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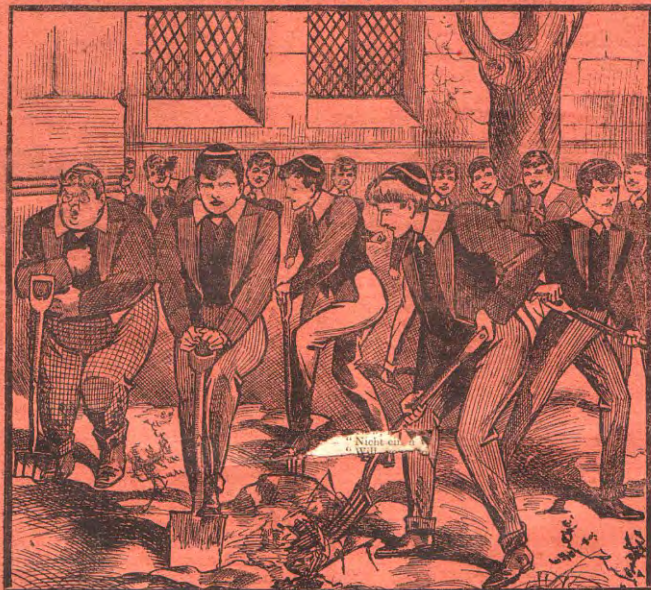
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THE FIRST CHAPTER.
The Garden Beautiful.

"JOLLY good idea!" said Frank Nugent.
Scratch—scratch!
"I say, Wharton—"
Scratch!

"I think it's ripping, you know!"
Scratch—scratch—scratch!

Harry Wharton's pen drove on. He was sitting at the table in Study No. 1 in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, with his brows wrinkled, and his pen travelling steadily over the paper. Strange and mysterious characters were left on the paper as his pen rushed on, and a careless observer might have supposed that a fly had travelled there after dipping his legs in ink. But it was not so. Harry Wharton was merely writing out lines in German—only his hurry made the writing more German than usual.

Frank Nugent had been reading a paragraph in the "Herald." He had read it several times, nodding his head with approval, and finally he had spoken. But Wharton did not look up. He seemed to be blind and deaf just then.

"Wharton, old man—"

"Nur mit Entsetzen wach ich Morgens auf!" growled Wharton, mumbering over the lines as he wrote them, in order not to lose the thread, owing to the fact that Nugent was talking at the same time.

The Greyfriars Gardeners!

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

By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Look here, you ass—"
"Ich mochte bitter Thrauen weinen—"
"Shut up!" said Nugent. "I tell you I've got a ripping, first-class, gilt-edged wheeze, and I'm going to—"
"Den Tag zu sein—"
"It will simply knock spots off the Fourth and the Fifth!" said Nugent, with great satisfaction. "I'll bet my last summer's straw hat that they've never thought of anything of the sort!"
"Der mit in seinem Lauf—"
"Now, look here—"
"Nicht-einen Wunsch erfüllen werd—"
"Will you stop mumbering that rot?" roared Nugent.
"Can't you hear me telling you that I've got a ripping, chipping, stunning idea—"
"Nicht-einen!" concluded Wharton triumphantly.
And he laid down the pen.
"Finished?" snorted Nugent.
Harry Wharton laughed.
"Yes," he said. "Now, were you speaking?"
Nugent grunted.
"Yes; I was speaking," he said. "What's that stuff you've been scribbling, you silly ass? I didn't know you'd taken up Greek!"
"Greek, you fathead! That's German!" said Harry Wharton indignantly.
Nugent cocked his eye at the imposition.
"Well, I'll take your word for it," he said. "It doesn't look like German to me, but I dare say Herr Rheinberger may be able to read it. Did you make it up yourself?"
"You fraubjuss ass!" said Wharton. "It's from 'Goethe!'"

"Gertie? Girl friend of yours?" asked Nugent innocently.

"G-o-o-t-h-o-o! Goethe!" yelled Wharton. "I didn't say Gertie, you ass!"

"Well, it sounded like Gertie," said Nugent pacifically. "But I don't care twopenny whether it's from 'Goethe,' or Gertie, or anybody else, so long as you shut up and listen to my wheeze. I've been reading in the gardening column in the 'Herald'—"

"Blow the gardening column in the 'Herald'! I've got to take in these lines to Herr Rheinberger as soon as they're done."

"Well, they look dry enough," said Nugent.

"I mean the ink, you fathead!"

"Let me read this out to you," said Nugent, unheeding. "It's a ripping article on the garden beautiful, you know."

"The garden which?"

"The garden beautiful."

"Do you mean the beautiful garden?" demanded Wharton.

"Well, I suppose it means that," said Nugent, rubbing his nose thoughtfully.

"Then why doesn't it say so?"

"Oh, it's a way of putting it, you know. It sounds more—more horticultural," said Frank. "Now, listen to this:—"

"The cultivation of the garden is a pleasure and delight to the amateur horticulturist. Every boy, whenever possible, should have his own little plot, which he should cultivate with assiduity. With patience and painstaking care, surprising results may be attained, and the amateur gardener may at length reach the height of the horticulturist's ambition—the garden beautiful. There, what do you think of that?"

"It's dry."

"Dry!" howled Nugent. "I think it's jolly interesting! I think—"

"I was speaking of my impot."

"Oh, ass! Look here, what do you think—"

"I think I'll take my lines in to Herr Rheinberger," said Wharton. "He's going out before six, and if I don't catch him they'll be doubled."

"Blow Herr Rheinberger!" shouted Nugent. "Don't I tell you I've got a stunning idea out of this paper! Why shouldn't we take up gardening?"

"I've got to take up my lines now."

"Why shouldn't the Remove take up gardening?" pursued Nugent. "It's a healthy occupation, and we're in the right season for it. I know a chap who got prizes for his roses, you know. Might make a lot of money that way. If a chap wants a hobby, he can't have a better hobby than gardening. What do you think?"

Six o'clock chimed out from the clock-tower of Greyfriars, and Wharton uttered an exclamation:

"Oh, rats! The Herr's gone out now, and I've hurried through these rotten lines for nothing! This is what comes of babbling about the garden beautiful, you ass!"

"Look here—"

"I say, you fellows—"

A fat face looked into the study, and Billy Bunter, of the Remove, blinked at the two chums through his big spectacles. He sidled into the study in a doubtful sort of way. Billy Bunter had once belonged to Study No. 1 in the Remove, and he still had a habit of dropping in there at meal-times; but he was generally a little doubtful of his reception. Nugent glared at him, and Wharton gave a shout as Bunter leaned his fat hand on the table:

"Look out, you ass!"

"Eh? What's the matter?"

"You're putting your fat fist on my lines from 'Goethe'!" said Wharton, catching up the sheet. "I don't want them spoiled, fathead!"

Bunter looked astonished.

"Lines from Gertie?" he repeated. "I say, let's read them, Wharton! He, he, he! I didn't know you had letters from girls here!"

"Ass!" said Wharton, without troubling to explain. "What do you want? We're not going to have tea, and there's nothing to eat."

"Oh, really, Wharton! Look here. I've got a ripping idea, and I want you fellows to join me in it," said Billy Bunter, still with one eye upon the sheet in Wharton's hand, which he evidently believed to be a letter from some young lady. "Have you fellows ever thought about gardening?"

"About what?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Gardening," said Bunter. "I've thought of it, and I've got a good idea. The idea came into my head quite on my own, you know. The cultivation of the garden is a pleasure and a delight to the amateur horticulturist."

"What?"

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"Every boy, wherever possible," said Bunter, "should have his own little plot, which he should cultivate with assiduity."

"Eh?"

"With patience and painstaking care, surprising results may be attained—"

"My hat!"

"And the amateur gardener may at length reach the height of the horticulturist's ambition—the garden beautiful."

The chums of Study No. 1 stared blankly at Billy Bunter.

"Did you think all that out for yourself?" asked Nugent faintly.

Bunter nodded.

"Of course I did," he replied.

"You haven't seen it anywhere in print?"

"Oh, really, Nugent! Of course I thought it all out for myself! Now, you fellows, if you'd care to go in for it with me, I've got an idea. I'm rather short of money just at present. Suppose we come to an arrangement—you fellows supply the money, and I'll supply the brains, and we can—"

"That's all very well," said Wharton. "We could do part of the bargain, but how are you going to do yours?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You fat fraud!" said Nugent wistfully.

"Oh, really! Look here, you know, it's a splendid idea, and I thought of it entirely by myself. The cultivation of the garden is a pleasure and a delight to the amateur horticulturist—"

"Eh?"

"Every boy wherever possible should have his own little plot—"

"Change the record!" yelled Nugent. "Don't let us have all that over again!"

"Which he should cultivate with assiduity—"

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent jumped up as if moved by the same spring. They laid violent hands upon William George Bunter and whirled him round towards the doorway.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "Whichever up to? Leggo! Hold on! Whoop!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter descended with a loud concussion upon the kitchen in the passage, and sat there gasping. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, grinning, passed him and walked down the passage, leaving Billy Bunter still sitting there, pumping in breath.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

More Gardeners.

"ALLO, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry, as Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent came into his study.

"You're late!"

"Had to finish an impot," said Harry Wharton.

"And to bump Bunter!" said Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha! Well, tea's ready!"

Bob Cherry's study, No. 13 in the Remove passage, looked very cheerful and cosy. The table was spread with a cloth that looked spotless—the tea-things being carefully placed to cover up the spots. Ham and poached eggs graced the festive board, and there was a small mountain of toast in a dish in the fender. The kettle was singing up the hob, and Mark Linley was scraping out jam from a jar into a nice, clean soap-dish. Little Wan Lung the Chinese was kneeling before the fire, with a ruddy countenance, adding to the pile of toast.

"All right!" said Bob Cherry. "Make the tea, Marky, old man."

"Righto!" said Mark Linley.

"I've got something to say to you chaps over tea," said Bob Cherry. "It's rather important, too. But start first."

"About the cricket?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Oh, no!"

"The swimming club?"

"Rais! No!"

"The Dramatic Society, then?" asked Nugent.

"Blow the Dramatic Society!" said Bob Cherry. "No! It's a new wheeze—something that I think is a ripping good idea."

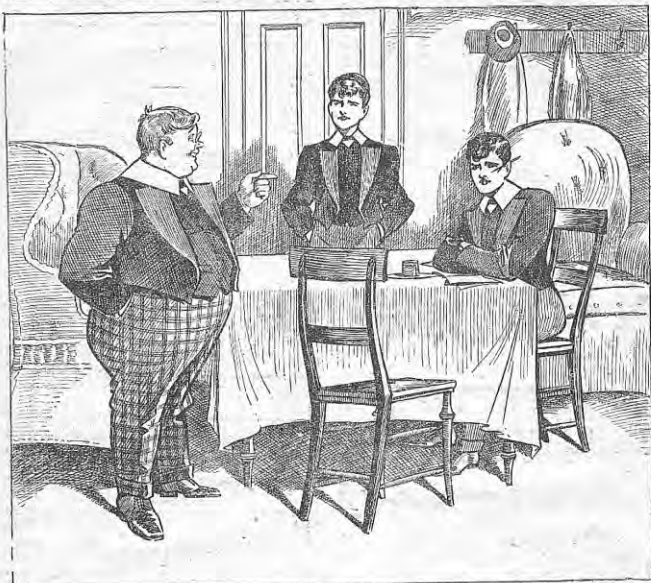
"All serene?" said Harry Wharton. "Pass the eggs!"

"That's enough toast, Wan Lung," said Bob Cherry, glancing at the growing mountain in the fender. "Get up, and pile in."

"Allee light!" murmured the little Celestial.

"You can pour out the tea, Marky."

Mark Linley poured out the tea, steaming hot. The fragrance of it was very grateful to the hungry juniors. Through the open window of the study they could see the cricket ground of Greyfriars, where a crowd of fellows in white were at practice. Wingate, of the Sixth, was batting



"Look here, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, "I've got a ripping idea concerning gardening. I want you fellows to join me in it. 'Every boy, wherever possible, should have his own little garden, which he should cultivate with assiduity.'" The chums of Study No. 1 stared at Bunter blankly. "Did you think that out all by yourself?" asked Nugent faintly. (See Chapter I.)

against a succession of howlers, and as the chums glanced out they saw a bull from Coker cut into the long field. They grinned. Coker, of the Fifth, fancied himself at a good many things, cricket among them; but, as Frank Nugent had remarked, what he did not know about batting and bowling would have filled volumes and volumes.

"Ahem!" said Bob Cherry.

"He coughed a little preparatory cough."

"Pass the eggs!" said Nugent.

"Here you are! Now, I was going—"

"Sugar in my tea, please," said Harry Wharton.

"Give the ass some sugar, Marky. I've got a suggestion to make to you fellows," said Bob Cherry, looking at his guests, who were very busy with ham and eggs and tea. "Some of the Remove have tried to set up this study against your study, but that's all rot. I think we ought to pull together."

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent. "We'll come to tea as often as you like, especially when you've got a decent spread like this."

"Ahem! I was going to say—"

"More ham!"

"Ham the idiot some ham, Marky—I mean, hand him some ham," said Bob Cherry. "Look here, you fellows. I think the idea I've got is really good, and I'd like you to listen to it."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 227.

NEXT
TUESDAY: "BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

"Go ahead!" said Wharton.

"Well," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully, "I suppose you'll agree with me that the cultivation of the garden is a pleasure and delight to the amateur gardener."

Wharton and Nugent looked at him.

"And I think, too, that every boy, wherever possible, should have a little plot of his own, which he should cultivate with assiduity," said Bob Cherry.

"My hat!"

"Great Scott!"

"You see," explained Bob, "with patience and painstaking care, surprising results may be attained."

Nugent laid down his knife and fork.

"Surprising results!" he asked.

"Certainly!" said Bob Cherry.

"Then," said Nugent deliberately, "I suppose the amateur gardener may at length reach the height of the horticulturist's ambition—the garden beautiful!"

Bob Cherry jumped.

"How—how did you know?" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha! I read it in the 'Herald'—as you did!"

yelled Nugent.

Bob coloured.

"Well, I did read something of the sort in the 'Herald,'" admitted Bob Cherry; "that was what put the idea into my

head. I think it's a nobby idea, and I think the Remove should start a gardening club, to be called the Greyfriars Gardeners, you know."

"Just what I thought of," said Frank.

"It's not a bad idea," said Harry Wharton. "But where are we going to get the garden? I don't want to throw cold water on a good scheme, but I don't see how we're to do gardening without a garden. You can't garden on paper."

"Why not ask the Head for some ground to— to dig up, and so on?" asked Bob Cherry boldly. "Every boy ought to have a little plot of his own—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to chuckle at. There's a lot of ground belonging to Greyfriars, and within the walls of the school, too, that isn't used. We could mark out some of it, and borrow spades and things of Gosling, and have a go at gardening. I've never done any, but I don't suppose there's much to learn. Anyway, we shall only be amateurs. We shall improve as we go on, and at length we may reach the height of the horticulturist's ambition, and—"

"And have a garden lovely," assented Wharton.

"A garden beautiful, you ass!"

"What's the difference?"

"Oh, rats! Look here," said Bob. "If you fellows agree with me, we'll carry out the idea. We can have a meeting in the Rag of all the fellows interested in gardening, and talk over the idea, and raise a subscription to buy spades and seeds and things. Spades and rakes and seeds and things like that are necessary before we begin. In the first place, there will be a lot of digging. I should not mind directing the whole affair while you chaps dig up the ground—"

"We jolly well should, though," said Nugent promptly. "On the whole, I think I should make a very good managing director."

"We'll talk all that over," said Bob. "Marky likes the idea, and he's done some gardening, so he will be able to give us pointers. I shouldn't wonder if the idea catches on, and we have the Fourth and the Fifth following our lead. You know how fellows do follow when a thing is once started."

"I dare say that depends on the number of copies of this week's 'Herald' that are about the school," grinned Nugent. "A lot of fellows here read it—"

"There was a knock at the door."

"Come in!" sang out Bob Cherry.

The door opened, and Johnny Bull and Micky Desmond of the Remove came in. Micky Desmond had a paper folded under his arm.

"Top of the afternoon to ye!" said Micky. "Sure, and I want to speak to ye, Wharton and all. We've got an idea."

"Just so!" said Johnny Bull. "We've got a scheme, you fellows, and we want to get you to go in with us, and make a sort of club of it."

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances. They had a suspicion of what was coming.

"What's the idea?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Why, you see," explained Johnny Bull. "The cultivation of the garden is a pleasure and a delight to the amateur horticulturist—"

"Faith, and every boy wherever possible should have a little plot of his own," said Micky Desmond, nodding his head sagely.

"And he should cultivate it with assiduity," added Johnny Bull.

There was a roar of laughter from the chums of the Remove.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Micky Desmond and Johnny Bull looked astonished.

"Blessed if I can see anything to snigger at," said Bob.

"Faith, and what are ye cackling at entirely, ye gossoons?" demanded Micky Desmond indignantly.

"You see, with patience and painstaking care—"

"Surprising results may be attained, be jabers!"

"And the amateur gardener may at length reach—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you asses—"

"Sure, ye blithering spalpeens—"

The door of the study opened, and Bulstrode, of the Remove, came in, looking very eager. He had a folded paper in his hand, a copy of that week's 'Herald.'

"I say, you chaps," he exclaimed. "I've got the idea of forming a gardening club. The cultivation of the garden is a pleasure and a delight to—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'd better have that paragraph from the 'Herald' framed and stuck on the wall," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Oh!" said Bulstrode. "You've seen it?"

"Arrah! Ye've seen it too, ye gossoon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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Bob Cherry chuckled.

"We've all seen it, and all got the same idea," he said. "Sit down and have some tea, you chaps, and we'll have a jaw over it, and we'll form the nucleus of the Junior Gardening Club of Greyfriars."

And the enthusiastic, if somewhat inexperienced, gardeners chimed in cheerfully:

"Heav, heav!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Coker Wants to Know.

COKER, of the Fifth, wore a majestic brow. Horace Coker, the big, burly Fifth-Former, was generally very good-tempered. He was popularly supposed to be the biggest ass at Greyfriars, but he was very well liked. He was big enough to lick any other fellow in the Fifth, and he was good-tempered to fellows he could easily have licked, and he was flowing with pocket-money. Naturally, when Coker passed into the Fifth from the Shell, he found friends there. Blundell was captain of the Form, but Coker's friends told Coker that he really ought to be Form-captain; a statement that Coker fully believed. Coker thought a great deal more about the prestige of the Form than Blundell did. While Blundell was thinking of nothing but cricket matches and swimming and rowing, Coker struggled to keep the Fifth Form's end up against rival Forms at Greyfriars. It was Coker who assigned himself the task of keeping the Remove in their place—a difficult task enough, which was really above Coker's weight.

Coker was frowning now.

He had never completely recovered from his last defeat at the hands of the Remove, when Harry Wharton & Co. had "bagged" a nigger minstrel show that Coker intended to give, and had given it themselves with great success.

Coker considered that the Remove wanted a periodical "squashing," and he was fully prepared to administer the necessary squashing, and in that his chums and study-mates, Potter and Greene, fully agreed with him.

"What's the trouble, Coker, old man?" asked Potter, of the Fifth, as he joined Horace Coker in the doorway of the School House, where Coker was frowning out into the sunny Close.

Coker knitted his brows.

"They're up to something again," he said.

"Who are?" asked Potter.

"The Remove kids."

"Oh! What's the little game?"

"Blessed if I know! But there's something on, and I'll bet my hat it's a jape up against the Fifth," said Coker. "It's time those cheeky fags were squashed again."

"High time!" agreed Potter. "But what's the latest?"

"Three or four of them have been in to see the Head. They passed me just now, and Bob Cherry was saying, 'This will make the Fifth look simply green.'"

Potter whistled.

"But what was it?" he asked.

"I don't know. I jolly well know there's something on, but I can't catch on to it." He gave Coker. "It's time we came down on them heavy. They've gone down to Gosling's lodge now."

"Let's go and see what they're after."

"Good!"

And Coker and Potter made their way across the old Close to the lodge of Gosling, the school porter and gardener of Greyfriars. Gosling was standing outside his lodge, and the three or four Removites were talking to him at once. The porter was frowning, and the Removites were waxing eloquent.

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"You see, we want to get to work," said Bob Cherry. "You can lend us a spade."

"And a garden-fork," said Wharton.

"Faith, and a rake, too!" said Micky Desmond.

"Ass, we shan't want a rake yet!" said Nugent. "We've got to put in a good deal of spade-work first."

"Wot I says is this 'ere," said Gosling. "I can't 'ave my tools 'uddled by a set of young humps. That's wot I says."

Harry Wharton inserted his finger and thumb into his waistcoat pocket, and drew out a two-shilling piece. Gosling's frown faded away as if by magic. His manner assumed an almost overwhelming civility.

"Not that there's any 'arm in you young gents doing a little diggin', if so be as you take care of the tools," he remarked. His gaze was fixed upon the two-shilling piece, as if it mesmerised him.

"Then we can have the run of the tool-shed, Gossy?" asked Wharton.

"Certainly, Master Wharton!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Catch!" he said.

He tossed the two-shilling piece to Gosling, who caught it. Gosling stowed it away in his trousers' pocket.

"I'll come an' unlock the tool-shed, Master Wharton," he said graciously.

"Good old Gossy!"

