniors, which Mr. Lothrop had rescinded. There was no doubt about that. And the boys were smarting under a strong sense of injustice, and under the knowledge that they were expected to submit to what their kind old head-master would never have approved of or allowed.

"Everybody's against the rotter," went on Bulstrode. "He's quarrelled with all the prefects. There's Wingate, captain of the school—he's sacked him from being a prefect. He's even quarrelled with Loder, who was crawling up to him like anything when he first came. The fact is, that the man's head has been turned by getting this job as Head of Greyfriars, and he hardly knows what he's doing, or what he isn't doing."

"Hear, hear!"

"Jolly near half the Form are sentenced to flogging now," Bulstrode went on. "We've got to take it quietly, with the same to follow pretty nearly every day—or—"

"Or go on strike!" said Ogilvy.

"Hear, hear!"

"Now, I want you all to say plainly what you want," said Bulstrode. "When we've once started, there's no turning back. We've got to stick together like glue. If we're going to put up with Lothrop, we had better begin now by knuckling under quietly. If we're going on strike, we'll strike before there are any more floggings."

"Hurrah!"

"You're all in favour of a strike?"

"All! All!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really—"

"Of course we're all in favour of a strike," said Bob Cherry. "Besides, strikes are very fashionable now; and why should Greyfriars lag behind?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

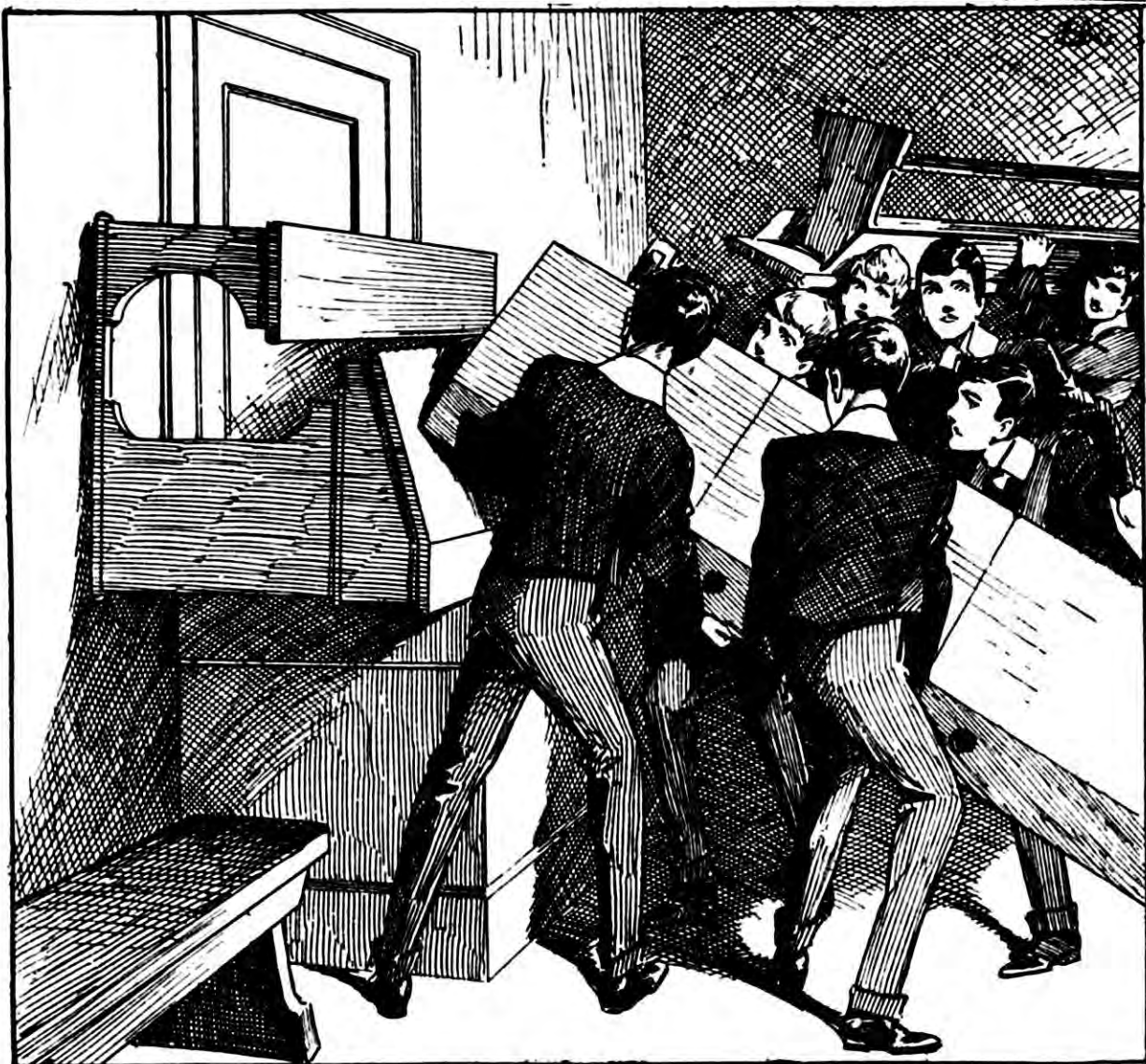
"Then a strike it is," said Bulstrode. "We'll show Lothrop—"

Bulstrode stopped.

His startled gaze was fixed upon the dormitory door.

The door had opened, and a bulky figure in cap and gown appeared there. The square jaw, the clean-shaven, clean-cut face, the heavy brows and sharp, piercing eyes, were those of the new head-master of Greyfriars, Mr. Lothrop.

Bulstrode's jaw dropped. The shouting died away! Mr. Lothrop advanced into the Remove dormitory in the midst of a dead silence.



The Remove set to work on the desks and wrenched them up one after another and jammed them close against the panels of the class-room door. (See page 9.)

THE SECOND CHAPTER. No Leader.

MR. LOTHROP did not speak at once. He stood looking at the Removites, with a hard, angry gaze, under which many of the juniors quailed.

There was something so hard, so stern, and so cruel in the look of the new head-master, that it was no wonder that many of the youngsters felt daunted.

This was the man who had come like a blight upon the school—the man whose coming had been like a dark shadow upon Greyfriars.

It was not only the Remove that detested him. The Remove, it cannot be denied, were a headstrong and an unruly Form. But Mr. Lothrop had made himself equally detested all through the whole school. He had turned out one of the masters—the Remove-master—and he was on the worst of terms with all the rest. All the prefects were on the verge of mutiny; and the Remove knew that they were discussing the step of resigning in a body. The Fourth Form, the Shell, and the Fifth were in a state of sullen suppression, ready to break out at any moment. And the Remove rather fancied themselves in the position of leaders to the more timorous Forms.

But just now, in the cold, unnerving presence of Mr. Lothrop, they seemed to be taken aback, and irresolute.

Bulstrode, the captain of the Form, was expected to lead. All Bulstrode's bold words would have been in place now.

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But Bulstrode did not seem to have any bold words left, under the keen, cold eye of the new Head.

Mr. Lothrop raised his hand.

"Step down from the bed, Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode hesitated.

The Remove waited expectant. If Bulstrode had refused to obey—

"Get down instantly!"

Bulstrode stepped down.

He had not had time to think—and the habit of obedience was strong—and Mr. Lothrop's manner was so commanding that it seemed to enforce obedience.

Mr. Lothrop's brows set heavily.

"You have been making a great deal of noise here," he said.

There was no noise now. The Removites stood in a frozen silence. Harry Wharton, for a moment, made a movement, as if to speak. But he did not. He remembered that he was no longer captain of the Remove. It was Bulstrode's place to lead, if leading was to be done.

"You were all guilty of insubordination in the Form-room last night," went on Mr. Lothrop, in cutting tones, "and you seem determined to keep it up this morning. This Form is the most unruly at Greyfriars. I shall alter all that."

Silence.

"Bulstrode!"

The captain of the Remove started.

"Bulstrode, come here!"

Bulstrode slowly advanced towards the master. Mr. Lothrop brought his hand from behind him, and a cane was seen in it.

"Hold out your hand, Bulstrode."

The Remove trembled with eagerness.

If Bulstrode had refused, even then, the excited juniors were willing to stand by him—and a rush of fellows might have swept Mr. Lothrop and his cane out of the dormitory, headlong into the passage.

But Bulstrode seemed to be numbed by the hard, icy master.

He held out his hand.

Swish!

"Oh!"

"The other hand, Bulstrode."

Bulstrode held out his other hand.

Swish!

This time Bulstrode did not utter a cry.

He stood shaking from head to foot with pain and resentment and shame. Mr. Lothrop turned from him, and glanced over the silent juniors.

"Let there be no more of this noise," he said. "I am going to reduce this Form to order. The boys sentenced to flogging will present themselves in my study immediately after prayers—Wharton, Nugent, Cherry, Bull, Bulstrode, and Fish."

And Mr. Lothrop quitted the dormitory.

There was deep silence after he was gone.

Skinner stepped to the door and closed it.

Bulstrode stood rubbing his hands, his face twisted with pain, and red with shame. He knew how sorry a figure he had cut in the eyes of his Form-fellows, of whom he was supposed to be the leader, and he was wounded to the quick.

"Well," said Skinner, "if that's the way we're going on strike the sooner we chuck it the better, in my opinion."

"Yes, rather!" said Ogilvy.

"It's rotten!"

"Bulstrode funk'd it—we might have known."

"Rotter!"

"Funk!"

Bulstrode stood silent and crimson. He did not seem to have a word to say in his defence. What, indeed, could he say? After all his bold words, after pledging the Remove to back him up in revolt against the Greyfriars tyrant, he had submitted to caning with the most utter tameness.

Scornful looks were cast at the unhappy Form-captain from all sides.

"Let's go down," said Harry Wharton abruptly.

And the juniors turned to the door.

Bulstrode followed in silence.

The Removites muttered and grumbled among themselves. Harry Wharton was looking very grim. Wharton was one of the fellows under sentence of flogging—a sentence utterly unmerited and unjust. Whether Bulstrode chose to take the lead in revolt, or not, Harry Wharton had made up his mind. He did not mean to submit.

"What are you going to do, Harry?" Bob Cherry asked, as they went downstairs.

"I am not going to be flogged, Bob."

"Same here," said Nugent, between his teeth.

"After prayers I shall go into the Form-room as usual. I won't be flogged, that's certain. If Dr. Locke wanted to flog me, it would be different—or Mr. Quelch. But this man has been sent here against the wish of our own head-master, and he's proceeded at once to turn the place into a sort of convict prison. That may be his idea of governing a school, but it isn't ours."

"I wonder Quelch hasn't let our Head know something about it," Nugent remarked thoughtfully. "Dr. Locke must be able to stop this brute, somehow, if he knew."

"I believe he would come back and stop him, only Miss Rosie is ill, and he can't leave her, perhaps," said John Bull.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, don't bother, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton crossly. Billy Bunter blinked at him indignantly through his big spectacles.

"Look here," he exclaimed, "I've got some news—"

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here, I've got something to show you!"

"Boah!"

"I tell you—"

"Oh, what is it, then?" exclaimed Harry Wharton impatiently. "Get it off your chest, and don't bother!"

"There's a telegram—"

"Not for us, I suppose?"

"It's from the Head!"

"From the Head?"

"Yes, to Mr. Lothrop."

"How do you know?"

"Because I've seen it."

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"You spying young rotter!" said Wharton, in disgust. "And how did you see it?"

"Oh, really—"

"You don't mean to say you opened it?"

Bunter blinked at him.

"Certainly not. I trust you don't think me capable of such a thing, Wharton. I happened to see Mr. Lothrop open it last night, and—"

"How did you know it was from Dr. Locke?"

"I didn't know; but this morning I've just looked into his study. I knew he was at breakfast in the Head's House, you see, and—"

"Well?" rapped out Wharton.

"The telegram was still on the table—"

"You read it, you cad?"

"I happened to see it by accident—sheer chance, you know—and when I found that the Head was telling him—"

"You had no business to read it."

"Oh, really—"

"What was in it?"

Billy Bunter sniffed.

"Oh, if I had no business to read it, I've no business to tell you what was in it," he said. "You can find out for yourself. I've got the telegram in my pocket, as a matter of fact, but I'm jolly well not going to show it to you."

"You'd better not," said Wharton. "Get out!"

"Oh, really—"

Wharton took the fat junior by the shoulders, and swung him round, and planted his foot behind him. Bunter gave a roar, and travelled along the passage at a great rate, till he brought up against a wall, and clung there gasping.

And the chums of the Remove, turning their backs on Bunter, discussed the proposed strike in the school, and Billy Bunter, as soon as he recovered his breath, yelled at the top of his voice: "Beasts!" and fled.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Manifesto.

THE Remove Form-room filled quietly with boys at the usual hour.

The Removites were looking very subdued.

Those of the Form who were under sentence of flogging came in with the rest, looking a little more grave than the others, perhaps.

Bulstrode wore a grim and determined expression.

He had failed when he was put to the test in the dormitory—failed lamentably. After all his big words, he had yielded in the tamest possible manner at the first sound of the new Head's voice.

But the scorn his submission had been received with in the Remove had stung Bulstrode too deeply for him to think of repeating it. He was only anxious now to remove the impression he had made, and to prove to the Form that they could rely upon him to lead them, and to raise the banner of revolt.

After what had happened, Bulstrode was, in fact, keener than before upon the "strike." There would be no hesitation upon his part now.

"What are you chaps going to do?" Ogilvy asked, looking at Wharton. "The Head will be waiting for you in his study."

"Let him wait."

"You're not going, then?"

"No."

"He'll come here, look you," Morgan remarked.

"Let him come."

"Then it's a strike, after all?"

"I don't know about that; ask Bulstrode. But I'm not going to be flogged, for one, when I've done nothing to deserve it."

"Same here," said Bob Cherry emphatically.

"Hear, hear!"

Bulstrode jumped on a form.

"Listen to me, you fellows!"

"Oh, rats!" exclaimed several voices. "You can only talk!"

"It's all jaw with you, Bulstrode."

The captain of the Remove flushed crimson.

"Give a chap a chance!" he exclaimed. "I was taken by surprise this morning."

"Oh, rats!"

"You'll be taken by surprise again as soon as Lothrop comes."

"Faith, and ye're right intirely."

"I tell you I've made up my mind," said Bulstrode. "Lothrop is waiting in his study now. I'm not going, and the others are not going. My idea is to write out a notice, and pin it on the Form-room door, and lock the door."

"Well, that's not a bad idea."

"It will show him what we want," said Bulstrode, "and if he won't come to terms, we'll go on strike."

"Well, you said that before."

"I say it again now, and I mean it. Look here, we've no time to waste—he won't wait very long in his study. Will you help me draw up the notice, Wharton?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Faith, and so will I!"

"It's a good idea."

Bulstrode stepped off the form. He drew out a sheet of foolscap, and dipped a pen in the ink on the desk. The Removites gathered round eagerly. This looked like real business at last.

"It's to be a manifesto," Bulstrode explained. "We want to notify him of what we expect, and give him a chance to come to terms. It's what the revolutionists in Spain call a pronunciamento, according to the newspapers."

"Pronunciamento," repeated Ogilvy. "Well, that's a good word, anyway."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Call it a manifesto—it's easier," grinned Nugent; "and the chief question is, not what it's called, but what we're going to put down on it."

"Faith, and ye're right," said Micky Desmond. "Suppose you begin it somethin' like this: 'Dear Baste, or Dear Thafe of the World.'"

"Ass!"

"Sure, and I——"

"Begin with the word 'Notice,'" said Harry Wharton.

"Good!"

Bulstrode wrote down the word "Notice" in big letters. Then he chewed the handle of the pen. Apparently he had come to the end of his inventiveness.

"Go ahead," said Ogilvy.

"Somebody suggest something."

"You're a blessed lawyer, Wharton—you dictate."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Shove in something like this," he said. "'Mr. Lothrop having invaded all the rights of the Remove——'"

"Good! Rights of the Remove!" said Bulstrode, writing it down.

"And having inflicted unjust punishments upon the Form——"

"The Remove have decided, in solemn conclave——"

"Solemn conclave's good," said Bob Cherry. "That ought to impress him."

"Yes, rather."

"Decided, in solemn conclave, that they can't stand it."

"Hurrah!"

"The Remove therefore demand the following: No more punishments——"

"Hear, hear!"

"The immediate reinstatement of their own Form-master, Mr. Quelch——"

"Hurrah!"

"And the recognition of their right to prepare their lessons in their own studies, instead of in the Form-room."

"Bravo!"

"The Remove are unanimous on this point. I mean on these points—and unless their demands are granted, they will immediately go on strike."

"Hip, hip!"

Bulstrode wrote it down as fast as Harry Wharton dictated it.

"Splendid!" he said.

"You ought to be a giddy barriater, or a member of Parliament, or a confidence man, Wharton!" exclaimed Bob Cherry enthusiastically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think that will do," said Nugent, looking over the notice. "I suppose we'd better all sign it to show that the whole Form is backing up Bulstrode?"

"Good idea."

"Shove in your signatures here, then," said Bulstrode. "I'll begin."

"You'll get it hottest when the row comes," said Stott.

"Well, I'm leader."

"Hear, hear!"

Bulstrode signed his name with a big flourish. Harry Wharton signed second; and then Nugent, and then Bob Cherry, and then John Bull. Then came Fisher T. Fish, whose signature sprawled across the paper, and Mark Linley, with a neat little signature, and then Tom Brown, and Hazeldene, and Micky Desmond, and Treluce, and Morgan, and Elliott, and Ogilvy, and Smith junior, and then Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. For once Vernon-Smith, the unpopular "Bounder," was at one with the rest of the Form. He was as keen upon the revolt as anyone.

Then the rest of the Remove signed in turn, Skinner and Snoop and Stott and the other fellows putting down their names with more or less alacrity.

Whatever inward twinges of doubt some of the fellows felt, there was no possibility of drawing out.

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NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL"

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Where the whole Form had decided to go, the individual members had to go; there was no standing out against the majority in a Form like the Remove. The results would have been too painful to the individual.

"All here, I think?" said Bulstrode.

"Yes, all there," said Harry Wharton.

"Everybody signed."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What about Bunter?"

"Bunter!"

"Where's Bunter?"

"I—I say, you fellows——"

"Come and sign the paper, Bunter. What are you trying to hide behind the blackboard for, you fat rascal!"

"I—I wasn't hiding, you know," Billy Bunter stammered.

"I—I was looking for something——"

"Looking for a thick ear, I expect!" said Bob Cherry, frowning. "You're jolly near getting one, anyway."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Sign your name here."

"I—I've knocked my hand," Bunter explained feebly.

"I—I don't think I could write my name just at present. I'll write it another time, if you don't mind."

There was a roar.

"Cad!"

"Coward!"

"Sign your name, you rotter!"

"I—I say, you fellows——"

"Sign!" roared Bob Cherry, putting the pen into Bunter's fat hand. "Do you think you're going to avoid the risk, you cowardly barrel of lard? Do you think we're going to leave you out of it, you—you worm?"

"Oh, really——"

"Sign!" yelled the juniors excitedly. "Coward! Funk! Cad!"

"I—I—I'd sign like anything, you fellows, only——"

"Sign!"

"My hand is hurt——"

"How did you hurt it?" asked Nugent.

"I knocked it against something hard."

"I'll knock my hand against something hard, at the risk of hurting it, if you don't sign," said John Bull. "You rotten coward, do you want to stand out of it, when the whole Form have signed?"

"N-n-no; certainly not! Ow! Don't shake me like that, Bob Cherry. You might make my glasses fall off, and if they get broken you'll have to pay for them. Ow!"

Shake, shake, shake!

"Let him alone, Bob," said Harry Wharton, as Bunter howled and roared. "If the cad doesn't want to sign, let him off. After all, the fat worm won't be much use to us in a revolt."

"Faith, and ye're right there!"

Bob Cherry released the Owl of the Remove. Bunter shook himself, and put his collar straight, and glared at the juniors through his big spectacles.

"I won't sign!" he roared. "I won't have anything to do with it! Yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick him out!" said Ogilvy.

"Ow! Yow! Yaroo!"

A dozen hands grasped Bunter and propelled him to the door of the Form-room, and half a dozen feet helped him into the passage. Bunter rolled over, and roared.

"Stick the notice on the door," said Nugent. "The Head may be along at any minute now. He's bound to get tired of waiting for us in the study."

Bulstrode pinned the manifesto on the outside of the Form-room door. Then the door was closed and locked.

And then the juniors waited.

Quietly, gravely, but resolutely the revolted Form waited for the storm to burst.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Under Which Master?

THERE was deep silence in the Form-room.

In the other Form-rooms along the passage the morning's work was beginning. The Upper Fourth Form were busy with Caesar's operations in Gaul, under Mr. Capper. The Shell were at work further on, and in the Fifth Form-room Mr. Prout had his class "on the go." The high and mighty Sixth were in their room, gravely studious. Only in the Remove Form-room was idleness—revolt.

The Remove were not idle, as a rule. They prided themselves on being able to work as well as to play.

But no work, of course, could be thought of now. Some of the juniors were timid, some were bold, some were reckless.

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

less, but all were united now—firmly bound together in resistance to the tyrant of Greyfriars.

"They waited, with beating hearts. Bold and timid, they were all firm now. There was no one in the Form, with the solitary exception of Billy Bunter, who had refused to sign the manifesto. Even Snoop had signed it.

"I wish he'd come," muttered Elliott at last.

"Listen!"

"He's coming, I guess!" murmured Fish.

There was a footstep in the passage.

The juniors knew the sharp, heavy tread of the tyrant of Greyfriars. Mr. Lothrop had evidently grown tired of waiting in his study for the juniors who did not come. He was coming to them; it was the old story over again of Mahomet going to the mountain because the mountain would not come to Mahomet. And, to judge by the hard, quick tread, the new Head of Greyfriars was coming in a state of fury. But that was only to be expected.

The Form-room door handle was turned.

The door did not open.

The handle was tried again, and then there came a sharp, savage rap on the oaken panels.

"Is this door locked?"

"Don't answer," said Bulstrode.

"Open this door! Ah!"

The "Ah!" apparently, meant that the Head had now observed the manifesto pinned on to the outside of the Form-room door.

There was silence for a full minute.

"He's reading it," whispered Bob Cherry.

"There's going to be a row now."

"Faith, rather!"

And there was. There was a sudden exclamation from the man outside—a loud cry, more like the cry of an angry animal than of a man. Then came a sharp knock on the Form-room door.

"Open this door instantly!"

"Somebody ought to answer him," said Bull.

"I will," said Bulstrode.

