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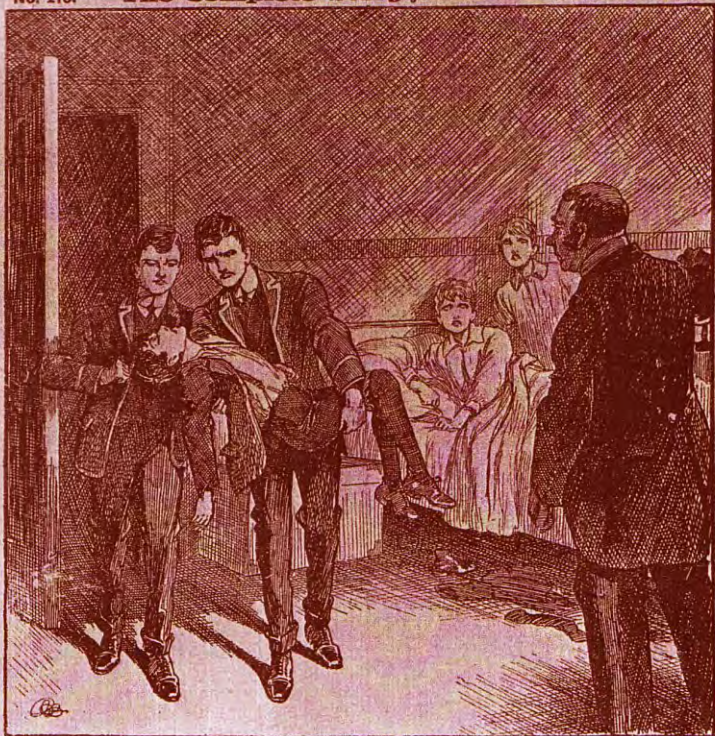
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(See page 14.)

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Bolsover minor was carried in. The whole House was awake now; the juniors were all up, and lights glared in every dormitory. In the Third-Form quarters the fags had already discovered that Bolsover minor's bed was empty, when the dormitory door was opened, and the injured lad was brought in.

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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Billy!

BOLSOVER MINOR came out of the Third Form-room at Greyfriars, with a cloud upon his brow, and his hands thrust deep into his trousers-pockets. The Third Form had just been dismissed after morning lessons, and the boys were streaming cheerfully away towards the big doorway that opened upon the Close. Bolsover minor did not join them.

He paused for a moment in the wide, flagged Form-room passage, and looked after the cheery fags. No one, looking at the fags as they streamed whooping into the Close, would have imagined that there was much trouble to be found in a fag's life at Greyfriars. But trouble was in the face of Bolsover minor, as he stood looking at his Form-fellows. One of them lingered behind to speak to him.

"Coming out, Billy?"
"Not just now, Paget."

Bolsover Minor's Last Sacrifice

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at Greyfriars.

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"Oh, rats!" said Paget, linking his arm in Bolsover minor's. "Don't be an ass! Come and help us punt a footer about, and get an appetite for your dinner."

Bolsover minor grinned faintly. Whatever his troubles might be, he generally had a good appetite for his dinner. Bolsover minor had not been long at Greyfriars, and he could remember early days of hardship when he never knew at dawn if there was to be a dinner for him or not. After experiences of that sort, the plentiful fare of

Greyfriars was not likely to pall upon him quickly.

"That's all right, Paget—"

Paget sniffed.

"Look here, you were a jolly little beggar when you first came here!" he exclaimed. "Now you're always mooping. What's the matter?"

"Nothing."

"Why don't you come out?"

"I—I'm going to see my major."

Paget sniffed again, or, rather, snorted. His expression showed pretty plainly that his opinion of Bolsover major was not a flattering one.

"I think you're an ass!" he exclaimed. "Leave Bolsover major to stew in his own juice, and come out."

"I'll come out later."

"Oh, rats!" said Paget.

And he dropped the fag's arm, and followed the rest of the Third into the Close. Bolsover minor went towards the staircase, with his brow still clouded. Three fellows belonging to the Remove were coming down the passage, and they stopped

in a line across the path of Bolsover minor. They were Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, the chums of the Lower Fourth. Bolsover minor halted. He had no choice about that, as the three juniors had lined up just in front of him, with their arms linked.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Wherefore that warlike brow! What's the matter with you, Billy?"

"Nothing, Master Cherry."

"Don't call me Master Cherry, ass. I'm Bob Cherry."

"I mean Bob Cherry, sir," stammered the fag.

"If you call me 'sir' again I'll bump you!"

Bolsover minor grinned a little.

"Yes, sir—I mean Master—er—Bob Cherry."

"What's the matter with you?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Been rowing with the Third?"

"Oh, no," said the boy eagerly. "They're very kind to me in the Third, Nugent. Everybody at Greyfriars is very kind to me, though I was only a newsboy a month ago—except—"

"Somebody been bullying you?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Oh, no!"

"Then what's the matter?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Nothing, Cherry."

"It's all right," said Wharton, after a quick look at the fag. "Come on, you chaps. If you want a friend at any time, kid, you know you've only got to look in at No. 1 Study in the Remove."

"Thank you, sir," said the fag gratefully. "I—I mean, thank you, Wharton!"

"All serene!"

The chums of the Remove walked on. Bob Cherry stared at Wharton.

"Why wouldn't you let me ask him what's the matter?" he demanded.

Wharton shook his head.

"Better let it alone," he said. "I know what it is—it's that precious brother of his. But it's no business of ours, and that kid would be cut in pieces sooner than complain of his major."

And Bob Cherry gave a long, low whistle. He understood.

Bolsover minor went on his way upstairs. The shadow had not lifted from his boyish face. It was not a face that was meant to be clouded—it was a round, chubby face, with bright and intelligent eyes, and kindness and good-humour in every line of it. But trouble lay deep at the heart of the new boy in the Third.

He reached the Remove passage. A fag of the Second Form—a fat youth in spectacles, with an appearance of being about to burst through his Eton jacket—came out of one of the Remove studies. It was Bunter minor, and he was coming out of Bunter major's study, and his discontented look showed that he had been there on a fruitless errand. The voice of Billy Bunter of the Remove followed the fat fag into the passage.

"If I catch you at my cupboard again, Sammy—"

"Oh, gammon!" growled Sammy.

He rolled down the passage, and almost rolled into Bolsover minor. He paused and blinked at him through his big glasses.

"Hallo, young road-scraper!" was his polite greeting.

Sammy Bunter was in a very bad temper, and as he was several sizes larger than Bolsover minor—sideways, at all events—he considered that Billy was a safe object to wreak his bad temper upon.

The Third-Former did not reply.

"Got any papers to sell?" asked Sammy Bunter, chucking at his own humour.

"Where are the latest extra specials?"

Bolsover minor walked on. But his cheeks were flaming. Kind as nearly all Greyfriars had been to him, there were some fellows who would never suffer him to forget that he had been a street-arab only a few weeks before—fellows like the two Bunters, and Snoop of the Remove. But he had learned to be patient, and not to hit out at every provocation. But Sammy Bunter of the Second was not the kind of person to be placated by submission. He blinked after the fag, and yelled:

"Yah! Extra special! Yah!"

Bolsover minor's face flamed, and he swung round.

"Shut up, you fat cad!" he exclaimed.

"Yah! All the winners!" yelled Sammy, with great humour.

"Will you ring off?"

"Extra special! All the—yoooop!"

Bump!

Bolsover minor smote the fat fag, and Sammy Bunter rolled over in the passage with a wild yell. Bunter major put his hand, which was very fat and curiously like his minor's, out of his study doorway.

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"I say, you fellows— Hallo! Did you knock my minor down, young shaver?"

"Yes, I did," said Bolsover minor truculently; "and if you like I'll knock you down, too."

Bunter was in the Remove, but he was not a hero. He never encountered even the smallest of fags in fistical combat if he could help it.

"Oh, really, Bolsover minor, I—ahem!—"

He shut his study door, and there was a sound of a key turning in the lock. Bolsover minor walked on. He reached Bolsover's study, and knocked at the door. A rough voice replied to the knock.

"Oh, come in!"

Bolsover minor went in.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Brothers!

BOLSOVER MAJOR was standing by the window.

He swung round as the fag came in. His hand went behind him, to conceal the fact that it held a cigarette.

Smoking in his study, against the rules of the school, was one of the little relaxations that Bolsover of the Remove allowed himself.

He brought the cigarette into view again when he saw that his visitor was only his minor. The expression upon his face was not very brotherly.

"So it's you!" he snapped.

Bolsover minor closed the door.

"Yes," he said. "It's me."

"Can't you say 'It is I'?" said Bolsover harshly. "Can't you ever get out of your rotten street-arab way of speaking?"

The fag flushed painfully.

"I'm doing my best, Percy," he said. "I ain't 'ad your chances, you know."

It was a curious thing that, whenever the boy was speaking to his elder brother, all that he had gained in his training at Greyfriars seemed to slip away from him. In the Third Form-room, among fellows who liked him, and made allowances for him, he was improving wonderfully in many ways. But when he was with his major, he slipped back into the little street-arab that Harry Wharton & Co. had met in London the first day of the term.

Bolsover major was not a fellow to inspire confidence. His disgust and dislike were quite sufficient to rob the fag of any confidence he might have had in himself, and to make him shew in the very worst light in his presence.

"You ain't 'ad!" mimicked Bolsover. "My hat! The pater ought to have known better than to stick you here, I must say."

"You don't want me 'ere?" said the boy.

Bolsover laughed scornfully.

"Want you?" he repeated. "Is it likely?"

"No, I suppose it ain't," said the fag slowly. He had hard work to keep back the tears that forced themselves into his eyes, but his brother did not notice it. Bolsover major was too much occupied with his own special grievances.

The Removee made an angry, impatient gesture.

"It's too utterly rotten!" he exclaimed. "It's rotten for me and rotten for you. Of course, I'm not thinking only of myself in the matter."

"Ain't you?" said the fag.

"No, I ain't, as you so elegantly express it," snapped Bolsover. "It's pretty rotten for you to be here, I should think."

"I like it," said the fag simply. "The fellers in the Third are very decent to me. They know I was lost when I was a kid, and was brought up in the streets, and made my livin' by sellin' pipers."

"Pipers, you say!"

"Yes, pipers," said Bolsover minor, to whom the two vowels were apparently the same. "It wasn't my fault, Percy. I didn't go far to be lost. I never asked father to put me at this school. He thought that you would be glad to 'ave a chance of 'elpin' me on, arter what I've been through."

Bolsover grunted.

"I ain't 'ad your chances, Percy, but I'm improvin', and I'm doin' the best I can," said the fag eagerly. "I don't want to disgrace you, Percy. I'd like to—to make myself like you, if I could," he added wistfully.

Bolsover laughed sneeringly.

"That's not likely to happen," he said.

"I suppose it ain't," said the boy, very much discouraged.

"Oh, put it to yourself," said Bolsover impatiently. "I don't say it's all your fault. You couldn't help being lost when you were a kid, and I suppose that all kids brought up in the streets are the same as you are. But think of it—"



Bolsover minor was upon the ruffian, hitting furiously. He had rushed to his brother's rescue without a thought—without a pause. For one moment the burly footpad staggered back, as the fag hit at him fiercely. Then the man's arm swung up again, and the cudgel descended.

you come here with the manners and speech of a street-arab—here, a school like Greyfriars—a place that's better than Eton! It's all very well to explain about your having been lost, and so on; but some of the fellows don't choose to believe it. Snoop, of the Remoye, has started a story that we were all as poor as you were, and that I had a tutor to teach me to pronounce my h's specially, before I came here."

"That's all rot, Percy."

"Yes, I know it is, but it puts me in a rotten position," said Bolsover irritably.

"I'd 'ave licked Snoop—"

"Do you think I didn't?" growled Bolsover. "I hammered him till he howled for mercy. But that somehow made some of the fellows think that there was something the story. I've been chipped about it ever since."

"I'm sorry," said Hubert miserably.

"So you ought to be. The chaps will never forget that you lived in a London slum, and were called Billy the news-boy. Billy!" growled Bolsover. "In the Third they call you Billy now, don't they?"

"Yes," admitted the boy.

"You'll never get out of it. It was sickening of the pater to stick you in the same school with me," said Bolsover. "If you were decent—"

"I'm trying to be decent, Percy."

"Oh, don't call me Percy—I can't stand it, from you!

And don't interrupt me, either. I was going to say that if you were decent, you'd ask the pater to take you away."

"I—I would, only he'd ask me why, and—and you don't want me to tell him that you don't like me being here," faltered the fag.

"Of course you can't tell him that," growled Bolsover angrily. "My hat! I should get lectures every day; he'd call me unbrotherly and unnatural, and wanting in affection and duty, and goodness knows what! You know the pater always rides the high horse. You can tell him that you don't like the school, and want to go to another."

"But I do like the school," said Hubert simply.

Bolsover sniffed.

"Well, you young ass, that needn't prevent you from pitching a yarn to the pater."

Hubert-Bolsover started.

"You don't mean that I'm to tell him a whopper, Percy?" he exclaimed.

"I suppose it wouldn't be the first you've told," said Bolsover cynically. "You're not going to set up as a high moral specimen, I suppose, after your training in the London slums!"

Bolsover minor was silent.

"Will you do it, Hubert?" demanded his major.

"I—I can't tell father a lie, Percy. Besides, I don't want to leave Greyfriars. Why can't you give me a chance?"

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boy broke out passionately. "I'm tryin' my best, and if you was to 'elp me I shouldn't be a disgrace to you. But it's aving you saying you're ashamed of me, and feelin' disgraced by me—" He broke off, his voice shaking.

"Oh, for goodness' sake don't turn on the waterworks in my study!" said Bolsover. And if Hubert had been in danger of crying, those words would certainly have dried up his tears. "I can't stand that kind of thing! You ought to go! If you were anything but a rotten slum-brat, you'd feel that yourself!"

"I—I thought you was glad, Percy, when it was found out that I was your brother?" said the fag miserably.

Bolsover shrugged his shoulders impatiently. "Well, of course I was glad for the long-lost brother to be found, and all that," he said. "But—but I've been chipped to death on the subject since then. I can't stand it. And when I hear you talk like a Cockney street-arab, and drop your h's, it gets on my nerves. Will you pitch a yarn to the pater and clear out?"

"I can't!" Bolsover's brow darkened.

"You mean that you won't!" he exclaimed harshly.

"I can't! I promised father—"

"Don't begin the good little Georgia business with me! I'm not taking that from you! If you won't do as I want, get out of my study, and keep out of my sight, that's all!"

"Won't you give me a chance, Percy? I'll try—" Bolsover pointed to the door.

"That's your way!" he said. "I can't stand you! Everything you say, everything you do, gets on my nerves! You make me sick! Get out!"

The hot tears rushed to the fag's eyes. He turned away so that his brother should not see them, and made his way blindly to the door. Bolsover watched him with a grim, unrelaxing brow as he went out of the study, and the door closed behind him.

Then the bully of the Remove threw himself into a chair, with an angry exclamation.

"It's rotten—utterly rotten! The pater ought to have known better! It's jolly hard on me!"

And Bolsover major felt very sorry for himself.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Downward Path.

HARRY WHARTON looked up from his work as a tap came to the door of his study, No. 1 in the Remove passage.

"Come in!" he called out cheerily.

Bolsover minor came in.

Harry Wharton nodded, with a cheery smile. Wharton and his chums took a good deal of interest in the little wail of the Third. They had seen him in London in the days when he was a newsboy in the streets, and that gave them a sort of protective interest in him; and they knew, too, that he had an uphill battle to fight at Greyfriars. And the fag who ought to have stood by him and helped him—his brother in the Remove—gave him little aid, and no encouragement. Bolsover major never thought of his minor save to feel ashamed of him, and annoyed by his presence in the school.

Wharton knew that, though he would not have spoken to Hubert on the subject. He had too much tact to interfere in family matters, and it never crossed the fag's mind to complain. With more delicacy in his nature than his major possessed, he only wanted to hide from public view the fact that Bolsover was ashamed of him.

"Come in, kid!" said Wharton. "Anything I can do for you?"

The fag halted by the table.

"Yes," he said, hesitatingly. "You told me, Master Harry, that you'd do anything you could to help me."

"So I will," said Harry cordially. "What's the trouble?"

"It's my brother."

Wharton's expression changed. He had observed the fag pretty closely, and he believed that the last thing in the world Hubert was likely to do was to complain of his brother. Was he going to begin now?

"Yes?" said Harry, rather sharply.

The fag's face became crimson. It was as if he had read the unspoken thought in the eyes of the Removeite.

"I—I don't mean—" he stammered. "It's like this, Master 'Arry." It was curious to note what havoc the fag made with the unaccustomed aspirates when he was confused or disturbed. "It's about Percy, my major. I'm afraid."

"He broke off confusedly."

"Nothing wrong with your major, is there?" asked Harry.

"I'm afraid there is, Master Wharton. Course, you mustn't tell 'im I've spoke about it," the fag said eagerly.

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"But—but I can't 'elp 'im myself, cause—cause we don't get on werry well, and 'e might take it bad from me."

Wharton nodded.

"I—I wanted to speak to 'im about it, and give 'im a warning," said Hubert; "but—but I can't no good. 'E'd sling me out of 'is study if I tried. But—but I can't bear to see 'im going on like that, and I know you'd 'elp me if you could—you see?"

"So what will, with pleasure!" said Wharton, in wonder.

"But what can I do? What's wrong with your major?"

"He's gettin' 'imself into trouble, that's wot it is," said Bolsover minor. "And I can't speak a word to 'im, and 'e wouldn't listen if I did. P'raps you might be able to do something—to say a word—I dunno! But I can't bear to see 'im gettin' 'imself into trouble—p'raps gettin' sacked."

Wharton whistled.

"So bad as that?" he asked.

"Yes, Master Harry. You'll keep it dark?"

"Of course!"

"And you'll 'elp 'im if you can?"

"Certainly."

"Well, it's like this," said the fag. "Me and Paget was out of the dorm last night—we was goin' out for a lark, you know. Smith said we didn't dare do it, and so we did. We sprinted round the Close and through the Cloisters."

"You young rascals!"

"Well, when we came along the wall by the road, there was my major. He was gettin' in. He had been out, and he came back, climbin' over the wall, at eleven o'clock."

"Phew!"

"Paget said he'd seen 'im at it before—twice. Course, we didn't say anything! Then. He would have been ratty. But—"

"I didn't know Bolsover major broke bounds at night!" said Harry Wharton gravely. "Vernon-Smith does, I know that, and he'd jolly well be expelled if the Head knew it. I'm sorry to hear this, kiddy!"

"It's that other bloke—Vernon-Smith—the Bouncer as you call 'im, who leads Percy into it," said the fag. "I know that. 'E's a rascal! But Percy—if it all comes out some time—Percy will get it in the neck. The Bouncer is too deep. They'll never catch 'im! It will all be put on Percy, and 'e'll be sacked!"

Wharton could not help thinking that it would be a good thing for Hubert if his major was sacked. Bolsover minor would certainly have been more comfortable at the school without his overbearing elder brother in the Remove. But he could appreciate the affection and generosity in the fag's nature. All the unfeeling harshness of the Remove bully had been unable to estrange the fag's affection for his elder brother. To Hubert, Bolsover major was the admired Percy—the fellow he looked up to, whose affection he desired with wistful eagerness.

"I don't know whether you can do anything, Master Harry, but—but there's nobody else I can speak to," said the fag. "I'm afraid that Percy will get 'imself into trouble, and I can't say a word to 'im. Course, it wouldn't be right for a kid to set up to teach his major. Percy is quite right there, and—and it would be a cheek in me to seem to find fault with 'im. He's a splendid chap, and—and a brother any kid might be proud of. Only 'e's so trusting, it's easy for a rotter like the Bouncer to lead him into things."

Wharton had his own opinion about that, but he would not have shaken Hubert's good opinion of his brother for worlds.

"I'll think it over, kid," said Harry. "Of course, I'll keep it dark. You don't mind if I tell Nugent—he will keep it a secret!"

"Just as you like. If you could do anything to 'elp 'im out of it, Master Harry, it would be the best thing you could do for me."

"I'll do my best, kid. But—I can't do anything else for you!"

The fag shook his head.

"I'm getting on all serene in the Third," he said. "They're very decent to me. Tubb and Paget stand up for me, and the others are all right. Nugent minor, of the Second, is very decent, too."

"You like being at Greyfriars?"

The fag's face brightened.

"Yes, rather, Master 'Arry!"

The door opened, and Nugent came in. Bolsover minor nodded to him, and left the study. Nugent glanced after him, and then looked inquiringly at Harry Wharton.

"What's on?" he asked, as he closed the door.

Wharton wrinkled his brows a little.

"It's jolly queer!" he said. "You know how Bolsover treats his minor?"

"Yes—the cad!"

"Billy has just been here to ask something of me. What do you think it is?"

"To give his major a licking!"
Wharton laughed.
"No. He's found that Bolsover is in the habit of breaking bounds at night—he's in the Bouncer's clutches—and he wants me to help him if I can."

Nugent whistled.
"My hat!"
"He's afraid that it may come out, and that Vernon-Smith will save himself and get all the blame put on Bolsover—which is just what he would manage to do, if I knew anything about the Bouncer."

