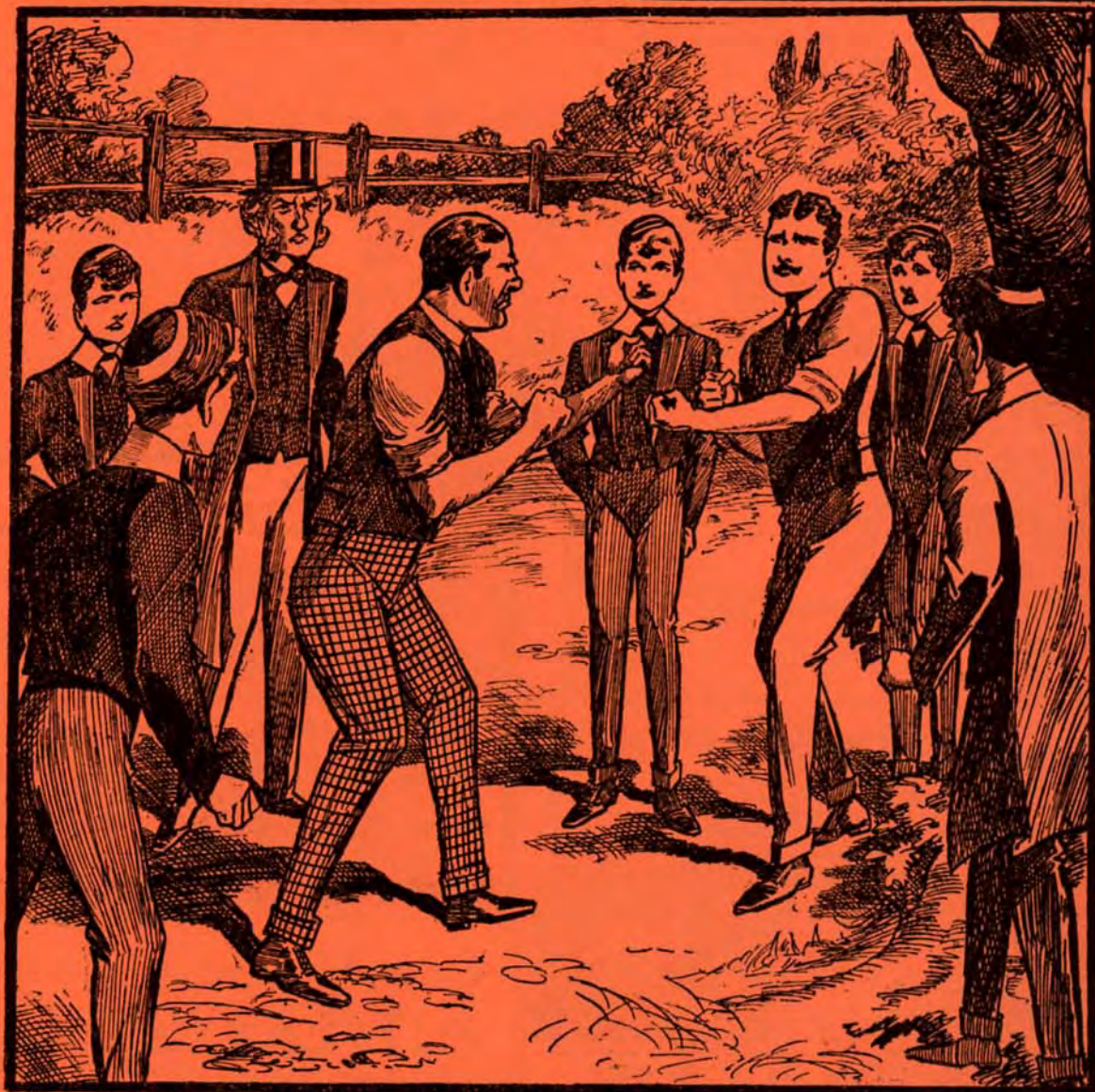


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A Splendid, Long, Complete School Tale in this issue



No. 324. Vol. 8. April 25th, 1914.



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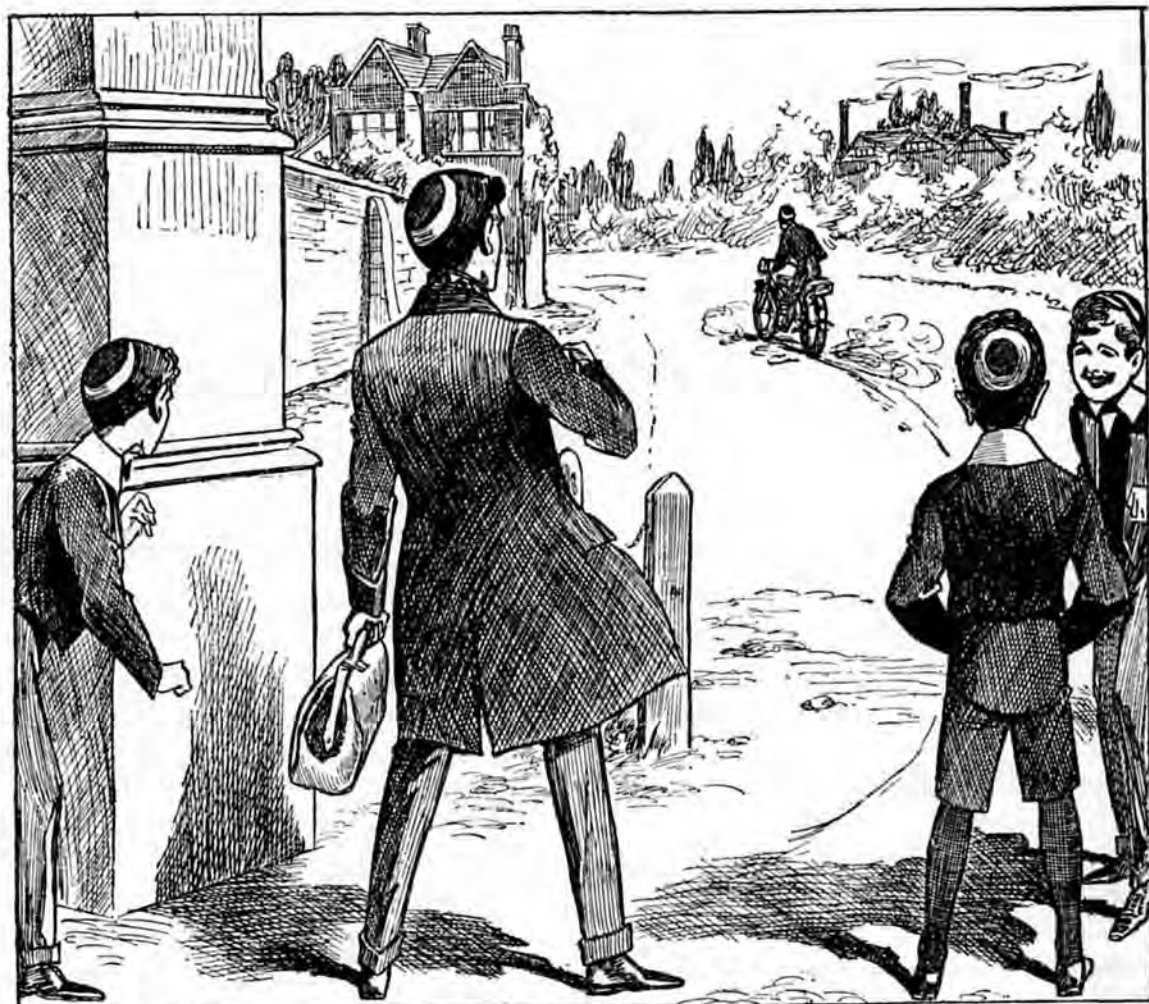


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HARRY WHARTON'S DIPLOMACY

A Grand, New, Long, Complete Story of the
 Chums of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.



Coker stood petrified as he saw Skinner ride off on his motor-bike. "You young villain!" he roared angrily. "Bring back my bike!" But Skinner took no notice and disappeared in the distance. (See Chapter 12.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Mauly's Idea!

LORD MAULEVERER, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, sauntered along the Remove passage, and stopped at the door of No. 1 Study. There he raised an elegant manicured hand, and tapped gently. Voices were audible in the study—several voices at once, which was perhaps the reason why Lord Mauleverer's gentle tap passed unheeded. The study belonged to Harry Wharton,

the captain of the Remove, and his chum Frank Nugent. But the voices of Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull could also be heard in the study. They were saying things about the weather; and Lord Mauleverer grinned as he heard them.

"Blow the rain!"
 "What rotten luck!"
 "No cricket practice this afternoon!"
 "Half-holiday mucked up!"
 "Nothing to do!"

"It's rotten!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!"

The last remark was made by Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Indian junior, whose English was both fearful and wonderful.

Lord Mauleverer tapped again. This time his tap was heard, and Harry Wharton's voice rapped out:

"Oh, come in, fathead!"

Lord Mauleverer smiled and opened the door, and looked into the study.

Five discontented faces were turned towards him. The Famous Five of the Remove were not good-tempered that afternoon. As a matter of fact, they were exceedingly bad-tempered. They had reason. Cricket was beginning at Greyfriars, and there had been first-class spring weather for days past. But on this special afternoon—a half-holiday—there had come sudden rain. The trees in the Close were weeping—the cricket-pitch was a marsh—the raindrops were pattering on the study window. And the Famous Five had nothing to do but to say things about the weather; and they were saying them emphatically.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" growled Bob Cherry, glaring at Lord Mauleverer as if he considered him responsible for the rain.

"What do you want, fathead? Come to tell us it's raining?"

"Begad, you fellows don't look very cheerful," said Lord Mauleverer, with an amused glance at the quintette of discontented faces. "Anythin' the matter?"

"Matter!" growled Johnny Bull. "Look at the weather!"

"Begad! It's raining!" said his lordship, as if he had noticed it for the first time.

"Yes, and wet rain, too!" said Frank Nugent dolefully.

"It doesn't matter to you, fathead, as you're too much of a slacker to play cricket! But it does matter to us, ass—and if you stand there, grinning, we'll sling you out on your silly neck, duffer!"

"Let's sling him out, anyway," said Bob Cherry, rising.

"Must do something on a rainy afternoon, and Mauly has come along just in the nick of time."

"Good egg!" chorused the juniors; and they all rose at once.

On a rainy afternoon, with cricket put off indefinitely, Lord Mauleverer's cheery smile and evident satisfaction were distinctly exasperating. Besides, as Bob said, it was necessary to do something. Five exasperated juniors closed in on the dandy of the Remove, with outstretched hands; and before his lordship knew what was happening, he was sailing through the study doorway.

Bump!

"Ow! Begad!"

"Now come in and grin again!" said Bob Cherry invitingly.

"Where that came from there's plenty more!"

"Ow!"

"Don't sit there saying 'Ow!' Come in again!"

"Ow—ow!"

Bob slammed the door.

"Now, what are we going to do?" he remarked. "We can't sit here staring at the rain all the blessed afternoon! What about a row with the Fourth? Or we could rag Coker of the Fifth—it's a long time since we ragged Coker."

The door opened again, and Lord Mauleverer looked in.

"My dear fellows—"

"Want some more?" asked Bob. "Right you are! Collar him!"

"Hold on!" ejaculated his lordship, backing away in alarm.

"Don't play the giddy goat, you know. Look here! You can't play cricket this afternoon—"

"Don't we know that, ass?" growled Harry Wharton.

"There's something else on," explained his lordship. "How would you like to see a fight?"

The chums of the Remove were interested at once. A fight was better than nothing on a rainy afternoon.

"Well, that's something," Bob Cherry admitted. "Who's fighting? Bolsover major going it again?"

"No!"

"Not a blessed fag fight, is it?" asked Nugent, with a sniff.

"No!"

"By Jove!" said Harry Wharton. "If it's a senior scrap, it will be worth seeing. Is old Coker going for one of the Sixth again?"

"Rats! No," said Lord Mauleverer. "It's outside Greyfriars. Follow your uncle, and you shall see it. Put your coats on—it's raining."

"Yes; we've noticed that it's raining, some time back," said Nugent sarcastically. "That's why we're not playing cricket, fathead! And we're not going out in the rain to see a silly fight, either. Go and eat coke!"

"Is it far?" asked Johnny Bull.

Lord Mauleverer considered.

"About twenty miles, I think," he replied, after some thought.

"What!" howled all the juniors at once. "Where is it, fathead?"

"It's at Chilford."

"Chilford! That's twenty-five miles from here!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Do you mean to say you want us to go twenty-five miles to see a fight?"

"Yaas!"

"I didn't know you were a humorist, Mauly," said Bob Cherry, stepping between Lord Mauleverer and the door. "I didn't know you were setting up as a funny man. But you shouldn't start in a new line like that on a rainy afternoon. We don't appreciate your little jokes just now. Bump the silly ass!"

"I say—let me explain—I—oh! Leggo! Yah!"

The exasperated juniors seized Lord Mauleverer. They were far from being in a humour to appreciate little jokes just then, and his lordship's sudden development of a sense of humour was not welcome. They bumped Lord Mauleverer on the study carpet, with a concussion that caused dust to arise in clouds.

"Yaroo!" yelled his unhappy lordship. "Leggo! I—"

Bump!

"Yaroo! Help! Stop! Ow!"

Bump!

"Begad! Oh, crumbs! You silly asses! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Now perhaps you won't be funny any more," panted Bob Cherry. "You won't come and ask chaps to walk twenty-five miles in the rain for a little joke, perhaps. If you do, you'll get some more like that. Savvy?"

"Grooh! I wasn't going to ask you to walk, you silly ass—Ow! I've got a motor-car waiting—Grooh!"

"Oh!" said Bob.

Lord Mauleverer sat on the carpet and gasped. The Famous Five stood round him in a circle. They realised that they had been a little hasty. Lord Mauleverer apparently had not been joking after all.

"You—you thumping chumps!" gasped his lordship. "I tell you, I've got a car ready—I've phoned for it from Courtfield, and it's waiting outside the gates now. Grooh! It's a glove-fight at Chilford—ow!—Tim Tutton against Larry Lynx, at the Chilford Ring. It's a boxing-match, you duffers! And if you don't want to come—"

"Ha, ha, ha! But we do!" said Bob Cherry. "We do, rather!"

"We do—we does!" said Nugent heartily. "Why, it's simply a ripping idea for a rainy day! Why didn't you explain that at first, ass?"

"Begad! You didn't give me a chance!" gasped Lord Mauleverer, staggering to his feet. "Ow! Ow! You wouldn't listen to me, you asses! I'll jolly well go and ask somebody else now. Ow! Ow!"

"No, you won't," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You'll take your dear old pals. Never mind the bumping, Mauly—we'll let bygones be bygones."

"You—you ass—"

"Consider it as past and done with," said Bob Cherry generously. "We'll overlook the fact that you're an ass, Mauly, and you can consider yourself unbumped. Now that's all right, we'll get off. It's a ripping idea!"

Lord Mauleverer dusted down his elegant trousers somewhat painfully.

"Well, all right," he said. "Look here, keep it dark, you know. I don't know whether the Head would want us to go, so it's no good mentioning it. Of course, it will be all right. But, you know, a still tongue shows a wise head."

Harry Wharton looked thoughtful.

"The Ring, at Chilford?" he said. "I suppose it won't hurt us to go there—and it will be a lark, anyway. If it comes out—"

"It's pretty certain to come out," grinned Bob Cherry.

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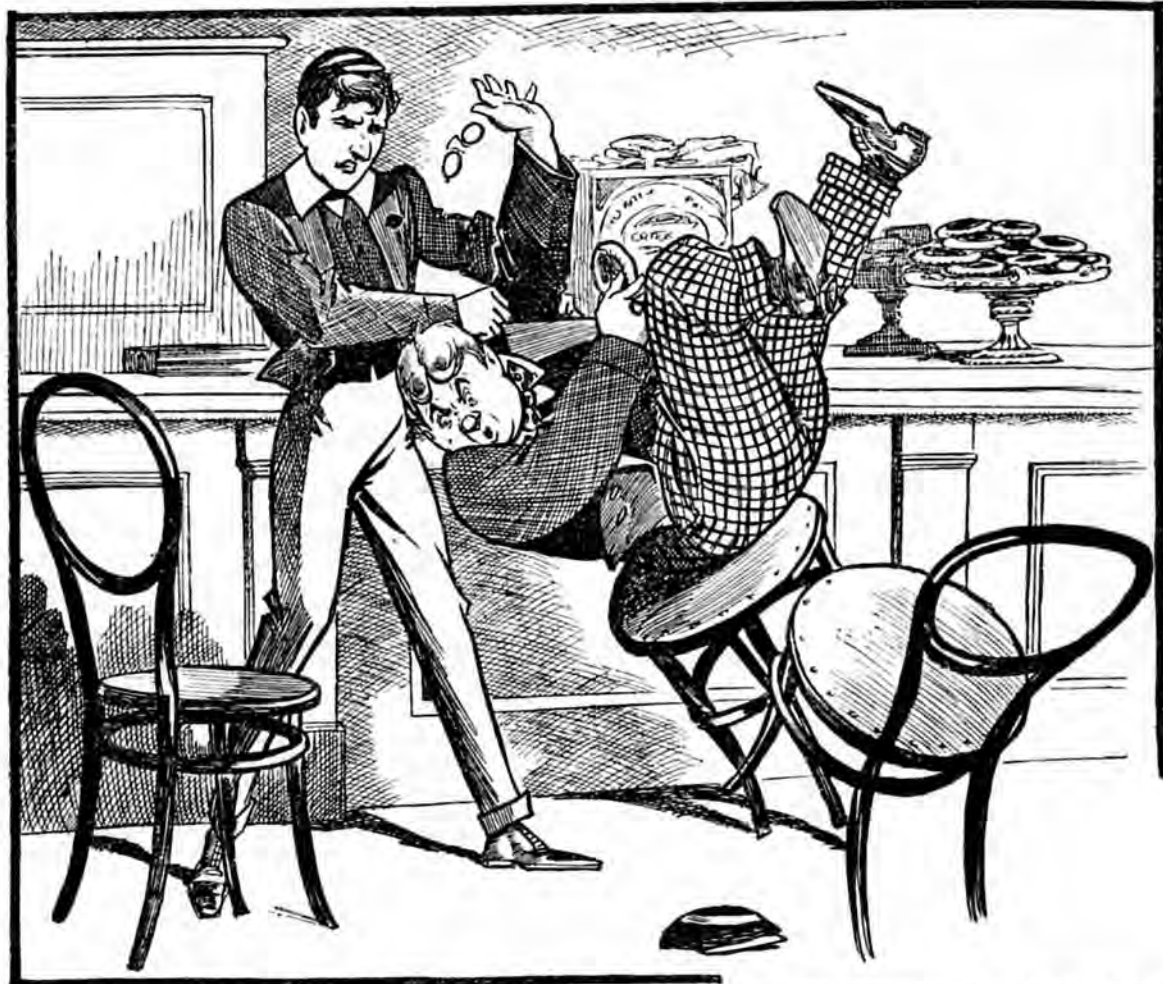
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Skinner dragged Bunter backwards off the stool, and the Owl of the Remove came down on the floor with a sounding bump. "Yow—ow!" he roared. "How much of the six bob Mauleverer lent you have you got left?" demanded Skinner. (See Chapter II.)

"All the school will know that Mauly's had a motor-car from Courtfield."

"Yaas; but that's all right," said Lord Mauleverer. "You know the new mathematics-master is coming to-day—Mr. Lasker, or Lumper, or something—"

"Mr. Lascelles," said Wharton.

"Yaas. I always forget names. Well, he's coming to-day, and I thought of calling for him at the station with the car as we come back, you know. I heard Wingate say he was coming by the six train, and we can catch him at Courtfield and pick him up. He will take it as a compliment, you know, and the Head will think it's rather nice; and then, most likely, there won't be any bother about our going to Chilford. You see, fetching Lumper—"

"Lascelles, fathead!"

"Yaas, I mean Lascelles. Fetching Lascelles from the station will be supposed to be our reason for having the car out," said Lord Mauleverer brilliantly. "I think that's rather deep, myself, you know."

The juniors gazed at Lord Mauleverer in great admiration. They had never suspected the schoolboy earl of being deep, or anything like it. But Mauly had evidently been giving his noble brain some unaccustomed exercise on this occasion.

"Well, you are a deep card, and no mistake!" said Bob Cherry. "I shouldn't have thought it of you, Mauly. Let's get off, and we'll pick up Lascelles coming back. That won't hurt us. We'll be ready in a jiffy and a half."

"Good!"

And the Famous Five, their good spirits quite restored by the prospect of passing the afternoon so agreeably, rushed away for their overcoats.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 324.

FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"COKER'S PLOT!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Coker Doesn't Go!

COKER & Co. of the Fifth were standing under the porch of the School House, looking out dismally into the rainy Close. Horace Coker was talking—he generally was! Potter and Greene listened to him heedlessly, while they said things about the rain.

"My cousin at Oxford knew him!" said Coker. "Very decent, so I hear—very decent indeed!"

Potter looked round.

"Decent!" he exclaimed, having caught only the end of Coker's remarks, all his attention having been given to the inexpressible weather. "Decent, did you say?"

"Very decent," said Coker.

"What utter rot!" said Potter.

"Eh?"

"You must be off your rocker—you must really, Coker!"