And Gosling walked away, followed by the Removites. Coker and Potter looked at one another, and followed. They were both in a state of amazement. That the latest whorve of the Removites was something "up against" the Fifth, Coker felt certain. But what the chums of the Lower Fourth intended to do with spades and garden-forks was a great mystery to him.

"What are the young bounders up to, Potty?" he muttered.

"Blessed if I know!" said Potter.

Coker frowned.

"We'll jolly soon see!" he said.

Harry Wharton & Co. came out of the tool-shed with spades under their arms. Micky Desmond carried a garden-fork in addition to a spade. He had one implement under each arm. Coker and Potter planted themselves in the path of the juniors.

"Look here, what's going on?" demanded Coker.

"We are!" said Frank Nugent cheerfully. And he went on.

"Wharton, look here—"

"No time, sonny," said Wharton, following Nugent.

"Balls, you ass—"

"Same to you, and many of them," said Johnny Ball; and he followed Wharton and Nugent.

Coker dropped a heavy hand upon Micky Desmond's shoulder, and forcibly detained the Irish junior. He was mystified and exasperated, and determined to know what it meant.

"Look here, Desmond, what are you up to?" he roared. "Snuff!" said Micky.

"Eh? What do you mean?"

"I mean I'm up to snuff, bodad!" said Micky innocently. Potter chuckled, but his chuckle died away as Coker glared at him. Coker was not feeling in a mood for humour by this time.

"You fags have got some game on," roared Coker. "I'm jolly well going to know what it is. Do you hear?"

"Faith, and I'm not deaf!"

"What are you going to do with that spade?"

"Dig, begorra!"

"What are you going to dig for?"

"Half an hour."

"You—your ass!" roared Coker. "Look here, Potty, if you can't stop cackling, you can buzz off. There's no need for you to be going off every other minute like a cheap cracker."

"Ha, ha, ha! I mean, I—I'm sorry."

"Look here, Desmond—"

"Faith, and will ye let me pass intirely?" said Micky Desmond. "I've got no time to waste. Stand out of the way, Coker darling."

"Rats!"

"Sure, and I want to pass ye!"

"You jolly well won't pass till you've explained," said Coker. "Take the other side of the cheeky beast, Potty, and we'll shake the truth out of him."

"Good egg!" said Potter.

And he cracked Micky Desmond by the other shoulder. The Irish junior was helpless, as he had a spade under one arm and a garden-fork under the other. The two Fifth-Formers shook him, and Micky Desmond roared.

"Xarool! Leggo, ye silly omadhauns!"

"What are you going to do?"

"Yow! Leggo!"

"Give him another, Potter."

"What-oh?"

And the two Fifth-Formers shook Micky with a hearty goodwill. The result was not just what had expected. They did not shake the truth out of Micky Desmond, but

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they shook the two gardening implements from under his arms. The garden-fork and the spade clanged to the ground. The spade fell upon Coker's foot, and he released Micky Desmond with a howl of anguish.

"Ow—ow—ow! My toe—my t-toe! Yar-o-o-o-op!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Micky Desmond. "Faith, and it was ye're own fault intirely!"

"Yow! Yow! Yar-o-o-o-op!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Micky jerked himself away from Potter, and picked up the spade and fork, and fled. Coker was dancing on one leg and claspng the toe of his other foot with both hands. He looked as if he were trying to tie himself into a knot. Potter tried not to laugh, but he was not successful. He roared.

"Ow!" yelled Potter. "My hat! Ha, ha!"

"Goo! Oh! You silly ass! What are you cackling at, you chump? Yar-o-oh! What are you sniggering at, you barmy duffer! Yar-o-o-o-oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow, you frabjous fathead! Is there anything—ow! I—funny—yow!—in getting a clump on the beastly foot with a—beastly—ow!—spade? Yow! Yar-o-o-o-oh!"

"Well, it looks funny!" gasped Potter. "If you could see yourself doing that step-dance! Ha, ha, ha! I—Ha, ha! I'm sorry! Does it hurt?"

"Does it hurt?" yelled Coker. "Do you think I'm doing this for fun, you ass? Ow! Does that hurt?"

And Coker left off dancing, to smite Potter a mighty smite upon the nose. Potter sat down suddenly on the ground and left off laughing quite abruptly.

"Oh, you ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker. "That's just as funny as getting a clump on the foot, if you could only see it. Ha, ha! Ow! If you get up I'll give you another—Yow!"

Ow! did not get up, and Coker limped away. He was still feeling very inquisitive about what the Remove fellows intended to do with those gardening implements; but he did not feel quite fit for further investigation just then.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch Comes Down Heavy.

"O H, Percy! Well!"

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, laid down his pen and frowned.

The sharp, shrill voice of the fag came clearly to his ears.

"That is Bolsover again!" muttered Mr. Quelch. "That boy is a wretched bully, and it is simply insufferable to be interrupted in my work in this way!"

Mr. Quelch was seated in the school library, with two or three volumes open on the table before him, and several sheets of paper covered with writing. Quite a little pile of closely-written manuscript lay upon the table, too, fastened together neatly at the corners with paper-clips. Mr. Quelch was a very hard-worked master. It was no easy task to rule the Remove and to drive unwelcome knowledge into the heads of the juniors. In his spare time—which was very spare—Mr. Quelch cultivated literary tastes. He was engaged upon a History of Greyfriars, from the foundation of the old school in the far-off Dark Ages to the present day, and that valuable work was the chief pleasure of Mr. Quelch's life. Every time he could add a page or two to the pile already written, he felt that he had deserved well of Greyfriars. He generally did his writing in the school library, where he could consult the ancient manuscripts preserved from early days, and dive deep into the dusty old records of the school. To be interrupted while engaged upon literary and historical work was annoying, and to be interrupted by so unnecessary a thing as a case of bullying was especially exasperating.

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed as he rose to his feet.

He stepped to the door of the library and opened it sharply. He came suddenly upon the scene in the passage.

A little fag in the Third Form had been cornered in the passages by Bolsover, the bully of the Remove. The fag was Bolsover minor—otherwise known as "Billy." The fact was Bolsover minor had been lost in his early youth, and that Hubert Bolsover had been lost in a London snuff before he had lived long years in the school. The Greyfriars fellows feel sympathetic towards him. But it did not have that effect upon his elder brother. Bolsover major had been annoyed when his minor was sent to Greyfriars, and any incident that reminded him of his minor's former days in Angel Alley exasperated him. And the most exasperating thing about Billy—from his major's point of view—was the fact that he would not break off all association with Angel Alley and turn his back upon the friends of his shun days. And, although Billy looked up to his elder brother with an affection and respect that Bolsover major was far from

deceiving, he was adamant on that point, and bullying made no difference to him.

"Percy! Don't!"

"Give me that letter, then, you young end!" growled Bolsover.

"I—I won't!"

"What are you going to do with it?"

"I'm going to post it," said Bolsover minor tearfully.

"Don't be so hard on a chap, Percy. It's only a letter to old Tadger."

"That rotten ragamuffin who came here to see you the other day," said Bolsover savagely.

"Tadger's alright," said Billy. "He was a good friend to me."

"I've told you are not to write to him, you young rotter! It's disgrace enough to have you here at all, without having your slant friends writing to you as well!"

"Look 'ere, Percy—"

"Give me that letter!"

"What do you want it for?"

"I'm going to burn it."

"Well, you ain't!" said Billy. "I've got permission from the Head to write to Tadger, and you ain't no right to stop me."

"Then I'll jolly well make you hand it over!"

Bolsover's grasp was upon his minor's wrist, and he twisted it till the lag shrieked with pain. Mr. Quelch came striding out of the library.

"Bolsover!" he exclaimed, in a terrifying voice.

Neither of the juniors had noticed the library door open. They had not known that Mr. Quelch was there, and his sudden appearance was a surprise to both of them. Bolsover released his minor's wrist as it had suddenly become red-hot.

"Yes-ees, sir?" he hammered.

Billy backed away from his major, looking startled and scared. His major had hurt him, and hurt him considerably, but he would never have cried out if he had known that Bolsover's Form-master was within hearing. For in spite of his major's bullying, the little fellow's devotion to his elder brother had hardly ever wavered.

Mr. Quelch regarded Bolsover with a stern glance.

"So you are bullying again?" he exclaimed.

"I—I—"

"How dare you ill-use your minor! I—"

"It's—it's alright, sir," gasped Billy. "Percy didn't mean to hurt me, sir. It's—it's alright, sir. I—I don't mind, sir."

"Silence, Bolsover minor!" said Mr. Quelch severely.

"Bolsover, I have noticed for a long time this tendency to bullying on your part. You were demanding that your minor should give you a letter he has written to an old friend."

Bolsover gritted his teeth.

"It's to a brat in the slums he comes from," he muttered.

"He has permission to keep up a correspondence with his old friend," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "It is no business of yours to interfere when he has permission from Dr. Locke. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Bolsover."

Bolsover looked sullen.

"I have spoken to you upon this subject before," said Mr. Quelch.

"Speaking, however, does not seem to be of any use, and I shall try severer measures. You have been guilty of bullying and persecution, and you have interrupted my work. You will follow me to my study."

"If you please, sir—" began Billy.

"Silence! I shall not allow you to speak in favour of your brother, Bolsover minor!"

"But, sir—"

"Enough! Follow me, Bolsover major!"

Mr. Quelch strode away, with rustling gown and frowning brow, and the bully of the Remove followed him.

Billy looked after them miserably. Many a time he had tried to get on better terms with his brother, but he had never succeeded. Even if he had consented to throw over his old friend of Angel Alley, Bolsover major would only have tolerated him sullenly and unwillingly. And that was the only Billy could not do. He had never forgotten the old days as a new-boy in London streets, when Tadger had been his best chum, and had always been ready to share his last copper or his last crust with him.

Billy went out with a shadowed face to post his unfortunate letter. His major followed Mr. Quelch into his study with a brow like thunder.

The Remove master selected a cane. Then he turned to the bully of the Remove.

"I shall cane you severely, Bolsover," he said. "Words seem to have no effect upon you. Hold out your hand!"

Bolsover held out his hand. He had plenty of pluck, of a bulldog sort, and he took his punishment without a murmur.

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And the punishment was severe enough—three on each hand, and last on as Mr. Quelch laid on when he was annoyed.

Bolsover ground his teeth to keep back a cry of pain.

"There!" said Mr. Quelch, laying down his cane. "I trust that will be a lesson to you, Bolsover. I hope you will profit by it. And remember, if I find you bullying your minor again, or if I learn that you have interfered with his correspondence, I shall punish you yet more severely. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," muttered Bolsover, almost choking with rage.

"Then remember what I say. You may go!"

Bolsover strode from the study without another word. His hands were aching from the caning, and he was in such a rage that if he had answered Mr. Quelch then he would have said things that would certainly have doubled his punishment.

Frank Nugent met him in the passage, and he looked in surprise at the pale, scowling face of the bully of the Remove.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"It's Quelch!" muttered Bolsover, his voice trembling with passion. "I've just been through it on account of my rotten minor. I'll make him sorry for it."

Frank's lip curled contemptuously.

"I suppose you've been bullying young Billy again," he said. "Serves you jolly well right what you've got."

The Remove bully snapped his teeth.

"Hang you!" he said. "And hang Quelch! I'll make Quelch sorry for this."

Nugent grinned.

"Going to give him a thick ear?" he asked.

"I know what I'm going to do," said Bolsover. "I'll—"

He paused and did not finish the sentence.

"Well, what are you going to do?" demanded Nugent.

"Mind your own business!" said Bolsover savagely.

And he tramped away, with his hands tucked under his arms, squeezing them to assuage the pain. A scheme of revenge had come into the bully's mind, but he did not intend to take Frank Nugent into his confidence.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. A Good Beginning.

"WHAT'S ON?"

"What's the little game?"

Quite a crowd of fellows had followed the Greyfriars gardeners as they marched across the Close with spades and garden-forks under their arms or over their shoulders.

Fellow belonging to the Remove and the Third and the Fourth followed them, to see what they were going to do.

Harry Wharton & Co. did not reply to their frivolous questions, as to whether they were taking up road-mending to turn an honest penny, or were going to hunt for the legendary Greyfriars treasure. They walked on with serious and sedate faces, as became youths who had taken up that important branch of industry—gardening. They had it on the authority of the gardening column in the "Herald" that amateur gardening was a pleasure and a delight, and a little chipping from irreverent youths was not likely to turn them from their purpose.

Behind the old chapel of Greyfriars was a space of ground that was not used for any special purpose, excepting for leaping by the fags. The Remove gardeners had obtained permission from the Head to cultivate it. Dr. Locke had been a little surprised by the request, but he had acceded at once. Gardening was certainly a very harmless occupation, and the Renovites might be worse engaged. Whether any horticultural success would come of it was another matter.

As the gardeners walked on the crowd round them grew in size. Half Greyfriars seemed to have determined to know what was going to be done with those spades and garden-forks.

Harry Wharton & Co. arrived upon the scene of operations. There was quite a large piece of ground at their disposal, bounded at one end by the chapel rails, and at the other by the high brick wall of the school precincts. Certainly it did not look very promising so far. It was covered with weeds and wild grasses, and there were two or three stunted bushes growing there along the inside of the school wall. This was the wilderness which the amateur gardeners had determined to turn into a smiling pleasure-land, to use Bob Cherry's ambitious expression.

"Here we are!" said Bob Cherry.

"Yes, here we are!" said Johnny Bull.

"Go it!" shouted Tubbs, of the Third, apparently under the impression that the chums of the Remove were going to give a performance of some sort.

Wharton waved his hand majestically to the interested crowd.

"You fags, clear off!" he exclaimed.



Herr Rheinberger began to read out the translation of the lines, while the three juniors stared in amazement. "Then—then it isn't a love letter from Gertie, sir?" gasped Bunter. "I tink you shoke mit me," exclaimed the German master. "Dose lines were written by der great Sherman poet Goethe!"

"Well, that's good!" said Temple, of the Fourth. "I like that!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"What are you going to do, you kids?" asked Hobson, of the Shell. "Are you going to look for the Greyfriars treasure? Have you got a clue?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rats!" said Bob Cherry. "We're going to garden, if you want to know."

"To what?"

"Garden!"

"Yes, rather!" said Micky Desmond. "Faith, and if you fellows knew a little about amateur gardening, you'd know that it was a pleasure and a delight to the amateur horticulturist intirely!"

"Every boy ought to have a little plot of his own," said Johnny Bull.

"And he should cultivate it with assiduity," said Bulstrode loftily.

"What's that?" asked Tubbs. "Is it a kind of manure?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Surprising results may be attained, with patience and painstaking care," remarked Bob Cherry.

"My hat! He's getting eloquent!" said Temple, in surprise. "Where did you pick up those giddy words from, Cherry?"

"He's looked 'em out of the dictionary," said Dabney.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't jaw!" said Bob Cherry. "Don't interrupt the work. You'd better buzz off and play marbles. We've got work to do."

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"BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
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"Oh, we'll watch!" said Hobson, of the Shell. "It will be a new experience to see you fags working."

And about two score of grinning fellows settled themselves to watch. The Remove gardeners elaborately took no notice of them, though they were secretly feeling a little self-conscious. They had not intended to put forth their first little efforts in the full glare of publicity in this way. But it could not be helped now.

"How are we going to begin?" asked Johnny Bull, looking round in some dismay at the weed-grown expanse of which the cultivation was to be a pleasure and a delight.

"Better dig it all up," said Bob Cherry.

"Ground has to be well dug before you can plant anything in it," Harry Wharton remarked. "Afterwards we can get some seeds and things. But, of course, the ground will have to be dug up first. We had better lay it all out in flower-beds."

"Good idea."

"Nugent's gone to get a tape measure," said Harry. "Here he is. Got it, Franky?"

Nugent came up breathlessly.

"Yes, here you are."

Wharton took the tape measure.

"Now, you fellows, begin digging," he said. "While you're getting that done, I'll lay out the plan of the flower-beds."

"I'll help you with the measuring," said Nugent.

"Perhaps I'd better do the planning while you fellows are digging," Bulstrode suggested. "I've got a head for that sort of thing, you know."

"No; I think you'd better do the digging, Bulstrode."

Bulstrode smiled.

"Well, I jolly well don't," he said. "I'm jolly well not

going to do all the work. I'm quite willing to do my whack."

"It's a healthy exercise," urged Nugent. "It expands the chest and makes the muscles as elastic as anything—in the long run."

"It's just as healthy for you as for me!" said Bulstrode obstinately.

"Now, look here, Bulstrode; if you're going to argue I don't know what's going to become of the Remove Gardening Club," said Wharton warmly. "There must be a head to any affair."

"I don't mind, so long as it's my head."

"Faith, and I think I'd better lay the plans, you know, while you fellows do the digging!" said Micky Desmond. "This spade is jolly heavy!"

The amateur gardeners looked at one another. It really seemed as if the gardening club was in danger of being broken up on the spot. Digging was a very healthy exercise, but nobody seemed particularly anxious to indulge in that form of healthy exercise at the moment.

"Oh, let's all wire in!" said Wharton at last. "We'll jolly soon get the ground dug up, so far as that goes."

"File in, then; you start, as you're leader!"

"Oh, rats!"

Wharton started with a spade. Gosling's spade was rather heavy for him to handle, but fortunately—or unfortunately—the ground had been softened by recent showers of rain. Wharton plunged the spade into the soil and started, and the rest of the amateur gardeners followed his example. In a few minutes a whole row of juniors were digging away inside the school wall, watched with great interest by a growing crowd of fellows.

Encouraging remarks came from the crowd, mingled with many chuckles and words of advice to the diggers.

"Go it, ye cripples!"

"Now, then, you're slacking, Desmond."

"Keep an eye on Nugent, Wharton—he's slacking!"

"I wouldn't let Bulstrode have any beer if he doesn't buck up!"

"Are you going to grow roses or orions?"

The amateur gardeners delved away unheeding, though their ears began to burn under the fire of claff. The labour was heavy, and the unaccustomed toil soon made the diggers pant for breath. But they did not intend to give in. It was their intention to show the derisive crowd the stuff they were made of. They dug away, turning up heaps of mud and muddy weeds. Their boots were soon smothered, and their trousers were very quickly splashed and stained, and their neat Eton jackets showed mud from collar to waist. The sweat of honest toil dropped from their brows, and they grew redder and redder, and muddier and muddier, as they dug away.

Wharton paused at last to wipe a splash of mud from his face, with a stream of perspiration. His hand was muddy, and he left a streak of mud across his features which made the crowd shiver.

"I—I say, this is jolly hard work!" gasped Nugent at last. Micky Desmond rested on his spade.

"Faith, and I feel rather warm, intirely!" he panted.

"Sure and it's time to take a rest. I'll sit down for a bit. You other fellows needn't stop."

"Needn't we?" growled Bulstrode. "I'm jolly well going to stop, if you do."

And the gardeners all stopped, as if moved by the same spring. They leaned upon their spades and forks and looked at one another. They were smothered with mud from head to foot, and some of them were scarcely recognisable.

"—it's getting late," said Nugent cautiously. "I think we'd better knock off now."

"Faith, and ye're right."

"We've got to take the spades back to the tool-shed," said Johnny Bull.

Wharton gasped.

"Oh, blow the spades! Leave 'em here. We shall want 'em to-morrow morning."

And the spades were jammed in the ground and left. The amateur gardeners moved off, feeling very tired and dirty. A cheering crowd followed them back to the School House.

As they entered the House Mr. Quelch met them in the hall, and he started in amazement at the sight of the muddy heroes.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Remove master. "What has happened?"

"Ahem!"

"Has there been an accident?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"N-n-no, sir."

"Then how did you get into that dreadful state?" exclaimed the Remove master in alarm.

"Ahem! You see, sir, we—we—"

"What have you been doing?" asked Mr. Quelch sternly.

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"Only gardening, sir."

"What?"

"We—we've taken up gardening, sir," explained Wharton.

"Amateur gardening, sir."

"Oh?"

"It's a pleasure and a delight, sir," said Bob Cherry diffidently.

"The Head has given us some ground to cultivate, sir," said Micky Desmond, "and, sure, we're going to cultivate it with—ah—ass—"

"What?"

"With assiduity, sir."

"Indeed! I should recommend you to put on some old clothes for the purpose," said Mr. Quelch drily. "You had better go and get yourselves clean now."

And the chums of the Remove thought so, too, and they streamed away to the bath-room. But the cleaning was almost as long an operation, and quite as laborious, as the gardening had been, and it was not a pleasure and a delight by any means.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. Alarming!

"BEDTIME, you kids!" said Courtney, of the Sixth, looking into the junior common-room.

Harry Wharton & Co. were seated round the fire, enjoying a well-earned rest after the labours of the day—or, rather, the evening. Their gardening had had unexpected results.

The juniors of Greyfriars were accustomed to plenty of open-air exercise, but it had brought unaccustomed muscles into play, and certainly the amateur gardeners had "plunged," a little at the start. The result was that a few hours later they were feeling stiff all over, and very much disinclined to move.

Preparation that evening had been a very great effort, and now they were sitting down in the common-room, and did not want to move. Nugent had remarked that he felt sixty years old, and Bob Cherry averred that he felt nearer seventy. Harry Wharton rose from his chair with as much deliberation as if his limbs were made of glass and might break at any moment.

Courtney looked at them with a grin. He had seen the muddy gardeners come in after their great exploits behind the chapel.

"Feeling stiff, you kids!" he asked.

"Well, just a trifle," said Johnny Bull. "Of course it will soon pass off."

"Better run up and down the dormitory a dozen times or so, and that will wear it off," the prefect suggested.