"Yes, rather!"
"And the kid is anxious about his major, after the way his major treats him. Queer, isn't it?"
"Jolly queer!" said Nugent. "He's a queer little beggar altogether! But I like him for it. He's worth fifty of his major!"

"I should say so!"
"And what are you going to do?"
Wharton shrugged his shoulders.
"I am going to do what I can. I should like to let Bolsover have a dormitory licking, but that isn't exactly what Billy wants."

"No, I suppose not," said Nugent, laughing.
"Blessed if I know what to do, though," said Harry thoughtfully. "Bolsover isn't exactly the kind of chap to talk to like a Dutch uncle. But I've told the kid that I'll try what I can do, and I will."
Nugent grinned. He was as willing as Wharton to help Bolsover minor, but he could not help seeing that Harry Wharton had set himself an exceedingly difficult task.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Rolls Out!

"EXTRA Special!"

Bolsover major looked at the words, scrawled in chalk upon the looking-glass in his study, and scowled darkly. Bolsover had come up to his study to do his preparation, and as he lighted the gas, the inscription upon the looking-glass had burst upon his view.

It was not the only one in the study. The practical joker, who had given his peculiar sense of humour a free run in Bolsover's quarters, had plastered the walls with similar inscriptions. On the window was chalked "Latest News!" and several cards pinned on the study walls bore the words "Extra Special—All the Winners!" etc.

Bolsover gritted his teeth.
The fact that his young brother had been brought up in the streets and had sold papers for a living did not make the fellows down on Hubert himself, but on Bolsover. It was very curious, and Bolsover might have reflected that the fault was his own. He was the bully of the Form; he was high-handed and overbearing, and his great strength made him an enemy not to be lightly tackled. Fellows whom he bullied retaliated in any way they could, and when it was found that Bolsover was extremely touchy upon the subject of his minor, his enemies seized upon that with great keenness.

Bolsover major was never allowed to forget what his minor had been.

Snoop, the sneak of the Remove, had started a story that the Bolsovers had all been slum people at one time, and though everybody knew it was not true, it suited many fellows to affect a belief in the story. Bolsover raged, but he could not stop it. The constant chipping on the subject made him almost hate the sight of his minor; it was as if Hubert were a thorn in his side that could never be removed.

"The young cadd!" he muttered, as he surveyed his decorated study. "This is the work of some of the Third, of course—Hubert's precious friends. I'll—"

The bully of the Remove picked up a walking-cane from the corner of his study, and went out. His face was set and grim. He made his way to the Third Form-room.

In the Third Form-room most of the fags were collected. After evening preparation with Mr. Twigg, they had the Form-room to themselves, and they preferred it to the junior common-room. Most of the Third were there when Bolsover opened the door and looked in.

The fags were busy, and did not notice Bolsover open the door. The Remove bully, with a dark and scowling face, stood looking into the room for some moments.

Tubb, of the Third, who was the leader of the Form, was his knees before the fire, making toast. A strong smell burning showed that Tubb was overdoing it. Bolsover minor was frying a bloater over the fire, and his face was red from the heat of the glowing coals, and very cheerful. His expression was very different from that he had worn in his brother's study. In the Third Form-room Bolsover minor was merry enough. He had plenty of friends there.

Paget was superintending the operations, giving advice to the cooks and being replied to with grunts by Tubb. Most of the fags were looking on, apparently amused by Tubb's methods of making toast.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

EVERY Tuesday, The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE PENNY.

"Isn't it done yet, Tubby?" asked Paget, with a touch of sarcasm. "Blessed if you're not making the whole room niff with it."

"Oh, shut up!" said Tubb crossly. "If you can, make toast better than I can, you'd better make it, Paget."

"Well, I couldn't make it worse," said Paget. "Do you call it toast or cinders?"

"Oh, dry up!"

"That's what the toast's doing," said Paget, with a grin. "I think it will be dried up a little too much, if you ask me."

"Well, I didn't ask you," snapped Tubb.

"The bloater's nearly done," said Bolsover minor.

"Nearly done for you, mean," said Paget.

"Simply talking, isn't it?" remarked Smith III.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Paget. "Here's your major, Billy. Did you invite him to a whack at the bloater?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy looked round. His elder brother strode into the room with a scowling brow. The fags looked at him, grinning. They were strong in numbers, and not afraid even of the Remove bully in their own Form-room.

"Look here, you young rotters!" exclaimed Bolsover.

"We're looking," said Paget cheerfully. "What's the trouble?"

"Somebody's been plastering up my study with cheeky notices."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Was it you, you whelp?" demanded the Remove bully, glaring at Paget.

"What a nice way to ask a fellow a question," murmured Paget. "But that's what I always admired about Bolsover major—his nice manners."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover gritted his teeth, and made a rush at Paget. Paget dodged round Tubb, and the Remove bully bumped into that unlucky youth, sending him sprawling into the grate, toast and all. Tubb gave a roar of wrath.

"You silly ass!"

"Get out of our room, you Remove cad!" shouted Smith III.

Smack!

Smith Tertius caught Bolsover's open hand upon the side of his head, and went staggering. He fell in a heap by the wall, and gasped.

"Ow! Go for him!"

"Kick the Remove cad out!" yelled Paget.

"Chuck him out!"

"Outside, you bully!"

Bolsover grasped Paget. Tubb was on his feet again now, and he rushed upon Bolsover without a pause, yelling to the Third to back him up. The fags were not long in doing that. They simply swarmed upon the Remove bully, and Bolsover, in spite of his size and strength, was dragged down.

He bumped heavily upon the floor, and the fags swarmed over him with excited yells.

"Bump him!" shrieked Tubb. "We'll teach him to come swanking into our Form-room! Bump the cheeky bouncer!"

"Huray! Bump him!"

"Give him socks!"

The fags dragged at the burly Remove, Bolsover struggled and roared, and a good many of the fags felt the weight of his hand. But he had no chance against so many. As he struggled, his collar was torn out and his jacket was split.

"Let me go, you young demons!" he gasped. "I'll smash you! I'll—I'll—"

"You'll get most of the smashing now, I think!" grinned Paget.

"Huray! Bump him!"

Bump!

The Remove bully was helpless in the grasp of the angry fags. He looked like getting what he fully deserved. The Third were very angry and very excited. Interference in their own Form-room was, as Paget would have said, altogether too "thick."

Bolsover minor ran forward.

"Let him alone, you chaps!" he exclaimed.

There was a scornful roar.

"Stand back!"

"Don't you interfere here, Billy!"

"Get out, Extra Special!"

"Buz off!"

Bolsover minor was dragging at the fags who were grasping his brother. His face was red and his eyes were gleaming.

"Stop it!" he gasped. "You can't—you shan't!"

"Are you off your silly rocker?" roared Tubb. "Do you think we're going to let him come here and bully us because he's your major? Get out!"

"Let him alone! I—"

NEXT Tuesday: "A RACE AGAINST TIME!" By FRANK RICHARDS.

Order Early.

"Well, he's had enough," said Paget. "Roll him out!"

Tubb, grunted discontentedly, but he ascended, and Bolsover was rolled out of the Third Form-room into the passage. His minor followed him to the door.

"In a moment, Percy, but you were wrong. I don't think it was any Third Form chap who went to your study."

Bolsover picked himself up, his face purple with fury.

"Don't talk to me, you guttersnipe!" he muttered thickly.

"Get away!"

"Percy—"

"Get away, you beggar brat!"

Bolsover trumped furiously away down the passage. Bolsover minor turned back into the Form-room without another word.

Tubb snorted contemptuously.

"That's the thanks you get for sticking up for your precious major," he growled.

Bolsover minor did not reply.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

No Exit.

"MY hat! Been in the wars?"

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, asked the question, as he looked into Bolsover's study. Bolsover major was brushing down his clothes, and his torn jacket lay on a chair, and his collar was still hanging by a single stud. He turned a red and furious face upon the Bounder.

"Mind your own business!" he snapped.

Vernon-Smith laughed.

"Certainly, my dear man! I looked in to settle about to-night, but—"

"You can go on."

The Bounder laughed again, and dropped into a chair. Bolsover continued to brush his clothes and grunt angrily while he did so.

"Was it Wharton & Co.?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"No!" growled Bolsover.

"Ah! I thought they might have discovered our little excursion, and it would be exact like them to chip in," said the Bounder, with a yawn. "Harry Wharton generally acts up to be a model in the Form and to make other fellows toe the line."

"He won't make me toe the line," said Bolsover savagely.

"Nor me," said Vernon-Smith, with a cynical grin. "But—by the way, does your young brother know anything about it?"

"Hang my young brother!"

"With pleasure. But does he know anything?"

"Of course not! Do you think I should tell a gag in the Third Form about my going to the Cross Keys?" growled Bolsover. "Besides, I don't see much of my minor. What do you ask such idiotic questions for?"

"I had a reason."

Bolsover started, and looked at him.

"What do you mean? You don't mean to say that Hubert has said anything?"

"Not to me."

"To anybody else, then?"

"I don't know. But—" The Bounder paused.

"Well, go on!" said Bolsover, suspending the operations of the clothes-brush, and looking at the Bounder with a savage expression. "If that young cad has been interfering in my affairs—"

"I don't know that he has. But he was in Wharton's study a while ago, and after he had gone, when Wharton and Nugent came down, they were talking over something very secretly. And as I was sitting in the armchair in the common-room, and they didn't see me, I heard what they said."

The Bounder suggested collaring you if you tried to get out of the room to-night, and giving you a dormitory licking."

"Me?" said Bolsover.

"Yes; and me, too!" yawned the Bounder. "They moved off and I didn't hear any more. But taking that in connection with your minor's visit to Wharton, and with the fact that the young cad has always had his back up against me—"

"But he didn't know anything."

"You remember the other night I told you I saw somebody in the Close when we got in? I was sure it was some gag out of bounds."

"My hat! You think—"

"It looks to me as if your minor has been spying on you, and has taken Wharton into the business. That's all."

Bolsover ground his teeth.

"He wouldn't dare—he wouldn't dare!"

"I don't know. He's a cheeky rascal, and the Third would back him up. They all hate you so much," Vernon-Smith explained pleasantly, "that they would back up anybody or anything to get at you."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

Read the grand new story the

Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled:

TOM MERRY & CO.'S MUSIC-HALL!

In this week's "GEM" Library. Now on Sale.

"Oh, cheese it! He wouldn't dare! But if he has—"

"You'll see to-night. If the rotters interfere with us, you can get out of them whether it was your minor set them on, and they—"

"I'll thrash him within an inch of his life."

"Yes, I should advise you to. We can't have fags setting up to preach to us and bring us up in the way we should go," said Vernon-Smith.

He quitted the study, leaving Bolsover in a savage mood. The thought that his minor should venture to interfere with his doings threw Bolsover into a state of suppressed rage that would have been dangerous to Hubert if he had been near.

When the Remove went up to bed a little later, Bolsover looked with a scowl at Wharton and Nugent. Now that he had been put on his guard, he could see easily enough that there was something between them. Wharton wore a troubled look, as if he felt himself in a difficult position, and was not quite decided what to do, as was indeed the case.

Bolsover said nothing on the subject. He turned in with the rest of the Remove; but both Nugent and Wharton observed that he did not take off all his clothing, and they exchanged a significant glance.

"The rotter is going out to-night," Nugent muttered, as he sat down on Wharton's bed to take off his boots.

"Looks like it."

"What are you going to do?"

"I don't know. I've no right to interfere with him."

But—

"But Bulstrode has; he's Form-captain."

Wharton nodded.

"Quite so. If I were Form-captain, I'd come down on it."

But—

Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, looked into the dormitory.

"Now then, tumble in!"

And Wharton went to bed still undecided. Wingate turned out the lights, and left the Remove to sleep. But there were several of the Remove who did not feel inclined for slumber. Bolsover and Vernon-Smith had no intention of sleeping. They had an appointment for that night, and they were waiting for ten o'clock to strike. Wharton and Nugent did not sleep, either; but the rest of the Remove dropped off one by one.

Wharton was in a troubled frame of mind.

He was filled with anger and distrust towards Bolsover, but he did not feel that he had a right to interfere. If he had been captain of the Form, as he had once been, he would have stopped anything of the sort. But that was Bulstrode's business now, and Bulstrode was very slack in such matters. Yet the proceedings of Vernon-Smith, and of the other fellows whom he led into his underhand ways, would reflect disgrace upon the Form, if they ever came to light—and they were certain to come to light in the long run. And Harry Wharton was thinking of his promise to Bolsover minor. He had said that he would do all he could; but what he could do was not clear.

He was still thinking sleeplessly of the matter when ten o'clock chimed off from the old clock-tower of Greyfriars.

There was the sound of a movement in the dormitory.

Wharton sat up in bed.

In the dim light that came in from the high windows, two shadowy forms could be seen moving in the room.

That was the sound of a whisper, and he recognised the suppressed tones of the Bounder.

"Quiet."

"Oh, all right!" came the growling reply of Bolsover.

They were dressing quickly in the darkness.

Wharton made up his mind. He did not think that an appeal to the two black sheep of the Remove was likely to have much result, but it would do no harm to try it.

"Bolsover!" he called out.

There was a quick breath in the darkness.

"Is that you, Wharton?" asked Bolsover.

"Yes."

"Well, what do you want? What are you spying on me for?"

"You are going out?"

"Yes," said Bolsover defiantly.

"Where are you going?"

"That's my business."

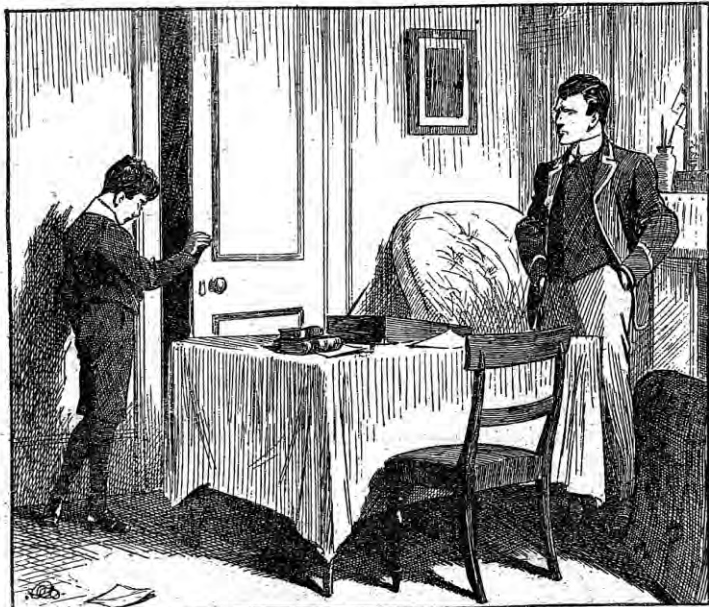
"I mean," said Harry quietly, "is it a joke, or are you going to break bonds?"

"Find out."

"I don't think I need to ask, if you are going with Vernon-Smith," said Wharton scornfully. "It is bound to be some blackguardism or other."

"Thank you!" drawled the Bounder.

"Mind your own business, hang you!" muttered Bolsover



"I can't stand you!" said Bolsover major harshly. "Everything you say, everything you do, gets on my nerves! You make me sick! Get out!" The hot tears rushed to the fag's eyes, but he turned away so that his brother should not see them, and made his way blindly to the door. (See Chapter 2.)

savagely. "What does it matter to you where I go, or what I do?"

"You have no right to disgrace the Form, for one thing," said Harry quietly; "and you will get yourself into trouble, for another. You are letting Vernon-Smith lead you into this—"

"I suppose I'm old enough to look after myself," sneered Bolsover.

"You're not sensible enough, it appears," said Harry. "I advise you to chuck this rot, and get back into bed."

"When I want your advice, I'll ask for it."

Wharton compressed his lips.

"There's another thing," he said. "If this sort of thing goes on, and it comes out, it may get Bulstrode into trouble."

"Hang Bulstrode!"

Bolsover and Vernon-Smith moved towards the window. Wharton stepped out of bed, and shook Bulstrode by the shoulder. His mind was made up now.

"Bulstrode!"

The Remove captain yawned and awoke.

"Hallo! Groo! Wharrer marret?"

"Wake up!"

"Well, I'm awake," growled Bulstrode. "What the deuce are you waking me up for, when I've only just got to sleep, you ass?"

"Bolsover and Vernon-Smith are breaking bounds, and if you choose to stop them, I'm ready to lend you a hand, that's all," said Wharton.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

Bulstrode jumped out of bed.

The two shadowy figures moving towards the window halted. Bulstrode ran towards them.

"Stop!" he exclaimed.

"Look here, Bulstrode—"

"You're not going out," said Bulstrode decidedly. "Get back to bed! Do you hear!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Lines All Round.

BOLSOVER gritted his teeth. Vernon-Smith's eyes were gleaming like a cat's in the darkness.

Bulstrode's tone was sharp. He meant business. There was no doubt that he meant to have his way. And Harry Wharton & Co. would back him up all along the line, there was no doubt about that, either.

"So you are going to stop us," said Vernon-Smith, his voice trembling with rage.

"Yes," said Bulstrode directly. "You're not going out, you cad!"

"It's not so very long since you used to break bounds at night yourself," the Bounder sneered.

Bulstrode flushed in the darkness.

"I know that," he replied. "But I've stopped it, and you're going to stop it, too. You know jolly well that if there's any row about it, I'm more likely to get into trouble than you are. Besides, a Form-captain is supposed to stop

NEXT TUESDAY: "A RACE AGAINST TIME!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

this sort of thing, if he knows about it. And I know about it."

"Supposed to!" said the Bouncer. "But it's generally only supposed. A fellow is expected to mind his own business, too."

"I'm not going to argue with you," said Bulstrode. "If it came out, the first question the Head would ask is, whether the Form-captain knew anything about it."

"You could say you didn't."

"Thanks! I'm not quite so well up in the art of lying as you are," retorted Bulstrode. "Look here, I'm not going to stand it! Get back to bed, or—"

"Or you'll call a prefect!" sneered the Bouncer.

"No," said Bulstrode, with a deep breath. "I won't do that; that would amount to sneaking. But there are enough fellows here to back me up. You're not going out."

"I am going out," said Bolsover. "I can lick any fellow in the Form. I'll smash any chap who lays a finger on me to stop me."

Bulstrode set his teeth. He was no match for the Remove bully in single combat; the only fellow in the Form who could lick the powerful bully was Bob Cherry. But Bulstrode did not falter.

"Get up, you fellows!" he called out. "I call on you to back me up."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came from Bob Cherry's bed. "What's the trouble?"

"Jump up," said Nugent. "You're wanted."

"Right you are!"

Bob Cherry was out of bed in a moment. Johnny Bull and Tom Brown followed him quickly. Most of the Remove were awake now, and they knew what was going on. There was no doubt that the feeling of the whole Form was against the two black sheep. Many of the Removes were reckless enough; the Remove had the reputation of being the most rowdy Form in the school. But they drew the line at the kind of blackguardism which appealed to Vernon-Smith and Bolsover. There were very few fellows in the Form whom the Bouncer had been able to induce to follow in his footsteps.

Bolsover and Vernon-Smith stood dismayed. The Bouncer was no fool, and he realised that the game was up, for that night at least. He knew when he was beaten. He went back to his bed, and turned in.

"Better chuck it, Bolsover," he said.

Bolsover snapped his teeth.

"I'm not going to chuck it," he said. "If you won't come with me, I'll go alone."

"You won't go at all," said Bulstrode.

"I tell you I will!"

"And I tell you you won't!"

"And I endorse that statement," said Bob Cherry. "You're not going to challenge the Remove while I've a fist left to punch you with, Bolsover. You're disgraced enough already."

"What do I chimed in Johnny Bull.

"Fash and pe're right," said Micky Desmond. "Ye'd better chuck it, Bolsover darling, and go back to bed like a good little boy."

"I'm going out," said Bolsover obstinately. "The fellow who tries to stop me will get hurt, that's all."

"Oh, don't play the giddy goat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton impatiently. "You can't go, and you sha'n't go, and that's an end of it."

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent.

Bolsover gave the chums of the Remove a furious look.

"I know what you're interfering for," he said, between his teeth. "I owe this to my minor. He has been spying on me."

Wharton was taken aback.

"Isn't that the case?" Bolsover went on savagely. "Didn't my minor come to your study this evening and tell you tales about me?"

"He did not tell tales about you," said Harry.

"He told you that I was going out."

"I don't choose to answer your questions. You're not going out, and that's an end of the matter."

"We'll see!" exclaimed Bolsover.

He strode to the window.

A crowd of juniors followed him, and as Bolsover put his hands upon the window-frame, many hands grasped him and pulled him back.

Bump!

The bully of the Remove descended upon the floor with a sounding concussion, and he gave a yell of pain.

"Ow!"

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TOM MERRY & CO.'S MUSIC-HALL!

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"It's your own fault," said Bulstrode. "Will you go back to bed!"

"No!" yelled Bolsover.

He leaped to his feet, hitting out furiously. Bulstrode caught his right under the chin, and went over backwards with a crash. His left crashed into John Bull's face, and Bull dropped heavily upon the floor of the dormitory.

But Bolsover had no time to hit out again.

Bob Cherry smote him, and he fell; and then the enraged juniors seized him by his arms and legs, and he was dragged away from the window. Bulstrode staggered to his feet.