"I suppose I know what I'm talking about!" roared Coker.

"You don't!" said Potter. "Ain't it raining cats and dogs?"

"I can see that," said Coker.

"And you call it decent! If this is decent weather—"

said Potter.

"You fathead! I wasn't talking about the weather!" growled Coker.

"Oh, weren't you? I was," said Potter.

"I was talking about the new mathematics-master—Lascelles," said Coker. "My cousin knew him at Oxford."

"Blow the new mathematics-master!" snorted Potter.

A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Tale
of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. Order Early.

"My cousin knew him—"
 "Blow your cousin too! Don't jaw so much!" said Potter, who was very much out of temper. "Ain't the rain bad enough?"

"Seems to be a decent chap, from what my cousin says," went on Coker, addressing his remarks to Greene now.

Greene of the Fifth grunted disparagingly.
 "Some wretched little scrub, most likely," he said—"chap who's mugged up maths. Ugh! Little blighter with a bald head and goggles—bet my hat!"

"Nothing of the sort!" said Coker. "He's mugged up maths, of course, or he couldn't be a mathematics-master, I suppose. But he's not a swot, by any means. An awfully athletic chap. Plays cricket and polo and things, and boxes."

"Boxes!" said Greene. "Rats! A mathematics-master! Poof!"

"Well, my cousin says—"
 "Bow-wow!" said Green. "No sign of the rain stopping. Looks as if we're going to be giddy prisoners all the afternoon. No cricket, no walks, no cycling—no anything! I'm fed up. For goodness' sake, don't talk any more, Coker, old man. I'm fed up with your cousin at Oxford."

"You—you blithering ass!" said Coker sulphurously. Tempers were growing strained among the Fifth-Formers. The weather was responsible. There had already been several fights in the Third Form-room. The fags were feeling it too.

Lord Mauleverer and the Famous Five came out of the School House just then. They were wrapped up in rain-coats, and had caps pulled down over their ears, and were armed with umbrellas. Coker & Co. stared at them. Billy Bunter, the fat junior of the Remove, followed them out of the House. His face was very angry, and his little round eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

"Hallo! Going for a swim?" asked Coker sarcastically.
 "Lovely weather for ducks!" said Potter. "So I suppose it's all right for geese!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" the Fifth-Formers cackled, rather dismally.
 "I say, you fellows, I'm jolly well coming with you!" piped Billy Bunter. "I jolly well know it's a feed, and you can't spoof me. You wouldn't be going out in the rain for nothing! Look here—"

"It's not a feed!" roared Bob Cherry. "Buzz off!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"
 "My dear fellow, it isn't a feed!" said Lord Mauleverer. "And there wouldn't be room for you in the car. You're too wide, begad!"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"
 "The car!" exclaimed Coker of the Fifth, interested at once. "You fags have the blessed cheek to have a car out! Where are you going?"

"We're going to mind our own business," said Frank Nugent sweetly.

"The mindfulness of our own business will be terrific, my esteemed and ludicrous Coker," murmured Hurree Singh.

"They're going to Chiford!" roared Billy Bunter. "I heard them saying so. And I know it's a feed, and I'm going to be in it. I tell you—"

"Chiford!" said Coker. "That's a jolly long way! Why, that's where the boxing match is—at the Ring, at Chiford. You kids going there?"

"Don't yell!" said Wharton. "We don't want all the school to know."

"My hat! What a ripping wheeze for a rainy day!" exclaimed Coker excitedly. "We'll come with you, as you've got a car."

"Sorry!" said Lord Mauleverer politely, while his comrades glared far from politely. "We've only just room in the car."

"Oh, we don't mind squeezing!" said Coker generously.

"But we do, dear boy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or some of those fags could stay behind," said Potter.

"After all, the Ring at Chiford isn't exactly the place for Lower Fourth kids. We'll come."

"Certainly!" said Greene heartily.

"My dear fellows—"

"Not another word," said Coker. "We'll come. It's rather infra dig to go about with fags, but we'll overlook that under the circumstances. Wait a minute while we get our coats."

"I don't think!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Coker & Co. rushed in for their coats. Lord Mauleverer and his comrades rushed for the gates, to get into the car outside.

Billy Bunter panted after them, his fat face gleaming with the rain that swamped upon it.

"I say, you fellows—"

They did not heed him. There was no time to lose in getting off, otherwise there would certainly be trouble with Coker & Co. It did not take the Fifth-Formers a minute

to get their coats. Then they came rushing out of the School House and down to the gates after the Removites.

The chauffeur touched his cap to Lord Mauleverer.

"Buzz off quick as you can, my dear chap!" said his lordship.

"Yes, sir."

The juniors clambered into the car. It was a roomy four-seater, and there was plenty of room for six juniors, with a little crowding. But they pretty well filled it. Billy Bunter stood in the rain, blinking at them through wet spectacles and raving.

"Look here, you beasts—"

"Clear off!"

"I'm jolly well coming to the feed—"

"It isn't a feed!"

"Well, I'm coming all the same. If you don't take me in, I shall consider it my duty to go and tell Mr. Quelch that you are going to see a prize-fight!"

"It isn't a prize-fight, you fat duffer; it's a boxing-match!" growled Bob Cherry. "We wouldn't see a prize-fight."

"I regard it as a prize-fight, and I shall consider it my duty to go to Mr. Quelch and say— Yow—ow—ow—yooooooooop! Ugh!"

Bunter did not really mean that he would consider it his duty to say that remarkable thing to Mr. Quelch. He said it quite involuntarily, as a sudden push from Bob Cherry's heavy hand caused him to sit down violently. He sat down in a puddle, and there was a mighty splash of muddy water.

"Now go and say that to Quelch, too!" growled Bob.

"Ow, ow! Groo-hooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The car was in motion now. It glided away through the rain, and only just in time. Coker & Co. came running out of the gateway. They dashed right at the car as it started.

"Hi! Stop!" roared Coker.

"Hold on!" yelled Greene.

Bob Cherry waved his hand genially from the window.

"Good-bye, Coker!"

"You young villain—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop, I tell you! We're coming!" roared Coker, making a desperate rush after the car. "I'll skin you! I tell you—"

"Yah, you young rascals! I'll scalp you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker grabbed the car behind, and held on frantically. He acted upon the impulse of the moment. If he had reflected, he could not possibly have expected to hold the car back. He was dragged off his feet in a twinkling, and landed face downwards in a puddle in the middle of the road. There was a loud splash and a muffled roar from Coker.

The car sped on, and vanished in the rain.

Horace Coker staggered to his feet. His coat, his trousers, his boots were smothered with mud, and his face was quite unrecognisable. Potter and Greene stared at him blankly as he came back towards them, gasping, and then they burst into a yell of laughter.

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

"Oh, crumbs! You're wet!" shrieked Greene. "You are very, very wet! And muddy! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grooooooh!" gasped Coker. "I—I tried to stop them! Ugh!"

"You must have been a giddy ass to try to stop a car by holding on to it," chuckled Potter. "But you always were rather an ass! My aunt! You do look a sight. Ha, ha, ha! Ow! Wharrer you at, you fathead? Yow!"

Biff! Horace Coker's temper had been too sorely tried, and he could not stand Potter's hilarity, in addition to his other trials. He hit out, and Potter sat down in a puddle, and ceased to laugh immediately. Coker strode in at the gates in a state of great wrath to get a change of clothes. He needed a change badly.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Boxing Match!

"CHILFORD!" said Bob Cherry, looking out of the rain-splashed window.

In spite of dashing rain and muddy roads the run had been quickly made, and in little more than an hour the car entered the town of Chiford.

Chiford was a town of considerable size, with electric trams and an Empire, and other signs of advanced civilisation. Among its other attractions was the celebrated Ring, to which spectators came from far and near to see boxing matches. Quite well-known boxers appeared at the Chiford Ring, and the house was often crammed for the boxing entertainments.

The present show was one of more than usual interest. Tim Tutton was a professional pugilist, with a very well-known record. Larry Lynx was a younger man, but he had

already made something of a reputation among the gentlemen of the "fancy." The Greyfriars juniors, as a matter of fact, had never heard of him; but, of course, they were not well up in pugilistic news. But Lord Mauleverer had a Chifford paper with him in the car, and from that the juniors had gleaned much information during the drive. According to the reporter, who professed to give some information about the boxers, Larry Lynx was the son of a publican in the East End of London, and had boxed since he was old enough to have the mittens on.

Lord Mauleverer knew a great deal about boxing and boxing men. It was one of the few subjects the slacker of the Remove interested himself in.

"I'm rather curious to see Lynx!" he remarked. "I've seen Tutton, when I was away last vac. Lynx doesn't box very often. He seems to be an amateur, who does it more for the pleasure of the thing than the tin. They say he could have had a match on at the National Sporting Club, but he didn't care to. Somebody says that he does something else for a living as well as box, but I don't know."

The car stopped.

"Here we are!" said Harry Wharton. "Here's the Ring!"

They alighted outside the big building. There was a crowd with umbrellas up. Evidently a large audience was collecting to see the glove-fight between Larry Lynx and Tim Tutton. Lord Mauleverer gave instructions to his chauffeur, and then the party from Greyfriars made their way into the building.

In spite of the crowd there was no difficulty in getting seats. When Lord Mauleverer did anything he did it well, and money was no object to the schoolboy millionaire. Having booked the best seats in the place, Lord Mauleverer walked in.

"Lots of time!" Bob Cherry remarked, as he glanced at his watch. "We're a good quarter of an hour early."

"All the better, my dear fellow," said Lord Mauleverer. "Here we are!"

They took their seats.

The house was filling fast.

Outside, the heavy rain was pattering and spattering on roof and windows. Inside, there was an eager buzz of voices, a shuffling of feet, and an incessant coughing, as the large audience came into their places.

The chums of Greyfriars waited with keen interest. They were naturally interested in boxing-matches, and this was one of unusual interest. It was not, of course, in the nature of a prize-fight, which they certainly would not have taken the trouble to see. It was a contest of ten rounds with the gloves on, and though some punishment was pretty certain to be given and received, it would not be of a serious nature.

The house was soon quite crowded.

"Plenty of people here—what?" Lord Mauleverer remarked, as he glanced lazily over the crowded audience. "Hallo, here they are!"

There was a round of hand-clapping as the boxers appeared. From the cheers of the audience, it seemed pretty clear that Tim Tutton, the "pug," was the favourite. He was considerably older than his antagonist, and more thickly built, and seemed a much more powerful man.

The Greyfriars juniors looked with great interest at Larry Lynx.

He was a young man, and looked almost boyish. He had clear-cut features, steady dark eyes, and short, curly-brown hair, and was decidedly good-looking. He moved with an easy elastic step that told of perfect physical fitness.

"That's the dark horse!" Lord Mauleverer pronounced.

"He doesn't look as if he'll stand very long against that bruiser," Johnny Bull remarked.

"Perhaps not, without the mittens on," said his lordship. "But this is a glove contest, science and not brute force, you see. With the knuckles Tutton would knock him out very likely. I've heard that Tutton does something in that line, on the strict Q.T., of course. His face looks like it."

Indeed, there were many signs of punishment about the bruiser's face.

His short, thick nose seemed a little crooked, and he had two teeth missing. Those signs of conflict with the bare knuckles certainly did not add to his beauty. His expression was not amiable, either. Larry Lynx looked the picture of good temper and good humour. But the big bruiser gave him a lowering look as he stepped into the ring. It was pretty certain that there would be some hard hitting, as hard as the gloves allowed.

"That chap does look like a blessed prizefighter," said Frank Nugent. "Still, at a place like this they aren't allowed to do any harm. The police would clip in."

"Yaas, that's all right," assured his lordship. "It's simply THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 324.

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a contest of science and skill, or I shouldn't have asked you fellows to come, of course, or have come myself. Prize fights ain't good form, any more than cock-fights. I don't see why the Head himself should object to our comin' here, only headmasters can't be relied on to see things in the proper light, don't you know."

"Exactly!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Of course, if questions are asked, we shall own up, right off the reel, dear boys. But when we turn up at Greyfriars with the new mathematics master I don't think any questions will be asked—what?"

"Probably not. I hope not, anyway," said Wharton. "Hallo, they're going!"

"Seconds out of the ring!"

The two boxers were facing one another.

They shook hands, in a perfunctory manner on Tutton's part, but with a kind cordiality so far as Larry Lynx was concerned. Then the mill commenced.

"The bruiser thinks he's got it all his own way!" Lord Mauleverer remarked, watching the opening round with the keen eye of a connoisseur. "He's longer in the reach, and he's got a drive like a sledgehammer. If he gets Lynx fairly on the mark—"

"Then it won't last to ten rounds," said Nugent.

"But he won't get him," chuckled his lordship. "Larry's like an eel. Blessed if he doesn't seem to be made of india-rubber."

Tutton was doing all the attacking. Lynx contented himself with defence all through the round, and allowed his bulkier opponent to drive him round the ring. The audience looked on with keen interest. The general impression was that Tutton was sparing his opponent, in order to make the contest last for the ten rounds, which the spectators had paid their money to see. But Lord Mauleverer shook his head when Bob Cherry made that remark.

"Not he," said his lordship confidently. "Not he! He can't get at Lynx. And you'll see Larry wake up in the next round."

"Time!"

There was a buzz of voices in the crowded hall, but it died away again as the second round commenced.

As Lord Mauleverer had predicted, Larry Lynx woke up in that round. He began to attack, and now the big bruiser had to give ground. There were calls from Tutton's supporters to "buck up!" and the bruiser's face flushed with

anger. It was evident that he was taking the fight seriously enough. Towards the close of the round, he made a sudden fierce attack, and succeeded in getting at close quarters with his younger opponent. There was half a minute of in-fighting, and Larry Lynx went down heavily under a body blow from Tutton's heavy right.

Crash!

The young boxer lay in the ring, panting, and the time-keeper began to count.

"One, two, three, four—"

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He'll be counted out!"

"Rats!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Five, six, seven—"

Lynx was up again like a rocket.

The bruiser was waiting for him, however, watchful as a cat, and his heavy drives came crashing upon the young boxer's face and chest. But Lynx took his punishment manfully, defending as well as he could, and keeping his feet until the call of time.

"Time!"

Larry Lynx went back to his corner, breathing heavily. Tutton sat down, grinning. He evidently considered the rest of the contest a mere walk-over.

"Close thing, that!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Bogad, it was awfully close for Larry. But Tutton won't have another chance like that."

"He's a plucky beggar, anyway!" said Harry Wharton. "He stood it out rippingly. My hat! This is worth seeing, and no mistake! He must be feeling pretty groggy now, I should say."

"But he'll come up smiling—you see!"

Again Lord Mauleverer was right. The younger boxer came up smiling, as cool as a cucumber, and apparently quite fresh after his rough experience. Tutton, who expected to have it all his own way in that round, found that he could not get near his opponent. He had no more chances of

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delivering those crashing body blows that had nearly knocked out the younger man in the second round. Larry Lynx kept him at arm's-length, stopping all his drives with easy skill, and countering very effectively.

"Time!"

Another and another round, and yet another. Six rounds of the ten had been fought out, and the big bruiser had not yet succeeded in knocking out the cool, handsome boxer. And by that time Tim Tutton was showing signs of wear and tear.

In spite of the gloves, there had been a good deal of punishment. Tutton's left eye was almost closed, and his nose looked a little crooked. But there was hardly a sign of damage upon Larry Lynx's handsome face.

"He takes mighty good care of his chivvy," Bob Cherry remarked, as the seventh round began. "He doesn't want his beauty spoiled, I suppose. My hat! Look at that!"

Bump!

Tim Tutton was down this time.

Eight had been counted before he rose, and then it would have been easy for Lynx to deliver a finishing blow as he came up; but the young boxer stood back, with his hands down, smiling.

"There's a sportsman for you!" said Lord Mauleverer enthusiastically. "It may cost him the fight, too; but what a giddy sportsman!"

"Hurrah!"

Tutton looked groggy at the end of that round. But in the next he succeeded in punishing the younger man pretty severely. Lynx's handsome nose assumed a somewhat bulbous appearance, and it decidedly marred his good looks.

Another round—both the boxers going "all out" now, and the audience gazing with breathless keenness.

"Time!"

"One more round," said Lord Mauleverer, with a sigh. "Looks as if it won't be a fight to a finish, after all—unless Larry wakes up. I fancy he's got something up his sleeve, though. How fresh he looks."

There was a breathless hush in the crowded hall as the boxers stepped up for the last round.

Tutton attacked fiercely, but he was decidedly groggy, and his attack was clumsy, and easily stopped. Then suddenly Larry Lynx seemed to "wake up." He was on the bruiser like a whirlwind, with right and left, his movements almost too rapid to be followed with the eye.

Rap, rap, rap! and then a crashing blow right on the mark, and the bruiser went down like a felled oak.

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine—out!"

There was a roar in the crowded hall.

Tutton had been knocked out in the last round, and it was a fight to a finish, after all. Lord Mauleverer clapped his hands wildly.

"Bravo! Bravo!"

"Hurrah!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Sudden Surprise!

LARRY LYNX looked with a smiling face at the yelling, enthusiastic spectators. It had been a splendid fight, and the younger man had won it—the bruiser still lay where he had fallen, breathing heavily. Ten had been counted, but it might as well have been twenty or a hundred, for all the chance that Tutton had of coming up to the scratch again. The fight had been won, and well won.

Lynx turned to his fallen opponent, and dropped on one knee beside him, and spoke in a low voice. Tutton gave him a dazed and savage look.

Harry Wharton & Co. watched that little scene with interest. They could not hear what was said, but they knew that Lynx was speaking in a friendly way to his beaten antagonist, and that Tutton was savagely rejecting his friendly advances. The young boxer shrugged his shoulders slightly, and rose to his feet. With a slight bow to the cheering audience, he disappeared.

Tim Tutton was helped to his feet, but he walked out of the ring without assistance, and with a lowering brow. It was evident that there was not much of the sportsman about the big bruiser. He could not take a beating with good-temper.

"Well, it's all over!" said Lord Mauleverer, rising. "This is where we clear. It's been a jolly good show—what?"

"Ripping!" said Harry Wharton. "It was really a brilliant idea of yours, Mauly. We couldn't have had a better afternoon. You were a friend in need, and we take back that bumping in the study."

Lord Mauleverer grinned. He had got over the bumping.

"Let's clear!" he said.

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And they cleared.

It was still raining when they came out of the building, but the motor-car was in waiting, and they were quickly inside it. The car glided away through the streets of Chilford, with the raindrops pattering on the windows.

"Lynx is going to appear again next week, I hear," Lord Mauleverer remarked. "It wouldn't be a bad idea to run over and see him again—what?"

"Good wheeze," said Harry Wharton, "if we can get away. We'll subscribe for the car next time, and stand Sam—as we're not all giddy millionaires. Or we could come by the common or garden train. And now for Courtfield. We've got time to get to the station there before six."

"Lots!" said Lord Mauleverer.

The car glided on swiftly through the rain. They reached Courtfield as six was chiming out.

"Just in time!" said Bob Cherry.

The car stopped outside the station.

The express was in, but the passengers had not yet come out. The juniors alighted from the car. Passengers who had arrived by the express began to come out of the station, putting up umbrellas.

"How are we going to know the chap?" asked Johnny Bull. "We don't know him from Adam, you know. We can't ask every man who comes out of the station whether he's the new maths-master for Greyfriars."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"No; that wouldn't do. But he's bound to take some sort of a vehicle to the school—he can't walk in this rain—and we shall spot him then, and we'll speak to him. Just keep an eye on the cabs."

"Only one here," said Bob Cherry, looking round. "There's a dearth of cabs in Courtfield on rainy days. However, we'll keep an eye on it."

But the cab was taken by a portly tradesman of Courtfield, who evidently was not the man the Greyfriars juniors were waiting for.

It rolled away, and they resumed their watch upon the station entrance.

If Mr. Lascelles, the new mathematics-master, came out of the station, he was certain to inquire for a vehicle to take him to Greyfriars, and they would know him then. There was no doubt about that. But he did not come.

The passengers from the express had gone their various ways, but there was no one among them who could be taken for the new master.

He had not appeared.

"Bogad!" said Lord Mauleverer at last. "It begins to look as if the Johnny has lost the train, and we've had our trouble for nothing."

"By Jove, it does!" said Wharton, frowning. "It's rotten, too, after all the trouble we've taken. Are you sure he was coming by that train, Mauly, you ass?"

"I heard Wingate say so."

"He may have taken the local for Friardale," suggested Nugent. "People often do when they're going to Greyfriars, you know."

"The local isn't in yet," said Wharton, looking at his watch. "It comes from Westwood, and passengers have to wait for it. If the Johnny intends to take it, he must still be in the station. I vote we look for him."

"Good!"

The juniors entered the station, and scanned the local platform. But it was quite deserted. They inquired of a porter they knew, but there was no passenger waiting for the local train for Friardale.

There was only one conclusion to come to—either Wingate's information was incorrect, or the new mathematics-master had acted in a very unmathematical manner, and lost his train.

"No good sticking here!" growled Johnny Bull. "May as well be off. I'm more than ready for tea!"

"Same here!" said Bob Cherry feelingly.

"Two hours to wait for the next express," added Wharton. "I don't feel inclined to wait here all that time, especially as the duffer mayn't come till to-morrow, after all, for all we know. Let's buzz!"

