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NEXT MONDAY'S STORY:

- LEFT - IN THE LURCH!

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

- By -

FRANK RICHARDS.

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Take, of the Remove.

A Splendid New, Long, Com-
plete School Tale of Harry
Wharton & Co. at Grey-
friars.

- By -

Frank Richards.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Council of War.

HARRY WHARTON, the captain of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, looked very serious. Frank Nugent, who shared No. 1 Study with him, looked serious too.

Bob Cherry and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who had dropped in from Study 13, were both looking just as serious.

Mark Linley, the Lancashire lad, who was sitting on the corner of the table, had the same expression of seriousness upon his face.

In a word, it was evidently a very serious occasion.

"Gentlemen——" said Harry Wharton.

"Hear, hear!"

"Don't interrupt——"

"Hear, hear!"

"The hear, hear-fulness is terrific!" chimed in Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, in his fearful and wonderful English.

"Shut up!" roared Wharton. "Can't you let a chap speak?"

"Well, I suppose we can cheer our giddy chairman if we like?" said Bob Cherry warmly.

"Hear, hear!"

"The hear, hear-fulness——"

"Oh, rats!" said Wharton. "Gentlemen, matters are getting serious!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We've lately been through a lot of troubles. Our respected friend the enemy, Vernon-Smith, otherwise known as the Bounder, has tried to get us all sacked from Greyfriars, and, instead of that, has very nearly got himself sacked. Smithy's got it in the neck. And the Famous Five—that's us—are going stronger than ever."

"Bravo!"

"Having beaten that dangerous foe, are we going to knuckle under to lesser ones?" demanded Wharton. "Are we going to defeat Achilles, and get licked by Thersites?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Quite classical, by Jove!" said Lord Mauleverer, looking up from the armchair, where he was dozing among cushions.

"Yaas, begad!"

"Order! Gentlemen, we have beaten the Bounder, and frustrated his knavish tricks! After that, are we going to be beaten by Coker of the Fifth?"

"Never!"

"Are we going to knuckle under to Loder of the Sixth—the rottenest bully that ever bullied?"

"Never!"

"Jamais!" added Frank Nugent in French, as if a foreign language would lend additional emphasis to his opinion.

"The never-fulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Loder of the Sixth is a rotter! He backed up the Bounder in his rows with us, before the Bounder had a fall, therefore we're up against Loder!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Coker & Co. of the Fifth backed up Loder because he's down on us. They've got a weird idea that the Fifth ought to boss the Remove, which is——"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"Utter rot!" said Frank Nugent.

"The rotfulness is terrific!"

"Exactly!" said Harry Wharton. "Now we are victorious. We've beaten the Bounder, and we've rotted the Highcliffe fellows till they sing smaller than they ever sang before. It's up to us to put the Fifth in their places."

"Hear, hear!"

"Likewise, it is up to us to come down heavy on Loder, the prefect, when he gets his ears up against the Remove—our noble selves."

"Yes, rather!"

"Bogad, yaas!" said Lord Mauleverer, waking up again.

"Ergo—that's Latin!"

"Go hon!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ergo," repeated Wharton firmly—"Ergo—otherwise therefore—it's up to us to get on our mettle, and show the Fifth who's who, and the Sixth!"

"What's that?" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton frowned.

"Don't be funny," he said; "this is a serious matter! We've got to go on the giddy warpath!"

"Another barring-out?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ass! We can't bar out the Fifth and the Sixth!"

"Rag 'em?" suggested Nugent.

"Let the ragfulness be terrific, my worthy chums!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Good!" said Wharton, with satisfaction. "We're going to put the Fifth in their places. We're going to come down heavy on Loder. Loder is trying to make up a party in the Sixth in opposition to Wingate, our respected skipper, who is one of the best."

"Good old Wingate!"

"Wingate is a duck; but he's an innocent old lamb, and it's up to us to take him under our wing, and protect him from the wiles of the Loder-bird."

"Oh!" said the Removites.

The Greyfriars Remove thought a great deal of themselves. They prided themselves upon thinking a great deal of themselves. But the idea of taking Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of the school, under their wing, was a little staggering, even to them. But Harry Wharton was evidently in deadly earnest.

"Loder has been taking up footer lately," continued Wharton. "Now, what does Loder care about footer?"

"Nothing!"

"But it can't be denied that he plays well when he chooses."

"No, that's a fact!" said Bob Cherry.

"He's making up an eleven of the Fifth and Sixth, fellows of his own kidney who back him up, and he's declared that he can beat the First Eleven—simply because Wingate doesn't think him good enough for the first team."

"Shame!"

"There's going to be an inter-Form match—two senior teams playing one another—Loder's eleven against the school team."

"They'll be licked!"

"I suppose they will; but if Loder can work it his way by foul play, he'll do it," said Wharton. "We all know Loder!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Now, it's agreed that this Study keeps an eye on Loder——"

"Likewise Study 13," said Bob Cherry.

"And 14," said Johnny Bull.

"Hear, hear!"

"We've got to keep an eye on Loder, and to teach Coker & Co. manners, Loder's playing some of Coker's chums in his precious scratch eleven."

"Rotten!"

"The most important business before the meeting is to rag Coker."

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows——"

Billy Bunter, of the Remove, put his fat face in at the doorway, and blinked at the Famous Five through his big spectacles. There was a yell from the Co.

"Get out, Bunter!"

"But I say, you fellows——"

"Buzz off!"

"I've got a postal-order coming this evening," said Billy Bunter. "If one of you fellows could lend me ten shillings on it——"

"Rats!"

"I'll hand you the postal-order immediately it comes——"

"Clear!"

"Well, say five——"

"Rot!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm rather hard up," said Bunter, "you might let me have something——"

Bob Cherry grinned. His hand had closed upon an orange—an over-ripe specimen that had been left over from tea, because it was a little too-too, as Nugent put it.