"Bump him!" he shouted. "Bump the rotter!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bump the cad!"

"Let me go!" roared Bolsover, struggling furiously. "Let me go! Back up, Vernon-Smith! Come and help me, you cowardly hound! Rescue!"

"Better chuck it, as I advised you," said the Bouncer coolly. "What's the good of butting your silly head against a wall?"

"You coward!"

Bump—bump—bump!

"Ow—ow! Yaro-o-o-p!"

"Give it to the cad!" gasped Bulstrode, rubbing his chin.

"Give it to him, the rotter!"

"Bump him!"

Bump—bump!

"Oh! Ow!"

Bolsover rolled on the floor, gasping, when the juniors released him. Then a rush was made for the Bouncer.

"Bump the other cad!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Give them both a lesson while we're about it!"

"Good egg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith jumped up in alarm. He had not expected that.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed. "I— Oh! Ow! Yow!"

Crash! Bump!

The Bouncer came heavily out of bed upon the floor as the juniors dragged at him. He struggled furiously, fighting like a cat; but he was bumped all the same, and bumped hard. They left him gasping on the floor. Bolsover had scrambled up. The Remove bully never knew when he was beaten, and he was in too great a rage to think of prudence. He charged at the crowd of Removes, hitting out right and left.

"Howly smoke!" roared Micky Desmond, as he caught a drive under the ear, and went sprawling over the Bouncer.

"Ow! Tare an' ounds!"

"Collar the cad!" yelled Bulstrode.

"Bump him again!"

"He hasn't had enough!"

"Collar him!"

In a second more Bolsover was struggling again in the grasp of the Removes. They were savage enough now, and they bumped him harder than before. Bolsover yelled furiously, and in the midst of the din the dormitory door opened, and a light gleamed into the room.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, stood in the doorway with a lamp in his hand, and his brow was contracted with anger.

"Cease this at once!" he shouted. "How dare you!"

"Cave!" gasped Nugent.

"My hat! Quelch!"

Bolsover was released. The juniors, blinking in the sudden light, stood looking in dismay at their angry Form-master.

"Go back to bed instantly!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Every boy out of bed will take two hundred lines! Get into bed at once!"

The Removes returned sullenly to bed.

"If there is any further disturbance in this dormitory tonight," said Mr. Quelch, "I shall cane every boy in the Form to-morrow morning!"

He closed the door.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry breathlessly. "This is a go! Well, Bolsover's had a good bumping! There's some comfort in that!"

Bolsover only grunted. He was feeling far too stiff and aching to think of going any further. The expedition of the black sheep of the Remove was decidedly off for that night.

As the Remove bully lay in his bed, sleepless and aching, his thoughts turned to his minor, to whom he attributed it all. And never had his feelings been so bitter towards Hubert as they were at that moment.

"HUBERT!"

Bolsover minor started. Morning lessons were over on the day following the disturbance in the Remove dormitory. Bolsover was waiting outside the Third Form-room when the Third came out. His face was dark and angry, and his young brother looked at him very uneasily. He could see plainly enough that there was trouble coming.

"Yes, Percy?" he said timidly.

"I want to speak to you."

"Yes, what is it?"

"Come into my study!"

"Yes, Percy."

Paget linked his arm in Bolsover minor's.

"Don't go!" he said, in a whisper. "Your major has got his back up about something! Don't be an ass! Come out into the Close!"

Bolsover minor shook his head.

"He's going to lick you, as sure as a gun!" said Tubb.

"I don't think so."

"Well, don't go!"

"I must!"

And Bolsover minor followed his brother into his study. The bully of the Remove watched him come in with glittering eyes, and then closed the door and put his back against it. Hubert watched him with startled eyes.

"Is anything the matter, Percy?" he asked, in a faltering voice.

"Yes, you young cub!"

"What—what 'ave I done?"

"You've been spying on me!" said Bolsover, in a low tone of concentrated passion. "You've been spying on me, you cur, and telling tales to Wharton about me."

Hubert changed colour.

"I—I 'aven't, Percy!"

"Didn't you tell Wharton about my breaking bounds?"

"I—I—"

"Answer me, you cub!"

"Did—did Wharton tell you?" gasped Hubert.

"Yes."

"He—he promised—"

Bolsover laughed savagely.

"Well, I found it out, you see. Wharton was on the watch for me last night. I got into a row. You told him. Don't deny it!"

"I—I didn't exactly tell him," faltered Hubert. "I—I thought you was getting into trouble, Percy, with that rotter Vernon-Smith, and I—I asked Wharton if he could 'elp you out, that was all. I found out by accident. I wasn't spying."

Bolsover gritted his teeth.

"And you think you've got a right to set up to judge my actions, and to lay down the law about what I shall or shall not do," he said.

"No. But—but—"

"But you are shocked at me, you street arab!"

"I—I wanted to stop you from getting into trouble, Percy!" said the fag miserably. "I've 'eard the chaps speak of a feller who was expelled from Greyfriars after being led into things by the Bounder. I was afraid it would 'appen to you."

"None of your hypocrisy, you cub! You spied on me, and told tales to Wharton."

"I didn't mean it like that. But I'm sorry—"

"I dare say you are!" said Bolsover grimly. "And I'm going to make you sorrier!"

He picked up a cane that lay on the table, which he had evidently placed there in readiness. Hubert started as he saw it.

"You—you're not goin' to lick me, Percy?" he stammered. Bolsover's eyes gleamed.

"That's just what I am going to do!" he replied. "I'm going to teach you not to meddle in my affairs, you young bound! It's bad enough to have you at Greyfriars at all, disgracing me, and making the fellows tell all sorts of rotten yarns about our family, without having you setting up to judge me, and meddle in my affairs, you guttersnipe!"

"Percy! I—I—"

"Don't Percy me! I'll give you a lesson that you won't forget in a hurry!"

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EVERY
TUESDAY,

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ONE
PENNY.

Bolsover turned the key in the door. A hunted look came into the fag's eyes. He backed away as Bolsover advanced upon him, gripping the cane.

"Percy! Don't! I'm sorry—"

"Oh, shut that!"

Bolsover gripped his minor by the collar.

"Percy!"

"Hold your tongue, you young cad!"

The cane lashed the fag's jacket. He uttered a cry; but the cane rose and fell with savage force. After the first cry the fag did not make a sound. He set his teeth, and his face grew pale, but he gave no cry.

He did not resist.

Lash—lash—lash!

The savage cane rang and lashed upon his back, till the bully's arm was aching with the force of the blows.

"There, you young cad!" he panted at last, flinging the fag from him. "There! That will be a lesson to you!"

Bolsover minor fell where his brother flung him. His face was like chalk, and his eyes full of pain. He gave a dry sob.

"Percy! I—I—"

"Don't talk to me!"

Bolsover swung out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

Hubert lay where he had fallen for some minutes. His brain was almost swimming with the pain of the thrashing he had received. He moaned softly as he moved at last and crawled to his feet. A sob he could not restrain shook him from head to foot. Bitter as was the pain of the licking, it was not so great as the pain in his heart.

He crept to a seat in the window, and sat down, quivering from head to foot. He did not want to go out. The fellows would see that something was the matter with him, and they would ask questions. They would find out that his brother had been brutal to him. And Bolsover minor was eagerly anxious to keep that from their knowledge.

But he was not destined to keep it a secret. Ten minutes or so later the door was opened, and Paget and Tubb looked into the room. They were searching for him.

"He's not here," said Tubb.

Paget caught sight of the little figure huddled on the seat in the window recess.

"There he is!" he exclaimed.

The two fags ran towards Hubert.

"Aren't you coming out?" exclaimed Paget.

Hubert shook his head.

"Oh, come out!" said Tubb. "What's the good of moping here? I suppose your major has been slanging you?"

Hubert did not reply.

"He's been doing something worse than that!" said Paget, his eyes gleaming. "He's been licking you, kid!"

"It doesn't matter."

"Has he been licking you?" shouted Paget.

"I tell you it's nothing," muttered Hubert.

"The rotten bully! The—"

"The beastly cad!" said Tubb.

Hubert's white face flushed.

"Let him alone!" he said. "It doesn't matter to you chaps what my brother does, I suppose? If I can stand it, it's no business of yours!"

"Well, you ungrateful young brute!" exclaimed Tubb angrily.

"I don't mean to be ungrateful," said Hubert. "But—but I don't like to 'ear you slanging my major, that's all."

"Not after he's licked you for nothing?"

"It—it wasn't for nothing, I—I did what he said. I—I ought to have known better," said Hubert, in a low voice.

"He was quite right."

Paget snorted wrathfully.

"Was he?" he said. "I've got my opinion about that. You can stand up for him as much as you like, Billy, but we're not going to put up with the rotten bully! He's not going to lay his paws on a Third-Former without trouble to follow, I can tell you!"

"No fear!" said Tubb emphatically.

"Look 'ere—" began Hubert.

"We'll make him sit up for this!" said Paget savagely.

"If you don't like to help, you needn't; but we're going to!"

"I tell you—"

"Oh, rats!" said Paget. "Come on, Tubb, and we'll tell the fellows, and we'll make that rotten bully sorry for himself, too."

Hubert started up.

"Paget, don't! I tell you it's all right. I—"

"Oh, rot!"

And Paget and Tubb tramped out of the room, leaving Bolsover minor more miserable than they had found him.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Blow for Blow.

HARRY WHARTON stopped in the passage, on his way to the class-room that afternoon, as he caught sight of Bolsover minor. Wharton was feeling troubled in his mind about the result of his interference with Bolsover's plans the night before. He had never supposed that Bolsover would guess from whence he had received his information. But Bolsover had discovered, and Wharton knew him well enough to know that Hubert would suffer in consequence.

"Stop a minute, kid!" he exclaimed.

Bolsover minor did not appear to hear him. He was passing on, with a clouded brow, when Wharton caught him by the shoulder, and stopped him.

"Wot do you want, Master Wharton?" said Hubert sullenly.

"Only a word. I suppose your major has told you about the trouble in our dorm. last night?" said Harry.

"Yes."

"He found out that you had spoken to me," said Wharton. "You may be sure that I didn't tell him."

"He said—" Hubert paused. He realised at once that his brother had deliberately misrepresented the facts, in order to shake his faith in Wharton.

But Wharton caught the word at once.

"He said what? Do you mean that he said that I told him?" he exclaimed sharply.

Hubert crimsoned.

"I—I don't rightly remember just wot he said, Master 'Arry," he said falteringly. "But—but it's all right. I know you wouldn't mean to tell."

"He asked me if you had told me anything," said Harry. "He knew already. He either knew, or guessed. I never expected that, of course. Somebody *must* have heard you talking to me; but I never said a word, and Nugent didn't, either. I'm sorry. I suppose it's been the cause of trouble."

"It's all right, Master Harry."

"I would that I had shipped in the matter if I had guessed that it would cause trouble between you, of course," said Harry. "I was trying to do what you wanted, that's all. I'm sorry it hasn't turned out better."

Hubert nodded.

"I know you'd do your best, Master Wharton," he said. "It's all right, and I'm very much obliged to you—I am really!"

And he went on into the Third Form-room. Harry Wharton entered the Remove class-room, with a troubled wrinkle on his brow. Bolsover was already there, and he looked at Wharton with a sneer as he came in.

"You will be pleased to know that I've given my minor a lesson on the subject of spying and sneaking," he said. "I've given him the licking of his life."

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"You wouldn't have done it if I'd been there," he said. "You are a coward and a cad!"

Mr. Quelch came in, and the juniors went to their places. There was a satisfied grin upon Bolsover's face. He had hit Wharton through Hubert, he realised that, and it afforded the Remove bully considerable satisfaction.

When afternoon classes were dismissed, Bolsover gave Wharton a sneering grin on leaving the Form-room.

"I suppose you have made up your mind to meddle in my private affairs, and champion my minor against me," he said bitterly. "Well, just remember that every time I get any sort from you on the subject, that young cub will suffer."

Wharton stopped, and looked steadily at the Remove bully.

"I understand," he said. "I don't want to interfere with your family concerns, Bolsover. It's not my business how you get on with your minor. But I tell you plainly, you are piling it on a bit too thick, and if you don't draw the line, we shall draw it for you."

"I'm willing to step into the gym. with you, any time you like," said the Remove bully, with a sneer.

"Yes, I know you can lick me, though I'm quite willing to stand up to you at any moment you choose," said Harry Wharton quietly. "But I tell you plainly, if you don't draw a line somewhere, a committee of the Form will draw it for you. That's all. You've had a Form ragging before now, and you ought to remember what it's like."

Bolsover bit his lip. He did indeed remember what it was like. But his arrogant nature was not easily checked.

"So you are going to interfere between me and my brother," he said.

"Yes, if necessary."

"Very good," said Bolsover, in the same sneering tone, "so I may as well tell you now that I shall give young Hubert another licking this evening, just to show you that you can't dictate to me."

"If you do, I'll see that the Form deals with the matter."

"That for the Form!" said Bolsover, snapping his fingers. And he walked away with a sneering grin upon his face.

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Harry Wharton compressed his lips.

"I can't stand that chap much longer, Franky," he said to Nugent. "I shall have to go for him, whether I can lick him or not."

Nugent nodded thoughtfully.

"It's a difficult matter, interfering between brothers," he remarked. "Chap who sticks his nose into family troubles generally gets it snapped off by both parties."

"Yes, I know; but hang it all, we can't let the brute make that youngster's life a misery to him!" Wharton exclaimed hotly. "It's too thick."

"Yes, I know it is. But—" Nugent hesitated doubtfully.

"He says he's going to lick the kid again. It's simply up against us," said Harry. "I'm not going to stand it."

"You won't get any thanks from Hubert for interfering, Harry. The kid seems to stick by his brother, whatever the brute does," said Nugent. "If he would ask us to protect him, it would be a different matter."

"Yes; but—well, we'll see."

The chums did see very shortly. The Remove Dramatic Society were holding a meeting in the Rag after school, and a little later, when Harry Wharton & Co. proceeded there, they heard a sound from within the room that made Wharton's eyes gleam angrily.

"Percy, don't!"

"It's that cad Bolsover again!" said Bob Cherry.

Wharton did not speak. He threw open the door, and strode in. Bolsover major was there, and he had his minor's arm in a hard grip. Wharton did not need telling what he was doing. He was twisting the fag's arm—a species of bullying very much in favour with Percy Bolsover.

"Stop it, you cad!" shouted Wharton.

Bolsover looked round with a sneering laugh, and gave the fag's arm another twist. Hubert uttered a sharp cry.

"Oh!"

Wharton ran straight at the bully of the Remove.

Bolsover released the fag, and turned to encounter Wharton. He received Harry's clenched fist full in the face, and went with a crash to the floor.

Wharton threw off his jacket.

"Now get up, you cad, and we'll have this out!" he cried.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Let me—"

"Leave it to me, Bob."

Bolsover was on his feet in a twinkling. Bolstrode took Hubert by the shoulder, and pushed him out of the room, and locked the door.

"Now, go it, you cripples!" he said.

"They were already 'gone'!"

Bolsover had attacked Wharton savagely. Harry was standing up to him gallantly; but the big, overgrown bully of the Remove carried all before him at first. Bolsover was a year older than Harry, half a head taller, and bigger in every way. He was big enough and old enough, as a matter of fact, to be in the Fifth, and he would have been in the Fifth if he had not been an incurable slacker.

But there was no slacking about him when he was fighting. He had courage enough of a bulldog variety, and when his temper was up he was reckless of the damage he might do.

The juniors formed a circle round the combatants. It was a very informal fight, without any rounds or time-keeping.

Wharton was driven back, but though he was the smaller of the two, he was a splendid boxer, and all that science and courage could do, he did.

Bolsover was beaten back, and laid upon the floor once more, but he sprang up, and came on again more furiously than ever, as if, like Anteus of old, he gathered renewed strength by the contact with mother earth.

Bolsover's left eye was soon closed, and his nose was streaming red. Wharton was breathing very hard by this time. The Remove bully pressed him hard, and succeeded at last in getting in a tremendous right-hander, which would have knocked out the biggest fellow in the school. Wharton went down heavily.

Bolsover stood over him, scowling.

"Get up, and have some more!" he gasped.

Bob Cherry helped Wharton to his feet. Harry was dizzy and sick from the tremendous blow, but he was keen to go on. But Bolstrode intervened.

"You can't go on, Wharton!" he exclaimed. "Hang it all! You can hardly stand on your pins. Get out of this room, Bolsover."

The bully swung away to the door with a defiant laugh.

The door closed behind him. Wharton sank into a chair, mopping his nose with a handkerchief, which was soon stained.

ANSWERS

deep crimson. He was indeed in no condition to go on with the fight.

"You chaps go on with the rehearsal," said Wharton, at last. "I'll look on. I don't feel much up to rehearsing just now."

"My hat! I should say not!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"And after the rehearsal," said Bulstrode, "we'll take the matter of Bolsover minor in hand. I think he's got to the end of his tether."

And the Removites agreed unanimously.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Wrong Catch!

BOLSOVER minor sat by the fire in the Third Form-room, alone.

It was not time yet for evening preparation, and the Third-Formers were not there, and for the moment Bolsover minor had the room to himself.

The fag's thoughts were dark and bitter.

His life at Greyfriars had opened brightly enough. In spite of the fact that he had been brought up in the streets, wild, uneducated, the fellows he mixed with at Greyfriars had taken to him very kindly. He had made many friends, and those who were not his friends were mostly inclined to treat him with a good-natured tolerance.

There was but one cloud on the horizon.

With the wistful sadness natural to one who had never known kith nor kin, he longed for his brother's affection.

If his major had taken to him, if he had even been commonly decent to him, things would have been so different for the fag.

He had hoped to overcome Percy's dislike and disgust in time—to make his brother like him, by patient and uncomplaining affection.

But he could not help realising at last that this was a hopeless task.

Bolsover hated him!

It had taken the far a long time to realise the truth, but it was borne in upon his mind at last.

His brother was ashamed of him. He was hateful in the eyes of the fellow for whose affectionate regard he longed.

Bolsover regarded him simply as a thorn in his side at the school, and would never regard him as anything else.

Hubert knew it. He felt it. And as the thought weighed in the poor lad's mind, a sob rose to his throat, and seemed to choke him.

For the first time now he thought seriously of leaving Greyfriars.

The thought was painful to him. He had such chances at the school; he had made friends there such as he was not likely to make in any other place. His affections had begun to be entwined about his new home, the only home the wail of the streets had ever known.

And if he left, how was he to explain to his father without betraying Percy? He knew how angry Mr. Bolsover would be if he suspected the true state of affairs, with what just sternness his anger would fall upon the elder brother.

And how was he to keep the knowledge from his father, if he left the school? He would not lie to him, as Bolsover major suggested; he would not even entertain that thought. But what was he to say at home?

He realised that if he left school for Percy's sake, he could not go home to his father. Mr. Bolsover was only too likely to send him back to Greyfriars, and to take Percy away instead. And the patient, kind-hearted lad could not endure the thought of thus injuring the brother who had never been anything but cruel and unkind to him.

What was he to do?

Go back to his old life, leave everything to Percy, as Percy evidently wished? Percy had told him that he was an interloper; he would never regard him as anything else. Had he a right to come between Percy and his father?

The fag's miserable reflections were interrupted by the Third-Formers crowding into the room. The fags were chuckling over something; but Bolsover minor was too troubled to listen to what they were saying, till some words spoken near him caught his ear, and he started up. They were speaking about his brother.

"If the rotten bully isn't sorry for himself this time, it will be funny!" Johnson II. remarked. "Paget's idea is ripping."

"Don't jaw it out to Billy," said another. "He always sticks up for that rotten major of his. Blessed if I know why."

Hubert started to his feet. He saw with a glance that Paget, Tubb, and Smith III. were not in the crowd of fags.

"Where's Paget?" he exclaimed.

"It's all serene!" chuckled Johnson II. "It's only a little surprise we've arranged for your major in his study, and the chaps are carrying it out."

"What are they doing?" Bolsover minor exclaimed breathlessly.

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"Never mind. Hallo! Where are you going?" exclaimed Johnson II.

Bolsover minor did not reply. He was dashing towards the door of the Form-room. The fags shouted to him to come back, but Bolsover minor did not heed. He ran out of the Form-room, and towards the stairs, and dashed up them to the Remove passage. The excited voices of the fags died away behind.

Bolsover minor ran down the passage. Sounds of suppressed laughter proceeded from his major's study. The raiding was in hand, evidently.

Without waiting to listen how many fellows were inside, Bolsover minor opened the door at once and rushed in. There was no light in the study.

There was a quick, suppressed cry of alarm.

Bolsover minor held out his arms in the dark as he heard sounds of movement.

"Dodge the beggar!" cried a voice—that of Tubb.

"Dose him, you mean?" said another.

"Right-ho!" chuckled still another.

And something whirled all over Bolsover minor, choking him, filling his eyes and ears and mouth with a nauseous grit and smell.

"Oh! Groo! Oogh!" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Staggered by the shock, Bolsover minor still made a fight for it.

Spluttering the awful snot out of his mouth, he plunged round and round the study.

More snot was thrown in Bolsover minor's face. He gasped.

"Oh! Groo—groo!" he spluttered. "Yarrop! Gerrooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My only hat!"

