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

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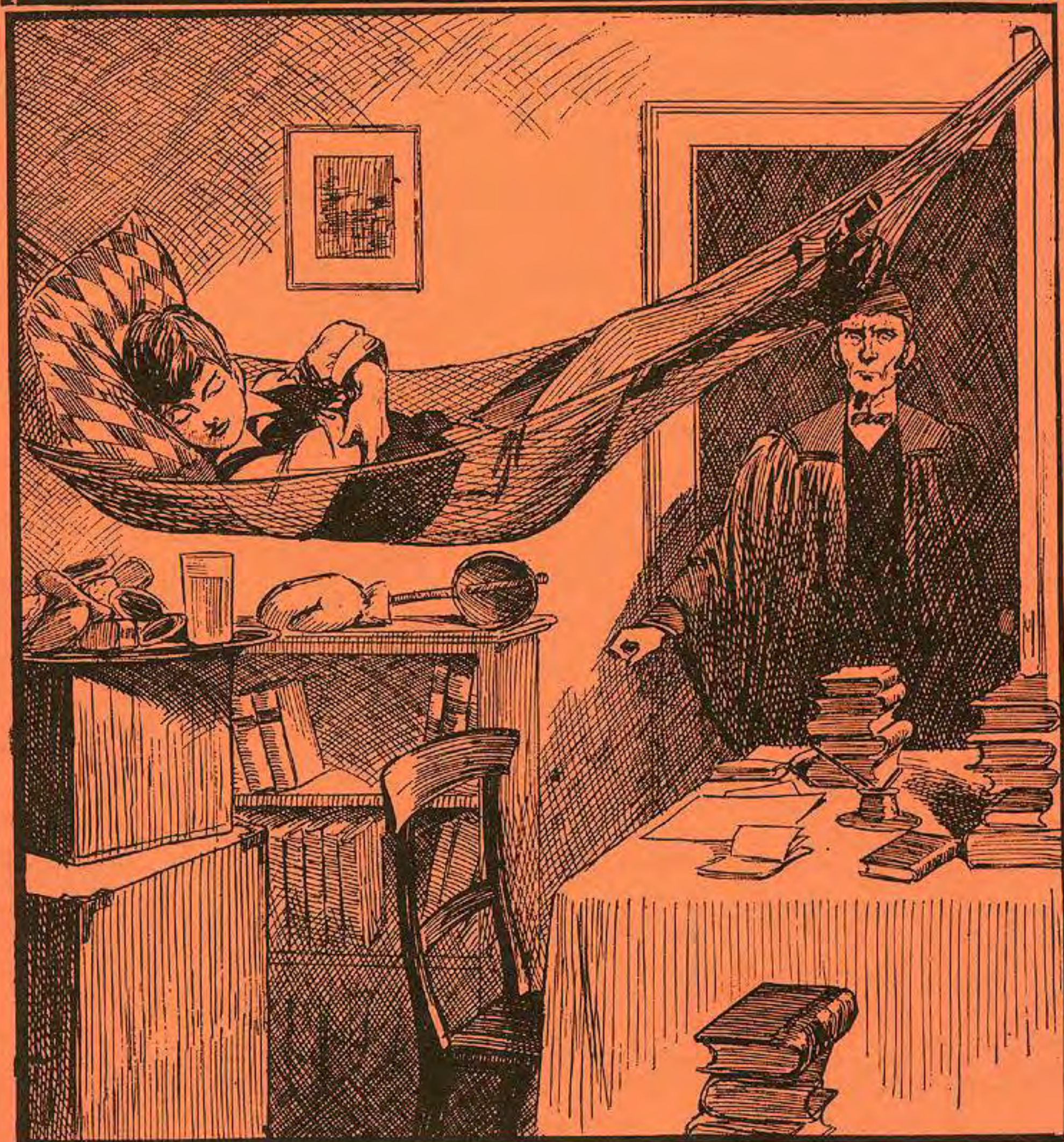
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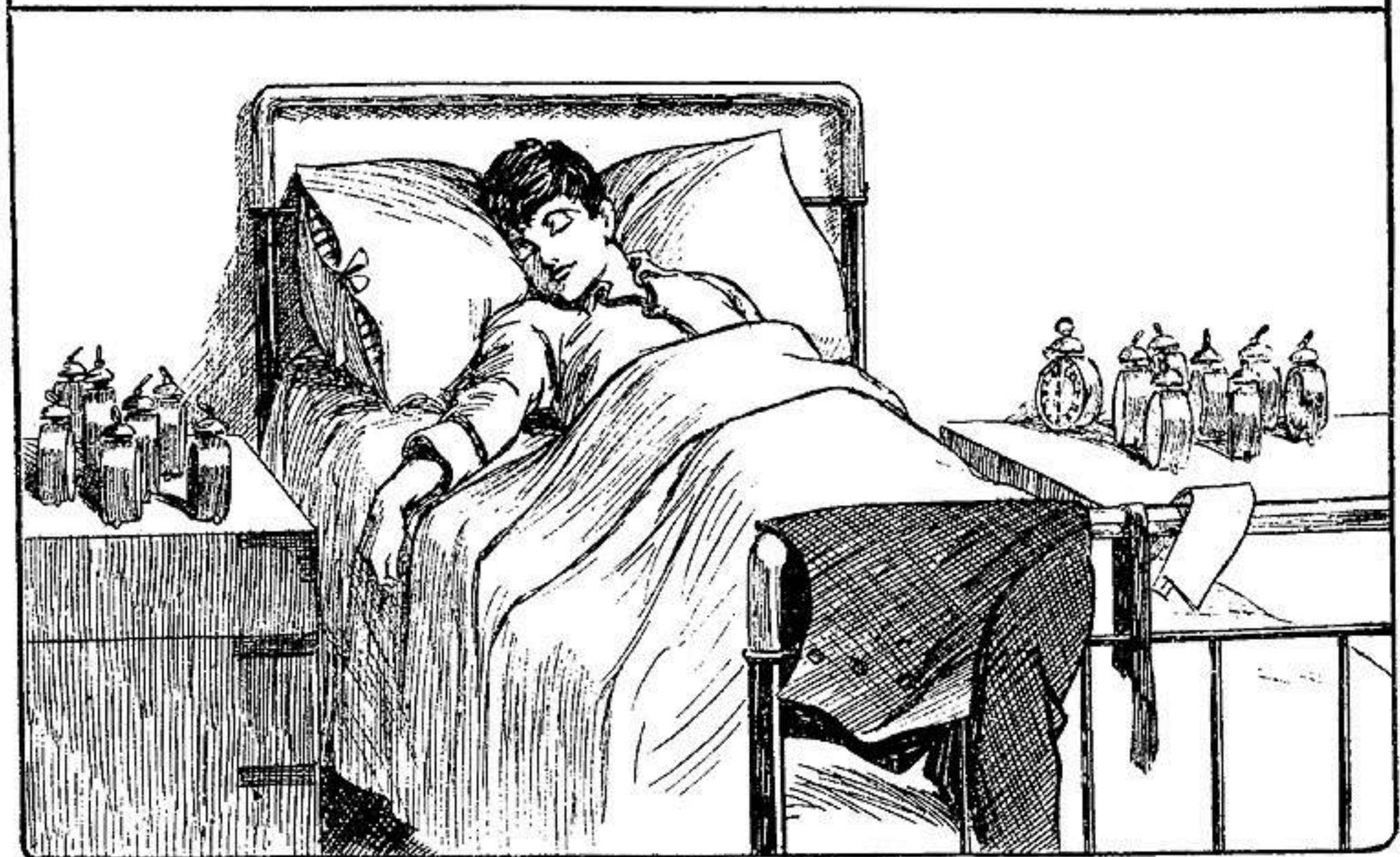
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By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Something Like a Slacker.

"YAW-aw-aw!"

It was a portentous yawn from a bed in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars.

"Yaw-aw!"

The rising-bell had ceased to ring, and the Remove had turned out of bed. Even Billy Bunter was up—partly, perhaps, because Bob Cherry had kindly jerked off his bed-

clothes, and rolled him out upon the floor. Harry Wharton and Mark Linley, always early risers, had already gone down, and the rest of the Remove were dressing, with one exception. That one exception lay on his back in bed, staring at the ceiling, and yawning, debating in his mind whether he could possibly have another second or two in bed before it was quite imperative to rise.

"You'll be late, Carlton," called out Frank Nugent.

"Yaw-aw!"

"You know Quelch was ratty yesterday because you came

down late," went on Frank. "Get up, and don't be an ass!"

Arthur Carlton yawned again, a more tremendous yawn than ever. He was the laziest fellow in the Remove, or in all Greyfriars. There were other slackers in the school, but Arthur Carlton was the only fellow who had reduced slacking to an art. He was full of the best intentions in the world, and he would sit for a whole afternoon under a shady tree, planning great schemes of industry for another occasion, and he would lie in bed till the last possible moment, thinking out dodges for early rising on the following morning. When nobody in the Remove took the trouble to roll him out of bed, he generally got into trouble for being down late; but it must be said, in justice to the Greyfriars Remove, that there were plenty of fellows in the Form who were perfectly willing to lend a hand—or a foot—in helping another fellow out of bed.

"What's the time?" yawned Carlton.

"Twenty past seven."

"Well, I think I can have another minute."

"Fathead! Roll out!"

"Another thirty seconds, anyway."

"Get up!"

"Yaw-aw-aw!"

"Of all the blessed slackers!" grunted Bob Cherry. "And you've entered for the Raven Scholarship, too, and you haven't worked worth a cent. You'll be last on the list, and serve you jolly well right."

"I guess so," said Fish, the American junior. "I guess I'm taking that scholarship, my son—some."

"Oh, you won't get it!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Skinner's more likely than you are, and Carlton's more likely than either, if he worked instead of slacking. Not that he's likely to do that."

"Oh, I'm going to wire in this afternoon!" said Carlton. "I'm going to cut the cricket, and mug in a whole afternoon at the papers."

Bob Cherry snorted.

"You'll cut the cricket; I've no doubt about that," he said. "But you jolly well won't mug in an afternoon at work, unless you call lying under the trees work. I suppose you're going to slave at reading a novel beside the river?"

"Don't jaw!" murmured Carlton. "Let me have my last minute."

And he closed his eyes.

Bob Cherry stared at him.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "He's gone to sleep! Carlton!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Carlton, you ass!"

There was no reply from the Slacker of the Remove. He was asleep.

"Oh, leave him alone!" said Skinner. "Let old Quelch come up and find him. That's what he wants."

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry. "I'm going to wake him up."

Bob Cherry took his water-jug, and filled it from another jug till it was quite full. Then he came up to Carlton's bed.

The Slacker was certainly fast asleep, or he would have stirred when Bob Cherry came near him with the jug of water. He did not stir. His eyes were closed, and his breathing was steady.

Bob Cherry raised the jug of water, and carefully poised it over Carlton's upturned face. The other fellows ceased their various occupations, and stood round watching him, grinning.

Bob Cherry tilted over the jug till a tiny stream of water flowed from it, falling directly upon the Slacker's nose.

Splash!

Carlton started and awoke.

"Oh! Ow! Yo-oo!"

Splash! Sloosh! Swash!

The water descended in a cataract.

Carlton had opened his eyes and his mouth, and both of them were full of water in a moment. The water splashed on his face, and ran over his neck and his chest, over the pillow and the bed. He started up, gasping and sputtering, and knocked his head against the jug, bringing down the last of the water in a heavy flood.

The juniors roared.

Carlton roared, too, in a different way.

"Ow! Yow! Yoop! Yaroo! Groo! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroo! Stop it! Yow!"

Carlton hit out blindly, and barked his knuckles on the jug, and roared again. Bob Cherry retreated, grinning.

"You ass!" yelled Carlton. "I'll punch your silly head!"

Ow! You ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Slacker of the Remove was flooded. He was drenched, and his bed was drenched. He rubbed his eyes and glared

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at Bob Cherry. Bob, chuckling, returned to his washstand, and went on sponging his sturdy limbs.

"You'll get up now, I think," he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob plunged his face into cold water, and splashed right and left. Bob was always very thorough-going in his ablutions. When he began to towel himself he looked round for the Slacker.

"Better buck up, Carlton," he remarked. "You'll be late, anyway. Why, what—how—Hullo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob stared at the Slacker in amazement. Carlton was not up. The rest of the Remove yelled at the expression upon Bob's face. Carlton, drenched as he was, had pulled the clothes over him, and was breathing calmly, with closed eyes.

"My only hat!" gasped Bob. "Did you ever see anything like that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry rushed towards Carlton's bed. This time the Slacker's eyes opened as he came out.

"You keep off!" he exclaimed.

"You lazy boulder! You've got to get up!"

"Look here—"

"Here goes!"

Bob Cherry seized the bed by the side, and exerted all his strength. The bed came swinging up, and bedclothes and Carlton together rolled out on the other side. There was a bump on the floor, and a roar from Carlton.

"Ow! Yow!"

But Bob was not finished yet. He turned the light bedstead right over, and plumped it down upon the struggling, wriggling Slacker. There was a suffocated roar from Carlton.

"Ow! Groo! You ass! Chuck it! Yah!"

"There!" gasped Bob Cherry. "I don't think you'll get into bed again, you boulder."

And the juniors roared.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry was right. Carlton crawled out breathlessly from under the bedclothes and the bedstead, gasping, but he did not make any attempt to get into bed again. He turned to his washing, and was last down of the Remove, and he came down yawning.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Slacker Decides to Buck Up.

"LETTER for you, Carlton."

The Remove had come out of the Form-room after second lessons, and Bob Cherry, who had faint hopes of a remittance that morning, looked for a letter. He did not find one for himself, but there was one addressed to Arthur Carlton.

Carlton had walked as far as the doorway, and was standing there, with his hands in his pockets, leaning against the wall and looking out into the sunny quad.

He glanced round lazily.

"Did you speak to me, Cherry?"

"Yes. There's a letter for you."

"Bring it to me, will you? There's a good fellow."

Bob Cherry took down the letter, with a snort. Bob was the most vigorous of fellows himself, and he never could understand slackers. He tossed the letter over to Carlton.

"Catch!" he exclaimed.

Carlton did not remove his hands from his pockets. The letter passed him, and fell outside upon the steps of the School House. Carlton looked at it lazily, and didn't move.

"You ass!" said Bob. "Why didn't you catch it?"

"How could I catch it when I had my hands in my pockets?" demanded Carlton.

Bob snorted.

"Well, pick it up, then," he said.

"Oh, presently will do!"

And the letter remained lying on the steps. Billy Bunter sidled down the passage, and picked up the letter. He blinked at it, and then blinked at Arthur Carlton through his big spectacles.

"I say, Carlton, this letter is for you."

"I know that."

"Don't you want to open it?"

"Yes."

"Why don't you, then?"

"Oh, I'm too tired! Stick it in my pocket for me."

"Oh, really, Carlton! It might contain a remittance, you know," said Bunter, turning the letter over in his fat hands.

"Very likely," assented Carlton.

"Look here, Carlton! I was expecting a postal-order by this post, and it hasn't come," said Bunter. "There's been some delay in the post. There are a lot of rotten delays in



"Arthur," said the Slackers' mother, crying softly, "things are very bad with your father; he has had heavy losses. He would not have you told till the last possible moment, but you must know it now. All the world, that cares to know, will know it soon. You understand now why we have both been so anxious for you to win the Raven Scholarship? With that scholarship yours, you will be able to remain at Greyfriars. (See page 6.)

the post when I'm expecting letters. I've been thinking of complaining to the Postmaster-General about it; something ought to be done. Look here! If you're not really in need of your remittance—"

"I don't know that it's a remittance."

"Well, suppose it is," said Bunter—"suppose it is, you might make me a small loan, you know, and I will give you my postal-order, when it comes, to settle up. What do you think of the idea?"

Carlton grinned.

"Rotten!" he said.

"Oh, really, you know. Look here, you'd better open the letter. Chap oughtn't to leave his letter unopened."

"Well, open it for me," said Carlton.

"Shall I? All serene!"

Billy Bunter was always glad to open a letter, his own or anybody else's. Everybody said that a post-card never came to the school without Bunter knowing what was on it; but a sealed letter baffled the Peeping Tom of Greyfriars. He did not give Carlton time to change his mind. His fat thumb was inserted in the envelope, and he drew the letter out.

"Shall I read it to you?" he asked.

Carlton yawned.

"Yes; if you like."

There was a chuckle from the juniors near at hand.
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"THE ONLY WAY!"
A Long Complete School Tale, by FRANK RICHARDS.

Carlton leaned back against the wall, his eyes half-closed, the picture of lazy comfort.

"Well, you ass," exclaimed Harry Wharton, "are you going to let Paul Pry read your letter?"

"Oh, really Wharton—"

"Nothing private in it," said Carlton, with a yawn. "It's only about arrangements for the holidays, or wearing something or other next the skin, or else a tip from my governor. Go ahead, Bunter!"

"Certainly!" said Bunter.

And he began to read out the letter:

"My dear Arthur,—You did not mention in your last letter what progress you were making in your studies for the Raven Scholarship—"

Carlton grunted.

"That's just like the mater," he said. "That's from the mater. I forgot about the blessed scholarship when I wrote. Blessed if I know what they made me enter for! I'm not the sort of chap to compete for a scholarship!"

"By Jove! You're not!" said Harry Wharton.

Bunter went on reading. His eye had glanced further ahead, and the Owl of the Remove was interested in the letter from Carlton's mother.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"BEYOND THE ETERNAL ICE."
An Extra-long Instalment, by SIDNEY DREW.

"I shall come down to the school and see you about it, Arthur. It is more important than you understand for you to succeed in this matter—"

"Blessed if I see it!" yawned Carlton.

"And if you do not succeed it will be a very heavy blow to me. But I will explain further when I see you."

"Is that all?" asked Carlton.

"That's all!"

"Very short for the mater," said Carlton. "It's rough on a chap to be bucked up like this. The pater lets a fellow alone."

"Here's your letter," said Bunter. "No blessed postal-order in it. Groo!"

Carlton took the letter. He stretched his limbs and yawned and blinked at the juniors.

"I suppose the mater's right," he said. "I'm jolly well going to buck up. This afternoon—"

"You'll have a nice long nap, as it's a half-holiday," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm jolly well going to buck up!" repeated Carlton.

"You will see. I can work when I like."

The juniors chuckled. They had heard Carlton say that before.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Bob Cherry's Foe.

BIFF!
"There, you bounder, take that!"
Biff! Crash!
"Got you that time!"
Biff, biff!
"Right on the mark! Got you! Take that!"
Biff! Crash!
"My hat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Somebody's getting it strong. Bob! Bob! Let him off!"
"Open the door, Bob!"
"Stop it, you ass!"

A crowd of juniors had gathered outside the door of Bob Cherry's study in the Remove passage. From within came terrific sounds of strife. It was time to go down to the cricket, and Harry Wharton & Co. were already in their flannels, and Harry had a bat under his arm, Nugent a set of stumps. They had knocked at Bob Cherry's door, and kicked at it, and banged on it with the bat, but it was useless—they could get no answer, and the door was locked.

Biff, biff, biff!

"Got you there!"

It was Bob Cherry's voice, alternating with loud blows and crashes. The juniors in the passage were getting seriously alarmed. Bob Cherry was generally one of the kindest and best-natured of fellows; but sometimes he lost his temper, and at such times he was like a hurricane. Any fellow who really provoked Bob, and had the misfortune to get to close quarters with him, was certain of a very rough time. And whoever was in the study now with Bob was having a very rough time indeed, to judge by the incessant blows and by Bob's exclamations.

"Bob! Bob!"

"Open the door!"

"Bob, old man! He's had enough!"

"Chuck it!"

But the only answer from within was the sound of incessant blows. The crowd thickened in the passage. Bolsover, the bully of the Remove, strode up, and kicked at the door.

"Open this door, Cherry!" he shouted, in his most domineering tone.

"Got you!"

Biff, biff!

"He's half-killing somebody!" exclaimed John Bull.

"Who can it be? It can't be Linley; he never quarrels with Linley!"

"Where is Linley?"

"Here I am," said a quiet voice. Mark Linley, Bob Cherry's study-mate, came along the passage. "What's the row?"

"Bob's massacring somebody in the study!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Call out to him to open the door; he may open it for you!"

Mark tapped on the door.

"Let us in, Bob; there's a good fellow!"

Biff, biff, biff!

"There you are!" came Bob Cherry's voice, in gasping tones. "That's one for your mother! And that's one for your uncle!"

Crash! Crash!

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"My hat! He'll kill the chap!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Bob, old man, stop it! You'll get into trouble over this!"

"I guess it's time to let up, Bob!" yelled Fisher T. Fish.

"You'll make it a last funeral for him! Let up, old man!"

Biff, biff, biff!

"Open this door, Cherry, or I'll lick you!" shouted Bolsover.

"Oh, you shut up!" said John Bull.

"I'll lick you if you give me any of your rot!" said Bolsover, kicking at the door. "Cherry, I order you to let us in!"

There was no reply from within the study, but the crashing blows and the breathless exclamations continued.

"Who can it be?" exclaimed Tom Brown. "It can't be Bunter? I know he was trying to sneak a pie in here this morning, but Bob wouldn't hammer even Bunter like that."

"Perhaps it's Carlton?" suggested Nugent. "Bob was promising to wake him up and make him look lively."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not Carlton," said the voice of the Slacker, as Arthur Carlton came lounging along with his hands in his pockets.

"I'm here! Extraordinary fellow, Cherry, to be going through that sort of thing on a warm afternoon!"

"Bob! Bob! Open the door!"

"Let us in, Bob!"

"That chap's had enough, whatever he's done!"

"Open the door, Bob; there's a good chap!"

Biff, biff, biff!

"Oh, he's off his rocker!" said Bolsover. "Let's bust in the door!"

And for once the chums of the Remove were in agreement with the bully of the Form. It really did seem as if Bob Cherry ought to be stopped.

"Try your bat on the lock, Wharton!" said Ogilvy.

"Right-ho!"

Crash! Crash!

The end of the bat was jammed violently on the lock.

That lock had suffered before, in some of the many alarms and excursions of the Remove, and it was not in very good condition.

At the second crash it gave way, and the door flew open.

"Now then!" exclaimed Bolsover, rushing into the study.

"Ow!"

Biff!

A punching-ball, fastened up by a cord from ceiling to floor just inside the study, was just flying before a redoubtable blow from Bob Cherry, and Bolsover caught the punching-ball with his nose!

"Ow! Yaroo!"

Bolsover went over backwards as if he had been shot, and fell with a terrific bump in the doorway.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Catching It.

HA, ha, ha!"
The Removites simply roared.
Bob Cherry's unhappy victim in the study was the punching-ball. The terrific biffs had taken effect only on the leather sphere, though Bob Cherry's exclamations had made it all sound very realistic to the juniors outside the door.

Bolsover had been in too great a hurry.

He lay dazed in the doorway, the juniors yelling with laughter outside, and Bob Cherry stared at them past the swinging punch-ball.

"You chumps!" he shouted. "What have you bust my door open for?"

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"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton. "We thought you were killing somebody, from the row you were making!"