"Let you have something—eh?" said Bob.

"Yes. You see——"

"Here you are, then!"

Whiz! Squash!

The over-ripe orange flew through the air, and squashed upon Billy Bunter's little fat nose with a terrific squash.

"Yowp!" roared Bunter.

He staggered back into the passage. Bob Cherry closed the door.

"That's something for Bunter!" he remarked. "Now, about ragging Coker?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

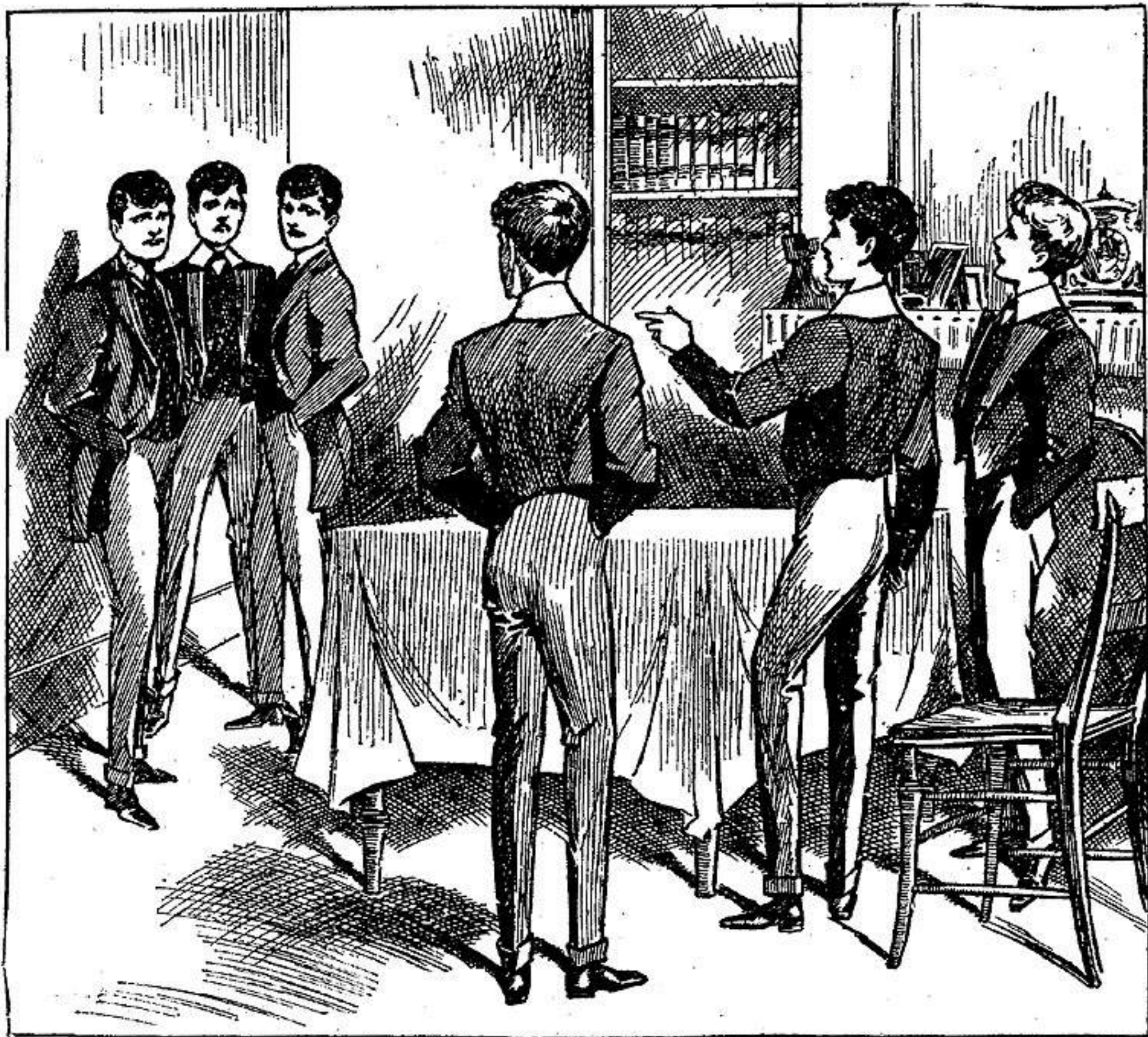
"Good!" said Harry Wharton. "We've got to begin on Coker at once. There's a new fellow coming into the Remove, and I heard Coker telling Potter that he was to be ragged as soon as he arrived—to teach him manners to begin with. Well, if that's Coker's idea of a method of teaching manners, I don't see why it shouldn't work with Coker himself."

"Hear, hear!"

"Then come on!"

"Bravo!"

And Harry Wharton & Co., their deliberations at an end, quitted Study No. 1, and made their way to the Fifth-Form passage, to pay a visit to Horace Coker of the Fifth in his own quarters.



"Stand in that corner!" said Harry Wharton. Coker, Potter and Greene obediently retired to the corner indicated by Harry Wharton's outstretched finger. The Removites were suspicious. "Look here, Coker," said Nugent, "What's the little game?" (See Chapter 2.)

"And if you put up a fight, you'll get hurt."

"Mercy!" exclaimed Coker, in mock terror.

"We're going to show the Fifth that they can't run the Remove!" said Harry Wharton. "And we're going to begin by ragging your study!"

"Mercy!"

"Oh, don't play the giddy goat! Stand in that corner!"

Coker, Potter, and Greene obediently retired to the corner indicated by Harry Wharton's outstretched finger.

The Removites looked surprised.

They were six to three, and they were prepared to rag Coker & Co. without limit, if they put up a fight. But they had not expected this passive obedience from Coker & Co. It made them suspicious.

"Look here!" said Nugent. "What's the little game, Coker?"

"Your little game," said Coker blandly. "We're obeying orders. What do you want us to do?"