"Give him another dose!" yelled Paget.

"Better hook it!" said Smith III.

"Yes, rather! Come on!"

Tearing the door open, they rushed away down the passage.

The better light there revealed them to be Tubb, Smith III., and Paget.

"Groo! Oogh! Groo!" came Bolsover minor's voice from the study.

"Ripping!" said Smith III. "That's one for Bolsover!"

"What-ho!" grinned Tubb. "He won't forget that!"

"Better get out of here before he comes after us, though," said Paget.

"Groo! Oogh! Groo!"

"Poor old Bolsover!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The sound of footsteps came up the passage—a heavy tread.

"Quick! Hop it, kids!" Tubb exclaimed.

And they doubled their speed.

To their dismay a burly figure strode into view in the Remove passage.

It was Bolsover major!

The fags halted, with expressions of amazement.

"Bolsover!"

"Great Scott!"

"Phew!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Bolsover. "What are you young

beggars up to?"

"Lemme pass!" gasped Tubb.

"You young sweeps—"

"Now, Smith!" cried Tubb. "Now, Paget!"

And the fag dived to one side, to pass Bolsover.

Bolsover made a grab at Tubb, but the other two fags were on him. Paying too much attention to Tubb, Bolsover

was not prepared for the push which Paget gave him.

Smith III. followed up Paget's lead by grabbing Bolsover's

shirt, and the bully of the Remove rolled over in the passage.

He tried to hold on to Tubb, but the youngster wrenched himself free.

"Now, kids!" he shouted.

They dashed away, roaring with laughter.

"Come back, you young rotters!" yelled Bolsover.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By Jove, that was a bit close!" said Tubb. "I wonder

who that was in the study, though?"

"Give it up," grinned Paget. "The Bounder, perhaps.

Ha, ha, ha!"

And notwithstanding Bolsover's repeated invitations to

come back, as he picked himself up, the fags disappeared as

quickly as their legs could carry them.

Bolsover started to follow them, but he paused.

"Dash the young sweeps!" he exclaimed, as he rubbed his

knee. "They've been in my study, playing some rotten jape,

I suppose."

11

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Order Early.

NEXT

TUESDAY: "A RACE AGAINST TIME!"

Bolsover had caught the sounds that were issuing from his study.

"Goo! Ooch! Grooch!"

"My hat! The young wasters were not all got away," exclaimed the bully of the Remove.

And he rushed towards the door.

The sneezing and coughing were still going on. Bolsover gave a grim laugh.

"Good! One of the little beggars left! I'll teach him to come potting about on my premises!"

And he dashed into the study.

Striking a match, he saw a figure near the fireplace, covered from head to foot in soot. He also noticed the damage his study had sustained.

The flag backed away from him as he came forward, rubbing his eyes and coughing violently.

"Who's that?" said Bolsover.

"It's me, Percy," murmured the flag.

Bolsover gritted his teeth.

"Oh, it's you, is it? Well, I think I know what to do with you."

"It's not my fault, Percy," pleaded Bolsover.

"Get out, you little brute!" said the bully, as he lighted the gas.

"I came to stop them, Percy," said the youngster, as he gasped in his efforts to clear his lungs from soot. "They were here when I came—"

"You lying little hound!"

And Bolsover seized his minor by the collar, and began to cuff him.

"Oh, don't, Percy!"

"Don't give me any of your cheek!" said Bolsover. "You're the worst of the lot!"

Cuff—cuff—cuff!

Bolsover minor gave a cry.

"Let me explain, Percy."

"Rot! I don't want your explanations, you little hound!"

"I came to warn you about them."

"And you expect me to believe that?" sneered his brother. Cuff—cuff—cuff!

"Lemme alone!"

"You bet! Take that, and that, and that!"

Each word marked a heavy cuff on the flag's head.

"Now, out you go!" said Bolsover.

The youngster was dazed, as well he might be. Blinded with soot, and gasping as he was, he yet tried to explain to his major.

"If you'll only just let me tell you, Percy," he said.

"Not a word, you gutter-snipe! Get out!"

Bolsover minor did not move.

"Hang you, you little rotter!" shouted Bolsover. "Get out!"

And in an instant Bolsover minor was in his grasp again.

"Don't, Percy—don't!"

Bolsover renewed the cuffing. The youngster was too spent to resist.

"If you won't go, I must throw you out!" said Bolsover.

"Percy—"

"Don't 'Percy' me!" said Bolsover, between his teeth. "I tell you I won't stand that from you."

"I—I came here—"

"And now you're going, you young cad!"

Bolsover's grasp closed again upon the flag. Hubert did not resist. Bolsover, gritting his teeth, swung him to the door, and opened it with his free hand.

"Now, you young sweep—"

"Don't! I'll go!"

"You will!" said the Remove bully, with a savage laugh. "You'll go, and you won't come back again, if you know what's good for you!"

And with a swing of his powerful arms he flung the flag into the passage.

Bolsover minor fell heavily. But no cry escaped his lips. Bolsover stood looking at the study for a moment, with a hard, grim expression upon his face.

Then he stepped back into the study and slammed the door.

Bolsover minor lay where he had fallen for some moments. Then he rose slowly to his feet.

He was aching—aching from the fall and from the blows of the Remove bully. But his heart was aching more.

The soot covered his face; but there were furrows in it now, made by the hot tears he could not restrain as they coursed down his cheeks.

Without a word, choking back the heavy sob that rose to his throat, Bolsover minor moved away.

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THE TALENTED CHAPTER.

The Honourable Committee.

BANG! A heavy boot crashed upon the door of Bolsover's study, and it crashed open, and the bully of the Remove started to his feet with a sudden exclamation.

"You silly ass!" he roared.

A shower of blots had scattered from his pen as he jumped up, and the imposition he was at work upon was hopelessly spoiled.

He glared savagely at the juniors who crowded into his study. But the choice spirits of the Remove were not likely to be scared by Bolsover's angry looks. There were eight of them, and they marched into the study quite undeterred by Bolsover's evident rage.

"What do you want, you fatheads?" growled Bolsover.

"You'll see soon enough!" said Bulstrode grimly. "Shut the door, Cherry!"

"Right—ho!"

Bob Cherry closed the door and locked it, putting the key into his pocket as a measure of precaution. Bolsover regarded this proceeding with growing alarm.

"Look here, what's the game?" he exclaimed.

He ran his eye over the crowd of Removites, as if seeking a victim. They were Bulstrode, the captain of the Form, Wharton, Nugent, Cherry, John Bull, Tom Brown, Micky Desmond, and Mark Linley. There was not one of them who would not have been a doughty antagonist even for the powerful bully of the Remove, and together, of course, they could have handled the big junior like an infant.

"It isn't a game," explained Bulstrode. "You are aware, I believe, that I am captain of the Remove?"

"Yes, you are!" growled Bolsover.

"Very good! I thought I'd remind you, as you seem to have overlooked the fact," Bulstrode explained urbanely.

"What do you want here?"

"Nothing. It's not a question of what we want, but of what you want. You want to be brought to your senses, and we're going to do it."

"Faith, and ye're right!"

"Oh, don't play the giddy ox—"

"That's what you've been doing, and we're going to stop you. Stand up!"

Bolsover threw himself into his chair.

"Stand up!" repeated Bulstrode sternly.

"I won't!"

"Put him on his feet!"

Three or four pairs of hands grasped the Remove bully, and he was dragged out of his chair. He began to struggle, but the looks of the juniors were so grim that he dropped it immediately. Bolsover was no fool, and he could see that they were in deadly earnest.

"If he makes a row land him with a cricket-stump till he shuts up!" said Bulstrode.

"What—ho!"

Johnny Bull stood ready with a stump in his hand. Bolsover eyed the stump, and the sturdy junior who held it, uneasily.

"I suppose this is a ragging!" he exclaimed savagely. Bulstrode nodded.

"Just so!"

"Well, look here—" "Shut up! I'm doing the talking," said Bulstrode. "We are going to teach you a lesson, you see. These fellows are a committee of the Form, selected by me, as Form-captain, to deal with the matter."

"Oh, don't play the goat!"

"You've come to the end of your tether," said Bulstrode, without heeding the interruption. "We gave you a lesson once before on the subject of bullying, and it did you good. This is a different matter. The Remove are not satisfied with the way you treat your minor."

Bolsover flushed with rage.

"Are you going to interfere between my brother and me?" he shouted.

"Yes, that is exactly what we are going to do," said Bulstrode coolly.

"You—you—"

"Dry up—I'm doing the talking! You've been a rotten cad to your minor ever since he came to Greyfriars, and the Remove don't like it."

"Mind your own business!"

"If he interrupts me again twist his arm, you fellows. It's what he was doing to young Billy, and it's only fair he should have a sample of it himself."

"Faith, and it's right ye are!"

"I'll twist his arm fast enough!" said John Bull grimly.

"Let me alone!" yelled Bolsover.

"Don't interrupt, then."

"Your minor has his faults," went on Bulstrode cheer-

fully. "Lots of fellows at Greyfriars thought it a bit thick to have a kid off the streets shoved in here. But he's such a decent little chap that we decided to stand it, and even to back him up, and nobody can say that he hasn't tried to get on."

"He has tried hard, and would have done better if he'd had a decent major to back him up," said Mark Linley.

Bolsover looked at Linley with a sneer.

"Of course, a factory cad like you would want to back up a gutsnipe," he said.

"One twist!" said Bulstrode. "We can't have a cad like that being impertinent to a member of the honourable committee."

Johnny Bull, nothing loth, gave Bolsover major's arm a twist in exactly his own style. It elicited a fearful howl from the Remove bully. He made an attempt to spring upon Bull, but strong hands held him back.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! You—you rotter! Ow!"

"Don't you like it?" asked Bull.

"Ow! Ow!"

"Well, if you don't like it, how can you suppose a fag does?" asked Bull cheerfully.

"Ow!" groaned the bully. "Ow!"

"If anybody had a right to complain about your minor being brought here it was us chaps," went on Bulstrode.

"If we took it calmly, you might have done so. You ought to have been jolly glad that the fellows were willing to take in your minor without making a fuss. You ought to have stood by the poor little chap and made things easy for him. Instead of which, you've devoted all your spare time to making his life a burden. The Third Form fags say that you are trying to drive him out of the school with your beastly bullying, and I've no doubt it's quite correct. The matter has now become a regular scandal, and we're getting chipped about it by the other Forms. Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Upper Fourth have written a silly article on the subject to put in the rotten school magazine they are starting. Coker of the Fifth told me only to-day that if we didn't keep you in order he'd take the matter in hand himself. As a reasonable chap you will see that it is getting altogether too thick."

"Oh, rats!"

"That is not the way to address the honourable president of an honourable committee—"

"Bah!"

"Twist!" said Bulstrode calmly. Bolsover got the twist. He gave a yell of pain, and with a tremendous effort he broke loose from the juniors who were holding him, and rushed furiously upon Bulstrode.

"Collar him!" shouted Bob Cherry.

But before he could be collared Bolsover major had grasped Bulstrode, and the president of the honourable committee was whirled round and floored, and Bolsover rolled over him, pommelling like a madman. And like one man the honourable committee threw themselves upon Bolsover.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Honour Bright.

"COLLAR him!"

"Yow! Y-y-yank himmoff!" gurgled Bulstrode. "Draggimoff! Groooch!"

It sounded as if Bulstrode were talking Russian. But it was only want of breath, and the effect of Bolsover's heavy punching. The juniors seized upon the burly Removeite and dragged at him furiously, and he was whirled off the fallen president of the committee. Harry Wharton helped Bulstrode to his feet.

Brief as the attack had been, Bulstrode had sustained great damage. He was blinking painfully with one eye, and his nose streamed red, and his mouth had a curious sideways look. He mopped his nose and mumbled.

"Grooch! Oooop! Wharrer you let him get loose for, you silly asses? Grooooop! Hold the beast! Ow! Yow! Silly fatheads! Oh!"

"Sorry!" said Wharton. "The cad won't get loose again."

"Mind he doesn't! Ow!"

Bolsover was still struggling madly. But he was pinned down in the grasp of the committee. Tom Brown took a length of cord from his pocket and fastened Bolsover's wrists together behind him, and tied the cord to the back of a chair. Then the Remove bully ceased to resist.

"Lemme go!" he gasped. "I'm done!"

Bulstrode glared at him.

"You'll get it all the worse for that, you cad!" he growled.

"Now, then, where was I?"

"You were under Bolsover," said Bull.

"Fathead! I mean, where was I in the indictment—"

"Getting altogether too thick," said Nugent.

"Oh, yes!" Bulstrode, pressed his handkerchief to his nose. "It's altogether too thick, Bolsover. That's what I was saying. I think that's about all."

"Well, if it's all, you can stop this rot and get out of my study," growled Bolsover. "I've got my prep. to do."

"We're not finished yet, my pippin. In the first place, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

you've got to apologise to the committee, representing the Remove, for having acted like a cad and a bully."

"I won't!"

"Then you've got to promise, honour bright, to treat your young brother decently, and never to lick him again."

Bolsover ground his teeth.

"I won't!" he repeated.

"You mean that?"

"Yes!" growled the bully.

"Very well! Then we've got to try means of persuasion," said Bulstrode, giving another dab at his nose. "You are specially fond of twisting fags' arms. I think that your own method of persuasion is the only one—that's most fit to apply to yourself. What do you fellows think?"

"Jolly good!"

"Hear, hear!"

"If a twist or two doesn't bring you to reason we'll find some more severe way," went on Bulstrode. "Now, who's executioner?"

Silence! Nobody specially wanted to take on the task of twisting Bolsover's arm. It was justice, and justice had to be done. But there was not a rush of applicants for the task.

Bolsover glared at the juniors. He imagined that they hesitated for fear of his future vengeance—a great mistake on his part.

"I'll smash the fellow who touches me afterwards," he growled.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Oh, if you put it like that, I'll take it on," he exclaimed.

"Hands off, hang you!"

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

He fastened a grip upon one of the bully's wrists. Bolsover's arms were tied, and he had no chance to resist, but he was not tied tightly enough to make it difficult to administer his punishment.

"Twist!" said Bulstrode.

Bob Cherry twisted. Bolsover howled with pain. There was a tap at the door. Bulstrode looked round anxiously.

"Hang! I hope that's not a prefect!" he exclaimed.

"Who's there?" called out Wharton.

"It's me!"

"Bolsover minor!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Let me in!" came the fag's anxious voice through the keyhole.

"What do you want?"

"I—I want to see my brother."

"Well, your brother doesn't want to see you!" retorted Bulstrode. "Cut off, young shaver, and don't interfere where you're not wanted."

"Oh, let me in! I—I—"

"We're rearing your precious major, and you're not wanted," said John Bull. "Cut off!"

Thump, thump!

"Go away!" shouted Bulstrode.

"I won't! Let me in!"

"Cheeky young beggar!" said Bulstrode, with a frown. "Never mind! Let him go on knocking; it won't hurt the door, and it won't hurt us. Now, then, Bolsover, are you coming to the terms I have suggested?"

"No!" growled Bolsover.

"Executioner, do your duty!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Twist!

Bolsover gave a fearful yell. Outside in the Remove passage Hubert heard it clearly, and he uttered a cry, and kicked on the door.

"Keep it up!" called out Bulstrode. "You keep it up out there, and we'll keep it up in here. That's an equal division of labour. Twist!"

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"Twist again!"

"Yarrop!"

"Now, you know what a fag feels like when he gets it," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Perhaps it never occurred to you before that it hurts. You know now, don't you?"

"Ow! Ow! Stop!" gasped Bolsover. "I—I'll do as you want!"

"You apologise to the Remove?" demanded Bulstrode.

"Oh! Ow! Yes!"

"Humbly!"

"Yes."

"You promise not to bully your young brother any more?" Bolsover did not speak. His eyes were gleaming, and his features were working with rage. Bulstrode regarded him mercilessly. Bolsover had reached the end of his tether, as the Remove captain expressed it, and there was no mercy for him.

"Twist!" said Bulstrode.

"Ow! Ooooooh!"

"Will you promise?"

"Ow, ow! Let my wrist alone! Oh! Yes, I promise."

"You promise not to lick your young brother any more, or to rag him in any way, or to bully him at all?" asked Bulstrode categorically.

Bolsover groaned.

"Yes."

"Honour bright?" demanded Bulstrode.

"Yes, honour bright."

"I think the committee can be satisfied with that," said Bulstrode, looking round at the juniors, and there was a general assent.

"Certainly," said Harry Wharton. "I don't think even Bolsover's cad enough to break a promise like that. If he does, we'll give him a Form trial, and drum him out of the Remove."

"Hear, hear!"

"Let the brute go, then."

Bolsover was released. He stood rubbing his aching wrists, and regarding the juniors with a look that was almost demonic. But he was too exhausted by his struggles and the severe infliction he had endured to do more than glare and gasp.

"Get out of my study!" he muttered thickly.

"With pleasure, now we're finished."

Bulstrode unlocked the door, and the juniors streamed out of the study. Bolsover minor was in the passage. He did not speak to them. His face was pale, and on the white skin was a cut, glowing red, where his brother had struck him.

"You'd better cut, kid," said Bob Cherry, as he passed him.

Bolsover minor did not reply. When the Removites were gone, the fag entered the study, where his brother lay groaning and gasping in a chair.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Hubert's Promise.

"PERCY!" Bolsover sat upright in his chair. He turned a white, savage face and glittering eyes upon the fag, as the latter came timidly into the study.

Hubert shrank back a little. He had never seen such livid hatred in any face before.

"Percy!" he muttered. "I—I would have stopped them if I could! I—shall I go?"

"No," said Bolsover. "As you're here, listen to what I've got to say to you. You young cad! You've been complaining up and down the school of the way I treat you!"

Hubert gave a cry.

"I—I haven't, Percy!"

"You have, you lying young cad. The Remove have taken it up now—taken it upon themselves to right your wrongs."

"But I—I never asked. I never told."

"Well, they've done it. Do you know that they've been ragging me, here in my own study, on your account."

"I'm sorry, Percy. I didn't want—"

"You young hypocrite! You've put them up to it," said Bolsover savagely. "Oh, I'm sick of the sight of you."

The fag's lip quivered.

"Percy! I—I tell you you're wrong. When you found me in your study, sooty, like that, I tell you I 'ad come 'ere to stop the fags from puttin' it on you—"

"Don't tell lies!"

"And—and when I 'eard that the Remove had made a committee to rag you, Percy, I came 'ere to try to 'elp—"

"Oh, shut up! Do you know what they're doing? They've made me promise not to touch you again," said Bolsover.

"I've promised, honour bright. I'm going to keep my word. I've got to. The Form would be too hot to hold me if I broke it."

Hubert's face brightened a little.

"Well, then, Percy—"

"But," said Bolsover in a low, savage voice, "do you think I'm going to let you alone, and let you stay here and

disgrace me, and put my own Form up against me! You sly young hound, you've made everything rotten for me since you've been here."

"I never meant—"

"Whether you meant to or not, that's what you've done. If you had a grain of decency in you, you'd get out. You're an interloper here. You don't belong to Greyfriars. You ought to get father to take you away. But what's the good of expecting decency from a brat brought up among beggars in the street."

"That wasn't my fault, Percy," said the fag, with a quivering lip.

Bolsover laughed scoffingly.

"It's not a rat's fault that it's a rat, but it's a rat all the same, and we poison it," he said. "I dare say it's not your fault that you're a rotten, mean, disgraceful little street-arab, but you are, and I can't stand you."

Hubert was silent. The colour was ebbing from his face. This was the brother whose affection he had hoped to win, whose feelings he had thought he might move by patience and forbearance.

This!

The tears were rising to the fag's eyes, but he kept them back. He knew that the sight of them would only provoke fresh scoffing from his major.

"You've put my own Form against me, and made the fellows up and down Greyfriars look on me as an unnatural sort of monster," went on Bolsover bitterly. "I suppose you are satisfied now. Only don't think that I'm going to take it lying down. I'll make you smart for it somehow; I don't know how yet, but I'll find a way. Now, get out of my study."

"Percy!"

"Get out, I tell you."

The fag did not stir.

"If you dislike me so much, Percy, I—I'm sorry I ever came 'ere," he said, with a break in his voice. "It—it ain't turned out as I thought it would. I didn't know you'd look at it like this, and I 'oped you'd come round in time. I always say a prayer that it will."

"That's not likely to happen."

"I know it ain't—now," said Hubert. "But—but I don't want to be a trouble to you, Percy. If—if you don't want me as Greyfriars—"

He paused.

Bolsover started, and his eyes gleamed.

"Do you mean to say that you'll go?" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

The word was hardly above a whisper.

"You'll go?"

"I'll go, if you don't want me 'ere," said the fag miserably. "I didn't come 'ere to make you hate me, Percy. I'd rather go than that. But—but 'ow am I to go; you 'aven't thought of that."

"Tell the pater you don't like Greyfriars, and ask him to send you to another school."

Hubert shook his head.

"I can't do that, Percy."

Bolsover's lip curled.

"No, I forgot. You've learned the good-little-Georgie binney somewhere in the slums, and you can't tell a lie," he sneered. "Well, tell him something else, then. Tell him you don't get on with me—that will be true enough."