"You ass——"

"Ow!" gasped Bolsover. "My nose! Yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What did you want to come rushing in for, then?" demanded Bob Cherry. "I should have thought you'd have too much sense to rush at a punch-ball. I'm practising hard hitting, all ready for our little mill this week, Bolsover."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You see," Bob Cherry explained, "I make it a point to imagine that the punch-ball is Bolsover's chivvy—they're really not unlike—and then I put my beef into every whack! I hope you're not hurt, Bolsover?"

The juniors yelled. Bob Cherry must have been of a very sanguine temperament if he hoped that. Bolsover certainly looked hurt. He was angry, too. He scrambled to his feet, black with rage.

"I'll jolly soon show you whether I'm hurt or not!" he yelled, tearing off his jacket. "You did that on purpose! Come on!"

"Hold on, Bolsover——"

"Shut up, Wharton! Mind your own business!"

"Hold on!" repeated Harry Wharton quietly. "You're going to fight Bob with the gloves on in the gym, on Saturday afternoon. You can keep it all till then!"

"I'm going to fight him now!" roared the bully of the Remove. "I'm going to lick him, and if you interfere I'll lick you, too!"

Harry Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"You can wait till Saturday," he said. "You're not going to pile on Cherry just before a cricket match! Stand back!"

"I won't!"

"Oh, let him come on!" said Bob Cherry. "I'll fight him now, if he wants to, and I'll fight him on Saturday as well!"

"You jolly well won't!" said Frank Nugent. "Nuff's as good as a feed, and you're going to play cricket now! Hands down, Bolsover!"

"Get out of the way!" roared Bolsover.

"Lend a hand here, you chaps!" said Wharton quietly.

Five or six fellows closed round Bolsover. The bully of the Remove glared at them.

Since he had lately come to Greyfriars, Bolsover had licked every fellow in the Remove who had tried to stand up to him, including Wharton and Bob Cherry, who had always been considered redoubtable fighting men in the Form. Bolsover had been cock of the walk, and even the burly Bulstrode had fallen before him. And since his triumph, Bolsover had been intolerable, for which reason Bob Cherry was going into special training for the purpose of tackling him again and giving him a lesson.

Bob spent most of his spare time now with the gloves on, with one or another of his chums, and the punch-ball in the study was his latest device. It had turned out rather unfortunately for Bolsover.

"Now, Bolsover," said Harry Wharton quietly, "you'll either keep the peace, or you'll go along the passage on your neck! You may be able to lick any fellow in the Remove—you've told us so often enough—but you're not going to play cock-of-the-walk here, all the same. Get out!"

"I'm going——"

"Exactly—you are."

"I'm going to lick Cherry——"

"Will you get out of the study, and shut up?"

"No, I won't!"

"Collar him!" said Wharton tersely.

Bolsover hit out savagely as the juniors collared him. Ogilvy fell with a shout, and sat clasp ing his jaw, and Tom Brown dropped across his legs. But the other fellows fastened upon the burly Removite, and Bolsover was swung off his feet, and hurled headlong into the passage.

He crashed down upon the linoleum with a loud bump.

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Mauleverer, of the Remove. "Jolly good! Hurrah!"

Bolsover staggered to his feet, and rushed at Mauleverer as the nearest victim. Mauleverer promptly dodged out of the way, and Carlton, the slacker, stopped the bully's rush. Carlton was standing leaning against the wall of the passage, his hands in his pockets, and he did not get them out in time to defend himself.

Biff, biff!

"Ow!" roared Carlton, as the bully's fists crashed upon him. "Ow! What are you up to? Yaroo!"

The juniors shrieked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was very seldom that the Slacker was aroused from his placid idleness, but he was roused now. He jerked his hands out of his pockets, and backed away up the passage, defending himself from the burly junior's onslaught.

Bolsover, having found a victim—and, perhaps, willing also to find an excuse for not renewing the struggle with

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PENNY.

Harry Wharton & Co.—followed the Slacker up, hitting out fiercely. Carlton received biff after biff upon the face or the chest, and he staggered away, yelling for help.

"Ow! Help! Rescue! Yow! Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't stop him," grinned Bob Cherry. "This will wake Carlton up. This is what he needs. Let him rip!"

"Faith, and ye're right!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover was quite willing to be allowed to rip. He drove Carlton along the Remove passage, the Removites following, laughing. They were ready to stop Bolsover as soon as they had had their laugh out. Carlton reached the head of the stairs, and there he made a stand. His temper was aroused by this time, and he went for the bully in return, and caught hold of him.

They grappled together the lighter and less muscular Slacker being whirled to and fro by the powerful junior.

"Break away!" shouted Bob Cherry. "That's enough!"

"Stop it, Bolsover!"

There was a sudden exclamation from the stairs. A lady in a black veil, dressed very plainly though very well, had ascended the stairs, and was about to step upon the landing, when she caught sight of the two struggling juniors.

"Arthur!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "That's Carlton's mother! Separate them!"

The juniors rushed to stop the fight. Bolsover heard what Bob Cherry had said, and any decent fellow would have stopped, but no one had ever regarded Bolsover as a decent fellow. He exerted his strength, and hurled the Slacker to the floor, and Arthur Carlton sprawled on the linoleum at his mother's feet.

"You cad!" muttered Harry Wharton.

Five or six pairs of hands grasped the bully of the Remove, and he was dragged away up the passage.

"Let go!" he roared. "Hands off! I—I'll——"

But Bolsover's threats were unregarded. He was dragged roughly up the passage, and rolled down the back stairs, alighting at the bottom of the flight with a bump and a wild gasp.

"You stay there," said John Bull. "If you make any more row this afternoon, we'll lock you up in a box-room, you bully."

"I guess we will—some."

But Bolsover was feeling too used up to make any further row. He limped away, muttering threats of vengeance. Mrs. Carlton was bending over the Slacker in the passage, while the junior gasped for breath.

"Don't be alarmed, ma'am," said Harry Wharton. "It's all right. Only a bit of rough play, you know. Carlton's not hurt."

"I'm all right," gasped the Slacker.

He staggered up, with the assistance of Wharton's arm. His nose was very red, and there was a thin stream oozing from it to the corner of his mouth. He mopped it with his handkerchief, which came away with crimson stains.

"It's—it's all right, mater," he gasped. "We—we're always like this in the Remove, you know. Come into my study."

The quiet-looking lady nodded, and followed the junior into his study. The other fellows exchanged glances.

"It was utterly rotten of Bolsover!" muttered Harry Wharton. "I hope you will lick him on Saturday, Bob."

"I'm going to do my best."

"We shall have to leave Carlton out of the cricket," said Harry. "His mater will keep him some time, I expect. I believe he was going to dodge it, anyway. Micky Desmond can have his bat—eh, Bulstrode?"

"Right-ho!" said Bulstrode.

"Faith, and I will, with pleasure!" said Micky joyously.

And the Removites went down to the cricket-ground, leaving the Slacker with his mother, little dreaming of what was the import of that interview.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Last Appeal.

CARLTON showed his mother into his study, gently mopping his nose the while. The Slacker of the Remove was feeling extremely awkward and uncomfortable. He had not understood that his mother's visit was to follow her letter so quickly, or he would have been prepared for her.

His study was far from tidy. Books and papers were strewn everywhere; hardly a thing was in its proper place. The grate had been used as a receptacle for all sorts of rubbish, and the mantelpiece was piled high with all sorts

and conditions of things. Mrs. Carlton hardly seemed to notice it, much to the relief of the Slacker, who had been accustomed to lectures upon the subject. Indeed, always after a visit from his parents, Carlton had resolved to be decidedly tidy in the future, and his resolve had generally lasted a couple of hours or so—not quite long enough to get into order.

"A fellow's study does get untidy, mater," he said. "You—you see, at present I haven't anybody else in the study with me, and—and that makes a difference. I'm going to have all this cleared up to-morrow."

"Yes, Arthur."

"I'm sorry you should have found me in a row when you got here, mater," said the junior. "That was an accident, too. Bolsover was really going for Mauleverer, and he dropped on me by mistake."

"Yes."

"Sit down, mother."

"Thank you, Arthur."

"About the scholarship," Arthur ranted on swiftly. "I—I haven't done much yet. I'm sort of preparing. I've read the subjects through, you know, and I'm allowing the—the general idea of the thing to sink into my mind. I think that's a rather good idea, before actually plunging into the thing."

Mrs. Carlton was silent.

"I think that's a pretty good plan, mater," said the junior hopefully; "don't you? If—if you don't, tell me, and I—I'll try some other plan. I was beginning work in earnest to-day."

"You have been working hard, then, Arthur?"

Carlton coloured.

"Well, not exactly working hard so far," he said; "but—but, you see, I was just settling down to it, as it were. I had mentioned to Wharton," he added eagerly, "that I shouldn't be able to play cricket this afternoon, because I was going to swot."

Mrs. Carlton smiled faintly.

"Was that for the sake of swotting, Arthur, as you call it, or because you were too idle to play cricket?"

The junior coloured again.

"Well, you see, mater, it's jolly warm for cricket, and—and I've really got to swot, you know. The time's getting near, and it's high time I settled down for a real, hard, heavy grind, in a business-like way."

Carlton repeated those words with considerable satisfaction. Expressions of that sort made him feel, somehow, that he was really grinding away.

"Arthur, my dear boy!"

The veil was pushed back now. Arthur looked at his mother's face, and started. He came quickly a step nearer to her.

"Mater! Mother dear, you've been crying!"

"Have I, Arthur?"

"Yes, yes! What's wrong? The boy's handsome face was serious enough now, and very anxious. "Any bad news at home?"

Mrs. Carlton was silent.

"The pater?" There was a break in the boy's voice.

"Mother, he's all right, isn't he?"

"Your father is well, Arthur."

"Thank goodness! I—I thought——"

"I believe that you care for your father and for me, Arthur, though you have caused us both very much anxiety."

"I—I never meant to," said the boy remorsefully.

"Mater, I—I'm sorry I've slacked, but I had really resolved, only this very day, to mug it up like anything."

"I hope it is not too late, my dear boy."

Carlton started.

"Too late for the scholarship do you mean, mother?"

"Too late for everything!"

Carlton laid his arm on his mother's shoulder.

"What is the matter, mother? Something's happened—I can see that. What is it? What's the matter at home?"

Mrs. Carlton's eyes filled with tears. The boy's face was dark with anxiety now.

"What is it, mother? I remember last vac. hearing something—the pater was anxious about the way things were going in the City. Has anything gone wrong?"

"Yes."

"Bad?"

"Very bad?"

"Oh, mother!"

The boy's arm was round his mother's neck now, and he kissed her on the cheek. The poor lady was crying softly, as she pushed back his curly hair and looked at his face.

"Arthur," she said, "things are very bad with your father; he has had heavy losses. He would not have you told till the last possible moment, but you must know it now. All the world, that cares to know, will know it soon."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 185.

READ the splendid tale of Tom Merry & Co., entitled "THE BLACK HOUSE ON THE MOOR," in this week's GEM Library. Price 1d.

You understand now why we have both been so anxious for you to win the Raven Scholarship? With that scholarship yours, you will be able to remain at Greyfriars."

"And otherwise?"

"You must leave."

"Oh, mother! So bad as that?"

"We are almost ruined, Arthur," said Mrs. Carlton quietly. "You must know how much depends on your efforts now, my dear boy. Your father cannot afford to pay your fees here any longer. If you lose this chance, this is your last term at Greyfriars."

"My last term at Greyfriars!" Carlton repeated dazedly.

He was hardly able to understand it. His people had always been, not rich, but well-off. That the horn of plenty should so suddenly cease to flow was strange and inexplicable to a boy of fifteen.

But the way he took it showed that, slacker as he was, idle as he had always been, his nature was noble enough.

"This will be rotten rough on the gov'nor," he said.

"It is hard on him, Arthur; but if you should win the scholarship, and be able to remain at Greyfriars, it will be a weight from his mind. We have been over the terms of the scholarship many times; you get free board and tuition here for three years, and a sum of fifty pounds a year for your expenses. That means that you can remain at the school, and your father will be put to no further expense on your account for three years to come. That means very much to us, Arthur."

"I know it must, mother."

"Is there not a boy here, who won a scholarship, while working every day in a factory, Arthur?"

Carlton nodded.

"Yes; Mark Linley, of my Form, he replied. "He's a fine chap; very different from me, I'm afraid. He's very decent, and works like a nigger."

"I don't suppose he likes work, Arthur; it may be a sense of duty, and a desire to help his parents."

"I shouldn't wonder; he's an awfully dutiful beast," said Arthur ruefully.

"Take him as an example, Arthur."

"I—I will!"

Carlton gave an inward shudder as he replied. Mark Linley, of the Remove, certainly made an excellent model for anyone to follow. But the quiet, steady, hardworking Lancashire lad was very unlike the happy and careless Slacker. Arthur Carlton had to change very much before he could hope to become like Mark Linley.

"I—I'll talk to the chap, and ask him how he does it, mater," exclaimed the Slacker bravely. "He's a jolly good-natured chap, and he'll help anybody, though he does twice as much work as anybody else in the Remove. I'll make him help me."

"Learn to help yourself, Arthur," said Mrs. Carlton quietly. "My dear boy, you have caused us much anxiety, but you will more than repay us if you succeed in this. If you have to leave Greyfriars, you must know what a difference it will make to your future. Arthur, think of us, and when you are tempted to be idle, put the temptation aside."

"I will, mater. I swear I will."

His mother sighed.

Of old she knew how full of good intentions the boy was, and how woefully lacking he was in carrying them into effect.

"Mater, I swear I will," repeated Carlton fervently. "I know I've been an ass—a silly ass! I don't need telling that. But I'm going to make a change—a big change! I'm going to work like—like anything."

Mrs. Carlton rose.

She stood before the boy, her hand resting upon his shoulders, the tears still on her pale cheeks.

"I know you mean it, Arthur. But will you carry it out?"

"I will, mother—I promise I will!"

"I trust you, my boy. And, remember—remember how much it means to us!"

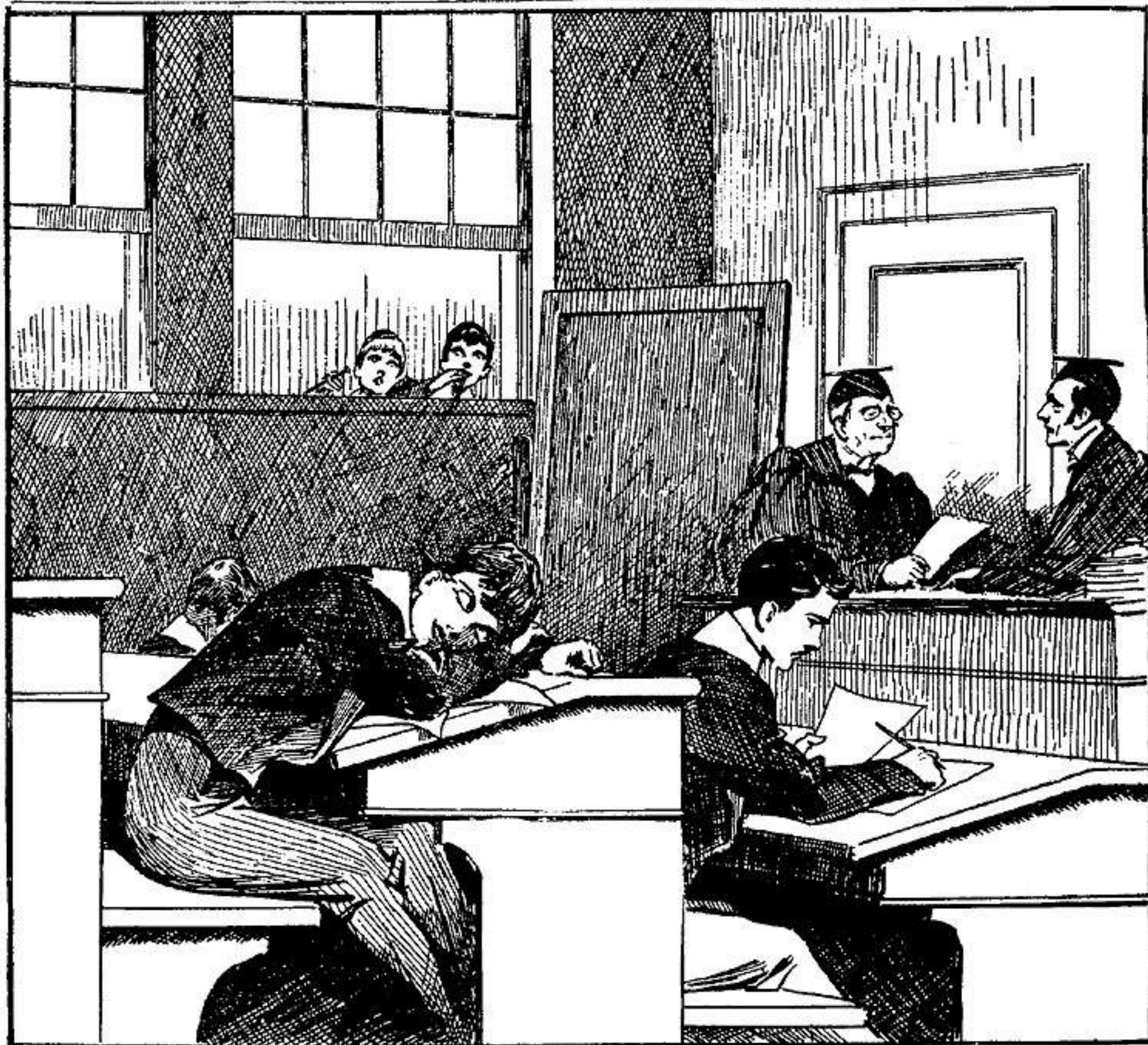
"I sha'n't forget!"

And Arthur Carlton meant it. He meant it, every word; but although the spirit may be willing, as was said of old, still the flesh is weak. The Slacker of the Remove was the Slacker still.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Slacker Sets To.

HARRY WHARTON came into the Remove passage with his bat under his arm and a healthy ruddy colour in his cheeks. The cricket match was over, and the Remove had beaten the Upper Fourth by two wickets, and the Remove were in a very satisfied frame of mind accordingly. Wharton tossed his bat into his study. Billy



Trevor and Skinner and Carlton were still working. But the Slacker of the Remove was still the slacker. After a time he was seen to be leaning over his desk in a very thoughtful attitude, with his head resting on his hand. But the juniors knew what that meant. He was dozing. Bob Cherry chuckled softly from the window.

Bunter was leaning up against the wall of the passage, opposite the door of Study No. 1, and he blinked at Harry Wharton through his big spectacles.

"I say, Wharton," he remarked, "I suppose you're going to have tea in the study—"

"Your mistake!" said Harry cheerfully. "Funds are low, and we're going to feed in hall this evening."

Bunter snorted.

"Oh, beastly!" he exclaimed. "And I've been waiting here for ten minutes for you to come in. That's what I call a dirty trick."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Go and cadge something from Mauleverer," he suggested. "He's a giddy lord, and rolling in money. He may have something to give away."

Bunter gave another snort, expressive of indignation.

"I hope you don't think I would cadge of any fellow," he said. "I certainly shouldn't take anything from Lord Mauleverer as a gift. Besides, I went to his study, and he was simply rude to me—he pushed me out so rudely that I fell down. I was hurt, but the beast didn't even trouble to open his door again to see what was the matter with me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at," said Billy Bunter peevishly. "You're a beast! Mauleverer's a beast, and Carlton's another beast."

"What has Carlton been doing?" asked Harry, laughing.

"He's tidying his study up," said Bunter. "I went in THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 185.

"THE ONLY WAY!"

A Long Complete School Tale, by FRANK RICHARDS.

and offered to help him, thinking, of course, that he couldn't do less than ask me to tea afterwards. But no sooner had I sat down in the armchair—"

"The what?"

"The armchair—Carlton's armchair—"

"Was that how you were going to help him tidy up the study?"

"Well, I was going to exercise a general superintendence, you know," Billy Bunter explained. "I was giving directions, and advising him. But no sooner had I sat down in the armchair—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Than the beast tipped me over, and I fell among a lot of dust and rubbish," said Bunter. "Then he pitched me out of the study in a brutal way. I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"But what's the matter with Carlton?" Harry Wharton exclaimed. "I never heard of his clearing up his study before—and the maids gave it up as a bad job long ago. Is he off his rocker? Has the heat affected him?"

"Perhaps it was his mother," said Bunter, with a snort. "I know the silly chump is clearing up his study, and he won't let a fellow help him—"

"By sitting in the armchair? Ha, ha, ha!"

And leaving Bunter grumbling, Harry Wharton walked along the Remove passage, to see the unexpected and unusual sight of Arthur Carlton clearing up his study.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"BEYOND THE ETERNAL ICE."
An Extra-long Instalment, by SIDNEY DREW.

There was certainly an appearance of activity outside the Slacker's study. Two chairs stood outside in the passage, and a table lay there upon its side. There were a coal-scuttle, a fender, and a heap of books as well. The Slacker had certainly started well; but Wharton could hear no sound to indicate that the good work was still going on.

He looked in at the open doorway.

Arthur Carlton sat in the armchair, his feet on the window-sill, his arms stretched out, and his handsome blue eyes staring at the blue sky through the window.

He did not turn his head at the sound of Wharton's footsteps. He seemed too fatigued to move, almost too much so to breathe. Yet there was very little alteration in the study to account for that tired feeling.

"Carlton! Wake up!"

Carlton did not move his head.

"I'm not asleep, Wharton."

"Bunter said you were clearing up your study?"

"So I was."

"How far have you got with it?" asked Harry, laughing.

"Well, I've got some of the things out in the passage," said Carlton cautiously.

"Ha, ha! Is that all?"

"Well, I had to turn Bunter out, too. He's heavy."

"Anything else?"

"I was going to dust the mantelpiece——"

"Have you done it?"

"Well, no! I've found the duster, though, and I've got it all ready."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry looked into the study, with Frank Nugent and John Bull. They were red and jolly from the cricket-field.

"I hear Carlton's bucking up," said Bob Cherry. "Is that the way he's doing it, in the armchair?"

"He's found a duster, and it's exhausted him," Wharton explained. "In another hour or two he will get up steam to dust the mantelpiece. Then he will have to lay up in the school sanatorium for a week or two to recuperate."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't make a row, you fellows," murmured Carlton. "You don't know how a row disturbs my nervous system."

"But what's the cause of this sudden and extraordinary bucking up?" asked John Bull.

"Have you turned over a new leaf, Carlton, or what?"

"Oh, it's my mater!" groaned Carlton.

"Oh, yes, I remember; she came this afternoon! Serve you jolly well right if she ragged you," said Bull.

"I wouldn't have minded that," said the Slacker, blinking sleepily at the chums of the Remove, "but she didn't. She brought jolly bad news—my pater's had losses, like old Dogberry, you know, and if I don't win the Raven Scholarship I shall have to leave Greyfriars next term. I don't mind telling you fellows."

Bob Cherry whistled.

"That's serious for you, old man."

"Yes, isn't it?"

"So I suppose your mater wants you to buck up extra hard?"

"That's it."

"And you're going to do it?"

"I am doing it," said Arthur.

"Oh, you are doing it, are you?" said Wharton. "In the armchair, with your feet on the window-sill?"

"Well, you see, it's—it's no good doing these things in too great a hurry," Carlton explained. "I like to thoroughly consider a thing first, and then fairly go for it. Don't you think that's a good plan?"

"Yes, if you carry it out."