The juniors shuddered. They felt that even the walk upstairs to the dormitory was too much for them in their present stiff and aching state.

"We shall be all serene to-morrow," said Bob Cherry.

"Yes, we're going to be up at six, to get on with the garden before brekker," said Bulstrode. "With patience and painstaking care, we—"

"Six!" said Nugent.

"Yes, that's what we arranged."

"Did we?" murmured Nugent. "Suppose we say seven?"

"Faith, and I'd rather say nine, intirely."

"It's all right," said Johnny Bull. "I've got an alarm-clock to wake us at six, and we shall turn out all right. This trifling stiffness will have passed off by then. Any new exercise makes a chap stiff at first."

Jolly well, but you won't be out till rising-bell!" said Bolsover with a sneer.

"Oh, rats to you!"

"Well, buzz off to bed now!" said Courtney, laughing. "You can carry one another up to bed, if you like."

That permission was not taken advantage of. The amateur gardeners walked slowly and sedately still up the stairs. They crawled into the dormitory at a snail's pace.

"We overdid it a bit for a start," Harry Wharton remarked thoughtfully. "One ought to take these things more easily. It's really no good fixing oneself out at the beginning."

"Yes, better make it the usual time in the morning," murmured Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover.

"Oh, do stop cackling, Bolsover!"

"I'll bet the alarm on for six," said Johnny Bull, winding the alarm-clock. "I think we ought to turn out, you know, Never say die."

And Bull placed the alarm-clock at the head of his bed, and turned in. The amateur gardeners grunted as they lay down. A fresh position brought them a fresh set of aches. But they fell asleep very soon, and slept the sleep of the just.

It seemed, to Johnny Bull, that he had only just closed his eyes when a wild whirling crackled off near his ears, and made him start out of balmy slumber.

He started and opened his eyes. Dawn was glimmering in at the high windows of the dormitory. He had slept like a top through the night, and it was morning.

Whirr-r-r-r-r!
"Ow! What a fearful row!" murmured Johnny Bull. He reached out for the alarm-clock to stop it. A sleepy voice came from Bob Cherry's bed.

"Grog! Stop that awful thing."
"It's six o'clock."
"Grog! Stop it!"

"What about the garden?" mumbled Nugent.

"Blow the garden!"
"Fiddle, and everything in the garden is lovely!" murmured Mickey Desmond. "Stop that beastly thing, ye ould-haun! Let's wait for rising-bell."

Whirr-r-r-r-r!
"Stop that awful row, Bull!"

Bull clutched at the alarm-clock. He was very sleepy, and he knocked it over instead, and it fell to the floor, and whirled away wildly.

Whirr-r-r-r-r-ting-g-g-g-g-g-whirr-r-r-r-r!
"Stop that row!"

"Chuck it!"

"Yah! Shurrup!"

"I—I'm trying to stop it," gasped Bull.

"Shut up! Let's go to sleep!"

Bull plunged out of bed after the alarm-clock. He captured it, and felt for the little catch at the back to shut off the alarm. But the catch was broken, and he could not stop it. The alarm rang and whirled on thunderously. It was an American alarm-clock, with a peculiarly raucous alarm. It did not keep good time, but there was nothing feeble about the alarm part of it. Bull wrestled desperately with the fiendish timekeeper, but it would not stop, and it was far from exhausted. He had wound it up to the fullest extent the night before.

"Stop it, you ass!" roared Harry Wharton.

"I—I can't!"

"Stop that row!" came wild shrieks from every bed in the dormitory. The whole of the Remove were awake by this time with the exception of Billy Bunter. Billy Bunter could have slept through a cannonade.

"I can't! It won't stop!" gasped Bull helplessly.

"Jump on it!"

"Biff it on the wall!"

"Smash it!"

"Stop it somehow, or we'll bump you, you silly ass!"

Crash!

Johnny Bull hurled the alarm-clock against the wall. It bumped on the floor, and, with a last defiant whirr, it ceased.

Glorious silence fell.

"Oh!" gasped Bull. "I've done it!"

"You ass!"

"You fabulous ass!"

"Here comes somebody to see what the giddy row's about!" growled Nugent, as a footstep was heard outside the dormitory door.

The door opened; but it was Bolsover, of the Remove, who came in. He started as he saw the whole form awake.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, staring in amazement at the bully of the Remove. "You're up jolly early, Bolsover."

Bolsover flushed red.

"I—I've been out for a stroll," he said. "It's a glorious morning. Why don't you lazy slackers get up?"

The Greyfriars gardeners looked at one another. They were pretty fully awake by this time. And the taunt of the Remove bully had more effect than all their good resolutions of the night before. To be called slackers by the worst slacker in the Remove was too much.

"We're just getting up!" said Bob Cherry, with a snort.

And he did, and the rest of the gardening club followed his example, and they dressed themselves in the grey light of dawn.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER. A Slight Mistake!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. left the Remove dormitory. The house was very still and silent, only an early-morning housemaid being seen as they trooped downstairs. The juniors rubbed their eyes furtively, and yawned as they came out into the quadrangle. The morning air was very fresh and keen, and it revived them a good deal; but they were feeling stiffer than they had felt the previous evening. The night's rest had had the effect of getting their various aches well set in their bones, as Bob Cherry remarked.

"It will pass off when we get digging," Johnny Bull remarked.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.

NEXT TUESDAY: "BOLSOVER MINORS' BOLT!"

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

And they arrived hopefully at the garden which was to be come the garden beautiful.

A light shower of rain had fallen in the night, sufficient to turn the well-dug ground into a kind of bog.

The amateur gardeners looked at it in some dismay.

"Faith, and it's no good looking at it!" said Mickey Desmond, seizing a spade. "Here goes."

"All very well for you!" growled Bulstrode. "You're at home in a giddy bog, but I'm not."

"Faith, and I—"

"Hallo, hallo, where's my spade!" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Sure, and I suppose it's where you left it, intirely!"

"Well, it isn't. Somebody's taken my spade."

Harry Wharton looked round. He remembered where he had left the spade, in the last clod of earth he had cut. But it was not there now. He looked about for it, and found it lying on the ground at a short distance.

"Some ass has been meddling with our tools!" said Wharton crossly. "We can't have that sort of thing. They'll have to learn that this is a serious matter."

"Yes, rather."

The gardeners began to dig. There was a considerable amount of splashing in the pools of rain-water that had formed in the trenches they had made. But that, as Bob Cherry remarked, really didn't matter.

In a very short time they were very muddy; but they had dressed in old clothes on purpose, and put on their oldest boots—a very wise precaution.

Seven o'clock rang out from the clock-tower, and then the clang of the rising-bell came to their ears.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There goes Gosling with the rising-bell!" said Bob Cherry. "We'd better chuck this now, and get cleaned up before brekker."

"Good egg!" gasped Nugent.

The amateur gardeners were not sorry to "chuck it," if they had hoped that their aches would pass away with further exercise, they were disappointed. They had now several more aches to add to the old ones, and some of them were beginning to wonder where the pleasure and delight of amateur gardening came in. But they would not say so.

They jammed spades and forks into the ground, and left them, and limped away round the chapel back to the School House.

The clanging of the rising-bell had ceased, and Gosling was returning to his lodge, when he met the juniors in the Close, as they came towards the School House.

Gosling stopped dead, and stared at them.

"Well, my hey!" he ejaculated.

"Good-morning, Gospy!" said Wharton cheerfully.

"Top of the mornin' to ye, bedad!" said Mickey Desmond.

"You awful young blimps!"

"Hey!"

"Nice goings hon, I must say!" said Gosling, staring at them as if he could hardly believe his eyes. "My hey!"

What I says is this "ere—I'll report yer."

"Report your grandmother!" said Harry Wharton.

"What have we done?"

"You awful young raskils!"

"Why, you old ass!"

"Nice goings hon, I must say!" said Gosling, staring at them as if he could hardly believe his eyes. "My hey!"

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What I says is this "ere—I'll report yer."

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

"You foller me in to the 'Ead," said Gosling. "You've been trampin' 'ome in the rain, I s'pose, and a nice state you've got yourselves into. Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll haf' 'otter sicker yer month when the 'Ead sees yer about it," snorted Gosling. "You foller me in."

"You fathead!" roared Harry Wharton. "We haven't been breaking bounds."

"Stuff!" said Gosling. "Wot 'ave you been doin', then?"

"Gardening."

"What?"

"Gardening; making the garden beautiful, you know."

Gosling sneered.

"Werry likely story!" he said. "We'll see wot the 'Ead thinks of it. You jest foller me in, and I'll report yer."

"You awful ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Don't we tell you we've been gardening. There's nothing surprising in coming in at seven if we got up at six."

Gosling snorted. He regarded the explanation of the juniors as the blindest possible attempt to impose upon his credulity.

"Don't you believe us, you silly ass?" demanded Wharton angrily.

"No, I don't," said Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Look here, Gosling—"

"You foller me in!" said Gosling. "I ain't taking in any of your yarns and nonsense. Gardening indeed! Br-r-r! It's my dooty to report yer. Disgraceful goings on!"

Nugent winked at his chums.

"Gosling!" he exclaimed, in an imploring voice. "Good old Gosling! Don't do it! It's the first time we've ever done this; you know."

The Removites ceased laughing and looked very serious and solemn. They understood that Nugent intended to "pull the leg" of the surly porter, and they were all ready to back him up in that worthy object.

"The first time!" said Gosling contemptuously. "'Ow do I know that? It's my dooty to report yer."

"Have mercy on us, Gosling!" said Nugent tearfully. "Don't get us sacked, and bring down our paters' grey whiskers in sorrow to the crematorium!"

"That ain't my business," said Gosling loftily. "You should 'ave thought of that before. I've got my dooty to do."

"Gosling! Gosling! Gosling!" said Bob Cherry pleadingly.

"Be merciful, Gosling!"

"Be kind!"

"Be good!"

"Faith, and remember ye were a boy wanst yerself, Gosling!" said Micky Desmond. "Boys will be boys. Ye were a boy once, hundreds of years ago."

Gosling gave an indignant snort.

"You foller me!" he roared.

"Won't you let us off, Gosling?" demanded all the juniors at once imploringly.

"I've got my dooty to do."

"But the Head won't be down yet."

"I'll report yer to Mr. Quelch."

"But it's a shame to disturb him before brekker, Gosling. Think it over, old man, and let us off, and we'll buy you some ginger-pop when the tuckshop opens."

"You foller me in!" shouted the indignant Gosling.

And he walked majestically into the School House, and the juniors, with solemn and serious faces, followed him in.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Gosling Reports.

MR. QUELCH was already down, and in his study. Gosling, with a portentous frown at the Removites, knocked at his door, and Mr. Quelch's voice called out to him to come in. The Remove master looked astonished as the school porter came into his study, followed by the troop of muddy juniors. Half a dozen pairs of very muddy boots did not improve the appearance of Mr. Quelch's carpet.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "What does this mean?"

Gosling waved a horny hand towards the juniors.

"Which it's my dooty to report these boys, sir," he said.

"Indeed! For what?"

"Breakin' bounds, sir."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir. I jest found 'em coming in, sir, arter a night out," said Gosling impressively.

Mr. Quelch looked startled.

"Do you mean to say that those boys have been out all night, Gosling?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir."

"Good heavens!"

"Which it's my dooty to tell you, sir, that they tried to THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.

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beg me off from reporting them, sir," said the virtuous Gosling. "But I alters does my dooty, sir. I 'ope."

Mr. Quelch fixed his eyes upon the juniors. The Remove generally agreed that Mr. Quelch's eyes were very like gimlets, so piercing were they. But they had never seemed so like gimlets as they did at the present moment.

"Wharton! Nugent! Is this true?"

"Is what true, sir?" asked Wharton meekly.

"What Gosling accuses you of. Have you broken bounds last night?"

"No, sir."

"Nay heye!" murmured Gosling. "Wot a nerve!"

"Absence, please, Gosling."

"Yes, sir. But wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Pray be silent! You have not been out of bounds, you boys?"

"No, sir."

"Then how was it that Gosling found you coming back to the school at this hour?" demanded Mr. Quelch sternly.

"The rising-bell has only just gone."

"We got up early to do some gardening, sir," said Nugent.

"Oh, indeed?"

Gosling snorted very audibly.

"And what time did you get up, may I ask?" said Mr. Quelch.

"Six o'clock, sir."

"Ahem! I suppose some of the other boys in the Remove will bear out your statement?" said the Form-master.

"All of them, I think, sir," said Wharton. "Bull's alarm-clock woke up the whole giddy dormitory."

"At six o'clock?" said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you not explain this to Gosling?"

"We did, sir; but he didn't believe us."

"Which they begged me to be merciful and let 'em off, sir," said Gosling.

"We thought it would be a shame to disturb you before breakfast, sir," Harry Wharton explained demurely.

Mr. Quelch's severe face broke into a smile.

"Verry well," he said. "You may go."

Gosling gasped.

"You don't believe 'em, sir?" he exclaimed, aghast.

"On the contrary, I do!" said Mr. Quelch tartly. "And you ought to have accepted their explanation, Gosling. You have acted in a ridiculous manner, and troubled me for nothing."

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"You are absurd, Gosling!"

"Oh!" gasped Gosling.

"You may go," said Mr. Quelch to the juniors, "and kindly wipe your boots before entering my study another time."

"Yes, sir."

And the juniors trooped out of the study, grinning. Mr. Quelch looked at Gosling and frowned, and then he looked at his muddy carpet and frowned more darkly. Gosling seemed to have some difficulty in getting his breath.

"If you please, sir—" gasped Gosling.

"I do not please!" said Mr. Quelch sharply. "You will kindly clean that mud off my carpet at once, Gosling!"

"But what I says, sir, is this 'ere—"

"You have said quite enough," said the Remove master.

"In fact, too much. Don't say any more, but get that carpet cleaned."

Gosling did not say any more, but the effort of containing himself made him feel as if he would explode. He set to work to clean the mud off the carpet, with feelings too deep for words.

Harry Wharton & Co. controlled their laughter until they reached the Remove dormitory, and then they roared.

"Poor old Gosling!" said Bob Cherry, with tears in his eyes. "He won't be in such a hurry to report us for having a night out again! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors changed their clothes in great spirits. Their victory over the obnoxious Gosling made them almost forget the aches they owed to the enthusiastic gardening.

"You fellows enjoyed yourselves!" asked Lord Manglewiper, sitting up in bed and rubbing his eyes.

"Rippingly!" said Bob Cherry.

"Don't feel fagged?"

"Nothing to speak of," said Bob airily. "Which was quite true, for he certainly did not intend to speak of it."

"I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter drowsily, "my offer's still open, you know. I don't mind managing the whole thing for you, if you like."

The juniors chuckled.

"You're too kind, Bunter!" said Nugent.

"Well, the fact is, my intention is to be kind," said Bunter, blinking at him. "We can make a ripping garden



Tom Merry stared at the amazing spectacle of Figgins & Co. sitting down to Redfern's tea, and Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence waiting on them with meek attention and civility. "Look here!" exclaimed Tom Merry, "What's the little game?" "It's our place to wait on Figgins," said Owen, with owl-like gravity, "and we're doing it!" (See the splendid, long, complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., entitled **"THE NEW HOUSE RIVALS!"** by Martin Clifford, which is contained in our popular companion paper, **"The Gem"** Library. Out on Thursday. Price One Penny.)

If you fellows supply the cash and I supply the brains. I'll take the whole financial arrangement into my hands."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you know, I think it's a jolly good idea! Only don't ask me to get up in the morning at six. I don't think it would be good for my health. I'm rather a delicate chap, and I find it difficult to get up."

"Oh, I don't mind helping you," said Bob Cherry. "I'd always help a lame dog over a stile or a fat pig out of a bed."

"Yow!" roared Billy Bunter, as Bob laid his muscular hands upon him. "Ow! Leggo! Yar-o-oh!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter descended heavily upon the floor with the bedclothes rumbled round him. He kicked his little fat legs out of the bedclothes, and roared.

"Ow-ow! Yow!"

"Anything more I can do for you?" asked Bob Cherry politely.

"Yow! No! Yowp!"

"If you're still sleepy, I don't mind the trouble of sousing you with cold water," said Bob, picking up a jug from a washstand.

"Yow! Gerroff! Beast!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.

NEXT TUESDAY: "BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

Billy Bunter was up in a twinkling and dodging round the bed. He was not fond of cold water. He frowned darkly as he dressed himself. Billy Bunter always dressed before he washed. He thought it saved time.

Harry Wharton & Co. went down with the rest of the Removs. Herr Rheinberger, the German master of Greyfriars, met them in the lower passage, and shook a podgy forefinger at Harry Wharton.

"You have not giffen me dem lines from 'Goeithe,' Wharton, ain't it," he said. "You write out a huntret instead of feefty, ain't it, before."

"I'm sorry, sir—"

"Tat is all right. You writes out a huntret instead, after," said the German master.

"Br-r-r-r!" growled Wharton, as the German master turned away.

Herr Rheinberger turned back at once.

"Vat is tat you say, Wharton?"

"I was only speaking in German, sir," said Wharton innocently.

"Oh!" said Herr Rheinberger suspiciously. "Ferry good, den."

And he rolled away, and the Removites grinned.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

"Goethe" and Gertie.

"I SAY, you fellows," said Billy Bunter very mysteriously—"I say—"
Bolover and Vernon-Smith and Snoop were standing in the passage talking, after morning lessons, when Billy Bunter came up to them. The fat junior looked as if he had a most important secret to reveal, but the juniors were not impressed. Vernon-Smith went through a pantomime of buttoning up his pockets, as if to hint to the Owl of the Remove that no money was to be expected.

Bunter sniffed.

"Look here, you fellows, it's an awful lark!" he said. "I suppose you don't know that Wharton has letters from girls, do you?"

"Does he?" said Bolover.

"Yes. He's got a letter in his study from a girl named Gertie."

"My hat!"

"It's not one of the Cliff House girls, then?" said Vernon-Smith. "There isn't one of them of that name."

"No! I shouldn't wonder if it's the girl in the bonnet-shop at Courtfield," sniggered Bunter. "Her name is Gertie. He, he, he!"

"But are you sure?" asked Snoop, with great interest.

"Quite sure."

"Seen the letter?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Yes; it was lying on Wharton's table yesterday when I went into his study, and he was awfully alarmed when I leaned on it—as if it mattered! He said it was from Gertie in my hearing. It would be a ripping joke to get hold of the letter and read it, and see what she says, don't you think?"

And Billy Bunter emitted a fat chuckle.

Some fellows in the Remove would have bumped Bunter on the spot for making such a proposition; but Bolover and Snoop and the Bouncer were not that kind. They grinned gleefully, quite entering into the spirit of the thing.

"We could write out a copy of it and leave it on Wharton's desk," said Bolover. "Fancy that young bouncer getting love-letters! I suppose it is a love-letter?"

"Bound to be! What else could Gertie write to him about? Do you know what her other name is, Bunter?"

"No; but I dare say it's on the letter."

"Where is the letter?"

"In the table-drawer in Study No. 1."

"How do you know?"

I saw Wharton put it there, and I heard him speak about it to Nugent just now as they were going out. He said something about getting it out after dinner, as he was going gardening now."

"The uses have all gone gardening!" said Bolover. "A good chance for us to get hold of the letter!"

"Good egg! Come on!" said the Bouncer briefly.

And the juniors hurried into the Remove passage, which was quite deserted. They went into Study No. 1. Wharton and Nugent were on the other side of the school grounds, gardening with the rest of the amateur horticulturalists, and thinking of anything but study raids. Bolover opened the table-drawer.

The lines from "Goethe" that Wharton had written out for Herr Rheinberger, and had not taken in, lay on top of the other things in the drawer.

"That's it!" exclaimed Bunter.

"That! That's in German!"

"Well, that's the thing that Wharton said was from Gertie," said Bunter. "I didn't notice that it was in German. I'm a trifle short-sighted, you know—"

"Blind as a bat, you mean!" grunted Bolover.

"Oh, really, Bolover—"

"Queer for a girl to be writing to Wharton in German, and on impot paper!" said Vernon-Smith suspiciously. "Look here. If this is a little joke of yours, Bunter—"

"I isn't!" said Bunter indignantly. "I tell you—"

"Then Wharton must have been pulling your leg," said Vernon-Smith. "I'm going out."

And he went.

"I say, you fellows, it's really genuine!" exclaimed Billy Bunter anxiously. "I know jolly well that Wharton wasn't pulling my leg. You know Wharton never tells whoppers like you chaps—"

"What?" roared Bolover.

"I—I mean Wharton never tells whoppers like some chaps, you know," stammered Bunter. "He said plainly this was from Gertie."

"Well, if he said so, I suppose it is," said Snoop. "He may have given the girl this paper to write on. She may be hard up, or something."

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"THE NEW HOUSE RIVALS!"

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

"But Wharton can't be mashing—a German girl," said Bolover.

"There's a German girl in a cafe in Courtfield," said Snoop. "I remember seeing her. I don't know what her name is, but I know those chaps go there for tea sometimes."

"That's it," exclaimed Bunter. "Of course I should have thought of that before. It's a German girl, of course. You know German, don't you, Bolover?"

"Well, yes."

"Read it out in English, then."

Bolover coughed.

"The writing's jolly bad," he said. "You see, it's written in German writing as well as the German language, and it's written badly. It looks more like a boy's writing than a girl's, and it's been scratched off at top speed, I think."

"But you can read some of it."

"Ich bin zu alt," read out Bolover slowly and painfully. "That means I am too old."