"We're trying to behave ourselves," said Potter.

"I'm sure we're doing our best," said Greene.

"Well, keep in that corner," said Wharton suspiciously.

"If you try rushing us, we shall bump you over, and tie you to the legs of the table."

"Mercy!"

"And shut up, you ass!"

"Thanks!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 258.

A Grand, Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars next Monday.

There was a sound of footsteps in the passage—many footsteps. There was a sound of voices—many voices. And they were the voices of the Fifth. Coker & Co. burst into a roar as they caught the alarmed looks upon the juniors' faces. Harry Wharton & Co. understood in a flash. Coker's passive obedience was explained. The chums of the Fifth had had news of the intended ragging, and had sent the word out, and the Fifth-Formers were gathering to fall upon the raggers, and smite them hip and thigh.

"Lock the door!" said Harry Wharton hastily.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker.

Bob Cherry sprang to the door.

"The key's gone!" he exclaimed, in dismay.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker again. "It's in my pocket!"

"Hand it over! Oh!"

It was too late.

The door was flung open, and Fifth-Formers crowded in—Blundell and Bland, and Norton and Fitzgerald, and a crowd more of them. They grinned at the dismayed raggers.

"Good-evening!" said Fitzgerald.

"Oh!"

"Ahem!"

"The ahemfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Coker. "Collar them!"

Wharton set his teeth.

"LEFT IN THE LURCH!"

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"Back up!" he shouted.
 "Rush 'em!" roared Bob Cherry.
 The six juniors made a determined rush.
 Crash! Biff! Bump!
 The next moment a wild and whirling conflict was raging in Horace Coker's study.
 Coker & Co. joined in it.
 The juniors put up a stout fight. But they were overwhelmed by numbers. In a couple of minutes the invaders were on their backs on the floor, with the Fifth-Formers sitting or kneeling upon them.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Got the young cads!"
 "Bump them!"
 "Ow!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Gerroff my chest, Coker, you beast!"
 "Pump them!" roared Fitzgerald. "Faith, and they've got into a hornet's nest this time! Bump them, and chuck them out!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Bob Cherry, in the powerful grip of Coker and Fitzgerald, was raised from the floor, and bumped with a force that raised the dust from the study carpet.
 Bump! Bump!
 "Ow! Ow!"
 Then Bob Cherry was hurled through the doorway. He rolled helplessly on the linoleum outside, and was helped down the passage by the boots of the crowd of Fifth-Formers waiting outside the study. Harry Wharton was grasped by Coker and Fitzgerald.
 The captain of the Remove struggled valiantly. But it was in vain.
 Bump! Bump!
 "Yaroo!"
 And Wharton went whirling out into the passage, to be kicked away like Bob Cherry, and to join his chum, flustered and dishevelled, at the end of the passage.
 Then came the turns of Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull, and Mark Linley and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
 Each of the invaders was bumped twice on the study carpet, and hurled forth. And each, as he was hurled forth, was kicked away down the passage by the grinning Fifth-Formers.
 Coker & Co. roared.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Come and pay us another visit, kids."
 "Always welcome."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 At the end of the Fifth-Form passage, Harry Wharton & Co. picked themselves up. They were dusty and dishevelled, and torn and flustered and flushed, and quite out of breath.
 "Ow!" groaned Nugent. "Yow!"
 "Oh dear!"
 "Grooh!"
 "M-m-my hat!" panted Wharton. "I—I feel as if I'd been through a mangle! Ow!"
 "Hallo!" It was the sharp voice of Loder, the prefect.
 "What are you kids doing in that state? How dare you go untidy and dirty?"
 The Removites exchanged sickly glances. Loder of the Sixth had caught them; and undoubtedly they were in a state that might have called forth the prefect's wrath.
 "You—you see—" stammered Wharton.
 "Ahem!"
 Loder looked at him grimly.
 "You will take fifty lines each for going about in that disgusting state!" he said. "You will write the lines out this evening! Now go and make yourselves decent, you frowsy young rascals!"
 The heroes of the Remove crawled, rather than walked, away. In the Remove dormitory they dusted themselves down more in sorrow than in anger.
 "Dished!" groaned Bob Cherry. "Wharton, you ass, if this is the way you go on the warpath, the sooner you get off it, the better! Ow!"
 "I should say so!" grunted Nugent. "Grooh!"
 "Oh dear! Ow!"
 "The oh-dearfulness is terrific!"
 And the ragers, who had been ragged instead of ragging, groaned in chorus.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Rake, of the Remove.

DICK RAKE stopped at the big gates and looked within.
 "This must be Greyfriars," he said to himself.
 It seemed superfluous to ring, as the gates stood half open. He stood looking in at the grey mass of school buildings, the old elms, the wide Close in which a dozen boys were punting about a football.
 A fine lad he looked as stood there, clean-limbed and clear.

eyed: if not exactly handsome, pleasant and frank and good to look upon.

He did not stand there for many seconds unnoticed. Three fellows were looking on at the punt-about, and for some reason of their own hooting at the fellows engaged with the football; but as soon as they spotted the stranger at the gate they transferred their attentions to him.

"Hallo!" said one of them, a powerfully-built lad, taller than Dick, and somewhat lanky in form. "Who are you, young shaver?"

Dick Rake replied politely:

"My name is Rake—Dick Rake."

"How interesting," said the tall youth, looking at his companions. "His name's Rake. Mind—Rake! Not pickaxe, but Rake."

"I've got it, Coker!" said one of them. "Rake, eh?"

"Charming name!" chimed in the third. "How are you, Mr. Rake?"

The new boy reddened slightly. He could see that those humorous young gentlemen were making fun of him.

"Will you tell me if this is Greyfriars?" he asked, changing the subject.

The three youths gasped.

"Is it what?"

"Greyfriars. You see," explained Rake, "it was a fine afternoon, so I walked from the station, and—"

"Exactly. And you are looking for Greyfriars School?"