"I'm going to carry it out this time. The first thing is to get my study thoroughly in order, and all my books just where I can lay my hand on them when I want them. That's very important for studying. Then I'm going to settle down to a regular grind."

"Yes, I can see you doing it—I don't think!" remarked Bob Cherry. "How long will it take to get your study thoroughly in order, at this rate?"

"Well, slow and sure wins the race, you know. You remember the fable about the tortoise and the hare?" said Carlton argumentatively. "It wasn't the hare that bagged the prize, you know. Slow and steady does it."

"Get up!"

"I was just going to get up and start fresh when you fellows came in. If you'll run along, I think I'll get on."

"You mean you'll go to sleep."

"Well, a little nap bucks you up for hard work—especially when you've got to grind away in deadly earnest, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You chaps might help me, too," yawned Carlton. "It's a jolly serious matter for me, and you fellows might back me up, you know."

"Exactly what I was thinking," said Bob Cherry blandly. "I think the whole Form ought to rally round and back you up—and buck you up, too—at a time like this. And I'm going to set the example!"

"Thanks! Come in in about half an hour, and——"

"Thanks! I'm here now, and I'll begin!"

"Not for a bit——"

"My dear chap, there's no time like the present. Never put off till to-morrow anybody you can do to-day!" said Bob Cherry. "You chaps going to help?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Then let's set to!"

And they did.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

And So Does Bob Cherry.

BOB CHERRY started. He caught hold of the back of the armchair, tilted it up, and shot Carlton out in a heap on the floor. There was a roar from the Slacker. He rolled on the carpet, and bumped his head against a chair-leg, and sat up, rubbing his head and shouting.

"Ow! You ass! You fathead!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Still sitting down?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Jump up!"

"Ow! I—— Oh!"

"You're in the way," explained Bob, taking a broom from the wall. Carlton had borrowed a broom from downstairs, though he had not used it yet. "You're liable to be swept over!"

"Yow!"

Biff, biff! Bash!

Bob Cherry swept away energetically with the broom. Whenever Bob did anything he did it with all his energy, and he had heaps of energy. A cloud of dust swept over Carlton, and the broom smote him in the ribs, and then in the back, and then in the neck.

He rolled hastily out of the way, only to fall in Nugent's way, and Nugent had armed himself with a hand-broom. The hand-broom smote the Slacker on the chest, and then was rubbed over his head. He squirmed out of Nugent's way, and jumped up, gasping for breath, and smothered with dust.

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

"Ow! You asses——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get out of my study!" roared Carlton.

"We're helping you!"

"Get out, I say!"

"Rats!" said Harry Wharton. "We're putting off our tea to help you in this noble and generous way. Where's your giddy gratitude?"

"I don't want to be helped!" shrieked Carlton. "You're messing up the whole place! Let it alone!"

"Oh, rot!"

"Buzz off, you fatheads!"

"We're going to help you, and you're going to help us!" said Bob Cherry. "Now, buckle to, like a good boy! You missed the cricket, you know, because you had to swot, and we're going to help you swot!"

Carlton gouged the dust out of his eyes and mouth. The chums of the Remove were busily at work. Bob Cherry was sweeping away energetically, and raising storms of dust, while Bull was dusting the mantelpiece—rather a useless task, considering how Bob was engaged at the same moment. But Bull had never studied housemaid's work, so how was he to know? He was doing his best, and a fellow couldn't do more than that.

Wharton bundled the furniture into the passage to get it out of the way. It was amazing to see how much rubbish had accumulated in the study, owing to the peculiar manners and customs of the Slacker.

"What are these cardboard boxes for?" asked Nugent.

"Blessed if I know!" said Carlton, still gouging at his eyes.

"Are they any good?"

"I suppose not."

"What do you keep them here for?"

"I suppose it's because they haven't been chucked away. I dare say they had something in them at some time or other."

"I'll chuck them, then. What's this white mice cage for? You don't keep white mice?"

"I used to."

"Well, the cage can be shoved in the box-room till you keep 'em again," said Nugent. "Have you got a candlestick?"

"I believe I have, somewhere."

"Then what do you mean by keeping a candle stuck on your Horace, with a lump of sealing-wax?" demanded Frank.

"I suppose the candlestick was lost. So that's where Horace got to," said Arthur. "I've been wondering where that book was for weeks!"

"You blessed ass!"

"Lots of my books are lost," said the Slacker. "A fellow can't be expected to buck up when his books are lost. I was going to grind at Virgil only yesterday, and Ogilvy said he wanted his Virgil. I had borrowed it to have a really good grind. What was a fellow to do?"

"You could have come along and borrowed mine," said Harry.

"Well, I did think of it."

"And that's as far as you got, of course? Never mind, we're going to back you up now!" said Bob Cherry. "You can rely on us; we'll make you work!"

Carlton looked rather dubious about it. Perhaps the prospect of being backed up in that way was not wholly delightful to him.

"Of course, I'm going to work!" he said.

"Of course you are!" agreed Bob cheerfully. "You're not going to bring down your family's grey hairs in sorrow to the cemetery, if I can help it. I'm going to back you up. And it's no good your standing there jawing while other fellows are working. Take the broom!"

"Certainly, but—"

"And don't stand there leaning on it!" roared Bob Cherry, exasperated. "Sweep the carpet!"

"But—"

"Go ahead!"

Arthur began to sweep the carpet. When that was finished, Bob took the duster from Bull and handed it to the Slacker. There was still as much dusting really to be done as when John Bull had started.

"Now, dust down the study, Carlton! We'll look on!"

"But—"

"Pile in, you lazy slacker!"

Carlton grunted, and dusted the study. The chums of the Remove stood watching him. He stopped after a few minutes, and sat down upon the window-sill.

Four pairs of eyes were fixed upon him immediately, like four pairs of gimlets ready to bore holes in him.

"What are you doing?" demanded Bob Cherry

Carlton gasped.

"Only taking a bit of a rest."

"Get up!"

"You see—"

"Are you going to work?" demanded Bob.

"In a minute or two—"

"Bump him!"

"Here! Hold on—that is to say, let go! Yaroo!"

Four pairs of hands seized the Slacker. He was whirled off the window-sill, and bumped on the carpet with a hard and heavy bump.

"Yowp!"

"Are you going to work?" roared Bob.

"Yow! Yes! Yaroo!"

"Give him a chance!"

Carlton staggered up. He started dusting again, and did not sit down on the window-sill again. The study was dusted.

"Now, get the furniture back!" said Bob Cherry.

Carlton snorted.

"Couldn't you fellows lend a hand?" he demanded.

"We could, but we're not going to!" Bob Cherry explained. "We're backing you up! No good doing the work ourselves!"

"Look here—"

"We're looking, and if you don't get the traps back into the study at once, we'll bump you, hard!"

"You cheeky ass—"

"Are you going to begin?" roared Bob.

"Yes; confound you!"

And Carlton, with many a gasp, tugged his property back into the study, and deposited all the things in the middle of the room. Then he glared at the chums of the Remove.

"Now you can buzz off, I think," he exclaimed breathlessly, "and give a chap a bit of a rest!"

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"You haven't arranged the furniture in the proper places yet," he replied.

"Oh, blow the furniture!"

"You can't live in a room piled up like a blessed second-hand shop!" said Bob. "Shove the things back in their places!"

"Lend a hand, then, some of you."

"Can't be did! That would spoil the whole thing!" said Bob Cherry serenely. "You ought to be pleased to be backed up in this way, Carlton. It isn't everybody who'd take so much trouble about you!"

"I jolly well wish you wouldn't, either!" growled the exasperated Slacker.

"Oh, we're going to see you through the Raven Scholarship," said Bob. "You haven't put the furniture straight yet."

The Slacker groaned, and arranged the furniture in order.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 185.

"THE ONLY WAY!"
A Long Complete School Tale, by FRANK RICHARDS.

EVERY
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

The study certainly looked all the better for what it had gone through; but its owner was decidedly dusty and untidy and bad-tempered.

"It's done now!" growled Carlton. "You can buzz off!"

"You're not thinking of remaining in that state, are you?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the Slacker threw himself into the armchair, gasping. "You're dusty from head to foot. What you want is a bath and a change."

"Rats!"

"The bath first," said Bob. "I'll fetch you a change from the dorm. while you're cleaning. You know your way to the bath-room!"

"I'm too tired!"

"Dirty boy!" said Bob Cherry chidingly, wagging his forefinger at the Slacker. "You must never allow laziness to lead you into unclean habits. If you're too tired to walk to the bath-room, we'll carry you. Will you go and turn the taps on in a bath, Franky?"

"Certainly!" grinned Nugent.

And he left the study.

"Now then, Carlton, don't you think you'd better go and get that bath?" Bob Cherry suggested.

"No, I don't!"

"It will buck you up for swotting over the Latin, you know."

"Hang the Latin!"

"But think of the Raven Scholarship—"

"Blow the Raven Scholarship!" howled the unfortunate Slacker. "Get out of my study, and leave a fellow in peace!"

"But what about your bath?"

"I'm not going to bath!" shrieked the Slacker.

"That's where you make a mistake!" said Bob Cherry blandly. "You are! I can see he won't walk, you chaps, so we shall have to collar him! Come on!"

The Slacker jumped up, but three juniors had hold of him in a twinkling, and he was whisked off his feet. They carried him, struggling, out of the study and along the passage. They reached the bath-room, and Frank Nugent met them in the doorway. There was a cloud of steam from the bath within.

"It's nearly full," he said. "Both taps full on."

"Good!"

The struggling Slacker was rushed into the bath-room. Bob Cherry tried the water with his hand. It was luke-warm. The Slacker was swung up over the bath.

"Going to undress?" asked Bob.

"No!" yelled Carlton. "I'm not! Oh, you ass! I won't—I won't take a thing off, so there! Now let me get down!"

"Certainly," said Bob cheerfully. "It doesn't make any difference to us. In with him!"

"Oh, you ass! I—I—oh! Yaroo—groo!"

Splash!

Carlton disappeared in the bath, clothes and all, and the chums of the Remove left the bath-room, roaring with laughter. Wild sounds of gasping and snorting followed them from the unfortunate Slacker.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Help Wanted!

THE Slacker came in to tea in hall, and he was very late. But it really was not his fault this time; he had had plenty to do. After tea he went out with the rest, and was seen in the hall, standing with his hands in his pockets, looking very thoughtful. Bob Cherry looked at him with a grin.

"The Slacker's got his considering-cap on," he remarked. "He's just thinking how he can do a tremendous amount of work, if he starts to-morrow or the next day, and has a thorough rest first."

Harry Wharton laughed. He had stopped at the letter-rack, and taken a letter down. It was addressed to him in a feminine hand that was unfamiliar to him. There was no stamp on the letter, and it had evidently not come through the post.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Don't let me interrupt you while you're reading your billet-doux."

"Don't be an ass, Bob. I haven't the faintest idea whom this is from," said Harry, with a puzzled look. "It's a woman's writing, but it's not from my aunt. It must have been left for me by somebody who's called, as it hasn't been posted. Trotter!"

The school page was passing with a tray towards the Head's study. He stopped.

"Yes, Master Wharton."

"Do you know how this letter came here?"

"Yes, Master Wharton. I put it there for you," said Trotter. "You was at the cricket when the lady gave it to me."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Oh, Harry, you giddy Lothario — you horrid D'Artagnan!"

"Shut up, Bob! Who was the lady, Trotter?"

"I don't know, Master Wharton; but she come out of Master Carlton's study, and wrote that letter in the prefect's room, sir."

"Mrs. Carlton!" ejaculated Bob.

Wharton looked astonished. He had seen Mrs. Carlton several times when she came down to the school to visit her son, and the good lady had always been kind to him, when he happened to be with Carlton. But he had not the faintest idea what she would have to write to him about.

"Thanks, Trotter; that will do!"

Trotter walked on with his tray, and Harry turned the letter over in his hands. He was surprised and wondering. Billy Bunter rolled up, blinking through his big spectacles with an eager expression.

"I say, Wharton, old man, you'd better open it. It's quite possible there may be a tip in it—you were always friendly with Carlton, you know, and I know his mater thought a lot of you. I remember hearing her say to Carlton once that he should cultivate your friendship, and it would be good for him—"

"How did you happen to hear her say that, you fat cad?" asked Bob Cherry, taking Billy Bunter's ear between his finger and thumb.

"Ow! Leggo! I happened to be passing the door! Yow! Leggo!"

"Kick him, Bob."

Billy Bunter did not wait to be kicked. He melted away, and Harry Wharton retired to the window recess, and opened the letter. Bob was going away, but Harry called to him.

"Come and read this, Bob."

"Oh, all serene."

They read the letter together, and both whistled softly. It was a brief letter, but couched in terms which moved the juniors very much.

"My dear Wharton,—I believe you are a friend of my son's, and he never needed the help of a good friend more than he does now. It is necessary for him, unless his future is to be spoiled, that he should win the Raven Scholarship. Will you do all you can to help him? You know his weaknesses, and perhaps you could help him to make the efforts necessary for success. If you could, and would, you would confer a great favour upon me, and I should thank you from my heart.—Yours sincerely,
ADELINA CARLTON."

"Poor old soul!" murmured Bob Cherry. "I quite understand how the land lies, after what Carlton said. He's done in here, if he doesn't get the scholarship."

"He ought to get it," said Harry. "He's clever enough. He's got Skinner and Fish and Trevor against him, but he ought to carry it off. It isn't as if he had a fellow like Mark Linley to compete with."

"Or your noble self," suggested Bob.

"Oh, rats!"

"He ought to be able to beat the little fishes," said Bob Cherry. "Skinner's got no chance. He's only entered for swank, and as for Fish, he will be beaten hollow, whatever happens. He won't be able to get the minimum. Trevor has a good chance. He's a steady worker. But the Slacker has brains enough to wipe them out, if he only bucked up."

"He ought to do it."

"He ought—only—ahem!—he's a lazy bounder," said Bob. "He's such a decent chap that one doesn't like to be down on him; but he's too lazy to live. He won't have much chance unless the other fellows draw out, and even then he won't get the scholarship, because there's a necessary minimum number of marks to be got, or it won't be given to anybody at all—and the Slacker won't rise to the minimum. He could if he exerted himself, but what's the good of talking about that? He won't do it."

Harry Wharton frowned.

"I should think he would try, when his mother is so anxious about it," he said.

"He will try, and slack, and fail."

"We've started bucking him up, Bob."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"We have," he agreed. "We has."

"Let's keep it up—seriously—and drive him hard," said Harry Wharton. "I'm going to reply to this letter that I'll do my very best."

"That's right."

"It would be a ripping thing if we could make the Slacker win, and perhaps success would have some effect on him, and make him a bit more industrious."

"It might—ahem!"

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"Anyway, it would be a jolly ripping thing for his mater to hear that he had carried off the Raven Scholarship, and it's worth our taking a bit of trouble, Bob."

"I'm willing to take any amount of trouble. The other fellows will help us, too—Bull and Tommy Brown and Marky. We'll all set to work!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Among us, we ought to be able to make the Slacker cease from slacking, and keep the weary from his rest."

"I'll go up to the study, and answer this letter at once," said Harry. "I'll tell Mrs. Carlton that we're all going to back Carlton up, and make him win that giddy scholarship by hook or by crook."

"That's right."

Wharton went upstairs, and Bob Cherry strolled to the door. He was going down to the gym, for his usual practice with the gloves. Bob was sticking to his training hard. He meant to lick the bully of the Remove in the fight on Saturday, if it was humanly possible.

Carlton stopped him in the doorway.

"Cherry, old man—"

Bob Cherry looked at him with a chuckle. Carlton was the best-tempered fellow in Greyfriars, and he had evidently got over the affair in his study, and the forcible bath.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob. "Feel all right now?"

"Yes," said Carlton, grinning a little.

"Better for your bath?"

"Oh, hang the bath! Will you lend me your Virgil? I've lost mine."

Bob Cherry stared.

"Lend you my Virgil?" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

"What for?"

"To work."

"Work!" repeated Bob, in great astonishment.

"Yes," said Carlton seriously. "I've got to work, you know. Instead of lounging along the river, I'm going to take Virgil out for a walk, and really grind."

"My hat!"

"Oh, I mean bizney," said Carlton. "Will you lend me the book? Mine's disappeared somewhere. I remember laying it somewhere, but I can't remember exactly where. I dare say it will turn up."

"My dear chap," said Bob Cherry, "if you're going to work, I'll lend you anything, from my Virgil to my Sunday topper. I'll fetch it for you."

"Thanks awfully!"

Carlton leaned against the porch till Bob came down with the Virgil. Bob was only a couple of minutes, but he found the Slacker in quite an absent frame of mind when he returned with the dog-eared volume in his hand. Carlton had his eyes dreamily fixed on the big trees outlined against the blue of the summer sky.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob bawled in his ear. "Wake up!"

Carlton started.

"Certainly! Thanks! I say, what lovely colours they are, aren't them?" he murmured.

"What are?" demanded Bob.

"Look at those shades of green," said Carlton. "There's every blessed tone of green in those branches now, with the light on them as it is."

"My only hat!" said Bob Cherry, staring at him. "I know what's the matter with you now; you're a blessed poet! That's what it is."

Carlton laughed.

"What have you got there?" he asked.

"Virgil," said Bob. "You wanted to borrow the beast."

"Oh, yes; I remember! Thanks!"

Carlton slipped the Virgil into his pocket. Bob Cherry, who was starting for the gym, stopped, and turned back. Carlton was still leaning against the porch, regarding the sky and the trees with the eye of an artist.

"Is that the way you're going to grind?" asked Bob.

"Oh, I'm just going to begin."

"You are!" agreed Bob, seizing him by the shoulder, and jerking him down the steps.

"Begin now! Go it!"

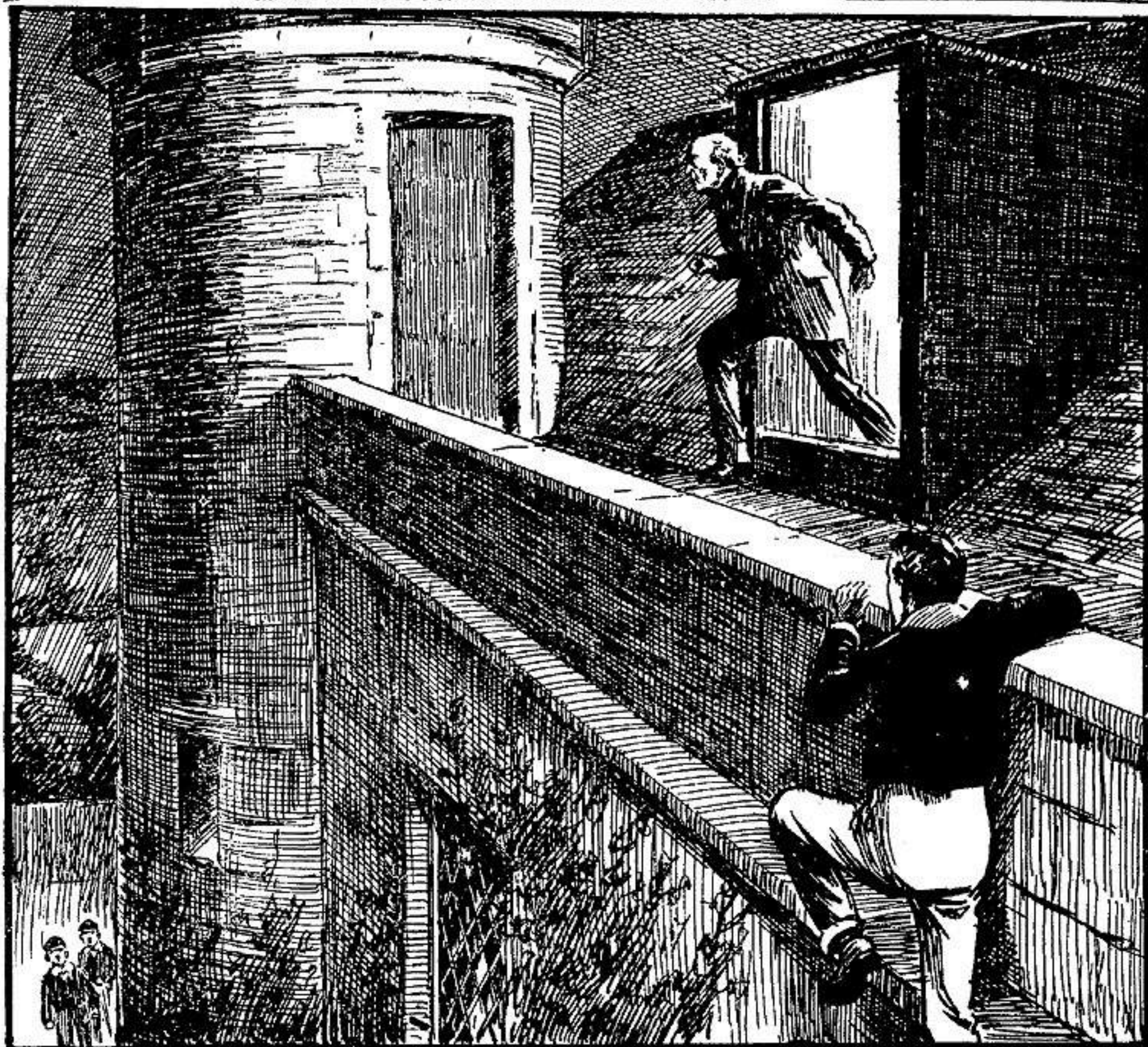
"Oh, you ass!"

"Begin, you fathead—begin, you clump! You can leave the sky to look after itself."

Carlton laughed ruefully.

"I suppose you're right," he said. "I'll work."

And he took Virgil out of his pocket, and opened the volume, and walked away across the Close reading it, and muttering to himself. Bob Cherry looked after him very doubtfully, but he had an appointment in the gym, and he had to go. A few minutes later Bob had the gloves on with John Bull, and they were sparring away; but it was very improbable that Slacker of the Remove was as busily engaged.



A figure moved in the doorway—Figgins, clinging to the leads, knew that spare, somewhat drooping figure of the scientist. The man came out upon the leads with stealthy, noiseless footfalls. (This picture illustrates an exciting incident in the splendid, long, complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., entitled "The Black House on the Moor," contained in this week's number of "The Gem" Library. Out on Thursday. Price One Penny.)

THE NINTH CHAPTER. A Bumping for Bolsover.

BOB CHERRY was certainly coming out very strong in the boxing line. He had always been a good boxer, and he was strong and sturdy, and had heaps of pluck, and an iron determination when he had once made up his mind. But the steady training he had been going through had improved his form wonderfully. It was not like Bob to bear malice against anybody, and he was never known to cherish a grudge; but the case of Bolsover was a peculiar one. Bolsover was old enough and big enough to be in the Fifth, and so the best fighting-men in the Remove had very little chance against him. And Bolsover took a merciless advantage of his size and strength. He had been licked only once, and that was by a fellow from Courtfield School, whom the Removites had invited to Greyfriars for the purpose.

Bolsover took a great pride in being cock of the walk, and he had made himself simply unendurable during the short time he had been at Greyfriars. It was imperative that he should be taken down in some way, if life was to be worth living in the Remove, and Bob Cherry had undertaken the task. It was just like Bob to take on a task of that sort, which even a plucky fellow might have shrunk from without disgrace. For if he succeeded, it was certain to be only after a tremendous battle and severe punishment; while if he failed, the bully of the Remove was certain to hammer him terribly, and to make a special point afterwards of being down on him as much as possible. But Bob faced the

prospect fearlessly; and his training was improving his form so much that he entertained high hopes of the result.