Bunter and Snoop looked excited.

"She's older than he is," said Bunter. "That girl in the cafe is seventeen at least. That shows it's from her."

"Yes, rather," said Snoop.

"Go on with it, Bolover."

"The writing's too bad," said Bolover, shaking his head. "I can make out a little bit here—ich mochte bitte Thranen weinen. I think that means that she's going to cry."

"Ha, ha, ha."

"That's proof enough," said Bunter. "If that ass Vernon-Smith hadn't barked he might have translated it for us. He knows German better than you do."

"Eh?"

"I mean, he knows German better than I do. Look here," exclaimed Bunter. "I've got an idea! Let's take it to Herr Rheinberger."

"Herr Rheinberger?"

"Yes. We can ask him to translate it for us, and pretend we don't know what it is. We'll say we found it, and we're curious about it. It will be fun to see the old codger's face when he starts reading a love-letter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good egg!" said Bolover. "Let's find him."

Herr Rheinberger was found in his study. He was seated in an ample armchair, which his equally ample figure quite filled up, and he was reading a paper printed in the weird characters of the Fatherland. The three juniors came in very respectfully, and the fat German looked at them over his spectacles.

"Vat is it?" he asked.

"I say, Herr Rheinberger—"

"If you please, sir—"

"Will you do us a little favour, sir," said Bolover, taking the lead and frowning his companions into silence. "You know how interested we all are in the wonderful German language, sir."

"Ach! Bolover—"

"We've found a paper written in German, sir," said Bolover, "and we would like you to translate it to us, if you don't mind, sir."

The German master smiled benignantly. As a rule, he found it hard to get the juniors interested in the language of Schiller and Goethe. Bolover, Snoop, and Bunter were three of the least enthusiastic on that subject. And so the German master was pleased by their keenness on this occasion.

"Certainly," said Herr Rheinberger graciously. "Hand me der paper, and I will read it out to you mit pleasure before."

"Thank you so much, sir."

"Nod at all, mein boy, nod at all."

Bolover handed the Herr the sheet, and Herr Rheinberger adjusted his spectacles, and glanced over it. His fat face lighted up with a smile as his eyes scanned those splendid lines from a great poem. But the smile gave the three juniors the impression that the Herr had already caught on to the fact that the lines were a love-letter. They waited eagerly for the translation.

"In jedem kleide—" began the Herr, and then he went on with the speech of Faust to Mephistophiles in rapid German.

"In English, if you please, sir," said Bolover.

"Certainly, mein boy, certainly."

And the Herr translated. The three juniors listened in amazement. This was certainly not what they had expected.

"In any garb I shall still feel the pain of this narrow

ANSWERS

earth-life," translated Herr Rheinberger. "Ich bin zu alt um nur zu spielen—datt means I am too old to play about—zu jung, um ohne Wunsch zu sein—and too young to be without a wish to do so, mein poys. Dar mit Entsetzen wach ich Morgens auf—only with misgivings wake I in der morning."

"But—but what would a girl want to write that stuff for?" broke out Bolsover, in blank amazement.

The German master lowered the sheet and looked at him.

"A curl!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, sir. That was written by a girl."

"I think you are yun ass, Bolsover. Tat was written by Goethe."

"Gertie!" said Bolsover blankly. "Then you know, sir?"

"Of course I know!" said the German master testily.

"Do you tink tat I do not know mein Goethe?"

"Your Gertie, sir!" stammered Snoop.

"De Sherman Goethe, den!" said Herr Rheinberger.

"You—you know her?" gasped Bunter.

"Her!" roared Herr Rheinberger. "Are you mat, den? It is not a her, you silly poys; it is a him!"

"Eh! How can Gertie be a him?"

"I tink tat you play shoke mit ma," said Herr Rheinberger.

"Do you mean to say tat you have neffer heard of to great Goethe?"

"Gertie is a girl's name, sir."

"I tink you a silly young tuffer, Bolsover. Take tat pen and write."

"Yes, sir."

"Go—t—h—e, Goethe," said Herr Rheinberger. "Now do you understand?"

"Oh!" gasped Bolsover.

"I tink you shoke mit me," said Herr Rheinberger, "or else you are ignorant of how to pronounce der name of to great Sherman poet. Therefore you write out tat name two hundred times each of you, and bring them to me this evening."

"Oh—"

"Now run away. I tink you ferry stupid."

The two juniors left the study. Bolsover glared at Billy Bunter. The fat junior backed away nervously.

"You silly young ass!" said Bolsover, in measured tones.

"You frightful fathead!" It was a rotten German imposition, and that is all.

"I—I—"

"I'll give you Gertie!" growled Bolsover. "You funny ass!"

"Yaroch!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter was bumped down on the floor, and Bolsover wiped his boots on his person, and strode away in great wrath.

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "Beast!"

And Bunter gasped on the floor for several minutes before he rose and rolled away. And that was his last visit to Wharton's study in search of letters from Gertie.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Shock for Mr. Quelch!

AFTERNOON school was a worry, as Frank Nugent remarked. The Greyfriars gardeners were as keen as ever, and they wanted to get at the garden. It was likely to be quite a long task, treading the howling wilderness into the garden beautiful. But the more they put into it, the sooner it would be; and they were rather inclined to resent lessons as an unreasonable interruption of gardening.

But the time came for the Remove to be dismissed at last. Mr. Quelch was as pleased as his pupils were. They wanted to go gardening, and he wanted to get at his valuable "History of Greyfriars," from the foundation of the College. The juniors trooped out into the sunny Close, and Mr. Quelch made his way to the school library.

As he entered the cool, shady, lofty room Mr. Quelch breathed more peacefully. In that scholastic shade he was quite at ease.

His writing-table near one of the high windows was ready for him, as it always was. His inkstand and his blotter, and his volumes of reference, and his little pile of nice clean manuscript. Mr. Quelch sat down in his chair with a sigh of contentment, and pulled open the table-drawer to take out the pile of written manuscript, to glance over it before he re-started after the interval, so to speak.

Then he uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

The drawer was empty!

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch.

Now, Mr. Quelch was a most methodical man, and when he saw that the drawer was empty, he knew perfectly well that the manuscript must have been moved by somebody else. But he went through the drawers in the table to make sure it was not to be found. That little pile of manuscript, neatly fastened with paper fasteners at the corners, and arranged in apple-pie order, like all Mr. Quelch's possessions, had vanished.

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"BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!"

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Mr. Quelch stood in a state of great agitation for some minutes.

What had become of the completed part of the "History of Greyfriars"—the work of the leisure hours of two or three years?

Had some careless servant moved it? Impossible! His instructions that his writing-table should never be interfered with had become a proverb in the house. Mr. Quelch had heard of the painstaking housemaid in the old story, who threw into the fire all the sheets that had been scribbled on, and saved only the nice clean blank ones. But there was no housemaid of that kind at Greyfriars. What had become of his manuscripts. A suspicion glimmered into his mind that some rival assassin might have abducted the precious sheets. But he dismissed it; it was not at all probable. But where was his History?

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch again, in great dismay.

He thought of the story of Carlyle's great history—how the first volume had been destroyed by accident, and the great historian had nobly bent himself to the painful task of re-writing it.

Mr. Quelch was not at all inclined to imitate the great Carlyle in that respect. He didn't want to write his first volume over again.

"What can have become of it?" he murmured, in amazement and worry. "Is it possible that some boy has removed it for a joke?"

Mr. Quelch's face grew scarlet at the thought with anger.

If sacrilegious hands had been laid japingly upon his precious manuscripts, there would be condign punishment for the japper when he was discovered.

And it was the only possible explanation. The manuscripts had been taken away, and therefore someone had taken them. Who could it possibly be, if not a boy with a turn for practical joking, or else some young rascal who had been punished, seeking revenge? At the latter thought Mr. Quelch turned pale. For in that case it was possible that his manuscripts had already been destroyed.

He searched about the table for some traces of a marauder.

He uttered a sharp exclamation as he picked up a handkerchief from under his chair. It was not his own; it was a boy's handkerchief, and not over clean. There were initials in the corner—H. B.

"H. B.!" muttered Mr. Quelch. "So some boy has been here—this is proof of it. For what boy's name do those initials stand? The B. would stand for Bolsover."

Mr. Quelch remembered the punishment of Bolsover on the previous day. He thought also of several other boys he had punished lately—and some of them, he knew, were of a revengeful nature. Snoop, and Vernon-Smith, and Bolsover, and Stott—but their initials did not agree with those on the lost handkerchief.

To whom did it belong? Mr. Quelch ran over names in his mind. A name flashed into his mind—Hubert Bolsover.

Bolsover minor!

Was it possible that Bolsover minor had raided his manuscripts? He remembered the incident of the previous day, and how Bolsover major had been punished against the wish of the fag he had been bullying. Certainly Mr. Quelch's interference had come very fortunately for little Billy. But the fag was a peculiar little fellow—he stood by his elder brother, brutal though he was, through thick and thin. It was quite probable that he would resent Percy Bolsover's punishment, although it was inflicted upon his own account. And it might appeal to a thoughtless Third-Form fag as a "lark" to raid the Remove master's manuscripts—which would probably appear to him as a heap of dry bosh.

"I must see Bolsover minor!" said Mr. Quelch.

And with a very grave face he quitted the library and made his way to the Third-Form-room. There was a great deal of noise proceeding from the Form-room, as was generally the case excepting when lessons or preparation were in progress. Mr. Quelch opened the door, and the boy of whom he was in search dropped the door, and the boy of whom he had fallen from the skies. But he had only vaulted over Tubb, who was bent down with his hands on his knees. The Third were playing leapfrog in the Form-room.

"Now, then, tuck in your tuppenny!" roared Paget.

"Hold on!" said Tubb, perceiving Mr. Quelch.

"Ahem!" said the Remove master.

The Third-Formers all stood up, looking rather red. They were not really supposed to play leapfrog in the Form-room, but Mr. Quelch did not think of interfering in another Form-master's quarters. He beckoned to Bolsover minor.

"I wish to speak to you, Bolsover minor," he said quietly.

"Yes, sir," said Billy.

"Have you been to the library since last evening?"

Bolsover minor looked astonished.

"No, sir!" he replied.

"You are sure?"

"Quite sure, sir!"

"Is that your handkerchief?" asked Mr. Quelch, holding out the article for Billy's inspection. The fag looked at it in surprise.

"I—I think so, sir," he said. "The initials are mine, sir."

"I found it in the library, under my chair, near the writing-table," said Mr. Quelch. "How did it come there, if you have not been there, Bolsover minor?"

Billy shook his head.

"I don't know, sir."

"You still deny that you have been there?"

"Certainly, sir. I ain't bin there!" said Billy. "I ain't no business in the library, sir!"

"You certainly had no business there," said Mr. Quelch drily. "But I am afraid that I cannot take that as proof that you have not been there!"

"Is there any harm in Bolsover minor going to the library, sir?" asked Paget.

"Not at all. But in this instance someone has taken away my manuscripts from the drawer in the writing-table," said Mr. Quelch. "If they have been damaged there will be severe punishment to follow; and, in any case, they must be recovered. I found this handkerchief where it had evidently been dropped, close to my writing-table in the library."

"You young ass, Billy!" murmured Tubb. "What did you want to meddle with a Form-master's papers for?"

"But I ain't!" exclaimed Billy aloud. "I ain't been in the library!"

"The evidence is that you have been there," said Mr. Quelch. "You did not lend your handkerchief to somebody else, I suppose?"

"Not that I knows of, sir!"

"Has anyone here borrowed Bolsover minor's handkerchief?"

There was no reply.

"I don't think nobody borrowed it, sir," said Billy, who always dropped more and more into the dialect of the slums when he was worried or excited. "I don't say nothin' of the sort, sir. There ain't a chap 'ere who 'ave an 'anky there to get me into a row, I know that!"

"Very well! You have a locker in this room, Bolsover minor?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Open it, please. I must ascertain whether the manuscripts that have been taken are in your possession before this investigation goes any further."

"I ain't got 'em, sir!"

"Open your locker!"

"Worry well, sir!"

Billy went to his locker in the Form-room. The fags' lockers were made with keys, but there were very few fags who used the keys. The keys were generally lost, and as nothing valuable was kept in the lockers, it did not matter if they were left unsecured. Billy threw open his locker, and Mr. Quelch glanced into the confused interior. He uttered a sudden sharp exclamation.

"Ha! What is that?"

Fall in view lay a sheet of paper, upon which was written, in Mr. Quelch's handwriting, the words: "Book L—History of Greyfriars."

Mr. Quelch's brow grew black as thunder.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Mystery!

BOLSOVER MINOR gazed at the sheet, and his eyes seemed to be about to start from his head.

The fags gathered round, and all of them looked startled and some of them dismayed. Most of them realised what a serious thing it was to interfere with a Form-master's private papers, and the finding of the sheet in Bolsover minor's locker was proof enough that he had done it. Mr. Quelch did not require any further evidence. His eyes were fixed now upon the little fag, and they glinted like steel.

"Well, Bolsover minor!" he said grimly.

Billy only stared blankly at the paper. He could not speak.

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"Where is the rest of the manuscript?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"This is only the flyleaf!"

"I—I—"

"Turn out your locker!"

"But I—I—"

"Turn out everything!"

"Worry well, sir."

Bolsover minor turned out the contents of the locker upon the Form-room floor. All sorts and conditions of things came to light. But there was no more manuscript to be seen. The remainder of the "History of Greyfriars" was not there.

"What have you done with the papers, Bolsover minor?"

"I—I—"

"You have not dared to destroy them!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, and his voice trembled a little at the idea.

"I—I ain't seen them, sir!"

"What?"

"I ain't touched them!"

"How dare you say so!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch in exasperation. "It is perfectly clear that you took my papers and placed them here. You have removed them somewhere else, and left this sheet behind. I ask you again, have you destroyed them?"

"No, sir!"

"Then where are they?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Boy!"

"I ain't touched 'em, sir!" said Billy, in great distress.

"I swear I ain't! I never went into the library, sir!"

Mr. Quelch looked at the junior with gleaming eyes. He could only imagine that the fag was telling him a deliberate falsehood.

"I have never heard of such astounding impertinence,"

said the Remove-master, hardly able to believe his ears. "After I have found your handkerchief in the library, and a part of my manuscript in your locker, do you dare to say that you have not removed my papers?"

"I didn't do it, sir!"

"Silence! I will not allow you to tell wicked untruths in my presence! I command you, Bolsover minor, to return my papers at once!"

"I ain't got 'em, sir."

"Does that mean that you have destroyed them?"

"I ain't done nothing of the sort, sir."

"Listen to me!" said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice.

"If you have destroyed my papers, I shall report your conduct to the Dr. Locke, and you will be dogged. If you have not destroyed them, I will give you an opportunity of returning them to me, and in that case I shall only come you for this foolish and wicked trick. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir; but I—I—"

"I am going to my study now," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall wait there for a quarter of an hour—time enough for you to get the papers from wherever you have hidden them, if they have not been destroyed. If you do not bring them to me in a quarter of an hour, I shall report your heinous conduct to the Head."

"Oh, sir! I—I—"

"Enough!"

And Mr. Quelch strode from the Form-room with rustling gown.

"Well, of all the silly asses!" exclaimed Paget. "What did you play such a silly, rotten trick for, Bolsover?"

"And on the Remove-master, too," said Tubb, with a sniff. "What's he done to you? He's not our Form-master."

"Billy young ass!" said Williams.

Billy looked at them dazedly.

"I didn't go for to do it," he said stammeringly. "I ain't seen no papers of 'is. I told you I ain't done it!"

Paget snorted.

"No good keeping that up to us, you young ass!" he said.

"Better take the papers back to Quelch at once," said Tubb. "Better have the caning, and get it over, than a dogging from the Head."

"Take 'em back, Billy, and tell Quelch you're sorry."

"Don't be an ass, you know!"

Billy gave a breathless cry.

"I can't take 'em back. I ain't got 'em!"

"You haven't been idiot enough to destroy Quelch's papers, have you?"

exclaimed Tubb, in amazement.

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Bolsover began to dig, turning over the earth slowly and with great difficulty. Suddenly he started, and ceased to dig. A footstep sounded in the dark Close. He straightened up, his heart beating wildly, and his eyes turned fearfully in the direction of the sound. (See Chapter 14.)

"I ain't touched 'em!"

Paget looked keenly at his chum.

"Look here, Billy," he said quietly; "it won't do, you know. Quelch knows that you've been in the library—"

"I ain't!"

"And he's found one of his rotten sheets here—"

"I dunno 'ow it got there."

"It didn't fly there!" said Tubb sarcastically. "It must have been put!"

"Well, I didn't put it!"

"Who did, then?"

"I dunno. It's a rotten joke on me, I s'pose; or else somebody 'as done it to git me into a row with Quelch."

"Oh, draw it wild!"

"If you say that one of us played a trick like that—"

began Johnson H. indignantly. "But somebody's done it. Look 'ere, you fellows, you know I ain't a liar! I tell yer I never touched his papers! I never knowed anything about them!"

"Honest Injun?" asked Paget.

"Yes, I tell you—honest Injun."

"Well, it beats me," said Paget. "I don't believe you'd tell a crammer, Billy, but it's jolly queer. If you didn't do it, who did?"

"I dunno!"

"It was a rotten thing for anyone to do," said Tubb. "Of course, we know it was all rot that Quelch used to scribble on those papers. Waste of good paper, I call it; much better have used the stuff for making kites. But he sets a big value on the rot, and there'll be an awful row if the thing doesn't turn up."

"Yes, rather!"

"I dunno who could 'ave done it," said Billy miserably. "There are some fellows 'ere who don't like me, and some of 'em says that a street-arab ortal be turned outter the school. I know Snoop and Vernon-Smith think so, but I wouldn't like to say that they 'ad done this."

"No good saying anything you can't prove," said Paget rather drily. "But if you didn't do it, Billy, it's up to you to find out who did. The quarter of an hour's nearly up."

"I dunno wat to do," said Billy wretchedly. "I know I didn't do it, and that's all I know 'bout the thing at all."

"Better go to Mr. Quelch, an' try to persuade him to think so," said Paget.

Billy nodded. He made his way to Mr. Quelch's study, and found the Remove master with a stern and frowning brow.

Mr. Quelch looked at him quickly, evidently hoping to see the manuscripts in his hands. But the bag's hands were empty.

"You have not brought me my papers?" said Mr. Quelch harshly.

"I ain't got 'em, sir. I wish you'd believe me—"

"Do you mean to say that you can't return them?"

"I can't, when I ain't got 'em, sir!"

"That means that they are destroyed. Very well, Bolsover minor, I shall leave the matter in Dr. Locke's hands. Follow me."

"Oh, sir—"

"Not a word!"

"And Bolsover minor followed the Remove master to Dr. Locke's study with a downcast face and a sinking heart."

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Coker the Gardener.

SIX hungry gardeners came in to tea with great appetites. The amateur horticulturalists were finding that continued exercise relieved their aches, and they were feeling much better now. And certainly digging up the reluctant soil had a wonderful effect upon their appetites. On their way back to the School House they had stopped at the school shop, and laid in supplies for tea. Each of the Greyfriars gardeners carried a package of considerable size.

Coker & Co. met them as they came in. Coker smiled. He had learned by this time what the object of the Removeites was in borrowing agricultural implements, and he was very wroth with himself for having allowed the Remove to get ahead of him in that line. Coker rather prided himself upon his skill as a gardener, and once he had brought back to Greyfriars, after a vacation, some tomatoes which he declared were of his own growing, and he had called upon his chums to eat them. Potter and Greene and Bland had been very dubious about it. They had not liked the look of those tomatoes. But Potter was a deep youth, and he had deftly changed the tomatoes for another set he purchased at the tuckshop, throwing Coker's tomatoes away. The new tomatoes had been very nice, and for ever afterwards Coker referred to them as a proof of his skill. Coker was very much exasperated to find that the Remove had taken up amateur gardening, and had had the pick of the ground which was to be his.

He stared grimly at the muddy juniors as they came in.

"Fagged out, I suppose?" he asked.

"No fear!" said Nugent. "Feeling more fit than ever. Shouldn't advise you to try it, though. You haven't the constitution for it."

Coker frowned.

"As a matter of fact, I've often gardened as a hobby," he said. "I'm taking it up again now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at, you cheeky fags?" demanded Coker angrily.

"Follow in your father's footsteps," said Bob Cherry, with a chuckle. "We'll give you some tips about gardening, if you like."

"It's a pleasure and a delight intirely!" remarked Micky Desmond.

"Though I don't suppose Coker will ever get so far as the garden beautiful!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Removeites tramped up to No. 1 Study, leaving Coker frowning majestically. Coker glanced at Potter and Greene, who turned off their grins quite suddenly.

"What are you grinning at?" demanded Coker.

"Was I grinning?" asked Potter.

"Yes, you were, you silly ass! Look here, it's up to us to show these Remove kids that they don't know anything about gardening," said Coker. "If we ask the Head to let us have a bit of ground, he'll do it like anything, and we can have a flourishing garden in a very short time, you know. I know the whole game from start to finish. You remember those home-grown tomatoes we had once?"

Potter and Greene looked at one another.

"I remember!" murmured Potter.

"They were prime!" said Green slowly.

"I should think they were!" said Coker, with emphasis. "I grew those tomatoes myself. I can generally make something of anything I turn my hand to."

Potter nodded.

"Going to grow tomatoes again?" he asked.