"Good! Go it!"

Bulstrode stepped to the door.

"Have you read the notice, sir?" he called out, stooping his head to the keyhole.

"Is that you, Bulstrode?"

"Yes, sir."

"Open this door!"

"Have you read the manifesto, sir?"

"I have read this insolent writing!" came back the Head's voice, shaking with rage. "Did you write this, Bulstrode?"

"Yes, sir."

"I shall expel you for it!"

"Very well, sir. The whole Form signed it."

"I shall flog the whole Form! Every boy in the Remove shall be flogged for this! Open the door at once!"

"Are you going to expel me, and flog all the rest, anyway, sir?"

"Yes!" thundered the Head.

"Then I don't see why we should open the door," said Bulstrode calmly. "We can't get anything worse than that if we hold out."

"Hear, hear!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Bravo, Bulstrode!"

"Will you open this door, Bulstrode?"

"Not unless you agree to our conditions, sir, stated in the manifesto."

"Bulstrode!"

"Yes, sir."

"I order you to open this door!"

"I have nothing more to say, sir."

There was a pause. They heard the man outside stamping up and down the passage for a few minutes. Then he came back to the door, and rapped upon it with hard knuckles.

"Boys!"

"Yes, sir."

"I will pardon any boy who unlocks this door!"

"Rats, sir!"

"What!" roared Mr. Lothrop.

And with one voice the Remove replied:

"Rats!"

Again a short silence. The Head was evidently non-plussed. Injustice and cruelty had brought him into a position where it was impossible to advance, and where it seemed equally impossible to retreat.

The juniors heard his footsteps die away down the passage.

"He's gone!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath.

"Gone!"

"He's given in," said Ogilvy.

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Bulstrode shook his head.

"The thing's only beginning," he replied. "This is only the first skirmish. But he can't do much as long as there's a locked door between us. I suppose he's gone to call up the prefects."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"Eh? What's the matter?"

"What's this?"

Bob Cherry stooped and picked up a telegram from the floor. It must have been lying there for some time, but the juniors had not noticed it.

"Does this belong to one of you chaps?" asked Bob.

"Must be a name on it, I suppose," said Wharton.

Bob unfolded the crumpled slip of paper.

Then he uttered a shout.

"My only hat!"

The juniors crowded round. As Bob held up the telegram every eye there could easily read the heavy black lettering:

"Mr. Lothrop, Greyfriars College.—I positively forbid further punishment until my return.—LOCKE."

"Great Scott!"

"My only summer hat!"

"By Jove!" said Harry Wharton. "That's the telegram Bunter boned from the Head's study. He must have dropped it here when he was kicked out. He said that he had it in his pocket."

"The fat young rascal!" said John Bull. "He had no business to touch it, but—well, we've seen it now! You see what it says?"

"Dr. Locke had positively forbidden him to punish us, and he went on doing it," said Harry Wharton. "You see how it is—he's disobeying orders, and we're standing up for proper authority."

"By George! Yes."

"Champions of law and order!" grinned Skinner. "It's rather a new role for the Remove."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it's true enough," said Tom Brown. "Dr. Locke is our head-master, and this chap is only a substitute, and he's under our Head's orders. If he disobeys them, we have a right to resist."

"No doubt about that."

"We'll jolly well show him the telegram, and let him know we know," said Bulstrode, taking the slip of paper. "Hallo! Here he is!"

There was a sharp, savage knock at the door.

"Boys, boys! You young scoundrels!"

"Phew!"

"Yes, sir?" said Bulstrode.

"Will you open this door? I have given you time to reflect, and if you refuse to obey orders you will take the consequences."

"We are following your example, sir!" said Bulstrode.

"What!"

"We've seen the Head's telegram, sir!"

Bulstrode slipped the telegram under the Form-room door. There was a muttered exclamation from Mr. Lothrop as he stooped and picked it up.

"Bulstrode, how did you get this?"

"It was picked up in the Form-room here, sir, and we didn't know it belonged to you when we read it—till we read it, I mean. Now we know that our own head-master has ordered you to let us alone, and you're disobeying him. We're backing up our own head-master, sir."

"Hurray for Dr. Locke!" shouted the juniors.

"Bulstrode—"

"That's final, sir! If you care to obey Dr. Locke, we'll obey you, if not—not!"

"Open this door!"

"We refuse, sir!"

There was a savage exclamation in the passage, and then silence. The juniors waited tensely. What was to follow?

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

More Trouble.

OUTSIDE, in the wide, flagged passage, a man was pacing to and fro with his hard, cold face pale with rage. The weak, mean nature of Mr. Lothrop had led him into this pass. His head had been turned by the possession of authority, and the meanness and cruelty of a small nature had come uppermost.

Now that he was resisted, defied, he hardly knew what to do. He could bully and tyrannise, but as to really governing, he did not know how to set about it. Resistance nonplussed him. His only plan, so far as he had any plan, was to threaten and punish. But at present punishment was out of the question, and threats seemed to have no effect.



Bulstrode stood before Mr. Lothrop shaking from head to foot with pain and resentment and shame. "Let there be no more noise," said the new Head. "I am going to reduce this form to order." (See page 4.)

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, looked out of the Fifth Form-room. The noise in the next room and in the passage had awakened his curiosity.

The new Head turned crimson at the sight of the Form-master's curious face.

"Is anything wrong, sir?" asked Mr. Prout.

"Yes, Mr. Prout; I am locked out of the Remove-room!"

"Dear me!"

"The boys have revolted against authority," said the new Head, crumpling up the telegram in his pocket. He did not mean to let Mr. Prout see that.

Mr. Prout looked shocked and startled.

"Has anything of this kind ever occurred at Greyfriars before, Mr. Prout?"

"Certainly not!" answered the Fifth Form-master promptly. "Under Dr. Locke's regime, sir, there has been no trouble at all."

Mr. Lothrop bit his lip.

"Under Dr. Locke's lax rule, I suppose the boys learned this insubordination," he said tartly. "I regard Dr. Locke as having ruined the discipline of this college."

"I should prefer not to discuss my head-master, sir."

"I want no insolence from you, Mr. Prout!"

"Sir!"

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"I say I want no insolence!" shouted Mr. Lothrop, his fury easily turning upon a new object. "I have already turned out one Form-master for insolence, sir, and it would be quite easy for me to turn out another!"

Mr. Prout turned scarlet. For a gentleman of almost middle-age, an M.A., and a Form-master at a public school, to be addressed in this way was simply outrageous. Mr. Prout already disliked the domineering Head. He was not likely to endure patiently language of this sort.

"I shall be very pleased to place my resignation in your hands!" he said tartly.

"You need not; I discharge you!" said Mr. Lothrop, with a wave of the hand. "I order you to leave the college!"

"I have never experienced such disgusting conduct before!" said Mr. Prout. "I will go with pleasure! You are a man with whom it is impossible to work! I retire from Greyfriars, sir, until the return of Dr. Locke, when I shall place my case before him, and I believe that Mr. Quelch will do the same. We shall teach here, sir, when you have returned to the obscurity from which you ought never to have emerged!"

And, feeling rather proud of that little speech, which seemed to reduce the Head almost to frenzy, Mr. Prout walked away.

NEXT
WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL."

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Every word had been heard by the fellows in the Fifth Form-room, and there was a buzz of voices there immediately. Mr. Lothrop was bringing a fresh hornets' nest about his ears, if he had only known it.

Mr. Prout, thus summarily dismissed by the Head, had no choice but to leave his class; and they were left uncontrolled. Coker, of the Fifth, jumped up.

"Enough lessons!" he exclaimed, throwing Euclid across the room. "I'm fed-up with angles! Let's get out!"

"I say—" began Blundell, the captain of the Form.

"Prout's gone!" said Coker.

"But—"

"The Remove have gone on strike; they were talking about it last night, and now they've done it!" said Coker.

"I don't think the Fifth ought to be behind the Remove!"

"But we're seniors," said Potter. "We can't play tricks like the juniors, you know."

"Oh, rats!"

"Coker's only just got out of the Shell," said Bland. "He still feels like a giddy junior! We can't do it, Coker!"

"Boah!"

"Look here—"

"Cave!"

Mr. Lothrop put in his head at the door.

"Silence here!" he exclaimed sharply. "Boys, your Form-master has been dismissed. I shall send a prefect to take the class for the present; or, rather," said Mr. Lothrop, remembering that the prefects were very restive under his rule, "I shall leave the class under your charge for the present, Blundell!"

"Ye-es, sir."

"If there is any disturbance, I shall hold you responsible!"

And Mr. Lothrop retired, and placed the key on the outside of the lock, and turned it when he had closed the door.

"My hat!" exclaimed Coker. "He's locked us in!"

He ran to the door and tried it. It was locked; the Fifth were prisoners in their Form-room. Mr. Lothrop evidently did not intend to run any risk of the Fifth joining in the revolt of the Remove.

Needless to say, there was no work done in the Fifth Form-room after that. Many of the fellows felt, with Blundell, that their position as seniors barred them from joining in a revolt. But they were disposed to make the most of the time of disorder, and their sympathies certainly were with the Remove.

As for Coker and a few others, they declared their intention of joining the Remove rebels at the earliest possible moment.

Having looked in the Fifth, Mr. Lothrop paced savagely along the passage, wondering what he should do next. He looked into the Sixth Form-room, and called to the prefects:

"Wingate, Courtney, Loder, Campbell!"

The Sixth Form-master looked round in surprise.

"Do you require the prefects, sir?" he asked.

"If I did not, I should not call them, Mr. Price!"

"Oh, very well!"

The four prefects looked at one another, and came very unwillingly in obedience to Mr. Lothrop's call.

Wingate, after a moment's thought, seated himself again at his desk, and resumed his work.

Mr. Lothrop glared at him angrily.

"Wingate!"

The captain of Greyfriars looked at him steadily.

"Yes, sir?"

"I called you!"

"I am not a prefect now, sir," said Wingate calmly. "You will remember, sir, that you have dismissed me from the post."

The new Head bit his lip. He had forgotten that for the moment.

"I reinstate you, Wingate!" he said, after a moment.

"Thank you, sir; but I decline to be reinstated!"

"Wingate!"

"I am quite within my rights, sir. A senior is not bound to act as a prefect unless he chooses at Greyfriars. I appeal to Mr. Price!"

"Quite so!" said the Sixth Form-master.

"Hold your tongue, Mr. Price, please!" shouted the new Head.

Mr. Price turned crimson.

"W-w-w-what did you say?" he almost stuttered.

"Do not interrupt me, sir!"

"I—I—I will certainly not interrupt you!" said Mr. Price, almost weeping with rage. "I will not exchange another word with you, sir! I will not act with you, sir! I retire from my post this minute, sir! Dr. Locke would never have addressed a page-boy, sir, as you have addressed me, a Form-master—a man older than yourself, too! I will not remain in this school another hour, sir! I regard you, sir, as a ruffian! I feel utter contempt for you, sir!" roared the Price.

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And the indignant gentleman stalked out of the Form-room with rustling gown, and his few remaining hairs simply bristling with rage.

"Wingate," said Mr. Lothrop, without even a glance at Mr. Price, as he stalked out, "I require your assistance, and that of the other prefects."

"I am not a prefect, sir," said Wingate steadily.

"I order you to act as one."

"I am within my rights in declining, sir."

"I shall remember this, Wingate."

"Very well, sir."

"Courtney and the rest, come with me—"

"If you please, sir," said Courtney suavely, "I resign, sir."

"What?"

"I was appointed a prefect by Dr. Locke, sir. I do not care to act as a prefect under you, sir. Pray accept my resignation."

"I refuse to accept your resignation!" shouted Mr. Lothrop.

"Pray excuse me, sir," said Courtney, still very politely. "But a prefect has a right to resign if he chooses. It's a rule here, sir."

"I resign, too," said Campbell.

Loder hesitated a moment. Loder was a bully himself, and very much inclined to back up Mr. Lothrop's methods. But Loder had felt the weight of the head-master's arm, and he had not forgotten or forgiven it. And Loder felt, too, that he could not resist the general trend of feeling in his Form.

"I resign, sir," he said.

Mr. Lothrop was pale with rage.

"You are doing this to help the juniors in their revolt!" he shouted.

"Not at all, sir," said Wingate. "You sacked me yourself, and you have no right to complain."

"No insolence, Wingate."

"Very well, I will say nothing more."

"I order you to aid me in suppressing the revolt of the Remove."

The seniors did not reply. Wingate bent his eye upon his book, and Courtney and Loder and Campbell returned to their seats.

Mr. Lothrop glared at them helplessly. Physical force was evidently quite useless here, for any one of the prefects was very nearly a match for the new Head physically. And if he had attempted violence, there was no doubt, in their present state of mind, that two or three of them would have collared him and tossed him out of the room.

Mr. Lothrop retired from the Sixth Form-room.

Wingate rose to his feet and glanced over the fellows, who were beginning to talk excitedly.

"We can't stand that Outsider, you chaps," Wingate said, in his plain way. "I'm not backing up a man who talks to our Form-master as he talked to Mr. Price. The Remove seem to have rebelled—and we all know jolly well that he's driven them into it. I'm not going to interfere with them. Mr. Lothrop has brought it about, and he's not going to drag us into it. We can't back them up; that would be a little too thick. But we're going to stand out of the thing entirely. The Sixth Form of Greyfriars can't enter into a rough-and-tumble with a junior Form to please a hot-headed outsider who doesn't know how to manage youngsters."

"Quite right!" said Courtney.

And the rest of the Sixth agreed. And it is quite possible that a good many in the Sixth wished that the great dignity of their lordly Form did not prevent them from sharing in the fun of a barring-out.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER,

No Entrance.

MR. LOTHROP returned to the door of the Remove Form-room. It was still locked, and he could hear the voices of the juniors inside. There seemed to be no slackening in the determination of the Remove.

Mr. Lothrop tried the door. There was a momentary cessation of the buzz inside. The door did not move, and the Head strode away.

Within the room there were chuckles now. The trying of the door was a sign of fresh weakness. The juniors were beginning to feel themselves masters of the situation.

Mr. Lothrop quitted the School House, and went into the porter's lodge.

Gosling, the Greyfriars porter, seemed to have received some inkling of what was going forward in the School House, for there was a twinkle in his eye. Gosling, like the rest of Greyfriars, had felt the keen edge of the head-master's tongue, and he did not like Mr. Lothrop any more than the

others did. It was quite possible that Gosling would rejoice inwardly at the sight of a defeat of the obnoxious Head.

"Gosling!" rapped out Mr. Lothrop.

"Yes, sir," said Gosling, with much outward respect, but with that twinkle still in his eye.

Mr. Lothrop saw it, but it did not seem expedient to take any notice of it at present. He wanted Gosling's services.

"The Remove have locked the door of the Form-room against me," said Mr. Lothrop.

"'Orrid, sir!" said Gosling sympathetically. "'Orrid, sir! Wot I says is this 'ere, sir, them young rips—"

"I did not come here to ask your opinion, Gosling!" snapped Mr. Lothrop.

"N-no, sir!" said Gosling, somewhat discomfited.

"I require your assistance. Do you know whether there is a duplicate key to the lock of the Remove-room?"

"I dunno, sir."

"You have not one yourself?"

"No, sir."

"Then it will be necessary to force the door," said the Head. "Bring your tools, Gosling, and force the lock of the door."

Gosling looked very doubtful.

"I dunno that I can, sir," he said.

"You must!"

"What I says, sir—"

"Follow me!"

Gosling followed the Head rather sullenly. He took his bag of tools with him, and grumbled all the way. Gosling did not like the Remove any more than the Remove liked Gosling. But he did not want to enter into open warfare with the most unruly Form at Greyfriars. He had an inward misgiving that he would suffer for it if he did.

The Head rapped on the Form-room door with his knuckles.

"Bulstrode!" he called out.

"Hallo!"

Mr. Lothrop ground his teeth. The respectful "Yes, sir," had already been changed for the familiar "Hallo!" It was a sign of the state of the Remove mind.

"If you do not immediately open this door, Bulstrode, I shall order Gosling to force the lock!"

"Rats!"

"What?"

"Rats!"

Mr. Lothrop was pale with rage.

"Break the lock open, Gosling!" he exclaimed.

"It will damage the door, sir."

"That does not matter!"

"Which it's a fine old oak door, sir, and Dr. Locke will not like it, sir, that's wot I says," grumbled Gosling.

"Hold your tongue, Gosling, and do as I tell you," said Mr. Lothrop. "Force the door open immediately!"

"Werry well, sir!"

Gosling started operations on the lock.

The sounds were heard within, and the juniors looked very serious. If Mr. Lothrop got in among them with his cane matters would reach a climax. Brute as he was, the juniors naturally hesitated at the idea of laying hands upon their head-master. Yet they would be compelled to do so unless the revolt was to end in an absurd surrender. But if the other masters and the prefects backed up the Head resistance would be useless.

"My hat!" said Nugent. "Gossey is going to do for us! He'll smash that lock in five minutes."

"I guess we can pile up the desks against the door," said Fish.

"Good!"

"They're clamped to the floor," said Skinner.

"We can wrench them up."

"The master's desk first," said Bulstrode.

"Buck up, you fellows!"

The Form-master's desk was surrounded by keen juniors. They wrenched it out of its place, and dragged it across to the door, and jammed it close up to the panels. It would require some very hard pushing from outside to move that desk.

And then they set to work on the others. Desk after desk was wrenched up and jammed against the door in a heavy pile. And the Form-room desks at Greyfriars were not flimsy modern ones; they were strong and heavy and old-fashioned, of old, solid oak, and required all the strength of two or three fellows combined to move them.

Crash!

The lock was smashed.

The Form-room door came open a half-inch.

Mr. Lothrop pushed on it savagely from outside, and the door jammed on the pile of desks, and stopped there.

"Back up!" shouted Harry Wharton.

The juniors piled against the desks, shoving hard, and holding them in position.

Mr. Lothrop pushed, and pushed; but he might as well have pushed at the Form-room wall as at the Form-room door.

The door did not yield.

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NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL"

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ONE
PENNY.

The Head desisted at last. His voice, broken and gasping with exertion and rage, came through the aperture of the door.

"Will you open this door, you young scoundrels?"

"No, sir!"

"If you refuse further I shall call in the aid of the police."

"Phew!" murmured John Bull.

The juniors stood silent.

The police!

They had not thought of that. But now that they did think of it they could only conclude that a head-master, defied by his scholars, had the right to call in the aid of the law.

Matters were getting serious now!

"Well?" rapped out Mr. Lothrop. "Will you open the door?"

"No!" shouted Bulstrode desperately.

"I will go down to Priardale, then, and in an hour I shall return with the police," said Mr. Lothrop, in a voice of concentrated rage. "I warn you that you will have to take the consequences. For the last time, will you return to your duty?"

"Our duty is to Dr. Locke, sir, not to you!"

"Will you open this door?"

"No!"

Mr. Lothrop said no more. He strode away; and five minutes later Bob Cherry, looking from the Form-room window, saw him crossing towards the gates, in his hat and coat. He had evidently gone to carry out his threat!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Laying in Supplies.

"THE police!" muttered Skinner.

The Remove looked serious.

"It's getting jolly thick!" said Snoop. "I—I—I think it's not much good holding out any longer."

There was a roar.

"Shut up!"

"Coward!"

Snoop cowered away in silence.

Serious the matter might be, but the Remove were not disposed to give in. "No surrender," was their motto.

"It's all rot!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "It's swank, and nothing else. The police can't hurt us. We've done nothing to be arrested for; and so long as we're locked in they couldn't arrest us, anyway."

"Quite right!"

"But we can't remain locked up here," said Skinner. "We shall get jolly hungry in time, and we shall have to get out."

"We ought to be provisioned for a barring-out," Tom Brown remarked.

Bulstrode mounted on a desk. Bulstrode was quite beginning to "feel his feet" as leader now. He was entering into the spirit of the thing heartily.

"Look here, you fellows," he said, "we're not going to give in."

"Never!"

It was a ringing shout back from the Remove. There did not seem to be much giving in about the Lover Fourth at that moment.

"We won't surrender till Lothrop agrees to our terms. We'll stand shoulder to shoulder and fight it out to a finish."

"Hurrah!"

"We can't hold out in the Form-room," went on Bulstrode. "We shall be starved out in a day's time. If we're going on strike, we shall have to do the thing in order, and make a real barring-out of it. We've got to take up a strong position. You've all of you heard of that old barring-out at Rugby. The chaps retreated to the Island, and were taken in the rear, and had to give in. We shall have to take up a strong position, and get some provisions in, and hold out till the Outsider comes to terms."

"Hurrah!"

"The question is, what place—"

"I suggest the gym," said Harry Wharton. "It's a jolly strong building, and the windows are very high, and the doors as strong as anything. We should have the place to ourselves there, and we could hold out for a whole term."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good!" said Bulstrode. "Now, are all you fellows ready to see this thing through, and make a regular barring-out of it?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Mind, we shall have to stick together, and our terms will be as stated in the manifesto, with the addition that no one is to be flogged or expelled for taking part in the strike."

"Hear, hear!"

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

"Come on, then!" said Bulstrode, jumping down. "We've got time to get into the gym. before Lothrop comes back with his blessed bobbies. We can raid Mrs. Mimble's shop for the provisions."

"Good!"

"Of course, we shall have to pay for them, but every chap can pool all the money he has, at a time like this. It's shoulder to shoulder now. I've got a sovereign and some shillings to start the collection with."

"I'll shove in a fiver!" said Vernon-Smith; and for once the Bounder's swank was welcome to the Remove.

"Cash wanted!" said Bob Cherry, going round with a cap. And cash was liberally subscribed. Little Wun Lung, the Chinese junior, added a fiver to the Bounder's fiver, and there were several sovereigns glistening in the collection. There was ample to pay for all the stock in the school tuckshop, if the juniors wanted it.

Meanwhile Bulstrode, more and more of a leader now, rapped out his orders.

"We'll get to the gym," he said. "Six of you can take the money and buy the things at Mrs. Mimble's, and get them into the gym. The rest garrison the gym. at once, and make it ready for defence. Come on!"

"Suppose the masters interfere with us when we get out?" asked Ogilvy.

Bulstrode shook his head.

"I don't think they will," he said. "Lothrop ain't any too popular with the masters. Anyway, we shan't take any notice. Our own Form-master has been kicked out, and we're not under the others."

"Quite right."

"But the prefects—" said Skinner.

"If the prefects were going to back up Lothrop, they'd have shown up before this," said Bulstrode shrewdly. "But, in any case, we have to risk it. Mind, we're standing shoulder to shoulder, and if the prefects interfere with us, they're to be biffed over. Our motto is 'No surrender.'"