One after another the best boxers in the Remove had had the gloves on with Bob, and Bob had beaten them. Even Harry Wharton and Bulstrode acknowledged now that Bob Cherry was above their weight. Bob was not in the least inclined to grow swelled-headed, and it was quite safe to acknowledge that with him. His present tussle with John Bull ended in the same way. It was a friendly spar, but John Bull, strong and muscular as he was, threw down the gloves at last, panting. He was quite good-humoured about his defeat. He, too, had felt the heavy hand of the bully of the Remove, and he was only too glad to see Bob Cherry coming out so strong.

"It's ripping!" he exclaimed. "I'm done, thanks, and I'm jolly glad to see you shaping like this, Bobby. My belief is that you will go ahead on Saturday."

"I hope so," said Bob, towelling his face, which was decidedly red. "Not that I'm particularly keen on the row myself, but it's necessary. Something will have to be done, and somebody will have to do it."

"Yes, it's a case of having somebody to bell the cat, like the old story," said Harry Wharton. "You're shaping splendidly, Bob."

Bolsover burst into a scoffing laugh. He was standing among the crowd of juniors who were looking on.

Bolsover was not looking pleased. He did not believe for a moment that Bob Cherry would be able to stand up to him, and he was not at all nervous, so far as that went.

But it was not pleasant to him to see how eagerly all the Form looked forward to his defeat, as they might have looked forward to a whole holiday. Bolsover liked to swank and bully, and cuff smaller boys, yet he did not like being unpopular.

No one took any notice of his laugh. No one wanted to have a row with Bolsover. His fist was always ready to back up his tongue, and his fist was hard and heavy.

"You're above the weight of any of us, now, Bob," said Frank Nugent. "You had better get Temple, of the Fourth, to put on the gloves with you next, and see how you shape against him. If you lick him, you can try Coker."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"It seems to me that I'm in for it," he remarked. "Pile it on; I don't mind. I shall get it pretty thick on Saturday anyway."

"That you jolly well will," said Bolsover angrily. "I'll hammer you till your mother won't know you, Bob Cherry!"

"Thanks awfully!"

"And if I have any of your lip, I'll hammer you now."

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"No you won't, my son," he replied coolly. "I've agreed to fight you on Saturday. I'm going into training, because you're a year older and six inches taller than I am. With all the training I can put in you'll have the advantage, and you've got nothing to grumble about. But the fight's on Saturday, and it won't come off till then; so you can put that in your pipe and smoke it."

"I guess so," remarked Fisher T. Fish. "You buzz off, Bolsover! You're altogether too numerous in these parts."

"I don't know that I care to wait till Saturday," said Bolsover. "But if Cherry's afraid to tackle me now, of course—"

"I'm not afraid, my boy," said Bob Cherry. "But a bargain's a bargain, and I'll fight you on Saturday; and until then you can go and eat coke!"

Bolsover made a sudden motion towards Bob Cherry, and before he could be prevented his open palm rang across Bob's cheek with a crack like a whip.

Bob Cherry staggered back.

"Now, then!" sneered Bolsover. "Will you fight me now, after that?"

Bob Cherry's eyes were blazing. He made a rush forward at the bully of the Form.

"Yes, I will!" he said, between his teeth. "Come on, you hound! I— Let go, you fellows! Let me go, I say!"

Nugent and Ogilvy and John Bull had caught hold of Bob, and were dragging him back. He could not get at his adversary.

"Hold on, Bob!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Hold on, sonny!"

"Let me go!" shrieked Bob. "I'm going to smash him! I'm going to pulverise the cad! Let go!"

"Hold him!"

"We've got him," said Frank. "Collar that cad, and give him the frog-march! You're not going to fight the brute till you're ready, Bob. It's a promise; you've given us your word on it, you know."

"I—I— Do you think I'm going to stand that?" yelled Bob.

"We'll see that you don't have any more of it to stand," said Harry Wharton, between his teeth. "Collar that cad, you fellows!"

Bolsover put up his fists.

"I pity the chap who tries to collar me!" he said.

"We'll see."

Wharton rushed right at the bully of the Remove. Morgan and Micky Desmond and Tom Brown and Bulstrode lent a hand. Bolsover's fists were knocked up, and he was collared and rolled over. He struggled furiously, but a crowd of fellows seized upon him. He lay on the floor under a pile of them, gasping.

"The frog-march!" said Harry Wharton.

"Let me alone!" roared the bully of the Remove. "Let me gerrup! I'll make some of you smart for this! Lemme alone!"

"Bump him along!"

Bolsover, struggling and yelling, was dragged along by many hands. He was frog-marched right round the gym., and then round again, and by that time his yells had died away, and he was only gasping. Then the juniors flung him out of the gym., and he lay for full five minutes, panting breathlessly, before he was even able to rise to his feet. When he did rise, he limped away. For the time being the bully of the Remove was daunted; and when a fag of the Second Form yelled after him in the Close, Bolsover the terrible did not even turn his head.

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THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Active and Passive.

"SEEN Carlton?" asked Bob Cherry, as the chums of the Remove came out of the gym.

Nobody had.

"He borrowed my Virgil," Bob explained. "He was going to grind at Latin. I should like to see him grinding."

There was a general chuckle. The Slacker's determination to grind, and how it usually worked out, were well known to the juniors.

"Anybody seen Carlton?" Bob Cherry called out, as they passed a group of fellows in the Close.

"Yes; he's under the elms by the Cloisters," said Treluce.

"What is he doing—grinding?"

"Oh, yes!" replied the Cornish junior. "Grinding—same as usual."

The juniors turned their steps in the direction of the Cloisters. In that secluded part of the rambling grounds of Greyfriars all was quiet and serene. The sun glinted on the leaves of the old trees, and under the wide-spreading branches the grass was thick and soft. In the grass, under the shade of a tree, the Slacker lay extended on his back, his hands clasped under the back of his head, his eyes half-closed, looking dreamily up through the foliage at the blue patches of sky. Virgil lay in the grass beside him, unopened.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob, in his powerful voice.

The Slacker started up to a sitting position.

"Hallo!" he replied lazily.

"Been grinding?"

"Well, not exactly grinding," said Carlton. "I came here to get quiet and seclusion, to—to peg away in earnest, you know. I was just going to begin."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to snigger at in a fellow settling down to hard, steady work," said Carlton. "I was thinking about deponent verbs, and my mind went off on something else. But I was just going to start."

"Good! We'll see that you do," said Bob Cherry, taking an exercise-paper from his pocket. "Deponent verbs, did you say?"

"Ye-es," said Carlton. "Old Quelch was going for me about them to-day. Blessed if I see any sense in mugging it up; but there you are!"

"Yes; there you are, and here I am," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "I've got 'em down here. Which conjugation are you rottenest in?"

"Well, the first conjugation is beastly," Carlton remarked.

"Then we'll start with the first conjugation."

"But the second is just as beastly."

"Then we'll start with the second."

"And the third is rotten, and the fourth is rottenest," said Carlton. "I think all the conjugations are as rotten as one another."

"We'll take the third, then, as we had it in class this morning," said Bob Cherry. "Loquor, I speak."

"Yes, I can hear you," said Arthur.

"Ass! Loquar, locutus sum, loqui," howled Bob, "to speak."

"Oh, good!"

"Now, then, give me the present imperfect."

"Loquor," drawled Carlton.

"Now the past imperfect."

"Loquebar."

"Good! Now the future imperfect."

"Loq-loq-loq—"

"Loq-loq-loq!" mimicked Bob. "Seems to me you want a fag in the Second Form to teach you. Loquar, you ass!"

"Loquar, you ass."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry turned red.

"What are you silly asses cackling at?" he demanded.

"Oh, go ahead, Bob!" said Harry Wharton, leaning his shoulders against the tree. "I like this! Fire away!"

"It's as good as a circus," declared Nugent.

"Oh, shut up! I'm going to take Carlton through his blessed deponent verbs. By the way, Carlton, what is a deponent verb?"

"Lemme see—"

"Answer up!"

"A deponent verb is—is one blessed thing in form and another blessed thing in meaning," said the Slacker brilliantly. And that definition brought a howl of laughter from the juniors.

"You champion ass! A deponent verb has a passive form and an active meaning."

"Jolly like Carlton," remarked Frank Nugent. "He has an active meaning, but he always seems to have a passive form."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take loqui again," said Bob Cherry. "Gimme the infinitive."

"I haven't got it."

"Ass! What's the infinitive form?"

"Blessed if I know."

"Oh, you ass!" shrieked Bob. "Haven't I just jawed it at you? Loqui, that's the infinitive form. I shouldn't like to be Quelchy."

"Loqui," said the Slacker.

"Good. Now the present perfect."

"Locutus something," said Carlton.

"Too much!" grinned Harry Wharton. "Locutus sum, you ass, not locutus something."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now the past perfect," said Bob Cherry, in quite a magisterial tone. He was beginning to warm to the work, and the juniors were enjoying it. The role of instructor was a new one for Bob Cherry.

"Blessed if I know."

"He can give you the imperfect, but not the perfect, I think," grinned Nugent. "I've always observed that his Latin was imperfect."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Locutus eram," yelled Bob. "Locutus eram, you fat-head."

"Locutus eram, you fathead."

"Ass! Chump!" said Bob, as the juniors roared again.

"Now, what mood are they in? Give me the mood?"

"Bob's in the imperative mood," Nugent remarked.

"Shut up, Franky. Gimme the mood, Carlton."

"Oh, any old mood will do!" said the Slacker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Indicative," yelled Bob.

"All right; indicative, if you like."

And the Slacker lay back in the grass, and closed his eyes. Bob shoved a boot into his ribs, and he opened them again.

"Ow!"

"Now, then, the present imperfect of the indicative mood," said Bob.

"Loq-loq-loq!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if he hasn't forgotten already," said Bob, in disgust, "and that's the chap who's going in for the Raven Scholarship."

"I'm going to grind this evening," said Carlton. "You see, my boys, I'm going to tie a wet towel round my head and grind away like—like anything."

"You are!" said Bob Cherry. "You don't mean it—but you are! And you're going to begin now."

"Well, I'm going to have a bit of a rest first—"

"You've had it—all you're going to have. You're going to stop being a deponent—you're going to become an active verb, and have an active form as well as an active meaning," said Bob Cherry. "Lift him up."

"Here, I say, hold on!"

"We're going to. Jerk him up!"

Arthur Carlton was jerked up. He resisted a little, but not much—resistance was too much trouble. The juniors, holding his arms, marched him off to the School House, and up the stairs, and into his study.

Bob Cherry planted him in a chair, pushed the chair up to the table, and laid pen and ink, Virgil, and Latin grammar before him. Carlton surveyed them in dismay.

"Now, begin," said Bob.

"I was just going to—"

"Begin!"

"I think I'd like a bit of a rest first—"

"Begin!"

"I'm feeling the heat, you know, and—"

"Begin!"

"Now, look here, old fellow—"

"Begin!" roared Bob.

And Carlton groaned and began.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Enough Books.

THE juniors quitted Carlton's study, leaving him beginning. But Bob Cherry left his study door open, and did his own work on his knees, sitting in the doorway. He meant to keep an eye on the Slacker. As he anticipated, ten minutes had not elapsed when the door of Carlton's study opened. The Slacker put his head out, very cautiously—a great deal like a tortoise stretching out his head to see if the coast was clear. He was about to step out quietly into the passage, when he caught sight of Bob Cherry watching him, and stopped short, and smiled a sickly smile.

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"THE ONLY WAY!"
A Long Complete School Tale, by FRANK RICHARDS.

EVERY
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob.

"Hallo!" said Carlton feebly.

"Finished already?"

"Well, not exactly finished," said Carlton. "I was just going for a little stroll down the passage, just to—to get a breather. I—I can't keep on just now, because I've lost my books."

"What books?"

"Well, you see, I'm going to have a regular grind this evening," explained Carlton, "and I want all by books about me. I shall want Cæsar, for one thing, and I'm blessed if I can remember what I did with the beast."

"I'll lend you a Cæsar."

"Then there's the maths.—I've got to dig right into maths. for the rotten exam.—for the beastly scholarship."

"Wharton will lend you the books."

"Then there's the French—I want Fontaine and St. Pierre—"

"Nugent's got them."

"I—I want some more books, too, and—and—"

Bob Cherry rose from his seat, and came along the passage. Carlton eyed him very dubiously. It was certainly true that he had lost or mislaid most of his books. He generally did; but it was equally true that he was not at all anxious to find them. A slight taste of work had made him feel very much in want of a rest.

"You buzz back into your study," said Bob Cherry. "I'll call up all the fellows to lend you books, if you like."

"Look here—"

"Get in!"

"Oh, hang!" said Carlton irritably. "Look here, I'm not going to be ordered about like this. I'm going to work when I like."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"When you like!" he repeated. "I've never noticed you like to work so far. My dear chap, you've got to work now."

"It's really no bizney of yours, Cherry. It's very kind of you to take an interest in the matter, of course; but really—"

"But it is my business, and Wharton's, too," said Bob serenely. "We're going to help a female in distress."

"What on earth do you mean?"

"Your mater has set her heart on your passing that exam., and you're going to do it, or bust something," said Bob Cherry. "We're all going to help you. Go back into your study and sit down, and—"

"I've broken my pen nib."

"Here's another."

"H'm! I—I want some fresh paper, too."

"I'll get you some."

"It's getting dark in the study—"

"Light the gas, then."

"Look here, Bob Cherry—"

"That's right, go in," said Bob Cherry, pushing the Slacker into the study. "Come on, you fellows; Carlton wants to be helped."

"No, I don't—"

"Yes, you do; shut up!"

The Removites willingly crowded to help. The bucking up of Arthur Carlton was being taken as a huge joke by the Remove. When they heard that books were wanted, the fellows entered into the spirit of the thing, and began to bring books. It was really surprising that so many books could be found in the junior passage.

Arthur sat at the table, and the loaned books grew round him in piles. Certainly they were not all school books—and the school books were not all of the kind he required. But they were books—and he was not likely to run short of books again.

Books were piled on the table—they were stacked on the floor—they were placed on the chairs and the mantelpiece. Carlton might have been a dealer in second-hand books by the number he had stacked round him.

"There!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Is that enough?"

Carlton laughed. He could not help it.

"Yes, I think that will do," he exclaimed. "For goodness' sake don't bring any more!"

"You think you've got all you want?" grinned Frank Nugent.

"You ass—yes."

"We could find some more," said Bulstrode.

"Oh, chuck it, for goodness' sake!"

"Are you going to work now?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I'm just going to begin—"

"Sit down!"

"Look here, Wharton—"

"If you don't grind away in earnest, we'll come back, and

bury you under the blessed books," said Bob Cherry warningly. "And you're not going to leave your study for a whole hour. If you try it, we'll rag you."

"Look here—"
"Get to work."
"But really—"
"Nuff said."

The Removites crowded out of the study, laughing. Arthur Carlton sat down disconsolately at his table. He knew the necessity of working, and his intentions were splendid; but never had work seemed so distasteful as at the moment when it was most necessary to be done. The Slacker surveyed the piles of books, and looked at the blank sheets on his table, and dipped his pen in the ink with a groan.

He sat for some minutes with the pen poised in the air, and the ink dried on the nib. Carlton grunted discontentedly. He wanted to win the Raven Scholarship very much; and it seemed rotten, as he expressed it, that he could not win it without working. He would have preferred, as John Bull had remarked, to find scholarships growing on bushes like blackberries.

There was a tap at his door, and it opened. Carlton looked round, expecting to see Bob Cherry, and as he turned he opened a Latin grammar in haste.

But it was not Bob Cherry; it was Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove. The Form-master came into the study. He stared blankly at the array of books.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "What does this mean, Carlton? What have you accumulated all these books for? What does it mean?"

"I—I'm going to grind, sir," said Carlton. "I've borrowed some books. You know, sir, I'm in for the Raven exam., and I've got to grind hard."

Mr. Quelch could not help smiling.

"Well, if you absorb a hundredth part of the knowledge you have accumulated here, you will certainly pass the examination," he said.

"I—I hope so, sir."

"I do not see what you need with so many books," said Mr. Quelch; "but I suppose it is a sign that you are in earnest, Carlton."

"Oh, yes, sir! I'm very much in earnest! I've determined to buck up, and have a really good and thorough grind to prepare myself for the scholarship exam."

"I am glad to hear it," said Mr. Quelch suspiciously. "Your mother spoke to me on the subject before she left the school to-day, Carlton."

"Oh! Did she, sir?"

"Yes; and I have promised to do the best I can to keep you at work, Carlton, so that you can have a chance for the scholarship. I am going to keep an eye on you. I have arranged that all the boys who have entered may come to my study for extra coaching for an hour, twice this week and next. Would you care to have that assistance?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I should be very glad! It's very kind indeed of you, sir."

"Very well; come to my study at five o'clock to-morrow," said the Remove-master.

"Thank you, sir!"

"And, meanwhile, work hard, Carlton. You owe this to your mother; it is your duty to work your very hardest on this occasion."

"I know it is, sir," said the Slacker earnestly. "I'm going to work jolly hard, sir, and pull it off if I can."

"That is right, my boy."

Mr. Quelch quitted the study. His words had fired the Slacker with new energy, and he pored over the books, and scribbled on the impot. paper for a quarter of an hour without intermission. Then his pen slackened, and his eyes wandered.

Half an hour later Bob Cherry looked into the study to see how he was getting on. The Slacker's head was resting on a pile of books, and his breathing was very deep and regular, and there was a peaceful smile upon his face.

He was fast asleep.

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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

An Alarm in the Night.

"I'M going to get up specially early in the morning," Carlton confided to Harry Wharton & Co., as the Remove went up to bed that evening. "I'm thinking of making a special point of getting up at five, and have a two hours' grind before you fellows are out of bed. I'm bound to get ahead that way."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I think I can see you doing it," he remarked.

"I'm determined on it! A chap can always wake up if he has an alarm clock going," Carlton explained.

"You will let it run on."

"Well, I might," the Slacker admitted cautiously. "I've done so before. But I've got a new dodge. I've bought half a dozen cheap alarm clocks, and I've borrowed four."

Bob Cherry whistled.

"Do you mean to say that you're going to have ten alarm clocks going?" he exclaimed.

"That's it!"

"You'll have the roof off the dorm.!"

"Oh, not all at once!" the Slacker explained. "Oh, no! I find that the alarm takes a full minute to run down. Well, I'm going to set the first one at exactly five o'clock, and the second at a minute past five, and the third at two minutes past, and so on for the lot of them—so that one will take it up where another leaves it off—"

"A sort of giddy anthem in alarm clocks," grinned Nugent.

"Exactly! By having ten clocks, I get ten minutes of alarm, and surely that ought to be enough to make any fellow get up!"

"But what about the rest of the dorm.?" demanded John Bull. "We shall all hear the blessed alarm clocks, too!"

"I guess that's so," said Fisher T. Fish. "And I guess I'm up against it. I don't want to wake up at five."

"Well, you chaps said you were willing to help me," said the Slacker. "You've been helping me, or worrying me, whichever way you like to put it. I think you ought to stick this out, too!"

"Ahem!"

"If I once get into the habit of getting up at five o'clock, and going for the blessed work, I shall simply romp home at the exam.," said Carlton confidently; "and I don't suppose I shall want the alarm clocks every morning."

"I know you jolly well won't have them, if you do!" growled Bob Cherry. "Well, I suppose we can let you try the experiment, anyway."

There were loud objections from many of the Removites when Arthur Carlton brought a bag into the dormitory and opened it, and produced an array of ten alarm clocks. He proceeded to wind them up, and fasten them round his bed—on the bedhead and at the foot of the bed and under the bed—anywhere and everywhere. The ticking of ten cheap clocks made a considerable noise, and Bolsover's voice was heard among the others in complaint. He happened to have the next bed to the Slacker, and he did not like it.

"Do you mean to say that you're going to keep up that fearful row all night, Carlton?" he demanded.

Carlton nodded cheerfully.

"Yes. These clocks are going off at five in the morning, to get me up. If I get up at the first one I'll stop all the others. I hope the ticking doesn't worry you?"

"Doesn't it?" roared Bolsover. "I sha'n't be able to go to sleep with that horrid row going on a couple of yards from my ears!"

"I'm sorry!"

"I'll make you sorrier if you don't stop it! Chuck the rotten things out of the dorm.!" said Bolsover.

"Look here—"

"If you won't do it I'll sling you out of the dorm., and sling your blessed clocks after you!" said Bolsover threateningly.

Carlton was nonplussed. The bully of the Remove could do as he threatened, if he liked; the Slacker had no chance of stopping him. But Harry Wharton & Co. were ready to take up the cudgels for him.

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The juniors turned out to the task. They dragged on the ropes, and the Slacker clutched and clung desperately to his bed. But it was useless. He was jerked out of the bed, and rolled on the floor in his bedclothes. "Ow! You asses—you fathheads!" he roared. "Oh, stop it!"

"You can cheese that, Bolsover!" said Bob Cherry. "Let Carlton and his alarm clocks alone. If you don't like being next to them, change into another bed!"

"Faith, I've got the end bed, and I'll change wid ye, Bolsover," said Micky Desmond, making the sacrifice in the interests of peace and quietness.

Bolsover gave in, and changed to the end bed. His experience in the gym. was still fresh in his mind, and he had no desire to have it repeated.

Wingate looked into the dormitory, and he glanced at the array of clocks about the Slacker's bed in great astonishment.

"What on earth is that for?" he exclaimed. "What's the little game now?"

"Oh, that's to wake me in the morning!" said Carlton.

"My hat! You must be a sound sleeper!"

Wingate turned the lights out, and retired. The Remove settled down to sleep.

They were dropping off to slumber one by one, when there was a sudden buzzing and clanging.

Buz-z-z-z-z-z-z-z!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, starting out of a dream in which he had been knocking Bolsover to little pieces in the ring. "What's that?"

"What the—"

"Who the—"

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"Stop it! Stop it, Carlton, you ass!"

It was one of the alarm clocks going off. Carlton had evidently timed it carelessly.

The Slacker sat up in bed, clutching at the offending clock in the darkness. The ringing and buzzing continued without intermission, and there were yells of indignation from the juniors who wanted to go to sleep.

"Stop it!"

"Ring off!"

"Yow! Will you stop it?"

"I—I'm trying to!" gasped Carlton. "I can't find which beastly clock it is! Oh!"

Biff!

A pillow swept through the air, and bowled the Slacker over. He rolled out of the bed, and bumped on the floor.

"Ow! Yaroo!"

Buz-z-z-z-z-z-z-z!

"Stop that blessed alarm!"

"Ring off, you chump!"

Carlton staggered up, and found the clock at last, and jammed the alarm. The buzzing and clinking died away, and there was blessed silence. The Slacker crawled into bed again.

"You silly ass!" said Tom Brown. "Why couldn't you make sure you had timed it right? Are the other clocks fixed anyhow, too?"

"Oh, no; they're all right!"

The Remove settled down again. Half-past ten rang out from the clock tower, and found them all asleep. Then there was another sound following the strokes of the clock; it was the buzz of another alarm.

Buz-z-z-z-z-z-z! Ting-ting!