"Oh, no! I think a flower garden would be about the proper caper," said Coker thoughtfully. "We can get some cuttings from the rose-trees in the Head's garden, you know; and if we're careful, we can get a regular garden of roses. We can keep 'em in pots in our study."

"Hurrah!"

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while those Remove kids are fumbling about digging idiotic trenches and getting 'em filled with rain!" Coker remarked.

"Jolly good idea!" said Greene.

"I'll ask the Head for permission to dig!" said Coker. "There's a nice little spot near the east wall of the chapel that we could have. It's a good distance from where those fags are mucking about."

"Ahem!"

"I'll show you fellows how to do it," said Coker. "We'll start a gardening club in the Fifth, you know. The club can come to a feed in my study when we inaugurate it. I've had a good remittance from my aunt, and I'm in funds now."

Potter and Greene ceased to look dubious at once.

"Jolly good wheeze!" said Potter heartily.

"Ripping!" exclaimed Greene.

"Then I'll go and speak to the Head. You fellows wait here for me."

Coker departed, and Potter and Greene exchanged a solemn wink.

"A little digging won't do us any harm," said Potter with a grin. "It will give us an appetite for a feed in Coker's study."

"Yes, rather!" said Greene, and he echoed Potter's chuckle.

Coker rejoined them in a few minutes.

"It's all right," he announced. "The Head says we can have the plot to garden on. All we've got to do now is to get some spades."

"Wouldn't it be better just to mark out the ground first?" suggested Potter. "We can begin the digging to-morrow, and you can order some spades from Courtfield. Those Remove kids have borrowed all the blessed spades there are in the school!"

"All serene," said Coker; "come on. And look here—we shall have to keep an eye on our ground. It would be like those Remove kids to muck up our garden. They'll pretend we're imitating them, you know."

Potter coughed.

"That would be sheer cheek!" he said.

"Of course it would. Our garden will be simply blooming soon, with my expert knowledge of gardening," said Coker. "We can have all that bit along the east wall, and we can dig it up—"

Bolsover major was coming in as Coker spoke, and he suddenly stopped and looked at Coker with a startled expression upon his face.

"What's that?" he exclaimed. "You taking up gardening?"

"Yes," said Coker. "We're going to show you Remove kids how it's done."

"Did you say you were going to dig along the east wall?"

"Yes."

"But—I say—it's not allowed!" exclaimed Bolsover.

"We've got permission."

"But I—I say—"

"Oh, rats!"

Coker & Co. walked out of the School House, leaving Bolsover major staring after them with a strange expression upon his face. There was nothing apparently alarming in the fact that the Fifth-Formers were starting a garden on their own, but Bolsover major certainly looked alarmed.

He hesitated for a few moments, and then followed the Fifth-Formers. Coker & Co. strolled round the School House, and passed on the scene of their intended operations. It was a very secluded spot between the old chapel and the school wall, shaded by several trees, and it did not get much sun, which was perhaps the reason why it was left unused. But, as Coker remarked, they could not be particular. They could not expect the Head to give them a special plot in his own garden.

"I think this will do us nicely," said Coker, glancing round. "We're fifty yards from the Remove muck-heap, and they needn't interfere with us. They'll be able to see our garden from their mud-patch, and it will do 'em good." "Somebody's been digging here by the look of it," said Potter, glancing at the trampled patches in the soil, which was soft from the recent rain.

"They'd better keep off the grass now," said Coker. "This ground is ours. Look here, if we had some spades we could start now!"

"Ahem! Better think it over first—"

"Rats! Those Remove kids have left their spades yonder," said Coker. "We may as well take three of them and start."

Potter and Greene did not look enthusiastic. But they made no demur, and three spades were fetched from the Remove garden, where they had been left standing in the soil. The bully of the Remove came round the house as the Fifth-Formers prepared for work. He uttered an exclamation.

"Hallo! Are you fellows beginning?"

"Yes, we're beginning," said Coker loftily. "And we're going to make something better than a mud-patch of it."

"You've got our spades," said Bolsover.

"You're not one of the gardeners, are you?" asked Potter.

"Well, no; but you've got to let Remove properly alone," said Bolsover.

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here—"

"Buzz off!" said Coker, with a wave of the hand. "We're busy, and we've got no time to talk to fags."

"I tell you—"

"Oh, bosh! Cut!"

Coker turned up a spadeful of muddy earth, and pitched it in the direction of the Remove hully. Bolsover gave a yell as it plumped upon his trousers, a considerable quantity of it sticking there.

"Ow! You rotter!" he roared.

"Get off, then!" grinned Coker.

Bolsover scowled furiously and tramped away to the School House. Coker & Co. went on digging industriously. Bolsover entered the house, and hurried up to Harry Wharton's study. The Greyfriars gardeners were at tea there, and they were piling into the good things with famous appetites. They all looked round at the bully of the Remove as he came in.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, noticing the mud on Bolsover's trousers. "Have you taken up gardening, too?"

"No, I haven't!" said Bolsover savagely. "Coker did that. Those silly asses in the Fifth have taken up gardening now. They've taken your spades away from where you left them. If you like to come and stop them, I'll lend you a hand."

"Oh, they can have the spades till we want them," said Harry Wharton carelessly. "I don't suppose they'll make much of the garden."

"No fear!" said Nugent.

"Look here, ain't you coming to take the spades away from them?" demanded Bolsover. "I tell you I'll back you up."

"Oh, rats; let 'em alone."

"They won't wear out the spades, I suppose?" said Johnny Bull.

"I suppose you're afraid!" sneered Bolsover.

"Oh, rats! Get out!"

Bolsover quitted the study and slammed the door. The chums of the Remove looked surprised. They could not understand why Bolsover should be so keen about getting the spades away from Coker & Co. But they soon forgot Bolsover and his temper as they went on with their tea, discussing gardening topics at the same time that they discussed the unusually plentiful supply of good things. Bolsover tramped angrily out of the House, and returned to where Coker & Co. were digging. Coker was working away like a Trojan, but Potter and Greene were slacking very considerably. They had already turned up a good deal of earth—a great part of it upon their boots and trousers. Coker caught sight of Bolsover, and picked up a clod.

Bolsover backed away to a safer distance. But he seemed unable to leave the spot. It was as if the scene of the Fifth-Formers' gardening had some peculiar fascination for him. Every time a spade went into the ground Bolsover watched it with a sort of mesmerised gaze. His keen interest in their proceedings could not escape the notice of the Fifth-Formers.

"What the dickens does that Remove kid want?" said Potter at last. "He looks like Eugène Aram watching somebody dig in the place where he had buried the body."

Coker snorted.

"We shall have to take jolly good care that they don't muck up our garden," he said. "That fellow Bolsover is an awful cud, and he's quite capable of spoiling our work for a rotten jape. We shall have to keep an eye on him."

And Potter and Greene agreed that they would.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bolsover Minor's Difficulty.

"MASTER 'ARRY!"

The tea-party had finished in No. 1 Study, and Harry Wharton and Nugent were left alone there, when Bolsover minor came in. Wharton gave the little fag a kindly look, and then, as he saw the expression upon Billy's face, he rose quickly to his feet.

"What's the matter, kid?" he asked.

Billy gave a groan.

"I'm in awful trouble, Master 'Arry!"

Wharton frowned.

"Your major again?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, no, Master 'Arry," said Billy hastily. "It ain't Percy. But somebody's played a rotten trick on me, and I don't know 'ow to get out of it."

"Tell me about it."

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Bolsover minor explained wretchedly about the finding of the sheet of manuscript in his locker, and his handkerchief in the library, after the loss of Mr. Quelch's papers.

"Mr. Quelch took me in to the 'Ead," said Billy. "I said I didn't know nothing 'bout it, but o' course he didn't believe me. I 'ardly expected him to."

"But you told him the truth, Billy?" asked Harry Wharton, with a very keen look at the fag.

"Yes, Master 'Arry. You know I wouldn't go for to tell a lie."

"I don't think you would, Billy," said Harry, with a nod.

"That's all right, kid," said Nugent, kindly enough.

"But it's a jolly queer business. What did the Head say to you?"

"He's give me till to-morrow to find the papers and bring 'em back," said Billy, with a groan. "I don't know nothin' about 'em. I ain't got no idea who took 'em, but the 'Ead and Mr. Quelch won't believe that. They both think I took the papers for a lark."

"Don't you know who did?"

"I ain't any idea."

"I think I have," said Frank Nugent, quietly.

Billy looked at him quickly and hopefully.

"Then tell me, Master Nugent," he said. "If I can find out the rotter, it's alright. I've got till to-morrow, and if I don't take 'em back to Mr. Quelch then, I'm to be flogged in public after the 'ole school."

"Hard cheese," said Wharton. "What idea have you got in your noodle, Frank? Who is it you think has taken the papers?"

"Bolsover major."

Billy jumped.

"Oh, it wasn't 'im!" he exclaimed, in alarm. "Percy wouldn't do that. This was done to get me into a row, you know. Percy wouldn't—!"

"The precious Percy was saying yesterday, after Quelch licked him, that he was going to pay him for it, or words to that effect," said Nugent. "He said that he would make you sorry for it, too, kid. It seems that Quelch licked the brute for bullying you."

Billy looked deeply distressed.

"It couldn't 'ave been Percy," he muttered.

"It was just the kind of thing dear Percy would do," retorted Nugent. "If you want to find out who it was, I don't think you'll 'ave to look farther than your major."

"There isn't any proof, though," said Harry. "If Bolsover major took the papers, and planted this on his minor, he would destroy them to make himself safe."

"Perhaps—perhaps not," said Nugent. "It's not so jolly easy to destroy a big heap of manuscript. If Bolsover burnt them, there would be an enormous heap of ashes in his grate, and that would be bound to attract attention."

Wharton nodded thoughtfully.

"Yes—especially as he shares his study with two other fellows," he remarked. "And he couldn't use any fire but his own."

"More likely he's hidden them somewhere," said Nugent.

"Look here, we'll jolly well have the truth out of him, if—"

"Old on," exclaimed Billy, in alarm. "I don't believe Percy would go for to do any such thing; and I don't want to get 'im into trouble. I ken 'ere thinkin' that per'aps you could 'elp me, Master 'Arry. But I don't want nothin' said agin Percy."

"But if he did this, kid—"

"He didn't, Master 'Arry; and anyway, I don't want nothin' said about it," said Billy. "I'd rather take the floggin' than get Percy into trouble. I'm sorry I ken 'ere now. Don't say nothin' more about it."

And Bolsover minor quitted the study hurriedly before either of the Removees could reply.

Harry Wharton frowned.

"The young ass wants to shield his brother, in any case, whether he's guilty or not," he said. "If Bolsover did this he ought to be boiled."

"Well, there's no proof that he did, so it's no good saying anything," remarked Nugent. "I suspect him, that's all. But I really think that kid would rather take the flogging than let his brother have it—though a jolly good flogging would do our dear Percy worlds of good."

"Yes, rather," said Wharton, with emphasis.

Bolsover minor had hurried away from the study, as if fearing that the chums of the Remove would call him back. Outside the School House he halted, and began to think the matter over.

"Seen my major, Ogilvy?" he asked, after some reflection, as he passed the Scottish junior.

Ogilvy grinned.

"Yes, he's round the House, watching Coker and Co."

garden. He's been watching them half an hour. Blessed if I know what the game is."

Billy hurried round the House.

His major was leaning against the chapel railings, with his hands in his pockets, and a scowl on his face, watching the Fifth-Formers digging.

"Percy!"

Bolsover major turned towards his brother, with a savage scowl.

"What do want, you brat?"

"Percy, old man—"

"Don't Percy me, confound you."

"Did you take Mr. Quelch's papers from his table in the library, Percy?" asked Bolsover minor, unheeding.

The Remove bully started.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "Who says I did—"

"Well, I thought you might know something about it," stammered Billy. "The papers 'ave been took, and Mr. Quelch thinks I took 'em—"

"I dare say you did," said Bolsover savagely. "I hope you'll get licked and sacked from the school. Now leave me alone."

"Percy—"

"And if you say a word about me, I'll lick you myself," said Bolsover. "If you've played a trick like this, you won't be able to put it on me."

"I wasn't thinking of that, Percy. If you've took the papers, and you'll tell me where they are, I'll get 'em, and take 'em back to Mr. Quelch without mentioning your name—honour bright," said Billy earnestly.

Bolsover laughed.

"Thank you for nothing," he said. "I don't happen to know anything about the papers, though, so I can't accept your kind offer. Now cut off, or I'll kick you."

"Percy—"

"Cut off, I tell you!" shouted Bolsover.

He made a movement towards his minor, and the wail of Greyfriars beat a retreat. Billy returned mopey and downcast to the School House. Whether Bolsover major knew anything or not about the missing papers, certainly there was nothing to be got out of him. And Billy, with a gloomy heart, prepared to face the punishment that seemed inevitable now.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Caught!

THE loss of Mr. Quelch's papers was the talk of Greyfriars that evening. The Head had offered a reward of 25 for their discovery; and that offer had set scores of fellows searching in all sorts of unlikely corners for them. The general belief was that Bolsover minor had taken them; the proofs seemed to be conclusive. But few believed that he had destroyed the papers. He was not likely to have nerve enough; besides, it would have been difficult. Such a mass could not have been burnt without leaving very plain traces behind. The papers were undoubtedly hidden somewhere, and fellows searched up and down the House, and in all the box-rooms and the old rooms of the school that were uninhabited, but without success.

"Five quid would stand a jolly good study feed," Coker, of the Fifth, remarked. "It's worth while finding the old boy's rubbish for him, if we could."

And Potter and Greene agreed.

They joined in the search, but they had no more success than the juniors.

Harry Wharton and Co. searched, too, in the hope of finding the papers, and saving Bolsover minor from the promised flogging on the morrow.

But the papers were not to be found.

Later in the evening, when the search slackened down, the fellows had to come to the conclusion that either the papers had been destroyed, or they were hidden somewhere outside the walls of the School House.

There were, of course, many nooks and corners in the grounds of Greyfriars where the stolen papers could have been concealed; and many of the juniors resolved to continue the search outside the House the next morning.

"I'll put the alarm on for six again," said Johnny Bull, in the Remove dormitory, when the Lower Fourth went up to bed.

"Unless Bolsover likes to call us," suggested Bob Cherry.

"He seems to have taken to early rising."

"Oh, rats!" said Bolsover.

"No good turning out early," said Harry Wharton.

"Goshing has locked up the spades and forks in the tool-shed. He says he can't have them left out at night."

Bolsover turned round quickly.

"The spades are locked up," he asked.

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"Yes. I don't see that it matters to you, Bolsover; you're not doing any gardening," said Wharton.

"It doesn't matter to me," said Bolsover.

"We shan't get the key of the tool-shed till Goshing gets up," Bob Cherry remarked. "So you can shut off that alarm, Bull. No good turning out for nothing."

"Rightish!" said Johnny Bull. "I don't really know whether the blessed thing would go off again, after the way it was handled this morning. Shall I try?"

"No!" roared the whole Remove.

And Johnny Bull didn't. Courtesy came into the dormitory to see lights out. He switched off the electric light and closed the door, and there was the usual buzz of voices after the prefect was gone.

"Oh, shut up, and let a fellow go to sleep!" growled Bolsover.

"Rats! You're not usually in such a hurry," retorted Bob Cherry.

"Well, I'm sleepy to-night."

"Then we'll talk you to sleep."

"Hu, ha, ha!"

It was some time before voices died away in the Remove dormitory. But at last all was silent, and Bolsover was at liberty to sleep if he wanted to. But, as a matter of fact, the bully of the Remove did not close his eyes.

When half-past ten rang out dully from the clock tower, Bolsover sat up in bed.

"You fellows asleep?" he asked cautiously.

There was no reply from the Remove.

Bolsover stepped silently out of bed, and dressed himself, and drew on a pair of rubber shoes.

He crept to the door of the dormitory, passed into the passage, and closed the door softly behind him.

In a couple of minutes more he was in his study in the Remove passage.

He took a cycle lantern and a box of matches from the cupboard, and slipped the fire-shovel from the grate under his jacket.

Then he left the study, and stole towards the box-room at the end of the passage. He knew the way out well; it was not the first time he had broken bounds at night. In a few minutes he had quitted the House by the box-room window, and had reached the ground, and was stealing away in the darkness, towards the ground behind the chapel.

If Coker & Co. had seen Bolsover at that moment they would not have dreamed of doubting that the Remove bully had designs upon their garden.

The Remove stopped at the east wall, his feet squashing in the muddy soil turned up by Coker & Co. in their recent labours.

He set the cycle lantern upon the ground, and lighted it, turning it with the glass away from the school buildings, to conceal the light as much as possible.

Then he scanned the ground close along the inside of the wall.

In this place Coker & Co. had done no digging as yet, their muddy excavations not extending so far from the spot where they had commenced.

Bolsover's face was pale with excitement now, and his heart was beating hard. He gave a glance round him as he grasped the shovel to dig.

Round him the darkness seemed all the more intense, from the gleam of the bicycle lantern close at hand.

Deep silence lay upon Greyfriars.

Bolsover began to dig, turning over the earth slowly and with great difficulty. The fire-shovel was not intended for that kind of work, and it buckled and bent as he used it. If the soil had not been very soft, he would have made no progress at all. As it was, he turned it up very slowly.

Suddenly he started, and ceased to dig.

A footstep had sounded in the darkness of the Close. Bolsover major straightened up, his heart throbbing wildly, and his eyes turning fearfully in the direction of the sound.

A form strode into the circle of light cast by the lantern on the ground, and Bolsover recognised Mr. Quelch, in his coat and hat.

The Remove bully gasped.

He stared blankly at Mr. Quelch, and Mr. Quelch returned his stare with interest, evidently utterly astounded at finding a Remove boy in such a place at such an hour.

"Bolsover!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh!"

"What are you doing here?"

"I—I—"

"Why are you not in your dormitory, Bolsover?" demanded Mr. Quelch sternly.

"I—I—"

Mr. Quelch glanced at the muddy shovel and at the slight excavation Bolsover had already made close to the wall.

"You utterly stupid boy!" the Form-master exclaimed, in

amusement. "Do you mean to say that you have got up in the night to do gardening?"

"Yes, sir," gasped Bolsover, catching at a straw as it were. "I—I'm an awfully enthusiastic gardener, you know, sir, and—and I wanted to get some digging done, sir."

"This is not the piece of ground allowed to the Remove," said Mr. Quelch.

"Is—isn't it, sir?"

"No; this is the Fifth Form plot. Are you doing this to annoy Coker, Bolsover?"

"Oh, no, sir, I—I—"

"Go back to the House at once," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "I fear there is more in this than meets the eye, Bolsover. I simply cannot understand your conduct. You are not one of the Remove boys who have recently been seized with this craze for gardening."

"N-no, sir; but—"

"I happened to catch sight of your light as I came in," said Mr. Quelch. "If I had not been out this evening I should not have caught you. What were you going to do if I had not stopped you?"

"Only dig, sir."

"With a fire-shovel?"

"Gosling's locked up the spades, sir."

"It is extraordinary, Bolsover. I cannot believe that you came out here to do gardening late at night with a fire-shovel. I cannot understand you at all. Have you any explanation to make?"

"N-no, sir."

"Well, you will return to your dormitory at once, and stay there, and you will be detained for the next two half-holidays, Bolsover," said Mr. Quelch. "You must learn that it is a serious thing to leave your dormitory after lights out."

"Yes, sir," muttered Bolsover.

And under Mr. Quelch's keen eye the Remove bully returned to his dormitory, and turned in.

Several of the Removites woke up as Mr. Quelch closed the door, and asked Bolsover what was the matter. The bully of the Remove did not vouchsafe a reply. He lay silent, his brows knitted, and it was a very long time before he slept.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Very Successful Gardening.

COKER, of the Fifth, sat up in bed and yawned. Dawn was glimmering in the windows of the Fifth Form dormitory. Coker, as a rule, slept like a top till the rising-bell clanged out, and sometimes later than that. But Coker was wakeful this morning. The gardening enthusiasm which had had so wonderful an effect upon the Removites had seized upon Coker also. Coker was anxious about the scrubby patch of mud and sand which his efforts, and those of Potter and Greene, were to turn into a garden beautiful.

Hence Coker's unusual earliness. He sat up in bed, he yawned, and he rubbed his eyes. Then he dragged a big goggle watch out from under his pillow, and consulted it. It was a quarter to six.

"Jolly early, by Jove!" said Coker, with much satisfaction. He rose from the bed, and shook Potter, who was in the next. Potter yawned without opening his eyes, and mumbled.

"Gerrou!"

"It's a quarter to six, Potty."

"Gerrou!"

"Time to get to the garden, you know."

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Now look here, Potty—"

"Lemme alone!"

The next moment Potter gave a yell, as Coker whipped off his bedclothes with a single powerful wrench. Potter shivered and sat up and grunted.

"You frightful ass! What's the little game?"

"It's a quarter to six."

"Well, 'tain't rising till seven, you frabjous ass!"

"But it's gardening now," chuckled Coker. "We've got to get to work, you know."

"Blow gardening!"

"But think of the garden beautiful—"

"Bust the garden beautiful!"

"Now, don't be a slacker, Potty," said Coker, dragging the bedclothes off Greene as he spoke. "I'm uneasy."

"So am I," roared Greene. "What are you up to?"

"I'm getting you out of bed," explained Coker. "It's time to go gardening. I'm uneasy about our garden. That cat Bolsover was watching us like a cat watching a giddy mouse last night. I'm afraid he's going to play some jape on our garden."