"Then he'll ask you questions. He might even ask the Head, or the other fellows here, and—and—"

"And it would come out that I've been the brutal brother, eh? The rotten bully, the unfeeling major!" sneered Bolsover.

Hubert was silent.

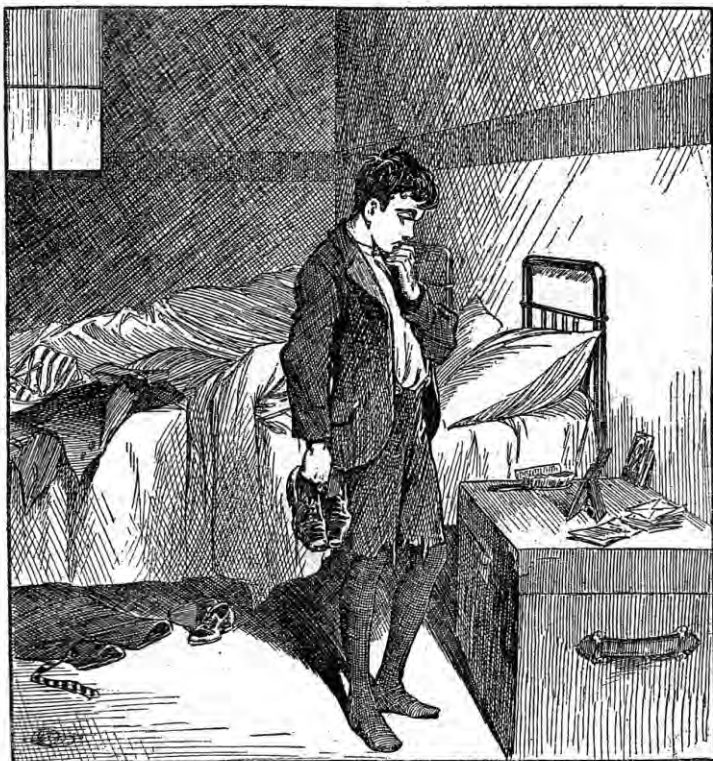
"Still, there's something in that," said Bolsover thoughtfully. "The pater's so queer. If he thought the trouble was my fault—though it isn't—he'd be quite capable of taking me away from Greyfriars myself as a punishment. You never know how to take a pater who goes in for philanthropy, and things of that sort. If you pitch the pater a yarn to get me into trouble—"

"I wouldn't do that, Percy. I think you're 'ard on a kid who's never had a chance, but I don't want to 'urt you."

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As the last stroke of midnight died away, Bolsover minor got up, and dressed himself in the tattered clothes which he had worn formerly when he was a London newsboy. His resolution was taken! He could not remain at Greyfriars, he could not go home. Only his old life was open to him! (*See Chapter 13.*)

"You'd be a pretty young blighter if you did, after the trouble you've given me already," said Bolsover. "Look here, how are you going to work it, then?"

"I can't go 'ome," said Bolsover roughly, "though it will be pretty sickening to find you there when I come home for the holidays. Vernon-Smith is coming home with me next vac., and he can't stand the sight of you."

Hubert winced. "You don't like me at 'ome, Percy, any more than at school?"

"Of course I don't! Did you expect me to?" "No," said the lag, after a pause, in a very low voice. "I guess you would, that's all."

Bolsover laughed angrily. "Oh, don't try the pathetic dodge! I can't stand it," he said. "THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210."

said. "Look here, you've said that you will go. Do you mean it?"

"Yes." "You will fix it up somehow so that the pater won't come down on me," said Bolsover, with a complete unconsciousness of the utter selfishness of the remark.

"Yes." "Good enough! If you do that, I shall think that you're not such an utterly rotten little cad, after all," said Bolsover, more cordially.

Hubert caught his breath. "You—you're sure about it, Percy?" he faltered. "Sure about what?"

"That you really want me to go." "You young ass! Are you going to begin all that again? Of course I'm sure. I can't bear the sight of you."

"I 'oped you might grow to like me, Percy! I—I—you ain't got any other brother," said Hubert.

"Jolly glad, too, if another one would be like you," said Bolsover.

"And you've really thought it over. You don't want ever to see me again?" said Hubert, in a low and unsteady voice.

"Of course I don't, though I suppose I shall have to. But the less I see of you, the better I shall like it."

"Very well, Percy, I'll go."

"Good!"

The fog turned to the door. He paused, and came back towards Bolsover. The Remove bully stared at him.

"Well, what do you want now?" he asked.

Hubert held out his hand.

"Good-bye, Percy, that's all," he said.

"Good-bye! What do you mean? You can't leave the school till you've asked the pater, and he's made the arrangements."

"Good-bye, all the same. You might shake 'ands with me once," said Hubert.

Bolsover gave an impatient laugh.

"Don't be a young ass! Get out!"

Hubert's hand dropped slowly to his side. His face was very pale, and the hard-held tears were glistening on his lashes.

"Very well, Percy," he said, "I—I don't bear you any malice. I think you might 'ave been more decent to me, but I don't bear no malice, and I 'ope you will be all right arter I'm gone. I won't say nothing to father to get you into trouble. 'E won't 'ear a word from me. I did 'ope that you would like me, but—but I s'pose I was a fool. That's all."

Bolsover minor quitted the study.

The Remove bully looked after him with a curious expression on his hard face.

"What did this young beggar mean?" he muttered. "What queer ideas has he got in his head now! The silly young ass!"

Perhaps it crossed Bolsover's mind for a moment that he had been hard upon the fog. But, if so, the thought passed quickly, and he growled angrily as he chafed his wrists, still aching from the punishment inflicted by the committee of the Remove.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Out of Bounds!

VERNON-SMITH greeted his friend with a grin when Bolsover came down into the junior common-room at last. Bolsover was scowling, as he flung himself into a chair by the fire, and his look at the Bouncer was not very friendly.

"I hear you've been in the wars!" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"Mind your own business," said Bolsover.

"A committee of the Remove has appointed itself to redress the wrongs of your young brother, apparently," said the Bouncer.

"Yes, hang them!"

"If I had a minor like that, I think I should make the school rather too hot to hold him," Vernon-Smith remarked.

"That's all right!" said Bolsover savagely. "He's going. The Bouncer raised his eyebrows.

"Going to leave Greyfriars?"

"Yes."

"Good news for you. You don't mean to say he's going to bolt?"

"Of course not," said Bolsover irritably. "He's going to ask the pater to take him away. He's promised to go."

"Then he won't be able to keep his fatherly eye on you—just when you need it, too," said the Bouncer.

"Oh, cheeze it! Look here," said Bolsover, sinking his voice, "what about the run out to-night?"

Vernon-Smith shook his head.

"It's off," he said.

"Why?"

"Too risky," said the Bouncer. "Better wait till things have quieted down a bit. No good getting the whole Form's back up against us, you know. I don't want to have any more bumping as we had last night."

Bolsover sneered.

"You're afraid of the Remove."

Vernon-Smith nodded cheerfully.

"Of course I am. I can't fight forty-odd fellows, and I'm not going to try. You can take it on if you like."

"I'm going," said Bolsover.

"To-night."

"Yes," said the Remove bully between his teeth. "I've got an appointment at the Cross Keys, and I'm going, if I have to fight 'all the Remove."

The Bouncer shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, you can go," he said. "I shan't try."

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"Do you mean to say that you won't come with me?" Bolsover asked angrily.

"Certainly. Look here, it's not only the Remove; but the roads aren't safe late at night," said the Bouncer. "I heard this morning that a chap had been knocked down and robbed in Friarlane Lane last night. We might have dropped on the same footpath if we'd gone out as we wanted to."

Bolsover laughed contemptuously.

"So you're afraid of a lonely road after dark. Is that it?"

"Put it as you like. I'm not going."

"Stay in bed, then, you rotten coward! I'll go alone."

"I advise you to chuck it."

"Keep your advice."

The Bouncer shrugged his shoulders and walked away. He knew that it was useless to argue with Bolsover, and he did not waste his breath in the attempt.

No notice was taken of Bolsover by the Removites when the Form went up to bed. The committee of the Remove had done its work, and they hoped that Bolsover had been satisfied by it. But there was no disposition to triumph over the bully. Bolsover turned in without speaking to anyone in the Form, and Wingate turned the lights out in the dormitory.

Bolsover did not sleep.

He fully intended to make the excursion he had planned for that night; all the more because he could let Harry Wharton & Co. know about it in the morning, and thus show them that he was not to be over-ruled.

But although he had told the Bouncer that he was willing to fight the whole Form rather than give up his idea, he was very careful to keep his intention a secret.

He had no desire to be dragged back from the window, and bumped by Bulstrode and the rest, as on the previous occasion.

It crossed Harry Wharton's mind when he went to bed that probably Bolsover would renew his attempt that night; but he had no intention of keeping awake to watch the bully of the Remove.

But there was one fellow in the Form who did so. It was Billy Bunter. When the other fellows dropped off to sleep, Billy Bunter was still awake, and his spectacles glimmered from his bed in the gloom of the dormitory.

Eleven o'clock rang out dully from the clock-tower.

Bolsover slipped noiselessly from his bed, and dressed himself almost without a sound. As he finished and turned towards the window, he gave a sudden start as a voice was audible in the silence of the room.

"Bolsover!"

"The bully's heart beat like a hammer."

"Who's that?" he muttered. "Smithy!"

"Oh, really, Bolsover—"

"Bunter!"

"Yes." The fat junior sat up in bed. "I say, Bolsover, you know, you really oughtn't to do these things, you know. I really think that I ought to call Bulstrode, you know."

"Shut up!" said Bolsover, in a fierce whisper.

He had left his attempt till a late hour, in order to be sure that the Remove were all sleeping soundly. He realised that Bunter must have stayed awake on purpose.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Quiet! What do you want?"

Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles.

"I don't want anything, Bolsover, excepting to do my duty, you know."

"Shut up, then, you fat cad!"

"Oh, really—"

"You'll wake the fellows if you jaw, hang you!"

"Oh, really, Bolsover! I—I was just going to say that I'm expecting a postal-order to-morrow morning," whispered the fat junior. "It's just occurred to me that it may be delayed in the post, and—perhaps you wouldn't mind advancing me five bob on it."

"You fat cad!"

"Of course, you needn't do anything of the sort if you don't want to," said Bunter. "I will wake Bulstrode up and ask him."

Bolsover ground his teeth.

"If you say a word—"

"I'm rather in need of cash, you know, and I should like to ask Bulstrode whether he could advance me something on my postal-order," Bunter explained. "If you can do it, of course, there won't be any need to wake Bulstrode up."

"In the morning, then," said Bolsover.

"Ahem! You might forget it in the morning, or change your mind. Suppose you hand the cash over to me now."

"I—I can't find it now."

"All right, then, don't bother. I'll ask Bulstrode."

Bolsover controlled his rage with difficulty. The Owl of the Remove had a very narrow escape at that moment from being dragged out of bed and bumped on the floor. It was

(Continued on page 18.)

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BOLSOVER MINOR'S LAST SACRIFICE.

(Continued from page 15.)

only Bolsover's anxiety to avoid waking the other fellows that saved Billy Bunter.

"Very well," said Bolsover, "quiet. I'll get it."

"Good!"

"Wait a minute."

Bolsover moved away as if to get the money. He crept towards the window instead, and opened it as quietly as he could. But Bunter, short-sighted as he was, had very keen ears, and he detected the slight creak of the window.

"Bolsover!" he called out.

Bolsover sprang into the window-frame and climbed out. He was on the window-sill now, and it was too late for him to be stopped.

"I say, you fellows, wake up!" shouted Billy Bunter, realising that he had been tricked. "Wake up, you know! I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the row?"

"What are you yelling for, you fat idiot!" growled Bolstrode.

"I think it's my duty to tell you, Bulstrode—"

"Oh, shut up, and go to sleep!"

"But, Bolsover—"

"Oh, blow Bolsover!"

"He's going out."

"What!" Bulstrode sat up in bed. "What's that, Bunter?"

"I think it's my duty to tell you that Bolsover's going out."

"My hat!"

Bulstrode sprang out of bed. A cold draught from the open window caught him, and he sneezed. He ran to the window, and climbed up and looked out. The ivy below was rustling, but Bolsover had disappeared.

"Bolsover!"

Bulstrode called out the name softly. There was no reply from the darkness below. The captain of the Remove came back from the window, gritting his teeth.

"Is he gone?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes."

"I say, you fellows, I—"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Bulstrode. "I've got out of bed for nothing. I've a jolly good mind to call a prefect; but, oh, hang the fellow!"

And Bulstrode went back to bed.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER

The Flight of Bolsover Minor.

MIDNIGHT! Twelve strokes had sounded from the clock-tower. Greyfriars was sleeping.

The last light had gone from the last window: the whole school, masters and boys, was wrapped in slumber.

There was one empty bed in the Remove dormitory; in the others, the juniors slept soundly. In the other dormitories, silence reigned. In all the great building there was one that was wakeful—two eyes only were open, when midnight tolled out into the darkness and silence.

Bolsover minor was awake!

The boy had not slept!

In his major's study that evening his resolution had been taken. As he lay sleepless in his bed, while the other boys slumbered round him, Hubert thought it over.

He could not stay at Greyfriars.

It was bitter enough to him to think of leaving. He had grown to love the school—the grey old buildings, the dim, shady cloisters, the old oaken desks in the Close; all were dear to him, even to the old oaken desks in the Form-room, carved and hacked with the initials of generations of Greyfriars boys.

But he had to go.

He had hoped—he had clung long to the hope—that his brother might soften in time, that he would become the same to him that Frank Nugent was to Nugent minor.

But he knew now that the hope was vain.

It would never be.

And the fact felt that he must go—must leave the brother who hated him, but for whom his own affection was strong and would not die. But to go home—that was impossible. For whatever he might say, his father would learn the truth.

Old Mr. Bolsover was a kind old gentleman, and Percy Bolsover had no high opinion of his understanding; but Hubert knew that he was keen enough, and he would not be long in getting at the facts.

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What would that mean for Percy Bolsover?

Hubert knew how angry the old gentleman would be if he knew. He had expected what Hubert had only hoped—that Percy Bolsover would stand by his young brother, and help him in every way to gain what he had lost by his years of poverty and want.

Mr. Bolsover was more than likely to take Bolsover away from the school, and send Hubert back. Even if he did not, there would be anger and bitterness between the father and his elder son.

Had the boy—who a few weeks before had never known a father—a right to come between father and son in this way?

His brother had told him that he was an interloper; and Hubert felt miserably that it was true.

He had no right there.

He had no right to sow dissension between father and son. The boy felt it—perhaps felt it too keenly.

And his resolution was taken.

He could not go home without making Percy suffer for his unfeeling conduct. He could not remain at Greyfriars, to be a thorn in his brother's side, to be met with hatred and scorn from his major at every turn.

There was only one other resource.

His old life was open to him.

And terrible as the wrench would be, Bolsover minor, with an unconscious heroism of self-sacrifice, had made up his mind to it.

During the evening, escaping the eyes of the fags, the boy had hidden his old clothes in the Third Form dormitory. He intended to dress in them when the school was silent and asleep, and go.

He had written a note to leave in his brother's study, where Percy Bolsover would find it: it was a word or two of farewell.

To his father he had written nothing. He could say nothing to Mr. Bolsover without betraying Percy—and that the little fellow was resolved not to do.

He could only hope that his father would forget him. After all, he had been lost to his father for the greater part of his life. His discovery was still recent, and surely his father would not grieve much. In any case, it was better that he should grieve, than that he should be estranged from the son he had always known, and in whom his pride was placed.

Midnight!

Bolsover minor rose from his bed as the last stroke died away.

He had placed his old clothes under the bed—that old suit of clothes, ragged and tattered, in which he had sold papers in the streets of London. He had kept the clothes as a reminder of his old life, not wishing to break away from every association. For in that life, along with want and trouble, he had had many bright days. Indeed, many a time he had thought of the lighted streets, of the excited bustle and hurry of selling off the latest editions in Fleet Street, with regret. He had seen lights and shades of life that were unknown to the Greyfriars fellows.

Glad as he was to be at the school, he had not parted from the old life quite without regret.

In dim courts in London he had acquaintances, friends, fellows who would be glad to see him again; he was not going out into a deserted world, abandoned by all. He pictured himself having cheap meals once more in the rooms of the Newsboys' Club, in Farringdon Street.

He drew out the clothes, and dressed himself. Round him the Third Form were sleeping soundly; they were not likely to wake.

His dressing finished, the fag stole towards the door. It creaked as he opened it, and he listened breathlessly, but there was no sound from the beds.

He stepped out into the passage.

There was a dim light from the high window at the end of the passage, and it revealed a tattered form—a form that would have astounded the Greyfriars fellows if they could have seen it.

He was no longer Bolsover minor; he was Billy the news-boy again.

He paused in the passage to listen. To be caught now would ruin everything. But there was no sound, save the scuttling of a rat behind the wainscot.

He trod on tiptoe down the passage.

Down the silent staircase, in the darkness, holding his little bundle tightly, he stopped in the Remove passage, at the door of his major's study. He knew it well enough in the darkness.

In the study there was a glimmer of starlight from the window. It showed up the furniture and the carpet, still blackened with the soot the fags had scattered there. There remained still a faint odour of soot in the air.

Hubert placed the note upon the table, and laid a paper-

weight upon it. His brother could not fail to find it there on the morrow. Then he left the study.

He crept silently downstairs, and opened the little window in the hall. Leaning out, he dropped his bundle softly into the Close.

He climbed out of the window, closed it behind him, and dropped from the sill. His heart was beating hard, and there was a moisture on his eyelashes. He was leaving everything—everything.

But he set his lips hard, and turned his face from the school. With the bundle under his arm, he crossed the Close, under the murmuring elms, and reached the school wall.

On the other side was the road—and the wide world.

It was not difficult for the active lad to climb the wall. On top of the wall, he laid his bundle down, and looked back at the school.

He could not see it. The school buildings were swallowed up in the darkness of midnight.

A sigh left his lips.

But he did not falter. He dropped his bundle into the road, and dropped after it. He was free! Greyfriars, as if his life there had been a dream that he had dreamed, lay behind him for ever.

Boom!

He started as the hour rang out from the clock-tower of the old school. Chimes—and the half-hour. It was half-past twelve. Was it the last time that he was fated to hear that deep tone in the stillness of the night?

"Good-bye, Greyfriars!" he whispered to the dumb, silent walls.

He turned his face towards the village.

There was the sound of a movement—a footstep ringing on the road in the night silence.

The fog, startled, crouched back against the wall.

To be discovered now meant failure after all.

He crouched in the shadows as the footstep came nearer.

In the dim starlight on the road a form came into view. From as the light was, Hubert recognized it, and the blood rushed to his heart.

It was his brother!

Unconscious of the little form crouching in the shadow of the wall, Bolsover major came on. He was returning from his night excursion—Hubert knew where he had been. Not for worlds would he have allowed his brother to see him at that moment. He crouched deeper into the shadows. Surely his brother would pass him unseeing.

And as he watched the form of the Remove, he became aware of two other dim forms, stealing after him—two burly men, who had moved out of the shadow of the palms on the other side of the road.

Hubert caught his breath.

He remembered the story he had heard that day, of someone who had been robbed by footpads in Friarale Lane.

He watched, fascinated, his heart beating like a hammer. Just as Bolsover came abreast of the hidden fog, there was sudden rush of feet. The two dim forms closed in upon the junior, and Bolsover was struggling in their grasp.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Sacrifice.

BOLSOVER gave a cry as the footpads rushed upon him, but the cry was choked back by an arm that was thrown round his neck from behind. He was dragged backwards in a savage grip.

"Oh, help!"

But the cry was only a murmur. The gripping arm round his throat choked his utterance. He struggled fiercely, kicking and hitting, and there was a savage curse from one of the footpads, as Bolsover's heel jammed on his shin.

"Give 'im the cudgel, Bill!"

An arm swung in the air, and the blow was falling, when a shadow darted out from the wall, and a little figure hurled itself upon the footpad.

"No, you don't!"

The ruffian staggered back, taken by surprise. The footpads had been as ignorant as Bolsover of the crouching figure by the wall.

Bolsover minor was upon the ruffian, hitting furiously. He had rushed to his brother's rescue without a thought—without a pause. For one moment the burly footpad staggered back, and the fog hit at him fiercely. Then the arm swung up again, and the cudgel descended.

It seemed to Bolsover minor that the world had come to an end suddenly.

Lights danced for a second before his eyes—then came blackness. The fog, stunned by the brutal blow, fell like a log into the road.

But Bolsover had taken advantage of the interruption to tear himself from the grasp of the other ruffian.

He sprang away, shouting at the top of his voice. It was no time to remember that he was breaking bounds—that

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discovery at the school was the last thing he wished. He was in danger of his life now.

"Help!" he yelled. "Help! Murder!—Help!" The footpads dashed at him. Bolsover eluded them, and sprang towards the school gate. He caught the bell handle, and dragged at it with all his force, and from within the walls there came a ringing clang.

Then he eluded the footpads again.

They paused.

Bolsover minor lay in the road, his arms outstretched, horribly still.

"You've done for 'im, Bill!" muttered a hoarse voice. "Better 'look it!'"