"Hurrah!"

"Hip-pip!"

The desks were dragged away from the door.

The Remove marched excitedly out into the passage. Under Bulstrode's orders, the greater part of the Form marched into the gym. at once.

Five or six fellows, with big bags and baskets, invaded Mrs. Mimble's tuckshop. The good old lady was quite alarmed as Harry Wharton came in and slammed down a big cricket-bag on the counter, followed by Bull and Nugent, and Brown and Fish and Morgan. Mrs. Mimble knew that there were queer doings in the School House that morning, and her first thought was that the juniors had come to raid her little shop.

"Oh, Master Wharton," she gasped, "you won't do any harm—"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Not a bit of it, Mrs. Mimble!" he replied cheerily. "We've come to give you a jolly good order, that's all."

"Look here!" laughed John Bull, laying the capful of money on the counter.

Mrs. Mimble's eyes almost started from her head.

"Deary me!" she gasped.

"We want a lot of things," said Harry. "All the bread you've got, Mrs. Mimble, and all the butter and bacon and cheese, and—and all the tinned things, and bottled things, and—and, in fact, everything."

"Just so," said Nugent; "that's quite comprehensive."

"Dear me, young gentlemen—"

"Buck up, Mrs. Mimble; no time to lose. There's fifteen pounds there, and you can add up the items of the bill afterwards."

"Very well, Master Wharton. I do hope you are not going to do anything very reckless, my dear boys," said the good old lady.

"Not much! We're going to stand up for our rights as Britons. Britons never shall be slaves, you know, Mrs. Mimble."

"What-ho!" said John Bull emphatically. "Bung the leaves into the basket. I'll start with them. But, I say, Wharton, oughtn't the other fellows to be given a chance of joining in?"

"The other Forms, do you mean?"

"Yes, the Fourth and the Shell."

"I'll put it to them," said Wharton. "You fellows get the grub to the gym. as quickly as you can."

"Right you are!"

Wharton met Bulstrode just outside the shop.

"What about asking the other fellows to join us, Bulstrode?" he asked. "The more the merrier, you know."

Bulstrode nodded at once.

"Yes, rather!" he said. "I hear that the Fifth are locked in their room, and they're making an awful row."

"I'll speak to them."

"Mind you get back to the gym. before Lothrop returns,"

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said Bulstrode warningly. "If he catches you in the House—"

"I'll be careful."

Wharton ran into the School House again. Bulstrode went into the tuckshop. The juniors were packing the provisions into the bags as fast as Mrs. Mimble could hand the things out.

"Good!" said Bulstrode. "Buck up! If there's any balance we'll settle it with you afterwards, Mrs. Mimble; but I think fifteen quid will see you through."

"Yes, indeed, Master Bulstrode."

"Hurry up!"

"I say, you fellows—"

Bulstrode turned round. A fat form had appeared in the doorway of the tuckshop, and a pair of round eyes blinked through big spectacles at the strikers.

"I—I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, "I—I think I'll join you, you know. I didn't know there was going to be a big feed. I—I mean, I think I ought to stand by the Form, you know, at a time like this. I—"

"You fat fraud! Get out!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"Get out!" roared Bulstrode. "You're not coming into the strike at all. You're a rotten blackleg, Bunter. Get out!"

"Oh, really—"

"Outside, you fat waster!"

"I—I think you might let a chap have a jam-tart, to go on with, anyway. I—"

"Here you are, then!" said John Bull.

Smack!

Billy Bunter staggered back with a wild yell as the jam-tart smacked upon his little fat nose, and stuck there. There was a roar of laughter from the juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Groo! Hoo! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Beasts! Groo!"

"Give him some soda-water," said Bulstrode.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good! Bunter—"

But Billy Bunter did not wait for the soda-water; he fled. And the juniors, laughing, packed the bags with provisions at lightning speed, and bore them off to the gym. ready for the siege.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Hot Chase.

THERE was a considerable noise in the Fifth Form-room. The Fifth, with all the dignity they arrogated to themselves as seniors, acted very much like juniors when they found the reins of authority slackened. Coker and his friends openly declared that they meant to join in the revolt of the Remove, and Blundell and the more grave and reverend members of the Form, though they did not intend to join the strikers, wanted to get out and enjoy their usual liberty in the open air. As there was no master to take them in lessons, there was no reason why they should not play cricket. That was Blundell's idea, and most of the fellows agreed with him. But Coker meant to join the rebels. Coker did not forget that his minor had suffered at the hands of Mr. Lothrop, at that gentleman's previous school. When he was at home, Coker was in the habit of licking his minor pretty regularly; but he was none the less indignant at anybody else presuming to lick him. Coker was hammering on the inside of the Form-room door when Harry Wharton came up the passage.

"Stop a minute and open this door, whoever you are," shouted Coker, as he heard the footsteps on the flags outside.

Harry Wharton stopped. The key was in the outside of the door, and it took him only a second to turn it and throw the door open.

"Thanks!" said Coker.

"You're quite welcome," said Harry. "Look here, I want to speak to you chaps. We're barring out the masters."

"Phew!"

"Lothrop's gone to Friardale for the bobbies. We're provisioning the gym., and we're going to hold out, and fight to a finish."

"My hat!"

"We want all the school to join us," said Harry. "Any of you fellows coming?"

"You see, we couldn't very well associate with juniors in this way," Blundell explained. "We have our position as seniors to consider."

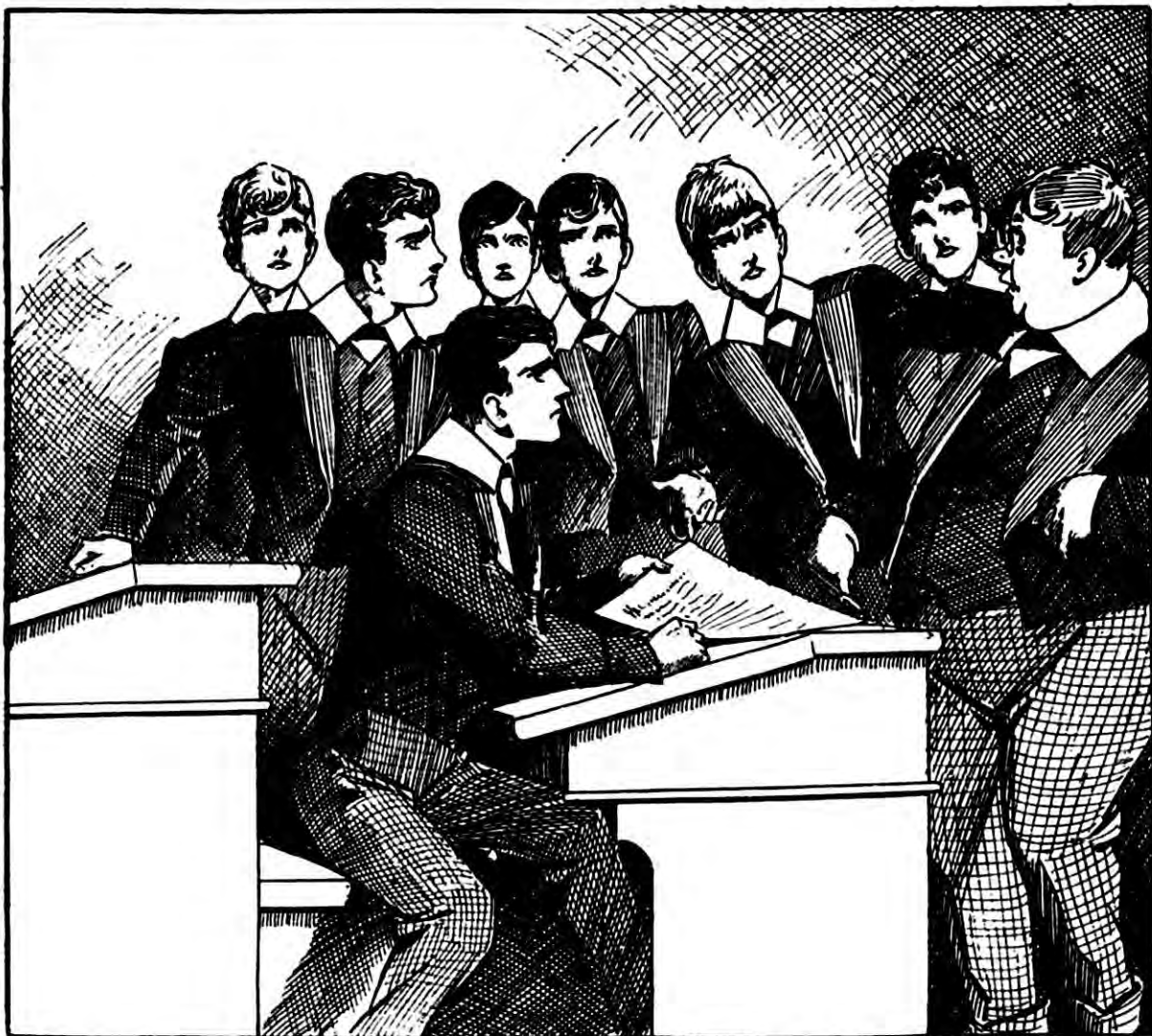
"Oh, rats!"

"Eh?"

"Rats," said Harry Wharton cheerfully, "and many of them. I expect you'll be glad enough when we've brought Lothrop to his senses, anyway. But do as you like; we don't want recruits unless they've got some pluck."

A FREE OFFER!

See this week's number of
"THE BOYS' HERALD," 14.



"Sign!" roared Bob Cherry, putting the pen into Bunter's fat hand. "Do you think you're going to avoid the risk, you cowardly barrel of lard?" (See page 5.)

"You cheeky young bounder!"

"Every chap who wants to join us in the strike is welcome in the gym," said Harry. "That's all I've got to say."

"I'm jolly well going," said Coker. "What?"

"So will I," said Potter.

Two or three other fellows said the same. Coker led the way to the gym. The Removites in the gym. received the Fifth Form recruits with loud cheers, and Coker & Co. felt very proud of themselves.

Second lesson was now over at Greyfriars, and the Forms were coming out. The Sixth Form studiously avoided seeing anything that was going on. Wingate went down to the cricket-ground, as if he had never thought of anything that term excepting cricket practice, and most of the seniors joined him there. It was a good way of keeping out of the matter. They did not care to join in the revolt, and they were determined not to be drawn into backing up Mr. Lothrop's lawless tyranny. The juniors understood their feelings very well, and the knowledge that the prefects did not mean to interfere, naturally encouraged the young rebels very much.

The Upper Fourth and the Shell crowded the passage, talking excitedly. There was no doubt that all sympathy was on the side of the Remove in the "row," and that most of the juniors were inclined to back them up.

There was a shout as Harry Wharton was seen.

"I say, is it a fact you've barred out Lothrop?" asked Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth.

"Solid fact!" said Wharton.

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"You've gone on strike—eh?"

"Yes."

"And you're the leader?"

"No; Bulstrode."

"And you're going to hold out in the gym.?"

"That's the programme."

"Until when?"

"Until Lothrop agrees to our terms."

"He jolly well won't; he can't."

"Then we hold out."

"What about grub—?"

"We've cleared out Mrs. Mimble's shop to provision the gym," said Harry. "We're prepared to hold out any length of time. Lothrop's gone for the Friardale bobbies now."

"Great Scott!"

"You'll all get expelled, as sure as a gun," said Temple.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"We're risking that. Are you fellows going to join us?" asked Wharton. "Some of the Fifth have gone into the gym. to help."

"Of course, you'd expect me to be leader?" Temple asked.

"Of course, we shouldn't."

"Now, look here, Wharton—"

"Oh, no rotting!" said Harry crisply. "Are you joining us, or aren't you? Bulstrode's captain, and I'm backing him up, all along the line."

"Of course, we couldn't take orders from a junior," said Temple loftily.

NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL."

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

"Oh, rather!"

"Then you can go and eat coke," said Harry. "We can manage all right without you. Any of you Shell fellows coming?"

The Shell fellows were hesitating. Feeling in the Form ran very high; they disliked Mr. Lothrop as much as the Remove did. But they had not suffered so much at his hands, and they were very undecided.

"Don't be beastly blacklegs, you know," said Wharton. "Why not pile in with us, and help to make the strike a success?"

"Well, you see—"

There was a sudden shout from the door.

"Look out, Wharton!"

"What is it?"

"Lothrop!"

"My hat!"

Harry Wharton bounded to the school door. Across the green Close he could see the new Head entering at the gates. And the Head was not alone. With him was the fat and imposing form of P.-c. Tozer, the old enemy of the Greyfriars Removites.

"Cut it, Wharton!" shouted the Shell and the Fourth.

"Buck up! He's after you!"

Out in the Close, five or six stragglers of the Remove were bolting into the gymnasium as fast as they could. The Head had returned earlier than they had expected; he had certainly lost no time.

Harry Wharton gritted his teeth.

Mr. Lothrop had caught sight of him at the school door, and was coming towards him with long strides.

Wharton dashed out of the house, and broke into a run for the gym.

The new Head shouted after him.

"Wharton, Wharton! Stop! Stop at once!"

Harry Wharton ran on.

His comrades were crowding in the doorway of the gym., shouting encouragement to him. Bulstrode had hold of the door, ready to slam it as soon as Wharton should be inside. But would the boy reach the gym. in time?

Mr. Lothrop was dashing after him, with his walking-stick clutched tightly in his hand, and savage determination in his face.

The new Head of Greyfriars was not an athlete, but certainly he had a very good turn of speed. He covered the ground rapidly and gained on the running junior. He was close behind when Wharton was still some little distance from the gym., and the walking-stick rose in the air.

It seemed as if the infuriated master, in his rage, meant to strike the junior to the ground from behind.

"Wharton! Stop!" he panted.

Wharton dashed on.

"Look out, Harry!" shrieked Bob Cherry. "Mind his stick!"

Wharton instinctively dodged.

The stick was sweeping down—and Wharton felt the wind of it on his cheek as it missed his head by an inch.

He gave a sharp cry as it grazed his shoulder.

Mr. Lothrop staggered, overbalanced a little by the force of the blow, and lost his stride for a moment.

Harry Wharton put on a desperate spurt, and dashed on and reached the open door of the gym.

Half a dozen hands were stretched out to grasp him and drag him in, and he went reeling into the building in the midst of the juniors.

Bulstrode slammed the door.

Mr. Lothrop came panting up.

He hurled his weight against the door, and it swayed back.

"Back up!" roared Bulstrode.

A crowd of juniors rushed to back him up. The door jammed to again; but it could not quite close, for Mr. Lothrop had put his foot into the opening. The boot prevented the door from quite closing.

"Take your foot away!" yelled Bulstrode.

"Open this door!"

"Rats!"

"You young scoundrels—"

"Take your foot away!"

"Tozer!" shouted the Head.

The fat constable was coming on. Bulstrode was desperate. He drew a pin from his coat, and jabbed the end of it into the leg outside.

There was a wild yell from Mr. Lothrop, and the leg was jerked away, the foot with it, and the door jammed close.

Slam!

"Oh!" roared Mr. Lothrop. "Ow! Yaroo!"

The Removites laughed breathlessly. Bulstrode turned the key in the lock. Outside, the Head's walking-stick dealt a shower of blows upon the door.

Bulstrode dropped the bar into place inside.

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NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL"

"Safe!" he gasped. "Barred out, by George!"

"My hat!" Wharton panted. "That was a narrow shave!"

"A miss is as good as a mile!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Listen to him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Open this door!"

"Rats!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors hurled a yell of defiance at the tyrant of Greyfriars, as he raged outside the gym.—barred out!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Majesty of the Law.

CRASH!
Crash!
Crash!

The heavy walking-stick in Mr. Lothrop's hand smashed upon the door of the gym. At the third blow it broke, and a half of it flew in the air, narrowly missing the angry master's head.

The new Head hurled the fragment that remained to the ground.

Within the gym. the juniors listened. Some of them were quaking a little. Not one of the Remove would have cared to face Mr. Lothrop at that moment.

"My word!" Frank Nugent murmured. "My word! I think he is rattly!"

"Quite waxy!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Jolly lucky thing for you, Harry, that you're on this side of the door," said Bob.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I was just thinking so," he said. "Talk about the giddy Bengal tiger when you twist his tail! He's not in it with Lothrop!"

"He's gone!" said Tom Brown.

"Not very far," said Nugent, mounting to one of the windows. "He's talking to our old friend Tozer."

"How many bobbies?"

"Only Tozer, so far as I can see."

"Well, Tozey won't hurt us."

"Ha, ha! Rather not!"

"Are all the doors and windows fastened?" asked Harry Wharton anxiously. "Lothrop's deep enough to dodge round, or send Gosling—"

"They're all fastened," said Bulstrode. "There's the door here, the side door, and the door of the room at the back. They're all bolted and barred."

"What about the windows?"

"All fastened. But they're too high from the ground, anyway, for anybody to get in, I should think."

"They may get ladders."

"Faith, and it would be a risky bizney intirely, wid us inside!" said Micky Desmond.

"They're jolly well not going to get in, anyway," said Bulstrode determinedly. "If they get up ladders to the windows, we shall have to push them out."

"Yes, rather!"

"You bet!" said Fisher T. Fish. "And I guess they'll feel less comfy falling off the ladders than we shall feel pushing them off—some!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a little window beside the gym. door, barred inside the glass. The juniors gathered there to watch for the next movement of the enemy.

Mr. Lothrop had disappeared, but he came back into sight in a few minutes, and Police-constable Tozer, the guardian of law and order in Friardale, came with him. The fat con-

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stable was puffing and blowing, evidently pretty well winded by his walk from the village in the warm weather.

He strode up to the door, and rapped upon it with his fat knuckles.

"Hallo, you there!" he called out.

"Hallo!" said Bulstrode.

"Hopen this door!"

"What?"

"Hopen this door!"

"Which?"

"This 'ere door!"

"How?"

"Will you hopen it?"

"Wherefore?"

The juniors chuckled. P.-c. Tozer paused, it dawning upon him at last that Bulstrode's replies were meant to be taken humorously. At the idea of anybody venturing to be humorous with him, P.-c. Tozer swelled like a turkey-cock. He felt the majesty of the law insulted in his person.

It was evidently Mr. Lothrop's idea to scare the juniors, if possible, by the sight of a man in uniform. But the juniors, to use Fisher T. Fish's expressive language, did not get scared worth a cent.

There was a strong oaken door between them and the constable, and even P.-c. Tozer had no terrors for them so long as the door was intact. And P.-c. Tozer was no Joshua to cause defences to fall down by mere sound.

Mr. Tozer seemed somewhat nonplussed. He had expected to inspire terror, and he seemed to inspire nothing but mirth. It took him some little time to get used to the idea. Finally, he rapped on the door again.

"You'd better hopen," he said.

"Rats!"

"Wh-wh-what!"

"Rats!" said Bulstrode cheerfully. "And many of 'em!"

"Boyl!"

"Hollo!"

"Do you know that you har insuking the law?" roared P.-c. Tozer. "Hopen this door at once, or take the consequences."

"Rats!"

"I horder you!"

"Horder away, Tozey."

P.-c. Tozer simply gasped. That any human being should have the astounding nerve to address him in this manner was almost incredible.

"You young ohecky himp!" he gasped.

"Oh, go and eat coke, Tozey!"

"What?"

"Take some anti-fat, old man!"

"W-h-h-h-at?"

"And leave the gin-and-water alone, Tozey. It makes you cross."

P.-c. Tozer retired from the door, muttering to himself. He rejoined Mr. Lothrop.

"It ain't any good, sir," he said. "Them young ribs don't care even for the police. Fur as I'm concerned, I don't know what this country's coming to."

Mr. Lothrop snorted. He did not care a rap what the country was coming to so long as he got to close quarters with the Remove.

"I will have the door burst in!" he exclaimed.

P.-c. Tozer looked at the door doubtfully.

"That won't be heasy, sir," he said.

And Mr. Lothrop, as he, too, looked at the door, had to agree with the fat constable. The door was far too solid to be easily broken in. And, as it was barred across inside, there was no use in breaking the lock.

Mr. Lothrop strode to the door and tapped upon it.

"Bulstrode! Can you hear me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Has not this nonsense gone far enough?" said the Head, in a voice trembling with anger. "You know what punishment you are exposing yourselves to by this absurd conduct."

"We are willing to lay our case before Dr. Locke, sir, when he returns."

"You are under my orders now."

"We regard Dr. Locke as our head-master, sir, and we know he has ordered that there shall be no more punishments till he comes back."

"Don't argue with me, Bulstrode."

"Certainly not, sir; but it is you who are arguing, sir."

"That's right," murmured Bull. "Pile it on, Bulstrode."

Mr. Lothrop ground his teeth.

"Bulstrode, if you don't admit me at once I shall have the door broken in."

"You can't, sir; it's too strong, and we've barred it. And we've got things here to pile up and make a barricade if you do."

"You cannot keep this up for long. You will have to open the door when you require food, you young scoundrel!"

"We've got food."

"You have what?"

"Fifteen pounds' worth of grub, sir," said Bulstrode. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 172.

NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL"

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"We can hold out quite a long time, sir—make a regular Siege of Ladysmith of it, sir."

"You must come out to-night."

"Not at all, sir. We're going to camp out here."

"Oh, you shall suffer for this!" shouted Mr. Lothrop.

"We are taking our chances of that, sir. As a matter of fact, we're only upholding Dr. Locke's rightful authority."

"Hear, hear!" shouted the Remove.

Mr. Lothrop retired. A few minutes later Police-constable Tozer rapped on the door again, and his dulcet tones were heard.

"Now, boys, you had better give in quietly. I've got horders to arrest the lot of yer if there's hany more of this."

"Ha, ha, ha! You can't!"

"I'm goin' to get in by the winder, and then——"

"You'll be jolly glad to get out again!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Police-constable Tozer walked away puffing. What was to be done with these juniors, for whom even the majesty of the law had no terrors? It was a difficult question for Mr. Lothrop to answer.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Short Commons.

THE garrison of the gym. listened for an attack, but none came. It was pretty clear that Mr. Lothrop was nonplussed, and did not know what step to take next.

The courage of the Removites mounted higher and higher. The idea that they were really backing up the authority of Dr. Locke against this interloper encouraged them wonderfully. They were willing to be judged by the kind old Head when he returned. But however that might be, they were determined not to submit to the tyrant of Greyfriars. Unless he came to their terms the struggle would go on to the bitter end.

Their successful defiance of the new Head "bucked up" the strikers. The strike seemed to be working wonderfully easily now.