Half the Remove started up in bed, awakened and alarmed. The loud and raucous sounds of the alarm rang through the dormitory from end to end, especially loud and raucous in the dead silence of the night. There were yells of angry indignation from all sides.

"Carlton! Wake up, you ass!"

"Carlton! You chump!"

"Stop that beastly thing!"

"You silly ass! Stop it!"

Carlton did not move.

"Carlton!" yelled Harry Wharton. "Stop it!"

"It will run out soon!" came the sleepy voice of the Slacker. "I'm too tired to keep on getting up! It's all right; it can't last long!"

There was a general yell.

"Stop that blessed thing, you lazy bounder!"

"We'll come and bump you!"

"Ring off!"

Buz-z-z-z-z-z-z! Ting-ting!

The lively tones of the cheap alarm clock continued unchecked. Carlton stopped his ears. It seemed an easier plan than getting up and finding the clock in the dark and stopping it.

Buz-z-z-z! The clock was slackening down, but at the same time another started. The Slacker had evidently been hopelessly careless in timing the alarms. The Remove were all awake by this time, with the exception of Billy Bunter, who could have slept serenely through an earthquake. The fellows were turning out of bed on all sides.

Carlton had stopped his ears, instead of stopping the clock, and it deadened the raucous sound of the alarm, and at the same time it prevented him from hearing the approaching footsteps of the avengers. They burst upon him by surprise. Even the juniors who were keenest to back him up in his new efforts were wild now. The Slacker was going altogether too far.

Wharton and Bob Cherry and Bolsover and Buistrode and a crowd of other fellows hurled themselves upon the Slacker. He was rolled out of bed and bumped upon the floor, yelling.

Frank Nugent lighted a candle-end, and the angry Removites clutched at the alarm clocks, hurling them to the floor, and Bolsover found a cricket-stump and smashed each of them as it was dropped.

Crash, crash, crash!

The stump broke in halves at last, but Bolsover had accounted for the alarm clocks. Carlton staggered up, very red and dusty and angry.

"You silly asses!" he gasped. "I sha'n't be able to get up in the morning now. You've spoiled my chance for the Raven Scholarship!"

"We'll spoil your features, too, if you disturb us any more to-night!" growled Bob Cherry wrathfully.

"Yes, rather!"

"Keep quiet, you ass, or we'll bump you again!"

And the Removites, leaving Carlton gasping, turned in; and there were no more alarms in the dormitory that night.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry keeps the Slacker "at it."

THE clang of the rising-bell the next morning awakened the Remove, and Carlton with the rest. Bob Cherry grinned at the Slacker as he turned out.

"Did you get up at five?" he asked.

"Groo!"

"Carlton!"

"Yaw-aw-aw!"

"You didn't get up at five," said Bob Cherry, "but you're going to get up at seven! Turn out, or shall I come and help you?"

The Slacker peered at him over the coverlet.

"I—I say, Cherry, I was disturbed in the night, you see, over these blessed alarm clocks, and I really haven't had a proper night's rest. I think I'd better have another ten minutes."

Bob Cherry did not reply. He came towards Carlton's bed with a businesslike air, and the Slacker turned out in a hurry, growling.

"Look here, Cherry——"

"It's all right; I'm looking after you!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "You sha'n't oversleep yourself while I'm around. Don't be afraid. You're going to get in half an hour's mugging before brekker!"

"I can't! I——"

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"You can! I'm going to help you."

"I'm going to Mr. Quelch to-day at half-past five for an hour's extra toot," said Carlton. "You'll admit yourself that that's enough for one day."

"Rats!"

"It's jolly good of Quelch to give you extra tuition," said Harry Wharton. "You ought to buck up and make the best of it."

"I'm going to. After I've left Quelch I'm going to grind—a really steady grind," said the Slacker. "I sha'n't be able to do any practice at the nets. I'm going to stick to work, and have a really good grind."

"And you're going to begin it now, before brekker," said Bob.

"I can't work on an empty stomach, old fellow. You see——"

"Then you'll work on a thick ear. We're backing up your mater, you know, and you're going to toe the line."

And when Carlton was dressed Bob Cherry affectionately linked arms with him and marched him out of the dormitory. John Bull and Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent followed, grinning.

The Slacker was marched down to his study and placed in his chair at the table. The boys' maid was busy in the Remove passage, but Wharton cautioned her to leave Carlton's study till last. As a matter of fact, the maids very seldom touched Carlton's study; it was too much for them, from the state the Slacker usually kept it in.

"Now, which subject are you keenest on?" asked Bob Cherry.

The Slacker groaned.

"Oh, any old thing!" he said. "I can't say I'm keen on any. Don't you fellows think it would be a good idea to grind after lessons, and start the day by a stroll in the open air?"

Bob Cherry nodded.

"That's a jolly good idea as a rule," he admitted. "But circumstances alter cases. You have got to buck up now, in season and out of season. Have you any special preference for Latin before breakfast?"

"N-n-no."

"Mathematics?"

Carlton shuddered.

"Ugh! No!"

"French?"

"I don't care for it."

"Perhaps you'd like to begin by sitting in the armchair and thinking it out?" Frank Nugent suggested sarcastically. Carlton brightened up.

"That's a jolly good idea of yours, Nugent!" he exclaimed.

"I don't believe in doing anything in a hurry. Everything ought to be thought out before you do it, you know. I'll just have a good, long think——"

"That you jolly well won't!" said Bob Cherry, with a chuckle. "You'll just have a good, long grind, and we'll watch you."

"It's—it's awfully good of you fellows!" said Carlton feebly. "But—but I feel that I'm imposing on you, you know. You ought to be out in the Close on a fresh, sunny morning like this. You'll miss your usual run before brekker."

"Oh, we don't mind!"

"It's jolly of you," said Carlton. "But—but I can't have you sacrificing yourselves for me in this way. You run out, now, while I have a good, steady grind at—at French."

"You shall have the grind at French, my son, but we'll look on," said Bob Cherry. "Here's your book."

"H'm! Upon the whole, perhaps I'd better begin with Latin."

"Very well! Here's Virgil."

"I don't want Virgil just now. I'd better take the grammar, I think, and have a good dig at those blessed deponent verbs."

"Here's the Latin grammar," said Bob, fishing it out from a heap of books.

Carlton groaned. He had hoped that the Latin grammar was lost, and that some time would be spent in finding it. The Removites grinned as they watched the vain struggles of the Slacker.

"On the whole," Carlton remarked, in a thoughtful way—"on the whole, perhaps the deponent verbs can stand over. I really ought to grind at Livy—he's a hard beast, and I want him for the exam."

"Here's Livy!" said John Bull.

"Th-thank you!" said Carlton, without looking very thankful, however. "You're very obliging, I'm sure."

"Oh, don't mench!"

"Ah, this is the first book!" said Carlton, shaking his head. "I'm through with Romulus and Remus. What I want is the book about Hannibal. I forget the number."

"Twenty-first book, you ass!" said Wharton.

"Yes, I dare say that's it," said Carlton.

"Well, here it is!"

Carlton snorted. There was the 21st. of Livy, and there was no further excuse for shirking. He took hold of the book and opened it.

"Perhaps, upon the whole——" he began, in a thoughtful way.

"No more perhapses!" said Bob Cherry decidedly. "We've wasted nearly ten minutes already with your blessed 'perhapses,' and 'on the wholes.' You're going to begin on Hannibal now. There you are: 'In parte operis mei——' Start!"

"But, you see——"

"Start!" roared Bob Cherry.

And Carlton groaned and started.

The chums of the Remove, nobly resisting the desire to get out into the air before breakfast, stood round and watched him.

Carlton cast many a longing glance towards the door; but there was no escape for him. Bob Cherry filled in the time by boxing with Wharton, mindful of his coming mill with Bolsover on the morrow.

Fisher T. Fish looked in at the door. He stared at the chums of the Remove.

"I guess I've been looking for you fellows!" he exclaimed. "What the dickens are you sticking indoors for?"

"Watching over the kid," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Making him buck up! He likes it! Don't you, Carlton?"

"Ye-e-s," said Carlton. "I'm sure it's very good of you. But——"

"But me no buts, as they say in the novels," said Bob Cherry. "Go for Livy—he's a difficult beast, and you have to go for him hard."

"I think perhaps a little rest now——"

"Time's not up yet! Go it!"

And Carlton groaned and went it. He was looking quite fatigued by the time the chums of the Remove let him off and allowed him to leave the study.

Bob patted him affectionately on the shoulder as they went down the passage.

"I'm going to keep an eye on you like this right up to the date of the exam.," he said. "We'll see you through, you know."

"Oh, really——"

"We're going to stick to it, regardless of expense," said Nugent. "You can rely on us to back you up in this way all the time."

Carlton grunted.

"It's awfully kind of you," he said. "But—but I can't impose on you in this way. It's making you waste too much of your time."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"That doesn't matter, so long as you don't waste your time," he said.

And Carlton grunted disconsolately. He intended to buck up—he certainly intended fully to do so. But he preferred to have the exact time of the bucking-up a little ahead—always a little ahead. To buck up in the real present moment was hard. But, with the chums of the Remove backing him up, he had little choice in the matter.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Extra Tuition!

BOB CHERRY peeled off the gloves as the quarter rang out from the clock-tower. It was a quarter-past five, and Bob had been boxing for nearly half an hour with a succession of fellows. The last one was the great Coker—Coker of the Fifth. Coker had benignantly consented to have the gloves on with the Removite, intending to knock him into a cocked hat for his cheek in asking such a thing. But Coker did not find the cocked hat within the range of practical politics. Bob Cherry certainly did not get the better of the Fifth-Former; but he held his own, and Coker had to admit, with considerable disgust, that the junior knew something about the noble art of self-defence. And when the bout was over Coker certainly showed more signs of fatigue than Bob Cherry did.

As Bob peeled off the gloves his chums slapped him on the back, and Coker gave him a very queer look. The Fifth-Former did not quite approve of a junior being so extremely handy with his hands. It was likely to lead to disrespect towards the Upper Forms, and the Fifth had had enough of that from Bolsover. But the Removites were delighted. A fellow who could stand up to Coker for ten minutes certainly had an excellent chance of standing up to Bolsover with success. Bob Cherry himself was very pleased; and in Bolsover's face, for the first time, there came an expression of doubt. He had looked on, and a doubt came into his mind as to whether he would have faced Coker with so much success—a doubt which led, naturally, to some inward misgivings about the combat of the morrow.

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"THE ONLY WAY!"

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"Oh, it's ripping, Bob!" said Harry Wharton. "It's simply ripping! It will be a good show to-morrow, anyway. Are you chucking it now? I suppose you're a bit winded."

"No fear!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "I could go for the punching-ball all right; but I'm going to look after Carlton."

"By Jove, I'd forgotten him!"

"He's got to go to Mr. Quelch for extra toot at five-thirty," said Bob, as he put his blazer on. "And I'd bet my weight in Latin primers that he's forgotten all about it—or that he'll make it a point to forget, anyway."

"Ha, ha, ha! I shouldn't wonder."

"Let's go and look him up," said Nugent.

And the chums of the Remove proceeded to look for Carlton. He had declared his intention of grinding from the moment classes were dismissed to the time he had to go to Mr. Quelch. But he was not in his study, and the juniors looked in the Form-room and the Common-room for him in vain. The school library was drawn blank. It was pretty clear that the Slacker of the Remove was out of doors.

"He's taken his books out, to study under the trees," said Bob, with a grin, "and he's studying on his back as usual—looking at the sky. We'll see that he doesn't miss his appointment with Quelch though. It would be rotten ungrateful to miss it, when Quelch is decent enough to give him extra toot for nothing. But Carlton wouldn't think of that till half-past six."

"Very likely."

Carlton was not under the trees in the Close, and he was not in the Cloisters. It was twenty-five minutes past five now, and the chums of the Remove were growing exasperated. It looked as if Carlton had left the school, to escape his friends' kindly attentions.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked down to Gosling's lodge to inquire if the school porter had seen the Slacker.

Gosling had!

"He's gone hout," he said. "He 'ad a book under his arm, Master Wharton. He went down towards the river."

Towards the river the exasperated juniors accordingly went.

The Slacker was reclining upon a green grassy bank, facing the river, and his book lay at his feet. He was leaning back in the grass, and his eyes were closed.

Bob Cherry looked at him wrathfully. The Slacker was asleep, and his mouth had fallen open, and he was breathing steadily. He had evidently gone there to study, but very little studying had been done.

"The boulder!" muttered Bob Cherry.

Nugent chuckled.

"There's no curing him!" he said. "He hasn't an earthly for the Raven exam. Let the silly ass go on snoozing!"

"Can't be did! We've promised his mater to back him up."

Bob Cherry stooped and picked up a nice, muddy turf from the edge of the river and crammed it into the open mouth of the sleeper.

Carlton woke up quite suddenly.

"Oh! Oh! Groo! Groooooch!"

He jumped up, spitting and spluttering.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Groo! What's that? Something's got into my mouth!" gasped Carlton. "Ow! Oh! Gr-roooooch!"

He spat and spat.

"It's all right!" said Bob Cherry. "I was just waking you up, that's all——"

"Groo!"

Carlton spluttered wildly. His mouth was full of soft mud, and it was not nice. He turned a red and wrathful face upon the juniors.

"You—you—you rotters! Ow—groooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's time for the extra toot," Bob Cherry explained. "It wants two minutes to half-past, and Quelch is expecting you in his study."

"I—I c-can't go now; I've got to wash my mouth out!" spluttered Carlton.

"You can do that afterwards."

"I can't—besides, I shall be late anyway, and Mr. Quelch would be offended if I went in late," the Slacker argued. "One of you fellows had better cut off and tell him that I'm very sorry I can't come."

"No fear!"

"Well, he'll soon give me up," said Carlton, sitting down on the bank again, and wiping his mouth with his pocket-handkerchief. "I think you're a beast, Bob Cherry! I was just dreaming that I'd won the Raven Scholarship."

"It's likely to remain a dream, too, if this is the way you study for it," Harry Wharton remarked.

"I came out here specially to study," said Carlton. "I can work ever so much better in a quiet, secluded spot without a lot of fatheads interrupting me."

"I suppose you work in your sleep?" Nugent suggested.

"Well, you see—"

"How much work have you done?"

Carlton hesitated.

"I haven't exactly done any," he confessed. "I was just going to begin. If you fellows will buzz off, I'll begin now."

"You won't," said Bob Cherry. "You're going to Mr. Quelch for extra toot."

"But I should be late, and—"

"Better late than never."

"Now, look here, Cherry; do be reasonable—"

"Are you coming?"

"A little later, when I've done some work."

"Are you coming now?"

"No, I'm not!" Carlton declared flatly. "I feel too tired, and Quelch's study is stuffy, too. And I don't believe in extra toot, really. I—"

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry, seizing him by the shoulders. "Lend a hand, you chaps!"

"I—I say! Hold on!"

"Take his feet, Bull!"

"Certainly!"

"You take one arm, and I'll take the other, Wharton."

"Right-ho!"

"Now buzz him along!"

"Hold on!" yelled Carlton. "I—I'll walk!"

"Too late! Besides, you wouldn't walk. We're going to take you in to extra toot. Bring the lazy boulder along, you chaps!"

Carlton struggled violently, but he had no chance. With one of the juniors holding each arm, and one holding each leg, he was swung into the air and rushed up the bank. The four Removites bore him along to the school gates. Carlton wriggled spasmodically in their grasp as he was rushed through the gateway.

"Let me go! I'll walk! You fatheads! Ow!"

They rushed him on. Gosling stood outside his lodge, and stared at them blankly.

"Well, my heye!" ejaculated Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere—"

But the juniors did not wait to hear what Gosling said. It was already three minutes past the time for Carlton's appointment with his Form-master, and they did not mean him to be later than was unavoidable. They rushed the Slacker at top speed across the Close, and yells of laughter from the fellows greeted them as they passed.

"Let me down!" yelled the Slacker, struggling.

"Rats!"

"I'll walk—"

"No, you won't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Right up to the School House the juniors rushed the Slacker, wriggling and kicking. The yells of laughter in the Close brought some of the masters to their windows, among them Mr. Quelch. The Remove-master looked out in amazement at the scene, and then a smile broke over his face. He understood how the matter lay.

The Slacker was rushed into the House, and in the hall he made a final struggle. He was determined not to be carried to Mr. Quelch's study in that way if he could help it. But he couldn't.

"Hold him!" gasped Wharton.

"Lemme go! Stop it, you fatheads! Chuck it—yow!"

"Keep him tight!"

"We've got him!"

"This way!" panted Bob Cherry.

They rushed him along the passage to the door of the Form-master's study. There they intended to set him upon his feet after knocking, so that he could walk in when it was too late to retreat. But just as they reached the study door it was opened, and Mr. Quelch looked out at them.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh!"

The juniors uttered that ejaculation together, and, in their surprise, they let go of Carlton. There was a terrific bump as the Slacker fell to the floor, and he yelled:

"Yarooop!"

Mr. Quelch smiled grimly.

"Ah! You have come for your extra tuition, Carlton, I presume?" he said.

"Ow! Yes! Yow!" gasped the Slacker.

"Very good! But you are late."

"I'm—ow!—sorry—yow—"

"We—we were helping him to hurry, sir," Harry Wharton explained, with a crimson face. "We—we thought we'd help him, sir."

"Very good!" said the Form-master, with a grave

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countenance. "It was very kind of you, and I hope you will continue to help him till after the Raven examination. You may come in, Carlton."

Carlton staggered, gasping, into the study. There was no escaping the extra tuition now. The juniors melted away, and the Form-master closed his door.

"Phew!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Of course I never guessed that Quelch would open his door at that precise minute. It was just our luck."

"I think he's jolly good-tempered about it," said Harry Wharton, laughing, "and poor old Carlton is in for it now—for an hour."

The juniors glanced at Mr. Quelch's window when they went into the Close again. The window was wide open, and they could see into the study. Carlton was sitting at the table, with the Form-master opposite him—working! He was certainly working now; there could be no doubt of that—under the gimlet eyes of Mr. Quelch he had no chance to slack. He did not look happy.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Pull All Together!

CARLTON looked quite fagged out when he emerged from Mr. Quelch's study. Harry Wharton & Co. were waiting for him in the passage, and the Slacker looked quite apprehensive as he caught sight of them. He evidently feared that he was going through it again. But the juniors were merciful.

"Had a good time?" asked Bob Cherry, as he linked arms with the Slacker, and walked him down the passage.

Carlton groaned.

"No; horrid."

"What! Haven't you been coached?"

"Oh, yes, I've been coached!"

"Accumulated knowledge, I suppose?" said Wharton.

"I believe so. My blessed head's bursting with it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then what are you grumbling about?" questioned John Bull.

"I'm not grumbling."

"Well, you don't look very exhilarated, that's all."

"I'm not feeling exhilarated."

"He's tired of life, poor chap!" said Frank Nugent.

"Let's take him for a two-mile sprint and shake him up."

Carlton shuddered.

"I haven't a run left in me," he said. "I haven't anything except a fat head at the present moment. Don't you fellows begin again! If you so much as show me a Latin book, I'll sling it at you."

"We don't mean to," said Bob Cherry, laughing. "We're taking you away to have a feed at the tuckshop. You deserve it."

Carlton brightened up.

"Well, that's all right," he said. "I hope you haven't got any rotten books in your pockets to spring on me."

"No, honour bright. You sha'n't look at a book for another hour."

"I think I've done enough for to-day—"

"Rats! You can do another hour before prep.," said Bob. "You shall have a feed and an hour's rest, and then you begin again."

"Now, look here—"

"No good talking; the fiat has gone forth," said Bob Cherry. "The great chief has spoken. Shut up!"

Carlton seemed quite happy in the tuckshop. The prospect of a whole hour without any work seemed to cheer him up. But as the hour drew to a close the clouds descended upon his visage again.

"Time's up!" said Bob Cherry presently.

"It's awfully ripping on the river in the sunset," Carlton suggested. "What do you fellows say to a pull up to the island? What do you say, Bob?"

"Rats!"

"I think I ought to have a little exercise after being stuffed up in a study so long," the Slacker remarked.

"You can get up early in the morning and have some exercise."

"I say, you fellows are awfully hard on a chap," said the unhappy Slacker. "Of course I'm going to grind like anything to win the scholarship. I wouldn't disappoint the mater. But there's such a thing as over-doing it, you know."

"Not much danger of your over-doing it," said Bob, with a chuckle. "My belief is that you'll go to sleep in the exam-room next week."

And Carlton was taken to his study, and there the chums of the Remove took turns in sitting with him to see that he worked. Carlton worked: there was no help for it.

When he chose to exert himself, Carlton was clever enough, and he had a good memory, when he took the trouble to have anything to remember. He was making good progress now, in spite of himself.

He seemed too tired to live by bedtime. He turned in first of the Remove, and was asleep before Wingate came to turn the lights out.

He was awakened suddenly. He sat up in bed and kicked out.

"Hallo! Who's got hold of my foot?" he exclaimed.

"I have," said Bob Cherry.

"What on earth—"

"I'm only tying a rope round your ankle," explained Bob.

"What for? I—"

"To wake you in the morning."

"Look here—"

"Keep still," said Bob Cherry. "We're going to tie the ropes to your ankles and wrists. They won't hurt you."

"But—but I—"

"Now, it's no good talking," said Bob. "We're four to one, and we mean business."

Carlton groaned, and gave it up. The ropes were adjusted, and the captain of Greyfriars came in as the juniors were finishing.

"What are you young sweeps up to?" demanded Wingate, in astonishment.

"It's a dodge for waking Carlton up in the morning," Bob Cherry exclaimed. "He wants to get up at five!"

"No, I don't!" groaned Carlton.

"That's a little mistake of his; he does," said Bob serenely.

"One of us is bound to wake up at five, or thereabouts, and the chap who wakes up is going to wake Carlton—see?"

Wingate laughed.

"Good idea!" he said. "You're jolly lucky to have fellows to look after you like this, Carlton, when you're preparing for an exam."

Carlton grunted. However, he raised no further objections. Indeed, he was asleep a couple of minutes after the Greyfriars captain had turned the lights out.

Carlton had had some idea of untying the ropes during the night, but he did not wake up once. When the early rays of the sun stole in at the windows, John Bull woke and yawned. He was about to turn over and go to sleep again, when he felt the cord on his wrist and remembered Carlton.

He sat up in bed, and called out to the Slacker of the Remove.

"Carlton!"

There was no reply. The Slacker was sleeping steadily.

"Carlton, wake up!"

Still no answer. Harry Wharton woke and sat up in bed. He reached out for his watch, and saw that it was a quarter-past five.

"Time for Carlton to get up!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, rather!" chuckled John Bull.

He jerked at his rope. Carlton awoke suddenly, and gave a howl.

"Ow!"

"Carlton!"

"Why, what—oh—leggo! Chuck it!"

"Time to get up!"

"I'm not going to gerrup!" roared Carlton. "It can't be three o'clock yet."

"It's a quarter-past five," said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, your ticker's fast—hours fast!"

"It's a quarter-past five by mine, too," said John Bull.

"I expect it's wrong—anyway, a quarter-past five is much too early for a fellow to get up. I'm going to get up at six."

"You're going to get up at a quarter-past five?" chuckled Bob Cherry, who was now awake. "Up with you! Give him a pull!"