Two dim forms vanished into the shadows of the road. Bolsover watched them go; watched them, ready to dodge if they returned. But they did not return. Now that the school was alarmed, they were thinking only of placing as great a distance as possible between themselves and the scene of the outrage.

Their footsteps died away.

Bolsover stood gasping.

He had soared them away by the peal at the porter's bell; but now that they were gone, he realized what that meant to him. Gosling, the porter, was awakened. A light was already gleaming through the bars of the gate.

Bolsover panted.

Had he time to get into the school—to hide himself in the Remove dormitory, before help came—the help he had called for? He ran towards the wall, and almost stumbled over the still form lying face downwards in the road.

He stopped.

This stranger—this ragged lad—had come to his aid. It could not abandon him there. He did not know who he was, but he could not leave him so. Bolsover was bad, but he was not so bad as that.

"Plucky little beggar, whoever he is," the bully muttered, as he stopped. "He tackled those big brutes—for me! Queer thing to do, too. But I wonder who he is."

In spite of the bundle, the ragged clothes, there was something that seemed familiar to Bolsover's eyes in the outlines of the still form.

He dropped on his knees in the road beside it. He lifted the heavy head, he glanced at the white face, stained with blood, and then a hoarse cry broke from his lips.

"Hubert!"

His brother!

Bolsover gazed at the pallid face, with starting eyes.

He could hardly believe what he saw. His brother, lying still and stained with blood—struck down in his defence!

What did it mean—what did the old clothes mean—and the bundle—and Bolsover minor's presence there in the lonely road past midnight?

What could it mean?

The only possible meaning was borne in upon Bolsover's mind. This was what Hubert had meant in the study—this was how he was to leave Greyfriars, without causing trouble between his elder brother and his father.

He had intended to go—for good—to take himself out of his brother's life as completely as though he had never entered it—to disappear from Greyfriars, leaving no trace behind.

Bolsover looked down upon the white, unconscious face, and a dry sob sounded in his throat.

It was he who had brought the boy to this!

But for him, Hubert would not be lying there in the road, with the blood streaming down his face, and his eyes closed as if in death.

As if by a flash of lightning, the bully of the Remove saw his conduct revealed to him in its true light.

"Hubert!" he whispered. "Hubert!"

But the voice that would have answered so gladly before was silent now. The eyes that would have looked affection upon him were closed. Would they ever open again? Bolsover shuddered as the fearful thought forced itself into his mind.

"Hubert! I'm sorry—I'm sorry! Look at me, old chap—speak! Just one word—oh, heavens, he's dead, and it's my fault! Hubert!"

Bolsover sprang up and looked round him wildly.

The light of the porter's lantern gleamed through the gate. Bolsover ran towards it, crying out as he ran.

"Gosling—help—quick!"

The Greyfriars porter stared at him in amazement through the gate, as the rest of the staff came running.

"Master Bolsover—"

"Quick! Open the gate—"

"But—but wot—"

"Open the gate!" shrieked Bolsover, shaking the bars

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NEXT TUESDAY: "A RACE AGAINST TIME!" BY FRANK RICHARDS. Order Early.

with his hands in a frenzy. "My brother's been murdered!"

"Oh!"

"Help! Quick!"

The porter unlocked the gate, and swung it open. He came out into the road, and flashed the lantern light upon the ghastly face of Bolsover minor.

"Good heavens!" muttered Gosling.

"Is he—he—?" Bolsover could speak barely above a husky whisper. "Is he dead?"

"No. But he ain't far from it, I think," said Gosling.

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Hubert! Oh, Hubert!"

"Run to the House for help, Master Bolsover, quick!"

"Yes, yes!"

Bolsover dashed in at the gates, and sped across the dark and silent Close. He was not thinking of himself now.

He rang a loud peal on the bell at the door of the School House, and rang again and again, till the whole of the great building was echoing with the sound. He shouted wildly as he rang.

"Help, help!"

Lights flashed in the windows—the door was opened at last. Mr. Quelch, half-dressed, a lamp in his hand, appeared in the doorway. Behind him several Sixth-Formers could be seen. Mr. Quelch seemed petrified for a moment at the sight of Bolsover. He grasped the junior by the shoulder and jerked him away from the bell.

"That is enough, Bolsover. You have alarmed the whole House. What does this mean? What has happened?"

Bolsover groaned.

"My brother—Hubert—"

"What of him?"

"He's injured—murdered—"

"What!"

"He's lying in the road, sir—"

"Are you mad, Bolsover? I cannot understand this! Do you mean to say that your minor is out there in the road?"

"Yes, yes!" shrieked Bolsover. "I tell you he's injured—he may be dead! Come and help!"

He raced back to the road.

Amazed as he was, Mr. Quelch could not doubt. He called to the seniors behind him.

"Wingate, Courtney! Follow me!"

"Yes, sir!"

Mr. Quelch ran quickly after Bolsover, followed fast by the two prefects. Gosling, lantern in hand, was kneeling beside the stricken junior. Bolsover minor was still insensible.

"Good heavens!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "How has this happened? But it does not matter now! Take him up, Wingate—Courtney—carry him in! Gosling, go for the doctor as fast as you can—hurry! Not a second is to be lost!"

"Yesir!" gasped Gosling.

Bolsover minor was carried in. The whole House was awake now; the juniors were all up, and lights gleamed in every dormitory. In the Third-Form quarters the fags had already discovered that Bolsover minor's bed was empty, when the dormitory door was opened, and the injured lad was brought in.

Wingate and Courtney bore him into the dormitory. Bolsover followed, with hanging head, and the tears running down his cheeks.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Remorse.

BOLSOVER MINOR was laid in his bed.

The fags gathered round with pale and frightened faces. There was a murmur of scared voices; but that was all, for Mr. Quelch's gesture enjoined silence.

Mr. Quelch did what he could for the injured boy. The cut upon his head was laid bare; it was washed, where the blood was clotting in the thick hair, and bandaged.

Bolsover minor lay unconscious through it all.

Mr. Quelch's face was pale and stern. How the matter had come about he did not know, but he meant to know. But for the present there was but one thing to be done—to take every care of the sufferer.

When all was done that could be done, and it remained only to await the arrival of the doctor from Friarsdale. Mr. Quelch left the bedside.

"You boys may return to bed," he said quietly. "I need not tell you to make no noise. Your Form-fellow is very ill—you must be silent."

"Yes, sir!" whispered Tubb.

The fags went back to bed. The light was left burning. Wingate remained by the bedside of the injured boy, to watch

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for the first signs of returning consciousness. Mr. Quelch signed to Bolsover to follow him.

"The unhappy junior went blindly into the passage after the Form-master. The tears were thick in his eyes, and they blinded him.

"Oh, sir!" Bolsover's voice was a husky whisper. "He—he is not badly hurt, sir? He will not—die?"

It seemed as if he could hardly speak the word.

"No," said Mr. Quelch curtly. "He is badly hurt, but it is not likely to be fatal, Bolsover."

"Oh, thank Heaven—thank Heaven!"

Mr. Quelch looked at him strangely.

"I did not know you were so fond of your brother."

said.

Bolsover only groaned. "Go to your study now," said Mr. Quelch. "Remain there till I call you. I am going to see the Head—you will be wanted to explain this to him. I will come to your study for you; do not return to your dormitory."

"Very well, sir," muttered Bolsover.

Mr. Quelch walked away. Bolsover staggered, rather than walked, into his study. He lighted the gas. As he threw himself into a chair, the glimmer of the white envelope, partly hidden by the paper-weight on the table, caught his eye. He started, for outside the envelope was written, in his brother's hand—"For Percy Bolsover."

Bolsover knew well enough the sprawling, uneducated hand. He had taunted his minor about it often enough.

Now his fingers shook as he picked up the envelope and opened it. He knew that it contained the farewell of his brother—the brother who had fallen in his defence!

The crabbed, scarcely-legible writing danced before his eyes.

But he read it with an effort, through his tears.

"Dear Percy, I'm goin', as I promised you I woud. I can't go 'ome, because father woud ask questions, and should 'ave to give you away, and I won't do that. I've didn't hate me as much as you do, but I s'pose it w be 'elped, and you won't see me no more, an' way goin' back to London, and you won't never 'ear of me agn. I 'ope you will get on better when I am gone, and the father won't miss me much. He will think I've got tired o the school p'fess, and run away, but I can't 'elp it. Good bye, and God bless you.—HUBERT."

Bolsover crumpled the letter in his hand. "There we stains upon it—stains that had been made by the falli tears of the fag as he had written it.

So that was what Hubert had meant—to give up ever, thing for the brother who had never been a brother to him.

Remorse and shame were gnawing at the heart of the bull, of the Remove.

"Poor Hubert—poor Hubert!" he whispered. "Oh, if he gets well—if he only gets well, I'll make it up to him, I swear it! But—if he should die—"

He choked.

He did not know how long he stood there, the crumpled letter in his hand. The voice of Mr. Quelch at the door interrupted his miserable thoughts.

"Bolsover!"

The Removeite looked round dully.

"Yes, sir."

"The Head wishes to see you."

"Very well, sir."

"Follow me, Bolsover."

Bolsover followed the Remove-master quietly. The letter was still in his hand. He was going to see the Head—to be questioned—but he did not care. For once in his life Percy Bolsover was not thinking of himself.

Dr. Locke was in his study, fully dressed. He had been awakened, like the rest of the Greyfriars, by the disturbance. He had been greatly disturbed by the news of the tragic happening, and he was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the doctor. But there was a great deal in the matter to be explained, and the Head's look was very grim as he fixed it upon the bully of the Remove.

"Here is Bolsover, sir," said Mr. Quelch quietly.

"Bolsover, come here!"

Bolsover halted before the Head.

"Will you explain, Bolsover, how you came to be out upon the Friarsdale Road last past midnight, when you should have been in your bed in the Remove dormitory?" said the Head sternly.

"I broke bounds after lights out, sir," said the junior dully. He had no thought of concealing anything now.

The doctor's brow grew darker.

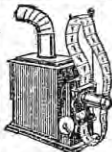
"You broke bounds after lights out, Bolsover!" he repeated.

"Yes, sir."

"For what purpose?"

(Continued on page 22.)

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BOLSOVER MINOR'S LAST SACRIFICE.

(Continued from page 20.)

"To go to the village?"

"Upon what errand?" asked the Head, his voice growing deeper with anger.

"I went to the Cross Keys."

"You dare to admit it?" the Head exclaimed sharply.

"I don't care what happens now," said Bolsover miserably. "I suppose you will expel me, sir; but it serves me right if you do. I've been a beast."

"I hope your repentance, if such it is, is not merely the result of being found out, Bolsover," said the Head dryly.

Bolsover winced.

"It isn't that, sir," he said. "I—I—you know what's happened to my brother."

Dr. Locke's face softened a little.

"I know, Bolsover, and I am very sorry. But I did not think that you would take it to heart like this. It is common knowledge in the school that you are on the worst of terms with your brother, and that the fault is all on your side. You have never shown him the kindness he had every right to expect from you."

"That is indeed true," said Mr. Quelch.

Bolsover shivered.

"That's what makes it so bad, sir!" groaned the Remove bully. "If I'd been decent to him it would have been different. But—but I've been a rotter, and I drove him from the school; and—and then he chipped in to help me, and he got the blow that was meant for me. That's what—"

He broke off, with a sob.

"How did your brother come to be there, then?" asked the Head, eyeing Bolsover, with a strange expression. "He did not go with you?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"What was he doing, then?"

"He was running away from school."

The Head uttered a sharp exclamation.

"What? I cannot believe it! He was not the lad to do such a thing."

"It was my fault!" muttered Bolsover. "I drove him to it! I made his life a misery here, and he promised me to go. I thought he meant to write to father to take him away; but—he meant to go like this. Look at his letter."

He laid the tear-stained epistle upon the Head's table.

Dr. Locke picked it up and read it, and then passed it to Mr. Quelch.

"That is the letter of a kind and noble lad," said Dr. Locke quietly. "You have very much to answer for, Bolsover."

"I know it, sir."

"Your brother was going to leave school and go back to his old life of rags and poverty because you wished to be rid of him and because he would not get you into trouble with your father."

"Yes, sir."

"And that, after the way you had treated him!"

"He was a decent little chap," muttered Bolsover. "He was decent all through. I never understood till now—till I saw him lying in the road, I mean. I—I've been a beast. I don't care now if I'm expelled. It serves me right. I dare say father would take me away from Greyfriars, in any case, as soon as he hears. I—I don't care, if only Hubert gets well. That's all I'm thinking about now."

Dr. Locke looked keenly at the junior's face.

The Head of Greyfriars knew boy nature well—he had known boys for thirty years—and it would have been very difficult for any boy to deceive him. That Bolsover was in earnest now his white face and tear-stained eyes only too plainly proved.

And the doctor's look softened.

"I am glad to see that you are sorry, at all events, Bolsover," said the doctor, in a gentler voice.

"Sorry!" echoed Bolsover miserably. "Oh, sir, I'd do anything—anything! Oh, I wish that brute had struck me down instead, as he intended! I could have stood it better! But—"

He could say no more. The tears were streaming down his face, and a sob choked his voice.

There was a tap at the door, and Courtney of the Sixth looked in.

"The doctor's come, sir," he said.

"Thank you, Courtney," the Head turned to Bolsover.

"You may go, Bolsover. I shall think over what is to be done with you. Go back to your bed now."

Bolsover tried to speak, but he could not. In silence he left the study.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

Read the grand new story of the

Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled:

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Out of the Shadow.

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Here he is!"

"Here's Bolsover!"

"Faith, and he's looking pretty sick, too!"

The lights were burning in the Remove dormitory. The juniors were all awake, and they had heard part of what had happened, but not all. That it was connected with Bolsover they knew, and they had been anxiously awaiting the return of the Remove bully.

Bolsover came into the dormitory with a heavy, hanging head, and the sight of his face struck the juniors with a shock. But questions poured on him.

"What has happened, Bolsover?"

"Tell us what's happened."

Bolsover shook his head. He could not speak, and he went without a word to his bed and laid down, in his clothes, as he was.

"Let him alone," said Harry Wharton. "His brother's hurt, we know that, and he seems upset. Let him alone."

"Faith, and he doesn't care if his brother's hurt!" said Micky Desmond. "He's hurt him often enough himself, if you come to that."

"Yes, rather!"

"Shut up!" said Bob Cherry. "If he's decent enough to care, let him alone—though I must admit it's a surprise to me."

Bolsover lay silent. Micky Desmond's words had cut him to the very heart, but he had no words to reply. It was true enough. If he cared for the injury his minor had sustained, the juniors had a right to be astonished.

It was long before Greyfriars slept again that night. Bolsover did not close his eyes once. If he closed them he knew that he would see only one image before him—that of a pale, ghastly face stained with blood.

He could not sleep.

He had never known remorse before.

But he knew it now—it tortured him through the long watches of the night.

Dawn broke at last, and the early sunlight glimmering through the windows of the Remove dormitory showed Bolsover's white face—and wakeful eyes—haggard, weary, sleepless and suffering.

He dragged himself wearily from his bed. He was the first down of the Form, and his first visit was paid to the Remove-master's study.

Mr. Quelch met him with a cold nod.

"My brother, sir?" gasped Bolsover. "How is he?"

"He has been removed to the sanatorium," said Mr. Quelch coldly. "He recovered consciousness towards morning. He had a narrow escape of a serious injury; but the doctor thinks he will recover without any permanent ill-effects. But he will not be able to rejoin his class for many weeks."

"But—but he will get well?"

"There is very little doubt upon that point."

"Can I see him, sir?"

"Not now."

Bolsover bowed his head and turned away. He wanted to see Hubert, to tell him he was sorry, to ask his forgiveness; but he realised that the sufferer must be left undisturbed while he was in a critical state.

The Remove bully walked out miserably enough into the Close. As he came towards the house a little later he encountered Vernon-Smith. There was a cynical smile upon the lips of the Bounder of Greyfriars as he nodded to Bolsover.

"You do it well," he remarked.

Bolsover stared at him.

"What do you mean?" he asked, without much interest in the matter. He was thinking of far other things than the Bounder and the Bounder's cynical face and thoughts.

Vernon-Smith chuckled softly.

"I mean the grief and remorse business," he explained. "If I had been caught as you were last night I don't know if I should have thought of it. Of course, it was the only way. If you can work on the Head's feelings enough you may get off being sacked. It's jolly deep of you. I never thought you had such a gift of spoofing."

Bolsover stared at him speechlessly.

"Is the kid really hurt?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Yes."

"How did it come about?"

"He came to help me, and got the blow instead of me."

"What did he do it for?"

Bolsover did not answer that question. It was not likely that the hard-hearted, cynical Bounder of Greyfriars would ever comprehend what Bolsover minor had done it for.

"You see, I was right about the footpads," said Vernon-Smith. "You were a fool to go there. It might have been done for you if the kid hadn't been there."

"I know that!"
 "He'll be laid up for some time, I suppose!"
 "Yes."
 "Good!"
 Bolsover started.
 "What do you mean by good?" he exclaimed.
 "He will be out of the way," Vernon-Smith explained.
 "Serve the young cad right for meddling, too. If you get off being sacked, we shall be left alone."

Bolsover shook his head.
 "That's all over for me," he said. "Sacked or not, I'm finished with the Cross Keys and that gang. I never really liked it, and it was only because the other fellows were up against it, and I wouldn't be stopped. But it's finished now, as far as I'm concerned."

"For how long?" sneered Vernon-Smith.
 "For good."

"Rot! Don't give me that kind of jaw!" said the Bounder impatiently. "I'm not the kind of bird to nibble chaff of that sort! Keep that for the Head. You may humbug him into letting you stay at Greyfriars. But as for making me believe that you're cut up about your minor, you can't do it. The young cad—"

Bolsover's eyes blazed.
 "Hold your tongue, Vernon-Smith! Another word, and I'll—"

"Bah!" said the Bounder angrily. "I tell you the young cad—"

Bolsover's fist crashed into his face, and the Bounder of Greyfriars fell heavily. The burly Removite strode away, leaving Vernon-Smith lying in the Close.

He rose, with a dazed look, but more wondering than hurt. He had had proof enough now that Bolsover was in earnest; but he could not understand it—the probability was that he never would understand it.

"Hang him!" he muttered, dabbing his nose with his handkerchief. "Hang him! I—"

"Serve you jolly well right!" said Bob Cherry, who had been a witness of the scene. "If you want some more, Smithy, come in this direction." Vernon-Smith evidently did not want any more, for he walked in the opposite direction.

Bolsover entered the School House. A gentleman with white hair was there. He had just come. Bolsover started towards him.

"Father!"
 Mr. Bolsover turned round. Then the junior halted, conscience-stricken. What would his father say?

"I have heard, Percy," said Mr. Bolsover, in a low and broken voice. "Dr. Locke sent me a telegram last night."

"It was my fault, father."

"Percy!"
 The old gentleman's pale face grew paler as he heard the miserable story from Bolsover's lips. His brow hardened into a stern frown.

"Heaven forgive you, Percy!" he said at last. "If you

EVERY TUESDAY. **The "Magnet"** LIBRARY. ONE PENNY.

have sincerely repented, Heaven may; but I shall find it hard to do so."

And he left the boy where he stood.
 Bolsover did not attend classes that morning. He wandered aimlessly about the Close, thinking of the sufferer in the bed in the school sanatorium. His father was with Hubert; but Bolsover was not to be admitted.

Bolsover came in at last, desperate and miserable. He met the Head as the latter left the Sixth Form-room.

"Dr. Locke"—Bolsover panted out the words—"I must see my brother! I must! I suppose you are going to expel me. I don't care how soon. But I must see Hubert."

Dr. Locke gave him a long, keen look.

"I think you have repented of your wickedness, Bolsover," he said. "I think you have been punished enough. I am going to give you another chance. You will not be expelled from Greyfriars!"

"Oh, sir!"
 "Follow me now. You shall see your brother."

Bolsover followed the Head of Greyfriars to the sick-room. He stepped in on tiptoe, with hushed breath.

Mr. Bolsover was seated by the bedside. On the white pillow was a bandaged head, and from the pillow looked a still whiter face; but the eyes lighted up at the sight of Bolsover.

The bully of the Remove dropped beside the bed.

"Hubert!" he whispered. "Hubert, old man, I'm sorry! I—I can't tell you how sorry I am! I've been a beast! Dr. Locke says I'm to stay at Greyfriars. Hubert, old man, when you get well you'll see that I'm different! Hubert—"

His voice died away.

"It's all right, Percy!" Bolsover's minor's voice was weak but cheery; the lag's pluck had not deserted him. "I'm jolly glad I was there, that's all! It's all right, Percy, old chap! I—I don't mind anything you did or said! It's all right!"

"I've been a beast—a beast!" groaned Bolsover.

His father's hand fell upon his shoulder.

"Look to the future, and not to the past, Percy," he said quietly. "What you have done cannot be undone; but it can be atoned for, and Providence has given you the opportunity. Thank Heaven for that."

"I do—I do!" muttered Bolsover huskily.

He said no more. But it was enough.

There was a happy light in the white face upon the pillow, as if the future had become bright and rosy for Bolsover minor.

THE END.

(Another splendid Greyfriars tale next week, entitled "A RACE AGAINST TIME," by Frank Richards. Order your "MAGNET" in advance. Price 1d.)