"Rats! What jape could he play on a heap of mud?" growled Greene.

"He couldn't make the place much rottener than it is," said Potter.

Coker snorted.

"Look here, you two fellows, get up and come on," he said. "We're wasting time yawning, and I want to have the ground ready to get the seeds in to-day."

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ONE
PENNY.

"Blow the—"

"Gosling's locked up the spades in the tool-shed," said Potter.

Coker grinned.

"But I tipped him a bob to let me have the key," he said. "You rely on your uncle Horace. Now, then, get up, and don't be lazy slackers."

And Potter and Greene, thus adjured, rose unwillingly and dressed themselves, and followed Coker out of the dormitory. There was no one stirring in the House. Even the industrious housemaids had not yet descended. The door groaned and creaked as Coker opened it. A blaze of early summer sunshine greeted them in the Close, and it cheered the sleepy Potter and Greene somewhat. As for Coker, he was very keen. He was entertaining Potter and Greene with vivid descriptions of what the garden was going to be like when they had succeeded in making it beautiful.

"I dare say we shall pull off heaps of prizes at the horticultural shows," Coker said. "I'm thinking of growing Gloire de Dijon especially."

"What are they?" asked Potter.

"A kind of tomatoes?" asked Greene.

"Ass! Lot you know about gardening," said Coker. "Come on, and don't jaw. We shall have a special cart set aside for vegetable gardening, and we can grow our own tomatoes to eat in the study, same as I did before."

Coker led the way to Gosling's tool-shed, and produced a key from his waistcoat pocket, and opened the door. He found three spades, and brought them out, and handed one each to Potter and Greene.

"Makes you feel simply bucked up to get a spade into your hands again, doesn't it?" said Coker enthusiastically.

"Makes me feel mucked up to get this rotten mud on me," growled Potter.

"Here we are!" said Coker, unheeding, as they arrived on the plot of ground set aside for the horticultural adventures of the Fifth. "There's been another shower, and the ground is nice and soft."

"And muddy!" said Green.

"Oh, do stop growling! Think of the garden beautiful. Those Remove kids will be pink with envy when they see our tomatoes and Gloire de Dijon all growing and a-blowing!" said Coker. "My only summer hat!"

He broke off in astonishment as his eyes fell upon the tracks of Bolsover major's digging in the previous night. The footprints of the Remove bully and of Mr. Quelch were plainly marked in the muddy soil. Bolsover had cleared out a hole of some size, and the Fifth-Formers stared at it.

"Somebody's been doing our digging for us," said Potter.

"Playing some rotten jape on us, I expect," said Coker, frowning. "Whoever did that must have come out in the night to do it."

"It's jolly queer," said Potter.

"You know how Bolsover major was watching us yesterday?" said Coker. "Look here, I knew all the time that that cat was up to some game. He didn't want us to dig here at all. I suppose he's thinking of starting gardening himself, and wants this plot."

"Too much like work for Bolsover, I imagine," said Greene.

"Then what is his little game?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"My hat!" ejaculated Potter, in a suppressed voice.

"Talk of angels, and you hear the rustle of their wings!"

"What do you mean?"

"Here comes Bolsover."

"Great Scott!"

Some shrubbery intervened between the Fifth-Formers and the School House, but through the opening of it they had suddenly seen the form of the Remove bully as he came round that corner of the building. He vanished the next moment. He was coming straight towards them, but for the moment the shrubbery hid him from view. He had evidently not seen them. The Fifth-Formers exchanged glances.

"Bolsover major!" murmured Coker. "What does he want?"

"Let's find out," said Potter quickly. "There's something queer about this; but if he's trying to jape us, we'll catch him in the act. He might be going to bury some rubbish for us to dig up."

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Get into cover, then. He'll see us in a minute."

"Good idea! We can watch him from the trees."

"Come on—quick!"

The three Fifth-Formers ran to the nearest of the big trees that grew within the school wall. They took cover behind the trunks, and waited for Bolsover, of the Remove, to come up. In a minute more the burly form of the Remove bully emerged into view from round the shrubbery.

Bolsover had a trowel in his hand, the only implement for digging that he could find. It was very small for the work he had to do, but it was better than the fire-shovel he had used on the previous night.

Without a suspicion that three Fifth-Formers were watching him from the trees near the wall, Bolsover came right on. Coker & Co. almost held their breath.

That Bolsover had some special purpose in view in coming there at that early hour was evident. His face was pale and strained, and he looked as if he had slept very little. As they looked at his face, the Fifth-Formers realised that there was something more than a joke in this. Bolsover was not there for a mere joke on the Fifth. He had some serious purpose in view. But what it was was a puzzle to Coker & Co. They watched the Removite with almost breathless interest.

Bolsover stopped on the spot where Mr. Quelch had discovered him digging the previous night, bent down, and plunged his trowel into the ground.

He dug away vigorously with the trowel, turning over the earth very quickly, and piling it up beside the hole he was making.

Coker & Co. exchanged glances of wonder.

"He's looking for something," murmured Potter below his breath.

Coker nodded.

"But what?" he whispered.

"The Greyfriars treasure, perhaps," grinned Greene.

"Rats! He's buried something there, I should say, and he's afraid we shall find it, digging there," said Coker eagerly.

"But what?"

"Goodness knows."

"We'll jolly soon see," whispered Greene, "He's going ahead! Look!"

Bolsover had laid down the trowel at last, and bending beside the excavation he had made he commenced groping in it with his hands.

"Getting very warm!" murmured Potter.

"Quiet!"

Bolsover rose to his feet, with a grunt, dragging out a bundle he had pulled from the clinging earth at the bottom of the excavation.

So far as Coker & Co. could see, it was a bundle wrapped in an old newspaper, and tied up with string.

Bolsover stood breathing hard, with a flushed face, after his exertions, holding the bundle in his hands.

As he stood there, Coker made a sudden sign to his companions, and the three Fifth-Formers stepped out from behind the trees.

"Good-morning, Bolsover!" said Coker blandly.

Bolsover started and turned deadly white. The bundle fell from his nerveless hands, and crashed upon the ground at his feet, and burst. A quantity of closely-written sheets of manuscript fluttered out of the burst newspaper.

Coker gave a yell of surprise.

"My hat! Old Quelch's papers!"

"Quelch's papers! Then it was Bolsover!"

Bolsover tried to speak, but no words would come. He stood with his hands clenched, his face pale as death, and despair in his heart.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bolsover Major Braves it out.

COKER stooped and gathered up the papers. They were damp from their burial in the earth, and the ink was spreading on the paper, and there was mould upon them. But they were still quite legible, and Mr. Quelch's valuable observations of the early history of the great foundation of Greyfriars were intact. Coker put the papers together, Bolsover major watching him in silence. Potter and Greene stood silent, too. They understood the whole story now, and they wondered that they had never guessed it before.

"So that's why you were alarmed when we started digging here yesterday!" said Coker, when he had finished gathering up the manuscript.

Bolsover did not speak.

"That's why the cad was watching us and wouldn't buzz off!" said Potter. "He was afraid we were going to turn up the papers he'd buried here."

"You awful rotter!" said Greene. "You boned old Quelch's papers and put it on your own brother! You awful beast!"

"Never heard of such a cad!" said Coker. "He makes me feel sick! Everybody in the school thinks that young Bolsover did it."

"And he's going to be flogged to-day for it. Why, this

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awful beast must have put that flyleaf in his brother's locker on purpose!" exclaimed Greene.

"And his handkerchief in the library," added Potter. The Fifth-Formers looked at Bolsover with unvarnished scorn. They did not set up to be good little Georgies, as Coker remarked; but they were utterly shocked and disgusted at the baseness of the Removite-bully.

"His own brother!" said Potter. "Well, it won't be Bolsover minor who gets the flogging now," said Coker significantly. "I'm going to take those papers to Quelch."

Bolsover uttered a hoarse cry.

"Look here, Coker! Quelch licked me badly, and I buried his papers to pay him out. You've no right to interfere."

"I'm jolly well going to, whether I have a right or not!" said Coker.

"You can't take those papers to Quelch! You can't speak about me!" said Bolsover. "It's telling tales!"

"Time to tell tales when a cur is trying to get his own brother flogged for nothing," said Coker.

"But I tell you—"

"Oh, shut up! Come on, you chaps, we'll get these papers indoors."

"Where are you going?" shouted Bolsover, as the three Fifth-Formers moved off, forgetting the gardening for the moment.

"I'm going to Quelch," said Coker.

"You're going to give me away?" said Bolsover major huskily.

"Yes."

"Hold on! Don't be a rotten sneak!"

Coker's eyes blazed.

"If it's a question between being a sneak and helping you to get your brother flogged for nothing, I'll be a sneak," he said. "But I don't call this sneaking."

"Give me those papers!" yelled Bolsover.

"Oh, rats!"

Bolsover major made a rush towards Coker. He was desperate. Coker dropped the bundle to the ground, and closed with the bully of the Removite. Big and powerful as the burly Removite was, Coker handled him without much difficulty. He crunched Bolsover round, and jammed him down into the hole he had excavated. Bolsover went into it to his thighs, his boots squeaking in the mud. The loose earth tumbled in round him in a shower.

"You can stay there," said Coker angrily. "Come on, you chaps!"

The Fifth-Formers walked away towards the School House, Coker carrying the papers, and Bolsover was left to scramble out of the hole as best he could.

Coker bore the papers into the House in triumph.

"Quelch ain't down yet," said Coker. "We'll take 'em up to his room. Jolly lucky we were down early, after all. If we hadn't been there, you know, Bolsover would have got the papers away, and buried them somewhere else, and they'd never have been found. Awful rotter to meddle with a chap's papers! It's taken Quelch years to write all this stuff."

"What did you say, Coker?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Coker.

He turned very red. Mr. Quelch, who was an early riser, had come downstairs just in time to hear Coker's unfortunate remark.

"Ahem!" said Coker. "Good-morning, sir."

"Good-morning, Coker!" said Mr. Quelch gravely. "You were saying—"

"Ahem! I've found your papers, sir."

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed.

"My papers! You have found them?"

"Here they are, sir."

Coker held up the bundle. Mr. Quelch opened it at once, and his face lighted up at the sight of his precious manuscripts.

"Good, good!" he exclaimed. "Thank you very much, Coker. I am very much obliged to you indeed. Where did you find the papers? In some place where Bolsover minor had hidden them, I suppose. This bundle has been buried in the earth."

"Yes, sir. But it wasn't Bolsover minor."

"Not Bolsover minor?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in surprise.

"But it was he who took them from the library, Coker."

"Ahem! I don't think it was, sir."

"It was somebody else, sir," said Potter.

"Quite another person, sir," said Greene.

"Do you know who it was?"

"We—we'd rather not mention the name, if you don't mind, sir," said Coker cautiously. "But we know for a fact it wasn't Bolsover minor, sir."

"Indeed. If he is innocent, I should be very glad to have

it proved," said Mr. Quelch. "But how can you possibly know?"

Coker looked uncomfortable. He did not want to mention Bolsover's name, if he could help it.

"How did you come to find the papers?" asked Mr. Quelch. "Where were they buried?"

"In our garden, sir."

"Oh, I see! You turned them up by accident in digging?" asked the Remove master.

"Well, not exactly, sir," said Coker. "We were just going to do some digging, when—when another chap came along and started digging. We watched him doing it, because we wondered what he was up to. He dug up these papers. You see, sir, we should soon have been digging on that spot, and should have turned them up, and he was anxious for them not to be found."

"Was it Bolsover minor?"

"No, sir."

"Then another boy knew where the papers were buried?"

"Yes, sir—the chap who buried them."

"He must have risen early this morning to go out and get them," said Mr. Quelch. "If you do not wish to give me his name, Coker, I will not insist. You have done me a very great service by saving my papers. I have a very strong suspicion as to the identity of the boy—ah!"

Mr. Quelch broke off as Bolsover minor entered the School House. The bully of the Remove was smothered with mud from his scramble in the excavation, and he was dripping from head to foot. His face was dark with rage. He stopped with a startled exclamation, as he saw Mr. Quelch. He had hoped to get back to the Remove dormitory unseen. Mr. Quelch beckoned to him, and the Remove bully approached unwillingly.

"You are out very early this morning, Bolsover major," said Mr. Quelch caustically.

"Yes, sir," stammered Bolsover.

"Why did you go out so early?"

Bolsover cast a furious glance at the Fifth-Formers.

He did not know whether they had given him away or not, but he resolved to attempt to braven it out.

"I went out for a stroll, sir," he said.

"You seem to have got yourself very muddy."

"Yes, sir."

"Have you been digging?"

"No, sir."

"My hat!" murmured Coker.

Mr. Quelch's brow grew very stern.

"Do not lie to me, Bolsover major! Last night I discovered you digging by lantern-light near the east wall. You could not explain what your object was in doing so, but I am aware of it now. Was it close to the east wall that you found these papers, Coker?"

"Yes, sir."

"You were digging for this bundle when I found you last night, Bolsover. You knew that they were buried there because you had buried them. It was you, and not your brother, who took them out of the library."

Bolsover was silent. It was useless to lie, when a lie had no chance of being believed.

"You placed your minor's handkerchief where I found it, I presume?" said Mr. Quelch.

No reply.

"You put the flyleaf of my volume in your minor's locker in order that it might be found there to convict him?"

Said Bolsover was silent.

"And when there was a chance of my papers being found, you resolved to recover them in order to bury them in a safer place than I might never see them again," said the Remove master, his voice trembling with anger. "I cannot find words to express my opinion of your baseness, Bolsover."

Bolsover set his teeth, but still he did not speak.

"Your cruel and wicked attempts to destroy the work of years was bad enough," said the Remove master; "but even that was not so bad as your attempt to bring a severe punishment, which he had done nothing to deserve, upon your brother. You are a very wicked and unscrupulous boy, Bolsover."

The Remove bully looked smitten.

"Why did you do this? What harm has your minor done you that you have acted so badly towards him?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

Bolsover's eyes gleamed.

"I don't want the young end here!" he muttered. "Let him go back where he belongs. He oughtn't to be at Greyfriars at all."

"I do not think I can say anything that would touch your hard heart, Bolsover," said Mr. Quelch quietly; "but there is one thing that may possibly touch you, and that is punishment. There will be a flogging before school to-day, but it will not be your minor who is flogged. You will be flogged in public, Bolsover, after prayers. Now you may go."

Bolsover tramped sullenly away.

Mr. Quelch bossed off his precious manuscripts to place them in safety. Bolsover tramped into the Remove dormitory, and THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.

NEXT TUESDAY: "BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!"

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

cleared the mud off himself with a sullen, scowling brow. There were inquiries from several of the boys as to what had happened, but the Remove bully kept a sullen silence and did not reply. But the Removites learned what had happened as soon as they came downstairs.

Even the enthusiastic gardening club of the Remove did not think of gardening that morning. There were matters more interesting to claim their attention. Bolsover major, of the Remove, was to be flogged, after prayers, before the school assembled in hall. Mr. Quelch had even accused the Head with the discovery that had been made, and the fellows who had seen Dr. Locke escorted by him, had looked very stern, and that it was a bad look-out for Bolsover major.

No one was sorry for the Remove bully—with one exception. That exception was Bolsover minor. Little Billy looked miserable enough that morning. He had escaped the punishment himself, and it was to fall upon the right shoulders; but it is doubtful whether the wail of Greyfriars would not have preferred to suffer it himself instead of his brother.

But he had no choice about that.

"Serves him jolly well right, Billy," said Bob Cherry, clapping the fag on the shoulder as the boys came out after breakfast. "Don't look go down in the dumps, you young ass. This will do your major good."

"What-ho!" said Harry Wharton emphatically. "Dash it all, Billy, he tried to get you licked, so you needn't mope over it. That ass Coker has done something useful for once. He won't make much of his garden, but there's something come of his digging."

"I wish Coker had let it all alone," said Billy.

"Oh, rot," said Bob Cherry. "You're a young ass."

Bolsover minor moved away. He did not expect the fellows to understand his feelings on the subject, and his brother least of all. When Bolsover major passed him in the passage he gave him a furious look, and stalked on without speaking to him. Bolsover minor looked very pale as he took his place among the Third in the crowded hall, when the school assembled to witness the punishment of the bully of the Remove.

"Buck up!" murmured Paget. "There's nothing to worry about. You ain't going to get the licking, you young fellow!"

"Cheer up, or I'll punch your head!" said Tubbs.

But even that did not cheer up Bolsover minor.

Bolsover major stood with sullen brow in the sight of the whole school, while the Head thrashed him with his tongue before he started with the birch. Bolsover did not mind the tongue-lashing, but when the birch commenced its play upon him he yelled. The school looked on grimly. As a rule, a fellow who suffered a severe punishment was sympathised with; but there was little sympathy wasted upon Bolsover major.

It was not the first time the bully of the Remove had been flogged; but it was the severest flogging he had had.

For the rest of the day Bolsover major was very sullen and very savage, and he showed a strong disinclination to sit down anywhere at any time.

"Jolly lucky thing we took up gardening," said Frank Nugent, as the Remove came out after morning lessons. "If we hadn't, Coker wouldn't have started. Of course, he can't garden. But if he hadn't started playing the giddy ox in the garden old Quelch's papers wouldn't have been found, and the wrong chap would have got the flogging. Therefore—"

"Therefore, let's go and wire in," said Bob Cherry. "I think we've done almost enough digging, and it's about time we got some seeds in. We mustn't let Coker get ahead of us."

"Rather not!"

And the Greyfriars gardeners went out to work, and came in, with several varieties of mud plastered over them, to dinner, with excellent appetites. So far, indeed, the chief product of the Remove garden was mud; but hope springs eternal in the human breast, as the poet sings, and the Remove gardeners had not the slightest doubt that ere long they would reach the height of the amateur horticulturist's ambition—the garden beautiful!

THE END.

(Another splendid, laughable, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next Tuesday, entitled "Bolsover Minor's Bolt!" by Frank Richards, also the third long instalment of our grand new serial! "TWICE ROUND THE GLOBE," by Sidney Drew. Order your copy of the MAGNET well in advance, Price One Penny.)

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By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

The Second Instalment of our Grand New Serial Story.

TWICE ROUND THE GLOBE!

THE STORY OF THE
GREAT MAN-HUNT
BY SIDNEY DREW



Ferrers Lord, millionaire, and owner of the Lord of the Deep.



Prince Ching-Lung, Adventurer, Conjuror and Ventriloquist.



Nathan Gore, Jewel collector, and multi-millionaire, Ferrers Lord's terrible rival.

THE FIRST WEEK'S CHAPTERS.

"BY FOUL MEANS OR FAIR, I'LL WIN."

Nathan Gore, millionaire and jewel-collector, clenched his hands furiously and raved like a madman on the deck of the liner Coronation. He had started especially from America in order to be present at the sale-room in London where the costly diamond, "The World's Wonder", was to be put up for auction, and now it seemed that this thief for which had suddenly fallen over the Channel was to spoil everything. For the great sale was to take place at midday, and already the captain had told Nathan Gore that it would be impossible to reach Southampton before that time. "A telegram for Mr. Gore," a voice rang up through the darkness. The American was told the message, and, as he listened, his face came over deathly pale, and he gave vent to a terrible oath. The message was: "Ferrers Lord purchased 'The World's Wonder' privately. No bidders. Price unknown." "I'll win yet," shrieked the man. "By foul means or fair, I'll win!"

"THE WORLD'S WONDER."

In the magnificent drawing-room of Ferrers Lord's house in Park Lane was assembled a varied collection of individuals. First of all there was the celebrated millionaire himself, and close to him sat Ching-Lung, a Chinaman, busily engaged in making paper butterflies. Had Honour the great engineer, was sipping tea, and Rupert Thurston yawned in a chair. "How much did you pay for that great diamond?" presently asked the latter. The millionaire smiled. "Money and fair words. Rupert," he replied. "By the way, you have not seen it yet?" "The priceless gem passed from hand to hand. A thousand fires burned in its crystal heart: a thousand colours, ever changing, leaped from every facet. I guess it would have been more money and less fair words if old Gore had turned up," remarked Ching-Lung sagely.

"I'LL TAKE THE CHALLENGE!"

The millionaire's house was wrapped in silence. A faint light shone from the drawing-room. Ching-Lung pushed open the door, then a cry broke from him. A man lay face downwards on the floor. There was a ghastly crimson stain on his collar. The man was Ferrers Lord. "Ching—the diamond!" came a hoarse voice. Ching opened the drawer which Lord indicated, but there was no diamond there. But a message had been left behind: "To Ferrers Lord.—Knowing that you would not sell 'The World's Wonder,' I have taken it. Do your worst. I defy you. The stone is mine.—Nathan Gore." The millionaire rose to his feet. "I take the challenge, Ching," he said. "I'll hunt him down and win back my diamond."

(Now go on with this instalment.)

An Odd Determination—Gan-Waga Does His Hair Nice, and Declines to Take Off His Hat—Excitement in the Kitchen—Gan Discovers That it is Sometimes Easier to Put on a Hat than to Take it Off.

Ching-Lung stared at Ferrers Lord again in startled wonder. Ferrers Lord had recovered by sheer strength of will. Calm and white, he strode up and down the room with firm steps. The great diamond had vanished, and the thief had not attempted to conceal his identity. The sheer audacity of the defiance written indelibly on the mirror was enough to stagger anyone. It had taken away Ching-Lung's breath.

"Great Scott!" he said slowly. "For impudence, this knocks everything! How did it happen?"