"Ow!"

Nugent woke up, too, and the four juniors sat up in bed, jerking at the ropes that were attached to the Slacker's limbs. Carlton yelled.

"Leggo! Chuck it! Ow! I'm not going to get up!"

"You are, you are, you are!" Bob Cherry sang cheerfully.

"Stop it! Yah! Oh!"

Jerk, jerk, jerk!

"Yaroooh! Yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get up!"

"I—I won't! Yewp! Oh, stop it!"

"We'll jolly well see whether you won't!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, jumping out of bed. "Now, then, all together!"

The juniors turned out to the task. They dragged on the ropes, and the Slacker clutched and clung desperately to his

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bed. But it was useless. He was jerked out of the bed, and rolled on the floor in his bedclothes.

"Ow! You asses—you fatheads!" he roared. "Oh, stop it!"

"Yes, we'll stop it, when you promise honour bright not to get into bed again," said Bob Cherry.

"I—I won't!"

"Yank him round the dorm.," said John Bull.

"Good egg!"

"Yaroooh!" yelled the unhappy Slacker. "Stop it! I—I won't get into bed again. I—I—I'll go down and work! Honour bright!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Slacker was released from the ropes. Carlton was a slacker, but he was a fellow of his word, and the juniors knew that they could trust him. He went down, and Harry Wharton & Co. turned in again, to enjoy a well-earned repose.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry v. Bolsover.

CARLTON was working when the chums of the Remove came down. They stopped at his study to look in, and found him very busy. He looked up at them with quite a pathetic smile.

"Been sticking at it?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather—two hours on end. Is life worth living?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Come for a run in the Close."

"I'll come for a walk," said the Slacker.

And he went for a walk. But as Bob Cherry and John Bull took hold of his arms, and ran with him, the walk took the form of a run, and he arrived at the house again, after going round the Close, in quite a breathless condition.

There was a great deal of excitement in the Remove that morning. It was a half-holiday in the afternoon, but the juniors were not looking forward to a cricket match, or to rowing, or swimming, or tennis, or any of their usual amusements. They were thinking wholly and solely of the coming contest between Bob Cherry and the bully of the Remove.

Bob was in splendid form. There was no over-confidence about him, but there was a quiet determination in his manner that boded success. He certainly meant to stand up to the bully of the Remove so long as he could stand at all, and even if Bolsover was victorious his victory was certain to cost him dear. And that Bolsover was beginning to feel slightly doubtful on the subject was soon evident. He stopped to speak to Bob Cherry as the juniors were going to the Form-room in the morning, and for once his manner was quite civil.

"I suppose you're not looking forward to the row this afternoon, Cherry?" he remarked.

"That's just what I am doing," replied Bob cheerily. "Never looked forward to anything so much in my life."

"I shall lick you, you know."

"I don't know anything of the sort."

"Oh, you haven't an earthly," said Bolsover. "But I'll tell you what. The weather's too hot for a slogging match, and if you like I'll let you off."

"Thank you for nothing."

"You'll be sensible to take the chance while you've got it," said Bolsover, frowning. "I don't see the fun of fighting in the hot weather, just to amuse a parcel of kids who won't be getting any of the hard knocks; that's how it is."

"Oh, I don't mind letting it slide, on conditions," said Bob.

"Conditions! What do you mean?" Bolsover demanded.

"Well, you'll have to agree not to be a beastly bully any more."

"Eh!"

"And to stop swanking, and bragging, and strutting about, and making yourself a ridiculous ass generally," explained Bob.

"Look here!"

"If you promise that, and keep to it, it will be all right," said Bob, with a grin. "Otherwise, I shall expect you in the gym, this afternoon at three."

Bolsover gritted his teeth.

"I shall be there," he said, "and I'll give you such a hiding that you'll be sorry you didn't take your chance of getting out of it."

"I'll risk that," said Bob.

"You utter ass!" said Bolsover. "Do you think you've got anything like a chance?"

"I know you think I have, or you wouldn't offer to let me

off!" grinned Bob Cherry. "That's good enough for me." And he went into the Form-room. Bolsover followed him in, scowling. The bully of the Remove looked very thoughtful during morning lessons. In his pride and self-confidence, he had not taken the trouble to train during the past week, regarding the task before him as a mere bagatelle. It was rather too late to think of it now, and he was a little anxious. His position as cock of the walk in the Remove was in danger, and the knowledge that his defeat would cause general satisfaction was very bitter to him.

After lessons, when the Remove turned out, Bolsover asked a fellow to have the gloves on with him for a few minutes before dinner. Those who heard him grinned. It was a fresh proof of inward misgiving.

But Bolsover could get no one to put on the gloves. Bolsover had always taken an unscrupulous advantage of his great strength, and even in a friendly contest he would hit out hard, and the fellows had learned not to trust him. He never could be relied upon to play the game. He was reduced to punching the ball for practice but he found himself in pretty good condition. He was so big, and so strong, that he would have been a dangerous opponent even if he had been very much out of condition.

The juniors were talking over the matter in whispers all through dinner. Mr. Quelch, at the head of the Remove table, could see very well that something was "on," but he showed no curiosity upon the subject. The Remove-master had the great gift of tact, and he did not inquire into matters unless he was sure they concerned him. After dinner the Remove strolled out, and in the Close they discussed the coming fight freely. And it was not only the Remove that took an interest in the proceedings. Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth were keenly interested. Temple had fallen before the mighty Bolsover, and he had not cared to try his luck a second time. He would have given a term's pocket-money to see the Lower School bully well licked.

Early in the afternoon the juniors began to crowd into the gym. The Sixth Form were playing a match with the Sixth Form of Highcliffe, and the seniors who were not playing were mostly on the cricket-ground, so the juniors had the gymnasium to themselves. Bob Cherry walked in with a crowd of friends round him, all keenly eager for his success. Bolsover came in alone, scowling. There was no one even to offer to be his second. Skinner or Snoop would have backed him up willingly if they had been sure of his success. But everybody was doubtful now about that, and if his reign was coming to an end, the cads of the Remove did not want to be on the losing side.

"Who's going to be my second?" Bolsover asked, looking round at the crowd of unfriendly faces.

There was no reply.

A bitter sneer crossed the bully's face. A week ago a dozen would have offered, but only because they considered it best to stand well with the Form bully.

"Do you want to second me, Skinner?" Bolsover asked.

"I'm afraid I've got an engagement," said Skinner warily. "I sha'n't be able to stay here all the time. I'm sorry, of course."

"What about you, Snoop?"

"Well, you see, said Snoop. "I—I—"

"I want you to second me," said Bolsover threateningly. "Oh, all—right," said Snoop. "I—I will, with pleasure. In—in fact, I was just going to offer, only—only I gave Skinner a chance."

Bob Cherry had no lack of seconds. Harry Wharton was acting for him; but any other fellow in the Form would have been glad to do it. Bulstrode, the captain of the Remove, appointed himself referee and timekeeper. The juniors formed the ring, standing round in an eager circle to look on. Frank Nugent brought out the gloves and handed them to the combatants.

"I say, Snoop—" began Bolsover.

He paused, and looked round.

"Where's that rat, Snoop?" he exclaimed.

There was a laugh. Snoop had disappeared. He evidently did not intend to act as Bolsover's second, after all. The bully of the Remove scowled savagely.

"Isn't there a chap here decent enough to second me?" he demanded.

Carlton stepped forward with his hands in his pockets.

"I'll do it," he said.

"Here!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "You ought to be at work! What about your grind this afternoon, you blessed slacker?"

"Well, I couldn't miss this fight, could I?"

"No," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You couldn't expect that, Bob. We'll make him grind afterwards."

"Besides, I'm going to second Bolsover," said Carlton. "He'll have to have a second. Are you satisfied with me, Bolsover?"

"Yes," growled Bolsover ungraciously.

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"Put on the gloves," said Bulstrode.

The gloves were donned, and the adversaries faced one another. Bulstrode looked at his watch.

"Time!" he said.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Defeat of the Bully.

"Go it, Bob!"

"Pile in, old fellow!"

"Give him beans!"

No one bade Bolsover "Go it!" or "Give him beans!" All the sympathy was on Bob Cherry's side, and everybody there was keen to see him win. There was a dark, sullen look on Bolsover's face, and his eyes were burning with anger. He was angrily determined to give Bob the licking of his life, and after he had done that he intended to bestow further favours upon some of the juniors who were standing round, and who were loudest in their enthusiasm for Bob Cherry. It was not possible for Bolsover to make himself liked, but he could make himself feared—if he was victorious in this contest.

He came at Bob Cherry like a bull in the first round, and, in spite of Bob's guard, he swept him away by his rush, drove him round the ring, and finished by knocking him down.

Bob dropped just at the call of "Time!" and Harry Wharton picked him up, and took him upon his knee.

Bolsover stood grinning.

The Removites looked dismayed. Bob had made a very bad beginning. But there was one thing to be noted in his favour—he was still breathing quietly and steadily, while Bolsover was puffing and blowing after his exertions. Bolsover turned to his second to get a knee.

"Carlton!" he exclaimed.

Carlton was leaning against the wall of the gym., and his eyes were half-closed. He started as his name was called, and blinked at Bolsover.

"Yes?" he said.

"You silly ass!" roared Bolsover. "Is that the way you second a chap? You were going to sleep!"

Carlton came forward.

"By Jove, I—I forgot!" he said. "Lemme see. Is the first round over?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fathead! Yes; it is! Gimme a knee!"

"Oh, certainly!"

"Got a sponge there? Dab it on my chivvy!"

"Oh, all right!"

"Time!" said Bulstrode.

Bolsover lounged forward with an air of exaggerated carelessness. Bob Cherry stepped up quite briskly to meet him. He had received cautions from Harry Wharton.

"Don't let the brute get too close, Bob, and avoid infighting," Harry had whispered.

And Bob nodded assent.

Bolsover tried a rush again. This time Bob was more on the alert, and he retreated round the ring fast, allowing the bully to expend his wind in pursuing him and hammering at the empty air.

It was towards the close of the round that Bob put in a little attacking himself, and he got home his first drive on Bolsover's chin, with a crack that jarred the bully's jaw very badly. Bolsover gave a yelp, and started back; and then Bob Cherry saw his chance, and came in with right and left, and left and right—rap, rap! rap, rap!

Bolsover staggered fairly out of the ring, and Bulstrode called "Time!" only in time to save him from being knocked fairly out.

"First round to Bolsover, second round to Bob Cherry," said John Bull, "and Bobby is coming out stronger every minute!"

"Yes, rather!" said Frank Nugent. "Bolsover's wind won't last him if he pumps himself out in that way. But he's a strong beast; it will be a stiff fight!"

Bolsover sat on Carlton's knee. He was glad to rest now. The Slacker of the Remove sponged his heated and crimson face, and Bolsover growled discontentedly while he was doing it.

"You're all right, Bolsover," Carlton said comfortingly.

"You're not licked yet, you know!"

"What?" roared Bolsover.

"You—you're not licked yet!"

"Do you think I'm going to be licked, you fathead?"

"Well, you see—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Certainly!" said Carlton obligingly.

"Time!"

The third round was full of incident. Both the champions received plenty of punishment, and but for the gloves they would have been considerably hurt. Even with the gloves

on, they were beginning to show very plain signs of wear and tear.

Bolsover's nose was beginning to look like a crushed strawberry, and Bob Cherry's left eye had a dark circle, and there were spots of red upon both of them.

"This is ripping!" said Frank Nugent, rubbing his hands. "Nobody has stood up to Bolsover so long as this before, excepting Solly Lazarus, of Courtfield. If Bob can last him out till his wind's gone, he will be able to make hay of him!"

"Faith, and ye're right!" grinned Micky Desmond. "Bolsover's wind is goin', and if Bob lasts to the sixth round, Bob's got him fair and square!"

"I guess you're right!"

Bob knew it, too, and he was trying to save himself and wear his opponent down. But Bolsover was also aware of how the matter stood, and his game was to force the fighting as hard as he could. Already he had bellows to mend, and he knew that his wind was not so sound as Bob Cherry's. Size and strength were his great advantages, but when he was once winded they would not serve him.

He forced the fighting in the fourth round as hard as he could, and Bob, cautious as he was, received a great deal of punishment. His nose seemed to be a surprising size in noses when he sat on Harry Wharton's knee again at the end of the round.

"How do you feel, Bob?" asked Frank.

Bob grinned a little sideways. He had a curious twist on his mouth, where Bolsover's fist had smitten hard.

"Like a punching-ball!" he replied.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But Bolsover's worse off," said John Bull. "He's got a pain in his gear-box, I believe. His breath is going."

"Stick it out a bit longer, Bob, and you've got him!"

"I'm going to!"

"Time!"

The fifth round was worse for Bob Cherry. He was knocked down twice, though each time he came up to the scratch again before the referee began to count. Then came the sixth round, and matters seemed about even. It was the turning point of the fight.

Bob had stood a deadly hammering, and was still in fighting trim; and now, as the experts of the Remove had anticipated, Bolsover's wind was hopelessly going.

Round No. 7 was watched with keen eagerness.

Bolsover, by this time, was content to act more on the defensive. But that was not a style that suited him, and he was hopelessly worsted in the round. Bob attacked fast and fiercely, and drove him to and fro, and finished the round with an upper-cut that laid Bolsover upon his back on the floor of the gym.

A yell greeted the fall of the bully.

"Hurrah!"

"Bravo, Bob!"

"Bolsover's down!"

"Hurrah!"

Bolsover was indeed down, and he needed help from Carlton to get up. The Slacker made a knee for him, and Bolsover plumped down upon it, and the Slacker fanned him.

"Buck up!" he murmured, as sympathetically as he could.

Bolsover snarled.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed.

"I mean, you're not licked yet, you know!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bolsover, getting off his knee.

"Do you want me to give you a prize thick ear?"

"Oh, I say—"

"Shut up, you fathead, or you'll jolly well be licked!"

"Oh, all right! I was only—"

"Bah!"

Bolsover gave the Slacker a rough push, and Carlton rolled over on the floor of the gym, among the legs of the spectators. There was a laugh as the Slacker sat up, blinking round him dazedly.

"Time!" said Bulstrode, grinning.

"Round Number Eight!" grinned Nugent. "This is where Bob goes ahead!"

And Frank was right.

Bob Cherry gained the upper hand in the round, and kept it, and Bolsover was hard hit. He was gasping when "Time!" was called, and he came up very slowly for the ninth round. The Removites were buzzing with excitement now. It was very seldom that a junior fight lasted into nine rounds; this was a combat to be remembered and talked of in the Remove. And Bob Cherry was winning—there was no doubt about that now. Steadily, surely, he was gaining the victory.

The tenth round! Bolsover was so winded now that he was almost powerless to defend, let alone attack; but with dogged persistence he stood up to his adversary. He would not admit till he was forced to. Bob Cherry knocked him round the ring, and finished with a right-hander that sent him with a crash to the floor.

There was a shout.

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"It's all over!"

"Bolsover's licked!"

"Bravo, Bob!"

The bully of the Remove staggered to his feet.

"I'm not licked yet!" he exclaimed hoarsely. "Don't be in a hurry! I'm going to lick that hound, I tell you!"

There was a derisive yell. Bolsover did not look like licking anybody just then. And the juniors had had too much of his bullying to be generous to him in the hour of his defeat.

"Oh, let's see the licking!" exclaimed Trevor. "Go on with it, Bolsover!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Time!" grinned Bulstrode.

Bolsover toed the line, though he was now considerably unsteady upon his "pins." Bob Cherry was master of the situation now. He did as he liked with his adversary, and Bob was too generous to hit as hard as he could have hit. He spared Bolsover, knowing that the bully was done. Bolsover saw it, and it added the finishing touch to his rage and chagrin.

He rushed fiercely at Bob Cherry, and grappled with him.

"Here, hold on!" shouted Bulstrode. "Break away!"

"Look out, Cherry!" yelled Nugent suddenly.

It was too late. The bully of the Remove, hardly knowing what he was doing in his rage, had crashed his boot against Bob Cherry's shin. Bob staggered back with a cry of agony, and Bolsover's fists dashed into his face, and he fell.

There was a roar of indignation from the juniors, and they swarmed into the ring. Hands seized upon the young ruffian from all sides.

Bob Cherry sprang up, limping with the pain of his bruised shin.

"Hold on!" he shouted. "Let him alone!"

"Let him alone!" growled Nugent. "Why, we'll smash him—we'll squash him! The rotten cad ought to be drowned! The—"

"Leave him to me!" said Bob.

"Oh, that's all right!"

The juniors released Bolsover. The Remove bully realised that he had gone too far, and he was very much alarmed and greatly relieved when the Removites let him go. Bob Cherry faced him again, with a deadly gleam in his eyes.

"You're a cowardly hound, Bolsover!" Bob said, between his teeth, "and I'm going to smash you, so look out!"

And Bob Cherry sailed in. There was no more mercy for Bolsover. Bob's fists crashed upon him again and again—on his face and chest and shoulders. Bob was limping, and his teeth were tight set with pain; but the pain only made him hit the harder. Bolsover, dazed, blinded, half-stunned, fell at last, and refused to move.

"Done?" exclaimed Bulstrode.

The bully groaned.

"Yes."

Then there was a shout:

"Licked!"

"Bob Cherry wins!"

"Hurrah!"

The juniors made a rush at Bob. The victorious junior was tired out, and his shin was hurting him considerably, but the enthusiastic juniors were not to be denied. They seized him, and raised him shoulder-high, and bore him round the gym, in triumph. Bob Cherry was victorious; the bully had been licked, and it was a great day for the Remove.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Good Shot!

BOB CHERRY bore his blushing honours thick upon him, and he also bore the signs of the fight for a good many days. He took a swollen nose and a black eye and a crooked mouth to church with him the next day, and he felt an inward guilty quake when the Head in his sermon touched upon the subject of quarrelling and fighting.

But Bolsover was looking much worse and feeling much worse. The result of the fight in the gym, had made a great deal of difference to Bolsover. The cock of the walk was the cock of the walk no longer. When he showed signs of swanking and overbearing, a threat to "tell Bob Cherry" was sufficient to quieten him. He did not want another encounter with the redoubtable Bob, and Bob had made it clearly understood that there was to be no more bullying.

Bob had not the slightest desire to assume the airs of a bully himself, or to triumph over Bolsover in any way, but he laid it down that the cock-of-the-walk business was to

come to an end for good and all. There should not be a bully in the Remove Form while Bob was in fighting trim; and in that view of the case the whole Form backed up Bob Cherry. And Bolsover, like Othello, found his occupation gone, and for some time after that he was very quiet and subdued.

But while Bob was suffering from the effects of that tremendous encounter he did not forget his duties to the Slacker of the Remove. Carlton came in for his careful attentions all the time, and Harry Wharton and Nugent and John Bull and a good many more of the fellows were just as keen about it.

They urged Carlton, and they preached to him, and they backed him up, and they made him rise at five in the morning, and they watched him in his study while he was at work, and they generally made his life a burden to him; but the Slacker had to cease from slacking, and that was their object. In that they succeeded, and Carlton himself, when once he had "buckled to" seriously, found that it came easier and easier, and gradually he worked up a little enthusiasm on the subject. It is far easier to work in company than alone, and the general air of strenuousness that Bob Cherry infused into the matter helped Carlton considerably.

"It's awfully kind of you fellows," Carlton said gratefully the day before the examination; "specially kind of you, Cherry, as you're so knocked up. If I pull off that blessed exam. I sha'n't forget this."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It's been a bit rough at times, but I think, upon the whole, we've done you good," he said.

"I know you have," said Carlton. "I've written to my mother about it, and she's very grateful. I'm jolly glad there's only one more day! Won't I have a jolly good rest the day after to-morrow, that's all!"

"You can manage to survive by anticipating that," John Bull remarked sympathetically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Only be careful at the exam.," said Wharton anxiously. "Don't go to sleep over it."

"I feel as if I hadn't been to sleep for months and months and months," said the Slacker, with a deep sigh. "Wouldn't it be lovely to go to bed and sleep for, say, a week without waking up?"

"Oh, ripping! Leave it till after the exam., though."

Carlton grinned ruefully.

"Mind, you'll have to be careful," said Harry Wharton. "You've been to sleep lots of times in the Form-room, and got lines for it. On the occasion of an exam. you won't get lines; you'll simply fail."

Carlton nodded.

"It's not likely to happen," he said; "only a blessed exam.-room does make a chap sleepy in this hot weather. I'm a believer in the siesta, you know—chap ought to go to sleep in the middle of the day."

"Well, I hope you won't be taking a blessed siesta when the exam.'s on," said Bob Cherry, in alarm. "That would be all our trouble wasted for nothing."

"I guess he can't have a set of alarm clocks tied round his neck, either," remarked Fisher T. Fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Not that it matters much," went on the American junior cheerfully. "I guess I'm waltzing off with that scholarship—some."

"Rats!"

"You haven't an earthly, Fishy. You're all talk," said Bob Cherry. "If Carlton goes to sleep, Trevor will get the scholarship. You won't even get the minimum."

"I guess—"

"Poof! Now, look here," said Bob Cherry; "I've got an idea. The exam. is held in the usual room on the ground floor, with the windows on the lawn. They're bound to have the windows wide open in this weather, and if they're not, Carlton can open one of them. My idea is that a couple of us should be there—"

"In the room?"

"No, ass; that wouldn't be allowed—but outside the windows. If Carlton shows any signs of slacking or going off into a dream in that poetical way he's got, we shoot him—"

"Shoot him!" yelled the juniors.

"Yes, with peas—peashooters, you know."

"Oh, I see!"

"I think that's a jolly good idea," said Bob Cherry, with considerable satisfaction. "I don't suppose the ass will actually go to sleep, but he's almost certain to go mooning off day-dreaming. You know his way."

"Oh, really—" began Carlton.

"You know you will, and we'll keep you awake," said Bob Cherry. "You're going to pull this exam. off, I tell you, or we'll pull your blessed head off. I'm not going to

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have the trouble of ragging a silly chump for nearly a fortnight for nothing."

"Rather not," said Harry Wharton. "You and I can be there, Bob, and we can pepper him every time he nods."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We ought to get a little practice," said Bob Cherry, taking a peashooter from his pocket and going to the passage window. "I don't know whether I'm in form. Here comes Loder; it's always better practice to fire at a moving target."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hold on, Bob. He's a prefect, you know, and—"

"Oh, that's all right! He won't see us here," said Bob Cherry, cramming peas into his mouth. "Watch me!"

The Sixth-Former was passing below the window. Bob took careful aim, and blew. Loder was seen to give a sudden start, and stop. He clapped his hand to his somewhat prominent nose with a sharp exclamation, and looked very perplexed.

"What's the matter, Loder?" asked Carne, of the Sixth, joining the prefect.

"Something stung me," said Loder, looking round in great astonishment. "Have you seen a bee or a wasp anywhere about?"

"No," said Carne. "I—Ow!"

"What's the matter?"

"Ow! Something stung me on the nose! Oh!" Carne rubbed his nose. "Why, what—"

"Yarrah!"

"What's the matter?"

"I've got it in the ear!" howled Loder. "It can't be a wasp—Ow! There it is on my nose again! Yow! Take that, you beast!"

He slapped his nose, hoping to squash the troublesome insect. He nearly squashed the nose. But the insect was evidently not squashed, for the sting came upon Loder's neck the next moment. Then Carne gave a roar, and clapped his hand to his ear.