The Head had, in fact, played into their hands by absenting himself from the school for half an hour as he had done. Mr. Lothrop was clearly not the man to deal with a crisis of any kind.

"All right so far," grinned Bob Cherry. "We're the giddy conquering heroes. Hurrah for us!"

"Hurrah!"

And the shout rang loudly through the gymnasium.

The juniors were entering into the spirit of the thing now. Even the more timorous members of the Form were beginning to regard a barring-out as good fun.

"Jolly lucky we thought of the grub," Nugent remarked.

"As a matter of fact, I'm beginning to get hungry."

"Same here," said John Bull.

"Well, it's near lunch-time," said Bulstrode. "Lucky Bunter deserted us. The grub will last twice as long without him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, I must say we're lucky not to have Bunter helping us," said Harry Wharton. "That's a real service he's done us by scooting off."

"I say, you fellows——"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

It was Bunter.

The fat junior had suddenly appeared from the room at the further end of the gym., where he had evidently concealed himself.

He blinked very doubtfully at the strikers, in some anxiety as to the reception he would get from them.

"You cheeky young beggar!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"How did you come here?"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

Bulstrode grasped the Owl of the Remove by the collar and shook him.

"Didn't we tell you not to come in here?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, really——"

"You fat fraud! What do you want?"

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I felt I was bound to stand by the Form, you know, in—in this noble struggle for independence," said Bunter. "I—I felt that I couldn't desert you chaps at a time like this!"

"Liar!" said Bob Cherry laconically.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"If you think you're going to gorge up to the neck on the provisions you're making a big mistake," Bulstrode said grimly. "Now you're here you can stay here, I suppose, and if there's any fighting we'll shove you in front, but you'll be on an allowance of grub all the time you're here."

"Oh, really, considering that I've come here to help you, and place my brains at your service—"

"Your what?" demanded Bob Cherry, in amazement. "Brains," said Bunter loftily. "You naturally want a chap with some brains to advise you at a time like this. I'd like to know how you're likely to get on without me, anyway."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, sling him out of the window!" said Tom Brown. "We sha'n't be able to stand him."

"Oh, really, Brown—"

"I guess he's been at the grub already," said Fisher T. Fish, whose keen eye noted a smear of jam on Bunter's fat face. "He's been in the room where the grub is."

"The—the burglar—"

"I—I haven't!" roared Bunter. "I—I only took a snack—just a sausage and a tart or two. I know you fellows don't want to starve me—"

"You—you—"

"Ow! Don't shake me like that, Bulstrode. You may make my glasses fall off—"

"Let's see what damage the fat boulder has done," said Wharton.

The strikers crowded into the store-room. The provisions had been packed into one of the cupboards where dumb-bells and boxing-gloves and like things were kept. Bunter had certainly made a raid, but the quantity of provisions was so great that the difference was hardly perceptible.

"The fat rotter!" Bulstrode growled. "If he stays here he'll be after the grub all the time. It would be better to drop him out of a window."

"Oh, really—"

"We can keep the cupboard locked," said Nugent, "and Bunter will have to be on allowance all the time. Let's have dinner now—I'm hungry."

"Good! I'll set sentries first."

"That's a good wheeze."

Five or six fellows were set on watch at different windows, with arrangements made for them to be relieved every half-hour. They were to shout at the first sign of an attack. Then the strikers prepared their lunch.

Hot and cold water were laid on in the gym., and Nugent had not forgotten a kettle and spirit-stove.

It was easy to make coffee, and coffee washed down sandwiches and cold chicken very comfortably.

Billy Bunter fixed a hungry eye on the fowls. He intended beginning with one, and continuing with others.

But as he reached out to help himself Bulstrode rapped him on the wrist with the handle of the carving-knife, and Bunter gave a howl.

"Ow!"

"Hands off!" said Bulstrode.

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"There's a sausage for you," said Bulstrode; "and you can have one cold potato and as much bread as you like."

"Look here!" roared Bunter. "If you think I'm jolly well going to be starved here you're jolly well mistaken! See?"

"You shouldn't have come in, then."

"I came to back up the Form—"

"Rats!"

"I've a jolly good mind to desert—"

"As soon as you like."

"The sooner the quicker, in fact," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course, I couldn't leave you fellows in the lurch, but I'm jolly well not going to be starved! I want a cold chicken. I refuse to eat that sausage."

"Very well," said Bulstrode, taking it away.

"I—I want something a bit more substantial. You see, I've got a very delicate constitution, and I only keep it going at all by taking constant nourishment," said Bunter pathetically.

"Oh, ring off!"

"Can I have the chicken?"

"No."

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"Well, I suppose I'd better have the sausage, then; only—"

"It's too late," said Bulstrode coolly. "Chap who turns his nose up at his victuals doesn't deserve to have them. There's the potato and the bread."

"Look here—" roared Bunter.

"If you say anything more I'll take the potato away, too!"

"Oh, really—"

"There goes the tater."

Bulstrode took it away. A large chunk of bread was left for Billy Bunter's dinner. He gazed at it, and blinked at the grinning juniors through his big spectacles, and gazed at the bread again. But he dared not say anything more, lest the bread should be taken away as well as the potato and the sausage. With fury in his fat face, the Owl of the Remove started his dinner of plain bread.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER. More Recruits.

MR. LOTHROP strode into the School House. He left Police-constable Tozer standing in the Close, mopping his manly brow with a red-spotted handkerchief.

The terrors of the law had had no effect upon the rebellious juniors, and P.-c. Tozer might as well have stayed at the police-station in Friarsdale. Mr. Lothrop did not take the trouble to speak a word to him, and he left the fat constable puffing and blowing. Gosling, however, was on cordial terms with Mr. Tozer—they were, to a certain extent,

kindred spirits, both having a delicate and experienced taste in gin-and-water. And Gosling took Mr. Tozer into his lodge to afford him refreshment in that delightful shape, while Mr. Lothrop stamped into the School House.

The tyrant of Greyfriars was at his wits' end.

He knew that he could not break in the doors of the gym.—the building was too strong for that. Attempts to get in at the windows, even if successful, would be a little too undignified even for him—and success, too, would be very doubtful if the juniors had made up their minds to resist, as apparently they had.

If he had been on better terms with the other masters, they might have afforded him some help. But they could only, after all, have given him advice. He could not have expected portly Form-masters to climb up ladders and throw themselves into

the windows of the gym. upon the rebellious Removeites.

The Sixth!

Yes, that was where he had made his mistake! He realised that now! The prefects might have reduced the rebels to submission—the prefects, aided by the rest of the Sixth Form.

Mr. Lothrop knew very well that at every public school the Sixth are used to support authority. But he had flouted the Sixth—he had mortally offended the captain of the school—he had insulted and caned even the one prefect who was willing to stand by him. Even Loder could not forgive a caning. There was no help to be expected from the top Form of Greyfriars.

But what was to be done?

P.-c. Tozer's imposing bulk and uniform had failed to impress the rebels. They had persisted in taking Mr. Tozer humorously.

Where was help to be had?

Mr. Lothrop thought the matter over with knitted brows. His expression showed that he was the kind of man to be avoided just then. But the Greyfriars fellows were rejoicing in their new freedom, and they were very much inclined to treat their disregarded master in a very flippant way.

A group of Fourth-Formers were in the hall when he came in, and he glanced at them. He was glad to find someone upon whom to wreak his rage, and he knew perfectly well that if these juniors were not in the gym., their sympathies, at all events, were there with the strikers.

"Why are you not in your Form-room?" he demanded harshly.

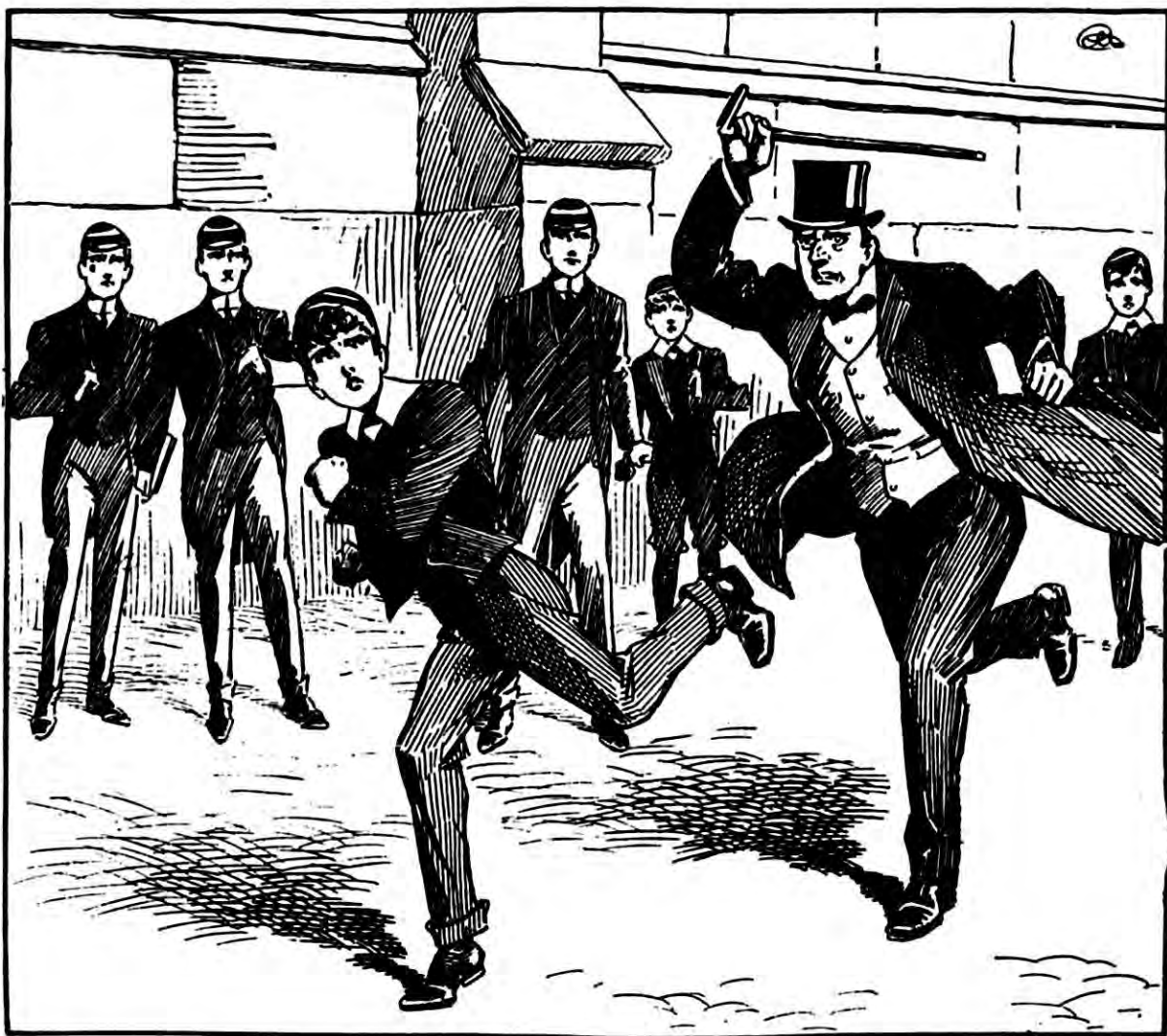
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The infuriated master was close behind Wharton, and his stick rose in the air. It seemed as if in his rage he meant to strike the junior to the ground. "Wharton! Stop!" he panted. (See page 12.)

"It isn't third lesson yet, sir," said Temple.
"Go into your Form-room at once. I will not have juniors idling about the passages."

"Mr. Capper isn't there yet, sir."

"Don't answer me, Temple!"

"No, sir. But—"

Mr. Lothrop waited for no more. He might have to listen to "back talk" from the Remove, while they were shut up in the gym, out of reach, but Temple was within reach of his hands, which were simply itching to punish somebody.

He grasped the captain of the Fourth by the shoulder, and boxed his ears savagely.

Temple roared.

"Oh, oh! Ow! Yaroop! Oh!"

Smack, smack, smack!

"Yah! Oh! Yow! Leggo! You beast! Stop!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "Stop it!"

With a back-handed smack, Mr. Lothrop sent Dabney reeling. He bumped upon Fry, who caught him and held him up. Mr. Lothrop boxed Temple's ears till his arm was tired, and the boy's head was aching and his senses reeling. Then he released him, with a gasp.

"Now go into your Form-room!" he said.

"You cruel beast!" howled Temple.

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"What!"

"Beast!" yelled Temple, too enraged to care what he said.

"You are a rotter! You were kicked out of your last school for ill-using a kid, you know you were, you coward!"

Mr. Lothrop started towards him. But Temple wisely did not wait. As he shot out the last word, he bolted.

Mr. Lothrop ran after him as far as the door, but the Fourth-Former was quicker. He dashed out into the Close, and broke into a run in the direction of the gym.

His intention was clear enough then—he meant to join the rebels. Mr. Lothrop dashed after him. Dabney, and Fry, and Scott, and several more of the Fourth crowded out into the Close, anxious and eager.

"Let's go, too," said Fry; "we can't desert old Temple."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Besides, that brute will half kill him if he catches him—and he's gaining! I should never have thought the beast could run like that."

Temple was making a desperate break for the gym. The door, of course, was fast; but he hoped to get in at one of the windows. One of the sentinels within saw him, and shouted to the strikers, who had almost finished their lunch by this time. There was a shout in the gym., and the windows were lined with faces.

Harry Wharton leaned out of one window, the one nearest the ground. But there was a good nine feet between the sill and the ground.

"Come on, Temple! Jump!"

"Right!" gasped Temple.

He dashed on gallantly, and made a spring at the window. His hands missed the sill, but Wharton leaned over and caught him as he slid back. Harry's grasp closed upon his shoulder and collar, and supported him, and Temple hung against the wall, and then he reached up again and grasped the sill.

But at the same moment Mr. Lothrop, panting, reached him.

He grasped Temple by the ankles and strove to drag him down again.

The Fourth-Formers struggled furiously.

"Hold on!" said Harry. "Hold hard!"

"He's dragging me down!"

"Hold on!"

Temple clung desperately to the sill, and Wharton held on to him. There was a terrible drag on the junior's ankles. Mr. Lothrop was exerting himself at that end. If Temple had been dragged away from the window, he would have had a fearful fall upon the ground; but the new Head, in his fury, seemed to have overlooked that.

Fry, and Scott, and Dabney, and several more of the Fourth were racing up. Harry Wharton shouted to them.

"Help, you fellows! Rescue!"

The Fourth-Formers did not stop to think. They saw Temple's danger, and they charged right at Mr. Lothrop. Bump!

The Head was bowled over like a ninepin by the impact of the charging Fourth-Formers, and he rolled heavily on the earth.

Temple scrambled in at the window.

"Quick, you fellows!" exclaimed Wharton.

There was no time for Dabney & Co to climb in. They dashed off as Mr. Lothrop scrambled up, and ran round the gym. There a window was opened at the back, and the new recruits were helped in by the Removites.

Mr. Lothrop staggered to his feet, and looked round. The Fourth-Formers had disappeared, and the windows of the gym were lined with juniors yelling defiance at him. He shook his fist at the windows, and limped away towards the School House.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Climbing Down.

"OVER!"

"Master Wingate, please."

The Sixth were still at cricket. Their Form-master having been dismissed, and having retired majestically to his room, like Achilles to his tent, it was useless for the Sixth to return to the school. Some of their work had been usually done with the Head; but the new Head was not likely to take them, nor were they likely to receive instruction from him. So the Sixth remained on the cricket-ground, playing a match among themselves, and as it was a pleasant day, just the weather for cricket, they were not wholly dissatisfied with the fact that there was a strike in the school.

Gosling came puffing on the senior cricket-ground as an over finished.

Wingate looked round at him impatiently.

"What do you want?" he exclaimed.

"You are wanted, Master Wingate. The 'Ead, sir."

"Dr. Locke has not come back?" exclaimed Wingate.

"Mr. Lothrop, sir."

"Oh, he wants me, does he?" said Wingate grimly. "And what does he want me for?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You can go back and tell him I'm playing cricket."

Gosling gasped.

A message like that to a head-master, even from the head boy of the Sixth, was rather out of the common.

"I say, Master Wingate!" the school porter stammered.

"You heard what I said."

"Oh, werry well, Master Wingate!"

And Gosling stumped off. Courtney looked a little dubiously at his captain.

"I say, that's a bit thick, isn't it, Winny?" he said.

Wingate gave a shrug.

"What does he want me for?" he exclaimed. "I saw him just now chasing a kid across the Close. The fellow has no more sense of dignity than a fag in the Second Form. He's sacked me from being a prefect, and I owe him nothing now."

"He will tear when he gets your message."

"Let him tear."

Courtney laughed.

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Come to London
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"Oh, all right!"

"Look at the state of the school ever since he came!" exclaimed Wingate angrily. "All the prefects insulted, and the Sixth made to look small before the juniors, all the juniors tyrannised over till they're driven into resistance, and then this exhibition of a barring out in the gym., and a policeman brought in to bully Greyfriars fellows into obedience! My hat! We shall have a crowd of kids from the village to watch, as soon as the news gets out! I'm sick of it—and of him! I'll have nothing to do with the fellow."

And Wingate went on batting, and he hit the ball so hard that the fieldsmen were given a great deal of leather-chasing; and he really seemed to be hitting out as if he were hitting at some special enemy—Mr. Lothrop, for instance.

The over was only finished when Gosling came puffing upon the pitch once more. A portliness of person, and liberal libations of gin-and-water, did not conduce to physical fitness, and a little exertion made the worthy Gosling gasp and puff somewhat after the manner of a locomotive.

"What on earth do you want?" demanded Wingate, in a voice that made Gosling jump almost clear of the grass.

"Oh, Master Wingate! The 'Ead—"

"Do you mean Mr. Lothrop?"

"Yes, Master Wingate."

"Did you give him my message?"

"Yes, which I did. And wot I says is this 'ere, Master Wingate—I was werry careful to keep close to the door, I was."

Wingate grinned.

"Well, then, if he's had my message, that settles it. Buzz off! Can't you see we're busy?"

"But he's sent me to tell you that if you don't come—"

"Well," rapped out Wingate, "if I don't come, what then?"

"He's coming to fetch you."

Wingate's jaw set square and hard.

"He's coming to fetch me, is he?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Master Wingate."

"Very well, go back and tell him to come."

"My hat!" murmured Courtney.

Gosling stared at Wingate, and rolled away. He seemed to be somewhat nervous of delivering such a message to the new Head, for his pace slackened more and more as he approached the School House, and finally he was simply crawling. However, he disappeared into the house at last.

The Sixth were looking solemn enough now. Matters were growing serious. If the Head appeared on the cricket-field and ordered Wingate in, and tried to remove him by force, what would happen? The big, powerful captain of Greyfriars was strong enough to toss the Head across the cricket-pitch if he chose. Surely Mr. Lothrop would realise that very obvious fact, and pause in time!

"Get on with the game," said Wingate sharply.

The Sixth did not feel much inclined to play, under the circumstances. But they obeyed their skipper's order, and the game went on. The bowling was decidedly erratic, and Wingate and Courtney cut it all over the field.

Every fellow there had one eye on the distant School House, with its red chimneys showing over the tops of the elm-trees.

They expected to see a gowned figure striding from that direction. And then would follow a scene such as had never before been witnessed at Greyfriars—an unseemly scene of violence between the captain of the school and his head-master.

Would Mr. Lothrop be insane enough to go so far?

A figure appeared in sight. Courtney, who was batting, made a late cut a little too late, and his wicket went to pieces. But he did not even look at it.

He gave a gasp of relief as he saw that the approaching figure was not that of the Head. It was Gosling once more, puffing more than ever, and extremely red in the face.

Gosling came puffing on to the pitch. At the same time, the ball was fielded and tossed in. There was no special reason, so far as could be seen, why it should be tossed in the direction of Gosling. But perhaps Loder had his reasons. Gosling gave a wild roar as the cricket-ball bumped upon his portly person.

"Ow! Yow!"

And he sat down in the pitch, gasping.

The Sixth burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate grinned as he went to help Gosling up. He dragged the heavy porter to his feet, being favoured with a very strong whiff of gin-and-water as he did so. Gosling rolled a fishy eye upon him, and gasped odorously.

Wingate sniffed.

"You horrid old bounder!" he exclaimed. "You've been drinking!"

"Which I ain't touched a drop!" said Gosling. "I'm a

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strick teetotaller, and always was aich! Wot I says is this 'ere—

"What do you come buzzing back for, like a blessed bluebottle?" demanded Wingate. "If you don't keep off the grass I'll give you a jam with a stump next time!"

"Wot I says—"

"Buzz off!"

"It's a message from the 'Ead," said Gosling. "He says—"

"Oh, buzz off!"

"He says that he requests you, as a special favour, and for the good of the school, to step into the study for a few minutes," said Gosling.

Wingate whistled.

That the tyrant of Greyfriars, having taken up an impossible position, would have to climb down, was evident. But that he would climb down so openly, so utterly as this, the Greyfriars captain had never dreamed.

His lip curled with contempt.

"And that's the man who thinks he can govern a public school!" he muttered to Courtney.

"Awful funk!" said Courtney. "Are you going?"

Wingate wrinkled his brows thoughtfully.

"Well, I don't see how I can refuse when he puts it like that," he said. "I suppose I'd better go in and speak to the man."

"I should advise you to, old chap."

"Wot I says is—"

"I'm going!" said Wingate abruptly. "You can clear off, Gosling. You fellows go on without me. Macdonald can take my place."

"Right you are, Wingate!"

The Greyfriars captain strode away towards the School House. He was feeling something of pity mingled with the contempt he felt for the tyrant of Greyfriars. He knew that it must have cost the man much to climb down as he had done.

Gosling blinked at the cricketers, and showed no desire to move off the pitch. Loder poked him in the ribs with a bat.

"Get off the grass!" he said.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," mumbled Gosling—"it's a 'ot day, and I'm tired. I've been goin' to and fro for howers and howers, and a 'ard-working man is entitled to a rest. Wot I says is this 'ere—the 'Ead he says, says he, 'You're drunk, Gosling!' says he. I says, says I, 'Nothin' of the sort,' says I; 'it's the 'eat of the sun,' says I. And wot I says is this 'ere, bein' as I've always been a strick teetotaller, I says—"

At this point Gosling's somewhat incoherent remarks were interrupted. Several of the seniors pushed him off the cricket-field; and Gosling, after holding on to a post and staring at them blankly for full five minutes, took an erratic course towards his lodge. For a strict teetotaller, Gosling's course was very erratic indeed!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hands Off.