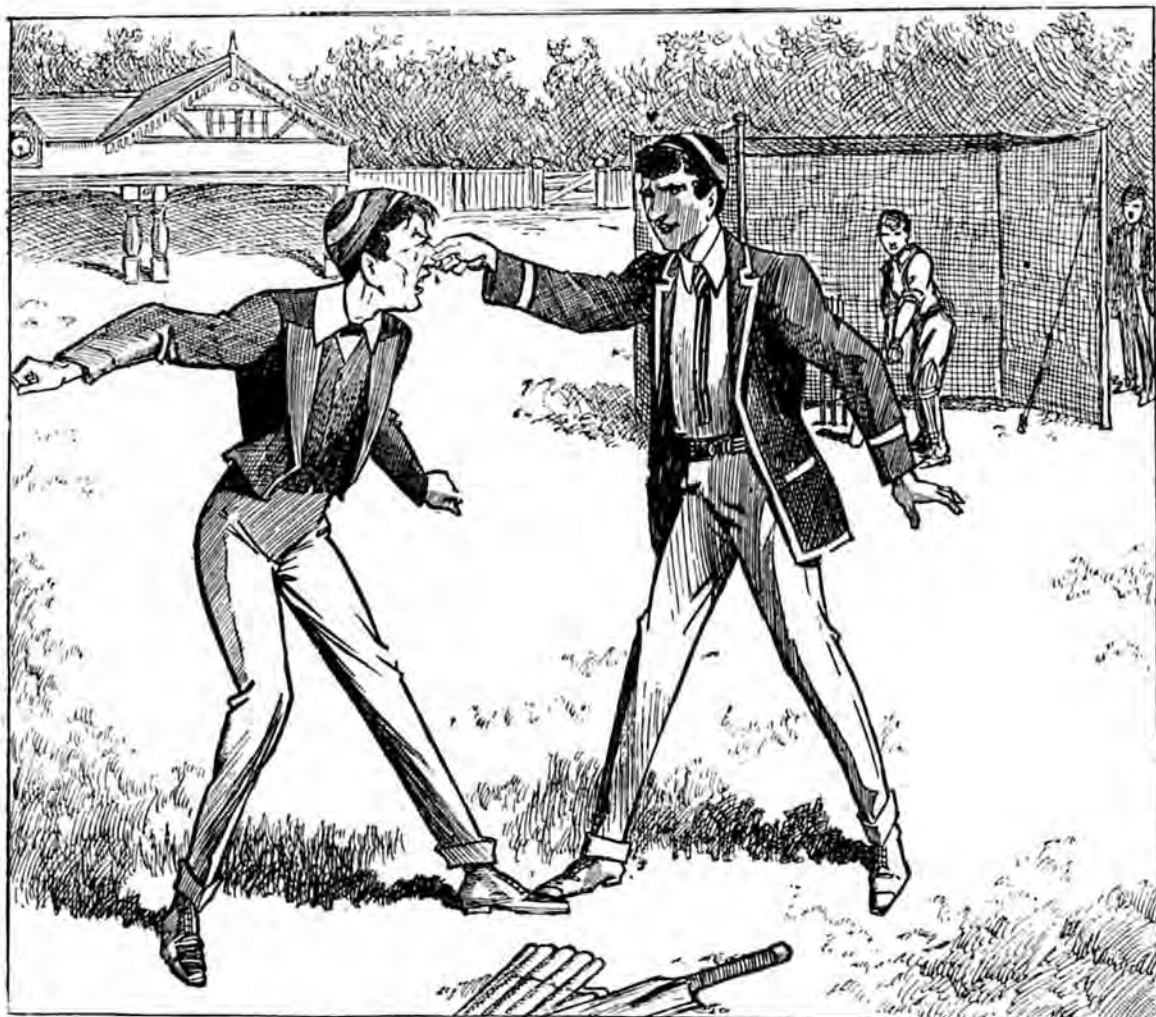
Lord Mauleverer nodded.

"May as well clear!" he agreed. "It's rotten! If we could have taken Lumper—I mean Lasker—back to Greyfriars with us—"

"But we can't, so let's clear off. I'm hungry."

"Right you are, dear boy."

The juniors returned to the car, and started for Greyfriars. They were decidedly annoyed by their failure to meet Mr. Lascelles. With Mr. Lascelles in the car with them, they would have been pretty secure from awkward questions being asked; but now they did not feel so safe. However, there was no help for it, and they glided away towards Greyfriars in a dissatisfied frame of mind, making rude remarks about



A dusky finger closed upon Skinner's prominent nose, contracting like a vice. "Ow! leggo!" roared Skinner. "The esteemed Skinner must apologise for characterising a nabob of Bhanipur as a blackful beast!" purred Hurree Singh gently. (See Chapter 11.)

a mathematics master who was not sufficiently mathematical to catch a train.

Greyfriars was reached, and Lord Mauleverer dismissed the car outside the gates. The rain was still coming down, and they pulled up their rain-coats about their ears as they came into the Close. They arrived in the School House steaming.

Billy Bunter met them as they came in.

He blinked at them reproachfully through his big spectacles. "You rotters!" was his greeting. "Coker's going to scalp you! He was smothered with mud, and so was I, you beasts! I was going to stand you a feed out of my postal-order, but now I'll see you blowed first!"

"Do you mean to say your postal-order's come?" asked Bob Cherry in astonishment.

Bunter grunted.

"I'm expecting it by the next post."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, tea's the word," said Bob Cherry. "It's in my study this time. Come on!"

"Certainly!" said Bunter, with alacrity.

"Fathead! I wasn't talking to you!" said Bob, who was blessed with a delightful directness of speech. "You clear off!"

"Oh, really, Cherry, of course, I'm coming! After leaving me out of that feed at Chilford—"

"It wasn't a feed, you fathead!"

"Well, if it was really a prize-fight—"

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"It wasn't a prize-fight."

"I haven't acquainted Mr. Quelch with it yet!" said Bunter, with dignity. "Upon the whole, I decided to keep your disgraceful secret."

"Why, you—you—"

"And the least you can do is to ask me to tea. Otherwise, I shall go to Mr. Quelch at once when he's finished jawing with Lascelles!"

"With whom?" exclaimed all the juniors at once.

"Lascelles, the new maths master, you know. It seems that he knows Quelch, and they're jawing about Oxford, I think. I happened to pass the study."

Harry Wharton grasped the Owl of the Remove by the shoulder and shook him.

"Do you mean to say that Lascelles got here before us?" he demanded.

"Ow! Don't sh-shake me, you ass! You'll make my glasses fall off, and—"

"Is Lascelles really here, you fat chump?"

"And if they get broken you'll have to pay for them!"

Wharton glared at him.

"Are you being funny, or is Lascelles really here?" he demanded.

"Of course he is. I heard him telling Quelch. You see, I happened to tie up my bootlace as I was passing Quelch's study, and so I happened to hear—"

"Then how the deuce did he get here?" exclaimed Bob

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Cherry. "He certainly didn't come by the six train at Courtfield, or by the local to Friardale."

The juniors looked at one another in astonishment. It was not, of course, a matter of great interest how the new master had arrived at Greyfriars School; but it was very curious to discover that he had arrived there before them. Certainly he had not come by the London express to Courtfield, as had been expected. He had arrived at Greyfriars, apparently, while they had been waiting for him in Courtfield. It certainly looked rather mysterious.

"He did come to Courtfield," said Billy Bunter. "I heard him tell Quelch he took a cab here from Courtfield. Besides, I saw the cab."

"He jolly well didn't come in the express!" growled Bob Cherry. "Must have come by an earlier train, after all, the duffer."

"But there isn't an earlier train from London," Nugent remarked, "only if he came two hours earlier. When did he come, Billy?"

"About half an hour ago."

"Then he must have left Courtfield only a few minutes before we got there," Harry Wharton remarked; "and how he got to Courtfield is a giddy mystery. There certainly wasn't a train to bring him."

"Here he is," said Billy Bunter, as the door of Mr. Quelch's study opened, and a handsome, well-built man, with clear-cut features, came out.

The juniors turned their gaze upon the new mathematics master.

Then they gasped.

"Great Scott!"

"Begad!"

"My hat!"

Billy Bunter blinked at them curiously. He did not understand the cause of their amazement. But their amazement was extreme.

They had supposed that they did not know Mr. Lascelles—that they had never seen him before. But now that they saw him, they found his face quite familiar. That short, curly brown hair; those keen, handsome, dark eyes, the clear-cut features; they had seen them before in the ring at Chilford!

For as they looked upon Mr. Lascelles, the new mathematics master of Greyfriars, the face they saw was the face of Larry Lynx, the boxer!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Simply Amazing!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stared blankly at the new master.

It was not a polite thing to do; but they could not help it.

Mr. Lascelles could not help noticing their blank stare; and he paused in the passage, regarding them with a somewhat puzzled expression.

"Well, my boys?" he said in a deep, pleasant voice.

"M-m-my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry, again, helplessly.

"Is—is it a lark?"

"Or a giddy dream?" muttered Nugent.

Mr. Lascelles's expression became still more perplexed.

"Is anything the matter?" he asked.

"Ma-a-atter!" stammered Harry Wharton.

"Yes. Surely it is not a custom at Greyfriars for junior boys to stare at a new master as if he were some strange animal?" said Mr. Lascelles severely.

"A—a new master!" gasped Wharton.

"Yes, I am the new mathematics master, Mr. Lascelles."

"Mr. Lascelles!"

"Certainly. Why should that cause you astonishment, my lad? What is the matter with you? You puzzle me very much."

Mr. Lascelles's voice had grown severe. Perhaps he suspected that he was being made the victim of a schoolboy "rag."

The juniors were still staring at him blankly. It was somewhat dusky in the passage, and the light was not yet on. But they saw Mr. Lascelles's face closely enough, and it was the face they had seen in the ring at Chilford, or another face exactly like it. True, there were no signs of recent conflict about it, but there are ways and means of removing such signs. If Mr. Lascelles was not Larry Lynx, he must be his twin brother, at least. What did it mean? That Larry Lynx could be also Mr. Lascelles, an Oxford man and

a master of mathematics, was wildly impossible. The juniors realised that as soon as they began to think. But the resemblance—

And now they observed something else, which in the first shock of astonishment had escaped them. Mr. Lascelles wore a moustache—a short, curling, brown moustache, the same colour as his hair.

And they remembered that Larry Lynx had been quite clean-shaven.

Yet the features—and the same good-humoured, boyish expression—it was astounding. And the build, too, was the same, although, of course, the difference in clothes made a good deal of difference in appearance.

"Begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "He's got a moustache, dear boys!"

"My hat! But—"

"Only a little one!" murmured Bob Cherry.

But it was evident that, little or big, a moustache could not have been grown in a couple of hours.

"What are you saying?" asked Mr. Lascelles sternly. "Is this some peculiar form of schoolboy humour, may I ask? I may tell you that I am not accustomed to being stared at in this manner."

"Sorry, sir," said Wharton, recovering himself a little.

"But—but—"

"Well?"

Wharton had been about to blurt out that he had seen someone who resembled Mr. Lascelles very closely, but he stopped in time. He could not mention Larry Lynx without a confession that the Co. had spent the afternoon at Chilford Ring, and that was far out of bounds, as well as being a place the Head might possibly not approve of. It would not have been judicious to explain to a master where they had been. Nugent pressed Wharton's arm as a hint, but he had already taken thought of that.

"I—I—we—" stammered Wharton. "The—the fact is, sir, we're surprised to—to see you here, you know."

"I really do not see why you should be surprised!" said Mr. Lascelles icily. "By the way, what is your name?"

"Wharton, sir—Lower Fourth Form."

"And why are you surprised to see me here, Wharton?"

Wharton had recovered himself by this time. Besides the injudiciousness of a confession that they had been miles out of bounds, it was likely, too, that the mathematics master would be by no means pleased at being told that he closely resembled a professional boxer. It was better to say nothing about Chilford or Larry Lynx. But there was another cause of surprise which the juniors were able to explain, and Wharton proceeded to explain it.

"We—we waited for you in Courtfield, sir," he said. "We heard you were coming, and we called at the station with a motor-car, sir, to give you a lift here. But you didn't come by the express."

Mr. Lascelles's brows contracted a little.

"And why did you wait for me at the station in Courtfield?" he demanded, with a note of sternness in his voice.

"We wanted to give you a lift in the car to the school, sir," said Nugent.

"Yaas, sir. It was really my idea," chimed in Lord Mauleverer. "I hope you're not offended, sir. As it was raining, begad—"

Mr. Lascelles's face broke into a smile.

"Certainly I am not offended," he said. "It was very kind and thoughtful of you; but as I was not aware of your intention, I was unable to avail myself of your kindness. I did not come by the express."

"No, sir; and that's how we missed you."

"I had business in another town, and came by another train, after all," Mr. Lascelles explained. "As my train came in about ten minutes before the express, I was gone from Courtfield, probably, before you arrived there. I am sorry; and I thank you for your kind intention."

And Mr. Lascelles nodded pleasantly, and walked on.

The juniors looked after him as he disappeared in the direction of the Head's study. Then they looked at one another. They were still in a state of great astonishment.

"Blessed if I ever saw such a likeness!" said Bob.

"It's amazin', begad!"

"Blessed if I shouldn't think it was the same man," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "Only, of course, it's impossible. That chap at Chilford—"

"Utterly impossible!" said Johnny Bull. "Besides, he's got a moustache. The other man hadn't a moustache!"

"That certainly settles it."

"And yet—" began Nugent, very thoughtfully.

"Yet what?"

"That train that comes into Courtfield ten minutes before the London express—"

"Well?"

"It comes from Chilford," said Nugent.

"My hat, so it does! Then he was there. But the train

ANSWERS

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comes from several other places, too," added Wharton. "It passes through Chilford, that's all."

"Yes; but—" "I know it looks queer; but it's impossible. Besides, the moustache settles it. But I never felt so knocked over in my giddy natural, I must say! For one moment—" "I say, you fellows!" burst out Billy Bunter, unable to contain his curiosity any longer. The juniors had forgotten that the Owl of the Remove was near. "I say, you know, what's it all about? You saw Lascelles in Chilford? You don't mean to say that he went to see the prize-fight, too?"

"It wasn't a prize-fight, you fat idiot!" "I call it a prize-fight, anyway," said Bunter obstinately; "and I suppose you saw Lascelles there! Nice goings-on for a mathematics master, I must say—going to low places to see prize-fights!"

"We didn't see Lascelles there, fathead!" said Wharton. "You were just saying—" "We saw a man like him; but it wasn't Lascelles! Now shut up!"

"But, I say—" "Clear off!" "Who was the man who was like him? I want to know, you know. I—Ow! Leggommy ear, Bob Cherry, you beast! Ow! Yow! Ow!"

Billy Bunter wailed with anguish as Bob Cherry compressed a finger and thumb on his fat ear with a grip like a vice. He seemed almost to curl up.

"Yow-ow-ow-oooo!" he roared. "Leggo! Yaroooo!" "Clear off, and shut up your silly head!" said Bob, releasing the fat Removeite, and raising his right boot. "Now, you chaps, all together, and see who can kick the hardest!"

"Hear, hear!" Five boots were raised, but they did not reach Billy Bunter. The fat junior scudded away down the passage at a speed that was surprising, considering the weight he had to carry. He paused at the corner to yell "Beasts!" and vanished.

"Now for tea!" said Bob cheerily. And they made their way to No. 13 Study, the famous apartment which belonged to Bob Cherry, Mark Linley, Hurree Singh, and Wun Lung the Chinese. Mark Linley had seen them come in, and he had tea ready—hot, steaming tea, and fragrant buttered toast, and ham and eggs galore.

The chums of the Remove were hungry after their afternoon's excursion, and they sat down to tea with keen appetites and great enjoyment, and for the present the strange resemblance between Mr. Lascelles and Larry Lynx was dismissed from their minds.

But afterwards they could not help thinking of it. When they saw Mr. Lascelles again, in clearer light, the resemblance seemed to be still more startling, and Wharton thought he even detected a slightly bulbous look about the handsome nose, and remembered that Larry Lynx had been punched very hard there.

And yet that the two men could be the same was wildly improbable.

The moustache settled it, if anything could. The boxer might be able to get rid of the signs of conflict, but he would not be able to grow a moustache in one afternoon. That was an impossibility.

Yet it was very perplexing, and the Co. could not help thinking about it a great deal, and they gave Mr. Lascelles much more thought and attention than they would, under ordinary circumstances, have dreamed of bestowing upon a mere mathematics master.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. A Good Idea Going Begging!

"I WISH Euclid had been boiled in oil!" said Billy Bunter.

Billy Bunter expressed that amiable wish to his study mates in No. 7, a few days after the arrival of Mr. Lascelles at Greyfriars. Mr. Lascelles had become quite popular with most of the fellows, but with slackers like Bunter he was never likely to be popular.

Billy Bunter hated the acquirement of any kind of knowledge, but Mr. Lascelles' branch of knowledge was his special "hate noit."

"And I wish Lascelles had been boiled in oil along with him!" Bunter added.

"Go bon!" said Peter Todd. "What's the matter now?"

"He's a beast!"

"Which means that he makes you work!" grinned Peter Todd. "But we don't have very much of him, Bunt!"

"We have too much, though!" growled Bunter. "And if a fellow don't understand a thing, he keeps on hammering till a fellow does understand it!"

"Surely that is his duty, my dear Bunter?" remarked Alonzo Todd gently. "I am sure my Uncle Benjamin would approve of that!"

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"COKER'S PLOT!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"Blow your Uncle Benjamin!" growled Bunter. "I wish your Uncle Benjamin had put up with the beast instead of me! What do you think the beast has done now?"

"Reported you to Quelch for slacking?" asked Peter.

"Worse than that!"

"Boxed your silly ears?"

"Worse than that!" groaned Bunter. "He's actually had the cheek to say that I'm the stupidest boy in the Remove."

"He knows something, that chap does!" commented Peter Todd.

"He says that my ignorance of the simplest principles of mathematics is simply astounding."

"Right on the nail!" said Peter.

"And he's going to take me specially in hand."

"He's taking on a big job, then."

"Why can't he let me alone?" snapped Bunter. "Lots of masters stick to the clever chaps in a class, and let them show off, and let the other chaps alone. Why can't Lascelles do the same? The beast says he's quite concerned about me, and he's going to have me in his study for special too!"

"That is very kind indeed of Mr. Lascelles, Bunter," said Alonzo Todd. "You ought really to be very grateful to him!"

Bunter snorted. He certainly did not look grateful.

"It's rotten enough to have him at the regular times, without being yanked into his study for special lessons!" he growled.

"What business has the beast to be concerned about me? It doesn't matter to him whether I pass exams or not. I think exams are all rot, myself! He says he's going to make it a point to find time to look after me a bit, and help me on?"

"I hope you thanked him nicely, my dear Bunter," said Alonzo.

"Well, I couldn't punch his head," said Bunter. "That's what I would have liked to do. I thanked the beast, of course. He'd have reported me to Quelch if I'd refused his rotten offer! The chap who was here before him never used to worry me like this. All I want is to be let alone. Now I've got to stick in his study half an hour this evening, and have his silly rot crammed into my head! He actually had the cheek to say he suspected me of pretending to be stupid, to avoid the trouble of learning!"

"Something in that, too," said Peter. "You are a silly owl, of course, but not half such a silly owl as you make out in the Form-room!"

"Well, I'll get even with the beast somehow!" said Bunter savagely. "Lots of the fellows don't like him any more than I do. Skinner and Stott would like to scalp him. He's down on them, too—makes them work; and they don't like it!"

"My dear Bunter—" "There's something queer about that chap, too," Bunter went on—"some blessed secret. The chaps in No. 1 Study know about it, but they won't tell me."

"What rot!" yawned Peter Todd. "How could there be a secret about a mathematics master? He's all right!"

"He isn't all right," persisted Bunter. "Wharton and the rest know something about him—something they're keeping dark. They saw him in Chilford the day he came here, or else a chap exactly like him. I heard them saying so. Now, you know he was supposed to come here from London. According to what they were saying, the man in Chilford was doing something shady—I couldn't catch what it was. Look here, you chaps; I've got an idea. We're going to find that out!"

"Find what out?" demanded Peter Todd, fixing his eyes upon Billy Bunter with an expression that would have warned the Owl of the Remove if he had noticed it. But Billy Bunter was too short-sighted to observe the expression upon Peter's face.

"The secret—whatever it is," said Bunter, his voice becoming eager. "You see, if those chaps really howled him out in something shady, and we got on to it, we should have the beast right under our thumb."

"And then?" asked Peter.

"Well, then we could make him let us off lessons, and give us extra good marks, and so on," said Bunter triumphantly. "What do you think of that? Of course, he wouldn't want to risk us giving him away. He's got a jolly good job here, and these jobs ain't easy to get. If he got the sack, it would be a jolly serious thing for him. I heard him saying to Quelch—"

"Oh, you heard him talking to Quelch, did you?" said Peter grimly.

"Yes; I happened to hear them. He was telling Quelch that his prospects hadn't been good, and how jolly glad he was to get a post here. I think it was Quelch's influence

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that got him the job. Now, if we knew what it is that Wharton knows against him, we could keep the beast in order, couldn't we?"

Peter Todd rose to his feet. Bunter had just sat down to the tea-table. Peter inserted his knuckles into the fat junior's neck, gripped his collar, and jerked him to his feet. Bunter came out of his chair with a yell, and the chair tipped over backwards, and crashed upon the floor.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "Leggo! Wharrer you doing?"