**CHING-LUNG
IN THE
FORBIDDEN
LAND.**

A Wonderful Story
of Ferraers Lord,
Millionaire,
Rupert Thurston,
and Gan-Waga.

— THE FIRST CHAPTERS —

THROUGH TRACKLESS TIBET!

**BY
SIDNEY
DREW.**

(READ THIS FIRST.)

Wishing to explore the practically unknown land of Tibet, Ferraers Lord, millionaire, makes up a party, including Prince Ching-Lung, Rupert Thurston, Gan-Waga, the Eskimo, and a number of the crew of the Lord of the Deep, to travel with him across Tibet to Kwa-Hai, the capital of Ching-Lung's provinces in China.

The party, conducted by an Afghan guide named Argal-Dinjat, have just crossed the Himalayas into The Forbidden Land, when they are attacked by the notorious pirate and outlaw, Storland Sahib, and a band of his ruffianly followers. These are beaten off, and the party, after a period of hard travelling, reach the first Tibetan Village. Here they are surprised to find that the head man is an Irishman, Barry O'Rooney by name. They stay at his house for a time, and while at dinner Ching-Lung startles O'Rooney by making the roast chicken which is being served, leap off the table and fly up the chimney, croaking the while at the Irishman: "You villain! You've spoiled me soul! I'll haunt you for ever!"

(Now read on from here.)

"Oh, murther, murther!" moaned Mr. O'Rooney, as he heard the croaking voice. "Oh, why did Oi ever leave me little Orish cabin? Faith, Oi never would have if I hadn't been evicted by the pols! Phaz, Mister Rooster, why didn't yez tel me yez had got a sowl when Oi was wringing yer neck?"

"Hant me, is it?" Oh, murther, murther, murther!"

"It comin'!" howled Gan-Waga, diving under the table.

And it came. A black, sooty, awful-looking ghost of a bird. It dropped into the fire, leapt out again with an awful shriek, whizzed round the room, and gave O'Rooney an awful smack over the left ear, that knocked him headlong after Gan-Waga. The next moment Ching-Lung caught it, swiftly removed a long piece of elastic from its blackened drumstick, stuck a few feathers in its tail, and replaced it on the diph.

NEXT TUESDAY: **"A RACE AGAINST TIME!"** By FRANK RICHARDS. Order Early.

Gan-Waga was playing his part admirably. Moaning with pretended horror, he hugged Mr. O'Roonoy to his breast, and Mr. O'Roonoy clung to him and begged him never to forsake him.

"Steady, steady!" said Ferrers Lord warningly. "Clear out, old chap," whispered Ching-Lung, "if you've finished, and don't spoil sport."

"What do you say, Rupert? Shall we see how the men are getting on?"

Thurston nodded. He felt that if he did not go at once, he would give the game thoroughly away. They closed the door behind him, but Thurston did not mean to miss the fun. He allowed the millionaire to get on ahead, and then with his knife he cut a narrow slit in the oiled paper, and placed his eye against it.

"I don't love me, friend!" moaned O'Roonoy.

"Never, never!" said Gan-Waga. "Ow, it's comin'—it's—Save me!"

"Kape it off! Don't let it touch me! 'Ow, ut's bitin' me! Ut's got hold of me leg!"

"Kill it!" roared Gan-Waga.

"O! can't! Ut's a sow!"

O'Roonoy squirmed and screamed as Ching-Lung gave his calf a tweak between his finger and thumb.

The strange theory of the transmigration of souls is still taught by some sections of the Buddhist priests, who on that account are very chary of taking the lives even of insects, in case the insect might contain the soul of one of their ancestors. With a wicked grin on his face, Ching-Lung tied a couple of strings to one of the ditches of bacon, and another to a bladder of lard.

The room was only lighted by a couple of tallow dips and the shifty, uncertain glow from the fire. Ching-Lung glanced under the table, and caught sight of Gan-Waga's glittering eyes. His Highness winked and pointed to the door. Gan-Waga understood. Then, taking the strings between his teeth, Ching-Lung raised the slab. The sides of the well were paved with rough pieces of granite, that afforded plenty of foothold. He disappeared, and the stone fell into place above him, leaving a cranny just large enough to work the strings and to peer through.

"Gan-Waga!" It was a splendid imitation of the millionaire's voice. Gan-Waga shook himself free.

"Don't love me—don't love me!" wailed O'Roonoy.

"Must!" said Gan-Waga. "Dat de chief calling. Not be long. Keep pecker up."

Gan-Waga darted out, and the Irishman was crawling after him on hands and knees, when he saw a sight that rooted him to the ground. A whole side of bacon lifted itself with a grunt from the hook on which it had hung for months, toppled lightly to the floor, and moved towards him. O'Roonoy stared at it in stony horror.

"Ha!" hissed the bacon.

"Oh?"

"Murderer!" hissed the bacon.

O'Roonoy made a plunge for the table, but by an adroit flank movement—there was plenty of flank about that bacon—the side of pig barred the way. O'Roonoy wiped the beads of perspiration from his blackened brow. The bacon balanced itself on end, and pointed its stumpy shoulder at him. "Miscreant!" it cried, "knowest thou who I am?"

"N-no! Yee were a black pig—"

"Pig! Rascal, the soul of Hector of Troy was in me ere you slew me!"

"Was ut, now?" sighed Mr. O'Roonoy. "Oh, murder, murder, think o' that! I didn't know the gentleman."

The side of pig collapsed and lay flat on the ground, as if in a dead faint. Then it got up slowly and uttered a groan. "This is the same!" he said tearfully. "Did I fight the Greeks for this? He's never heard of Hector of Troy! Oh, ye gods and little fishes, ye anchovies, sardines, sprats, minnows, whelks, and sticklebacks! Ten thousand Greeks I slew before the walls of Troy before Achilles struck me down!"

"Hark at him!" muttered O'Roonoy. "Ten thousand Greeks he snuffed out. Oh, murder, Mr. Hector!"

"Silence!"

The pig approached nearer, and the terrified Irishman retreated on all fours. As the side of bacon offered no personal violence, O'Roonoy grew calmer. Ching-Lung began to fear that, in spite of the dim light, he would see the strings. He gave a sharp tug. The next moment the ditch was hanging innocently on its hook.

"It's all the powers!" gasped O'Roonoy. "O've been dhramin'!"

He pulled himself to his feet and cautiously approached the bacon.

"Bow-wow-wow-wow-wow!"

Mr. O'Roonoy gave a jump that would have done credit to an athlete, and uttered a yell that would have caused the siren of an Atlantic liner to blush with envy. He thought

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.
Read the grand new story of the
Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled:

some ferocious dog had got him by the leg. There was no dog there. And the side of bacon shook on its hook, and laughed with unholy joy.

"Shure the whole place is haunted with goblins and banishes!" gasped the Khan of Akhmar. "Oh, murder, murder!" He stood petrified, and then a great longing to fly seized him.

But he waited a moment to long. Rupert, choking with mirth, had his eye glued to the crevice. Gan-Waga, also eager to see what was going on, stole round. He caught sight of Thurston, and a wicked thought entered Gan-Waga's mind. He rushed upon Thurston and gave him a mighty push.

Thurston crashed through the paper window, and alighted with his head in the middle of O'Roonoy's back, with the simple result that O'Roonoy was pitched on to the slab, the slab trapped Ching-Lung's fingers, and Ching-Lung slipped. He fell like a stone into six feet of black and icy water.

All's Well that Ends Well—Thurston Becomes a Hero in Mr. O'Roonoy's Eyes—A Quiet Night.

Mr. Barry O'Roonoy was afraid of souls and spectres, but he was certainly afraid of very little in the shape of flesh and blood.

And when Thurston's head bumped violently into the small of his back, O'Roonoy felt that no soul that might be floating about in the vicinity was quite strong enough to give him a twenty-horse-power cannon like that.

He got up very much shaken and horribly wrathful. Thurston also got up, rubbing his knees, and wondering whether he had been fired out of a cannon or an enormous catapult. Gan-Waga, repenting the deadly deed, had fled, and hidden himself in the straw; and in the well, Ching-Lung had just risen to the surface of the freezing water, and was blowing bubbles beautifully.

Altogether matters were lively.

The expression of absolute amazement on Rupert's face would have sent a cat into convulsions had one been present.

Thurston was utterly speechless. He could not understand how he had come there at all, but he knew that he had come in a great hurry. An angry light of battle gleamed in Mr. O'Roonoy's eyes, and he took off his coat, bared two hairy arms, and spat on his hands.

"Do ye always come in through the winder, eh?" asked Mr. O'Roonoy.

"Hang it, what's it all about?" gasped Thurston.

"Do ye always jump wid both feet into the middle of a gentleman's back whin he ain't lookin', eh?" inquired Mr. O'Roonoy, ignoring the question. "Is that yer favourite way of enterin' a mansion, eh? Put 'em up!"

O'Roonoy spat on his hands again, shook his hairy fist under Thurston's nose, and began to hop from foot to foot in anything but a peaceful manner.

"My dear fellow," said Rupert, "what's it all about? I assure you I didn't mean to hurt you."

"Didn't ye?" O'Roonoy said. "I made of injurribler is ut, and that a ton of coal can thrup on me liver widout hurtin' me? Is that ut, sor? Be jabbers, does that hurt?"

Barry O'Roonoy "planted" one over Thurston's ribs hard enough almost to have knocked his heart over to his right side, and then put in another of equal weight just to keep the balance. Thurston had a great deal of patience, but this was altogether too much. He could use his hands rather neatly. He skillfully parried a third blow, and drove out with his right. Mr. O'Roonoy's beauty would have suffered had he been there, but he was not, and like a hammer his fist pounded Rupert again, making his teeth dance.

"Did ut tickle?" grinned the Irishman. "T'wixt me particular spot for spreadin' on the butter. Oh, bairn! C it from a boy in ould Kennmare. Have at ye again, kind sor. Bivlad, O'll ring the bell this time, or ate me boots!"

Thump! came the left again on Thurston's ribs, and a look of perfect bliss lighted up Mr. O'Roonoy's face as he hopped round Thurston in a very energetic fashion. The stone-covered wall was cautiously lifted a few inches, and Ching-Lung's glittering eyes surveyed the scene of strife, and Ching-Lung grinned mightily.

"O! will now present to the audience a striking example of the knock-out, stroik-me-dead, or paralyser," said Mr. O'Roonoy, as he parried a drive. "It was invented by mys. Christian name Barry, surname O'Roonoy, and Oireland his country. The drawback to it is ut's usually fatal, and I only use it when me winders has been broke, and me liver jumpin' on me in the present case. Me opponent bein a winder, O'll only break all his ribs ter pieces, for me heart's as tender as a lamb's."

"I've had enough!" panted Rupert. "I don't know what ye're fighting about."

"Aisy, now, aisy!" said O'Roonoy soothingly. "Just wan more round—only wan more! It's years sin' I met a man who could hold his punchers up, and ut may be years afore

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I find another. Wan more round, and O'll be yer slave for loife. O must show yez that smoit. Oh, O'll be jittle O'll be as jittle as a dead canary, or a bag o' feathers! And that's ut, me bhoy!"

Mr. O'Rooney sent in a crushing blow that might easily have dropped an ox. Certainly it would have put Thurston out of the running had it taken effect. But a yellow hand gripped Mr. O'Rooney's ankle just in time, and Mr. O'Rooney spun into the air and fell on his back.

The Irishman lay there staring at the ceiling, while Rupert stared at the prostrate form in utter amazement. He had not seen the yellow hand, for he had forgotten all about Ching-Lung.

To be sure, he had struck O'Rooney, but barely hard enough to upset a child of six. And here was the doughty fighter, horse-de-combat, squealing like a pneumatic tyre with a tack in it.

And then Mr. O'Rooney sat up, sighed, and gazed at Thurston admiringly. He staggered to his feet, then, rushing to the victor, gripped his hand, and rung it again and again.

"Don't spake!" he roared. "Don't say a word! Let me luk at yez. Murther! How did yez manage it? Is it a new trick? And does it come under the Queensberry rules? Arrah! It was the neatest backheel I ever knowed. Ay yez waited a second longer for that smoit, it's pulverised yez would have been! Murther, bhoy, I was off my fate afore I could wink! Yez must tache it me. It's a jool of a trick—a raal jool!"

A hollow chuckle sounded far away in the depths of the earth, but they did not notice it.

Thurston, more and more puzzled, honestly protested that, as far as he was concerned, the whole thing was an accident. The more he protested, the more Mr. O'Rooney grinned.

"Hark at yez!" he said, winking. "Shure, yez don't want to give ut away—eh? Bedad, yez must show ut me afore yez leaves. O'll insist upon ut! Troth, it was a daisy! Gimme yez fist. O! loves yez for ut!"

Ching-Lung had found no difficulty in climbing the sides of the well. He was chilled to the marrow, and his teeth were chattering. He groaned with anguish as he listened to the conversation. If they did not go soon, he felt that he would soon turn into a human icicle.

They went at last. Rupert had some embrocation in his saddle-bag, and Mr. O'Rooney had made such an impression on his ribs that he needed it badly. The Irishman generously promised to rub him, and they departed together.

As Ching-Lung crawled out of his chilly prison, Gan-Waga entered the window.

"What's up, Chingy?"

"I am," sighed Ching-Lung. "I've just come."

"Why, you all sloppy!" said Gan-Waga. "What been doing, hunk? Been sitting under waterspout, hunk?"

"No; I forgot my umbrella. I dropped into that giddy well."

Gan-Waga held his sides.

"Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho!" he roared. "What a lark, Chingy! It all lar, Mr. Thurston got cye to hole outside watching Rooney, and I push him bang inside. Ho, ho, ho! He drop on Rooney, and— Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, oh!"

Ching-Lung began to grin.

"That's what they were scrapping about—eh? Say, Gan, it was worth a wetting. What about the souls in the roosters and the bacon? Ha, ha, ha, ha! I reckon we made O'Rooney sit up—eh?"

Gan blew out one of the candles, and devoured it in three bites, while Ching-Lung steamed before the fire.

"Bit of all right, Chingy!" gurgled the Eskimo. "Like fun butterful. We better go, hunk, else they'll twig. Go round back, and I'll get you dry clothes. Not want you catch the twiddlewuns, Chingy. Don't tell Mr. Thurston."

"Not for nuts and ninepins. Hurry up and I'll do a sprint outside till you come. Thurston is sure to think one of the villagers slung him through. Leg it, you lump of snot!"

Ching-Lung cattered up and down the dark street until the faithful Gan-Waga brought him a change of attire. He had managed to secure the clothes without being observed.

Ching-Lung was rubbed down with a towel by his devoted follower.

A stiff glass of Mr. O'Rooney's "milk," which was borrowed in that gentleman's absence, set his blood circulating freely once more.

Then the khan himself returned, accompanied by Rupert and the millionaire.

O'Rooney good-naturedly cemented the peace already made by giving up his bed to Thurston.

They chatted for nearly an hour. The fire was replenished, and, lying round it, wrapped in blankets, the travellers fell fast asleep.

Outside Maddock was on guard, pacing up and down, rifle on shoulder.

Only the melodious snoring of O'Rooney and Gan-Waga. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

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broke the silence. The soul of the rooster had apparently departed, and the soul of Hector of Troy slumbered in the side of the bacon.

And so the long night passed quietly.

In which an Egg and a Pair of Trousers take a Leading Part, and the Soul of Hector of Troy Makes It's Second Appearance—A Queer Kind of Fishing—Those Trousers Again.

Mr. O'Rooney was a gentleman with a very elastic disposition. Long before the others were awake he was out in the grey dawn, washing himself in a leather bucket, and trying to part his hair with the help of an almost toothless comb. He had forgotten all about the souls, and he cut a dozen great rashers of the side of Hector, and proceeded to carve breakfast without disturbing his guests.

Unfortunately, in the dim light, he trod on Gan-Waga's ears. Gan-Waga's ears were not small ones, neither were O'Rooney's feet. Of course, Gan-Waga woke up with a yell that would have roused a small city. Mr. O'Rooney had the frying-pan in his hand, filled with melted fat, and he was so startled by the yell that he spilled the contents over Gan-Waga's face.

And then, filled with horror at what he had done, he fled outside, and kicked himself.

The fat was not hot enough to do any damage, but the yell awakened the travellers effectually. O'Rooney returned, and humbly apologised.

"Don't worry about it," said Ching-Lung. "Gan-Waga shouldn't have his great ears all over the place for people to wipe their feet on. Now for a glorious wash, and then a feed. I've got the log of a billiard-table! Hallo, Thurston! How are the ribs?"

"A bit tender."

"That comes of fighting. I've heard all about it. Tumble out, Gan, you lubber! What do you mean by oiling your hair before you wash your ugly face? Jove, it's a ripping morning! Shouldn't I enjoy a swim?"

He suggested a gallop to the river, but Ferrers Lord would not give his permission. However, Gan-Waga willingly carried half a dozen buckets of water to a secluded spot behind one of the sheds, and splashed the water over his friend.

It was almost as good as having a bath, and, after a brisk rub down with a towel, Ching-Lung declared that he was fit for anything—and looked it.

The villagers still skulked on the other side of the stone wall, looking surlier and uglier than ever, and a pack of mongrels sniffed the scent of the bacon hungrily.

Bacon, eggs, and black bread, washed down by excellent tea, formed a princely breakfast.

The cattle fared quite as well as their masters, but they seemed jaded after their trying journey.

"What time do we trek, old man?"

Ching-Lung rested his elbow on the table as he put the question. He had a fork in his hand, and Gan-Waga was conveying a whole hard-boiled egg to his mouth at that moment. Ching-Lung jerked his elbow. The egg sprang from Gan-Waga's fork, impaled itself on Ching-Lung's, and his Highness slipped it out of sight and munched it lazily.

"What dat gone?" gasped Gan-Waga, staring at his fork.

"What?" asked Thurston.

"My egg. Just goin' eat him, and he hunk."

"You must have eaten it, Gan, and forgotten all about it. Are you sure you didn't drop it?"

Gan-Waga got under the table to look. It had been so neatly done that only Rupert had seen Ching-Lung's sleight of hand.

"Isn't that it—that white thing down in the grate?" asked the Prince.

Gan-Waga had to go upon his hands and knees. There was something of a dirty-white colour on the stool he had just vacated, but it was not the egg in question, although it had been placed there by Ching-Lung, who demolished the remainder of his breakfast in two bites and a gulp.

"Found it?"

"No," growled Gan-Waga.

"Then it must have dropped down a mouse-hole," said Ching-Lung, making for the door. "Never mind, have another. Eggs are cheap and fresh in Tibet."

As Gan-Waga emerged from under the table, Ching-Lung got nearer the door.

"Fanny 'nough 'bout dat egg," murmured Gan-Waga. "I know I not eated him!"

"Oh, we'll soon find you another!" said Thurston innocently. "Sit down, Gan."

Gan sat down, and found one for himself without delay. There was a soft, squealing sound, and at once the most horrible, awful, loathsome, sickly stench filled the room. For one short second they gazed at each other in dismay. And then, clutching their noses, they rushed out into the fresh air.

Gan-Waga had sat down on an egg that was not young. By the smell of it, it had probably been laid centuries before. The perfume was strong enough to have worked a locomotive with forty loaded trucks behind it. It was a hoary-headed egg—a nasty, spiteful, bad-tempered egg—and even a little of it insisted on having the whole house to itself.

They didn't argue with it, but let it have its own way. Spiteful as it was, that egg showed that some of it had not lost all its good feelings. There was a spark of affection in its heart—or, rather, its yolk—still, for it clung lovingly to Gan-Waga as he bolted. It seemed to say, "Gan, my friend, I can never leave you. I am greatly attached to you. Even you were so cruel as to sit upon me before other people. I will forgive you, and cling to you for ever, for I am an egg of strong will power."

And it was strong. With both hands pressed over his fat nose, and his eyes bulging with terror, Gan-Waga hurled himself through the open door. Ching-Lung was rolling on a pile of straw, and laughing hysterically.

"What's the row?" asked Prout. "What's the matter? Have you gone barmy, Gan? Have you—"

"Hunk!" Prout turned pale as the egg began to inform him that it was there.

"By hokey!" panted the steersman, and fled.

Gan-Waga fled, too, and no one tried to stop him. They rolled out of his way, and even the mules sniffed the tainted air with silent surprise. The Eskimo's only thought was to get away from the perfume, and he fished it down the village street so fast that his fat legs actually twinkled. He disappeared into a thicket, and the laughter was long and loud.

Ching-Lung was in a paroxysm of fendish mirth, when the strong hand of Ferrers Lord jerked him to his feet.

"Take a bucket and a cloth," said the millionaire, and clean up that awful egg. Bring out the stool, and burn it."

The jaw of his Highness dropped; and he laughed no more.

"What, no? I wouldn't face that bed of violets for a pension!"

"You'll do what you're told. You caused it, and you must get rid of it. I order you!"

"But, old chap," pleaded Ching-Lung, "think of my youth! I'm too young and too good to die! Ask me to face armies, to jump off the top of St. Paul's, to beard the maneless tiger in his jative nungle—I mean native jungle—ask me to slay the eagle in his lofty lair, to nurse the twins at midnight, to have a tooth drawn, to wear tight boots, to eat a railway-station sandwich, or to put my hair in curl-papers, any of these tasks I will attempt, but I dare not—dare not—acknowledge it. It is too much. You may yoke me to a team of wild horses, and let them drag me asunder; you may shell me with a twelve-pounder to eggs-aggerate my woes, but still I refuse! Come one, come all, that house shall fly from its firm base as soon as I grapple with that smell—and sooner! Joo, go and clean up, and this yellow-boy is thine!"