"After the foolish alarm of fire, Honour and I were working. When the confusion was over, I remembered that the gem ought to be in the safe. I came to take it, and that answers the rest."

He pointed to the candlestick.

"A cowardly blow from behind—eh? The brute! I suppose he managed to get in with the firemen. Old chap, I'm really sorry. I set that silly alarm going by accident. It's my fault that you've lost the diamond."

Ferrers Lord laughed softly.

"Both the diamond, Ching!" he answered. "I'm not going to worry myself about that bit of carbon. The atrocious THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.

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outrage and insult will have to be paid for, and paid for heavily."

"The scoundrel must be mad!"

"That is a matter of opinion, lad. Nathan Gore's love of jewels is almost a mania, no doubt. He is a strong man, and terribly in earnest. Bad luck put him out of the running when the jewel was sold. He was stung to the very quick. Fair means had failed, and he adopted foul means. He watched the house. Your blunder let him in, and my abominable carelessness placed the jewel he coveted in his grasp. Then he defies me. He will fight the law and me. He will fling wealth and influence into the balance; he will face ruin rather than give up the gem. He offers to pay me what I paid for the stone. Very well. He has dropped the gauntlet, Ching, and beat him!"

The millionaire spoke softly, but there was a grim note in his quiet voice.

"Aren't you going to tell the police, old chap?"

"No; we don't want the police. We shall make use of them in a way. I am not afraid. I shall give Nathan Gore six hours' start, and then for the pursuit. You had better go to bed."

"If I did, I couldn't sleep. This has knocked the sleep out of me."

Ferrers Lord halted before the mirror. He would find Nathan Gore, and wrest the stolen-gem from him. The

millionaire could foresee no grave difficulty in carrying out his plan. Gore would fly either to the Continent or back to America. In any case, he could not hide himself.

"This is a beastly nuisance, old chap," sighed the prince. "I thought we were off to Australia. Don't waste any time in catching the old thief. I should have the police on him!"

"I hate to use the police!"

"But it's such a tame affair, chasing an old man. It's like hunting a tame stag!"

"Well, Ching," said Ferrers Lord, "that is all the better. The sooner we run him to earth, the sooner we can make preparations for our trip. However, I have an idea that the hunt may be more exciting than you imagine."

"Oh, rats! Where's the fun in chasing a burglar? Chuck it up, my boy, and let the police attend to their own business."

Ferrers Lord took a sip of brandy.

"I see you are very keen to get to Australia," he said, smiling, "and I would not disappoint you. We'll come to terms. Gore is to have six hours' start. This is just a whim of mine. In the morning, we commence the search. If we fail to find him in three days, you can select our future programme. Whether we continue the pursuit, or prepare for our trip, will be matters for you to decide. That is fair, I hope?"

"As fair as a fine morning. All the same, conny, it strikes me as being a queer idea altogether."

"Only a mere whim, Ching. I'm off to bandage my broken head. Good-night!"

They shook hands. When he was alone, Ching-Lung perched himself on the back of a chair, lighted a cigarette, and pondered. Why should the millionaire insist on hunting down the miserable robber? Why did he not leave the unsavoury task to the proper authorities? Nathan Gore could not escape. The police would have a strict watch kept at various points, and lay their hands on the criminal without trouble.

"What's behind it?" muttered Ching-Lung. "Old Lord has got something up his sleeve, I'll bet. Heigh-ho, we'll learn if we live, and if we don't live, we can't help it! It's a queer job. I never thought I'd become a policeman!"

What was the meaning of allowing the American six hours' start? Ching-Lung slid off the chair, and went thoughtfully to bed.

"I wonder if the smack over the head has got anything to do with it?" he murmured. "I give it up!"

And then he fell asleep. Bright sunshine flooded the room when he awoke. Gan-Waga, the Eskimo, was squatting on the rug before the dressing-table. Ching could only see his back, but there was a smacking sound, that told him the Eskimo was devouring something with great relish.

"You fat freak," said Ching-Lung, "what are you doing in my room—eh?"

"Eatin' jam, Chingy—butterful, lubly, 'licious jam!"

"Where did you get it?"

"Offer de tabel!" crowed Gan-Waga. "Never tasted nothin' more butterful. Oh, him grand!"

"Oh, pip!"

Ching-Lung bounded out of bed. Gan's lips were smeared

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with a red substance, and Gan's forefinger was scooping more of the red substance out of a silver box and conveying it to his mouth.

"Oh, pip!" roared the prince. "If the overgrown oil-tank isn't wolfing all my cherry toothpaste! You'll poison yourself, you giddy gorilla! It's not jam, ape!"

"Like him all right, good 'nough!" grinned the Eskimo. "Have a lick, Chingy?"

"Have a lick? I've a jolly mind to lick you! Have you eaten my shaving-soap and swallowed the lather-brush as well?"

"Oh, no, Chingy!" gurgled Gan-Waga. "I noited touched nothin' but dis. Ain't it lubly? Gotted any more?"

Gan patted his stomach, and his little eyes rolled blissfully as he swallowed the last fragments. Then he coolly commenced to do his hair with the prince's silver-backed combs. Ching watched him, and grinned. Gan's bristles refused to lie down. They were as stiff and sharp as the spines of a hedgehog.

"You want some oil on your locks," he said.

"Can't find none!" said Gan-Waga.

"Look in the drawer, fatticus!"

Gan-Waga discovered a lead tube. It said on the label plain, for all to see: "Rubber Tyre Cement." Gan unscrewed the cap.

"Lubly scent!" he gurgled. "Butterful 'nough. Dis good for Eskimo's wool! I try him!"

He squeezed a lot of the sticky preparation into the palm of his hand, and polished it into his hair. It acted beautifully. Gan parted his hair in the middle, and smiled at himself.

"You want some powder now," said Ching-Lung.

Gan jumped at the idea. The powdered locks of Ferrers Lord's menservants had aroused his admiration and envy.

Ching-Lung had a box of powder, and he sprinkled Gan's sticky hair with it. He was careful not to cover the hair of the temples and the nape of the neck.

"Oh, lubly!" chuckled Gan. "Ain't I a toffee?"

"You mean a toff, walaoot!" said Ching-Lung, "and a toff thou art! You want to put your hat on now for ten minutes. That keeps the atmosphere of the oleaginous concatharus from slapping the conglomerate concogality of the didderotic do-do! You see, don't you?"

"Ye' goin' break yo' teeth, Chingy! I not see!"

"In plain English, it gives the oil time to dry and keeps the beautiful parting intact. It makes the powder stick instead of flying away in a draught!"

"I got no hat!" said Gan-Waga.

"Then take one of mine," said Ching-Lung.

He placed a silk hat on Gan's head.

"Don't try to move it till you hear the clocks strike, my bonnie child. Now trot, for I'm going to tub and dress."

Gan-Waga, his chest inflated with pride, strode down the wide staircase. There was a footman in the hall. He looked at Gan's hat.

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"Beg your pardon, Mr. Gan-Waggar," he said, "you being a forring gent, perhaps, sir, you won't take it unpudent like; but, your 'at, sir!"

"Like him, huh?" asked Gan-Waga cheerfully.
 "Oh, yes, yes, werry nice, werry nice! But in Hongland, sir, it ain't allowed to wear 'ats in the 'ouse. Please take it off, sir."

An angry and cunning light flashed into Gan's eyes.
 "Yo' go and tie yo' face up," he said; "I know you mean low trickies, yaller legges. Yo' jealousy. My hair nicer and more butterfuller dan yo's, and yo' want make me spile him. Go way, fat face. Yah!"

"Gosh! Cheek!" muttered the man. "Wat cheek!"
 Gan descended into the lower regions. There was an appetising scent of frying fish and coffee. In one of the kitchens a cook was rolling paste.

"Good-morning, Mr. Gan-Waga!" she said, with a smile.
 "Mornin', miss!" answered Gan.
 The cook shook her head chidingly.

"You ought to take your hat off when you speak to a lady, Mr. Gan-Waga."

Gan glared.
 "I not," he growled. "Yo' all do bad zame, wantin' me spole my hair. Yo' all bad 'nough jealous."

"Good gracious!" gasped the startled lady. "I'm ashamed of you! You are rude!"

"Den yo' lettee my hat 'bout," said Gan fiercely. "I not stand it!"

"Vulgar beast!"

"Monkey!" cried Gan, who felt quite sure there was a conspiracy against him. "Old monkey!"

The lady lost her temper and raised her voice. Gripping the rolling-pin, she brandished it at the air.

"Get out of my kitchen, you—yot—you doughnut!" she said shrilly. "Do you think I'm 'ere to bear the 'orrid insult of a wild savage? Go away, you lardy doughnut!"

"Go away!"

"Jinty, jinty," said the gruff voice of Barry O'Rooney. "Whisht, now, whisht! Lit not yer angry passions rise, but lit yer spache be soft and awate. 'Tis better far whin makin' poles to roll the dough thin yell and prate. What is ut at all, at all? Till me quick!"

The cook wiped her eyes on her apron.
 "Oh, Mr. Rooney," she sobbed, "that base wretch—h-ha—insulted me!"

"Thin he dook," said Barry; "he doies in wan single tableau."

"I-h-he e-called me an old man-monkey!"

"The thin he doies in half a tableau!" roared Barry. "The dookers! The rogue! The yaller-faced spalpeen! He doies!"

"H-h-he w-won't take off his h-hat!" sobbed the cook.

Barry spat on his hand. He was the soul of chivalry where a lady was concerned.

"Misther Gan," he said, "ut is wid sorra Oi spake to yez this blissid day. Oi thought yez a jintleman and a comrade, but bad luck to the bhooy who's rude to a woin! Oi mane a lady. Take off yer hat and apologise—apologise on yer bended knees, or Oi shall be compelled to make yez into plum-duff!"

"I not!" said Gan flatly.

"Cat!" sobbed the cook.

"Ye'll not!" Barry spat on his other hand. "Thin Oi'll do ut for yez?"

It was getting too much for Gan-Waga. Everybody seemed determined to ruin his hair. He dodged Barry's first rush and dived under the table. An unceremonious yell rent the air as he accidentally trod on the cat's tail. The cook loved that cat. It was her pride, delight, and joy. She answered its yell with a wailing scream, and aimed a blow at Gan with the rolling-pin.

That blow cost Ching-Lung a guinea and a half. It utterly spoiled the silk hat, and made countless stars hop, and dance before Gan's eyes. The terrified cat bounded on the table and upset a tin of molasses. Barry, who was diving in pursuit of the Eskimo, got most of the treacle on the back of his neck.

Then the real excitement began. The cook rushed to seize her injured pet, but the injured pet floundered into the treacle. Gan whipped up a flour-bag and hurled it at Barry, but hit the cat, bowling it over into the molasses. The bag burst, and the air was full of flour. A good deal of the flour stuck to the cat, and some to Barry. The lady fainted in a pan of dough which had been placed near the fire. Mad for revenge, and very sticky, Barry seized the table, and, dragging it over, pounced Gan in a corner.

"Now Oi've got yez," roared O'Rooney—"Oi've got yez—Oi've got yez!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.
 Read the grand new story of the
 Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled,

"Ooh—ooh! Helps—helps!" screamed Gan-Waga. "I not taken off my hat! Helps—helps!"

"Oi'll help yez to a large plateful o' fist!" said Barry grimly.

He swung one leg over the table. Gan looked round him despairingly. He was wedged against the sink. Gan thought only of preserving his precious hat. He grabbed the dough, and flung the whole sticky mass of treacle and flour into Barry's face.

It was a ghastly shot. With a howl, Barry cleared his eyes and mouth, and pounced upon the rolling-pin. Gan was in despair. He rushed to the tap and turned it on. Then he pressed both thumbs under it, and directed a stream of water at the Irishman. The water shot into Barry's open mouth, and hissed round his head. He charged, but was driven back. Taking advantage of the respite, Gan filled a couple of buckets.

"Helps—helps—helps!" he screamed, manipulating the tap again.

The yells brought several servants running down the stairs. They were in such a hurry that they got jammed in the doorway. It is not an easy thing to squirt accurately from a tap. Gan had already washed the ceiling and put the fire out. He had managed to thoroughly soak himself and Barry, and now he made an atrocious shot. Whizz! went the water among the heap of plush-trousered, silk-stocking gentlemen who were struggling in the doorway.

And then came the biggest blunder of all. The horrid, awful, unearthly-looking mass of flour and stickiness that had once been a respectable cat, had taken refuge on the top of the eight-day clock. The water shot off at an angle, and washed the cat from its refuge. This was adding insult to injury. The cat decided to get away. It bolted for the door, and got badly mixed up with the butler. Not liking such treatment, it buried all its claws in the butler's calf, and the uproar was terrific.

Barry was furious. He could not storm Gan-Waga's fort, so he began to throw things. A ham nearly floored Gan, and then came a brush, a carpet-sweeper, and a bottle. The men in the doorway untied themselves and burst in, shrieking for the Eskimo's life.

Gan-Waga began to think his doom was sealed. His heart ached. He spied a mop. There was plenty of treacle and flour on the table yet. Quick as thought he whisked the mop into the stickiness, and twisted it round and round. On the wall hung a meat safe made of fine wire. Gan tore it down, and, wrenching the wooden bottom out of it, thrust in his head.

"Murder him!" roared Barry. "He's gone mad!"

"Fetch in the police," moaned the butler, "before he kills some of us!"

They all had different advice to offer, but they were careful not to come too near. They were sure the Eskimo had suddenly lost his senses.

Gan did not care a rap about losing his senses. His one idea was not to lose his hat. The big meat-safe was a glorious helmet. Gripping the mop, Gan prepared to fight his way to safety.

"Get howld of him!" yelled Barry.

"Get hold of him yourself!" yelled the others.

"Bedad, Oi will, or Oi'll die!" said Barry firmly.

Barry got a wipe across the face with the mop that made him change his mind. Gan sprang from the sink to the table, and from the table to the floor. His blood was up.

"Akak-chaplik tchookak! Yah-h!" he belloved.

"Mad! He's mad!"

"Murder! Fire!"

Gan rushed at them. A couple of loaves hurled by Barry, and also a spring chicken, cannoned harmlessly off Gan's headpiece. They stuck in the doorway again, but a firm application of that abominable mop persuaded them to move on. Gan drove them up the stairs and down the steps into the street. Using the mop as a spear, he whizzed it after the last man, flung the meat-safe after it, and then sought Ching-Lung's feet.

"I gotted him! Chingy!" he panted. "I gotted him!"

"Great gretious!" said Ching-Lung. "What on earth have you been up to?"

"Dey want to take offer de hat," said Gan. "Hoo! Oh, hoo—hoo—hoo! I give dem treacle. Hases de clock struck yet, Chingy?"

"It's just striking eight now."

"Den I taken him offees," said Gan-Waga.

"But what have you been doing, you ton of lard? Look at my hat! You're a nice chap to lend anything to! Do you know I give thirty-one-and-six for my silk ties? What's happened to you?"

"Not know, Chingy. Yo' say not take off hat, and dey all say taken him off. Den I getting mad, and biff dems."

"THE NEW HOUSE RIVALS!" In this week's "GEM" Library. Now on Sale, id.

Ching-Lung grinned. He had taken good care not to miss the fun, and he had enjoyed it hugely.

"My doughty and valiant Gan," he laughed, "I'm proud of you! Always hold your own if you are in the right. Don't be so on. Imitate your old Chingy, and stand on nonsense. That's my advice to you, my fat friend and brother. There goes the clock."

The prince tied his neatly-plaited pigtail with a piece of red ribbon, and Gan clutched the hat. He turned quite pale.

"Chingy!" he panted.

"Yes, my son of the snows?"

"It is not come offer!"

"Great Scott! It must have been hammered on! Let me try."

He seized his hat, and dragged Gan round the room. Gan yelled, for it hurt; but Ching-Lung would not let go. At last there was a crack, and Ching-Lung fell into the corner with the brim in his hands. The crown still remained glued hard and fast to the Eskimo's head.

"Oh, Pip, what have you been up to?" asked the prince. "The hair-oil must have frozen."

"What I goin' do?" moaned Gan.

"Dashed if I know! Let me have another try."

"No more—no more! I pain too much bad 'nough. Not like him."

"Perhaps you could soak it off in a few hours."

Gan-Waga growled.

"If you like to try, I'll fix you up," said Ching-Lung sympathetically. "It's the only thing."

The gong for breakfast sounded. Ching-Lung went downstairs chuckling. He left Gan-Waga lying across a chair, with his head in a basin of water. Gan had still got his hat.

Ferrers Lord Discusses Plans With His Friend—A Man-Hunt—Lord's Estimation of Nathan Gore's Character.

When Ferrers Lord took his place at the table, he was unusually grave and silent. Honour and Rupert Thurston had heard the startling news. The millionaire glanced through his letters.

"We shall have to apologise to his Majesty, Ching," he said, "unless you care to go without me."

"We'll not do that, old chap," answered Ching-Lung.

"You still intend to keep to what you told me last night?"

"Certainly I do."

Honour met Thurston's glance. Ferrers Lord's decision was just as startling and puzzling to them as it had been, and still was, to Ching-Lung.

It was not understandable; it was even ridiculous. Surely this was a matter for the police, and for the police only.

There was something behind it all—something they could not guess at. There was much conversation, but they were burning with curiosity. At length the millionaire glanced at his watch.

"My friends," he said, with a smile, "I think I know your feelings exactly. We were discussing a trip to Australia, and I have apparently altered my plans owing to the theft of a diamond. I have not communicated with the police, and I have given the criminal a start of six hours. You are wondering what it is all about?"

"Right enough," said Ching-Lung. "You've puzzled us, old chap."

"But you like adventure, Ching?"

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"Like it? What else do I like? I revel in it. Oh, for the dear, dead days at the North Pole and in Tibet!"

"And what do you say, Rupert?"

"That I'm rusting out," answered Thurston. "For everything's safe, let's go to Australia!"

Ferrers Lord laughed softly.

"Do not pin your faith to what I am going to tell you," he said, "for it may end in a fiasco. Nathan Gore is a most



Gan Waga sprang from the sink to the table, and from the table to the floor. His blood was up. "Yakuk-chagkik tchoekak! Yah-h!" he bellowed.

determined man. If the police arrest him, I hardly think we shall recover the jewel. Money is nothing to him. I am quite sure he will lead us a merry dance. Why should you not have a man-hunt?"

"But it's so tame."

"That has to be proved, Rupert," answered the millionaire. "It depends upon the man. Gore rolls in wealth. By the message he left he will fight tooth and nail. Have I ever disappointed you?"

"Never!" cried Ching-Lung and Thurston at once.

(This thrilling new story will be continued next week, when another long and exciting instalment will be published.)

NEXT TUESDAY: "BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!" By FRANK RICHARDS, Order Early.

THROUGH TRACKLESS TIBET!

By SIDNEY DREW.

CONCLUDING INSTALLMENT.

Through the Enemy's Camp.

"Paste him, Eskimo!" chuckled Prout. "Hit him again! Do it tickle, Barry, eh? By hokey, larpu him!"

"O'll have yer loife!" yelled Barry. "Yez are knocking all the gloss off me sik hat!"

"Oh, me eyesight!" grinned Joe. "Can't you 'ear his brains jumpin' about like a glass marble in a tin-kettle?"

"Booshia, whooshia, ya-a-m!" chanted Gan-Waga.

"Look out!"

The men scattered as Barry wrenched the frying-pan from the Eskimo's grasp. He did not wait to remove the helmet, but struck out blindly and savagely in all directions. The handle broke, and the pan went skimming over the trees.

"Now," yelled Barry, "where is he?"

Gan-Waga thought it was time to go. Barry saw him, and dashed in pursuit. Casting terrified glances behind him, Gan fled round the aeroplane. Brandishing the metal handle of the frying-pan, the Irishman took up the chase. From the deck of the little vessel Ching-Lung watched the scene.

"First lap," cried Ching, as his quick fingers tied a slip-knot in a stout rope. "Log it, Gan!"

"O'll run yez down, yer heathen," roared Barry, "av Oi runs all day!"

Gan-Waga put his fingers to his snub nose. Round they came again. Barry had gained about a yard.

"Second lap!" sang out Ching-Lung. "Pippit!"

"Third lap, gentlemen!"

Barry was still gaining, and Gan saw it when he glanced over his shoulder. In trying to turn the corner too sharply, he got his legs slightly mixed, and the result was a fall.

"Hurroo!" yelled Barry. "The band will now strike up that beautiful march 'The Last Squeal of the Doicin' Eskimo.' O'll go not yez, me boy! O've got yez, and we'll nivir part no more! The earthquake is going to quake! O've got yez at last! Come, sweetheart, and let me hug!"

"Not do it no morerer! Not do it no morerer!" wailed Gan-Waga.

"O'i don't think yez will," said Barry.

He seized Gan by the nape of the neck, and the handle was poised to strike.

A rope whizzed through the air, dropped over Barry's head and shoulders, and tightened round him. Ching-Lung sprang to the lever. The screws buzzed, lifting the aeroplane twelve feet from the ground, and Barry, kicking, sprawling, and yelling, hung above the heads of the laughing men like some gigantic crab.

Gan-Waga, having escaped a thrashing in this miraculous fashion, stood on his head and howled with joy. The men screamed with mirth.

"Ow! Lit me down!" roared Barry. "Lit me down! Oi shall fall and break me beauty!"

Gan danced a wild and wonderful kind of jig, and grinned at his discomfited foe.

"Gan, make him apologise," said Prout.

"What him apologise?"