WINGATE tapped at the door of the Head's study.

"Come in!"

Mr. Lothrop's voice was very quiet and subdued. The big Sixth-Former opened the door and went in. Mr. Lothrop was sitting in Dr. Locke's chair, at Dr. Locke's desk. His face was studiously calm, and he nodded to Wingate as if nothing of an unpleasant nature had passed between them. Mr. Lothrop evidently meant to make no allusion to the messages he had sent to the cricket-field, or to Wingate's far from respectful replies through Gosling.

"You wished to see me, sir," said Wingate abruptly. He could infuse little respect into his manner. He felt no respect for this man, who had done nothing but bring trouble and disgrace upon the old college since he had arrived there.

"Yes, Wingate," said Mr. Lothrop quietly. "You are aware of the state of affairs here. The Remove have barricaded themselves in the gymnasium, and refuse to return to obedience."

"Yes, sir."

"It is a state of affairs that must be ended as quickly as possible," said Mr. Lothrop. "The return of Dr. Locke is not at all unlikely at any time."

Wingate looked interested.

"I understood that Dr. Locke would be away quite some time, sir," he said. "Miss Rosie is not recovered from her illness yet, and it was understood that her father would remain at the seaside with her for some weeks, at any rate." "I have reason to believe that Dr. Locke has changed his intention."

"Very well, sir."

Wingate thought he knew the reason. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, had been turned out by the new Head. Mr. Quelch was an old friend of the Head's, as well as a Form-master under him, and Wingate had little doubt

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that he had acquainted Dr. Locke with what was happening at Greyfriars. Mr. Lothrop had been appointed by the governors of the school to take Dr. Locke's place while he was away, and the doctor had hardly been consulted in the matter. But his return, at all events, would put an end to the reign of Mr. Lothrop. It was the only way the doctor could stop it.

"You will understand that it will not do to have the school in this state when Dr. Locke returns," said Mr. Lothrop.

Wingate smiled grimly.

He understood now. Mr. Lothrop had mentioned the Head's probable return in order to enlist the aid of the Sixth in dealing with the strikers. And Wingate mentally resolved, at once, that he would not be caught in such a trap.

Mr. Lothrop noted the smile that flitted momentarily over the captain's face, and his teeth came together hard.

"I think you agree with me there, Wingate?" he said.

"It would be rotten for the Head to find the school in this state, certainly, sir," said Wingate.

"I think, therefore, that I may look to the Sixth for help in putting down this revolt," said the Head. "I have a right to expect help from the prefects. I believe you have very great influence in the Sixth, and I hope you will decide to do your duty."

Wingate flushed.

"I hope I shall try to do my duty at any time, sir," he said. "But I don't know what you want me to do, yet."

"The boys are barricaded in the gymnasium, and they refuse to surrender. They must be put down by force."

"In what way?"

"A forcible entrance must be effected into the building, and I expect the Sixth to do it," said Mr. Lothrop.

"And after that?"

"After that, I shall deal with the Remove. Your assistance is required only to reduce them to submission."

Wingate's face hardened.

"I might use my influence as you suggest, sir," he said.

"I might be able to restore order. Can I promise the Remove that there shall be no punishment for what has happened till Dr. Locke returns, when the whole matter will be placed before him to decide?"

Mr. Lothrop's eyes gleamed.

"Certainly not! I am not appointing you Head of Greyfriars in my place!"

"Then I don't see what is to be done, sir. I cannot ask the juniors to surrender and be punished—as they think, unjustly."

"You can put them down by force."

"I don't think the Sixth would be justified in interfering in that way, sir, unless you, on your side, were willing to make concessions."

"That is impossible. My authority has been defied!"

"If you would agree to leave all punishment till Dr. Locke returns, sir, and to reinstate Mr. Quelch and leave him in undisturbed charge of the Remove, I think a settlement might be come to. If I gave the juniors my word to that effect, I think they would come out of the gym."

"I did not send for you to ask you to give me insolent advice, Wingate!"

"Very well, sir," said the Greyfriars captain, biting his lip. "I have nothing more to say."

"I require your aid—"

"I cannot give it, excepting upon that understanding."

"I refuse to admit any such understanding!"

"Then I may as well go, sir."

Mr. Lothrop rose to his feet.

"You understand, Wingate, that you are defying your head-master by taking up this line of conduct!" he exclaimed.

"I don't look at it in that light, sir."

"You refuse to obey me, in a word?"

"I cannot, in conscience, do as you ask."

Mr. Lothrop gritted his teeth.

"Very well," he said. "I know, now, how we stand. The Sixth are aiding and abetting the juniors in their insubordination."

"Nothing of the sort—"

"Don't interrupt me! I have no doubt that you have had a hand in this rebellion from the very first!"

"That is not true, sir."

"What!"

"I have had nothing to do with it. It would not have happened if you had treated the juniors as they have been accustomed to be treated, sir."

"That will do, Wingate! I shall not argue with you! I shall punish you!"

"You will—what, sir?"

"I shall punish you!" said Mr. Lothrop, crossing to the

door and turning the key in the lock. You apparently imagine that you can defy me because you are captain of the school and head of the Sixth. You will find out your mistake. You will either do as I order you, my boy, or I shall thrash you, here and now."

Wingate looked at him in surprise and contempt.

"I think you must be mad, sir," he said. "You cannot imagine that the captain of a public school will submit to a caning."

"We shall see."

Mr. Lothrop stepped to his desk, and took up a cane. Then he turned upon the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate eyed him. He was more astonished than angry, and, in fact, amused. The fatuity of the man seemed past credence. That he should attempt to cane the captain of the school, a stalwart fellow twice as powerful as himself, seemed incredible. But he evidently did mean it.

"Hold out your hand, Wingate."

The Greyfriars captain burst into a scornful laugh.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," he replied.

"I order you."

"And I refuse."

Mr. Lothrop said no more. He came at Wingate lashing out savagely with the cane. A blow fell across Wingate's shoulder, and a second left a red weal along his cheek.

There was no third blow. For Wingate grasped the man, and tore the cane from him, and for a moment he whirled it aloft, as if he would use it upon the man himself. Mr. Lothrop shrank back with a startled cry.

Wingate changed his mind. He snapped the cane in his hands, and tossed the pieces into a corner of the study.

"You ruffian!" he said, breathing hard. "You coward! For two pins I'd give you the thrashing you want!"

"Boy!"

"Open that door!"

"I—I will not! I—"

"Give me the key."

"I will not."

Wingate made a step towards Mr. Lothrop, his hands clenched, and his eyes blazing. It required very little more provocation to make the captain of Greyfriars lay hands upon the tyrant of the school. He was holding himself back with a very great effort.

"Open that door!" he said, in a scarcely audible voice, so great was his rage. "If you keep me here, I will not be answerable for what happens."

Mr. Lothrop looked at him and quailed. Then without a word he crossed to the door, inserted the key in the lock, and threw it open.

"Go!" he muttered.

Wingate went without another look at the baffled and defeated man. He strode straight from the house, and returned to the cricket-pitch.

The seniors gathered round him. They did not fail to note the red mark upon Wingate's ruddy cheek, and they knew that there had been trouble.

"What's happened?" exclaimed Courtney breathlessly.

Wingate pointed to his cheek.

"That's happened," he said. "I had to take the cane away from him. By George, I never came nearer to hitting out straight from the shoulder! It will come to that yet, if that rank outsider stays at Greyfriars. Let's get on with the game."

And Wingate would say no more upon the subject. But he put little heart into the cricket after that, a black cloud lingering on his face all the time.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Holding the Fort.

"MY word!" said Temple, of the Fourth. "You're jolly well fixed in here. Got anything to eat?"

"Heaps!" said Bulstrode.

"I'll show you where it is," said Billy Bunter.

"No, you jolly well won't," said Bob Cherry promptly.

"Come along, Temple. I've got the key of the cupboard."

"Oh, really, Cherry?"

"Shut up, Bunter."

The new recruits of the strike were soon busy upon the provisions. They brought very good appetites with them. But the supplies were abundant. Billy Bunter hung round, looking on at the feed with a hungry eye. But there was nothing for him. The fat junior was on a strict allowance. The crumbs that fell from the rich man's table were not for him.

The strikers had been glad to welcome the recruits. The more the merrier, as Bob Cherry said. While there was a lull in the hostilities, more and more recruits came dropping in. They were helped in at the windows, and joined the garrison. Early in the afternoon, half the Fourth Form were

there, and several more of the Fifth, and a crowd of fags belonging to the Second and Third. With Mr. Lothrop in his present state of mind, it was safer to be inside the gym than outside, even if one was not on strike. Mr. Lothrop was only too liable to wreak his temper upon those who were at hand, whether they had offended or not.

Nugent minor, of the Second, and Gatty, and Myers, and several more of the Form, came in, and so did Tubb, of the Third, with a contingent of inky fags. The garrison of the gym was growing in numbers every few minutes. There came none of the Sixth, but that was not to be expected. The Sixth went in to dinner, and after that they turned out to keep on with their cricket match. They had evidently made up their minds to remain strictly neutral.

The spirits of the juniors rose.

Their success so far had been unbroken, and the cessation of any attempt to break into the gym looked as if Mr. Lothrop had given it up.

Naturally, as there was no outward enemy to resist, there came little troubles within the ranks of the garrison. Coker, of the Fifth, started them. Coker was firmly persuaded that, as a Fifth-Former, he was bound to take command. The Removites were equally convinced that he would be bumped if he attempted anything of the sort.

The Removites proved to be right. Coker was bumped, very soon, and bumped hard, and that quieted him for a time.

Meanwhile, watch and ward was kept for the enemy.

The alarm came at last. Mr. Lothrop was sighted in the Close, proceeding towards the porter's lodge. He was seen a little later, with Gosling and P.-c. Tozer. They were advancing towards the gym, Gosling carrying a long ladder, rather unsteadily.

Wharton gave a shout.

"Line up!"

And the garrison were on their guard instantly.

Gosling, rather unsteadily, carried the ladder towards the gym. P.-c. Tozer followed him with an uncertain tread. Both of them had been indulging very liberally in the refreshing liquid Gosling kept in a green bottle in his lodge.

"Tozer's still here," John Bull remarked. "There will be riots in Friardale if he stays here much longer, I should think. He's the only bobby in the place."

"I expect Lothrop's standing him a half-sov. over this bizney," Vernon-Smith said. "He wouldn't be taking all this trouble for nothing."

"Quite right, he wouldn't."

"They're going to scale the windows," said Bulstrode.

"Look out!"

The juniors were keen enough for the conflict.

Their position was strong enough, so long as they had the nerve to defend it. And most of them had the requisite nerve at all events.

They had not been idle. Inside the gym they had, in several places, piled up benches and boxes to stand upon, to reach the windows. There was also a high pair of steps, which could be moved to any window that was threatened, to enable the defenders to get at the assailants.

Several pails of water, with soot and earth mixed well in, stood ready, and all the available brooms and mops had been served out.

The Remove were armed for the fray.

One of the windows was lower than the others, and it was at this one that the attacking party halted. The steps inside were promptly placed in position, and Bulstrode mounted to the top. Bulstrode was very much the leader now.

The window was open, and Bulstrode showed head and shoulders at it. Behind him on the steps were Wharton and John Bull. A dozen fellows below held the steps in position. The three juniors had mops in their hands, which had been dipped in the sooty concoction specially prepared for the invaders.

Gosling, with some difficulty, reared the ladder up to the window. The top end of it crashed against the sill.

"There you are, sir," said Gosling.

And he stood breathing after his efforts, with a sound that could be heard at a great distance.

The Head looked up at Bulstrode.

"I give you one more opportunity to return to your duty,"

he said. "Will you come out of the gymnasium?"

"Do you agree to our manifesto, sir?"

"No insolence, boy. Do you yield to my authority or not?"

"No, sir."

"If you refuse to open the door, Police-constable Tozer will enter the building by the window."

Bulstrode grinned.

"He won't find it very easy, sir."

"You will not dare to resist a constable in the execution

of his duty, I think. You will be liable to arrest if you do."

"I know better than that, sir. Police-constable Tozer has no right whatever to lay hands on us, and he knows it, too."

P.-c. Tozer snorted.

"Cheeky young himp!" he growled.

"Will you surrender, Bulstrode?"

"Not unless you agree to our terms, sir?"

The Head bit his lips.

"Then please ascend, Mr. Tozer."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Tozer advanced to the ladder. Bulstrode caught hold of the top rung, which was on a level with the sill.

"Better not risk it," he remarked.

"You young ruffian—"

"There you are!"

Bulstrode exerted his strength, and hurled the ladder away from the window. P.-c. Tozer jumped in one direction, and Gosling in another. The ladder fell upon the ground with a terrific clatter.

"Put it up again," said the Head.

"Which it's 'eavy," said Gosling, whose potations had rendered him a little more independent than usual. "Orrid 'eavy, sir."

"Put it up."

"Will you lend a 'and, then?"

"Certainly not."

Gosling grumbled and grasped the ladder. Mr. Tozer lent him a hand, and the ladder was planted against the sill again. Then Gosling held it in position, throwing his weight upon it, and Bulstrode could not push it away.

"Now, go up, Mr. Tozer," said the Head.

Mr. Tozer certainly did not seem to like his task. But he had been promised a sovereign if he succeeded in getting into the gym. He meant to earn that sovereign if he could. He tightened his belt, grasped the ladder, and mounted.

He eyed Bulstrode very dubiously as he came higher. Bulstrode waited till he was within easy reach. Then he brought the head of the mop, dripping with soot and water, out of the gym window.

P.-c. Tozer stopped.

Several drips of sooty water splashed upon his fat face, and he snorted.

"Keep that 'ere thing away," he gasped.

Bulstrode laughed.

"You'll get the full benefit of it if you come on," he said.

"Go down the ladder while you're safe, Tozey."

"Which I've got my dooty to do."

"Rats!"

"I'm coming hin."

"Look out for the mop, then."

"The cook won't know you again when we've finished with you, Tozer," said a voice inside the window.

P.-c. Tozer turned red with rage, and came up the ladder fiercely.

"Go back!" shouted Bulstrode.

But the fat constable still came on

Bulstrode hesitated no longer.

He thrust forward the mop, and the head of it plumped full into the face of P.-c. Tozer.

Mr. Tozer gave a wild yell, and slid down the ladder. His fat red face had disappeared under a thick coating of wet soot. He was choking and blinded, and he reeled off the ladder, and gouged at his eyes and mouth with his fat fists, and snorted and gasped and sputtered.

"Ow! Gerro-o-o-oh! Yaroo! Yow! Ah! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode.

The garrison of the gym yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha! Hear us grin! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Yaroo!"

Mr. Lothrop waved his hand.

"Go up again, Mr. Tozer!"

The fat constable glared at him through wet soot.

"Which you can go hup, if you like it; but I ain't taking any!" he roared. "I've 'ad enough of your young himps, Mr. Lothrop! I've 'ad enough! I'd 'ave them all drowned, sir, that's wot I'd do! I've 'ad enough! I'm huff!"

And Mr. Tozer, with his helmet on the back of his head, and shedding drops of sooty water with every step, stamped off towards the gates of Greyfriars. A wild yell of laughter from the gym followed him.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Go it, Gosling!

"HEAR us grin! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The strikers in the gym yelled and roared. They had defeated the majesty of the law at the first skirmish. P.-c. Tozer had retreated in disorder, and it was pretty certain that he would not return to the attack.

Mr. Lothrop was left to deal with the matter as best he could, without the assistance of the Force.

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The new Head's face was white with rage.

He made a movement as if to ascend the ladder himself, but Bulstrode flourished the sooty mop. Mr. Lothrop stepped hastily back. Several drops of sooty water splashed upon his face, giving him a curiously spotted appearance, which he was unconscious of in his rage.

He waved his hand imperiously to Gosling. The Greyfriars porter was still holding on to the ladder, staring stupidly at the head-master. Gosling, as a matter of fact, was very far gone in gin by this time, and he was not fully alive to his surroundings.

"Gosling!" rapped out the Head.

"Sir?" said Gosling, with the great dignity he generally assumed when he was very nearly tipsy.

"Go up the ladder, Gosling!"

"Which I can't go up the ladder and 'old it at the same time, sir."

"I will hold it."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said Gosling.

He relinquished the ladder to Mr. Lothrop. Then he turned away in the direction of his lodge.

"Gosling!" roared the Head.

The porter turned round.

"Yes, sir?"

"Go up the ladder, Gosling!"

"Which ladder, sir?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared John Bull. "He can see two ladders!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The face of Mr. Lothrop was convulsed with rage.

"You are drunk!" he gasped out.

"Drunk, sir! I scorn the imputation, sir!" said Gosling.

"Wot I says is this 'ere, I'm a strict teetotaler, sir, and my favourite drink is gin-and-water! The man as says I'm intoxicated, sir, is a liar, sir!"

"What—what!"

"Wot I says, sir, is this 'ere, I'm a tee—tee—tee—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gosling, go up this ladder at once!"

"I scorn to do so, sir!" said Gosling, with intoxicated gravity. "You have implied, sir, that I have forsaken my strict principles, which is gin-and-water, and strict teetotalism, sir! I despise you, sir!"

"Go it, Gossy!" roared the juniors, in great delight.

The Head was almost dumb with rage. He could only splutter. He must have fallen low indeed, when a Gosling could lift his heel against him.

"You ain't my 'Ead, sir!" said Gosling. "You har an outsider, sir! You can't give me the sack, sir! I take the sack only from Dr. Locke, which I respect, and which is a gentleman, sir, and understands that a man has feelings, sir. Which you are no gentleman, sir, and never was, sir."

"You—you—you—"

"I regard you, sir, with despision!" said Gosling, with owl-like gravity, taking a hold upon the ladder to steady himself. "I refuse to take the sack from you, sir! I take the sack only from my own 'Ead, sir!"

"Man! Villain! Wretch! Go!"

"Eh?"

"Go!" shrieked Mr. Lothrop. "Begone!"

"Wot?"

"Begone at once, or I will strike you to the ground!" roared Mr. Lothrop, almost foaming with rage.

Gosling eyed him slowly, and proceeded to roll up his sleeves with great care and deliberation.

There was a joyous chuckle from the juniors at the windows.

"My hat!" Bob Cherry ejaculated. "Gossy's going for him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Gossy!"

"Give him beans!"

"Give him toffee!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My aunt! This is as good as a giddy circus!"

Gosling advanced upon the Head.

Mr. Lothrop retreated before him. He had said that he would strike Gosling to the ground, but he seemed in no hurry to carry out his threat.

"Man! Go!" he hissed.

"Which I am a man, sir—a free-born Briton, though I say it!" said Gosling. "I live under the flag that never sets, sir, and my favourite refreshment is gin-and-water! I can knock the stuffing, sir, out of any guy in a gown, sir, though I say it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Gosling!"

"Pile in, old man!"

Gosling seemed to be encouraged by the yells from the

gym. He rolled his sleeves further up, and advanced upon Mr. Lothrop. The latter retreated further, beginning to look extremely alarmed.

Gosling made a wild drive at him, but probably he saw two school-masters at the same moment, for he missed one of them.

He lurched forward, and lost his balance, and threw his arms round Mr. Lothrop's neck to save himself. The Head struggled to get away.

"Release me!" he shrieked.

But Gosling held on. He could not have stood without any visible means of support, and he did not mean to let go Mr. Lothrop. And, as frequently happens in cases of intoxication, Gosling's enmity turned to sudden and unaccountable friendliness.

"Lend a 'and to hold a chum!" he said. "It's many a time we've 'ad a drop together! Lend a 'and to a hold friend!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Release me!"

Mr. Lothrop succeeded in pushing Gosling off, and the porter sat down in the Close. He sat staring stupidly after Mr. Lothrop, who had dashed off to the House with fluttering gown.

"Wot I says is this 'ere!" murmured Gosling. "I says—I says—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gosling rose to his feet, and moved away on a zigzag course. He disappeared from the view of the juniors, who were yelling themselves hoarse.

Bob Cherry wiped the tears from his eyes.

"Oh, my only summer hat!" he sobbed. "This is one of Lothrop's unlucky days, I think!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gosling has turned up trumps for once!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "I don't think the Head will get any more help from him, or from Tozer, either!"

"Not likely!"

"Well, we've won the giddy victory!" said Bulstrode. "I shouldn't wonder if the boulder comes to terms now."

Wharton shook his head. He did not believe that Mr. Lothrop would come to terms. But whether he did or not, the strikers seemed to be having things all their own way. They were holding the fort with great success.

Bulstrode descended from the steps, and put the mop back into the pail of sooty water, ready for use when required again.

"Where's Bunter?" he exclaimed suddenly, looking round.

Bunter was not to be seen.

Bulstrode ran off towards the store-room, with a dozen fellows after him. They could guess how Billy Bunter had been occupied during the time of excitement.

The fat junior was seated before a jar of jam, scooping it out with a tablespoon. His hands were jammy, his face was jammy; and there were fragments of cold chicken and morsels of pudding round him. The cupboard door was open, and the lock had evidently been broken.

Bunter jumped up in alarm as the Removites rushed in, and the jam-jar went to the ground with a crash, and broke into a score of pieces.

"I—I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

"You burglar!" roared Bulstrode. "I thought you were up to something of this sort!"

"I—I found the cupboard door open, you know—"

"Why, you fat fibber, the lock's broken!"

"I think one of the fellows must have done that, to—to raid the grub, you know. I've only had a small snack—Ow! Yow!"

"Come on!" said Bulstrode grimly.

"Ow! Look here—Oh, really—"

Bulstrode marched the fat junior away with a grasp of iron on his collar. He marched him to the window where the attack had taken place.

"There's the steps!" he said. "There's a ladder outside. That's your way out!"

"B-b-but—"

"Outside!"

"I won't go!" yelled Bunter. "I w-w-won't go! I—"

Bulstrode grasped the mop which had done such good service upon the majestic countenance of Mr. Tozer.

"I give you two seconds!" he said grimly.

Billy Bunter gave him one wild blink, and then he scrambled up the steps and through the window. Inside the two seconds he was sliding down the ladder outside. Bulstrode pushed the ladder down after him, and it fell with a crash to the ground. The fat junior turned and shook his fist at the captain of the Remove.

"Beast!" he yelled.

Then he scudded off.

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Come to London
To see the Ceremonial

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Thrown Out.

THE barring-out, so far, had been an unbroken success. Within the gym., the strikers rejoiced.

Bottles of ginger-beer were broached in honour of the victory, and health was drunk to the strike, and to the captain of the Remove, and confusion to Mr. Lothrop and all his works.