"Yow! I know what it is! It's some young rotter shooting peas!" he yelled. "I'll skin him! Where is he?"

And the two seniors glared round wrathfully.

But the juniors had disappeared from the window, and were retreating, chuckling, along the passage. Bob Cherry was satisfied that he had not lost his skill.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

The Slacker Does Not Go to Sleep.

CARLTON was looking very nervous the next day. He had been up early, and he had had a last grind. Owing to the trouble his kind friends had taken over him he really was quite fit to have a good chance for the exam. If, as Bob Cherry suggested, he did not go to sleep over the paper work, he had a good chance of winning the Raven Scholarship.

Before he went into the examination-room he had a last talk with Mark Linley on the subjects he had to tackle, and Mark did his best to buck him up. He had received a letter from his mother that morning, and he meant to do his best. Mrs. Carlton was coming down to the school that day after the exam. to learn as far as possible how it had gone. Of course the result would not be known at once.

Carlton, Skinner, Trevor, and Fish went into the room together, and Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout were to be present while the work was done. Carlton gave his chums a last pathetic look as he went in, looking as if he were going to execution.

Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton put their peashooters in their pockets, and a plentiful supply of peas, and strolled round to the window of the examination-room. It was wide open, and it gave upon a lawn with two or three big trees growing close to the house. The spot was very favourable for the sharpshooters.

Bob Cherry peered in at the window.

"They're at it," he announced.

"Good! Keep an eye on him."

Carlton was working away at his papers steadily. All the four juniors were hard at it, and Fish was the first one to show signs of fatigue. As a matter of fact, the American junior had entered out of sheer swank, and he never had any real expectation of carrying off the prize. As he was pretty certain not to get even the minimum number of marks, he did not see the use of working hard, and, having done enough to his paper to keep up appearances, he dawdled the rest of the time away.

"Suppose we give him a touch-up," Bob Cherry suggested.

Wharton laughed.

"No. Fish isn't our game. Keep an eye on Carlton, and

lay low. If Quelch gets his gimlet eyes on us we shall have to buzz off."

Trevor and Skinner and Carlton were still working.

But the Slacker of the Remove was still the slacker. After a time he was seen to be leaning over his desk in a very thoughtful attitude, with his head resting on his hand. But the juniors knew what that meant. He was dozing.

Bob Cherry chuckled softly.

"First shot to me," he murmured.

"All right! Go it!"

Bob took a careful survey to make certain that the masters' backs were turned, and let fly.

Pip!

The well-aimed pea caught Carlton behind the ear, and he gave a sudden jump out of his doze.

"Yow!" he ejaculated.

Mr. Quelch looked round sharply at him. Carlton was sitting rubbing his ear.

"Who made that ridiculous noise?" the Remove-master exclaimed sternly.

"I—I did, sir," gasped Carlton.

"And why?"

"I—I felt a pain, sir."

"H'm! Kindly go on with your work, and do not disturb the others with your absurd antics, Carlton."

"Ye-e-es, sir."

Carlton glanced round cautiously to the window, but the sharpshooters had disappeared from view.

The Slacker, thus reminded of duty, worked again at his paper, and kept it up for quite a long time. Presently he began to draw figures on his blotting-paper. Carlton had an artistic turn of mind, and the figures he drew were very good; but it was not work.

Bob Cherry peered in at the window again.

"What is he doing?" asked Wharton, in a whisper.

"Sketching a knight in armour on his giddy blotter."

"The silly ass!"

"Your turn now, Harry."

Wharton took careful aim.

Pip!

"Yaroo!" gasped Carlton.

"Carlton!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"How dare you?"

"N-n-no, sir—I mean, ye-e-es, sir."

"What is the matter with you?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Something stung me, sir," stammered Carlton.

"Oh! In that case, I excuse you. But you are aware that you are interrupting the work of your competitors," said Mr. Quelch severely. "If you cannot keep quiet, Carlton, I shall put you into a separate room to work by yourself."

"I—I—I won't make another sound, sir."

"See that you do not."

Carlton cast a vengeful look round at the window, but the faces there were gone. The Slacker groaned inwardly, and resumed his work.

Ten minutes later Harry Wharton looked in. He intended to look at Carlton to see how he was progressing; but, as luck would have it, he met full the eyes of Mr. Quelch, who happened to be looking out of window at the moment. Wharton popped down again, but the Remove-master had seen him.

"Wharton!" he exclaimed.

Harry rose into view again, looking crimson.

"Yes, sir."

"What are you doing here?"

"I—I was looking in, sir."

"You should know better than to hang about an examination-room," said the Remove-master sternly. "Take fifty lines, Wharton, and go away at once! Don't come near that window again!"

"Oh, very well, sir!"

Wharton gave his companion a rueful look.

"I'm off!" he murmured. "Keep it up, Bob, but keep your peepers peeled for Quelch. He's as sharp as a needle."

"Right-ho!"

Harry Wharton walked away, and went to do his fifty lines. Bob Cherry lay low for a time, and then peered in cautiously at a corner of the window. Carlton was drawing trees on his blotting-paper, his thoughts evidently miles away from the examination and the Raven Scholarship.

"The ass!" muttered Bob Cherry. "Only a quarter of an hour left, and he's slacking! The silly ass! I'll wake him up!"

He put the peashooter to his mouth, and took careful aim. The pea caught Carlton full in the ear, and he started, and dropped his pen. Mr. Quelch swung round, and caught full view of Bob Cherry in the window, with the peashooter to his mouth.

He strode to the window.

"Cherry, what are you doing?"

Bob Cherry stared at him in dismay. He was so taken

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aback that he stood with the peashooter still in his mouth, pointed at the Form-master, as if he meant to take a pot-shot at Mr. Quelch.

"Cherry, how dare you play such tricks here?"

"Oh, sir!"

"I shall cane you severely!"

"Please, sir," said Carlton, turning very red, "don't go for Cherry, sir. It was all my fault."

"Your fault! What do you mean, Carlton?"

"He—he was only bucking me up, sir," stammered Carlton.

"What?"

"It was to prevent the silly ass—ahem!—I mean, to prevent Carlton from going to sleep over the exam., sir," stammered Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch tried to frown, but he could not quite do it. He smiled, and then he laughed.

"You absurd boy!" he exclaimed. "Go away at once! If Carlton cannot keep awake on an occasion like this, he deserves to fail."

"Ye-es, sir."

And Bob Cherry departed. But the time was nearly ended now, and Carlton had nearly finished his paper. He finished in good time, and left the examination-room, and found the chums of the Remove waiting for him outside.

"Well?" they demanded in chorus.

Carlton grinned.

"It's all right!" he said. "I've finished, and I believe I've got the rotten thing through all right. Thanks, you chaps, for bucking me up!"

"Your mater's come," said Harry Wharton. "We've invited her to tea in the study. Come along! And don't tell her you went to sleep over the exam."

"I didn't exactly go to sleep, you know. I was just resting for a minute, and then I was going to have a really good grind."

"Oh, come along!"

Mrs. Carlton was seated in No. 1 Study. She looked very anxious, but Carlton's confident manner reassured her.

"Arthur, my dear boy—"

"I think it's all right, mater," said Carlton cheerfully. "I've been bucking up like anything, and I stuck to the paper like a leech. Didn't I, you chaps?"

"Oh, yes, rather!"

"It's bound to be all right, mater."

"I really think it will be all serene, Mrs. Carlton," said Harry Wharton. "Now have some tea. Carlton deserves it, too, after the way he's exerted himself."

And they had a very cheerful tea in No. 1 Study. The chums of the Remove were very confident that Carlton would be the successful candidate, and they sent Mrs. Carlton away very happy and hopeful. And they proved to be right, too: for when the result was announced Carlton's name was at the top. And it was a day of triumph for the Slacker of the Remove, and he celebrated the occasion by having a long, long sleep in a hammock suspended from the wall to the door of his study.

THE END.

(Next week's splendid, long, complete school-tale of Harry Wharton & Co., by Frank Richards, is entitled "THE ONLY WAY." Please order your copy of "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY in advance. Price 1d.)

ATTRACTIVE TALES.

(Told by "THE MAGNET.")

AS PER AGREEMENT.

"I haven't the vestige of a case," said the crafty client to the craftier lawyer, "but I have £ s. d."

"How much?" casually inquired the legal one.

"Five thousand pounds," proclaimed the client.

The lawyer put out his hand.

"Shake hands," he said. "You have the best case I have ever heard of. I'll see that you never go to gaol with that sum."

And he did. The client went there "stony."

THE INCOMPLEAT ANGLER.

For two hours the novices had sat, one on each side of the river-bank, waiting for the bite that wouldn't come. The hotel at which they were staying had advertised "good fishing," which was possibly true, but there appeared to be no good fish.

At last one of them rose.

"What's up?" called his companion.

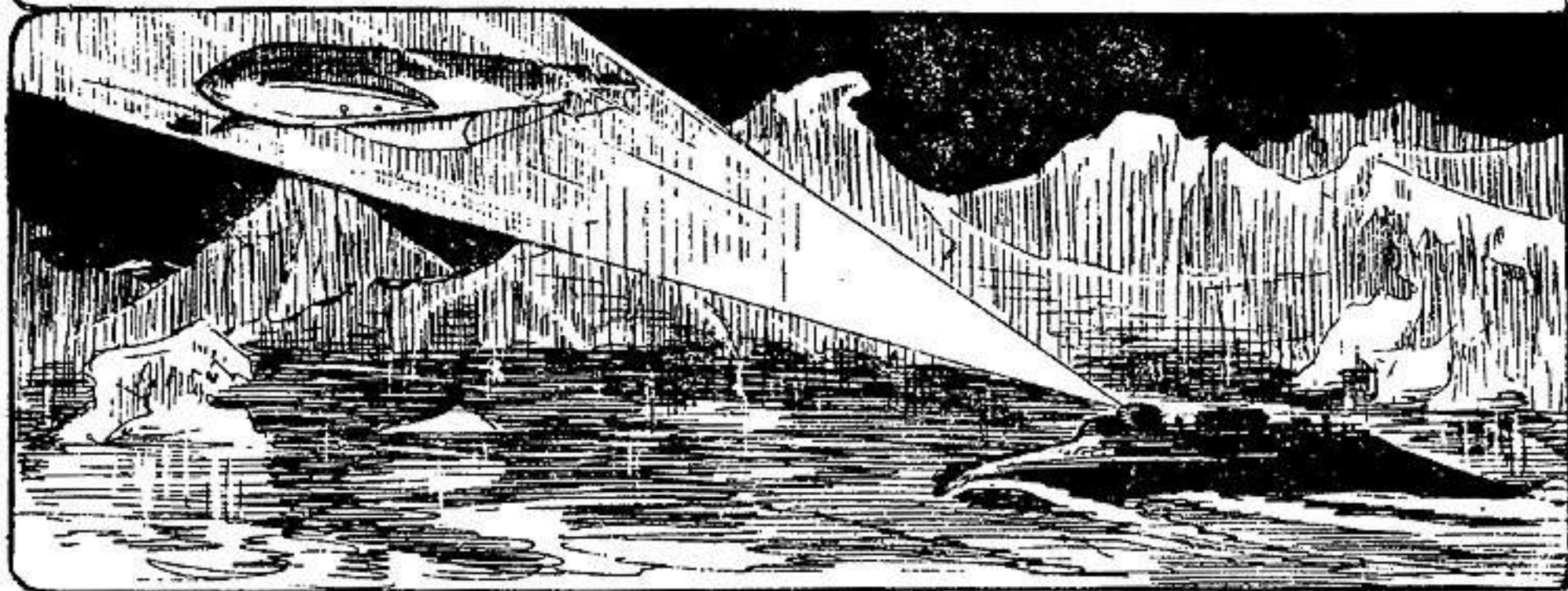
"Off to the village to get a new float," replied the other.

"A new float? What do you want a new float for?" inquired his companion.

"Why," answered the fisherman, "because mine's sunk."

The Fourth Instalment!**"BEYOND THE ETERNAL ICE!"**

A Thrilling Story of the Amazing Adventures of Ferrers Lord, Millionaire, Ching-Lung, and Rupert Thurston.
By SIDNEY DREW.

**THE OPENING CHAPTERS.**

Ferrers Lord, the famous multi-millionaire and inventor, startles the world by entering the lists against Professor Hugley, the celebrated American scientist, who is about to start in search of the North Pole in his wonderful airship the Cloud King. Lord announces his intention of starting for the Pole at the same time in his mysterious submarine the Lord of the Deep, and makes a match of it with the professor for the gigantic sum of a million pounds! The preliminaries are settled, and two judges are appointed—one to travel on board each of the two strange competing craft. Ferrers Lord is accompanied by all his old friends on the Lord of the Deep, including Ching-Lung and Rupert Thurston; while Professor Hugley has a Cuban named Paraira with him, and Estebian Gacchio, a negro. The two scoundrels murder Professor Hugley on the voyage, assuming command of the Cloud King themselves.

They also plot against the life of Ferrers Lord, which they have often secretly attempted. "If he even gets to the Pole, he may be killed by a bear," snarls Paraira. "Bears are dangerous animals, especially those with claws of lead!"

(Now go on with the story.)

A Second Message—An Armed Vessel.

"But do you think Lord guesses our real aim?" asked the negro.

"Bah!" said the Cuban. "What does he not guess? I would stake my soul that he knows. The way he watched me was enough. He knows well enough that this wager is a blind, and that we intend to seize the vessel and become pirates of the air."

"Pirates" is an ugly word, senior. Call us patriots. When we have sunk the American navy, and freed Cuba, call us what you like. One thing frightens me. Is it possible that Hugley has left the plans of his invention behind? That would ruin us, for more vessels would be built. And though we could sink all the battleships of the world, two airships would be enough to beat us."

Paraira's lips curled contemptuously.

"Senior Estebian Gacchio," he drawled, "that is almost an insult. Caramba! A child would have thought of that, and taken precautions. You will remember, no doubt, that the lamented professor dabbled not only in airships, but explosives. As he was a man of peace, that may seem strange. But he had theories. His idea was that the discovery of an explosive of terrible death-dealing power would make war so costly in life that it would be impossible. And he did invent such an explosive, though he failed to perfect it. The fault was that it 'went off,' as they say, at a very low temperature. He kept it in a silver bottle, surrounded by ice. The bottle held less than half a pint of these crystals, and our defunct friend assured me that it would blow up a small city."

"Si, si!" cried the negro eagerly.

Paraira glanced at his watch.

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READ the splendid tale of "THE BLACK HOUSE ON THE MOOR," in this week's GEM Library. Price 1d.

"It is ten minutes to one, camarado. At this very moment, allowing the difference of time, the professor's house is burning. The heat will melt the ice, the bottle will explode, and then, if he kept any plans of the Cloud King, ask the four winds of heaven where they are!"

"Marvellous—marvellous!" cried Estebian Gacchio, in admiration. "You forget nothing!"

Paraira laughed and blinked through the cigarette smoke. He could imagine the awful thing that was happening, or just about to happen, some seven thousand miles away. The blazing house, the wild, deafening roar, and glowing wood hurled far and wide by the explosion. There would be the charred, unrecognisable corpses, too, in the holocaust of death and destruction. But he did not give that a thought. Woe to all who stood in the way of his ambition!

It was time to raise the alarm. Paraira rolled another cigarette, and went to the professor's cabin. Sir Clement heard a loud knocking at his door.

"Who's there?" he called.

"I want Mr. Hugley. Have you seen him? Has he been with you?"

"No."

"Then where on earth is he?"

The well-acted tone of alarm frightened the baronet. He sprang out of bed and drew the bolt.

"Have you been on deck?" he asked.

"Caramba, senior!" said Paraira, shrugging his shoulders. "I have not! I do not care to be turned to an icicle. And the cold up there is atrocious. No doubt he is on deck; but I fancied he might have been having a late chat with you. A thousand apologies for disturbing you. I will speak to the steersman, and ask."

He bowed, but Sir Clement saw the sneer on his handsome face. Paraira entered the engine-room. The noise of wheels and pistons was deafening. Three or four men, black with swarth and oil, were watching their charges silently. Paraira paused before the telephone.

"Steersman!" he called.

There was no answer, and he called again.

"Death of my life!" he cried fiercely. "Is this thing broken? Come here, you, and see if you can make the fool understand!"

The chief engineer rang the bell. There was no reply, and he turned pale.

"There is something wrong, sir!" he cried, snatching an overcoat from the wall. "I'll go up."

"I'll go with you. Lend me a coat."

The engineer went first. As he saw the eerie figure swaying over the wheel his cry of terror startled the whole ship.

"Dead!" he panted, horrified.

"Frozen to death!" said the Cuban. "Where is the professor?"

Others came running up, to pause and stare, trembling at the ghastly sight.

But where was Hugley?

They searched every inch of the vessel in vain. Paraira had

just covered the dead man with a blanket, when Gacchio touched him on the arm.

"Look!" he hissed. "Read!"

A beam of light flashed across the sky, until it found the aeroplane, rested there, and began to wink and dance.

"What does it say?"

Paraira clenched his hands, and whispered the message hoarsely.

"The Lord of the Deep sends compliments. Thanks for the foils. All's well."

Uttering an oath, the negro dashed forward, and dragged the tarpaulin over from a gun.

"Madman, what are you going to do?"

"Fire on her!" panted Gacchio. "Let me alone!"

"You fool!" snarled the Cuban. "Do you want to spoil all? Wait, I tell you! Because we have lost the first game it does not mean that we shall lose the rubber. You— Ah, senor, this is sad—most sad!"

His voice had changed in an instant. The baronet was standing beside them, staring at the negro in surprise.

"Then the vessel is armed?" he said.

"Merely for experiment, senor. Naturally we wish to know the effect of artillery fire from an airship. We intended to shoot at floating targets. My friend Esteban is an enthusiastic soldier, and such toys amuse him immensely. Like yourself, he has only just discovered this gun. It is a new pattern, and it interests him."

Sir Clement's heart sank. With the shadow of death and mystery hanging over the ship, it was strange that a man should choose such a moment to satisfy his curiosity. Why was the ship armed? A great misgiving and gnawing dread oppressed him.

"Then they have not found the professor?"

"No, senor!" drawled Paraira. "Poor Hugley! I am afraid he has walked in his sleep, and fallen overboard!"

The baronet turned upon his heel. That night he found no sleep. But he had a loaded revolver under his pillow.

The Millionaire's Strange Sleep, and the Awakening—More Mystery—What Ferrers Lord Found—"Till the Sea Gives Up Its Dead."

Thurston recoiled in dread as he dashed into the state-room. Ferrers Lord was lying, still and white, on the floor, Ching-Lung kneeling beside him. The white lips moved, and Ching-Lung searched frantically for the phial. The millionaire's teeth were locked before he found it.

"Give me a knife, Rupert!" he said hoarsely. "He's fainted!"

He forced apart the clenched teeth with the blade of a knife. The effects of a few drops of the thick yellow liquid was magical. The colour leapt into the millionaire's cheek, and his breathing became regular. Still, he did not open his eyes. He seemed in a heavy sleep.

"Did he faint?" asked Thurston.

"Yes. I can't understand it. We were fencing, and I just grazed him with the foil. Look, it's the merest scratch. He went all at once." He looked at Rupert scaredly. "It isn't a fit?"

Thurston shook his head. They had no doctor aboard, but he was sure it was nothing but a swoon. And yet Ferrers Lord showed no sign of awakening. His hands were quite warm.

"He's asleep—sound asleep," said Rupert. "What was that stuff you gave him?"

"I don't know. He told me there was a bottle in his pocket."

It was some pungent drug, for the odour of it filled the room. They waited for a time, and then Ching-Lung shook the millionaire—gently at first, and then more roughly. But they could not rouse him. They lifted him on the couch and placed pillows under his head.

"Could I have given him too much of the stuff?" muttered Ching-Lung.

Unless the drug was tremendously powerful, that seemed hardly possible, for the phial was almost full. They watched him anxiously. The minute hand of the clock had made a complete circuit of the dial before Ferrers Lord opened his eyes. He sat up, yawning.

"Hallo!" he said. "Have I been dozing?"

He paused as his gaze fell on the foils, and sprang up. A fire of smokeless logs burned in the grate. He thrust the foils deeper into the glowing embers, and turned, with a smile.

"Then I fainted," he said. "It is not often I make such a fool of myself."

"Well, it looks rather foolish to turn a pair of excellent foils into poker," said Thurston, in astonishment.

"It may seem odd to you, Rupert," said the millionaire lazily. "But I seldom do even foolish things without a reason. Perhaps they were rather too highly-tempered. The fire will alter that. Give me a glass of water, prince."

Both Thurston and Ching-Lung were puzzled and uneasy.

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"THE ONLY WAY!"
A Long Complete School Tale, by FRANK RICHARDS.

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It was not their place to question Ferrers Lord's actions, however strange they might be. He had given them no explanation for his conduct in the billiard-room. Something was amiss. And, putting two and two together, Ching-Lung, with a thrill of horror, began to get near the truth. The millionaire had dashed the wine from Thurston; had fainted at a scratch that would hardly have brought tears to the eyes of a child, and now he was making the foils red hot.

The foils, like the wine, were poisoned. Ferrers Lord gulped down the water eagerly, and wrapped a handkerchief round his wrist, which was beginning to swell and blacken.

"Have patience," he said, smiling. "You will learn the mystery by-and-by. Come for a stroll on deck."

He signalled to the wheel-house, and the pumps expelled the water from the tanks and swimming-bath, bringing the vessel to the surface.

"Listen!" said Ching-Lung. "That's Gan-Waga! Here he comes!"

They were at the end of the corridor. Gan-Waga, shedding water right and left, came bounding in their direction. He had been sound asleep in the bath, and had reached the bottom with a bump, as the water hissed out of the bath. That made Gan-Waga angry. It was like dragging a mattress from under him. Ferrers Lord passed up the ladder, but Ching-Lung waited.

"Whateer the mattel?" he inquired.

"Bad 'nough!" roared Gan-Waga. "Wake me up, and bash my head nasty bang. Water gone. No get sleep."

"Shockingee!" said Ching-Lung. "Dat Thomas Prout do it. He take out the pluggee."

In a way that was the truth, for Prout had transmitted the millionaire's signal to the engine-room.

"Bad 'nough!" gurgled Gan-Waga sadly.

"Why not you punchee his headee?"

"Got pistol and shoot bang," said the Eskimo. "Not much! Let him be, t'ank you!"

The revolver had inspired Gan-Waga with a deep respect for the steersman. He had come to vent his wrath on the gentleman who had so rudely broken his rest, but when he discovered the culprit was Prout he was ready to forgive. He followed Ching-Lung on deck. Ferrers Lord, night glasses in hand, was watching the sky.

"There's been a bit of a blow, sir," said Prout, saluting.

The sea was tumbling roughly across the low deck, dashing clouds of spray against the glass.

"I see it," drawled Ferrers Lord. "And it will blow harder before dawn. Can you make her out, Rupert?"

"No," said Thurston, straining his eyes, "not a sign of her."

"She cannot be far away, and she generally shows a good light."

He examined the chart. In five hours the Lord of the Deep had made one hundred and six knots.

"There she is!" cried Ching-Lung.

He pointed towards the sky. A faint shadow was creeping towards them, far overhead. Gan-Waga caught a glimpse of the flying shape, and stared, with his huge mouth open. He had not seen the Cloud King before. Ferrers Lord extinguished the lights.