Joo withstood the bait of a sovereign. He said he would not do it for fifty of them.

"You must go yourself," said Ferrers Lord firmly. "It was a disgusting trick."

"I am quite with you," put in Thurston. "Make him go!"

"I intend to. Off with you, Ching!"

There was no getting out of it; and so, armed with a bucket and mop, and with a handkerchief tied round his nose, Ching-Lung—carried out the unsavoury task. Mr. O'Rooney took it in good part, but his suspicions were beginning to awaken.

"Bedad, he's a rum 'un, by the soize of ut, that same Chinee!" he thought. "Now, I wonder who's sowl was in that egg? Ut was a mighty powerful sowl, and that's the thruth. Arrah, Barry, me bhoy, it's both eyes yez'll keep open!"

A burning stick waved about the room got rid of the lingering aroma of the egg, and made the place habitable again. The men were drawn up for inspection by Rupert. Though they tried to look grave, they could not hide their grins. It tickled them immensely to think that Ching-Lung had been compelled to use a mop and pail like an ordinary housemaid. But when Ching-Lung joined Rupert they became as solemn as judges.

"Attention!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

Read the grand new story of the Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled:

Then a gruff voice remarked, as they lined up: "Hallo, Susan! Is your fat policeman coming for his pie to-night?"

Prout stood at the top of the line, but Prout looked as innocent as a baby when Ching-Lung glanced at him.

"Don't forget to scrub the steps and bring the coals up, Susan."

Was that Maddock? Maddock stood as rigid as a post. Still another voice remarked:

"Oh, Susan, blacklead the kitchen grate, and then come and mind the baby!"

It must have been Joe; but Joe was staring at the sky, as if in deep and earnest thought.

"Susan, I shall ask you if you do your hair like that!"

"Dismiss!" cried Thurston, shouting with laughter. "They're not so green as they look, Ching. You'll be Susan until they forget all about that paid an mop. Why, in the name of Cæsar's aunt's footwarmer, what's that? Ha, ha, ha!"

It was Gan-Waga, and they greeted him with yells of laughter. And well they might shriek. That egg might not have been firmly attached to Gan-Waga, but its attachment to his trousers was remarkable. It clung to them lovingly, and would not give them up. And so Gan-Waga had left his trousers behind him, replacing them by a kind of petticoat of branches, which he had tied round his waist. The odd garment came almost to his knees, and he still wore his boots, socks, and tunic, but the rest of his legs had no covering.

"You don't you turn up your trouser-bottoms, Gan?" roared Prout. "You'll get 'em muddy!"

"Find your kilts draughty in the wind?" inquired Joe. "What a pretty pattern! I'd like a waistcoat made of it."

"Trip us a Highland fling!" grinned Maddock. "Who's your tailor? He can build knobby knicksies! Where did you get them?"

Gan-Waga strode indignantly into the shed in search of a pair of trousers; and they hurried volleys of chaff after his retreating figure.

While they were laughing themselves into convulsions an ugly, grinning face looked over the wall. It was the face of a youthful Mongol. His arm shot up, and he flung a bundle into the middle of the group of tittering men.

Horror of horrors! The bundle was Gan-Waga's discarded trousers.

They got one whiff, and scattered wildly in every direction; for, like the famous cat, the trousers had come back, tired of wasting their sweetness on the desert air.

Then, arming themselves with cudgels, they surrounded Gan-Waga, forced a pole into his hand, and swore to have his life unless he immediately removed them.

"All right!" growled the Eskimo. "Me take 'em soon 'nough. No need get mad. Me shift 'em."

He hooked them up on the end of the pole, and as he bore them away the odour of the egg poisoned the surrounding air.

But Gan-Waga was offended. An injured feeling rankled in his bosom. He thought he had not been treated fairly, and that Ching-Lung might have selected someone else to play the highly-scented joke on. It was not nice to have to parade even in a Tibetan village in broad daylight wearing a pair of wooden trousers—or, to speak more correctly, a wooden petticoat. To say the least, it was undignified and chilly.

So, instead of returning to the abode of Barry O'Rooney, Esquire, Gan-Waga burrowed in the straw and sulked.

At O'Rooney's earnest request, Ferrers Lord had decided to stay another night in the place. A reward would do the ponies and mules good, and the men no harm.

"Do you think the villagers will be surly if we take a stroll round?" asked Thurston.

O'Rooney chuckled, and removed his blackthorn from its nail.

"Show 'em that," he said, "and, bedad, they'll scot like jack-rabbits when a gun goes off! Av one of the dirty rogues as much as blinks at yez, Or'll call on him, and raise lumps all over him."

"I should like to see the place. Will you come, Lord?" The millionaire rose and put on his slouch-hat.

"By the way, O'Rooney," he drawled, "has Storlan Sahib ever payed you a visit?"

"Marcy forbid!" said the Irishman. "He's got a black name even in Tibet, the rascal! But, shure, what would he be doin' here? He kapes on the caravan routes, where there's loot to get. Ut was said wance that he was going to raid Tibet, but, o' coorse that was a loi. There's a divil in that man. He's a black lot!"

"Oh, no," answered the millionaire. "Well, I'm ready, Rupert."

"Or'll have the grub ready for yez in an hour, gentlemen."

"It's pay-soup, and ham, and bread and cheese checked in." "That will do grandly," said Thurston. "It's hungry air in Tibet, and I'm always ready to eat."

Ching-Lung had been missing, but he came in while O'Rooney was preparing the soup. He sat down on a stool and watched the operation silently. A piece of Hector, the pig, was simmering in the pot. O'Rooney stuck a fork into it.

"Ow, ow, ow! You're hurting me! Don't do it!" O'Rooney sprang back, startled.

"Thunder and whiskers!" he roared. "Did yez hear that?"

"Hear what? I didn't hear anything except you."

The Irishman scratched his head.

"Didn't yez? Well, that's mighty queer, be jabers, ut is! Would yez do me the favour of sticking this fork into that bit of pork and listen! Whisht! Not a word! Go!"

(Ching-Lung did as requested. Like Mr. O'Rooney, he leapt back, and his pigtail stood erect with dread and horror. The pork in the pot was uttering piercing shrieks.

"Don't do it, I tell you!" it yelled. "Ow, ow, ow! Isn't it bad enough to be boiled, without having forks jabbed into me? I'm Hector's soul. I was a warrior once. Ow, ow, ow! You've punctured me!"

"Murder! Do yez hear it?"

"Ye-e-e-es!" gasped Ching-Lung, trembling violently.

"And what does ut say?" asked O'Rooney, trembling with fear.

"Th-that it's Hector's soul!"

"Hector's soul! Oh, murder! Oh, do you know what th-that is?"

Mr. O'Rooney slowly lifted a great hobnailed boot and stretched out his leg so that Ching-Lung might examine his footgear.

"Eh?"

"Do yez know what that is?"

"I should call it a foot—a boot!"

"Would yez, now?" said the great O'Rooney, with a knowing wink. "So would Oi. Plaze notice the bottom part of that same daisy-crusher—the part wid the nails in ut. Av yez plaze, Mistor Ching-Lung, that's my sole. And, av yez plays the Hector's sowl game on any more, bedad, yez'll faal ut!"

Ching-Lung was unmasked, but not confused. He broke into a peal of laughter, and the genial O'Rooney joined in.

"Bedad," he said, "yez tickled me up last night! That was a mighty purty joke, and a mighty clever wan!"

"I'll show you some more," said Ching-Lung. "Got a lead-pencil?"

"Nivir seed such a thing for years."

"Why, there's one behind your ear. Lend it to me."

O'Rooney's admiration was unbounded as he put up his hand and found a pencil behind his ear.

Ching-Lung took it, and began to shake it up and down. It grew slowly into a fishing-rod, with hook, line, and float complete. Then Ching-Lung removed the cover from the well, and began to fish in its depths.

The first thing he hooked and landed was the revolver he lost the night before. O'Rooney stood holding the saucapan in his hand.

"Thee ought to be a nice fish for you in here," said Ching-Lung. "Was that a nibble? By Jove, it was! And got him!"

He wound up the line. A beautifully engraved cigar-case dangled from the hook.

"That's your fish," said Ching-Lung.

"Mine?" gasped the delighted Irishman. "Be jabers, an' full o' cigars! Is ut for me?"

"You bet it is. I'll see if I—"

Something fell between them. Ching-Lung dropped the rod, O'Rooney dropped the saucapan. They clutched their noses and tumbled out of the house, green with horror.

The trousers had come back again. Gan-Waga had avenged himself.

EVERY
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

They pounced on the dirty gentleman like terriers on a rat.

He turned pale under the dirt and yelled. They dragged him to the door of the hut, and explained what they wanted. Then the pig got frightened.

Afterwards Ching-Lung swore that Prout's face had frightened it.

With a squeak, it bolted, and Maddock, getting mixed up with the string, was shot headlong into an empty bucket.

Prout, Joe, and Gan-Waga went in pursuit of the runaway, while the dirty gentleman entered the house.

They heard him groan as if in agony, and, suspecting perfidy, Mr. O'Rooney clutched his cudgel tightly and took his stand beside the window, which he had re-secured.

"Hurry up, can't you?" said Ching-Lung, peering in.

"What are you waiting for?"

Holding his nose, groaning in muffled tones, his eyes rolling horribly, the dirty man reluctantly caught hold of the odiferous garments. Perhaps on the red battlefield that man would have charged the guns like a hero; but there are things more deadly than lyddite shells and cold steel. And that garment was one of them!

He left—and very suddenly! With one scream and one leap he was through the window, leaving the task undone. He took a huge strip of the paper with him. It flapped round his face and body, completely blinding him. And before he could tear it off and fly, the watchful Mr. O'Rooney had him by the hair, and a very knotty cudgel was playing a tattoo on his bones.

"Wa-ow! Ooh-oo! Wa-ahah! Wah!" screamed the dirty man.

"Ooch, zip!" said Mr. O'Rooney. "O'll tache yez, Oi will! Yez'll thry pranks on wid me! Won't yez do what yez are told, won't yez? Be jabers, it's a lucky thing Oi'm so tender-hearted entirely, or Oi'd be after hammering you inter sawdust! Ouch! How do yez loike that?"

The dirty gentleman did not appear to like it in the least. He roared for mercy, and promised to do anything.

Mr. O'Rooney took him firmly by the ear, and, leading him back to the house, drove him in with a kick.

The trousers were removed, and O'Rooney wiped his forehead.

"Whin Oi was given the great position, Mistor Ching-Lung," he explained, "this was wan o' the wildest villages in Tibet. Ut was as full o' thieves as me pigsty is of pork. Oi was the only man in the country to tame them, and Oi did it. And they loike me for that same. Pouf! It's hot work, tamin' Tibetans. Oi must gangle. Will thou also gangle?"

Ching-Lung was quite agreeable, and took a weak glass of Mr. O'Rooney's Irish milk.

Quick to judge character, Ching-Lung liked the khan. O'Rooney was no hypocrite. He told Ching-Lung frankly that his only reason for staying in Tibet was to line his own stocking. The priests robbed the ignorant people right and left, and he robbed the priests whenever he got the chance.

"Arrah!" he added, shaking his head. "They're a black lot, those prastes—a wicked lot!"

Ferrers Lord and Thurston returned from their stroll punctually. They had found the people quite tractable, and had even entered one or two of the wretched hovels. The military official who had been thrown out of the barrow had been intoxicated since the accident.

"He's nivir anything else," said O'Rooney. "Av he isn't drunk wi' spirit, he's drunk wi' opium. Oh, he's a lovely soldier, he is!"

"One of the penny-a-box sort," said Ching-Lung.

"Not so good. Them at a penny a box can stand up mostly, but, faith, he can't not once in a month!"

They laughed. Mr. O'Rooney's humour was pretty smart at times.

"Where's Argal-Dinjat?" asked Thurston. "I haven't had a glimpse of him all day."

"I gave him permission to go in search of a herd of deer that one of the villagers reported to be near the river," answered Ferrers Lord. "He must have set off before daylight. I suppose there is plenty of game about, O'Rooney!"

"Not loike it was, yer honour. There's a big thrade in smuggled guns, and more guns manes less game. Yak is plentiful enough, and goats. Oi do a bit in the gun thrade

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The Alarm—The Hill Pirates. Once More—The Engagement.

As everyone flatly refused to remove the obnoxious garments, they took Mr. O'Rooney's advice and lay in wait for one of the inhabitants.

The first misguided person to appear was a dirty gentleman, who was driving a pig in the Irish fashion—by the simple method of a string attached to the porker's hind leg, and a stick to urge it on.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 210.

Next
TUESDAY: "A RACE AGAINST TIME!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

meself, but Oi don't guarantee the guns to go off. O'd be sorry for the chap holdin' it at u'd did."

"You seem to do a little of everything."

"Bodad," said Mr. O'Rooney, "in a wicked, praste-ridden country like this there's only one rule to follow as yer don't want to starve—do everybody, or, be jabers, they'll do you!"

They laughed again. As a matter of fact, O'Rooney had not the heart to cheat any person except the priests, whom he justly looked upon as his own foes and the foes of the helpless people. They voted his pea-soup a great success, and the ham a triumph of cookery.

When the meal was over Ching-Lung spoke to the millionaire.

"I wish we could take O'Rooney with us," he said. "His knowledge of the country will help us tremendously."

"I have been thinking the same thing. If it's a matter of money he will join us. I'll mention the idea to him. I speak the language, but there are so many dialects that I get puzzled."

"That's always the same, even in England," answered Ching-Lung. "When I learned English, and could speak it fairly well, I was quite fogged when I got into Yorkshire or Lancashire. 'Good owd Lancashire! Eh, mon? Ah tell ye it's a grand place, sithet! If the' says it isn't, Ah give thee a clout over t' lug! Ah come from Owdham, Ah do!"

Ching-Lung went off chuckling to discover Gan-Waga after his masterly effort, leaving the millionaire smiling.

"He's a caution!" said Thurston. "What on earth shall we do with the little rascal? He keeps getting worse!"

"We must get him back to Kwai-Hai as soon as possible. The Empress of China is getting angry at his long absence."

"But he has only been away six months, and he had twelve months' leave."

"That does not matter, Rupert. Monarchs, you know, are privileged to change their minds more than common folk. It would not be wise to anger that woman. I scent trouble already. She detests Ching-Lung, for she detests anything in the shape of civilisation. She might depose him."

"And what would that mean?"

"It would mean a civil war," said the millionaire. "We would never consent to see Ching-Lung deposed. We would fight it out to the bitter end. But we must not think of it. Our best plan is to hurry to Kwai-Hai. Ching-Lung's people—"

He was interrupted by a lusty shout, and Prout rushed in.

"Horsemen on the road, sir! Is it all right?"

The villagers had crowded from their houses. A column of dust was moving down the steep road, through which the shadowy outlines of ridden horses appeared.

And then a half-naked figure appeared over the wall—

Agal-Dijnat.

"Sahib," he hissed, his eyes rolling and glittering, "Storland Sahib and his wolves!"

"Storland Sahib?" said O'Rooney. "Yez are dhramin'!"

But the villagers had caught the dreaded name of the white bandit from the hills. It ran from lip to lip. Only

Agal-Dijnat snatched up a few of their miserable possessions, and turned and ran.

"Pull down that house, lads!" shouted Ferrers Lord. "No; blow it up, and build a barricade across the road! You have just time. Quick, Maddock! You are a good shot. Ching! Ching, fire at them from behind the wall! Give Agal Dijnat another ride! Work with a will, lads! Where's the dynamite!"

When the various orders were called out so hurriedly, they were obeyed without a trace of confusion. Few men except Ferrers Lord's trained veterans could have carried them out with such speed. Ching-Lung, Thurston, Maddock, and Ferrers Lord himself knelt behind the wall. Prout lost no time in entering the first house of the village—the house he was to blow up.

"Crack!"

Ching-Lung's rifle was already at work, and four others answered it. Then came the boom like the report of a small cannon that made Gan-Waga jump as if he had been shot. Another boom answered it, and they saw O'Rooney reloading an enormous elephant-gun, that fired an explosive bullet.

The hill pirates had not bargained for this. They halted in confusion.

The cloud of dust sank slowly back, and the horsemen galloped to the right, and took shelter behind a ridge. Two more of these ridges lay between them and the village, the nearest ridge being barely three hundred yards away.

"Look out!" shouted Prout. "I've lighted the fuse!"

(Another splendid instalment of this grand new serial will appear next week in "The Magnet" Library. Order your copy in advance.)

My Readers' Column



FOR NEXT TUESDAY:

The title of next week's splendid complete school tale of Greyfriars is:

"A RACE AGAINST TIME."

By Frank Richards.

When I say that the old school welcomes the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur back again, and also that the vexed question of the captaincy of the Remove Form is vigorously reopened, I am sure I have told my readers enough to cause them to look forward to

"A RACE AGAINST TIME"

with more than usual eagerness. The wise ones will make sure of getting their next week's copy of THE MAGNET Library at the earliest possible moment by taking care to

ORDER IN ADVANCE!

From a Sheffield Reader,

This week's letter is a very pleasant and chatty one from one of my keenest chums:

"Sheffield.

"Dear Editor,—As I have read THE MAGNET and 'The Gem' for three or four years, I should like you to know how I like them.

"Since I first started reading them I have been continually trying to get new readers. I am proud to say that during the last year I have got about fifty readers.

"The 'Midget' MAGNET Competition, I am sure, was one of the finest I have ever seen, and it is certainly the first one of its kind I have ever seen or heard of. I hope to have a look in at the finish of THE MAGNET Competition, as I have saved the miniature pages every week very carefully.

"The 'Gem' Competition I am not going in for. I am giving the coupons to readers who are not going in for THE MAGNET Competition, as I think it is not quite fair for one to go in for both, while another can't go in for any.

"I shall, like many other readers, be glad when 'Inky' comes back. I hope he will not have forgotten his wonderful English. I should also be glad if we heard a little more about little Wun-Lung, and if Todd's cousin Peter came to Greyfriars regularly. I think he would stir things up a bit, 'some,' as Fisher T. Fish would say.

"Mr. Richards and Mr. Martin Clifford are simply marvellous as writers of school stories. Some of the tales written by them are better, I am sure, than some books that cost three or four shillings.

"The 'Duffer's Double' was one of the series of lovely tales that are worth reading by anybody.

"The 'Gem' is also lovely. I think that Arthur Augustus would make a fine school captain, although he is only in the Fourth Form. If by any unfortunate chance Kildare had to leave the school again, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy should be made captain without troubling for a vote of the whole school. Monty Lowther is a very funny boy, and some of his jokes are absolutely lovely.

"Glyn, the boy inventor, must be very clever, and I should like to hear a little more of his inventions, such as the mechanical bowler, and the chess that he electrifies.

"The serial tales at the end of 'The Gem' and THE MAGNET are very fine. I hope 'Wings of Gold' will be as good as the one before it, and the one in THE MAGNET.

"I shall be glad when I get 'The Gem,' as I have nothing to read, and I can't get any other books anything like my two favourites the M. and G.

"I will now close.

Yours truly,

"A MAGNETITE AND GEMITE."

Many thanks for your interesting and appreciative letter! Your total of fifty new readers is indeed one to be proud of, and I am very grateful to you for the trouble you must have taken to secure such a satisfactory result.

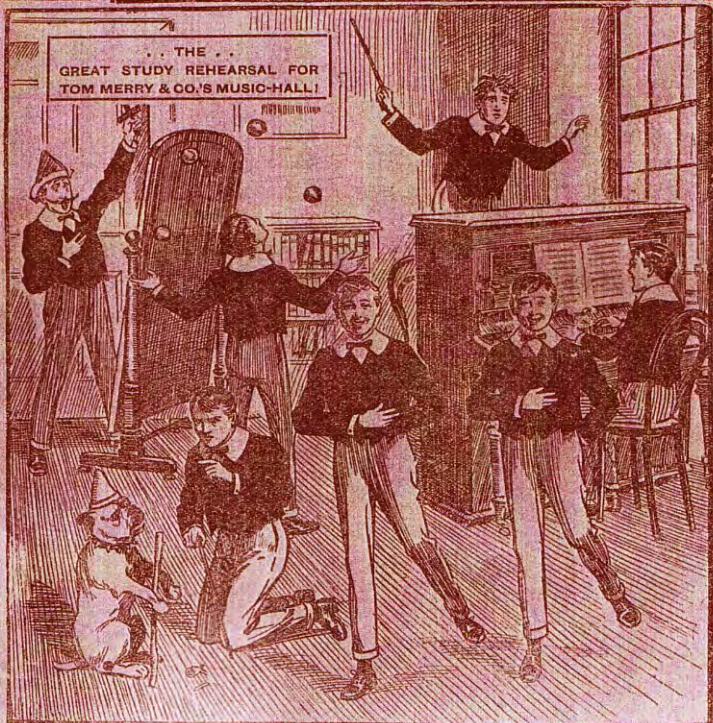
THE EDITOR.

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