"It means beg your pardon, blubberbiter," explained the steersman.

"Ow! Lit me down! O'i'm doicin'! The blood is running to me head!"

Gan scratched his own head, and a beaming smile spread over his face.

"Oirish!"

"Via!" said Barry faintly.

"Yo' not loike bein' up dere?"

"O'i lov' ut!" sighed O'Roonney.

"Say dis, and I let you down." "I am a dirty Oirishman."

"Nivir!" roared Barry madly. "Nivir, yez barrel of train-oil!"

"Den yo' stop!" said Gan-Waga, winking at Ching-Lung.

Ching-Lung allowed the aeroplane to sink within about five feet of the ground. Gan rushed in, and gave Barry's nose a tweak that made the Irishman yell. Then his head swung limply on his chest.

"By hokey, he's fainted!" said Prout in alarm.

Gan was going to give Barry's nose a second tweak, but he paused aghast.

But Barry had not fainted, or anything like it. His arms closed round the Eskimo, and the next moment his feet were off the ground, and he was swinging backwards and forwards in the grasp of the Irishman.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 227.

Read the grand new story of the Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled.

"Rocked in the cradle of the drape," chanted Barry. "But don't yez fancy O'i'm asleep? Oi luvs me little Eskimo, his face it is so fat, but O'll flatten ut more than ut was afore when Oi g't me fist on that. (Biff, biff!) Oi luvs yer, Gan, me boy! Oh, how Oi luvs yez! (Biff, biff, biff!) Oh, how Oi luvs yez!"

"Ow, ow, ow, ow!" yelled the Eskimo.

Barry was fairly merciful; but though his blows-caused no bruises, there was a nasty sting behind them. In vain Gan kicked, screamed, and squirmed. Barry's strength was enormous. Then he let Gan fall, and, deftly using his knife, cut himself free.

"Gentlemen," he grinned, shaking himself. "O'i reckon Oi come out top. Av yez ain't satisfied wid the show, ax for yer money back, and kindly oblige me wid a match to light me cutty."

They waited impatiently for the night, and the time hung heavily. Ferrers Lord was anxious, but he did not show it. Hal Honour seemed to have none of the emotions of ordinary men. With him never a moment was wasted. He carefully overhauled the machinery of both aeroplane and car. There was always a rag, a spanner, or an oilcan in his hand, and there was always a pipe in his mouth. He worked silently, perpetually, and always perfectly.

At length the sun began to sink. Hal Honour had wrapped the tyres thickly in strips of blanket to make them more noiseless. The plan was to creep as near the camp as possible, and then put on full speed for the final dash. Anxious eyes watched the sky. Dense clouds were rare in the clear, dry days of Tibet, but the night gave promise of being exceptionally dark. Prout made sure that his cherished Maxims were in working order.

"Any accident to the car will ruin us, Honour," said the millionaire.

"There will be no accident."

"Not to the machinery," said the millionaire, smiling.

"I know the perfection of your handiwork too well. But the tyres are treacherous things. They would murder every one of us. The aeroplane might keep them off for a time, but we can't fight twenty thousand men. Ammunition is scarce with us."

"Our shrougs his shoulders."

"There will be no accident," he repeated. "If the road is clear we are safe."

"It was clear enough when we saw it," put in Ching-Lung cheerily. "You never saw such a beggarly army in your life. I don't think they have a single wagon to bless themselves with. Won't old Mike dust them up if he gets near them? I can just imagine my cavalry amongst them."

"How far is it to the frontier?" Rupert asked.

"I should reckon about forty miles. We ought to cross it in an hour and a half at the most."

"And from that to Kwa-Hai?"

"Another sixty, isn't it, Ching?"

Ching-Lung nodded.

"Not more, anyway," he answered. "I wish it would get dark."

How the time dragged! Night fell, but still Ferrers Lord lay by the fire, lighting cigar after cigar. He had no intention of making a move until a couple of hours before dawn. Slumber is heaviest then.

The men tried to doze, but in vain. Slumber would not come.

The order came at length. The aeroplane rose black and shapeless in the gloom, and the men mounted the car. Slowly they crept along the road.

"Honour!" said the millionaire.

The engineer struck a match and carefully shielded it. He glanced at the motometer.

"Two miles," he answered.

"Then fly!" cried Ferrers Lord.

The men held their breath. Wheels roared and screamed. The car seemed to leap over the road as if in mad pursuit of the flying shadow above. The wind was terrific.

Out flashed the four dazzling lights like monstrous eyes. They were in the camp; they were through it!

Flashes of flame stabbed through the darkness from behind as the dazed sentries discharged their rifles. And then all was laughter, cheers, and handshakes.

"Bedad!" said Barry, when the car had slowed down.

"It was loike bein' shot out of a gun!"

"Hoo, hoo, hoo!" laughed Gan-Waga.

"Dry up, yez miserable, oily Eskimo!" growled Barry.

"Shut yer face, and—"

Bang! A tyre had gone.

"Stop her!" shouted Ching-Lung.

It was an anxious time while the engineer was fitting on a new tyre. They were barely five miles from the Mongol army, and they dreaded pursuit.

"What's that?" gasped Ching-Lung.

Read the grand new story of the Juniors of St. Jim's, entitled.

"THE NEW HOUSE RIVALS!" In this week's "GEM" Library. Now on Sale.

A dull sound swept through the darkness—the drum of countless hoofs.

The startled men caught up their rifles.

"Done for!" said Rupert hoarsely.

"But they come from the east," said Ching-Lung.

Could it be Kennedy? The sound swelled to a thunder. A sharp order was given, and the men fell in line. Proud sprang to the Maxim. If they were foot, there was no escape. Ferrers Lord leapt from the aeroplane.

"All aboard!" he cried.

Shrill and clear the bugle rang through the darkness.

"Ta-ra-ra, ta-ra-tara, ta-la-tara!"

A wild, prolonged yell of delight sprang to Ching-Lung's lips. He knew the call. Kennedy had composed it himself. Every soldier fit a doggerel of some kind to every bugle-call. Clear and shrill came the notes again:

"Come, my pigtailed Johnnies—come and have your tucker; There's nice and greese and Irish stew, and puppy-dog for supper!"

"It's Mike! Mike, for a million!" roared Ching-Lung.

"Give 'em a yell. Kwai-Hai, shoy!"

"Ching-Lung, Ching-Lung!" screamed Frost and Mad-dock.

"Ching-Lung, Ching-Lung! Ai, Ai! Ching-Lung, Ching-Lung!"

The answer came like the roar of a gun. Mounted men surrounded them on every side a hundred deep.

"Out o' the way, yez blackguards! Clear the road—clear the road!"

Laying about him lustily with a mighty whip to clear the way, a giant on a great black horse rode into the light. He let out a bellow as loud as a baby thunderclap, hurled his helmet into the air, and with one sweep of his massive sabre cut it clean in two as it fell.

"Hurro, hurro!" yelled Mike Kennedy. "An Oi asalape? Heaven bless yer Highness—and you, Mistor Lord! Hello, Tum! Hallo, Ben, no heenties! Give me yer faste. Hurro! Here's a merry meetin'. If it's a dream, don't wake me up. Oh, murder! Oi must take it out of somebody. Back, you dogs—back, back!"

The great, cracking whip made the pigtailed warriors within the circle.

"Form square!" roared Mike.

Two thousand sabres flashed, and Mike shook hands with everybody six times over. It was a joyous meeting. The yellow cavalry cheered their beloved prince over and over again.

"Give me a horse!" roared Ching-Lung.

He mounted.

"Lord, old chap," he said, "the way is now open, and the palace is your own. Go ahead, and make yourself at home. I shall be with you in a day or so."

"So you are going to attack the rebels?" said the millionaire, smiling. "So are we."

"Hoory!" shrieked Barry. And the others cheered.

The End of the Insurrection—Ching-Lung Triumphant—A Terrible Gift—Conclusion.

There is no need to describe the battle. Practically, it was a rout. Ching-Lung took the whole enemy by surprise, and they awoke one morning to find two thousand cavalry riding down their tents. More terrible even than the fierce riders were the terrible aeroplanes and the black monster with the glaring eyes which spat flame and bullets into their flying ranks.

The pursuit continued far into the dawn, and the leaders were captured. After that Storland Sahib's eastern army melted into air. And with them went all dreams of Storland Sahib's crown—at least, for a time.

Ching-Lung left Kennedy and his dare-devil cavalry to push on to Lhassa. The others turned eastward. A week later they entered Kwai-Hai in triumph.

Ching-Lung's subjects went mad with loyalty and enthusiasm to know their boyish chieftain among them once again. They knew he was in disgrace in Court, and if he had raised his finger they would have followed him to Peking itself, and pulled down the royal palace. And not only the people of his province, but half China would have flocked to his standard.

The air was full of kites and balloons. Every house was decked with lanterns, bunting, and paper monsters. Guns boomed, drums and rattles rattled, and vast, cheering crowds thronged the streets. Behind Ching-Lung rode six men, who threw money among the crowd in silver shovels. Ferrers Lord was on his right, Rupert Thurston on his left. Just as they neared the palace, a richly-dressed man galloped forward. He threw himself before the prince's horse, and, kneeling, held out a massive envelope, sealed with the Great Seal.

EVERY TUESDAY, **The "Magnet"** LIBRARY, ONE PENNY.

Ching-Lung opened it, and read in Chinese:

"To our illustrious and well-beloved Ching-Lung.—These greetings with all speed. The news of your Highness's victories has reached us, and pleased us greatly. If we heretofore misjudged you, forget it. We look to you to protect our interests and your own. Further, our envoy, acting for ourselves, is authorised to confer upon you the most illustrious and ancient Order the Peacock's Feather as a token of our esteem. Long may you live!"

The letter was signed by both the Emperor and his mother.

"Pip, pip!" cried Ching-Lung, handing the mandate to Ferrers Lord. "It is all serene, old chap. My head feels safer than it has felt for months!"

Ferrers Lord smiled. Another envoy galloped up, his horse steaming. Ching-Lung glanced at the second letter.

"Pip, pip!" he chuckled. "More honours! Here's the giddy Order of the Yellow Banner for Ferrers Lord and the distinguished insignia of the Crimson Robe for Rupert Thurston, Esquire. Ru, you're a mandarin of the first water, and you can chop off heads as fast as you like!"

"I'll have Barry's as a start," said Rupert.

"Bar, ear, sir! Down wi' poets!" grinned Joe. "Or wi' their mappers!"

Joe piloted the aeroplane, while the motor was in the care of one of the crew. The little vessel played havoc with the countless kite-strings, and was cheered to the echo. Amid thunderous roars of "Ching-Lung!" the cascade passed through the towered gates of the palace.

"Home at last!" said Ferrers Lord.

"Home at last, old chap!" answered Ching-Lung, his eyes sparkling.

All night long the festivities were kept up. Cannons boomed, rockets hissed, squibs fizzed, and crackers banged. Ching-Lung gave a banquet to his friends and his most important mandarins. The rejoicings lasted until the victorious Kennedy brought the cavalry into the town. Then feasting and merry-making began to pall.

"I'm getting tired of it, old chap," Ching-Lung said.

Ferrers Lord yawned. They were lounging on the sunny verandah of the palace, smoking and drinking champagne.

"What do you want to do, my disappinted youth?" asked Thorston.

"That is what I don't know; only I do know I want to do something. Isn't the world a miserable little place? I want to be a buccanier!"

"Sahibs!"

"They turned with a start. Before them stood the tall, half-naked figure of the Afghan, and at his feet lay a bag."

"I bring you a gift, sahibs!"

He caught the bag by the corners. A human head rolled out! Appalled, horrified, they stared at the ghastly object. It was the head of Storland Sahib. Argal-Dinjat had kept his terrible oath.

They saw the Afghan no more, though Kwai-Hai was searched high and low for him.

Another week passed. Ching-Lung's province, thanks to the hard-working, hard-headed Mike Kennedy, was richer and more prosperous than any other in China. Money absolutely streamed into the Treasury, and a British company was building railways.

But still Ching-Lung sighed. One morning he came down to breakfast looking like a ghost.

"What's the matter?" cried Ferrers Lord, Thorston, and Hal Honour in a breath.

"Matter!" yelled Ching-Lung. "I'm ruined, murdered! I'm going to run away. The Empress is so pleased with me that she is going to make me marry her niece! And her niece is fat and ugly! I'm going to Timbuctoo, or White-chapel, or somewhere!"

"Hark to the avate, avate weddin' bells! What a tale of rapture their lovely moosic tells!" chuckled Barry, who was acting as waiter.

Ching-Lung heard a loaf at him. The others screamed with laughter. Great as the honour was, he objected to being forced into matrimony with a stout Chinese princess of forty summers. As the will of the Emperor amounted to law, Ching-Lung's only hope lay in immediate flight.

But where could they go? There was a meeting that night, and a long discussion. Kwai-Hai awoke in the morning to find itself once more without a prince. And again the Empress swore to have Ching-Lung's head.

THE END.

Please ask your friends to read this week's instalment of our grand new serial story, "Twice Round the Globe," by Sidney Drew.—Editor.

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.
Order Early.

My Readers' Page.



GRAND, NEW, WEEKLY FEATURE.

NEXT WEEK'S STORY.

"BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT." BY FRANK RICHARDS.

Next week's grand, long complete tale of school life, under the above title, deals principally with the two brothers whose affairs have attracted the attention and interest of all Greyfriars more than once before. The powerful, overbearing Removite continues to treat his younger brother in a way that causes the loyal heart of the little fax to despair of ever gaining his brother's affection, with the result that Bolsover minor is driven into a wrong-headed and foolish action.

"BOLSOVER MINOR'S BOLT"

is a powerful and gripping story of intense human interest, which all my chums should make a point of reading in next Tuesday's MAGNET Library.

A CHANCE TO HELP YOUR EDITOR THIS WEEK!

Our new serial, "Twice Round the Globe," has "gone with a bang," as one enthusiastic reader expresses it, and the ever-popular MAGNET Library is in greater favour than ever before. But I am not satisfied even yet; like Oliver Twist, I am bold enough to ask for more, and to get it, I have no hesitation in asking the co-operation of my readers, who have again and again proved their loyalty and goodwill towards me. I therefore specially ask each one of you, my dear chums, as a personal favour, to do your utmost to get at least one new reader for THE MAGNET Library this very week. To-day's issue, besides the splendid complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co., contains the second instalment of "Twice Round the Globe," the very finest story ever written by world-famous Sidney Drew, so that this week is a particularly favourable opportunity to introduce the good old MAGNET to a non-reader. I feel sure that my chums will not find their task at all a difficult one—in almost every case it will simply be a matter of showing a non-reading friend a copy, with a word or two of recommendation, and persuading him or her to read it for himself or herself. THE MAGNET itself, true to its name, will do the rest. Cold-blooded indeed must be the person who can read our new adventure serial without being thrilled, interested, and finally gripped fast by this masterpiece of story-writing, while Harry Wharton & Co., the lively and manly British schoolboys, never fail to delight and attract. So, at any rate, I have been taught by experience to believe, and I ask my readers this week to test for themselves, and prove whether this belief of mine is justified or not. I flatter myself that I know my reader-chums well enough to be confident that the little favour I am specially and personally asking of them this week will not be asked in vain. I am so sure of this, in fact, that I am going to thank them now, one and all, in advance for the trouble I know they will make up their minds to take to help their Editor immediately on reading these lines. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, of course, so that I shall expect to find the circulation of the merry little MAGNET just doubled by next week!

HOW TO MAKE GREASE-PAINTS.

To make grease-paints, first of all obtain some coconut fat or lard, which should be free from salt, some white wax to make the colours workable, and a good quantity of each of the following colours: Flake white, vermilion, ultramarine, raw umber, rose pink, Venetian red, orange chrome, and lemon chrome, all of which can be bought at an oil and colour merchant's for a few pence each.

In making the various tints great care should be exercised in mixing the various ingredients together. The paint that is most used by amateurs—flesh tint—is made in the following manner:

The colours that are used are white, vermilion, crimson

lake, and orange chrome. Mix the first three colours in equal proportions at first, and add a small portion of orange chrome. Then, according to the final colour that is required, mix in a little more of the white or red colours.

First of all, before mixing obtain a tin pipe tube, about eighteen inches long, with the bore of the same size as the finished paints are to be—usually about half an inch. Then stop one end of the pipe up with a tight-fitting cork—an indiarubber one for preference.

Melt the coconut fat and the white wax, and add the colours as desired, keeping the mixture well stirred, as some colours are apt to sink to the bottom of the mixture before it is cool. When they are thoroughly mixed pour the liquid into the tube, and plunge into a basin of cold water so as to cool it quickly.

Then obtain a few pieces of paper the same colour as the paint, and cut into sizes of sufficient length to cover the paints.

With a piece of wood, cut round to fit the inside of the tube, force the paint out, and cut it into convenient lengths, which can be wrapped in the coloured papers.

If a superior quality grease is required it can be made in the following manner:

Get some spermaceti and white wax, and melt equal quantities together. Add sufficient amount of pure olive oil to make it into a stiff paste, at the same time putting in a small drop of any kind of essence or scent that is preferred.

Buy the colour of ochre required, place it into a sieve, and wash well. After this it has to be dried by placing it in an oven. It has then to be sifted again, to make sure only the pure ochre is used, and that no foreign matter is mixed with it. It must then be added in the paste, which will have to be reduced in sufficient quantity to render it the desired shade. Pour into the tube and plunge into cold water as before explained, and then cut into the right sizes.

As a general rule, grease-paints are cheaper to buy, but if they are to be used in any large quantity it comes cheaper to make them.

Simple shades of paint are made by just adding the right-coloured ochre to the melted spermaceti and white wax.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

"Inquirer" (New Malden).—The issues you inquire about were published from February 15th, 1908, to February 12th, 1910.

A. W. (Oxford).—There are many good remedies for a sore throat, which can be bought at a chemist's, but it would be better for you to go to a doctor and ask his advice upon the subject.

F. W. B. (Norfolk).—The idea you mention is already being considered.

"A Megnetite" (Exeter).—Thank you for your letter and suggestion, which, I may mention, has already been submitted to me by several other readers, and is already under consideration.

L. M. R. and R. M. R. (Shanghai).—I was very pleased to receive your letter, and hear how you enjoy reading the companion libraries. I am sorry that I cannot now insert your request, but you have by now no doubt seen the explanatory notice inserted in THE MAGNET and "The Gem" Libraries a few weeks back.

"Scottish-American Reader" (London, N.).—Thank you for your letter. I have no knowledge of any troop of "guides" such as you mention, but if there are any in the district you could ascertain their headquarters through the various church magazines, etc.

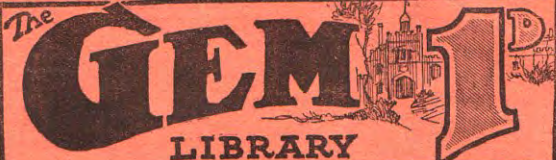
"Australian Reader" (Sydney, New South Wales).—Thank you for your letter. I note the suggestions you make, and may possibly at some future date be able to make use of them.

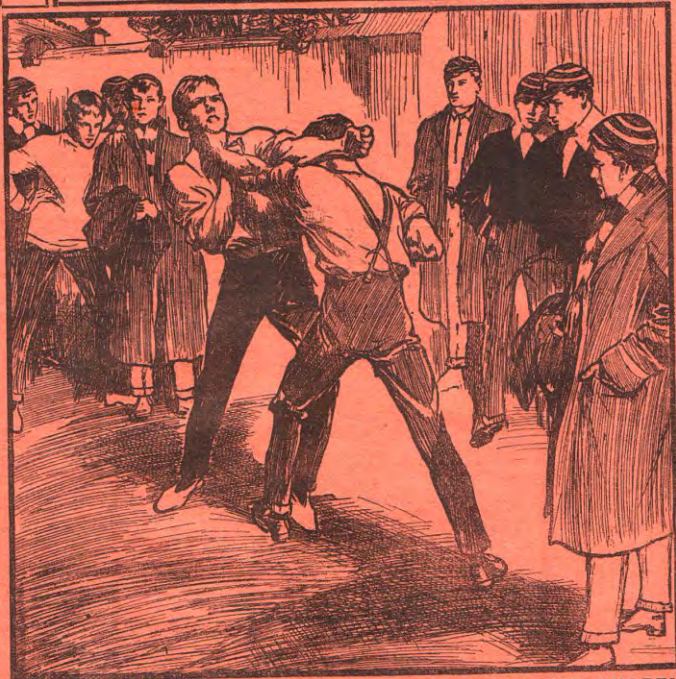
T. W. Griggs (K.I.).—Thank you for your kind letter and the appreciative way in which you speak of THE MAGNET Library. Your idea has already been suggested to me, and is being considered.

THE EDITOR.

"THE NEW HOUSE RIVALS,"**By Martin Clifford,**

Is the title of the grand, long, complete school tale contained in our popular companion paper, the cover of which is reproduced below. Out on Thursday, price 1d.

Complete Stories for ALL, and Every Story a GEM!		No. 227. Vol. 6.
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**THE NEW HOUSE RIVALS FIGHT IT OUT BEHIND THE CHAPEL**

"Go it, Figgy!" "Pile in Reddy!" Figgins and Redfern were at it hammer and tongs. The former got in several body-blows upon his adversary that made Redfern stagger, and the chief of the new firm was driven round the ring; but just at the end of the round he deceived Figgins with a feint, and delivered a crushing uppercut that swept the long-legged junk fairly off his feet.

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