"I'm shaking you," said Peter, suiting the action to the word. "I'm shaking a silly fat, mean beast—"

"Yaroooh!"

"And I'm going to kick him out of the study—"

"Yow-ow!"

"You've been spying and listening, after all I've told you on that subject," said Peter. "Now you're suggesting spying on a man and finding out something against him, to sneak out of lessons."

Shake, shake, shake!

"Yow-ow! Stop it! Chuck it!" shrieked Bunter. "If you make my glasses fall off and get broken, you'll have to— Yow-ow-ow!"

"You're not going to spy on Lascelles, and you're not going to find out anything against him, if there's anything to be found out," said Peter grimly. "You're going to be decent—or as decent as you can be—if I have to break every bone in your fat carcase! See?"

"Yow! Help!"

"Open the door, Lonzy."

Alonzo opened the door. With a swing of his powerful arm, Peter Todd propelled the fat junior through the doorway, and bumped him down in the passage. Then he slammed the door upon him, and returned to the tea-table.

A minute later the door re-opened. Billy Bunter's fat and breathless and crimson countenance looked in.

"You rotter!" he roared. "I'm coming in!"

"You'll go out on your neck if you do!" said Peter.

"I haven't had my tea."

"You're not going to have any tea," said Peter calmly.

"That's your punishment for being a spy and a sneak."

"N-n-not going to have any tea!" spluttered Bunter furiously. "Why—why, you—you beast—you—you rotter—you—you—"

"Outside!" said Peter, raising his hand.

"I'm going to have my tea!" roared Bunter, coming into the study.

"Here it is, then!"

Peter picked up Bunter's teacup, and jerked it forward.

The tea flooded the face and chest of the Owl of the Remove, and Bunter gave a wild whoop.

"Groooh! Beast!"

"And here's your jam-tart!" said Peter, slamming it on Bunter's head. "And if you wait a moment, I'll give you your whack of the treacle."

Bunter did not wait a moment. He knew where he would get the treacle. He whipped out of the study and fled.

Peter kicked the door shut after him, and returned to his tea in a satisfied frame of mind. He felt that he was doing his best for Bunter, whether the Owl of the Remove appreciated it or not.

Billy Bunter certainly didn't appreciate it. He rolled away down the passage in an almost homicidal frame of mind. He spent about ten minutes cleaning jam off his hair and wiping tea from his face. Then he presented himself in No. 1 Study, where Harry Wharton and Nugent were having tea. Nugent picked up the loaf as Bunter's fat face looked in at the door.

"Clear!" he said tersely.

"I haven't come to tea you rotters!" growled Bunter.

"I've got a proposition to make to you chaps—a really good thing—and I'm willing to let you into it."

"You're generally willing to let anybody in," remarked Wharton. "What is it this time?"

"It's about Lascelles."

The chums of the Remove looked at him intently. They wondered whether Bunter had made any discovery. Bunter generally managed to find things out, when his curiosity was once excited. Inquisitiveness was almost a disease with Bunter.

"Well?" said Wharton abruptly. "What about Lascelles?"

Bunter cautiously closed the study door, and lowered his voice.

"You chaps know something against him," he said.

"Rats!"

"You know you do!" growled Bunter. "Well, my idea is to find out all about it, and hold it over his head, you know, and make the beast let us off mathematics, and give us extra good marks. I suppose you chaps never thought of that?"

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Wharton and Nugent exchanged a glance.

"No; we certainly never thought of that!" admitted Wharton.

"It takes a chap like me to think of things like that!" remarked Bunter, with an air of considerable satisfaction.

"Quite so," agreed Wharton. "I don't think anybody but a chap like you would have thought of such a thing as that."

"Well, I'm rather more brainy than most fellows," said Bunter modestly. "It's a jolly good idea, don't you think so? I think so myself."

"I dare say you do," said Harry, rising to his feet; "but I don't. In the first place, we don't know anything against Lascelles."

"Oh, gammon, you know!"

"In the second place, if we did, a fellow who'd use a secret like that would be a dirty, mean, blackmailing cad!" said Wharton deliberately.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"I advise you to drop the idea, Bunter."

"I'm jolly well not going to drop it!" said Bunter savagely. "I'm jolly well going to find out! I'm going—"

"Yes, you're going!" said Harry. "You're going out of this study on your neck!"

"Ow! Hands off! Oh! Yah!"

Bump!

"Going—going—gone!" grinned Nugent.

"Ow, ow! Oh!"

Wharton closed the study door. Bunter sat on the linoleum, gasping for breath, and blinking at the door, but he did not venture to open it again. Excellent as Billy Bunter's great idea was—from his own peculiar point of view—there was evidently no market for it in No. 1 Study.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Makes a Discovery!

"GREAT Scott!" Skinner of the Remove uttered that exclamation, in tones of utter astonishment. He stared blankly at the newspaper in his hand.

The newspaper was the "Chilford Times." Skinner was staring at a photograph in the paper—the photograph of a young man in boxing garb. It was a far from excellent reproduction of a snapshot, but it gave the likeness very well, and Skinner knew that face—every fellow at Greyfriars knew it.

Skinner whistled.

He was not specially interested in boxing, and it was not for the sake of the report of the Larry Lynx—Tim Tutton match that he had obtained the paper. Skinner was more directly interested in horses, and there was a racecourse near Chilford, and the racing news figured largely in the "Chilford Times." Skinner intended to have a "bit" on a certain horse in a certain race, through the medium of a certain sporting gentleman whom he knew in Courtfield, and he was looking out the latest news on the subject before he risked his half-sovereign.

It was by sheer chance, therefore, that he came upon the photograph of Larry Lynx in the Chilford paper. But that photograph struck him at once.

He scanned it with amazed eyes.

"If that isn't Lascelles' chivvy, I'll eat my giddy Sunday topper!" said Skinner. "Only Lascelles has a moustache! The chap must be his twin brother! A common boxer brother to a mathematics master from Oxford—that's jolly queer! But he must be a relation. People don't have doubles like that. Great Scott! I wonder—"

"I say, Skinner—"

"Just the chap I want to see," said Skinner, as Billy Bunter joined him under the elms in the Close.

"Good!" said Bunter. "Have you had a remittance?"

"No, I haven't," growled Skinner; "and if I had, I shouldn't want you to help me spend it."

"You had a half-quid this morning," said Bunter. "I saw you put it in your pocket."

"And it's going to stay there!" said Skinner grimly.

"Ahem! I say, Skinner, it happens that I'm expecting a postal-order for exactly ten shillings—that's what I wanted to speak to you about. I suppose it wouldn't make any difference to you, old chap, if you handed me the ten bob now, and I gave you the postal-order when it came?"

"It would make a difference of exactly ten shillings, I fancy!" grinned Skinner.

"Ahem! I'm expecting that postal-order from—from a titled relation."

"Yes; I've heard of your titled relations before, but I've never seen 'em," said Skinner. "Where do you keep 'em, Bunter?"



"Release that boy instantly!" said the Head angrily. Tim Tutton took no notice, but continued to rain blows on the unfortunate Bob Cherry. The Head raised the umbrella he carried, and brought it down with a crack on the pugilist's shoulders! (See Chapter 16.)

"Oh, really——"

"But never mind your titled relations and your post-border," said Skinner cheerfully. "I expect one's as likely to come to Greyfriars as the other! You were saying something about Lascelles the other day—hinting that you knew something about him."

"So I do!" growled Bunter. "I wish I knew a little more. I'd make him sorry he planted that extra toot on me."

"I'll bet you don't know anything at all!" said Skinner.

"I know Wharton and the rest saw him in Chilford, and spotted him in something shady, and they won't tell me anything about it," said Bunter.

"Did they, by Jove? It was Wednesday they went to Chilford, in Mauly's giddy motor," said Skinner thoughtfully. "That was the day of the match."

"What match?"

"Look at that!" said Skinner, holding up the paper.

Billy Bunter blinked at the photograph and gasped.

"Lascelles, by George, excepting for the moustache!" he said. "That must be the man they saw there. They said he was exactly the same, excepting for the moustache. So that's it—a pugilist."

"Read what it says under the photograph!" said Skinner. And Bunter read:

"The above is from a snapshot taken of Larry Lyox when leaving the dressing-room, a few minutes before his match with Tim Tutton. Larry Lyox has always had a strong objection to his photograph being taken, we understand, and it has never previously been published."

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"Like their cheek to publish it, under the cires," said Skinner. "But why does the chap object to being photographed? They generally like it. It's an advertisement. What does he want to keep his chivvy dark for?"

"Blessed if I know," said Bunter.

"He must have some reason," argued Skinner. "If he's a relation of a man in a good position, for instance, the man may make it worth his while to keep the relationship secret. And anybody might spot it if his photograph was published in the papers."

"That's so," agreed Bunter. "He must be a relation, to be so like him. Besides, Lascelles is a boxer himself."

"Is he?" said Skinner quickly.

"Yes; I've heard Coker say so. Coker's cousin knew him at Oxford, so Coker says. He was great on boxing there."

"Great on boxing, was he?" said Skinner very thoughtfully. "Perhaps it runs in the family, then. Or perhaps——"

Bunter blinked at him curiously. He could see that some idea was working in Harold Skinner's active mind.

"Perhaps what?" he asked.

"I wonder!" said Skinner meditatively. "Larry Lyox must make a good bit out of his boxing. And Lascelles's Christian name is Lawrence, isn't it? Larry is short for Lawrence."

"Yes, his name's Lawrence Lascelles right enough," said Bunter. "I've seen it written in one of his books."

"Two relations—brothers, perhaps—with the same front name," said Skinner. "I wonder—I wonder—was Lascelles

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hard up before he came here, I wonder? I know it's some time since he left Oxford."

"His people ain't well off," said Bunter, "and he was a long time getting a post in a school. I heard him saying that to Quelch."

"Quite by chance, of course?" said Skinner sarcastically.

"Certainly! I happened to hear—"

"Jolly lucky you happen to hear things sometimes," said Skinner. "My only summer hat! If it should be the same chap!"

"The same chap!" repeated Bunter.

"Yes; it's possible."

"But that boxer chap's clean-shaven, and Lascelles has a moustache," said Bunter. "He couldn't grow it in one afternoon, could he?"

"He couldn't grow it, certainly," agreed Skinner. "But all the moustaches that are worn don't grow on the faces they ornament, my innocent Bunter. There are such things as false moustaches."

"Oh, crumbs!" said Bunter. "I didn't think of that. I—I mean, now I come to think of it, I had that very idea in my mind all along."

"You hadn't," said Skinner. "But it's likely enough. After all, it's rather queer for Lascelles to have a moustache. Nobody wears a moustache now. But if he wanted to make a distinction between himself and Larry Lynx, that's what he would do. Larry Lynx couldn't wear a false moustache; it might get knocked off in the ring. But Lascelles could do it easily enough."

"But—but they can't be the same chap!" said Bunter. "Still, I believe Wharton thinks so. In fact, I'm sure he does."

Skinner tore the photograph from the paper and placed it carefully in an inside pocket.

"It looks to me as if we've got on to something, Bunter," he said genially. "If there turns out to be anything in it, we'll soon put a stop to Lascelles being down on us, my pippin. He reported me to Quelch yesterday, and I was licked."

"He makes me come into his study for extra toot," growled Bunter.

"If there should be anything in this, we've got him," said Skinner, with glistening eyes. "We'll make him let us off work and give us favourable reports. What?"

"I suggested that to Toddy, if we could find out about him—"

"And what did Toddy say?"

"Ahem! Never mind that," said Bunter hastily. "He was a rude beast, as usual. Look here, Skinner, I'm in this with you! If we can spot him, we'll have the beast right under our thumb. No good sharing it with other fellows. It will be a good thing for us. But how are we going to prove it?"

"If it's true, he'd get the sack if the Head knew," said Skinner musingly. "I can just imagine Dr. Locke's face if he found out that a master at Greyfriars gave boxing shows in music-halls and places. I think he'd have a fit."

"And Lascelles would get the boot," said Bunter viciously, "and serve him jolly well right! I'd like to see him sacked."

"We don't want him sacked," said Skinner. "There would be another beast just as bad in his place, wouldn't there? We want to keep him under our thumb and make him let us down easy. I'll mathematics him, if I'm once certain of this. All we've got to do is to make certain."

"But how?"

"That's what we've got to find out," said Skinner, rising. "Keep it dark. If the other fellows knew, especially Wharton and Toddy, they'd be down on us. Not a syllable, mind! Mum's the word!"

And Bunter agreed that mum should be the word. There seemed at last a good chance of his great idea being carried out, owing to Skinner's accidental discovery, and Billy Bunter felt very satisfied with the prospect.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER. With the Gloves On!

BUNT! Loder of the Sixth sat down on the floor of the gym, and grunted.

There was a buzz from the crowd of fellows standing round. Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, was "having the gloves on" with Loder. It was merely a friendly spar on Wingate's part, but Loder's expression showed that he did not look upon it as wholly friendly. The bully of the Sixth would have been very glad to knock out the captain of Greyfriars, if he could. He had pressed Wingate so hard that the Greyfriars captain had had to hit out hard, too, in defence, and the result was that Loder was

sitting on the floor of the gym, looking dazed and angry. And most of the fellows present were glad to see him sitting there.

"Well hit!" murmured Bob Cherry, who was there with a group of Remove juniors. "Right on the wicket!"

"How's that, umpire?" inquired Johnny Bull.

And there was a laugh.

"Hope I didn't hit too hard, Loder," said the good-natured Wingate, helping his opponent to rise. "You were coming for me like a giddy whirlwind, you know."

"It's all right," grunted Loder sulkily. "My foot slipped."

"Shall we go on?" asked Wingate.

"Yes, if you like."

"Right-ho, then!"

Mr. Lascelles strolled into the gymnasium, and he paused among the crowd of fellows, senior and junior, and stood looking on.

Skinner of the Remove nudged Billy Bunter, "Looks as if he's interested—what?" he murmured.

Bunter nodded. Mr. Lascelles undoubtedly was interested in the boxing. He watched Wingate and Loder keenly as they began to spar again.

And the two young rascals of the Remove watched him. His evident keenness for boxing was a fresh point in favour of their theory.

Loder attacked Wingate hotly, and the spectators might easily have thought from his manner that it was a fight and not a friendly round or two with the gloves. Wingate did not think about it; he was too good-natured to suspect Loder of wanting to hurt him under cover of a friendly bout. But Loder had no chance with the stalwart captain of Greyfriars. He rushed in, hitting out, and rushed upon Wingate's right, and sat down with a bump again.

"Begad! Bet you he don't come up again!" said Lord Mauleverer.

His lordship was right. When Gerald Loder rose to his feet, he peeled off the gloves sullenly.

"You're too good for me," he growled. "That's enough!" And he walked away.

"Anybody like a turn?" asked Wingate, glancing over the Sixth-Formers who were looking on at the boxing. Wingate was a great boxer, but he could find few fellows to stand up to him at Greyfriars.

"I'll take you on if you like, Wingate, old man," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. And there was a chuckle. Bob's remark was not meant seriously.

Wingate laughed.

"None of your cheek!" he said.

"Perhaps Mr. Lascelles would try you, Wingate?" suggested Skinner. "Mr. Lascelles is fond of boxing. He's a great boxer, you know."

Mr. Lascelles started a little, and looked sharply at Skinner.

"Indeed! How do you know that, Skinner?" he inquired.

"I've heard Coker say so, sir," said Skinner blandly.

"Coker's cousin knew you at Oxford, sir, so we know you box."

"By Jove, sir, if you'd care to try a round or two—" said Wingate.

The temptation was too strong to be resisted. Mr. Lascelles came forward and took off his coat.

"I should be glad to," he said. "I did a good deal of boxing up there, and I've done some since. I miss it here."

"Good! Here are the mittens."

Mr. Lascelles put on the gloves, and the crowd gathered more thickly round to watch the contest. Mr. Lascelles was not very much bigger than Wingate, who was a burly and powerful fellow. The skill and strength of the Greyfriars captain were well known, and most of the fellows expected that Lawrence Lascelles would have all his work cut out to hold his own.

"Begad, he knows the ropes!" Lord Mauleverer murmured as Mr. Lascelles stood up to Wingate.

His easy, alert attitude reminded the Famous Five irresistibly of Larry Lynx, the boxer they had seen standing up to Tim Tutton in Chiford Ring. His manner and look recalled the young boxer at once.

What followed was a surprise to the Greyfriars fellows.

Wingate had polished off Loder without much difficulty, though Loder was a good boxer; but he found that he could not touch Mr. Lascelles.

The mathematics master evidently knew as much about the noble art of self-defence as he did about mathematics.

He hardly seemed to make an effort; but his defence was impenetrable, his side-stepping quick as lightning, his counters even quicker.

Wingate began to get a little excited, and he put all his "beef" into the effort to break into the magic circle that seemed to surround the mathematics master.

But it was in vain.

Mr. Lascelles' gloves tapped him lightly here and there—

on the nose, the chin, the chest—but never a drive in return reached him.

The Greyfriars fellows cheered involuntarily as they watched that splendid exhibition. Wingate, the champion boxer of Greyfriars, was as helpless as an infant before the mathematics master.

Skinner and Bunter exchanged glances of eager satisfaction.

"Only a blessed professional could box like that!" Skinner murmured in Bunter's ear. "He's giving himself away, if he only knew!"

"But the giddy moustache—" murmured Bunter.

"He's taking jolly good care that it doesn't get a knock, anyway."

"By George, so he is!"

"I tell you he's the same chap, and that moustache is a spoof one," Skinner whispered. "And I'm going to prove it to-night. Mum's the word."

Wingate dropped his hands at last, in sheer despair.

"I give you best, sir!" he exclaimed. "Why, I can't get near you! You'd make a fortune in the ring, sir!"

Mr. Lascelles laughed.

"Thank you very much for ten very pleasant minutes!" he said, and he peeled off the gloves and strolled away, with a nod to Wingate.

Wingate looked after him with great admiration.

"A splendid chap!" he said. "He's wasted on maths! Blessed if I could touch him—and I'm not a fool with the gloves, either!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were looking very thoughtful as they strolled out of the gym a little later.

The skill Mr. Lascelles had shown in those rounds with Wingate was amazing, unless he had followed boxing with great assiduity and with plenty of practice. And his manner, his style, everything about him, reminded them of the young pugilist who had knocked out Tim Tutton in ten rounds at the Chilford Ring.

"Must be a relation of that giddy kipper!" Bob Cherry averred, as they walked back to the School House. "Might be himself, if it wasn't impossible. It's mighty curious."

"Jolly queer!" said Harry Wharton. "But the less said about it the better outside ourselves. And—and I begin to think that we'd better not go to Chilford the next time Larry Lynx appears there."

"Begad! Why not?" Lord Mauleverer asked.

"Well, I fancy we know too much already, and we don't want to know any more," said Harry quietly. "What we've just seen makes me think—a heap. I suppose that moustache is a real one—"

"Great Scott!"

"But one never knows," added Wharton. "If Lascelles has got any secrets, we don't want to find them out. He seems a decent sort, but if the Head knew a thing like that about him he couldn't keep his position here, of course. It's no business of ours what he does, or what he's done, and the less we know about it the better. He might see us at Chilford, too, and think we were spying."

Lord Mauleverer nodded.

"We'll chuck up the idea if you like," he said. "Anyway, Lascelles is a decent man, whether he's a boxer or not. If the other man's his relation—that's most likely—I don't see that he need be ashamed of it."

"It wouldn't do him any good here to have it known."

"I suppose not," admitted his lordship.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What are you rotters muttering about?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as he nearly ran into Skinner and Bunter in the dusk.

The two juniors were muttering with their heads close together. They started in a guilty manner as Bob spoke.

"Ahem! Nothing!" stammered Bunter. "Only Lascelles—I mean, we weren't speaking about Lascelles, of course, were we, Skinner?"

Skinner gave him a savage look. Bunter's way of keeping a secret was not the best that could possibly have been devised.

"Yes, we were," said Skinner. "I was saying what a jolly good boxer he was. That's all. No harm in that, I suppose, Bob Cherry?"

"Don't see why you should whisper it if that's all you were saying," grunted Bob. "More likely you were plotting something up against somebody, you pair of spoofers. Rats!"

The chums of the Remove walked on, leaving the two young rascals alone. Billy Bunter blinked reprovingly at Skinner.

"What did you give it away for?" he asked. "No need to let them know we were talking about Lascelles at all, that I can see."

Skinner snorted.

"Silly ass! You gave that away!"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Shut up! Look here, we're going to try the game on to-night," said Skinner. "We're going to know whether that moustache is real or not."

"But how?"

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FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"COKER'S PLOT!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"If it's false he won't wear it in bed, I suppose?"

"Well, I suppose not," said Bunter.

"Then all we've got to do is to see him after he's gone to bed."

"But we can't! We go to bed at half-past nine, and he never goes till half-past ten," said Bunter. "How can we see him?"

"By going to his room, fathead!"

Bunter blinked at his companion in astonishment.

"Going to his room? Are you dotty? For one thing, it will be dark there—"

"It won't be dark if we turn on the electric light, idiot!"

"You ass!" gasped Bunter. "Then he will see us, and recognise us, and we shall get the licking of our lives!"