Mr. Lothrop had retired to the School House, baffled and beaten. If he had been at a loss before, he was at his wits' end now.

The juniors, encouraged by success after success, were not in a mood to surrender. The prefects and the Sixth had refused to interfere.

The constable from Friardale had proved useless. Gosling had retired to his lodge, and even if he had not, he was of no use. There seemed to be nothing to be done; and Mr. Lothrop was at a loss—dead beat, as Fisher T. Fish would have put it.

Even at this pass he did not change his mind or his intentions, and he did not repent of the injustice and cruelty that had led to the strike of the juniors. His only thought was to overcome their resistance, and inflict exemplary punishment upon them. But how was it to be done?

The Head paced up and down his study, trying to think out the problem, as the shades of evening fell upon the old Close of Greyfriars.

The rebellion had lasted a whole day. The rebels were in higher feather than ever. What was to be done?

What had been done in previous cases of the same sort by head-masters defied in their schools by rebellious pupils? Barrings-out, though uncommon nowadays, had been quite a feature of public school life early in the nineteenth century.

Mr. Lothrop turned over in his mind stories he had heard of such things, and he remembered having been told of that famous rebellion at Rugby, by a man whose father had taken part in it. That was a famous occasion, when the Head of Rugby was burned in effigy in the quad., and did not care to venture out to interfere with the proceedings, but secretly sent for a crowd of soldiers and drovers from the town, with whose aid he reduced his recalcitrant pupils to surrender. Soldiers with fixed bayonets guarding the Head's study in Rugby School; drovers, with their heavy whips, wading the moat to drive the rebels from their last stronghold. It was a stirring story, which the Greyfriars fellows knew well; and Mr. Lothrop had heard of it, though his sympathies, naturally, were on the other side. That was in the long, long ago. But it occurred to Mr. Lothrop that he might with profit take a leaf out of the book of the Head of Rugby in those old days. Soldiers he could not get; but there were men in the village and in the market-town of Courtfield whose services were to be obtained if he chose to pay for them.

And when he thought of that, Mr. Lothrop's face lighted up, and he put on his hat and coat and left the school.

Dusk was thickening in the Close.

From the windows of the gym. came a glare of light. The electric light was turned on from end to end of the building, and the merry voices of the strikers could be heard shouting a chorus. Mr. Lothrop, as it burst upon his ears, could distinguish the deep voice of Coker of the Fifth loud above the rest. He gritted his teeth, and hurried on to the gates.

The strikers would soon have something to do more serious than singing, the tyrant of Greyfriars thought to himself.

The masters of Greyfriars looked out of their study windows at times and listened to the shouting from the gym., and wondered what Dr. Locke would say. The Sixth, their cricket over, went about their usual tasks, apparently in ignorance of the fact that the Remove existed at all, let alone that that unruly Form was on strike.

Fellows crept from the School House over, through the darkness, to the gym. at intervals, and every recruit was helped into the windows by the rebels within.

Fully two-thirds of the Lower School were in the gym. now, heartily engaged in the strike, and determined not to surrender till Dr. Locke returned to Greyfriars.

The usual bed-time of the juniors came round, but they were not sleepy. They were quite ready to sit up all night; though probably they would change their minds about that when midnight drew near.

Supper was a merry meal—much more plentiful than the juniors had been accustomed to. After supper there was a chorus.

ANSWERS

See this week's number of
"THE BOYS' HERALD," 1d

A FREE OFFER!

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, preferred to smoke. He had brought his cigarettes into the gym. with him, and he lighted up as soon as supper was over, and passed the box to Snoop and Skinner and some more of the same sort.

Harry Wharton's brows darkened as he saw it.

But Wharton was not captain of the Remove now, and he had no right to interfere. Vernon-Smith saw his expression, and looked at him, with a sneer on his lips.

Vernon-Smith had taken a chief part in getting Bulstrode elected in Wharton's place as captain of the Form; and it had been generally understood that when Bulstrode was captain fellows would be allowed to do as they chose without interference.

But Bulstrode had been thinking that matter over. Responsibility had somewhat sobered the one-time bully of the Remove.

He rose to his feet and walked over to Vernon-Smith. The Bounder of Greyfriars eyed him coolly as he came.

"Put that away," said Bulstrode quietly.

"What?"

"Put that cigarette away."

"Why?"

"You can't smoke here."

"Rats!"

Bulstrode's eyes glittered.

"I mean it, Smithy," he said. "We're in the right in this row so far, and we're not going to place ourselves in the wrong. It's rotten, anyway."

"How long have you thought so?" sneered the Bounder.

"Ever since I was Form captain," said Bulstrode frankly.

"And I'm sorry now I gave Wharton such a rotten time when he was skipper. But I'm not going to have rotten blackguardism now, even if you did help me to get in as skipper."

"So you are following in Wharton's footsteps?"

"You can call it that if you like. You're not going to smoke here."

"I'm going to do as I like. And if you put on too many airs as Form captain, Bulstrode, it will be as easy to pitch you out as it was to pitch you in."

Bulstrode flushed.

"The fellows can decide that for themselves," he said.

"If they want a new election, I'm ready to stand it. But while I'm captain we're not going to have this sort of thing. Put that cigarette away."

"I won't!"

"You must, Smithy."

"Well, I won't, then!"

"We'll soon settle that," said Bulstrode.

He reached out to take the cigarette from Vernon-Smith's lips. The Bounder of Greyfriars knocked his hand aside.

The next moment Bulstrode grasped him and whirled him off his feet.

"Let go!" shrieked the Bounder.

"Will you stop smoking?"

"No!"

"Very well, we'll see."

Bulstrode grasped the Bounder by the collar with both hands and shook him, very much as a terrier shakes a rat.

The cigarette dropped from Vernon-Smith's lips, and several more from his pockets—and other articles, too, as he was shaken.

He could not release himself; but he kicked out backwards at Bulstrode's shins. And then the captain of the Remove released him, staggering back with a cry of agony.

Vernon-Smith swung round on him, glowering with rage.

"Oh!" gasped Bulstrode. "Oh! Oh!"

"Serve you right! I— Let me alone!"

But the juniors did not let the Bounder alone.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry and Mark Linley had grasped him, and he struggled in vain in their strong hands.

"You cowardly hound!" said Wharton between his teeth.

"You ought to be thrashed within an inch of your life."

"Throw him out!" yelled the Removites.

Bulstrode held on to the wall, white as chalk with the pain in his shin. The heel of the Bounder's boot had struck there hard.

"Turn him out!" he panted. "Kick him out of the gym."

The Bounder struggled as the juniors dragged him to the window. But his struggles did not avail him very much.

He was dragged to the window, dragged up the steps, and three or four juniors lowered him outside by grasping his collar and letting him slide out.

They lowered him as low as they could, and then let him drop.

Vernon-Smith had only a few feet to fall, and he was not hurt; but he rolled over on the ground, dishevelled, and in a furious rage.

He scrambled to his feet, stuttering with fury. He had been turned out a little more roughly than Billy Bunter had.

"Get off, you cad!" said Wharton. "You're not fit for

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a decent chap to touch, or I'd drop out after you and lick you till you couldn't stand. Buzz off!"

"I'll make you suffer for this!"

"Buzz off!"

Swish-swoop!

A pailful of sooty water descended from the gym. window, and it swamped over Vernon-Smith from head to foot.

He gave a wild yell:

"Ooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Will you buzz off now, you cad?"

"Groooooh!"

The Bounder staggered away, drenched and dripping. A fat form loomed up out of the gloom of the Close, and a pair of big spectacles glimmered at the Bounder.

"I say, Smithy, I—I saw you, you know. You must be feeling awfully rotten! Will you come to the tuckshop? I'm expecting a postal-order, and if you care to advance me a— Yow! Yaroo!"

Smack!

Vernon-Smith did not care much whom he hit at that moment so long as he hit somebody.

Bunter sat down as a heavy back-hander caught him on his fat face; and the Bounder of Greyfriars squelched away, leaving the Owl of the Remove sitting on the ground in a very dazed state.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

An Alarm in the Night.

AFTER the sudden departure of the Bounder of Greyfriars there was no more smoking in the strikers' camp. Snoop and Skinner and the others put their cigarettes away, as if they really didn't care for them at all, after all. Bulstrode took no notice of them. Bulstrode was nursing his shin for some time to come. For the rest of that evening he limped when he walked, and had cause to remember the Bounder.

As the night advanced the juniors kept watch from the windows. The electric light threw out a glare far into the darkness and enabled the sentries to observe every approach to the gym.

Doors and windows were secured, and never less than a dozen fellows kept watch at once, and the rest were ready to crowd to any point that was threatened.

So long as the defenders were on the watch it seemed impossible for the strikers to be surprised, or the gym. to be taken by assault.

But as the evening grew older the juniors evinced signs of sleepiness.

The younger fags dropped off to sleep without ceremony wherever they happened to be; and, as Bob Cherry remarked, it was lucky for the strikers that it was summer weather.

The night was quite warm; otherwise, they would have missed very much their warm beds and warm bedclothes.

As it was they camped out in the gym. with considerable comfort. Many of them had brought in coats and rugs, and, of course, under the peculiar circumstances, they expected to rough it.

Midnight tolled out from the clock-tower.

By that time all the recruits from the Second and the Third were fast asleep, and there was a drowsy sound of snoring in the gym. Coker, no longer keen on leadership, was stretched on a bench, snoring fast, and so was Hobson of the Shell. The business of keeping watch and ward remained to the Remove.

But very many of the Removites could not keep their eyes open.

In the excitement of a scrimmage they would have been wakeful enough, but watching and waiting sent them to sleep.

It was easy enough to set sentries, but it was not so easy to guarantee that they would not fall asleep at their posts.

"It's a time for the leaders to buck up," Bob Cherry remarked. "What's the good of a leader if he doesn't do what the other chaps can't do?"

"Good!" said Nugent. "As a humble follower, I think I'll proceed to have a nap."

"Same here!" grinned Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'm sleepy now."

"Oh, rats!" said Bob. "We've got to stay awake. I suppose you don't feel much inclined for sleep, Bulstrode?"

Bulstrode was rubbing his sore shin.

"No," he said "I shall stay awake all right. I dare say one will be enough to keep watch—not that old Lothrop is likely to try any game in the middle of the night. I expect he's in bed and fast asleep."

Wharton shook his head.

"You don't know him," he said.

"Do you think he'll try to surprise us at night?" John Bull asked.

"I think that's exactly what he would do."

"Anyway, we'll keep watch," Nugent remarked. "Suppose four of us stay awake, and then wake another four. Bulstrode, Wharton, and Bull, and Bob to begin with—they can be trusted. After their turn I will watch with Fish and Mark Linley and Brown."

"Good!"

And so it was settled.

The leaders of the strike, naturally, had to expect to face the major share of the work and the discomfort, and they meant to do their best.

But as the time dragged by, drowsiness came very heavily upon them.

Wharton, Bulstrode, John Bull, and Bob Cherry, keeping watch and ward, were posted at different parts of the ward. Bulstrode, in spite of the pain in his leg, was the first to fall asleep.

He sat down on a bench to rest his leg, and nodded off, and in a few minutes was in a deep slumber, from which nothing short of a thunderclap was likely to awaken him.

Bob Cherry sat down, and leaned his back against the wall, intending to keep strict watch in that more easy position. In five minutes his chin dropped upon his breast, and he slept.

John Bull and Harry Wharton held out longer, but sleep was overpowering them. They had been up earlier than usual that morning, and they had had a long and tiring day, full of excitement. Intending to keep awake all the time, they dropped off to sleep, sitting on benches by the wall.

Slumber reigned in the gym.

The bright electric lights were still flaring forth illumination into the dark night.

One o'clock tolled solemnly out.

It fell upon no listening ear in the gym.

The strikers were all buried deep in slumber.

Presently, through the weird silence of midnight, came faint sounds from outside the gymnasium.

No one in the building heard them.

Bulstrode stirred on his bench.

There was a big black bruise on his shin where the angry Bouncer had kicked him, and he felt the pain of it even in his sleep. It made his slumber less deep than usual. Perhaps it was the pain that awoke him.

His eyes opened.

He blinked in the glare of the electric light, and gazed dazedly round him, for the moment quite lost as to where he was. He had instinctively expected to awaken in his bed in the Remove dormitory.

His glance fell upon the lighted gym, and the sleeping figures of the strikers stretched on all sides of him.

"By Jove!" he murmured.

He stumbled to his feet.

"By Jove! I'm supposed to be keeping watch!" he murmured. "I wonder whether the others are asleep? I wonder—"

He paused and listened.

Outside the window where the attack had taken place in the afternoon he heard a faint sound, as if a ladder had been very cautiously placed against the wall.

He started, thrilling from head to foot, listening intently.

Another sound.

Was it the attack?

"My hat!" he muttered.

In a moment he was wide awake.

His eyes gleamed, his face flushed, and every nerve in his body was tingling and on the alert.

It was the attack at last.

"Wake up!" shouted Bulstrode.

He received no answer. The juniors were too deep in slumber to wake up at his call.

There was a sound at the window. It had been fastened, but it was not difficult to wrench open from the outside with the aid of a jemmy.

Crash!

The sound was not sound in itself, but in the dead silence of the night it rang like a thunderclap through the sleeping gym.

A face appeared at the window.

It was not the face of Mr. Lothrop. It was a large, rugged, bearded face, flushed with drink—the face of some public-house ruffian from the slums of Courtfield. It was easy to see where Mr. Lothrop had gone for assistance.

The face looked into the gym., and then two large and dirty hands came over the window-sill, and the man began to climb in.

Bulstrode gave a roar.

"Wake up! They're here! They're coming! Rescue, Remove!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 172.

READ the splendid tale of Tom Merry & Co. entitled: **"BURNT OUT"** in this week's **"GEM"** LIBRARY. PRICE ONE PENNY.

And he rushed to seize the mop that was ready in the pail of sooty water.

Harry Wharton woke at his call, and so did John Bull. They came dashing up, stumbling over some of the sleepers, and effectually waking them.

"Wake up!"

"Look out!"

"The enemy!"

"Back up, Greyfriars!"

Shouts of alarm rang through the gym, from end to end. The juniors were stumbling up on all sides, hardly knowing what was happening, but ready for the fray.

From outside, in the dark night, came the cutting tones of Mr. Lothrop, addressing the burly ruffian on the ladder.

"Quick! Quick, Pudsey! Quick! They are awake!"

"Orl right, air!"

And Mr. Pudsey thrust head and shoulders into the window, and scrambled his way in.

Bulstrode sprang upon the steps within, the mop, drenched with sooty water, in his hand.

Smack!

The head of the mop mopped upon Mr. Pudsey's face with a loud mop, and there was a choking gasp from Mr. Pudsey.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hard Knocks.

"BACK up!" shouted Harry Wharton.

He was rushing to Bulstrode's aid.

He had a rough broom in his hand, and he thrust it upward at the ruffian, catching him on the chest, and pushing him back through the window.

Mr. Pudsey roared.

"Groo! Ow! You limb! You wait till I get 'old of yer! Ow! Groo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shove him out!"

Mr. Pudsey struggled furiously to get through the window, but the mop and the broom between them did great execution.

He was driven back, and he gave a fresh roar as he crashed the back of his head against the window.

He drew his head out at last, panting.

"Hurrah!" roared the juniors.

They were all wide awake now, and cheering. All of them were ready for the fray. They had grasped all sorts of weapons, and stood ready to repel boarders.

Crash!

Crash!

The sudden deafening noise behind them made the juniors jump.

A window on the opposite side of the gym, had crashed in under the heavy blows of a mallet, and through the wreck of it the head and shoulders of a powerful fellow appeared—a burly ruffian very like Mr. Pudsey.

"Look out!" yelled Wharton.

"This way! Back up, for goodness' sake!" shouted Bob Cherry.

The ruffian was scrambling in. It was evident that Mr. Lothrop had brought more than one assistant, and he had divided his forces to attack in several places at once.

Crash! Crash!

Another window was crashing in.

Then, from the store-room at the farther end of the gym., came a crash. A heavy attack was being made upon the window of it, which was on the ground floor. There were shutters to that window, and they were fastened, but they were being crashed upon with a crowbar or a sledge-hammer, to judge by the sound.

Four attacks from four different points bewildered some of the juniors, but their leaders, fortunately, kept their heads.

Bulstrode yelled out orders like a born commander.

"Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, get into the store-room! Bull and half a dozen of you, run down to the end window! Coker, get across and deal with that chap—quick!"

And the strikers rushed to obey.

Fellows crowded after those that led, and there was quickly a force to defend each of the threatened points.

One of the ruffians was half through the window by the time he was reached, but a crack on the leg from a broom-head soon made him withdraw that limb, and he was heard to slide down his ladder, using decidedly unparliamentary language.

Another was kept at bay with fierce thrusts from below, and, although he could have jumped in, he did not care to precipitate himself into a crowd of angry and excited juniors, who would certainly have made things very warm for him.

Wharton and a little crowd reached the store-room, to find

the shutters shattered under the attack from without, and the glass in fragments. Mr. Lothrop had intended to take the strikers by surprise, if possible. But as the surprise attack had failed, he did not seem to care how much damage was done in getting at them.

Crash! Crash!

"Look out!" gasped Wharton. "They're coming in!"

Two burly fellows, both red with drink, with which they had primed themselves for the attack at Mr. Lothrop's expense, were thrusting themselves in at the store-room window.

They had stout cudgels in their hands, and the cudgels clattered against brooms and cricket-stumps wielded by the juniors.

At this spot the fight became close and desperate.

Wharton received a blow from a cudgel that numbed his left arm, and gave one in return with a cricket-stump that sent a ruffian reeling back from the window.

The scrimmage was sharp and hot.

The second man hurled himself in, bringing away fragments of wood and glass with him, and rolled among the juniors.

Bob Cherry snatched his cudgel away before he could do any damage with it, and three or four juniors rolled on the man, grasping him.

He struggled furiously, hitting out savagely right and left, the youngsters reeling away from terrific blows.

But they were game.

They stuck to their bulky antagonist, and by sheer force of numbers pinned him down, and crowded upon him till he was breathless and exhausted.

Meanwhile, sticks and brooms defended the broken window, and kept the other man out. He came again and again to the attack, only to be knocked back, covered with bruises.

"Got that beast!" gasped Wharton, turning from the window.

"Yes."

"He's safe!"

"Tie him up, then!"

The ruffian began struggling at the words, but there were nine or ten juniors piling on him now, and he had no chance. A cord was run round his arms and legs, and he was trussed up very like a fowl.

Then the juniors, bruised and panting and victorious, left him, wriggling on the floor and saying things.

Wharton stepped back from the window, and signed to his comrades to do the same.

The man outside fell into the trap. He charged blindly in, and was seized and rolled over the next moment, and, in spite of his resistance, he was overcome by numbers, and bound hand and foot like his companion.

"Got 'em both!" said Bob Cherry, with much satisfaction. "Nice-looking pair of beauties, I must say!"

"Giddy prisoners of war!" said Tom Brown. "Drag them into the gym. We can tie them to a post for safety."

And the two ruffians were rolled out of the store-room and tied up.

Meanwhile, the defenders of the gym had had matters very much their own way.

The three fellows at the three different windows had been unable to effect an entrance.

The juniors once awakened and on their guard, their numbers were too great for the assailants.

Mr. Pudsey and his friends had been very much hurt, for the defenders had struck out without much care where their blows fell.

Two of the ruffians had retired from the attack, and only Mr. Pudsey was still making a feeble attempt to enter—probably because Mr. Lothrop was at the foot of the ladder urging him on.

His face, inflamed with rage and blackened with sooty water, appeared at the window, and Bulstrode dipped the mop in the pail again.

"Come on!" he said invitingly.

"This way!" roared the juniors. "Come on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You young limbs—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Funk!"

Mr. Pudsey scrambled desperately in at the window.

He received the mop full in his face, and fierce thrusts from brooms and cricket-stumps, and he yelled with pain; but he came in. Perhaps he lost his balance at the window; at all events, he rolled in, and came bundling down among the juniors.

Ogilvy caught his ankle as he came, and Mr. Pudsey slighted at full length, with all the breath knocked out of his body.

"Ow!" he grunted

"Collar him!"

"Pile on him!"

"Hold the cad!"

Mr. Pudsey simply had no chance.

A crowd piled on him, and he was in great danger of being

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transformed into a human pancake. Bulstrode passed a cord round his wrists and tied it, and then his legs were tied together with rope, wound round and round them and knotted, till there seemed to be as much rope as legs.

Then Mr. Pudsey lay gasping.

A white and furious face appeared at the open window. It was that of Mr. Lothrop, mounted upon the ladder. He looked in upon the boys with glittering eyes.

Whether he meant to make an attempt to enter at the window cannot be said. But he had no time, in any case. A junior below caught up a pail of sooty water, and swept it through the air. The contents flew through the window, and turned the white, angry face, with startling suddenness, into a black one.

There was a choking cry, and Mr. Lothrop disappeared.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Bulstrode.

Another cry outside the gym—a cry of fury. Then nothing more was heard from Mr. Lothrop. Micky Deamond—for it was he—set down the pail.

"Faith!" he muttered. "Sure, and I—I didn't stop to think. But sure it serves him right, anyway, the thafe of the world!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Lothrop did not look into the gym again. He was probably gone to wash off the soot. Neither did his assistants return to the attack. The strikers were left once more victorious, with three prisoners of war in their hands.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Edged Tools.

MR. PUDSEY lay on his back, unable to move a limb, and blinked dubiously at the juniors. They were gathered round him, still looking very excited, and Mr. Pudsey anticipated further trouble.

"Which you keep your 'ands off," he said. "I ain't done no 'arm!"

"What did you come here for?" demanded Nugent. "How dare you interpose your common or garden carcass between the wind and our nobility!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Pudsey did not appear to understand Shakespearian language. He blinked at Nugent in a dazed way.

"Yes," he said. "Gent offered me 'arf a quid. 'Arf a quid, says he—'arf a quid for you and your mates if you 'elp me get some young scoundrels in horder, he says—"

"Young what?"

"Young gentlemen," said Mr. Pudsey promptly.

"That's better!"

"So we come," said Mr. Pudsey. "We didn't mean no 'arm, you know. We come for the fun of the thing. Gent stood us drinks, and promised us 'arf a quid each if we got the young scound—gentlemen in order. We didn't mean no 'arm. You let us go, and we'll go quiet and thankful!"

Bulstrode shook his head.

"You'll be safer tied up," he said.

Mr. Pudsey looked alarmed.

"Ow long!" he inquired.