"Yes."

"Keep straight on up that road," said Coker, "turn to the right when you reach the cross-roads, and then bear to the left, cross the stile, and you're there."

Rake was no fool, and he had more than a suspicion that the lanky youth was "rotting."

"Oh, I see! I'm going into the Remove," he said, coming further in.

"My dear lad," replied Coker, "you've come to the wrong shop."

"Well," said Rake coolly, "I shouldn't be surprised to find that I've run into a lunatic asylum by mistake! It looks like it!"

Coker smiled in rather a sickly way.

"Now, none of your cheek, Rake!" he said, wagging a long forefinger at the new boy in an admonitory way. "Stand where you are till we're satisfied about you. He looks an awful bounder, doesn't he, Greene?"

"A regular tramp!" said Greene, nodding his head solemnly.

"Oh, rats!" said Rake. "Let me pass, will you?"

"No hurry, young shaver! Look here! You are going to join the fags?"

Rake looked puzzled.

"I don't quite catch on," he said.

"I mean—are you going to join the measly kids in the Remove?"

"Oh, I see! I'm going into the Remove!" said Dick.

The expressions of the three boys became alarming at once. They evidently did not belong to the Remove.

"He's a young duffer!" exclaimed Coker. "I guessed that by the look of him!"

"Who are you calling a duffer?" demanded Rake.

"They're all duffers in the Remove! If it wasn't for the Fifth, the old school would be going to the dogs!" said Coker.

"I ought to know, as I'm in the Fifth!"

"Are you?" said Rake doubtfully. "A pity you can't keep your collar clean at the same time, and get some of the ink off your fingers!"

Coker turned red. He was not particularly careful in his personal appearance, but any allusion to the fact touched him on the raw, and he became cross.

"This is a cheeky kid, chaps!" he said. "He'll be as bad as any of the Remove if we don't put him in his place at once. We don't want any of his class here, anyway. Shove him out!"

And like one man the three heroes of the Fifth hurled themselves on Dick Rake, and he was sent staggering into the road. The great gate closed with a bang. The sudden attack had taken Rake rather by surprise, or he would not have been disposed of so easily, even by three seniors. He recovered himself in a moment and caught at the bars.

The three kept it shut, and grinned at him from the inside.

"I say, open the gates, you cads!" said Rake hotly. "I'm coming in!"

"You don't look like it!" jeered Coker.

It was evident that feeling ran high between the two Forms—a state of things not at all uncommon—and that accounted for the hooting he had noticed when his three enemies were watching the punt-about. The boys with the football were evidently of the Remove Form, Rake thought, and he acted upon the thought instantly.

"Help, here!" he shouted. "I'm a Remove chap and these cads are trying to keep me out!"

The call had an electrical effect. In a moment the party in the Close were sweeping down upon Coker & Co., and from their looks they evidently meant business.

Horace Coker did not look pleased. He had not expected the "new kid" to fall in with the ways of Greyfriars as if he had been born there. The odds were a dozen to three, and the plight of the Fifth Formers was worse than Dick Rake's had been.

"Here, I say; you chaps, cut it!" muttered Coker.

And the trio attempted to make off ingloriously; but it was not to be. The Removites surrounded them and hemmed them in against the gate; and, their retreat being cut off, Coker & Co. assumed an air of bravado, and tried to look as if running away was the very last thing in their thoughts.

"Hallo! What's wrong here?" exclaimed a handsome junior. "What are you cads up to?"

"What's that got to do with you, Wharton?" demanded Coker defiantly.

"I'll show you! Let that kid in!"

"Sha'n't!"

Harry Wharton addressed Rake through the gate:

"You're a new kid coming here, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Rake.

"You're coming into the Remove, Rake," pursued Harry Wharton.

"Rather! You don't think I'd make one of that fat-headed crew, do you?"

Wharton grinned.

"Right-ho! That's the way to talk! That's why those fellows were keeping you out, of course. Wipe up the ground with the duffers, you fellows!"

Coker & Co. made a desperate burst to get through the enemy, and they succeeded, but not scathless. They had to run the gauntlet, and they were winded and considerably the worse for wear when they escaped across the quadrangle. Coker's collar hung by one end, Potter had lost his hat, and Greene's nose was bleeding.

The Remove party remained victorious, and they sent a howl of jeering laughter after the flying enemy. The gate swung open, and Dick Rake entered.

"You can come in," said Wharton, with a wave of his hand. "We're bound to stick up for you, as you are going to join our Form. You'll soon get to learn how things are here. We are the Remove, you understand."

"We're up against the Fifth," explained Johnny Bull. "The Remove and the Fifth have been on fighting terms ever since Greyfriars was founded—since Henry V. dissolved the monasteries."

Dick Rake grinned.

"Well, I always thought it was Henry VIII.," he said.

"Oh, did you, Mr. Clever? And what right has a beastly new kid to be thinking about the matter at all?" demanded Bull. "Do you know I'm Bull, of the Remove?"

"No, I didn't know; but that doesn't matter. It was Henry VIII. who dissolved the monasteries when I heard about it last."

"Oh, was it? A lot you know about it! You're too beastly clever by half! Now, I tell you it was Henry V.!" exclaimed Johnny Bull warmly.

"And I tell you it wasn't!"

Bull looked round on his supporters.

"No wonder those kids were chipping him," he said, "if that's the sort of worm he is. Checking us the first ten minutes he's here. What shall we do with the bouncer?"

"Skin him!" said Nugent. "Boil him in oil!"

"Pull his ears!"

"Frog's march him!" said Micky Desmond.

"You'd better let me alone," said Dick Rake truculently. "I can hit, I tell you, and I'm not going to stand any nonsense."

"Bravo!" said Bull mockingly. "I think pulling his ears will be best. We must give him a lesson for his own sake, or he'll get so cheeky that he'll have to be thrashed, and we don't want to hurt him. Get hold of him, Nugent, and Inky; and you, Micky, twist his ears till I tell you to stop."