"He will see us, but he won't recognise us," said Skinner coolly.

"Why won't he?" demanded Bunter.

"Because we're going to borrow those Guy Fawkes masks that Bob Cherry keeps in his box. He's used them to play larks with, and now we're going to. All Lascelles will see will be two kids with Guy Fawkes masks on. And if there's any inquiry afterwards, it will come out that they belong to Bob Cherry, so we shall be all right."

"My hat! You are jolly deep, Skinny!" said Bunter admiringly. "If anybody gets a licking, it will be Bob Cherry—and serve the beast right!"

"I'll wake you at eleven," said Skinner. "We'll go together."

"Right-ho!"

"Not another word about it, in case somebody hears," added Skinner cautiously. "You can't be too careful."

And the juniors returned to the School House, both of them looking forward to the adventure of the night—Skinner with keenness, and Bunter with some inward uneasiness, but both determined. That night would prove whether their suspicions were well-founded or not; and if they were well-founded, they felt that they would hold Mr. Lascelles in the hollow of their hands, which, from their point of view, was a consummation devoutly to be wished.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Keeps the Secret!

BILLY BUNTER prided himself upon his ability to keep a secret. He was especially fond of secrets, and he liked to be very mysterious. As a matter of fact, he never had a secret for an hour without at least half a dozen fellows guessing that he was hiding something. There is an Eastern proverb which says that he who has a secret should not only hide it, but should hide that he has it. William George Bunter would have done well to realise that. But the desire to talk, to hint at things he knew were not known to everybody, was too strong for Bunter.

Skinner was in his study, with several problems to work out, owing to his slackness at lessons, which did not increase his love for the mathematics master. Billy Bunter came away from Mr. Lascelles' study after his "extra toot" in a savage temper. He did not want to understand things, and he hated extremely the mental effort required to understand things, and he disliked Mr. Lascelles with a deadly dislike for taking unusual trouble with him. When he came into the Common-room his scowling brow drew grins and chuckles from several of the juniors there.

"Hallo, Bunt!" remarked Temple of the Fourth. "Can you tell me whether two isosceles triangles extended to infinity will ever meet?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter wiped his perspiring brow.

"I hate that beast!" he remarked.

"What beast?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"The Lascelles beast!" growled Bunter. "I'd jolly well pay him out for all this—you see if I don't!"

"Has he been making you work again?" asked Peter Todd sympathetically. "Poor old Bunter! Your brain isn't used to it."

"You'll get used to it in time," said Tom Brown comfortably. "They say that even monkeys can be taught to think, if one is patient enough. If monkeys, why not donkeys?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm jolly well not going to do any more, anyway," snarled Bunter. "You fellows will be pretty envious when you see me cutting maths."

"I dare say we should!" remarked Bolsover major, who was not keen on mathematics himself. "But how are you going to cut them, fathead? It seems to me that you're getting more than we get at present."

"You'll see what you'll see," said Bunter oracularly.

"Well, I daresay that's quite correct," admitted Bob Cherry. "But what are we going to see?"
 "Just you wait a bit, that's all, and you'll see what you'll see."

"Shows what mathematics will do for a chap!" grinned Bolsover major. "That is as safe as any proposition in Euclid. Bunter's coming on."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gassing, as usual!" growled Bob Cherry, eyeing the Owl of the Remove rather uneasily. He wondered whether Bunter had learned anything about Mr. Lascelles by his Peeping Tom methods. He remembered the excellent idea Bunter had propounded in No. 1 Study.

"You'll see whether I'm gassing!" snorted Bunter. "I'll jolly well make that mathematical beast dance to my tune soon."

"Rats!"

"Silly ass!"

"Cherise it!"

"Well, I know what I know," said Bunter.

"And what do you know?" snorted Bob.

"Never mind that. I know what I know, that's all. Perhaps you'll believe me to-morrow!" said Bunter, with a sneer

on his fat face. "Perhaps some chaps wear false moustaches, and perhaps they don't. I'm not saying anything."

The chums of the Remove exchanged a quick glance. It was easy now to see what groove Bunter's suspicions were running in. Peter Todd frowned darkly. But to the rest of the juniors who were listening to Bunter's remarks they sounded utterly cryptic.

"What on earth is the fat ass talking about? Anybody know?" asked Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior.

"Talking out of the back of his neck!" yawned Bolsover major. "Shut up, Bunter, if you can't talk sense! Blessed if it isn't time somebody wrote to your people to suggest sending you to Colney Hatch."

"Well, somebody's going to find out something to-night," said Bunter. "I'm not telling you fellows anything. I agreed with Skinner not to say a word, and I'm jolly well not going to—so there!"

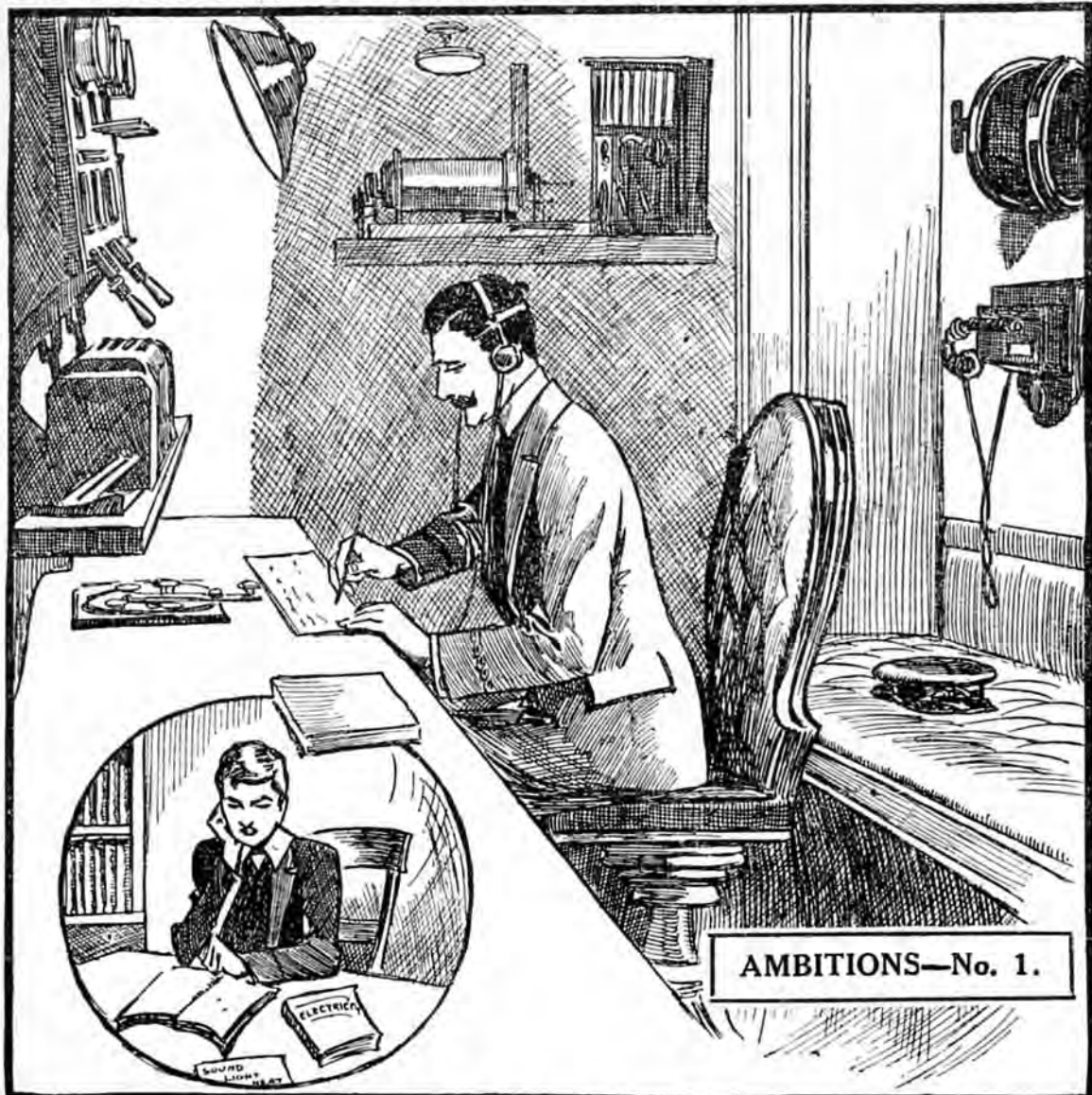
"So Skinner's in this, is he?" said Bob Cherry.

"Find out!" said Bunter.

"And you're going to find out something to-night—eh?"

"That's my business!" said Bunter loftily.

And he rolled out of the common-room. It dawned even upon his slow and obtuse mind that he had been talking



AMBITIONS—No. 1.

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"I'm going to have my tea!" roared Bunter indignantly. "Here it is, then!" said Peter Todd, and he picked up Bunter's cup, and jerked it forward. The tea flooded the chest and face of the Owl of the Remove, and he gave a wild whoop. "Ow! You rotter!" (See Chapter 6.)

somewhat incautiously. The Famous Five drew apart from the rest of the fellows. Bunter's words had given them food for thought.

"They're going to spy on Lascelle-Skinner and that fat rotter, I mean," Bob Cherry said, in a low voice—"and to-night!"

"I wonder what the little game is?" said Nugent.

Wharton frowned.

"Plain enough," he said. "They suspect him of being Larry Lynx, the boxer—and if he is, his moustache is false, of course. They want to spot him in his room, and see whether he has his moustache on in bed. That can be the only meaning of Bunter's gas."

"The rotters!" said Johnny Ball contemptuously. "Why can't they mind their own beastly business? Look here, we're going to stop them! We're not going to allow rotten spying to go on."

"Just what I was thinking," said Bob Cherry. "Whatever the rotters are going to do, they'll try after lights out. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 324.

of course. You chaps can leave it to me. I'll stay awake to-night and see what the game is. I'll call you chaps if I want you—though I daresay you'll wake up if I begin to handle them. If they try to get to Lascelle's room, I'll jolly well drop on them like a hundred of bricks. Lascelle is a decent chap, whether he's got a secret or not, and he's not going to be watched and spied on."

"Hear, hear!" said the Co. heartily.

Billy Bunter was looking extremely knowing when the Remove went up to bed that evening. Skinner gave him several warning looks; to which Bunter replied with elaborate winks, as much as to say that he could be trusted. The winks were visible to everybody in the dormitory, as well as Skinner; and the most casual observer could not have failed to see that there was something "on."

Wingate came in to see lights out, and the juniors turned in. But there were several Removites who made it a point to remain awake that night. One was Skinner—Billy Bunter falling asleep as soon as his fat face touched the pillow.

Another was Bob Cherry, and a third was Peter Todd. Peter had resolved to keep his eye on Bunter, and if he made any attempt at spying, to make an example of him. Peter had declared his intention of making Bunter a worthy and creditable member of No. 7 Study in the course of time. And he intended to spare no pains—especially pains for Bunter.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Mistake in the Dark!

BOB CHERRY had meant well when he declared that he would remain awake and keep an eye on the intended spies. He had taken on the task quite cheerfully—not being sleepy at the time. In the common-room it had seemed quite easy to remain awake until midnight; but when he was in bed, surrounded by the deep breathing of sleeping juniors, Bob found it far from easy. He found himself nodding off many times, and it was only by heroic efforts that he was able to keep awake. Before eleven o'clock tolled out from the clock tower, Bob was mentally anathematizing Bunter and Skinner and all inquisitive persons. He was greatly inclined to throw up the whole matter, and go to sleep. But he resisted that impulse manfully.

Half-past eleven sounded, and all Greyfriars was sleeping and silent. Then Bob heard the sound of someone getting out of bed.

He pulled himself together, and clenched his fists under the bedclothes. He intended to console himself for his late painful efforts by bestowing some extra hard punches on the spies when he came to deal with them.

"Bunter!"

It was Skinner's whispering voice, as he shook the fat junior by the shoulder.

Bunter woke, and yawned, and yawned again.

"Groo! Groo-hoo! Lemme alone! Grooh!"

"It's time, you ass!"

"I—I say, Skinner, old fellow, I don't think we'll go after all!" murmured Bunter. "I—I think, perhaps, we shall think out a better plan to-morrow, you know—"

"Get up!"

"And very likely Bob Cherry has locked his box, and we sha'n't be able to get the Guy Fawkes masks—"

"I've got them already."

"Oh, have you?" murmured Bob Cherry, sotto voce. "So that's the little game, is it? What the dooce are they going to do with Guy Fawkes masks?"

"Ahem!" murmured Bunter. "Now I think of it, Skinner, there's no need for two of us to go, you know."

"Get up, you fat rotter."

"You can do it all by yourself, and tell me about it when you come back—or rather, tell me about it in the morning; said Bunter. "Better tell me in the morning, and then you won't have to wake me up again. Goo-night!"

And Bunter settled his head on the pillow again.

"I give you two seconds," said Skinner, "then I'm going to empty the water-jug over you!"

"Oh, I say—all right—I'll get out—I was only j-j-joking—"

Bunter was out of bed in a twinkling. The prospect of a jug of cold water being emptied over him was worse than getting up.

"Get into your things, quick!" said Skinner. "Only your bags and jacket, that's enough; it's not cold!"

"I say, Skinner—"

"Shut up, and come on!" said Skinner. "Don't jaw, or you'll wake up some of the fellows. Put this mask on your silly chivvy."

There was silence in the dormitory; it did not seem as if any of the fellows were awake. The darkness was intense, and Skinner and Bunter had to grope their way towards the door.

Meanwhile, Bob Cherry had stepped lightly out of bed, and crept to the door. He understood quite enough of the scheme now; and he intended to stop the two spies at the door, before they could leave the dormitory. Bob was quite a match singly for Skinner and Bunter, and he had no doubt about his ability to handle them. They wouldn't get out of the Remove dormitory that night.

Bob had made no sound in reaching the door, and the two young rascals were not alarmed. And in the dark they could not see him.

And neither they, nor Bob, could see another junior who had turned out of bed, and who had also been extremely silent and cautious. That other was Peter Todd. Peter did not know in the least that Bob Cherry was up; and his plan was exactly the same as Bob's—to stand guard over the door, and there stop the two young rascals as they attempted to get out. Peter Todd chuckled softly as he anticipated the surprise of Skinner and Bunter when they ran into his arms.

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Peter Todd groped his way to the door, his hands outstretched before him to feel the way in the dark.

His outstretched right hand came in contact with a nose, and there was a muffled exclamation. The nose was Bob Cherry's.

Bob made a jump forward.

His grasp closed upon Peter Todd, and Todd was borne to the floor with a bump, with Bob sprawling over him.

"Got you, Skinner!" chuckled Bob.

"Groogh!"

There was a startled exclamation from the real Skinner as he heard the bump on the floor. But Bob's voice warned him of what was happening, and of the mistake that had been made. He gripped Bunter by the arm.

"Quiet!" he muttered. "Some of them are up. Bob Cherry's collared somebody for me. Not a sound. Sneak past them."

Bunter grinned in the darkness.

It was easy enough to avoid the two struggling juniors. Bob and Peter Todd were rolling over on the floor in frantic combat.

Skinner and Bunter stole round them, and reached the door. Skinner opened it softly, and they crept into the passage, and the door was silently closed behind them.

"Now come on!" muttered Skinner. "They'll be after us soon. No time to waste."

"I—I say—" muttered Bunter, hesitating.

"Cheese it, and come on!"

"Yes, but—but they—"

"Shut up!" growled Skinner. And he grasped Bunter's arm and dragged him away quickly down the passage.

Meanwhile, Bob Cherry and Peter Todd were struggling on the floor of the dormitory. Bob was certain that he had got hold of Skinner, and he held fast to him. His arm was round Todd's neck, and Todd could only gasp and splutter. The noise of the struggle awoke a good many of the Removites. Harry Wharton sat up in bed, staring round him in the darkness.

"Hullo! What's the row?" he exclaimed.

Bob panted.

"I've caught them!"

"Caught whom?"

"Skinner. Bunter's up, too. Get a light!"

"Groogh—hooh!" came in muffled tones from Peter Todd.

"I—you— Groogh!"

"You can goog-gooh as much as you like!" chuckled Bob.

"But I've got you!"

Wharton jumped out of bed and struck a match.

"I've got him!" grinned Bob. "He's putting up a fight. Blessed if I knew Skinner was such a giddy athlete! But I've got him!"

"You ass!" exclaimed Wharton, staring at them. "You've not got Skinner!"

"What?"

Bob looked at his prisoner in the flickering light of the match. It certainly was not Harold Skinner.

"Todd!" he ejaculated, in amazement.

"Groogh!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bob, jumping up. "Why didn't you tell me you were Todd?"

Peter sat up, gasping.

"You thumping idiot! Did you give me a chance?" he gasped. "How was I to tell you, with your silly arm round my beastly neck? Groogh!"

"Well, you chump—"

"Well, you lunatic—"

"They're gone!" said Harry Wharton, looking round. Frank Nugent had lighted a candle. "Bunter and Skinner are gone!"

"They've given us the slip while that idiot was garotting me!" panted Peter Todd. "You thumping ass! I've a good mind to wipe up the floor with you!"

"What did you get up for at all, you duffer?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"I got up to catch those rotters!"

"So did I. And you—"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"And you caught one another," he said. "And those two cads got away while you were playing the giddy ox. They've gone to Lascelles' room by this time."

"After them, then!"

Wharton tore open the door, and three or four juniors ran out into the passage in their pyjamas. They ran down the passage and down the first flight of stairs, to reach the door of the mathematics-master's room.

There was a sound of a muttering, angry voice ahead of them in the darkness. The two spies were there, at the door. Skinner was speaking.

"It's locked! The beast locks his door of a night! It won't open!"

"That looks as if he's afraid of being spotted, anyway," said Bunter.

"Hang him!" said Skinner savagely. "All this for nothing!"

"Here they are!" muttered Bob Cherry.

A voice was heard from within the mathematics-master's room. Evidently the twisting at the door-handle had awakened Mr. Lascelles.

"Who is there? What is the matter?"

"He's awake!" muttered Skinner.

"Well, when he opens the door we shall see."

"As! He'll stick on the moustache before he opens the door!"

"Better clear!" muttered Bunter nervously.

"We'll help you clear!" said Bob Cherry, arriving on the spot, and groping in the direction of the voices. "Kim on!"

His grasp closed on Skinner's neck, and Skinner was rushed away along the passage. Wharton grasped Bunter at the same moment, and whirled him away. The two spies were rushed back to the Remove dormitory at a speed that made their heads swim.

A few moments after the juniors were gone Mr. Lascelles' door opened. The mathematics master turned on the light, and looked out into the passage. It was deserted, and there was no sound to be heard.

"That is very strange," muttered Mr. Lascelles, looking very puzzled indeed. "I am certain that I heard my door tried on the outside. Is it possible that there are burglars in the house? I thought I heard voices, too."

And it was some time before Mr. Lascelles returned to his bed. He had to satisfy himself that there were no burglars in the house. Fortunately, he did not think of looking in the Remove dormitory.

In that dormitory two juniors had been soundly "welcomed" with pillows, and they crawled back into bed, feeling that life was not worth living. Harry Wharton & Co. returned to bed, too, satisfied that Bunter and Skinner would not resume their valuable investigations for that night, at least—and they were right! Bunter and Skinner were feeling too used-up to think of anything of the kind. And, for the present, at least, Mr. Lascelles' secret, if he had one, was safe.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Cash Needed!

"ANYBODY seen Lascelles?"

Skinner asked that question on Wednesday afternoon in the following week.

Since the "pillowing" in the Remove dormitory, on the night of the attempt to surprise Mr. Lascelles' secret, Skinner and Bunter had, like the celebrated Brer Fox, laid low.

Harry Wharton & Co. had warned them, in the plainest of English, that what they had had was a mere joke to what they would get if they persisted in spying on the mathematics-master; and the two young rascals had apparently given up the idea.

Their suspicions and their scheme had become known to many of the Remove fellows, and their suspicions met with laughter and their scheme with contempt.

The idea of identifying the mathematics master with a professional pugilist seemed absurd to the juniors, and the scheme of putting the secret, if it existed, to personal profit was regarded with unmixed scorn.

But there were a few fellows who agreed with Skinner that, if secret there was, it would be a good thing to discover it and use it—Snoop, and Stett, and Bolsover major quite agreeing with Harold Skinner on that point—but refusing to believe in his theory at all.

Skinner was more determined than ever to prove that he was right; his malice was fully excited now, and he was more obstinate than ever.

And on Wednesday afternoon he might have been heard—and as a matter of fact was heard—inquiring for Mr. Lascelles up and down Greyfriars.

"He's gone out," Bob Cherry told him. "What on earth do you want him for?"

"Got an impot to show him," explained Skinner. "Sure he's gone out?"

"Well, I believe so."

"Begad, I saw him go out!" said Lord Mauleverer, when Skinner inquired of him. "He went down towards Courtfield."

Coker of the Fifth had just come in on his bike, from the direction of Courtfield, and Skinner addressed his inquiries to the great Coker. Had he seen Lascelles?

"Yes," said Coker. "He passed me on the road. He's gone to Courtfield."

"Thanks!" said Skinner, and he joined Bunter in the tuck-shop.

"Any news?" asked Bunter, blinking inquiringly at Harold Skinner's excited face.

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EVERY MONDAY, **The "Magnet"** LIBRARY. ONE PENNY.