"Keep pace with her, Prout!" he said. "I do not think she has seen us. It will be a good test as to the rate she can travel. No doubt we shall show her a clean pair of heels when the time comes. Have you a match, Ching?"

He shaded the flame with his hands, and lighted a cigar. The aeroplane moved closer, and drifted over them. The Lord of the Deep's screws moved slowly.

"She's only doing four knots, sir," said Prout. "It'll take 'em a day or two to reach the Pole at that rate."

The millionaire watched the flying vessel through his glasses. He guessed her altitude at about eight hundred or a thousand feet. The glare from her deckhouse was dimly visible, and they could hear the droning of her fans.

What was that?

Something black came hissing down, and splashed into the waters.

"Great Scott!" said Thurston. "I did not know they carried ballast like a balloon—threw it out when she wanted to ascend. I reckon we had better stand from under. It wouldn't be pleasant to be brained by a bag of bricks or scrap-iron!"

Ferrers Lord turned the glass upon the tumbling sea. It was human ballast, and he knew it. Someone had fallen from the Cloud King. To strike the water from such a height would mean instant death. There was no shouting

ANSWERS

NEXT TUESDAY!

"BEYOND THE ETERNAL ICE."
An Extra-long instalment, by SIDNEY DEAN.

from above, no alarm. If it were an accident, the tragedy had not been discovered.

But was it an accident?

Ferrers Lord doubted it. But it was useless to speak. The man was dead and past all aid.

"All below!" he said.

They obeyed the order, imagining that the Lord of the Deep was going to continue her journey under water. Ferrers Lord drew the bolts, and the hermetically sealed door of the wheelhouse swung open. He made a signal to Prout, and then walked across the deck.

"I wonder what he's up to?" Prout murmured. "What does he want the launch for?"

The waves washed over Ferrers Lord's knees. Prout pulled a lever, the deck opened with a gushing sound of rushing water, and the little launch, raised by a lift, came slowly up. Its covering of indiarubber sheeting kept out the water. A single touch set some labour-saving mechanism to work, rolling aside the covering. Ferrers Lord sprang into the launch, the grooved lift slanted, and the launch slid down and was afloat.

Tossing and rocking, it moved into the darkness, the millionaire's dark figure at the helm. He knew exactly where the figure had fallen, and his keen eyes searched the water. Only chance, however, could reveal the object of his search. He cruised round and round in a narrowing circle, wiping the spray from his face. The little boat shipped sea after sea, and the water surged round his ankles.

It seemed hopeless to look any longer. He brought the boat's nose up, and headed for the Lord of the Deep at easy speed. There was a sudden thudding shock. The boat rose on the crest of a billow, and, like a flash, the millionaire's hand shot out and gripped at something dark and shapeless.

Exerting all his strength, he dragged the dripping object over the rail. It was a human body. A little electric lamp glowed, and the light shone on tangled white hair and a white face.

"Hugley!" muttered the millionaire. "Poor fellow! I warned him, too, as much as I dared."

He could do nothing now but commit the body to the deep. It was useless to tell Thurston and Ching-Lung. He looked round for something that would sink the lifeless man. In the locker was a gun-case, containing the stock and barrels of a heavy wild-fowling gun. The barrels would answer the purpose.

He looked again at the dead face. The throat was black and swollen, telling of foul play and choking fingers. Twisting a handkerchief through the trigger-guard of the gun, he made the barrels fast to Hugley's feet.

"The world will miss you, poor fellow!" he murmured.

He stood with his head reverently bent and his lips moving. The body disappeared noiselessly. Prout ran forward to the davit chains at the millionaire's call. Ferrers Lord passed him without a word, but the grim look on his face frightened the steersman.

"Prout!"

"Yes, sir?" answered the startled sailor.

"I am leaving you a message here. Keep that accursed ship in sight until I ring, and then flash the message to her. I will give you full orders then. Get the launch in and stowed, and take the temperature of the water every hour. We should be meeting with some icebergs now."

Prout saluted. He wondered what had made his chief's voice so strained and hoarse. He scratched his head as he read the pencilled message.

"Well," he growled, "I reckon the coves up there ought ter be nice chaps to know. They allus seem to be chucking presents about. I've half a mind to ax 'em to chuck a keg o' rum down, or lower a bottle an' a box o' cigars on the end o' a string."

How, Among Other Strange Incidents, Gan-Waga Discovered a Man in His Bed.

Ching-Lung felt the time hang heavily on his hands. He did not care much for billiards, and the amazing tricks the balls performed when he went to the table made both Van Witter and Thurston decline to play with him.

They said it was not billiards at all to see the three balls chase one another across the table, run up the cue, make a circular tour round Ching-Lung's neck, and then hop into a pocket like mice into a hole.

To make matters worse, in the middle of a game six or seven balls would appear very often, and Ching-Lung would remark, in amazement, that he thought they were playing billiards, with two white and a red, and not pyramids, with fifteen red balls and one white. Then the marking-board would be found upside down, and weird legends, such as "Well played, sir!" or "What a shocking stroke!" would suddenly be written in chalk right under the player's nose.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 185.

READ the splendid tale of "THE BLACK HOUSE ON THE MOOR," in this week's GEM Library. Price 1d.

It got so bad that Ching-Lung was firmly ejected from the billiard-room. And then all was peace.

Maddock was netting a hammock one morning, when Ching-Lung thrust his face round the bulkhead. Maddock had acquired an unpleasant habit of singing, and the hoarse strains of "Mike Marlinspike's Wedding" attracted Ching-Lung to the spot.

"Cheer-ho, Ben!" he cried.

"Mornin', yer 'Ighness!" said the boatswain. "Pleased to see yer!" And then, as he plied the netting-needle, he continued to chant down his nose: "'Then shiver me timbers,' says Mike, 'I was forced me colours to strike, when that purty, rosy-cheeked pirate turned her sweet eyes on me! So I've dropped me anchor in bonnie Portsmouth town, ter wed me purty pirate lass—'"

"Oh, chuck it, Ben!" said Ching-Lung. "I want you. Just come with me, and don't say a word."

Maddock was a typical handy man in every respect. He followed the prince to his snug cabin.

"Now, look here, Benjamin!" said the prince, holding out his cigar-case. "I want you to help me. I've got an old suit and some boots and gloves. I'm going to make a dummy that will float. Can you rig up a few sticks to go into its arms and legs in such a way that we can make him kick out when we pull the string?"

Maddock laid one finger knowingly on his nose.

"Gan-Waga, sir?"

"You bet!" said Ching-Lung, with a grin. "I want him to find somebody in his bed."

The bo'sun had nothing particular to do, and he was fond of a joke. He grinned hugely.

"All right!" he said. "It's as easy as easy. I'll fix it, sir."

Ching-Lung was busy for an hour after that. He visited the electrician. Ching-Lung knew nothing about electricity, but he showed a great interest in the subject, and asked numberless questions. Several articles were missing when he went away, including a couple of small bulbs and a roll of insulated wire.

Gan-Waga was on deck giving the sledge dogs their swim, and the coast was clear. Ching-Lung crept into the swimming-bath. As the vessel was not submerged, the bath was dry. His Highness fastened a cord to a ring in the bottom of the bath; and then, with a screwdriver, he began to tamper with the connection of the electric light.

After that he went back to his cabin, locking himself in. He was very busy indeed. He inflated a bladder, picked a rope to pieces, and ornamented the bladder with a fluffy wig. It began to look very much like a human head, and he deftly painted a nose and grinning mouth upon it. Its eyes, fastened to the bladder with quick-drying glue—marine glue that will resist water—consisted of the two electric globes he had borrowed. He covered them all but one central spot, the size of a shilling, with black varnish. Then he attached a length of wire to each, and left the whole hideous-looking thing to dry.

"Is that you, Ben?" he asked, as someone's knuckles tapped at the door.

"Yes, yer 'Ighness," answered a gruff voice.

Maddock's invention consisted of four belaying-pins hinged together at the centre and stringed across. A pull at the central string made the belaying-pins kick out quite naturally, and four pieces of lead brought them back into position when relaxed. They dressed the skeleton, buttoning the coat over two other bladders to keep it afloat, and attached the head, gloves, and boots.

They bundled the dummy into a sack, and Maddock, swinging the sack over his shoulder, conveyed it to the swimming-bath, and hid it there. Ching-Lung took a stroll on deck. Gan-Waga, followed by his dogs, was almost a mile away from the ship, his round, black head just showing, and his powerful arms rising and falling as he forced himself along. Van Witter watched him admiringly through a pair of field-glasses.

"I reckon that's a human fish," he drawled. "He'd swim the Niagara without a wink."

They had a smoke and a chat together. There had been a northerly gale in the night; but even Ferrers Lord, the weatherwise, had misjudged its strength, for the sea was almost calm.

"Look out, sir!" cried a sailor.

A steel pillar, holding a pulley, had been stepped aft. Ching-Lung and Van Witter stood aside as half a dozen of the crew staggered past under the weight of a heavy trawl net.

"We're going to fish," said Ching-Lung. "I'll give the blubberbiter a call."

He gave an ear-piercing whistle, so shrill that it made the Yankee jump. The net went down as the windlass revolved, and Gan-Waga swam aboard to kennel his dogs. The vessel began to move very slowly, dragging the great net



Man and beast rose not a fathom apart. Brushing aside the dogs, the walrus rushed upon its human foe. Gan-Waga tried to dive, but he was helpless, and entangled in the line. Death and he were close together. (A thrilling incident in next week's extra-long instalment.)

along. Then the gong sounded, and, carrying their rifles, the crew lined up on deck. Ferrers Lord came last of all.

"Fine chaps, I reckon," drawled Van Witter. "Drill, I reckon?"

"No; rifle practice," said the millionaire. "I think we shall rather astonish you. Ready, Prout?"

"Yes, sir."

Twenty bladders, painted white, were flung overboard, and drifted rapidly away. Ferrers Lord measured the distance with his eye, and glanced at his watch.

"Five hundred yards!" he cried. "Fire!"

There was a crack of rifles. Three white marks only specked the sky.

"Eight hundred yards, sir," said Prout.

The white specks were hardly visible to the naked eye. Van Witter raised his glass, and a rifle went to Ferrers Lord's shoulder. Three reports rang out in quick succession, and the Yankee gasped. The white specks had vanished. Van Witter had never dreamed of such marksmanship as this. He looked at the rifle keenly. The barrels were slender and long, and a tiny diamond replaced the usual metal sight. They were not Lee-Netfords, Mausers, or Winchesters, but some pattern he had never seen. Evidently they were very light, and carried a small-calibre bullet. There was no smoke, no smell of powder, and the report had not been loud.

"Might I ask what kind of gun you call that?" he said.

"I'm afraid I have not christened it," drawled Ferrers Lord. "It is a gun of my own devising, and the charge consists of a charge of oxygen and hydrogen gases, compressed into a liquid state, and exploded by an electric spark. It fires a bullet only weighing five to seven pennyweights. The barrel has one great advantage—it does not get overheated."

He thrust one of the rifles into the American's hands, and lighted a cigar. Ching-Lung's eyes were fixed on the northern horizon. A strange silvery glare had attracted his attention.

"Ice!" he cried. "Due north!"

"And nor'-east!" shouted Maddock excitedly.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 185.

"THE ONLY WAY!"

A Long Complete School Tale, by FRANK RICHARDS.

There was a rush for glasses. The first glimpse of the eternal ice thrilled them all. It was a fascinating land of mysteries—a land fatal to human life, whose wonders they were soon to explore. The lenses showed two great bergs of wondrous hues, and far beyond them the white glare of the everlasting ice-pack—that remorseless barrier that hides the North Pole.

The crew uttered a cheer. Ferrers Lord's face was impassive as he gazed ahead.

"Bring in the net!"

The donkey-engine clattered merrily as the wire hawser ran round the drum. All was eager expectation and excitement. The crew clustered round, wondering what harvest the sea would yield.

Slowly the great dripping beam, thick with weed, rose above the water. The pulleys creaked and the hawser groaned.

"A good haul," said Thurston, as he saw the gleam of fish through the netting. "Heave-ho! Bring her round!"

The beam moved over the rail and the net lay on deck. It was full of gasping fish. But the men fell back silent and awed.

Something else was there, a chain-shot dangling at its feet. It was the body of Bennet. Printed across his white jersey they read "Cloud King." The sea had revealed its double secret.

For hours there was a gloom over the ship. Ching-Lung forgot all about the dummy in the swimming-bath. He went to bed early and passed a restless night. In crowded waters it is not an uncommon thing for a trawler to bring up a corpse; but the fishermen look upon it as an omen of disaster. Even this cheery Van Witter lost his spirits and his appetite. Ferrers Lord was at the wheel himself, and he kept his post until a faint green light, shining through the glass, showed him that the sun had risen upon the sea. Then he rang for Maddock.

All day he was not seen, and the vessel did not rise. Towards nine o'clock Gan-Waga was sitting on the edge of

NEXT TUESDAY!

"BEYOND THE ETERNAL ICE."
An Extra-long Instalment, by SIDNEY DREW.

the bath, regaling himself with sea-biscuits and lard, when Maddock, in a very perspiring and excited state, rushed in. He was clutching himself behind as if he had been sitting on a nest of spiteful ants.

"Murder!" he cried. "Why don't you keep your dogs fastened up?"

"Hunk!" gurgled the Eskimo. "Bad 'nough. He bite you—get out an' bite you. Sorry 'nough. He die now and get poison!"

A shrill barking sounded outside the door, and Gan-Waga whistled. The dog continued to bark, but did not answer the call.

"Have a bit?" gurgled Gan-Waga soothingly, pointing to the biscuits and lard.

There was thunder on Maddock's brow. Even that tempting offer did not soothe him.

"Go an' chain up yer dog," he howled, "afore he kills somebody!"

"Supper first," murmured the Eskimo sweetly. "Bad 'nough tear your trousers. Ow!"

Maddock brandished a revolver in his face—a revolver with a nine-inch barrel. Gan-Waga rolled into the bath, rose on the other side, scrambled out, and dived through the doorway like an arrow from a bow.

The barking sounded a long way off now, but the Eskimo followed the sound.

Then Ching-Lung bounded in, tossed down the macintosh which covered him, and stood revealed in a blue swimming-costume. He dived headlong into the bath, and the dummy hurled by Maddock went flying after him. Ching-Lung came to the surface with a cord in his hand.

"Yap-yap—yap, yap, yap!" came the far-away barking.

Ching-Lung was one of Nature's ventriloquists—not made, but born. All the dogs were safely kennelled, and the mystified Eskimo, hearing the barks and snarls in front, behind, over his head, and under his feet, was whistling and searching in vain.

Swiftly the wires were joined to the bulbs.

"Get out of sight, Ben," said Ching-Lung.

The bath was used as an armoury, and they crouched down behind a case containing rifles. Gan-Waga kept them waiting a long time. The lights were out, and they heard him come growling and disgusted. He had counted the dogs as well as he could, and found the door fast. The sight of the revolver had taken away his appetite. He thought the best thing to do was to go to bed. So, taking a couple of handsprings across the marble floor, he sought his cot feet foremost.

He met with a shock. His feet descended on the dummy's chest, and the dummy uttered a weird groan.

For a time the Eskimo was so thunderstruck, that he found himself swallowing sea-water at an alarming rate. Again the dummy groaned hollowly, and it began to dawn upon Gan-Waga that someone had taken possession of his bed.

"Hunk!" he gurgled, swimming round the figure. "What you want? Dis my place!"

"Go away, you dirty blubber-eater!" remarked the stranger. "You smell of oil. Get out with you!"

"Shall not go 'way! It my bed. Bad 'nough come here at all."

"I'm looking at yer putty face," said the unknown gentleman.

Ching-Lung turned on the light, and a horrible, glaring eye flashed stonily. Gan-Waga felt creepy. It was a hideous eye, and it winked atrociously. If he had met it on land in the darkness he would have fled, but he was afraid of nothing in the water—whale, shark, walrus, or man.

"Hunk! You go 'way!" said Gan-Waga. "No want you. It my bed."

"It ain't! It's mine, yer flabby oil-drinker!" said the gentleman in possession.

He opened the other eye and stared fixedly at the ceiling, throwing two white circles of light there.

"Then I fight you like British mans," gurgled the Eskimo. "I say it like Prout mans say—ouch!"

"Scroosh!" yelled the figure.

Gan-Waga's blow sounded like a drum on the hidden bladder as he struck out. The gentleman retaliated in French fashion—all four at once.

His boots hammered against the Eskimo's ribs, and his arms lashed wildly, beating the water into foam. Then his eyes ceased to glare, and he was lost to view.

"Bad 'nough!" roared Gan-Waga. "I not done yet. You not British man's fight, for you kick! I kick mooch as well."

"No you won't, putty face!" said the voice. "You can't kick! I'm going to sleep up here."

The words came from overhead. Slowly a dark, dripping shape emerged from the water, and floated upwards. Two horrid eyes glared, and a hollow voice chanted:

"Up came McGinty from the bottom of the sea,
Dressed in his best Sunday clothes.

And he's not so very wet, for he's getting dry, you bet,
And he's got his eye on dirty Eskimos."

Trembling in every limb, Gan-Waga backed up the steps, and, crouching down on all-fours, gazed at the awful apparition. It was kicking and wriggling horribly, as Ching-Lung pulled the string. Maddock was choking by degrees.

"I loves yer," said the phantom. "I'm coming to kiss yer!"

It winked both eyes in rapid succession.

"I'll eat yer!" it went on, kicking violently. "My! Ain't yer fat!"

Ching-Lung pulled the cord that suspended it from the ceiling. The figure, jerking its arms, swung nearer and nearer the frightened Eskimo. The damp boots almost grazed his cheeks, breaking the spell. He yelled and bounded away.

The door opened. Rupert Thurston was there in his trim dress-suit. With a howl of joy, Gan-Waga clutched him round the neck, while the spectre laughed hysterically. And its laughter sounded greatly like Ching-Lung's.

"Wake up, lazybones! Wake up, you sluggard! It's eight o'clock, and I want to snowball you!"

Rupert Thurston sprang out of bed at Ching-Lung's cheery call.

"All right," he said; "you needn't yell! Seen my shaving water?"

"It's outside," answered Ching-Lung. "I'm afraid you'll find it rather cold."

Ching-Lung beat a retreat to the end of the corridor, and peered round the bulkhead with mischievous eyes.

Rupert pushed open the door. Down came a mass of snow upon his head, filling his ears and neck, and feeling cold through his thin silk pyjamas. A lascar servant, carrying a dish of bacon and eggs, was entering the state-room. Thurston gave vent to such a yell that the dusky servant, terrified out of his wits, shot the contents of the tray into the face of Maddock, who was waiting to report the night's run to Ferrers Lord.

The bacon fat was very warm, the eggs were cooked to a turn for eating—that is, just soft enough for the yolks to burst on the slightest provocation.

Maddock was partial to eggs, but this was the first occasion he had tried them as hair-oil, or a wash for the complexion. He had never used hair-oil, and he was quite satisfied with his skin.

For fully a minute, his face streaming with yellow, he glared not only daggers at the petrified lascar, but also swords, cutlasses, dirks, bill-hooks, rat-traps, mowing-machines, bayonets, and every other imaginable stabbing and cutting machine ever invented, from a harpoon to a hand-saw. Then he found his tongue, and it was in fine working order.

(This thrilling adventure story will be continued in next week's number of "The Magnet" Library. Order early. Price 1d.)



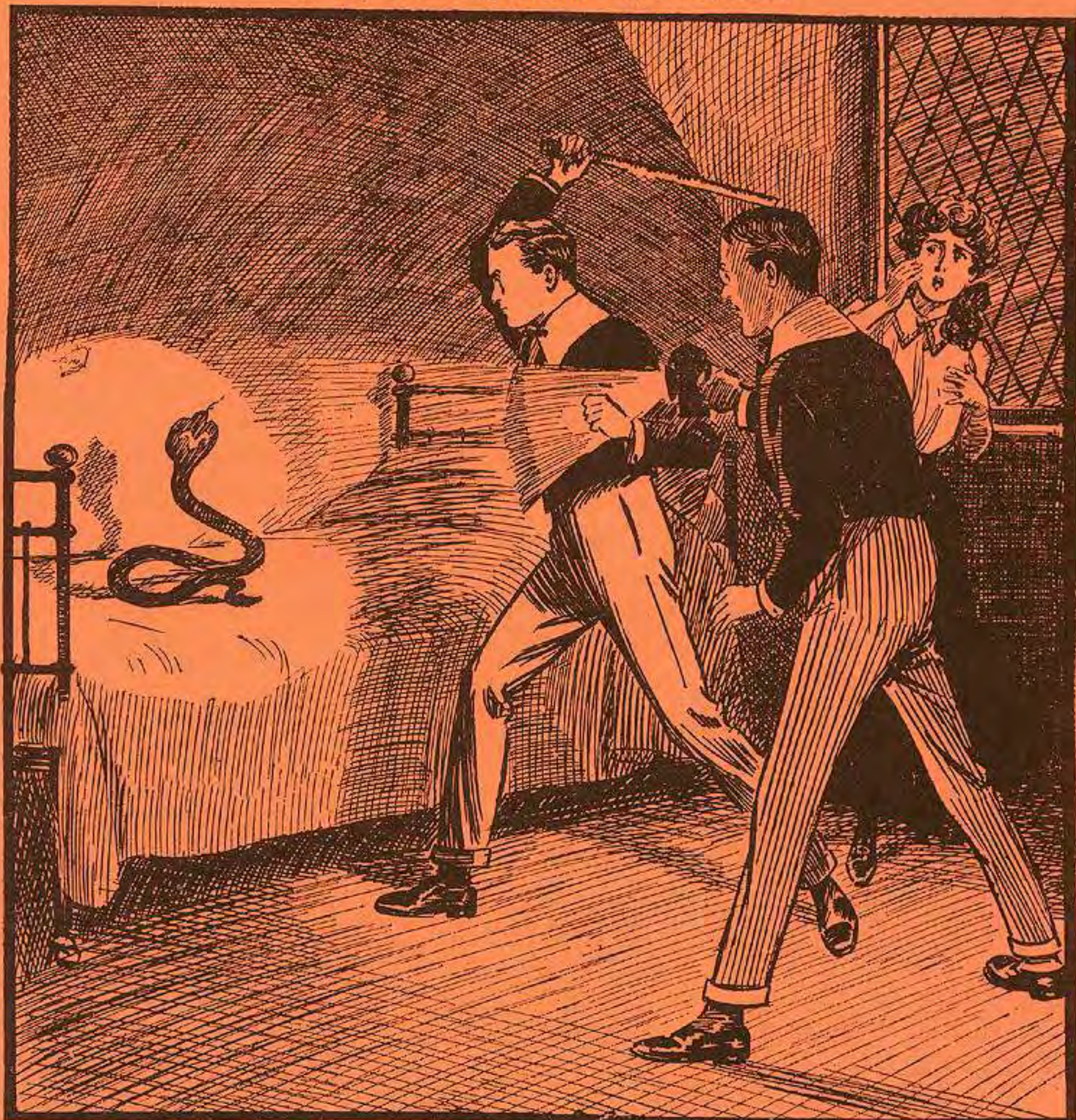
The Editor

This Is the Cover to Look Out For!

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