Rake was promptly collared, and with a junior hanging to each arm he was unable to escape. Desmond took a firm grip on his ear. Bull stood before him like judge and executioner rolled into one.

"Now, then, we'll see," said Johnny, with a superior smile. "Who was it that dissipated the monasteries—I mean—er—dissected them, young Rake?"

"Henry VIII."

Johnny Bull made a sign to Micky Desmond, who twisted the ear he had hold of till Rake gasped with pain.

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"Now, who was it?"

"Henry VIII."

"Give him another dose, Micky, my son!"

Rake gasped.

water, and would come under the head of sneaking. And so he stopped with his sentence half finished, and turned redder than before.

Mr. Quelch looked at him rather curiously.

"Well?" he asked.

"Nothing, sir!"

"I cannot congratulate you on your lucidity, Rake, any more than upon your personal appearance," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall overlook this as it is your first day at Greyfriars, but it must not occur again. I do not wish the boys of my Form to go about like ragamuffins. You understand that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. You may go now and make some improvement. Let me see. Ah, Bull will show you!" Johnny Bull was just passing the open window, and Mr. Quelch called to him. "Bull!" The junior looked in. "You will kindly show this new boy—Rake—to the dormitory where he can make himself a little less disreputable."

Johnny Bull grinned.

"Yes, sir. He looks dirty, doesn't he?"

"That will do, Bull. You may go for the present, Rake."

Rake retired, and Bull joined him in the corridor. The latter grinned at him.

"Come along, smudgy face!"

"I'll smudge your face if you don't look out!" said Rake wrathfully. "It was your fault I just got a wiggling!"

"Well, why don't you keep yourself clean? Soap and water ain't expensive. But perhaps they don't wash themselves where you come from. But come on; there's no time to waste, if you're going to get clean in time for tea."

"Is this the dormitory?" asked Rake.

"No, ass. Can't you see there's only one bed in it? You can't go into the dormitory. You can wash in this room. It belongs to the porter, you know, and we always run in here when we like."

"Thanks!" said Rake. "When is tea?"

"In a quarter of an hour; so buck up, if you're going to get all that dirt off your face." And Bull vanished before Rake could reply.

The new boy lost no time. It certainly struck him that the room was cosily-furnished for a school porter, and he was a little surprised to see books, and boxing-gloves, and foils, and a football lying about. But as he had never been at a public school before he did not know exactly what to expect, and Bull's manner had been too off-hand and indifferent to excite suspicion.

Rake washed himself, and restored his collar to as much of its original shape as he could, and brushed and dusted his clothes. He would have liked to put on a clean collar, but he had no idea where his box was, or whether it had yet arrived from the station. Still, he was pretty well satisfied with the improvement in his appearance when he had finished, and surveyed himself in the glass.

"I think that will do," he said.

As he spoke, the door opened suddenly, and a big, powerfully-built fellow burst into the room, evidently in a hurry. He came right in without seeing Rake, and then stopped in amazement and stared at him.

"Hallo!"

"Hallo!" replied Rake cheerfully.

"What are you doing here?"

"Cleaning up a bit," said Rake. "You can do the same if you like!" The new-comer looked hot and dusty, and seemed to have just come in from the playing-fields. "I don't mind. Anybody can use this room!"

The big fellow stared harder at him.

"Can they?" he said.

"Oh, yes! I'm finished. I was just going, so there you are."

"Oh, you were just going, were you?"

"Yes."

"Then it's unfortunate for you that you didn't go a little earlier, before I arrived."

"Why?"

"Why? Because I'm going to thrash you for your con-founded cheek—that's why!"

Rake jumped back.

"Here, I say, chuck it!" he exclaimed. "Who are you?"

"My name is Wingate, and I am captain of this school, if you wish to know."

"Pleased to make your acquaintance!" said Rake, with his best bow. "But I really don't see what you want to get your wool off for."

"No; I suppose I ought to take it as a compliment that you should deign to make use of my room," said Wingate grimly, taking a cane from the table. "The unfortunate part of the business for you is that I don't!"

"Your room?" ejaculated Rake. "Bull said——"

He broke off, realising in an instant that he had been fooled by the playful Johnny.

Wingate looked at him.

"Well, what did Bull say?" he asked.

"Never mind," said Rake, confused. "I—I thought this was the porter's room, and that anybody could come here."

Wingate laid down the cane, a smile coming over his face.