Skinner nodded and grinned.

"Yes, rather! Lascelles has gone to Courtfield."

"Well?" said Bunter, not much interested.

"Well?" repeated Skinner. "I've got a time-table here. There's a train leaves Courtfield for Chilford just after Lascelles will get there. And this afternoon Larry Lynx appears again at the Chilford Ring."

Billy Bunter's little round eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. He understood now.

"Then he's gone to Chilford?"

"Of course he has!" said Skinner.

"That settles it."

"Settles it all—except proving it," said Skinner. "That's what we want—proof. He's meeting the Limehouse Chicken at Chilford Ring this afternoon, in ten rounds, according to the paper—Larry Lynx is, I mean. He beat Tim Tutton last week there. Now, my idea is to see him at Chilford. If we actually see him in the boxing-ring we shall be able to identify him—what?"

"I should think so," agreed Bunter.

"And I've got a dodge, too," went on Skinner gleefully. "After the match, we'll wait about outside the house till he comes out, and then we'll speak to him."

"Speak to him!" repeated Bunter.

"Yes—speak to him as Mr. Lascelles. He'll be taken by surprise, of course, and he'll give himself away at once—what?"

Bunter rubbed his fat hands.

"Sure to," he agreed. "That's a nobby idea. In fact, it's just what I was thinking of myself. I was just going to suggest—"

"Oh, cheese it! Have you got the money for the tickets to Chilford? There's a train we can catch in half an hour—that will be in good time. The tickets are three shillings each—return."

Bunter coughed.

"Ahem! As it's your idea, Skinner, you ought to stand the fares. I put it to you, now—don't you think so?"

"No, I don't," said Skinner tartly; "and I've only got a bob, anyway. How much have you got?"

"I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"How much have you got?" roared Skinner, exasperated. He did not want to hear about an expected postal-order just then.

"Only a penny in cash," confessed Bunter; "and—and that's a French one."

"Poof!" sniffed Skinner. "We shall have to borrow it, then. The trouble is, we can't tell anybody we want to go to Chilford. Wharton and the rest would guess what we wanted to go for, and they'd be down on us. They'd be quite capable of stopping us, the beasts, if they knew we were going. How can we raise the tin?"

Bunter shook his head desolately. He had already tried to raise tin that afternoon; not for railway fares, but to expend in jam-tarts at the tuckshop. And he had drawn the Remove blank. Money was tight—very tight, so far as lending it to Bunter was concerned.

"We've got to get some somewhere," growled Skinner angrily. "We can't have a ripping scheme spoiled by want of a few bob at the critical moment. That would be simply sickening. Look here, we've got to borrow it somehow."

"I'm on!" said Bunter. "Only tell me a chap, and I'll borrow it off him soon enough, if he'll lend it to me. I told that beast Cherry I was expecting a postal-order, and he only cackled."

"There's Mauly," said Skinner reflectively. "He's got lots of tin. And there's Inky; he's always rolling in money."

"I've tried Inky already—"

"Well, you try Mauly, and I'll try Inky," said Skinner.

"There's no time to lose. Buzz off and see Mauly; I expect he's slacking in his study."

"Good!" said Bunter.

And he rolled away in search of the schoolboy earl; and Skinner walked down to the cricket-field, where Inky—otherwise, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur—had gone down with the rest of the Co. for cricket practice.

Inky was watching Wharton and Bob Cherry at the wickets, when Skinner tapped him gently on the arm. Hurree Singh turned a dusky and benevolent smile upon the end of the Remove.

"What is the esteemed wantfulness of the honourable and disgusting Skinner?" he inquired politely.

"Can you lend me six bob, Inky?"

"Certainly, my worthy Skinner!"

"Oh, good! Hand it over, then!" said Skinner, much relieved.

The nabob shook his head calmly.

"I have only remarkably observed that I can, but not that I will, my esteemed Skinner," he replied.

"Look here, Inky, I want six bob very urgently, and I'll

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let you have it back on Saturday. It's for something very particular."

"Is the esteemed Skinner thinking of making a journey?" asked Hurree Singh, and the spy of the Remove realised that his intention was guessed.

"I—I could do with three bob!" muttered Skinner.

"And then travel to Chilford upon your esteemed longsome?" purred the nabob. "My dear and ludicrous Skinner, I decline to refuse."

"Look here, you black beast—"

A dusky finger and thumb closed upon Skinner's somewhat prominent nose, contracting like a vice, and Skinner gave a howl of anguish.

"Gerroogh! Leggo!"

"The esteemed Skinner must apologise for characterising a Nabob of Bhanipur as a black'ful beast," purred the nabob gently.

"Ow! Ow! Groo! I—I apologise!" gurgled Skinner. "Ow! Leggo!"

The dusky fingers relaxed, and Skinner caressed his nose tenderly. He bestowed a furious glare upon Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and strode away. Inky smiled gently, and resumed watching the cricket.

Skinner sought out more promising lenders; but he had no luck. Nobody in the Remove seemed to have money to lend that afternoon. In a savage state of temper, Skinner returned to the tuckshop, to see how Bunter had fared.

He found Bunter perched upon a stool at the counter, with a plate of tarts before him, which he was travelling through at a great rate. Skinner stared at him in surprise and rage.

"So you've got some tin after all?" he exclaimed.

Billy Bunter blinked round at him nervously.

"Ahem! I—I— Lord Mauleverer lent me six bob," he replied.

"Where is it?"

"Ahem! I—I— On second thoughts, Skinny, I thought it would be—ahem!—rather mean to go after Lascelles and spy on him; so as I was hungry, I—"

Skinner emitted a roar of rage, and rushed upon the fat junior. He dragged Bunter backwards off the stool, and the Owl of the Remove came down on the floor with a sounding bump and a loud yell.

"How much have you got left?" roared Skinner.

"Yow-ow! Nothing! The last bob went for those tarts!" howled Bunter. "Grooh! Lemme alone, you beast! Ow!"

Skinner stared at him, speechless with rage, for a moment. Then he seized the plate of tarts, and jammed it down over the face of the sprawling junior. Bunter gave a muffled howl as the tarts squashed on his fat features, and Skinner strode from the tuckshop in a towering rage.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Last Resource!

SKINNER drove his hands deep into his trousers-pockets, and knitted his brows, as he strode away from the tuckshop. He was in a state of intense exasperation. His scheme for unmasking, as he called it, the mathematics-master, was knocked on the head, for the lack of the few shillings necessary for his fare to Chilford.

Never had a schemer with a first-class scheme been so annoyed. The impediment was so slight—and yet it was insuperable.

Skinner was not overburdened with cash at any time, as his "pater" believed in small allowances for schoolboys—a point upon which Harold disagreed with him entirely—but as no argument was allowed upon the subject, his disagreement did not make any difference.

Skinner's available funds now amounted to one shilling, which was required to pay for his admission to the Chilford Ring—if he got there. Skinner was feeling quite desperate. Nobody seemed to have any money to lend—to Skinner, at all events.

Harry Wharton and his friends suspected his little game, and were not likely to help him carry it out. As he left the tuckshop, however, he spotted Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, in the Close, and bore down upon him.

Fish had the reputation of being remarkably careful with his money, and certainly Skinner would not have attempted to borrow of him excepting as a last resource. But it was neck or nothing now; and he approached the Yankee junior with his most agreeable smile.

"You're interested in boxing, Fishy?" he remarked, in the most friendly way. "I've heard you tell the chaps how you box, I think."

Fisher T. Fish nodded.

"I guess so," he said. "You should have seen me box, over there; we know something about boxing, in the Western States. Yes, sir, I guess we can lay over anything you can put up on this side of the duck-pond—just a few!"

"I'm sure you can," agreed Skinner amicably. "It's THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 324.

occurred to me that you might like to come over to Chilford and see the boxing-match there."

"Out of bounds, I guess."

"Oh, that's all right—nobody'll know. Wharton and his crowd went over last Wednesday, and there was nothing said. We've got time to catch the train at Courtfield."

"I guess I'll come, then," said Fish. "I've offered to show those galoots how we play cricket, but they ain't taking any. I guess I'll wedge in, if you like."

"The return fare's three bob each," hinted Skinner.

"Good! I'll do as much for you another time," said Fish. "Very decent of you to stand treat in this way."

Skinner coughed.

"Ahem! The fact is, I'm out of tin," he confessed.

"Then I guess it's off. The railways don't take passengers for nothing, I suppose?"

"I was thinking that you might lend me the tin, till next week," said Skinner.

"Were you really?" said Fish. "Then I guess your thinker wants oiling, or something. I'm not lending my dollars till next week. But I'll tell you what I'll do—come into the gym, and I'll show you what real boxing is like."

"Lend me three bob—"

"Three rats!" said Fisher T. Fish. And he walked away whistling.

Skinner breathed hard. He had taken the trouble to "butter up" the Yankee junior; but it was all in vain. The cautious Fish was not lending any money. Skinner reflected for a few minutes, and then made his way to Lord Mauleverer's study. He tried the door, and found it locked on the inside, and rapped.

"You there, Mauly?" he called, through the keyhole.

"Yaas," came back Lord Mauleverer's lazy voice.

"What have you got your door locked for?"

"Keep Bunter out."

"Let me in, old chap," said Skinner. "I want to speak to you very particularly."

"Can't!"

"Why not?"

"I'm lying on the sofa," explained Lord Mauleverer calmly.

"Well, you can get up, can't you?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Tired!"

Skinner murmured something under his breath.

"Mauly, old man, I want three bob for a very special purpose. Will you lend it to me?"

"No."

"Look here, Mauly, you've got plenty of dibs."

"Yaas."

"Then lend me three bob."

"Can't!"

"Why can't you?"

"Wharton asked me not to lend you any tin. He says you've got a scheme on, and it's rotten. Clear off, and don't bother!"

Skinner set his teeth hard. His state of impecuniosity was known to all the Remove by this time, as well as the purpose for which he wanted money. Harry Wharton had forestalled him with the schoolboy earl.

"I say, Mauly, it's a very special thing I want it for. Let me have three bob—"

"Don't bother!"

"I'll return it on Saturday—"

"Good-bye!"

"Look here, you lazy slacker, get up and open the door!" roared Skinner, rattling savagely at the handle.

"Can't!"

"You—you rotter! If I could get at you, I'd wipe up the study with you!"

"But you can't get at me!" chuckled his lordship. "Run away and play, Skinner! Don't bother! I'm tired!"

Skinner bestowed a furious kick on the door, and retired, baffled. He was at the end of his resources now. But he looked into No. 13 Study as he went down the passage. Little Wun Lung, the Chinese, was there, curled up in the armchair. He blinked at Skinner as he looked in. There was no love lost between them, the little Chinese having often been the victim of rags planned by Skinner and his friends. But Wun Lung might have been Skinner's long-lost brother, by the effusive friendliness of Skinner's manner now.

"Taking it easy—eh?" said Skinner cordially.

Wun Lung nodded.

"I say, kid, can you lend me three bob till Saturday?" asked Skinner.

"No savvy."

"Three shillings!" Skinner explained. "I want it specially to-day, and I don't get my allowance until Saturday. See?"

"No savvy."

When Wun Lung did not choose to understand, his knowledge of English always failed him in that manner.

Skinner's friendly smile vanished, and a threatening frown took its place. He clenched his fists, and came nearer to the little Celestial.

"You confounded heathen, you savvy well enough!" he snarled. "I want you to lend me three bob, and I want it at once!"

"No savvy."

"Or I'll give you the hiding of your life!" said Skinner, between his teeth. "Now then, what are you going to do?"

"No savvy," said Wun Lung, with a smile that was child-like and bland.

Skinner snorted with rage, and grasped him, and whirled him out of the chair. He was in a state of simmering fury by this time, and the little Chinese seemed a safe person to wreak it upon. But he had never made a bigger mistake. Wun Lung was small and thin and far from athletic, but he was as tough as steel wire, and he had a wonderful knowledge of ju-jitsu. He seemed to curl round Skinner, and the Removite discovered himself lying on his back on the study carpet suddenly, without in the least knowing how he had arrived there. Wun Lung grinned down upon him amiably.

"Like some mole?" he asked sweetly.

"You—your rotten heathen!" yelled Skinner.

And he picked himself up, and rushed furiously upon the Chinese.

Bump!

This time Skinner descended in the doorway. The bump on the floor made every bone in his body ache. He lay and gasped, and stared blankly at Wun Lung. The Chinese smiled at him with undiminished good humour.

"Hopee Skinneer not hurtie!" he murmured. "Tly again, perhaps!"

Skinner did not try again. He scrambled to his feet, and jumped away down the passage. Wun Lung chuckled, and returned to the armchair.

The unfortunate borrower went out into the Close again. There were loud shouts from the cricket-ground.

"Well hit! Bravo!"

Skinner snorted, and walked away to the gates. He glanced up at the clock-tower. It was too late now to catch the train at Courtfield. Outside the school gates he heard a peculiar grunting noise. Coker of the Fifth was there, persuading his motor-bike to get into a condition to go. Skinner stood and watched him idly. Coker's stink-bike would have served his purpose admirably—Skinner could ride it—but there wasn't the remotest chance that Coker of the Fifth would lend it to a junior.

Coker, having finished his preparations, leaned his bike against the wall, and went in at the gates. Apparently he had forgotten something.

Skinner watched him hurrying away towards the School House, and then he looked at the bike again. Coker would not be back for several minutes.

Skinner's eyes gleamed.

"Blessed if I don't chance it!" he muttered. "It's worth a hammering from Coker—to spot that rotter Lascelles, and show him up! Blessed if I don't do it!"

He ran towards the motor-bike.

Three minutes later Coker appeared in the gateway, with a bag in his hand. The sound of a sharp zip-zip fell upon his ears. Coker stood almost petrified. His stink-bike was not where he had left it. It was disappearing up the road towards Courtfield, with a Remove junior in the saddle.

Coker rushed after the robber, and roared:

"You young villain! Stop! Bring my bike back! Do you hear?"

Skinner did not hear, as a matter of fact; but it would have made no difference if he had heard. He was fairly going now, and he had not the slightest intention of returning.

Coker, with feelings that were inexpressible in mere words, stood in the middle of the road, and watched the bike disappear in the distance.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

On the Track!

THE Chifford Ring was crowded for the match between Larry Lynx and the Limehouse Chicken. Skinner had arrived in good time, however, on Coker's motor-bike.

He put the bike up at the station, and hurried to the Ring, and expended his shilling upon a cheap seat, and crowded in with the rest. He found himself squeezed between a burly carter on one side and a powerfully-built man with a bulldog face on the other. The latter had the look of a pugilist, and he attracted Skinner's attention. He remembered having seen that bulldog face and square jaw somewhere before. He remembered suddenly—it was in a photograph in the "Chifford Times."

The "pug" seated beside him, with a scowling brow, was Tim Tutton, the boxer who had been defeated by Larry Lynx. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 324.

FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"COKER'S PLOT!"

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

Lynx in the last week's match at the Chifford Ring. Evidently he had come there to see his rival in the engagement with the Limehouse Chicken.

There was a round of applause when the boxers came on the scene.

Skinner fastened his eyes upon Larry Lynx.

His eyes gleamed.

There he was—the young boxer, looking in the pink of condition, and looking the exact counterpart of the mathematics-master at Greyfriars, with the exception that he was clean-shaven.

Surely it was the same man!

Before the afternoon was out Skinner meant to know for certain.

He heard a low growl beside him as the boxers came into the ring, and he glanced at his neighbour. Tim Tutton's face was working with rage. He had evidently been drinking, and he did not take the trouble to conceal his feelings. His hatred for the young boxer was plain enough.

"You know that chap?" Skinner ventured to remark.

Tutton gave him a surly look.

"Wot if I do?" he growled.

"I know him, too," said Skinner. "You're the chap he fought with last week, ain't you? Everybody expected you to beat him hands down!"

Tutton's expression became a little more amiable. The burly pugilist was not proof against flattery.

"And I should 'ave downed 'im," he growled; "only I wasn't in condition!"

Skinner, reading the signs of drink in the man's face, guessed easily enough why he had not been in condition.

"Why, he oughtn't to have a chance against you!" Skinner remarked. "I suppose your luck was out, Mr. Tutton?"

The pugilist growled.

"My time'll come!" he muttered, half to himself. "They don't want me to box now—me, Tim Tutton, wot has been before the public this twenty year! My time'll come!"

And his deep-set eyes blazed at the unconscious boxer.

Skinner realised that the man beside him was a bitter enemy of the young boxer; his own dislike for Mr. Lascelles paled into nothingness beside Tutton's fierce hatred for Larry Lynx. Were they the same man—the mathematics master and the boxer? Skinner had hardly a doubt of it, and it came into his mind that Tim Tutton might be useful to him in his scheme against the master he disliked.

"You'll tackle him again, of course?" he remarked.

"Ain't got a chance!" growled Tutton. "I tell yer they don't want me now. That was the finish for me."

"Hard lines!" said Skinner.

"Well, it ain't any business of yours," said Tutton morosely.

"Of course not," said Skinner amiably. "Only I've watched your career, in the papers, Mr. Tutton, and I'm proud to have met you."

"I'm out of it now," the boxer growled.

"If I were you I'd tackle him again," said Skinner, in a low voice. "I'd tackle him outside the ring if I couldn't meet him inside it."

Tutton's eyes gleamed.

"Wish I 'ad the chance!" he growled. "I'd show whether he could stand up to me or not, I would. But he lays low when he ain't before the public. There ain't no finding him."

"No?" said Skinner. "Why, I should have thought it would be quite easy to find a well-known boxer."

"He ain't like the rest; he's a gentleman, he is!" snorted Tutton. "Runs some other bizney as well as boxin', so they say. Nobody knows where he lives."

Skinner grinned. All that he heard from the pugilist was confirmation of his theory.

"I fancy I know!" he remarked.

Tutton stared at him.

"You do?" he ejaculated.

"I've seen him at home," said Skinner. "At least, I think so."

"You tell me where to find him, then," said Tutton, with a hoarse laugh. "I'll pay him an afternoon call."

Skinner laughed. He could not help it. He pictured the astonishment of Greyfriars if that battered old pugilist came to the school to pay the mathematics master an afternoon call, with the intention of tackling him. It would be the finish of Mr. Lascelles' career at Greyfriars; there could not be much doubt about that.

"Wot you cackling at?" demanded Tutton suspiciously.

"I was thinking how surprised he'd be when you called, Mr. Tutton."

"I'd give him something to surprise 'im!"

"I could find out his address for certain, I think," said Skinner. "I could send it to you. Where do you live?"

"Red Lion in Chiford," said Mr. Tutton.

"Good! I'll remember."

The boxing was beginning now, and the talk ceased.

Larry Lynx and the Limehouse Chicken seemed well matched, and the big audience watched the rounds with breathless attention; but there were few so keen as Skinner. Every movement of the young boxer reminded him of the style of Mr. Lascelles, in the rounds with Wingate in the gym, at Greyfriars.

There could be no doubt; but Skinner meant to make quite certain. And just before the contest was over, he slipped out.

While the boxing-match was finishing, in a victory for Larry Lynx, Skinner was waiting outside the building by the stage door, to see the boxer when he should come out.

Skinner waited patiently.

The audience were leaving at last. If Larry Lynx was Mr. Lascelles, he was certain to be out soon to catch the train back to Courtfield.

He emerged at last.

The athletic figure was muffled up in an overcoat and a thick muffler, and a cap was pulled down over the face. Larry Lynx started to walk quickly down the street, in the direction of the railway-station.

Skinner ran into his path.

"Excuse me, Mr. Lascelles—" he began.

The boxer halted.

His eyes were fixed upon Skinner, and Skinner's keen glance was searching his face. Was it Mr. Lascelles?

If it was he certainly must have recognised Skinner, and he must have been startled to hear his real name spoken so suddenly.

But not by the flicker of an eyelid did he give himself away. He stared at Skinner, as anyone might have who heard himself addressed by a name not his own.

"Did you speak to me, lad?" he asked.

"Yes, Mr. Lascelles."

"I am Larry Lynx."

Skinner stared at him. Was he mistaken, after all? The boxer was regarding him with an expression of surprise and impatience.

"I—I thought—" stammered Skinner, taken quite aback.

"I am in a hurry," said Larry Lynx. "Kindly step out of my way!"

"But—but—"

Larry Lynx's strong hand dropped on Skinner's shoulder, and he was lifted out of the way as easily as if he had been a child.

The boxer strode on.

Skinner, discomfited and enraged, stared after him a few moments, and then broke into a run in pursuit. At least, he would see whether the boxer took the train for Courtfield; but his footsteps were heard, and at the corner of the street, Larry Lynx halted and swung round.

"Why are you following me?" he asked quietly.

"I—I'm going to the station!" faltered Skinner.

"You were following me."

"I—I—"

"You are an impertinent and prying little rascal," said the boxer, taking Skinner by the ear. "I don't allow cheeky kids to follow me!"

"Ow—ow!" groaned Skinner, as the boxer's iron grip was compressed upon his ear. "Ow—ow! Leggo, you beast! Yow-ow!"

He writhed with anguish.

"Now, cut off!" said Larry Lynx, releasing him.

"This instant, or—"

Skinner cut off fast enough.

The boxer watched him out of sight, and then hurried on his way. Skinner halted breathless, at a safe distance.

"The rotter!" he muttered, caressing his ear. "The beast! I know he's Lascelles! I'm certain of it now! Ow—ow!"