"As long as the siege here lasts."

"Ow long will that be?"

"Until Dr. Looker returns."

"Ow long, I says?"

"Well, he may be here to-morrow, or he may be here next week," said Bulstrode, with a grin. "There's no telling."

"Look 'ers!" roared Mr. Pudsey. "You ain't keeping me tied up like that all that time, I s'pose! I'm getting the cramp already!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It ain't no laughing matter. You let us hout, and we'll go quiet!"

"Can't trust you!"

"We'll go, we will, and thankful. I want to go 'ome to bed, for one thing. My missis will make it 'ot for me, coming 'ome so late, anyway—specially as I sha'n't be bringing no 'arf-quid arter all!" said Mr. Pudsey dismally.

"Then your missis will be a sensible woman," said Bulstrode. "I hope she'll use the kitchen-poker or the copper-stick!"

"She uses the broom!" said Mr. Pudsey.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'd better ask Mr. Lothrop for the 'arf-quid in any case," grinned Nugent. "You've got in, you know, and you've earned it. I wouldn't go through what you've been through for a dozen 'arf-quids."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If he won't pay up, go for him," continued Nugent.

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NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL"

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

"Remember, your missis will go for you if you don't take 'ome the 'arf-quad."

"My 'at!" said Mr. Pudsey. "I'll do so!"
"You'll go straight out if we let you loose?" demanded Bulstrode.

"Strike me pink!" said Mr. Pudsey.
"That means honour bright, in his language," said Nugent. "Let him go."

Mr. Pudsey was released. The juniors stood round with ready weapons, ready to give him a terrific handling if he showed fight. But he had no intention of doing so. All the fight had been taken out of the rough. He only wanted to get out of the gym. without any more bruises. He was pretty well covered with them from head to foot already.

"Outside!" said Bulstrode.
And Mr. Pudsey climbed the steps, and clambered through the window, and dropped outside, with a grunt.

"Better let the other rotters go," said Harry. "We've no use for them, and I fancy they've had enough trouble."

"Good!" said Bulstrode.
The other two prisoners were only too glad to promise to go quietly if they were released. They disappeared through the store-room window, which the juniors then proceeded to barricade.

The window and shutters were smashed, but a barricade was soon planted within, which would not be easy for an assailant to get through, especially with defenders behind it.

Some of the strikers looked out of the windows after Mr. Pudsey and his friends, in the hope of seeing their interview with the Head. They heard the sound of voices from the Close, but they could not see the forms in the darkness.

"Listen!" Nugent exclaimed. "There goes Lothrop!"
Mr. Lothrop's voice could be heard, in shrill, excited tones.

"You must be mad to expect me to pay you when you have done nothing. I will give you half-a-crown each, which is more than you have earned."

Mr. Pudsey and his friends were standing round the Head. Mr. Lothrop had washed his face, and he had come out again to urge the Courtfield ruffians to another attack on the gym. He found them in a mood for anything but an attack, unless it was upon himself. Mr. Lothrop was playing with dangerous tools.

"Look 'ere—" growled Mr. Pudsey.
"Get into the gymnasium," exclaimed the Head, "reduce those young scoundrels to order, and I will certainly pay you, as agreed."

"Ain't we tried?"
"Well, try again, then."
"We've 'ad enough of it," said Mr. Pudsey. "Ain't we, mates?"

And a loud murmur from his comrades bore out Mr. Pudsey's statement. They had certainly had enough of it.

"You are afraid of the boys!" Mr. Lothrop exclaimed angrily. "Well, go, then. I shall not pay you!"

"You'll shell out, my gentleman, I says—"

"Leave the place," said Mr. Lothrop, with a wave of the hand—"leave the place at once!"

Mr. Pudsey scowled.

"Wot about the 'arf-quad?" he demanded.

"I have paid you all I intend to pay you!"

"The 'arf-quad—"

"Go!"

"I says—"

"Leave the school at once, or I will telephone for the police," said Mr. Lothrop, a little alarmed at the looks of the roughs he had brought from Courtfield to subdue his rebellious pupils.

Mr. Pudsey and his friends exchanged glances. Then they fell upon Mr. Lothrop, and smote him hip and thigh. They bumped him on the ground, and tore out his collar, and ripped his coat up the back, and rolled him in the dust, and kicked him. Worse than the strikers had done unto them, they did unto Mr. Lothrop.

Then they left him.

They slouched down to the gates and disappeared, leaving Mr. Lothrop writhing on the ground, rather uncertain in his mind as to whether he was alive or dead.

He staggered up at last.

He was a fearful wreck to look at—ragged, torn, dusty, dishevelled, and stuttering with rage and pain.

He said things that were not exactly suitable for a headmaster to say, which were clearly heard in the gym., and increased the juniors' measure of scorn for the tyrant of Greyfriars, if increase was possible. Then he staggered away into the House.

Mr. Prout and Mr. Capper met him in the Hall. Late as the hour was, they had not gone to bed. They were very anxious as to what was passing at the gym. They were expecting to see the obstinate, hard-hearted tyrant of Grey-

friars; but when that ragged, unkempt wretch staggered in they did not even recognise him.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Prout. "Who—what is that?"

"One of the ruffians Mr. Lothrop has employed against the juniors," said Mr. Capper. "Dear me, what would Dr. Locke say!"

"It is shocking!" Mr. Prout waved his hand majestically at the ruffianly-looking figure. "You must not come in here," he said. "Go out at once! Go back to your employer, my man! You must not come in!"

"What!" roared Mr. Lothrop.

Mr. Prout nearly fell upon the floor at the sound of the Head's voice.

"Goodness gracious! It is Mr. Lothrop!" he exclaimed.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Capper.

"My dear sir—"

"How did you come into that state? How—"

Mr. Lothrop marched on without replying. He was in too great a rage to speak. The two Form-masters stared after him, and then at one another.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Capper. "What is Greyfriars coming to? I am shocked, disgusted—and I think Dr. Locke will be shocked and disgusted, too!"

"Thank goodness I thought of telegraphing to him this afternoon!" said Mr. Prout. "Mr. Quelch has already told him what kind of rule we are getting from this man, but my telegram will have enlightened him still further. I am sure that he will not stay away a moment longer than is possible."

"Thank goodness!" said Mr. Capper. "This is a most—most extraordinary state of things! I wonder what Dr. Locke will say?"

And the two Form-masters went to bed, Mr. Capper still wondering what Dr. Locke would say. Mr. Lothrop followed their example. Obstinate and vindictive as he was, the tyrant of Greyfriars felt that he could do nothing more that night. Every resource had failed him, the strike had prospered all along the line. Further attacks upon the rebellious Remove he must leave till the morrow.

So Mr. Lothrop went to bed, exhausted and angry; while in the gym. the strikers dozed and watched, and watched and dozed till the morning sun came up and glistened on the old red roofs and chimneys of Greyfriars.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Murrah!

"RISING-BELL!" exclaimed John Bull, laughing.
Clang, clang!

Gosling was ringing the rising-bell as usual, as if nothing had happened at Greyfriars, and the school were to turn out as usual that morning.

The juniors could not help laughing as they heard it. They did not need the rising-bell to awaken them.

They had awakened earlier than that, with cold chills creeping over them, and with aches in their bones from their hard couches.

They looked at one another in the grey morning light, heavy-eyed, weary, and depressed. At that moment the strike did not seem to be a howling success after all.

But that mood did not last.

The sun flushed over the red chimneys, and streamed warmly in at the high windows of the gym., and the sunshine was cheering and invigorating.

Bob Cherry soon had the spirit-stove going, and brewed coffee.

The smell of the coffee, and the sight of plentiful viands, cheered up the strikers, and faces were soon bright again.

There were washing facilities in the gym., and the strikers took it in turns to perform their ablutions, and some of them were very quick indeed with the washing—especially the fags. As Tubbs, of the Third, was heard to remark: "What was the use of going on strike if you had to wash yourself, as usual, in the morning?"

Breakfast completely restored the good-humour of the strikers.

They discussed breakfast and their late exploits together, and the prospect of another day free from lessons was very pleasant. Mark Linley, it is true, had brought his books into the gym. with him, and after breakfast he started work on Greek, apparently extracting meaning from characters that seemed to the other fellows very like spiders and flies. Greek was not a compulsory subject at Greyfriars. The Lancashire lad took it up from choice, thereby raising some doubts in the Remove as to his sanity. The other fellows grinned as they saw Mark at work. They did not care for work so much themselves.

"I believe that chap will be doing Greek or maths. on his

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death-bed!" said Bob Cherry. "We're going to play leap-frog, Marky!"

Mark Linley looked up with his pleasant smile.

"Play up, then!" he said.

"Come on!"

"I'd rather stick to this, if you don't mind. I'm working up for an exam., you know, and I don't want to get done in."

"Oh, all serene!" said Bob. "Go ahead!"

And the other fellows played while Mark worked, and both parties were satisfied.

Harry Wharton was keeping watch from the window.

That Mr. Lothrop would resign the conflict, and admit himself defeated, was hardly likely; yet the strikers could not imagine what his next move would be.

It was necessary to keep on the look-out.

Fellows came out of the School House, and they all looked curiously towards the gym., as if wondering how the strikers were getting on.

But none of them came over towards the building. Mr. Lothrop was known to be awake and on the watch, and he would have been only too glad of an excuse for caning anybody who was within his reach.

Some of the fellows looked envious. They had to go in to lessons, as usual, and it would have been a great deal pleasanter to join the strikers.

It was about nine o'clock when Mr. Lothrop appeared in the Close.

The tyrant of Greyfriars looked somewhat haggard, from his late hours and his painful experiences on the previous night. But the same baleful gleam was in his eye, and the lines of his brow were set harder than ever. The lessons he had had were of little use to him. He was more obstinate than ever, and the juniors could read as much in his face as he strode towards the gym.

"Here comes Lothrop!" said Harry Wharton. And in a moment the windows were lined with faces.

Mr. Lothrop stopped under the window where Wharton was looking out. Harry met his savage glance unmoved.

"So you are keeping up this nonsense to-day?" Mr. Lothrop said, in a grinding voice.

"Yes, sir," said Harry.

"You still refuse to open the door of the gymnasium and return to your duty?"

"Certainly, sir, unless you return to your duty to Dr. Locke."

The new Head ground his teeth.

"Very well!" he said savagely. "Mind, I shall visit a very heavy punishment upon you all for this! You, Wharton, and Bulstrode, will be instantly expelled from Greyfriars, and every other boy in the gymnasium will be soundly flogged!"

There was a yell from the gym.:

"Rats!"

The Head made a gesture of rage.

"I shall now send for sufficient force to overcome your resistance," he said, between his teeth. "This disgraceful affair shall last no longer. I will have the door of the building hacked to pieces, and I shall force an entrance. And then—beware!"

"We're ready, sir."

"Hurrah for us!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Lothrop retired, his brows black with rage. He strode away towards the gates. Harry Wharton looked a little uneasy.

"I wonder what dodge he is up to now!" he exclaimed.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"It's only a threat. What can he do?"

"Well, I suppose he could get chaps to come and burst in the door, if he paid them for the trouble—"

"Then there will be another scrimmage."

"And we're jolly well ready for it," said John Bull. "It will pass the time. We don't want to hang about doing nothing all the morning."

"Hurrah for us!" roared the juniors.

But Wharton was still looking a little anxious as he watched from the window. From that window, through the elm-trees, he had a view of the big stone gateway of Greyfriars, and he watched the Head striding towards it. What was Mr. Lothrop going to do? If he chose to use desperate measures, to spend money like water, and to have a scene at Greyfriars that would ring through the country doubtless, then, he could make things very warm for the strikers. But even so, Wharton was not inclined to give in. Almost all the strikers were of one mind—a fight to a finish.

Wharton watched the new Head as he strode to the gates. Just before he reached the stone arch of the gateway, there was a sound of wheels, and the cab from Friar-dale Station drove in.

Mr. Lothrop halted.

The station cab stopped at the same moment. The window in the door was thrown open, and a face looked out surmounted by a silk hat.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 172.

NEXT WEEK: "DRIVEN FROM SCHOOL"

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Mr. Lothrop and the man in the cab looked at each other. Harry Wharton gave a yell!

Great as the distance was, he recognised the face looking out of the cab. The features were blurred in the distance, but the outline was enough.

"The Head!"

"What's that?"

"The Head! The doctor—Dr. Locke!"

"My hat!"

"He's come back!"

"Yes! Look! The Head! Hurrah for the Head!"

And the juniors burst into a shout that rang as far as the gates.

"Hurrah!"

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

All's Well that Ends Well!

D R. LOCKE stepped from the station cab. Mr. Lothrop was looking at him hard. He did not know Dr. Locke by sight, and neither did the doctor know him; but they recognised each other instinctively and antagonistically. Each knew who the other was, though they had never met before. A second gentleman followed Dr. Locke from the cab—it was Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove. He had been dismissed with insulting contumely by Mr. Lothrop, but he had returned with the rightful Head of Greyfriars. Mr. Lothrop gave him a bitter glance. He realised at once that his reign was over.

"This—or—this gentleman is Mr. Lothrop, Mr. Quelch?" the Head of Greyfriars asked.

The Remove-master nodded.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. I am Dr. Locke, sir," said the old Head, with great dignity. "I have returned to resume my charge. I shall relieve you of your duties here immediately."

Mr. Lothrop found his voice.

"I have been sent here by the governing body!" he said. "I am here by order of the governors!"

"I do not think the governors would have sent you here if they had known to what state you would reduce the school!" said Dr. Locke. "I had a telegram from Mr. Prout, yesterday, and I learned that you had disregarded my instructions wired to you, and that a portion of the Lower School had barricaded themselves in the gymnasium to escape your cruelty, and that you had dismissed two masters—a thing you had no right to do, as you know perfectly well. The governors may decide between you and me, but for the present I resume my authority here."

Mr. Lothrop turned livid.

"I refuse to resign my authority to you!" he said fiercely. "I was sent here by the governors—"

"Until my return."

"Yes."

"Well, I have returned."

The deposed tyrant of Greyfriars clenched his hands hard. He was fairly caught. He had no case at all. Dr. Locke, by his return, was Head of Greyfriars again if he chose to remain. There was no doubt about that.

"I have returned, sir," said Dr. Locke. "I have left my daughter, who required my care, at the seaside, in order to return and put an end to an intolerable state of things here. I have foregone the vacation allowed me by the governors. You are relieved of your duties here, and the sooner you relieve Greyfriars of your presence, sir, the better everyone will be pleased."

Without waiting for a reply, Dr. Locke walked on.

He left the tyrant of Greyfriars white with rage, clenching his hands. But he was powerless—his sting was drawn. His reign was over. Even if he had been disposed to resist, he knew how the Sixth would rally round their old master, how the whole school would back him up. His day was done at Greyfriars!

Dr. Locke strode towards the gym.

He looked up at the window crammed with faces.

"Good-morning, sir!" said Wharton.

And a chorus came from behind:

"Good-morning, sir!"

Dr. Locke coughed.

"I hope Miss Rosie is well, sir?" said Nugent.

"My daughter is better, but she is not yet recovered," said the Head. "Thank you! Now, my boys, what does this mean?"

"We've been on strike, sir," said Bulstrode, speaking up boldly but respectfully. "We saw your telegram to Mr. Lothrop, sir, and as he wasn't obeying orders, sir—"

"Ahem!"

"Chap who disobeys, sir, can't expect to be obeyed, can he?" said Bulstrode.

"H'm! Perhaps not, Bulstrode! But do you assure me that but for your seeing that telegram this would not have happened?"

Bulstrode coloured.

"Well, no, sir," he said. "We were going on strike because he was a brute, sir. I think we should have gone on strike anyway. He's messed up everything at Greyfriars, sir. We didn't want trouble; but he sacked Mr. Quelch, and sentenced us all to be flogged for nothing. And we offered to surrender, sir, if he would let our Form-master come back, and obey the orders in your telegram, sir."

"Ahem! I shall—shall look into this matter, Bulstrode," said Dr. Locke. "It is a most—a most extraordinary state of affairs. If I punish, I shall punish only where it is deserved, and after careful inquiry. I trust that this—this extraordinary proceeding on the part of the Lower School is now at an end."

"Of course, sir! You don't think we'd think for a moment of disobeying you, do you, sir?" exclaimed all the Removites at once.

Dr. Locke coughed. As a matter of fact, he was more moved than he cared to show by the spontaneous loyalty of his juniors.

"Well—well," he said, "come out of the gymnasium, now, and return to your duty. This matter has gone much too far."

"You are staying at Greyfriars, sir?" said Harry Wharton.

"Yes—unless the governors consent to appointing Mr. Quelch to take my place."

"Good enough—I mean, yes, sir!"

Bulstrode raised his hand.

"Three cheers for Dr. Locke!" he called out.

And the strikers cheered.

"Hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

Dr. Locke smiled as he turned away and joined Mr. Quelch. The two masters went into the house together.

"I don't think there is much wrong with the boys," said Dr. Locke. "When the governors inquire into this matter, I shall be able to tell them with perfect truth that the rebels returned to their duty the instant I returned. That should satisfy the most exacting. I am afraid that Mr. Lothrop is to blame. He has been most—most injudicious!"

The strikers streamed out of the gym.

The strike had been very exciting while it lasted; but perhaps, upon the whole, all of them were satisfied to have it at an end. And they had a feeling that Dr. Locke would not visit their transgression very heavily.

"We've got to be giddy models to-day," Bob Cherry re-

marked, with a grin. "We've got to show that our motto is defence, not defiance, and that we're willing to—to play the game like anything if we're given a fair show. No slacking because we've been on strike, you know. Let's make Quelch feel glad that he's got back!"

"Good egg!" said Harry Wharton.

"I guess you're right!" said Fisher T. Fish.

And the rest of the Remove guessed so, too. They were very late for lessons that morning, but they turned up in good order. As the Remove made their way to their Form-room, they caught sight of a cab leaving Greyfriars with trunks on top and a white and angry face visible inside.

"Lothrop's going!" said John Bull.

"Give him a groan!" exclaimed Skinner.

"Oh, cheese it!" said Wharton. "He's beaten to the wide—let him go! Don't hit a man when he's down!"

And so the cab was allowed to roll away from Greyfriars without a demonstration, and it bore Mr. Lothrop away from the old school—for ever, the juniors hoped. They went cheerfully enough into the Form-room.

Mr. Quelch took his class that morning, beginning at third lesson, and going on as if nothing had happened. The Remove had never been more orderly and attentive. When the Form was dismissed, they began to expect a summons before the Head. But it did not come. Dr. Locke had consulted with the other masters, and thought the matter out very carefully, and he had decided to let the matter drop. By surrendering to him without making any terms, the strikers had, to a certain extent, thrown themselves upon his honour; and upon due reflection, as the Head did not see where the punishment could justly fall—unless it fell upon the departed tyrant of Greyfriars—he decided to say nothing about the matter at all, but to let the life at Greyfriars fall into its old groove, and let bygones be bygones.

Which suited the strikers very well.

Indeed, when the Remove were dismissed after lessons that day, and they trooped out in the cheery sunshine to cricket practice, it was hard for them to realise that only that morning they had been on strike, and that they had spent the previous night barricaded in the gym.

Greyfriars was calm again. The storm had blown over. But round every tea-table in every study that evening there was one sole topic of conversation and animated discussion—the strike in the school, and the triumph of the bold strikers!

THE END.

(Another splendid long, complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, entitled "Driven from School," by Frank Richards. Order your copy of the MAGNET in advance. Price One Penny.)

Conclusion of our Grand Serial.

(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.)

Wolves of the Deep.

A Grand Adventure Tale.
By SIDNEY DREW.

READ THIS FIRST.

Fetters Lord, multi-millionaire and owner of a wonderful submarine, is engaged in a deadly struggle against his powerful rival, Prince Michael Scaroff. Lord becomes aware that he has a traitor on board his vessel, the Lord of the Deep, and from information laid by his skipper, Trethwick, Ned Horton, the sturdy diver, is brought before the millionaire for trial. Lord is about to condemn his faithful servant when the ship's boy, Eric Hagensen, tells a tale which puts a different complexion on the matter. "Arrest Trethwick!" thunders Lord. "Mr. Horton, you are free!"

(Now go on with the story.)

Ching-Lung Makes a Wonderful Sensation in the Fore-castle, aided by Shakespeare Willyum and Billy Buttons.

Merrily down the darkening Thames, past gloomy wharves, black, frowning warehouses, and forests of masts and funnels, sped the little launch. Its brave little screw beat as merrily as the hearts of its occupants, Rupert Thurston and Ching-Lung. The Chinese boy squatted on the cushioned seat, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 172.

holding the tiller, and the magpie on his shoulder kept up a continuous chatter, telling him fifty times in as many seconds to "punch somebody in the eye." As Thurston was the only other person in the launch, it is needless to say that the kind invitation was not accepted.

"There's no Michael Scaroff on the Lord of the Deep," said Rupert, lighting a cigarette. "You'll have a jolly time there."

The Chinese boy was still dreaming of all the wonders he had seen in a four days' visit to London.

"Dat allee lightee," he squeaked. "Sayee, Mr. Lupert, me not luncce 'way from you. You jolly finee foreign debbil, dat plaine. Chinese boy gooe on your boat fol a bitee, den he go backee to London and earnee lot of money for you. Dat ole conjuler foollee we see at de theatle; he no conjol a bit. Little Chingee gives him fits. How muchee you sayee him getee?"

"Eighty pounds a week."

"Ching-Lung's yellow eyeballs rolled.

"You jokee-jokee, Mr. Lupert."

"Not a bit of it!" said Thurston. "Plenty of them get that, and more, in London."

"Punch 'em in the eye!" snapped the magpie savagely.

Ching-Lung grinned, and was silent. He had a vivid imagination, and he pictured himself living in a huge kind of Chinese palace in Park Lane, rolling in riches.

Merrily the little boat churned along, till the wharves gave place to fields and wooded hills, where pretty villas nestled. They passed steamers inward bound by the score. The long pier at Southend faded away behind them, and a bright moon rose in the summer sky. It was a perfect night.

Presently the water became rougher, and they saw the flash of the Nore lighthouse. From the unknown depths of his trouser-pocket Ching-Lung produced a huge red sausage and a fair-sized loaf of bread.

"Me peckish," he squeaked. "Have a bitee, Mr. Lupert!"

Rupert declined the invitation, and, aided by Billy Buttonee and Shakespeare Willyum, the Chinese boy quickly demolished the light refreshment, washing it down with a bottle of lemonade.

"Dat better!" he said, with a sigh of satisfaction. "How far we gotee go now?"