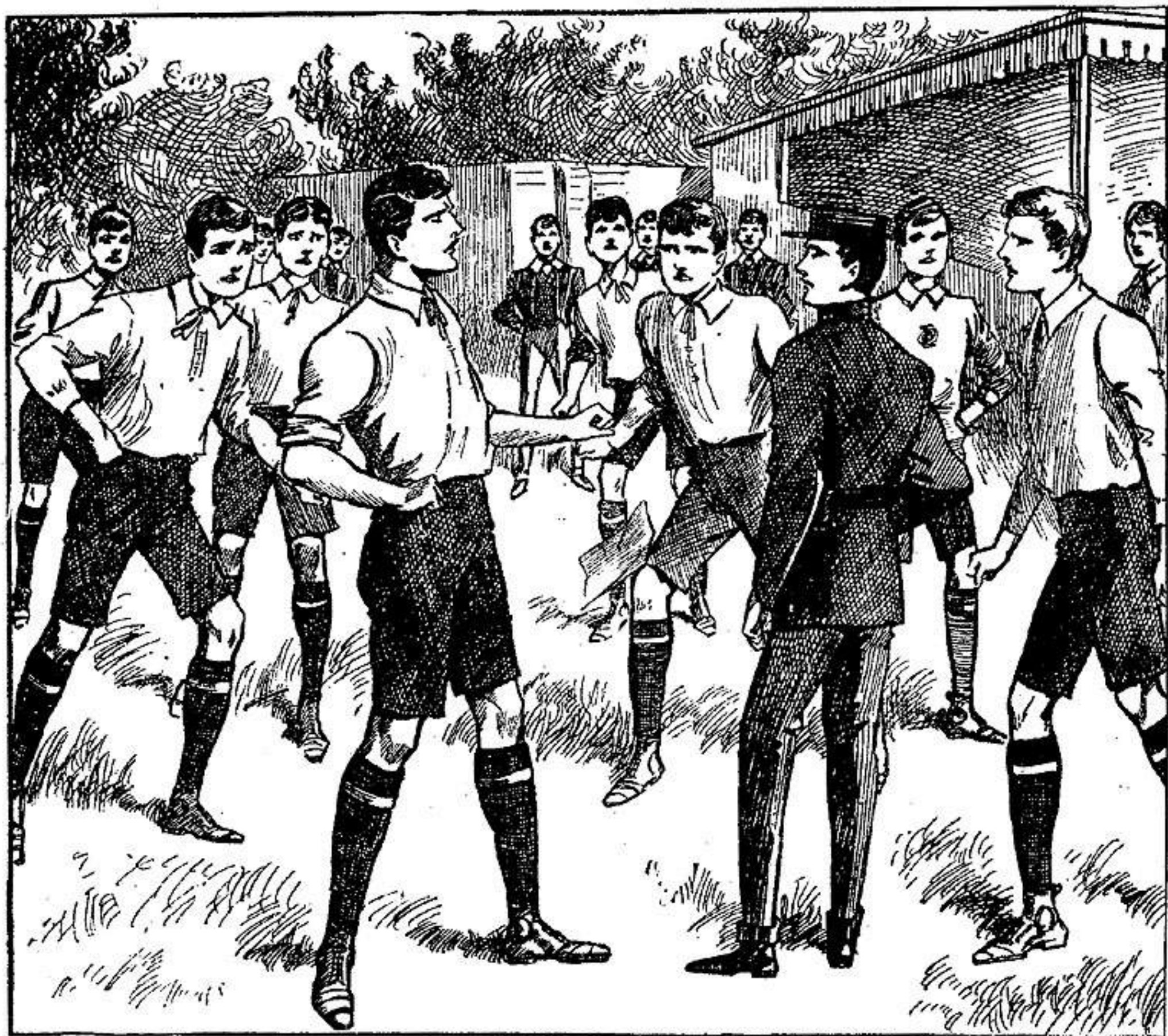
"You're a new boy, of course?"

"I haven't been at the school an hour."

"That accounts for it. You have been made a fool of. It was a practical joke. Cut!"

And he threw open the door.

"You're not going to lick me?" inquired Rake.</



Wingate took the telegram from the boy with a look of wonder. He opened it and glanced over the writing within, and his face went deadly white. "Hallo!" said Courtney. "What's the matter, old chap? Bad news?" (See Chapter 13.)

Dick Rake nodded.

"So I was told," he said.

"Then Fishy will be your study-mate."

"I guess not," said Fisher T. Fish emphatically.

Rake looked surprised.

"You're in No. 14 Study?" he inquired.

"Yep!"

"You say I sha'n't be your study-mate?"

"Nope!"

"Why not?"

"I guess we're not going to let you in."

Rake laughed.

"I should have thought that that was for Mr. Quelch to decide," he remarked.

"That's where you make your little mistake," said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I've decided it, and I've decided it against you. Savvy?"

Rake shook his head.

"No, I don't think I quite savvy," said the new boy.

"I guess you're not coming in."

"What's to prevent me?"

"I guess I shall."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish glared at the new junior.

"What are you cackling at?" he demanded angrily.

"You!" said Rake cheerfully.

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Chums of Greyfriars next Monday.

"I guess——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess you're not going into No. 14 Study!" roared Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'll make your silly head into a pumpkin first!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gee-whiz! I'll stop your cackling, or bust a boiler!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish.

And he rushed at the new junior, and hugged him as if he loved him.

"Hurrah!" shouted Nugent. "Go it!"

"Pile in!" roared Bob Cherry.

"I guess I'm going to smash him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gee-whiz! If he isn't still cackling——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish made a desperate effort to throw the new boy. Much to his astonishment, he was swept off his feet himself, and alighted on the floor on his back, raising quite a cloud of dust from the study carpet. Still more to his surprise, he found Dick Rake, of the Remove, sitting upon his chest, and smiling down into his face.

"LEFT IN THE LURCH!"

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"My hat!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Lemme gerrup!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "You—you silly guy——"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Lemme up, you chump! Lemme up, you fathead! Yowp!"
 "Are you going to be my study-mate?" asked Rake pleasantly.
 "Ow!"
 "Will you be happy to have me as a study-mate, or shall I bump your silly head against the floor?" asked Rake pleasantly.
 "Yow!"
 Bump!
 "Yaroop!" roared the unhappy American junior.
 "Gr-o-o-o-o-oh!"
 "Are you going to take me in?"
 "Ow! Nope! Oh!"
 Bump!
 "Are you going to take me in?"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "You'd better decide to take him in, Fishy! He's taken you in already!"
 "Ow! I guess I'll take you in!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.
 "Glad to?"
 "Ow! Yep!"
 "Very, very glad?" asked the new boy.
 "Yep!"
 "In fact delighted!"
 "Yep!"
 "And you won't be a bad boy again?"
 "Ow! Nope!"
 "Will you be a good boy?"
 "Nope—I mean yep!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Sure you mean yep, and not nope?" grinned Rake.
 "Groo! I guess so! Yep!"
 "Then you can get up."
 Rake rose to his feet, and Fisher T. Fish staggered up. He blinked at the chums of the Remove, who were roaring with laughter, and slowly took his departure from the study. He did not want to try conclusions with the new boy any more.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Johnny Bull Cuts Up Rusty.