He made his way by a detour to the station; but he had lost too much time. When he arrived there, the Courtfield train was gone, and he had no means of discovering whether Larry Lynx had taken it or not.

In a sullen and savage manner, Skinner rode back to Greyfriars on Coker's motor-bike. When he arrived at the school, there was a very painful explanation with Coker. Coker declined to listen to Skinner's reasons for borrowing his bike. He simply flew at Skinner, and hammered him till the junior roared for mercy. When Skinner escaped, he was feeling sore all over, in body and in mind. He had only one consolation—he was assured now of Mr. Lascelles' real identity, and he felt that he held the mathematics master in the hollow of his hand. And Mr. Lascelles should pay for all that Skinner had suffered—if Skinner could contrive it.

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THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER. Skinner Does Not Prosper!

TAP!

"Come in!" said Mr. Lascelles.

The mathematics master was in his shirtsleeves, with a pair of boxing-gloves on his hands, when Skinner opened the door of the study. A punching-ball was suspended from the ceiling. Mr. Lascelles had been punching the ball. He paused in that occupation, and glanced round carelessly at Skinner.

Skinner looked sharply at his face.

Under Mr. Lascelles' left eye was an unmistakable "mouse," and there was a slight swelling on his nose. Skinner remembered that Larry Lynx had received heavy drives from the Limehouse Chicken on those two spots, in the contest at the Chiford Ring. Of course, the punching-ball might account for them—punching-balls, when carelessly handled, sometimes rebound with direful results upon the puncher. But Skinner divined that that was the very reason why Mr. Lascelles was so industriously punching the ball—in order to account for any slight marks upon his face.

"Skinner!" said the mathematics master, looking at him, "what do you want, my boy?"

His tones were very much softer than those in which Larry Lynx had addressed the spy of the Remove in the street of Chiford.

"I want to speak to you, sir, if I may," said Skinner.

"Certainly."

"Not interrupting you, in your exercise, sir?" asked Skinner satirically.

"It does not matter," said Mr. Lascelles, taking off the gloves, and laying them upon the table. "I was nearly finished." He resumed his coat. "What is it, Skinner? Can I assist you in any way? You are one of my most backward pupils—the most backward of all, with the exception of Bunter. I should be glad to help you."

"I don't like mathematics, sir," said Skinner, closing the door.

"No? But you are not sent here to do exactly as you like, I presume."

"That's what I want to do, sir, so far as maths are concerned," said Skinner, with an air of deliberation, as he faced the master again.

Mr. Lascelles looked puzzled.

"I don't quite understand you," he said.

"I want you to excuse me from lessons, sir, and to stop giving me extra instruction," said Skinner.

"What?"

"At the same time, sir, I should like you to give me always a good report."

"Skinner!"

Mr. Lascelles' look now was utter astonishment. He seemed to be wondering whether the junior had taken leave of his senses.

Skinner's heart was beating hard. He was bearding the lion in his den now, with a vengeance, and a great deal depended upon the way he played his cards. He was quite certain that Larry Lynx, the boxer, stood before him, that the mathematics master of Greyfriars was a boxer and pugilist in his spare time, unknown to the headmaster. That knowledge placed Mr. Lascelles' fate in his hands, and he felt that he had the master under his thumb. But his heart thumped uncomfortably as he faced the steady, keen eyes that were bent searchingly upon him. It was no light matter to encounter and defy a master, even if he had the power in his hands to get that master the "sack."

"I do not understand you in the least, Skinner," said Mr. Lascelles icily. "If you will have the kindness to explain yourself I shall be obliged."

"Very well, sir. Look at that!"

Skinner drew the photograph of Larry Lynx from his pocket, and held it up. Mr. Lascelles looked at it.

"Well?" he said.

"That is the photograph of Larry Lynx, sir, the pugilist."

"Indeed!"

"Any chap might take it for your photo, sir."

"Yes. It is very like. Well?"

"As a matter of fact, sir, I think it is your photo," said Skinner, taking the plunge.

Mr. Lascelles stared.

"My photograph?"

"Yes, sir."

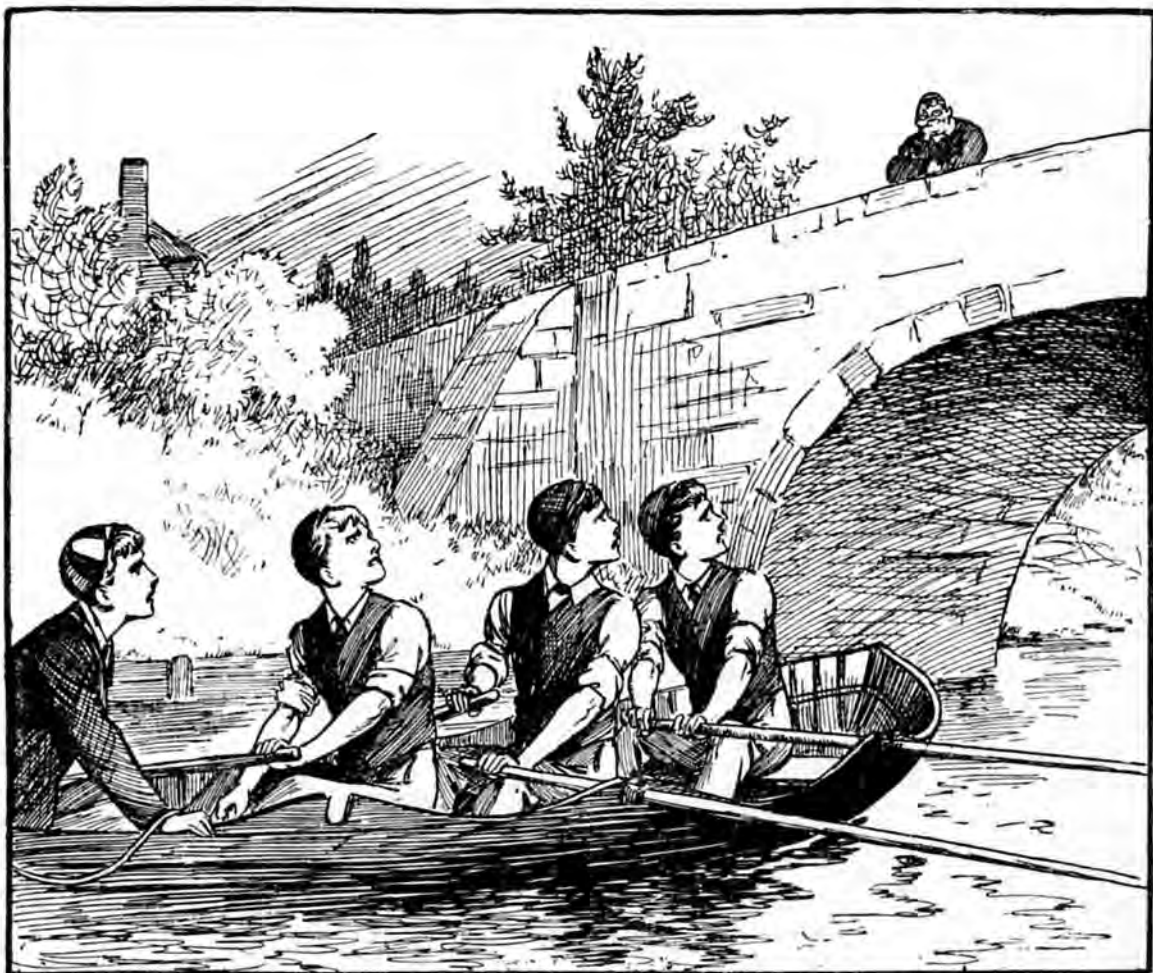
"Did you not just say that it was the photograph of a boxer?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then what do you mean?"

"I mean that you are Larry Lynx, and there's no use denying it, Mr. Lascelles," said Skinner desperately.

"I am Larry Lynx!" Mr. Lascelles repeated thoughtfully.



Billy Bunter's almost hysterical giggle broke the spell at last, and four pairs of eyes were turned upon him instantly, and it was Solly Lazarus who was the first to "tumble." "Bunter!" he yelled. "It was Bunter all the time!" (An amusing scene from "BUNTER'S DAY OUT!" the splendid complete school story, by Frank Richards, appearing in the current number of our latest Halfpenny Companion Paper, "CHUCKLES." Get a copy of "CHUCKLES" to-day. On sale everywhere, price One Halfpenny.)

"You know you are," said Skinner. "I know you are, too. I thought it might be your twin brother at first, but now I know it's you. I saw you at the Chilford Ring to-day, and spoke to you afterwards. You came home in the train to Courtfield. I've found it all out, sir."

"It seems that you have been spying, Skinner?"

"You can call it that if you like, sir," said Skinner insolently. "I call it finding out the truth about a—a—an—"

"He hesitated."

"About a what?"

"An impostor!" blurted out Skinner. "You know jolly well what the Head would think if he knew. He wouldn't have you here. Well, I've only got to tell him, and it would be all up with you at Greyfriars."

"Indeed!"

"Isn't it true?" demanded Skinner.

Mr. Lascelles smiled slightly.

"I do not intend to argue with you, Skinner, or to admit or deny anything, as I do not recognise your right to pry into what does not concern you."

"That's as good as admitting it, sir."

"But I intend to punish you severely for your impertinence, and for the veiled threat you have used," said Mr. Lascelles, picking up a cane. "As a rule, I should report you to your Form-master for punishment, but on this occasion I shall take the matter into my own hands. Hold out your hand, Skinner!"

Skinner put his hands behind him.

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FOR NEXT
MONDAY—

"COKER'S PLOT!"

"You're not going to cane me, sir," he said, between his teeth.

"And why not?"

"Because, if you do, I'll go directly to the Head, and tell him all I know."

The mathematics-master laughed.

"That is quite dramatic, Skinner. However, I shall cane you all the same, and then we will go to the Head together."

"Wha-a-t!" gasped Skinner, taken quite aback.

"Certainly! If you have something to tell the Head concerning me, it will be better to tell it in my presence."

"You—you wouldn't dare—"

"Enough! Hold out your hand!"

"I—I—I—"

"If you do not hold out your hand, Skinner, I shall cane you across the shoulders, and very severely," said Mr. Lascelles quietly.

Skinner, white with rage, held out his hand. The cane came down with a swish, and Skinner gave a howl of anguish.

"Now the other!" said Mr. Lascelles grimly.

Swish! Another howl from Skinner. Whether Mr. Lascelles was Larry Lynx or not, he was certainly very muscular, and the strokes were well laid on. Skinner writhed with the pain of the infliction, as Mr. Lascelles laid down the cane.

"Now we will go to the Head!" said the mathematics master pleasantly. "Come with me, Skinner!"

He dropped his hand on the junior's shoulder, and led him out of the study. In the passage, however, Skinner halted.

His brain was in a whirl.

A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Tale
of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. Order Early.

Had he made a mistake, after all? If the mathematics master was really the boxer, with a false moustache on his upper lip, would he dare to go to the Head? Was it bluff, or—had the spy of the Remove made a ghastly mistake? And even if he proved his case, what was the Head likely to say to him? Whatever happened to Mr. Lascelles, certainly the spy and informer would only meet with contempt. Indeed, if Mr. Lascelles informed the Head of the threat Skinner had uttered, undoubtedly the junior would receive the most condign punishment.

"Come!" said Mr. Lascelles.

Skinner hung back.

"I—I don't want to go to the Head, please, sir," he mumbled.

"You have no choice now. Come!"

"I—I—I take back what I said, sir," panted Skinner, in a terrible funk by this time. "I—I beg your pardon, sir."

Mr. Lascelles paused.

"If you apologise I may look over the matter," he said curtly. "But nothing of the kind again, Skinner."

"I—I apologise, sir."

"Very well. I will say no more about the matter. You may go!"

Mr. Lascelles went back into his study. Skinner, almost livid, tramped away down the passage. Billy Bunter met him at the corner.

"How did it work, Skinny, old man?" he asked eagerly.

"Why, you beast! Ow! You rotter! Wharrer you at?"

The infuriated Skinner pushed him roughly aside, and Bunter sat down on the floor of the passage with a howl. Skinner strode on without replying.

"Beast!" howled Bunter.

Skinner did not heed. He stamped away furiously to his own study, his eyes gleaming, his teeth set.

"The rotter!" he muttered. "He was bluffing me, but—but I dare not go to the Head! But—but I'll settle him all the same. Tutton will settle him!"

And within half an hour a note was written and posted to Tim Tutton, at the Red Lion, in Chilford. The note was unsigned, and it was in a disguised hand. But it told the pugilist all he wanted to know—that Larry Lynx, the boxer, held a post at Greyfriars School under the name of Lascelles, and that he could be found there at any time. Skinner chuckled as he dropped the letter into the box. His scheme—Bunter's scheme—of having the mathematics master under his thumb was finished with. There was evidently nothing doing, so to speak, in that line. But the end of the Remove had the satisfaction left of making Mr. Lascelles pay dearly for the reception he had given him. It would be something to see him disgraced and sacked! And Skinner looked forward to that consummation of his plot with great glee. Mr. Lascelles had refused to make terms with him, and Mr. Lascelles would be "booted" out of Greyfriars. It was a very severe Roland for an Oliver. Skinner walked back to the school after posting the letter, with a very cheerful grin on his face. Skinner generally looked cheerful when something unpleasant was to happen—to somebody else.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton's Diplomacy.

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! I know that merchant!" said Bob Cherry softly.

"Tutton!" said Harry Wharton.

"What does he want here, I wonder?"

It was after lessons on the following day, and the Famous Five were strolling down the lane towards Friardale. Tim Tutton came into view from the direction of the village, tramping along the road towards Greyfriars. The juniors recognised him at once. They remembered the bulldog jaw and the deep-set eyes of the pugilist who had been defeated by Larry Lynx at Chilford.

"It is certainly the esteemed pug," Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh remarked. "Can he be coming to the school, my esteemed chums?"

"Why should he?" muttered Wharton uneasily. He thought of Mr. Lascelles at once.

The bruiser stopped as he came up to the juniors. The deep flush in his rough, stubbly face showed that he had been drinking.

"Greyfriars School 'ereabouts?" he asked.

"Yes," said Wharton, eyeing him. "Are you going there?"

"I reckon. You belong to Greyfriars—hey?" asked Mr. Tutton, noting the school caps.

"Yes."

"Then you come erlong, and you'll see something. I'm going to see Larry Lynx," said the bruiser thickly.

"Larry Lynx, at Greyfriars?" said Nugent.

"Calls himself another name there," said Mr. Tutton. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 324.

"Nobody knows where he hung out, but a young gent 'avo told me. Ever 'eard of Mr. Lascelles?"

"He's our mathematics master," said Bob Cherry.

"Zackly, when 'e's at 'ome," chuckled Tutton. "When he ain't at 'ome he's Larry Lynx, the boxer. I'm goin' to see him."

"What are you going to see him for?" asked Harry.

"Lick him!"

"You won't have much chance of doing that, considering how matters went at the Chilford Ring, Mr. Tutton!"

Mr. Tutton eyed him ferociously.

"You shut your head!" he said. "I was out of sorts then."

I'm going to show him that I can lick him—and show him up, too! I reckon they don't all know at the school as how the man is a common bruiser, what? Which way is Greyfriars?"

"Come with me," said Bob Cherry politely. "It will be a pleasure to show you the way, Mr. Tutton!"

"I'm arter you!" said Mr. Tutton.

And Bob, closing one eye at his companions, led Mr. Tutton down the side road that ran towards Reddyliffe. It was a move to gain time, for all the juniors realised what it would mean for Mr. Lascelles if the half-intoxicated bruiser arrived at the school as he intended. Bob felt that he could leave the matter in Wharton's hands, to do what was best to be done.

The Co. consulted hurriedly. It was no special business of theirs; but they liked Mr. Lascelles, and they wanted to do what they could for him.

"This will be a rotten show up for him," said Harry, biting his lip. "Not much doubt about it now, chaps!"

"None at all, I suppose," said Nugent. "It wouldn't be so bad for Lascelles if he told the Head himself—but if that ruffian gets there—"

"He mustn't get there! Lascelles must come here!" said Harry decidedly. "He will be able to deal with him."

"But Lascelles is at Greyfriars now—"

"I'm going to warn him!"

"Phew! I don't know how he'll take it—"

"Must chance that!"

"Good egg!" said Johnny Bull. "Cut off, and we'll help Bob keep an eye on that tipsy brute, and keep him back as long as possible."

"Right-ho!"

And Harry Wharton started at a run for the school.

The active junior covered the ground quickly. He reached Greyfriars in a few minutes, and hurried into the School House. He was breathing hard as he knocked at the door of Mr. Lascelles' study.

"Come in!" called out the cheery voice of the mathematics master.

Wharton entered the study. Mr. Lascelles was seated in his armchair before the open window, looking out towards the playing-fields, with a book on his knee. He nodded cheerily to the captain of the Remove.

"What is it, Wharton?" he asked, his keen eye noting at once the signs of haste and excitement in the junior's looks. Wharton closed the door quickly.

"I've come to tell you, Mr. Lascelles, that—that—" He paused.

"Well?" Mr. Lascelles' handsome face hardened a little. Perhaps he anticipated another interview similar to the one with Harold Skinner.

"I—I don't want to mix myself in your affairs, sir," said Wharton, reddening. "It's no business of mine, I know. But—but we were at Chilford Ring last week, and we saw the contest between Tim Tutton, and—and Larry Lynx!"

"Well?"

"We couldn't help seeing the likeness, sir. Tim Tutton is coming to Greyfriars!"

That startled Mr. Lascelles. He rose quickly to his feet.

"How do you know that, Wharton?"

"We've just met him on the road, sir. He says he knows that you are Larry Lynx, and he's coming here to make a scene."

"Indeed?"

"The other chaps are keeping him back, sir—"

"Why?"

Wharton's flush deepened.

"We—we thought, sir—excuse me—if there's going to be a scene, we thought you'd prefer, perhaps, to have it outside the school. It—it would attract less attention."

Mr. Lascelles smiled a little.

"That was very thoughtful of you, Wharton."

"I'm sure we don't want to meddle, sir, but—but we didn't want you to be taken by surprise, and—and—"

"Thank you very much, my dear lad!" said Mr. Lascelles kindly. "So this obstreperous person is coming here to see me?"

"He can't be far off now, sir. Bob's trying to keep him away, but—"

"I think I had better go and meet him," said Mr. Lascelles.

quietly. "If he really desires to see me, there is no reason why he should be disappointed."

And the mathematics master took up his hat, and followed Wharton from the study.

Harry Wharton would have hurried across the Close; but Mr. Lascelles proceeded with a calm and deliberate step. Apparently he was not perturbed. Yet he must have known—if he was indeed Larry Lynx—that his career at Greyfriars was trembling in the balance.

They passed out of the school gates, and moved on towards Friardale, and in a few minutes came in sight of the Co. Frank Nugent ran up to them.

"Well?" said Mr. Lascelles, with a smile. "Where is our friend Tutton?"

"Bob's taken him down the Redclyffe Lane, sir," said Nugent, with a very curious look at Mr. Lascelles' imperturbable face. "But I fancy he'll tumble soon, and come on this way. I hope he won't hammer Bob when he finds out."

Mr. Lascelles quickened his pace. The juniors followed him, their looks very grave. "There's going to be trouble now," Johnny Bull remarked. "Did you see how Lascelles' jaw looked—same as Larry Lynx's looked in the last round that time?"

"I feel sorry for Tutton if he tackles him!" said Wharton grimly.

"The sorrowfulness is terrific. I considerably think—" Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's flow of peculiar English was interrupted.

Across the wood came ringing a shout, from the direction of the lane to Redclyffe, where it wound away behind the trees.

"Help!" It was Bob Cherry's voice. Mr. Lascelles broke into a run, and the Co., with anxious faces, broke into a run after him. What was happening, out of their sight, behind the trees?

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER. The Truth Out!

BOB CHERRY had led the half-intoxicated bruiser some distance towards Redclyffe, before Tutton became suspicious.

"This 'ere road leads to Greyfriars?" asked Tutton, at last.

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"Straight on," said Bob cheerfully, forbearing to add that it would be necessary to traverse, roughly speaking, twenty-four thousand miles before Greyfriars was reached in that direction. "Only got to keep on long enough."

"Well, git on!" said Tutton.

But Bob halted, himself, the next moment. Ahead of them, in the lane, appeared a majestic figure. It was that of Dr. Locke, the Head of Greyfriars. And Bob remembered that the Head had been on a visit that afternoon to the headmaster of Redclyffe School. He was taking advantage of the fine spring weather to walk back to Greyfriars—and here he was, only a dozen yards ahead of them. Bob halted in dismay. He did not want the bruiser to meet Dr. Locke.

"Wot you stopping for?" asked Mr. Tutton suspiciously. "Ahem! Would you care to take a short cut through the wood?" asked Bob.

"You said this 'ere road was straight on to Greyfriars."

"So it is—only—"

"Then I don't want no short cut!" said Mr. Tutton. "And I'll ask this old gent, too! I've a suspicion you're larking with me, you young rip!"

"Better take the short cut!" urged Bob. "This road is right on to Greyfriars, but—but you'll have to go right round the world, you know, and that's a long distance. I'll show you a shorter cut!"

Mr. Tutton stared at him savagely.