"Only a little way. Show the light, Ching. Three flashes." The Chinese boy unmasked the lantern, and sent three rapid flashes speeding through the gloom ahead. A single flash answered the signal.

"She's there!" cried Rupert.

Ten minutes brought them alongside of the Lord of the Deep. Except for the gleaming beacon in her conning-tower they would have shot past her, for she lay so low in the water that she was hardly discernible even at a cable's length. Standing in the full glare of the light was Ferrers Lord.

He held out his hand as Rupert scrambled up.

"Welcome home!" he said, smiling. "I am more than pleased to see you again, Thurston. You wired just at the right moment to find me. So this is your Chinese friend?"

Ching-Lung bowed low.

"Me your velly humble servant, sir."

Billy Buttonee, the magpie, cocked his bright eye upwards and glanced knowingly at the millionaire.

"Punch him in the eye!" he said gravely.

"You shutee up," said Ching-Lung, "or you gotee your ole neckee twisted! Takee no notice of him, sir; he gotee no manners. Velly finee and dly after de wet, isn't it? Exclusee me."

Ferrers Lord beckoned to Rupert to follow him, and turned on his heel, leaving the Chinese boy to his own devices. The coolness of his reception did not abash Ching-Lung in the least. He placed his thumb against his snub-nose and expanded four yellow fingers in the direction of the retreating millionaire, to the great delight of Tom Prout, the brawny steersman, who was leaning against the wheel enjoying a quiet pipe.

"Hallo, dandelion!" said Tom Prout, in such a deep bass voice that the words seemed to come from the very depths of the hold. "None of your cheeky ways here!"

"Punch him in the eye!" croaked the magpie. "Punch him in the eye!"

"It 'ud sarve him right if I did," growled the sailor, "to teach him common respect!"

Ching-Lung twisted himself sideways as if all his bones were made of indiarubber, and laid his right ear close to the deck-plates, pretending not to have seen the speaker.

"Here, you chapee downee there," he squeaked, "if you givee me any moree sauce I come downee and smack your head. You no talkee to Ching-Lung twice. You gotee your coffin oldelee."

A look of comical astonishment crossed his face as he glanced up and pretended to see the steersman for the first time.

"Exclusee me," he said, bowing to the ground, with his hand on his heart, "did you cough?"

"I did not."

Ching-Lung staggered, and wagged his pigtail dolefully.

"Be velly, velly careful wid dat voice," he squeaked, "or you losee it. You takee Chinese boy's tip, and tie a label on it wid your namee and address. Exclusee me, but do you digee enough of it up in de molning to lastee you allea day? I thought it was a chapee downee dere."

"Punch him in the eye!" croaked the magpie.

Tom Prout laughed like a battery of guns.

"You'd better come down to the fo'c's'le, dandelion," he said, "and I'll introduce you as a rare specimen of cracked china. When you and young Hagensen get together I guess there'll be no living in the ship. What's that—a rat? Let's look at him. What a spanking little chap!"

There was a sensation in the forecassle when Ching-Lung entered and beamed upon the men. The steersman introduced him briefly as the "yellow turnip."

Ching-Lung nodded and smiled, and the magpie hopped from his shoulder and made himself at home immediately.

Little Hagensen was busy making a cage for his jackdaw. When the roars of laughter which greeted the arrival of Ching-Lung had subsided, he dropped the hammer and stared at the Chinese boy just as he had stared at the ape.

"Is dot your proper face?" he asked, with perfect simplicity, amazed by its yellowness.

There was another shriek of laughter as Ching-Lung replied, with a beaming smile:

"You bettee! Good glaciouse! Whatee you got in your mouf?"

Eric's mouth was not of the rosebud kind, and astonishment had made him open it widely. Ching-Lung, horror depicted on every feature, sprang upon him and seized him gently but firmly by the nape of the neck. He might well have asked what Hagensen had there. Yards upon yards of ribbon of every hue shot out in a perfect stream. Piles of it fell around Ching-Lung like a rainbow, and waved about him in mid-air. Then, as the torrent slackened, the

Chinese boy, still looking the picture of horror, thrust in his yellow fingers and, with a sudden jerk, produced a huge dried haddock.

Hagensen collapsed, and turned deadly white. As he sat on the floor staring blankly at the amazing collection that had apparently been concealed inside him, a salvo of cheers and hand-claps made it dawn on him slowly that it was a trick. He smiled weakly, and murmured:

"Dank you very mooch."

From that moment he was Ching-Lung's devoted slave, and from that moment also Ching-Lung was the idol of the forecassle. He asked for a cigarette, and a regular shower of them were hurled at him. He caught two in his mouth, one behind each ear, and the rest in his nimble hands.

Meanwhile Billy Buttonee, the magpie, and Eric Hagensen's jackdaw—who had been christened Old King Cole by the men—were making friends with each other, and planning every kind of theft and wickedness. The magpie was a most sleek and handsome bird, but Old King Cole was probably the most ragged, unkempt, and melancholy specimen of his tribe ever hatched from a speckled egg.

"You clever chap!" said the Norwegian boy, as Ching-Lung jerked a lighted cigarette from his lips and caught it behind his ear. "Ach! Wonderful clever! Dank you mooch!"

"Me velly pleased you thinkee so," squeaked Ching-Lung, highly gratified. "Me teachee you. Gentlemen, I will now performee one of de most marvellous trickees ever seeg. Givee me dat hampel."

An empty hamper was placed before him, and Ching-Lung rolled up his sleeves and bowed. Then he took one of the strips of wood Eric had been using to nail on the front of the jackdaw's cage, and, tying a piece of string to it, converted the whole, by the aid of a bent pin, into a primitive fishing-rod.

"Examinee dat hampel, please," he squeaked, "and leavee do lid open."

The hamper was examined with the utmost care, handed round, shaken, and generally overhauled. Ching-Lung squatted down near it, and baiting the pin with a piece of biscuit, commenced to fish.

"Datee was a nibble!" he said suddenly. "Dere he goee again! Yah! Gotee him! Whoosh!"

It was a fish, a monstrous paper fish, and so well did the Chinese boy manipulate the line that it came out wriggling and flapping as naturally as if it were alive. Eric uttered a yell of amaze and delight.

"You thinkee you can holdee him, big mouf?" inquired the angler. "He velly slippy."

"Yes, yes. Dot so. Dank you very mooch!"

"You be velly careful, den," said Ching-Lung, with a sly look at the grinning spectators. "Dis am a velly savage kindee of Yarmouf bloater. Nabee him at de backee of him neckee when I say go."

"Yes, yes. Dot is so."

"Go!"

Eric Hagensen clutched the paper monster with all his strength. The next instant there was a terrific report, and all that was left of Ching-Lung's catch consisted of a few tiny fragments of tissue-paper floating in the air. Little Hagensen stared dumbfounded at his empty hands.

"Where dot beggar gone?" he asked.

"Yah!" squeaked Ching-Lung. "You not holdee tightee enough. He a flyee-fishee. Me catchee something else."

Again the hook was baited and flung into the hamper. The next catch, which caused tremendous laughter, was a pair of old flannel trousers, which Ching-Lung gravely presented to the steersman. The fishing went on merrily, much to the delight of all, and Ching-Lung became a hero. But the crowning portion of the Chinese boy's performance came last of all. With his little face screwed up, and looking wonderfully alert, like a keen angler watching his float, he flung the hook into the hamper.

"Don't makee any noisee," he whispered hoarsely. "Dis velly hard fish to catchee. He swimme deep downee."

Five minutes passed, and the Chinese boy shook his head and sighed. Then he bent over the hamper and squeaked:

"Sayee, you old beastee downee dere, why you no bitee?"

Far down, apparently from the very depths of the ship, a deep voice replied:

"How can I bite, Mr. Ching, sir? The line ain't long enough to reach me by a mile."

Everyone looked at Tom Prout. It was Tom Prout's voice, but Tom Prout stood open-mouthed, staring at the basket.

"You better takee my advice, Mr. Plout," said Ching-Lung calmly, "and chaine up dat voice of yours. He gotee lost for certain if you don't. Much oblige for your kindee tenshun, gentlemen, and dere'll be no collection. Exclusee me! I go findee Mr. Lupert Thulston. -Ta-ta!"

"Well," growled Mr. Thomas Prout, as Ching-Lung glided away on one leg, his pigtail sticking out behind him like a poker, "if he ain't a knock-out! That's what you call a ventriloquist, ain't it, when a chap imitates people talking? Well, I'm blowed! Who'd ha' thought it?"

His comrades agreed with him that Ching-Lung was indeed an extraordinary character. It happened that Tom Prout had a weakness for snuff, and whenever he was perplexed or puzzled he helped himself to a generous pinch of this unnecessary and useless compound. He therefore produced a huge tin box, opened it, and conveyed an enormous dose of its contents to his weather-beaten nose.

Atchoo!

But Tom did not only sneeze—he yelled, roared, danced about frantically, grew black in the face, streamed at the eyes, and buried his face in an enormous red handkerchief, groaning deeply. His amazed comrades slapped him on the back till his ribs rattled again. At last Tom Prout's purple face appeared from behind the handkerchief, and his voice, thick with anger, bellowed:

"Red pepper! If I knowed the man what done it, I'd scalp him!"

It could not have been Ching-Lung, surely, for Ching-Lung, who glided into the forecabin just then, looked so sympathetic and gentle that even the mildest brand of butter would not have melted in his mouth.

"Whatee de mattel?" he inquired.

"Cayenne pepper!" roared Thomas Prout, holding his burning nose. "Atchoo-o-o! Cay-a-a-atchoo!"

"In his snuff, turnip," explained one of the grinning bystanders.

Ching-Lung looked as grave as a judge on the Bench, and as sad as a boy whose pet bird has been swallowed by the cat.

"My fiends," he squeaked, "dis is a velly tellible ting. Cayenne peppel in a gentleman's snuffee meanee a practical jokee. Practical jokee tellible cluel ting. What oughtee to be done wid practical joker?"

Billy Buttonce, to the huge delight of everyone except the injured steersman, answered promptly:

"Punch him in the eye! Punch him in the eye!"

Ching-Lung bowed towards the speaker.

"I muchee obliged to de gentleman in black-and-white who just makee dat sensible lemalk," he went on. "If we only findee de fascal what puttee peppel in Mr. Plout's snuffee we no doubt cally out de suggestion. My heart bleed wid sollar for Mr. Plout. Yah, dis cluel, cluel world! Ah, me!"

Here Ching-Lung covered his eyes with a paper handkerchief, with a border of pink dragons, and wept bitterly.

Nathan Trethvick Declares War—The New Skipper—Thurston is Left Alone.

Meanwhile Rupert had followed Ferrers Lord to the saloon. If the millionaire had greeted him coldly in the presence of Ching-Lung and the steersman, he made amends for it now. His dark eyes sparkled with pleasure as he wrung Thurston's hand again and again.

"By Jove!" he said. "It's good to see you again, Rupert! I had almost made up my mind that you were lost. Not a word of anything serious until we've had dinner. I kept it back for you. You haven't dined, I suppose?"

"No; I was too eager to get back to you to think about it."

They sat down, and the Chinese servant entered noiselessly to wait on them. Until the liqueur and coffee appeared they chatted about the ordinary topics of the day, and principally about the terrible state of anarchy in China. Ferrers Lord had a wonderful knowledge of the vast land of the yellow men. They lighted their cigars at last, and, leaning back in his chair, his eyes half closed, the millionaire listened to Rupert's story. Once or twice he yawned lazily, but he started at the name of Simon Trethvick.

"You have had quite an exciting time of it," he said, as Rupert ended. "I was quite aware that Michael Scaroff was at the bottom of the mystery of the missing liner. Of course, my dear fellow, as you have seen the gold stolen by this sea-wolf, and Ching-Lung witnessed the affair, it would not be difficult to make the world too hot to hold the Russian. Granting this, what do you expect me to do?"

Rupert stared.

"What do I expect you to do, Lord? What a question to ask! Is this human wolf to be allowed to scour the seas, to harry and murder and rob, when a word would outlaw him, and put a price on his head? Let me swear to the horrible story at once, and every nation will join in helping to hunt him down."

Ferrers Lord smiled, and shook his head.

"My dear fellow," he answered, "you are full of pluck and grit, but your brain is not of the brightest. Consider for a moment, and you will see the weakness of your plan.

Let us suppose, Rupert, that we petrify the world by publishing this terrible story. In the first place, it would paralyse the shipping trade, for people would fight shy of carrying any cargo valuable enough to tempt the sea-wolf, and passengers would be afraid to travel. Again, think what a tremendous fighting-machine the Tsaritsa is, and do not forget that Scaroff is a Russian, and, being a Russian, he would strike at us first. We might lose scores of our best ironclads, for no ironclad ever built can fight with such a vessel. No, Rupert, we must finish this between us. There is only one way."

Thurston stared moodily into the grate. The argument was unanswerable.

"It is horrible," he said—"horrible!"

Ferrers Lord smiled again.

"Moreover," he went on calmly, "I have come to terms with Michael Scaroff."

Rupert Thurston sprang up as if electrified, and stared at the millionaire.

"What!" he gasped. "Come to terms with that murderer—"

"Gently—gently, my dear fellow! Your escape, and the secret you carried, brought him to his senses. He did not want to have the whole civilised world against him, and so he came to terms. My niece has been released, and is now on her way to London. If Michael Scaroff is a liar himself, he knows that I never break my word. I have a written pledge from him, in which he promises to respect all vessels, no matter what flag they carry, and to attack no British man-o'-war, unless in self-defence, or upon a declaration of war between Great Britain and Russia. In return for this I have promised to keep his secret for twelve months. It makes no difference to the quarrel between ourselves. That can only end with the death of one of us. Have I done well?"

"Marvellously!" said Rupert, with a sigh of relief. "And Lady Violet is—"

"On her way home, little the worse for her adventure. I hope. Your misfortune in getting lost was really a magnificent piece of luck. As long as I knew my niece was on board the Tsaritsa, I could do nothing. I have to deal with Nathan Trethvick now. I must have been blind not to distrust the man before. It is strange that his treachery in tampering with the guns should have saved your life and Lady Violet's. Scaroff must have paid Trethvick well."

"Yes," said Rupert, "he does not spare his gold, the fiend! You will shoot Trethvick, I suppose?"

Ferrers Lord's handsome face darkened, but he made no answer. He rose and touched the electric bell.

"Bring Nathan Trethvick here!"

The servant saluted, and slipped away. There was a clank of chains, and a tramp of drilled feet in the corridor, and Ferrers Lord calmly lighted a cigar. The door opened.

"Hang you!" snarled the dwarf's cracked voice. "Hands off! I can walk alone!"

Dirty and unkempt, and loaded with heavy fetters, he glowered round him like a caged wolf, his hideous face livid with rage. He bared his teeth as his bloodshot eyes rested on Rupert.

"You nine-lived brat!" he snarled. "You're back again, are you? Ha, ha, ha! Fifty lives wouldn't be too many for you, if I once got a grip of your throat!"

Rupert turned away, shrugging his shoulders.

"You may go, men," said Ferrers Lord.

He sat down again as the door closed, and clasped his hands over his knee. The prisoner waddled to a chair.

"Stand up, and remain standing, if you please," said the millionaire. "This is our last interview."

The dwarf turned pale.

"You're not going to have me shot?" he cried. "You daren't! You daren't! I'll let out the truth!"

"The lamp, Rupert, if you please," Ferrers Lord's cigar was burning badly, and he lighted it afresh at the spirit-lamp. "You think I am afraid to have you shot, eh?" he went on icily. "You ought to know me better than that, Trethvick. Is there anything I am afraid to do? Every man on this vessel can see that you have some hold on me. Mr. Thurston here guessed it the moment he heard you speak to me. It is a horrible secret, and I curse the day and the deed every instant of my life. If I were afraid, I would have got rid of you long ago. All I have to do is to have you gagged and shot, and the secret is safe."

The dwarf broke into a peal of cracked laughter.

"Try it!" he snarled. "Try it, my noble millionaire! Ha, ha, ha! Do you think Nathan Trethvick is a born lunatic? If I opened my lips, that fawning brat would slink away from you like a thing accursed. I'm no fool, Ferrers Lord, and took care to look after the secret before I put my head in the noose by sailing with you. I put the proofs in safe hands, and I told the cunning old fox who

(Concluded on page iii. of cover.)



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WOLVES OF THE DEEP.

(Continued from page 16.)

keeps the packet to open it if I happen to be missing. Ha, ha! What would become of the great millionaire, with his palaces and yachts and carriages, then? How would the handsome Ferrers Lord, raved about by all the pretty women in London and Paris, look in striped stockings, and clothes with the broad arrow branded on them? How would the wealthy Ferrers Lord feel when he was quarrying stone in a convict prison, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Oh, you'll shoot me, will you?"

"No; I will not shoot you. Hold up your hands!" Still calm, the millionaire rose, and, selecting a key from a bunch, stepped forward.

"Hold up your hands, Nathan Trethvick!" he said again. The dwarf obeyed, chuckling, and the fetters fell upon the carpet with a crash.

"Ha, ha! I thought you'd come round!" snarled the dwarf. "I thought you daren't face it out. I don't deny I messed with the guns, and I don't deny Scaroff pays me. Ha, ha! What am I to do now? I don't suppose you'll care to have me on the ship. You'll pension me off, eh?"

He poured out a glass of liqueur, and tossed it down his throat, chuckling with triumph. Ferrers Lord paced the room.

"You will find the door behind you," he said quietly. Something in the tone of his voice made the dwarf spring round.

"What do you mean?" "There is the door! If you turn to your right after going outside and follow the corridor, it will bring you to the companion-ladder. That leads to the conning tower. You will find a boat there."

Nathan Trethvick staggered back. "Are you mad?" he snarled. "Are you going to throw me off? By Heaven, unless you treat me well, I'll ruin you!"

The little revolver glistened threateningly in the millionaire's hand. He glanced at his watch.

"You have exactly four minutes to make yourself scarce!" he said. "I should not advise you to linger."

Their eyes met. Then, with an oath, the dwarf waddled to the door. He turned, and raised his clenched hand.

"Good!" he snarled. "I am going. But don't forget, Ferrers Lord, you are letting loose a tiger that will tear your heart out some day. I have the proofs, you bound, and my teeth are sharp. I hate you a million times more than I hate Michael Scaroff. Day or night, I'll never rest until I crush you. Ha, ha, ha! I have the proofs!"

The little revolver went up. Trethvick was foaming at the mouth.

"Time is getting short," drawled Ferrers Lord. "I have no doubt that Michael Scaroff will welcome you, if you go to him. You are mistaken about the proofs, I fancy. And who would believe the word of Nathan Trethvick? They would put you in the asylum as a madman. The proofs are here!"

He drew a sealed packet from his pocket, and held it up. Open-mouthed, panting, the dwarf stared at it. Then, with a murderous yell, he snatched up one of the steel manacles, and rushed at the millionaire. A little yellow hand gripped his ankle, and, crashing forward, his head struck the carved leg of the mahogany table, and he lay stunned and silent.

The yellow hand was the hand of Ching-Lung, and Ching-Lung regarded the fallen man with a look of mild surprise. "You velly careless wid de fulniture," he said, shaking his head gravely. "He mightee have bloke de table."

Ferrers Lord hid a smile. "What do you want here?"

The Chinese boy bowed deeply. No one on earth could bow like Ching-Lung. It was a bow, a twist, and twenty wriggles combined.

"Oh, excuse me!" he squeaked. "I just came to speak to Mr. Thulston."

Ferrers Lord sounded the gong, and four sailors hurried in.

"Pick this fellow up," said the millionaire, "and pitch him into the boat. He's too thick-headed to be hurt much, and he'll soon come round. He can pull himself ashore. Send Mr. Horton to me."

The unconscious dwarf was dragged away, and with him Ching-Lung disappeared.

The diver entered the millionaire's room. Nobody on the ship evinced more honest delight at seeing Rupert than Ned Horton. Ferrers Lord was seated at the table writing. He looked up.

"Good-evening, Horton!"

"Good-evening, sir!" said the burly diver, touching his forelock.

"I have just been speaking to Mr. Thurston about you," continued the millionaire. "You must admit that the evidence was black against you."

"It was, sir—terribly black! I can't blame you, sir, and I bear no ill-will to anybody—not even to Trethvick, now he's out of the ship."

"Quite so; and it does you credit. The fact, is, Horton, I am about to make great changes. The vessel which you saw—the Destroyer—will be completed in a few days, and I intend to command her in person. Mr. Thurston will remain on board the Lord of the Deep, holding the same position that I have previously held here. You will be under Mr. Thurston, and take your special orders from him. You understand?"

"I—I don't think I do, sir."

"I mean," said Ferrers Lord kindly, "that you are captain of the Lord of the Deep."

When the news spread to the fore-castle, it was hailed with joy, for Ned was a general favourite. There were good and bad among the crew, and there must be good and bad everywhere; and some of the skulkers, who had smarted under the iron rule of Nathan Trethvick, prophesied merry times.

It was the merriest evening the fore-castle had ever known. To drink the health of the new skipper, Rupert ordered a double allowance of grog to be served out. Little Hagensen, who adored the diver, was as proud as a peacock. Tom Prout brought out his old fiddle, and its squeaking was drowned by lusty voices singing, "For he's a jolly good fellow!" in honour of the new skipper.

It was not quite so merry in the saloon, where Ned Horton sat, grave of face, listening to his instructions. Though he did not hold a Board of Trade certificate, the diver was born to the sea. He could not take a reckoning, but he could follow a course, and Rupert would do the rest. Ferrers Lord shook him kindly by the hand as he stood up to go.

The millionaire and Rupert chatted and smoked for another hour, and then the Chinese servant appeared, bringing a hat and coat.

"Surely you're not going ashore?" asked Thurston.

"That is just what I am going to do. Good-bye, Rupert!"

"Good-bye? How long are you going to be away?" Ferrers Lord held out his hand, and yawned.

"I hardly know, my dear fellow," he answered. "I will see you at Shanghai on the 26th at half-past four in the afternoon precisely. How long I shall be away from this particular spot I cannot say. You will find all your instructions in that desk. Good luck go with you, my friend! Stay where you are! I can find my way alone."

He waved his hand, and the door shut. Amazed, Rupert stood staring at the closed door. Suddenly he heard a rush of water as it hissed into the tanks. The vessel sank, and the screws revolved, churning her onwards. Rupert awoke from his dream.

He had accomplished much during his association with Ferrers Lord. Would his future be as brilliant? To this only the future can answer, and the story of his mission under sealed orders must be told in another volume.

THE END.

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