WELL, old Quelch might have had a bit more consideration!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.
 Rake looked at him.
 He had just come into Study 14, and such was the polite remark that greeted him.
 "Hallo! What's wrong with you, old son?" asked Rake cheerfully. "Got the collywobblers?"
 "I said that Quelch might have had some more consideration for me!" snapped Bull.
 "He doesn't know what an awfully important person you are, I suppose," said Rake sweetly. "Why don't you explain it all to him?"
 "Look here, he oughtn't to have shoved you on my hands!"
 "I ain't on your hands; but I shall be on your neck, if you don't learn better manners!" declared Rake.
 "They've stuck you in the Lower Fourth along with us," went on Bull.
 "Yes, it was a bit neglectful of Mr. Quelch not to consult you about that, I admit," said Rake, with heavy sarcasm.
 "And you know you ought to be down in the Third among the infants. But the worst of it is to stick you into my study, where there's none too much room for me and Fishy."

Rake wagged his forefinger at the speaker.
 "You should say Fishy and me," he replied. "Your grammar, Bull, is as knock-kneed as your history. Do you still think it was Henry V. who dissolved the monasteries?"
 "Oh, shut up about that! I don't want you in here!"
 "I'm in the same fix. I don't want you. And you must admit that it's harder on me than on you, now."
 "How do you make that out?"
 "Why, you've only got to put up with me," said Rake, "and I, on the other hand, have got to put up with you."
 This little witticism was too much for Johnny Bull. He rose in his wrath, and was just going for Rake, when the door opened, and Fish came in.
 "Hallo! Squabbling again?" said Fish. "For goodness' sake, you fellows, let's have a little peace! If you want to row, why don't you go into the gym, and have the gloves on?"

"I am afraid I should kill the new rotter," said Johnny Bull.

"You needn't be," said Rake. "I don't want to boast, but I fancy I could knock you into a cocked hat! I know I could, if you know as much about boxing as you do about Henry VIII!"

"All right! Come on, then!" shouted Johnny Bull. "We'll see! Come on, you bounder!"

"Correct!" chimed in Fish. "He'll be all the better for a hiding! I'll bring the fellows along!"

And it was quite a party of the Remove that accompanied the new boy and his adversary into the gymnasium.

There were a good many boys there—of all Forms—and, of course, a crowd of the Fifth, who immediately began to jibe at the "Kids." The latter took no notice of them, however, but marched straight on, their heads in the air. They had a more important matter in hand now, and were content to forgo their usual row with the Fifth.

"Form a circle here!" said Bull. "Keep those Fifth rotters out of it! We don't want them looking on!"

"Right-ho!" said Wharton. "Gather round, Remove!"

But the Fifth-Formers were evidently not disposed to be left "out of it." Coker & Co. soon spotted what was toward, and called up their followers.

The Remove ring was broken by a rush of Fifth Form fellows.

"Keep off, you beasts!" exclaimed Nugent. "What do you want here? Go back and wash your faces!"

"Oh, you go and eat coke!" said Coker, shoving forward. "Mustn't we see the little ones amusing their 'ickle selves? Haven't the little dears put on gloves in case they should hurt their 'ickle selves?"

"Look here!" said Rake, turning red. "You shut up, Coker, or Poker, or whatever your name is! You can look on, if you like, but you mustn't make yourself objectionable, or you'll be turned out!"

"Who'll turn me out?" said Coker truculently.

"I will!"

"I'd like to see you try it!"

"Order!" said Wharton. "Can't you shut up, and let us have our mill? You can fight afterwards, if you want to; but shut up now!"

"Let the dear kids alone," said Coker patronisingly. "Let them amuse themselves. We only want to see them do it, that's all!"

It was evidently impossible to drive the Fifth away, for there were quite as many of them present as Removites, so they were allowed to look on. They evidently did not intend to be silent spectators, either.

Rake and Bull faced each other in their shirtsleeves, with the gloves on. Bull was taller than R

Wingate, with a smile, rose and took the envelope in his hand, and, opening the drawer of the desk, put the valuable document in it and locked it up.

"There! Are you satisfied now?" he asked.

"Yes," said Rake. "Thanks, Wingate! You're a good sort."

Wingate bowed solemnly.

"I am much beholden to you for your good opinion," he said.

Rake grinned.

"You won't forget that the paper's jolly important?" he said.

"No."

"You won't leave that desk unlocked?"

"No."

"All serene."

"Jolly important, Wingate!" added Harry Wharton, as he turned to the door.

"All right," said the Greyfriars captain. And Courtney and Valence chuckled.

"Mind you don't leave the key about!"

"Good-evening!"

"You see—"

"Buzz off!"

"Yes. Put—"

Wingate pushed the juniors out of the study and closed the door after them.

"Something jolly mysterious there!" Courtney said, with a grin. "I wonder what the giddy document is? A clue to the smuggler's treasure in Pegg Bay, perhaps!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the seniors went on with their tea and talk.

They were discussing the split in the Sixth, and the coming football match between Wingate's Eleven and the Loder team; an event of great interest at Greyfriars.

It was a very unusual state of affairs.

Loder had set himself up against the captain of Greyfriars, and had induced his friends and backers to help him in forming the new eleven; and he was in great hopes of giving the Greyfriars First socks.

The juniors backed up George Wingate through thick and thin; and Harry Wharton, as captain of the Remove, felt all the more sympathetic because Vernon-Smith had tried something of the same sort in the Remove of late. Vernon-Smith had failed lamentably in his attempts to make division in the Remove; and the Removites fervently hoped that Gerald Loder would fail in his attempt to divide the Sixth, and lower Wingate's colours.

In the interest of that discussion, the seniors soon forgot all about Rake and Wharton and Nugent and their important document.

But the Removites retired very satisfied with themselves.

"I'm glad Courtney and Valence were there," Harry Wharton remarked. "They will be witnesses that the giddy document was locked up in Wingate's desk long before the Sixth-Form match."

"Yes, rather!"

"I think we've put a spoke in Loder's wheel this time," Rake remarked.

"What-ho!"

"And a bit better than putting tin-tacks in his boots, or ink in his Sunday topper! What?"

And Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent agreed that it was; and with that the juniors departed to their studies to give some attention to the little matter of their evening prep.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Coker & Co. Make a Proposal.

"FINISHED, Bull?"

John Bull shut up his Latin Grammar with a bang.

"Yes. Coming down to the common-room for a jaw with the fellows before bedtime, Fishy?"

"Yes. I guess that's the idea—some!"

"Then come on. You coming, young Rake?"

Dick Rake looked up from his Latin exercise.

"No, thanks, young Bull. I think I'll finish this off first."

"Right-ho!" said Johnny Bull, with a grin. "We'll leave you to it."

And he and the American junior strolled out of Study No. 14 in the direction of the junior common-room.

For some minutes Dick Rake worked steadily away at his Latin exercise. The work in the Remove was new to him, but he wanted to acquit himself well in the eyes of his Form-master, and Dick welcomed the quiet which settled down upon Study No. 14 after the departure of his study-mates. But he was not to remain undisturbed for long. There was a sudden loud knock on the door, which was immediately opened before Rake even had time to call out "Come in!"

Horace Coker of the Fifth walked into the room, followed by Potter and Greene. Greene closed the door carefully after him.

"Thought we should find you alone at this time, young shaver," remarked Coker, with a cheerful grin. "You're just the chap we want to see. Ain't he, Potty?"

"He is, old man!" grinned Potter.

"Just the identical chap!" chuckled Greene.

Dick Rake pushed his exercise away from him and jumped up.

He felt considerable apprehension as to the object of Coker & Co.'s visit, but he faced the big Fifth

"New kids mustn't ask questions of their seniors," said Coker airily. "You've just got to do what you're told—hasn't he, Potty?"

"Ha, ha! He has!" grinned Potter.

"I see," said Dick Rake, with a gleam in his eye. "Why do you ask me to do this, more than any other Remove chap?"

Coker grinned knowingly.

"Well, you see, you're a new kid. A regular Remove chap might cut up rusty; the blessed Lower School fags do stick together, you know. Of course, it's different with you, who've only been in the Form a week or two. And a pretty rough time you've had, I should think, with fighting John Bull, and one thing and another."

"Oh, I see!" said Rake slowly. "So that's how you look at it, is it?"

"Of course, you young ass!" said Coker impatiently. "Now, do you understand what you've got to do?"

"I understand what you want me to do—which is not quite the same thing!" said Dick Rake coolly.

Horace Coker gazed at the new boy as if he could hardly believe his ears, while Potter and Greene looked shocked.

"What do you mean, you young sweep?" bawled Coker.

"I mean that I'm not a traitor—that you can get someone else to do your dirty work," said Dick Rake, in a tone of quiet determination.

For a moment Coker & Co. looked a little taken aback. Then Horace Coker burst into a mocking laugh.

"We thought of that, though, young Rake, didn't we, Greeney?"

"We did!" roared Greene. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Collar him!" exclaimed Potter.

The three burly Fifth-Formers advanced round the table, hemming the unfortunate new boy in on all sides. Rake hit out vigorously, and Greene gave a sudden roar.

"Ow! Yaroop! My chin!"

Rake had planted his knuckles smartly on the Fifth-Former's chin, and Greene staggered back. But Rake had no time to get in any more blows. Coker and Potter were upon him, and he was borne down upon the study carpet, and rolled over.

"Hold the young beggar down while I talk to him!" panted Coker. "Lucky I brought this little 'persuader' with me, wasn't it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Potter chuckled as Coker held up a glass fountain-pen filler.

Dick Rake wriggled and struggled in the grasp of the burly Fifth-Former.

"Come and lend a hand, Greeney!" gasped Potter. "The beggar's as slippery as a blessed eel!"

"Ow! Yaroop!"

"Oh, never mind your jaw! Come and lend a hand!"

"You ass! I'm hurt!" howled Greene.

"Oh, piffle! Here, catch hold of the beggar's feet!"

Still groaning, Greene did as he was asked, and Dick Rake was pinned on his back on the floor, perfectly helpless.

Meanwhile, Coker was busy collecting some soot from the chimney and mixing it up in the inkpot. Then he carefully filled his squirt with the nauseous mixture, and approached the squirming Rake.

"Keep off!" roared Rake. "Take that muck away!"

Coker smiled sweetly.

"Not much!" he replied. "Why, I brought it specially for you, young Rake, in case you were silly enough to be obstinate. Now, will you unlock the door for us at eleven o'clock to-night?"

"No! Ouch! Gr-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-h!"

Swish!

Coker squirted the sooty, inky mixture over Rake's face, and Rake gave a wild yell as the fearful stuff ran into his mouth and ears, and trickled down his neck.

"Gr-o-o-o-o-h!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" cackled Coker, refilling the squirt. "Now for another dose! Do you still say 'No' to our little request?"

"Yes, I do!" roared Dick Rake, struggling furiously, but in vain, to free himself from the grasp of the grinning Potter and Greene. "Lemme gerrup, you beasts!"

"Some other time!" chuckled Coker.

Swish!

"Groo! M-m-m!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The new boy got another dose of the fearful solution all over his face, and he gasped and spluttered wildly.

"Gr-o-o-o-h! M-m-m!"

Coker, grinning, refilled the squirt again. He could see that the new boy was not enjoying the treatment, and he felt quite certain that after a little more of it he would yield his point. Horace Coker did not realise that Dick Rake was made of stern stuff—that he would have submitted to any

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amount of Coker's "persuasion"—unpleasant as it was—had not an idea suddenly flashed into his mind.

A gleam of fun came into