"So you was larking, was you?" he exclaimed. "I thought as much. And I'll show you that it don't pay to play your larks with me, young slaver!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Hands off!" exclaimed Bob, as the bruiser grasped him.

"I'll give yer larks!" granted Tutton. And he rained angry blows upon the junior. Bob Cherry struggled fiercely, but he was as a child in the grasp of the pugilist.

"Ow! Ow! Leggo! Yarrah! Oh, crumbs!" yelled Bob.

"Take that—and that—and that!"

Dr. Locke quickened his pace as he saw a Greyfriars junior in the grasp of the ruffian. He came up quickly.

"Let that boy go at once!" he exclaimed angrily.

Tutton paused in sheer surprise. That an old gentleman with white hair, whom he could have killed with one blow

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of his fist, should dare to speak to him in this manner, quite took his breath away for a moment.

"Well, I'm blowed!" he ejaculated.

"Release the lad instantly!"

"And s'posin' I don't?" grinned Tutton.

"Then I shall do my best to make you, my man!" said the Head of Greyfriars, grasping his umbrella firmly.

Tutton gave a snort of derisive laughter.

"Why, you old donkey, I could knock you skyhigh with one lick!" he exclaimed. "My heye! Do you know who I am? I'm Tim Tutton—the pugilist!"

"Release that boy instantly!"

"Oh, shut your head!" said Tutton.

And he rained blows again upon the unfortunate Bob, as much upon the Head's account now as upon Bob's own. But he did not anticipate what was to follow. The Head strode towards him, his umbrella uplifted.

Thwack!

It came down across Tutton's shoulders with such force that the handle broke in two, and the bruiser gave a yell of pain.

He released Bob, and turned upon Dr. Locke with a murderous look.

"I'll out yer for that!" he hissed. And he sprang right at the reverend Head of Greyfriars.

"Help!" yelled Bob Cherry, hoping that his chums were in hearing. And he ran recklessly between the bruiser and his intended victim.

Dr. Locke, who had been a boxer in his far-off youth, had put up his hands, though his defence would certainly have availed him little against the crushing attack of the pugilist. But Tutton did not reach him. He collided with Bob, and staggered and fell.

"Help!" roared Bob, again.

Tutton scrambled to his feet, and, with a heavy and brutal blow, sent Bob spinning out of his path. Then he advanced upon the Head again, his huge fists clenched, his eyes gleaming spitefully.

"Now for you!" he exclaimed.

"Help!"

There was a swift patter of footsteps in the dusty road. Round the corner came Mr. Lascelles at top speed, behind him Harry Wharton & Co.

The bruiser had just reached the Head when Lascelles reached him. Tutton had sent in one blow, which the Head stopped. He could not have stopped the next; but Tutton had no time for another. A grasp like iron was laid upon his collar, and he was swung away from the Head, and sent spinning to the ground. He fell in a heap with a gasp, raising a cloud of dust where he fell.

Mr. Lascelles turned quickly to the Head.

"He has not hurt you, sir?"

"N-no!" panted the Head. "Thanks to your timely arrival, Mr. Lascelles. But—look out—he is going to attack you."

Tutton had leaped up, his eyes bloodshot, his face red with fury.

"Larry Lynx!" he shouted. "Now for you!"

"Come on!" said Mr. Lascelles coolly.

He had thrown his coat off in a twinkling. In his shirt-sleeves, he stood up to the big bruiser, as Tutton rushed down upon him. Dr. Locke came forward anxiously.

"I shall aid you, Mr. Lascelles."

"Stand back, please!"

"But—but—"

"I can handle him. You will see."

There was no time for more. Tim Tutton was upon his old enemy, and they were fighting hammer and tongs. There were no rounds in that fight—little skill, on Tutton's side, at least—it was a struggle of strength, activity, grit, and endurance.

The Head looked on spellbound. Harry Wharton & Co. stood round, gazing with all their eyes. It had come now—in the very presence of the Head. Their well-meant endeavours had been in vain. They could only hope that the rascal would receive a most terrific hiding; and there was little doubt about that.

But the fight was long and hard. Tutton was furious, and he did not seem to care what punishment he received.

But from the start it was clear that Mr. Lascelles could take care of himself.

"Bless my soul!" the Head muttered more than once. "Bless my soul! Well hit—well taken, indeed! Splendid! Splendid!" For the moment the old gentleman was no longer the reverend Head of Greyfriars; he was an old boxer looking on a fight that would have thrilled him to the core in his younger days, and that thrilled him now. "Splendid! Bravo, Lascelles!"

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "The Head's an old sport himself, and no mistake! Blessed if he isn't enjoying it."

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OUR COMPANION PAPERS: "THE GEM" LIBRARY, Every Wednesday. "THE PENNY POPULAR," Every Friday. "CHUCKLES," 1d. Every Saturday, 2

Crash!

It was over at last. Tim Tutton lay in the dust, so utterly knocked out that he could not rise—could only lay and groan and gasp. It was the severest licking he had ever had in all his career as a bruiser. But Mr. Lascelles had not escaped punishment. His nose was streaming red, his left eye was closed, his upper lip was cut, and the cut lip was no longer adorned with a moustache! The blow that had cut the lip had torn the moustache away, and the mathematics master of Greyfriars was revealed—with all possible doubt gone now—as Larry Lynx, the boxer!

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head, grasping Mr. Lascelles' hand and wringing it. "I had no idea—no idea at all that you were so terrible a pugilist, my dear fellow. How very fortunate for me. I could certainly not have handled that ruffian. But—but—" His eyes opened wide. "Your—your moustache, my dear sir, how—how very extraordinary! My dear Lascelles—"

"Lascelles!" gasped Tim Tutton, raising himself on his elbow, with a look of hatred at his vanquisher. "That man is Larry Lynx, the boxer."

"What! Nonsense! My dear Lascelles—"

"It is true, sir," said Mr. Lascelles quietly.

The Head stared at him.

"Come, my dear Lascelles, what do you mean? You—you are—"

"I had intended to tell you, sir," said Mr. Lascelles. "You will forgive me for not having done so already. I hope; but—but your offer of a position at Greyfriars meant so much to me that I could not risk it. I am the man known in the sporting ring as Larry Lynx."

"But—but explain!"

"There is not much to explain, Dr. Locke. After I left Oxford, I had to depend on myself, and there was nothing doing. I could teach mathematics, and I could box. For the latter gift I found plenty of openings, for the former none. To keep the wolf from the door, I took to boxing in a small way. I was successful. I began to make something of a name. I could have made much more; but when, through Mr. Quelch, I received your offer of a position at Greyfriars, I determined to give up boxing and go back to the life I desired."

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head. "But—but if you gave it up—"

"I had certain engagements already made which I could not break without causing loss to those who had engaged me, sir. The last of these I fulfilled yesterday at Chifford. But—but I understand how you must regard the matter, and—and I place my resignation in your hands, sir."

There was a pause. The juniors looked on anxiously. Bob Cherry murmured in Wharton's ear that he hoped the Head would play up like an old sport.

Bob's hope was well grounded.

Dr. Locke extended his hand to the young man.

"Mr. Lascelles, this has surprised me very much, and, of course, it is impossible for a master at Greyfriars to pursue at the same time the avocation of a boxer. But you say you have fulfilled the last of your engagements?"

"Yesterday, sir."

"And—ahem!—it is finished for good?"

"If I remain at Greyfriars, certainly. Otherwise, I shall have to earn my bread as Larry Lynx once more."

"You will remain, I trust, Mr. Lascelles. After what you have just done, after you have saved me from a brutal assault by your boxing powers, I should be ungrateful indeed if I should find fault with them." He shook hands cordially with the young man. "We will say no more about it, Mr. Lascelles. You will remain at Greyfriars, and that chapter in your life is closed."

Mr. Lascelles pressed his hand with emotion.

"I thank you, sir," he said in a low voice. "I am glad the truth is out now. It has weighed upon my mind. And that chapter in my life is now, as you say, closed for good. Larry Lynx will never be heard of again in the boxing-ring."

The disappearance of the promising young boxer, Larry Lynx, from the purlieus of the Ring excited a good deal of comment in sporting circles; but none of the sporting gentlemen interested in the young boxer ever ascertained the reason. Few knew what had become of Larry Lynx, and those few were Greyfriars juniors, with whom Mr. Lascelles was never less—but rather more—popular, because he had been both Master and Boxer!

THE END.

(Another splendid long complete tale of the Greyfriars Chums next Monday, entitled: "COKER'S PLOT!" by Frank Richards. There is sure to be a record rush for this number, so make certain of YOUR Copy by ordering it in advance!)



BY SIDNEY DREW

Grand Story of Ferrers Lord, Ching-Lung & Co.

READ THIS FIRST.

Ching-Lung (Prince of China), Rupert Thurston, and Gan-Waga (the Eskimo), with Prout, Maddock, and the rest of the famous crew of the Lord of the Deep, the marvellous submarine belonging to Ferrers Lord, the multi-millionaire and adventurer, find themselves on board the Philomel, a little paddle-steamer which is puffing up the broad bosom of the mighty Amazon River. Ferrers Lord himself is in command of the expedition, and he tells them that he is in search of a "field" of blue orchids, the secret place of which was mapped out and given to him by a dying man. A rascally German millionaire, named Hausmann, determines to secure these plans, and pursues the Philomel in his magnificent yacht Medea. A storm comes on, and the flashes of lightning reveal the position of the Philomel, and a shell is sent hurtling towards her from the Medea. The Medea collides with a Brazilian warship, and the small but fast little launch which the former was towing is captured by Ferrers Lord. The Philomel's cargo is transferred to the launch, which has been renamed the Blue Orchid. After an uneventful voyage the Blue Orchid anchors at the edge of the trackless Brazilian forest, and Rupert Thurston, with Ferrers Lord, Ching-Lung, and Barry O'Rourke, set out for a trip in the forest. The millionaire meets Vasco, the son of a native chief whom he had formerly befriended. Vasco joins Ferrers Lord's party. Ferrers Lord and his companions return to the Blue Orchid, and no sooner are they safely on board than the look-out sights the Medea. Steaming at full speed, Ferrers Lord manages to gain the shelter of a lagoon. A moment later Ferrers Lord notices that the water is gradually getting lower and lower. He comes to the conclusion that it is dammed somewhere, and he is about to get into a boat to examine the lagoon when a sudden roar breaks out. The dam bursts, and Vasco is swept overboard. Ching-Lung manages to rescue him, but not before the Indian has been struck senseless by a floating tree. The Blue Orchid is swept out of her hiding-place, and the Medea gives chase. Vasco, when he regains consciousness, tells Ferrers Lord of a rivulet where they would be safe from pursuit. Although three men short, they make the rivulet in safety. A party of riflemen in ambush fire on them, but are put to flight. Soon after this the Blue Orchid's passage is blocked by a huge mass of floating logs, but the millionaire's knowledge of the lumber trade enables him to find the governing log. This is set in motion, and the Blue Orchid is able to push its way through. When they have passed, the logs return to their former state. This will effectually block the Medea's passage. Ching-Lung and Rupert Thurston, tired of sitting on the hot deck, decide to get out and walk through the forest. They are chased by a multitude of peccaries, or wild pigs, and are endeavouring to escape them by running away, when Ching-Lung suddenly pulls his companion to the ground. In a wide lake is the Medea, the rascally German's yacht!

(Now go on with the story.)

Ching-Lung Arranges for Hans Hausmann to Spend a Night in a Tree, only to Find Himself There Instead.

"Little apples and little pigs!" said Ching-Lung. "There's a picture for you."

Rupert could find no words. The yacht was the last thing in the world he had expected to see. He rubbed the back of his hands across his eyes, but he could not rub out the Medea. It was as if some monstrous giant had seized her by her prow and stern, carried her over the tree-tops, and dumped her down in the lagoon. And behind them the fierce little peccaries were snorting and squealing.

Ching-Lung slipped away. A peccary began to snort and squeal furiously—or was it Ching-Lung? Rupert suddenly realised that, instead of advancing, the drove was sweeping away to the left, deceived by Ching-Lung's cunning call. He began to crawl backwards little by little. Then, making sure that he could not be seen from the yacht, he sprang to his feet, and raced away through the trees.

The prince soon found that he had the whole pack behind him, and he chuckled. They hunted like beagles hunt a hare, but their powers of scent seemed greater. Squealing, snorting, and snuffing, they kept on his track.

"Oh-o!" said Ching-Lung.

He heard a shot, and then a yell, and spun round.

"Rupert has made a mess of it," he thought. "He must have been hard pressed to shoot. Hallo! They're warm on his track. I shall have to stop a few of—whe-ew!"

Ching-Lung dodged round a tree, and pressed himself flat against the trunk. Three rifles cracked almost simultaneously. Then three men burst into view barely two hundred yards away. They stopped to fire again, and then ran, the peccaries tearing after them. The leader was a little fat man, who had lost his pith helmet, and he was almost done. The soft, sloppy mass made difficult going for a per-

son of his weight. He stumbled and rolled over, and as his rifle exploded, a tall sailor behind him clutched at his left forearm, and began to dance and yell, for the bullet had gone through it.

"Hausmann himself!" muttered Ching-Lung. "How's this going to end, I wonder?"

The German was beaten. He made for the first climbable tree, and helped to drag the wounded man up. He had very little breath to spare, but the prince could hear him swearing in his own tongue. The peccaries burst into the clearing, and sighted their enemies. At once they laid siege to the fortress.

Six shots from the fat German's revolver rolled six of them over. Hausmann knew how to use a revolver. He thrust his hand into the bag to reload, but the movement made it catch against a twig. It upset, and the cartridges fell in a shower to the ground.

Ching-Lung grinned, but he dared not stir. If the peccaries scented him, the adventure would come to a sudden end. From what he knew of Hausmann, he felt pretty sure that the German would not hesitate to shoot him on sight. The prince could have shot the three of them without the slightest trouble or risk, but he never dreamed of such a thing. He was not a sniper, and it would have been murder.

Hausmann and the unwounded sailor began to use their rifles steadily. Peccary after peccary dropped. Then the firing ceased, and Ching-Lung chuckled again. They had expended all their ammunition without terrifying the dogged little pigs. Unless help came it seemed pretty certain that Hans Hausmann and his two comrades were doomed to spend a most wearisome night.

Ching-Lung of Kwai-hal scratched his snub nose thoughtfully. Like all Chinamen, he had wonderful patience. The most important thing of all was to keep out of sight. If the

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"COKER'S PLOT!"

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Germans saw him they would know at once that the Blue Orchid was close at hand. Either help would come, or the peccaries would grow tired. But when?

"This is fairly beastly!" muttered the prince. "If I shift, those porkers are pretty sure to wind me or see me. I could easily trick Hausmann and company, but it's not so easy to trick a peccary. I'm getting pretty sick of holding this tree up. Besides, I want my tea."

The shadows were swiftly deepening. The three men in the tree kept on shouting hoarsely.

"You'll make yourselves thirsty," thought the prince, "if you go on like that. Rupert must have got aboard hours ago, lucky beggar. I look like staying where I am until it's dark. Dare I risk it?"

For several minutes Ching-Lung thought hard, trying to recall certain sounds that he had not heard for years. Then his lips moved, and the purring whine of a jaguar drifted out of the deepening gloom.

The terrible little peccaries rushed away in pursuit of an enemy even more hateful to them than mankind. Ching-Lung seized the opportunity, and slipped away.

"You're not coming down yet, my pets, so don't think it!" grinned Ching-Lung, peering back. "At least, if you are, you'll soon go up again. That's a trick I can play twice."

Hausmann was already on the ground. The supposed jaguar gave a howl that sent him scuttling into the tree again, for it sounded close behind him. Again and again the imaginary brute yelled and roared. The peccaries were coming back. Like grey shadows they gathered round the tree.

Tears gathered in the eyes of Ching-Lung as he made his way through the dusk; but they were not tears of sorrow. He hummed a tune about somebody who would not go home till morning.

He could hear faint shouts in front of him, and they were becoming louder. It could only be a search-party from the Medea. Ching-Lung had been keeping too much to the right. Lights twinkled through the tall stems.

Sixteen or seventeen men, carrying lanterns and rifles, passed under his hiding-place.

The light had vanished with its usual suddenness, leaving the forest as black as the interior of a mine. A wind sobbed and moaned through the tree-tops, and Ching-Lung discovered that it was raining.

It would be folly to go on at the risk of breaking his neck, or tumbling headlong into some morass or pool. Ching-Lung resigned himself to the inevitable, and felt about for a suitable tree. By striking matches he found one, and climbed it. He perched himself in the fork, and was surprised to find himself fairly comfortable.

Ching-Lung could sleep anywhere. He curled himself up, and closed his eyes.

An Anxious Night—The Return of Ching-Lung—The Expedition Sets Out—Barry's Mushroom.

Thurston succeeded in striking the bank of the river without the slightest difficulty. After following the sluggish, muddy stream for a couple of miles, he saw the Blue Orchid steaming along in the middle of the river. Taking out his handkerchief, Rupert waved a brief message that made Mr. Thomas Prout cough violently.

"M-e-d-e-a," said the steersman, spelling out the repeated message. "Medea ahead of us. Anchor. By honey, this is jam or else marmalade. Mr. Rupert, eh? Would you mind comin' ere a moment, sir?"

Ferrers Lord evinced no surprise, even if he felt it. He merely waved his cap to the signaller.

"Get her as close to the shore as you can, and run out a plank," he said.

Rupert came on board. Prout could not hear what they were saying, but he could tell that Thurston was excited. He told the story briefly, and the millionaire nodded.

"So the Medea is within a couple of miles of us, Rupert. It is a lucky thing that Ching-Lung took it into his head to go on shore. But for that we should have sailed under Hausmann's guns, and closed the chapter of our adventures. This river makes a delta evidently. We took the shallow channel, and the Medea the deep one."

"I suppose so," said Rupert. "This isn't a safe neighbourhood. I wish Ching-Lung would turn up."

Ferrers Lord knitted his brow, and, clasping his hands behind him, took a few turns up and down the deck.

Within an hour the Blue Orchid was fairly well screened, but Ching-Lung had not returned. Though the Eskimo had hurled bitter threats after his departing friend, poor Gan was terribly anxious. Loaded rifles were kept in readiness to repel an attack, and a full head of steam made the boilers tremble.

"Wants my Chingy," said Gan-Waga piteously. "Wants my butterfuls Chingy. Where he goned hunk?"

"Oh, he'll be along in the mornin' safe enough," added the gruff, but kindly, voice of Prout. "Cheer hup, blubber-face. He's all right, by honey! He ain't soft enough to go cruisin' round in strange waters w'out a compass. He'll steer straight for port soon as it's daylight. 'Ave a cigar, and make your miserable life 'appy.'"

Prout was not quite so confident in his heart as his words implied. Light showers kept falling all through the long, dreary night, but none of them went below. The frogs made a hideous clamour, and huge night-flying insects buzzed through the air. Joe brought up a steaming jug of coffee soon after the dawn began to break. Joe was always doing something pleasant like this without being asked.

The coffee awakened them up.

"Whoa! Don't drink it all," said a well-known voice, as Prout held out his mug for more. "Save a little for me."

"My Chingy; my butterfuls Ching-Chang-Chung-Chingy!" shrieked Gan-Waga.

He clasped the returned wanderer round the neck and hugged him wildly.

"I might have been away for fifty years," laughed the prince, grasping the hands outstretched to greet him. "For being so late—early. I mean—I apologise on bended knees. Couldn't help it, though. I've had a beastly night."

"So have we," said Rupert.

"But you didn't have a vampire bat in bed with you, chewing your ears, I reckon. I did. Until I've had some grub, I decline to open my mouth, except to give a word of advice. I don't know what time those Germans get up, but I should advise a quick move."

The millionaire spoke to Prout. It galled him to have to retreat, but he could not fight the Medea. Very soon he was laughing quietly over Ching-Lung's queer story of his adventures. Thurston was in convulsions.

"You got the worst of it in the end," said the millionaire. "But you cannot be blamed for that. Now, lads, let us come to a decision. I have been talking to Vasco again. The fork of the river the Medea followed runs through a string of lagoons. Vasco did not think the water deep enough to float such a large vessel. Hausmann seems to be taking big risks. Just ring for Vasco, Rupert!"

The guide came, still bandaged, but looking stronger and better. His dark eyes were sparkling excitedly.

"Excellency," he said quickly. "I have been trying to remember the time I fished in the lagoons with my father, and I have remembered. There are no natives here, and the delta is full of creeks and hiding-places. Our enemies are many and we are few, but we are brave. An armed vessel that cannot sail is as foolish a thing as a jaguar without teeth or claws. Listen, Excellency, and, if my memory does not lie to me—for it was long ago—I will show you what I think a few brave men can do. Have you a pencil, Excellency?"

Thurston gave him one. His brown hand shook a little as he traced a rough plan on the tablecloth.

"Look well," he said. "Here is the head of the fourth lagoon, and here it was we made our fishing-but. The channel is narrow and deep, and it passes between high rocks. If we can block that channel, Excellency, the Medea will be only a wolf in a trap."

"We can try," said Ferrers Lord, breaking the silence.

"And if it comes off," said Ching-Lung, passing the bacon-dish to Gan-Waga, "I shall present myself with a box of gold medals. But, alas! it's the sort of thing you do when you're asleep. I fear, and then wake up. By Jove, if we only could do it! Hausmann would be wishing he'd brought a flying-machine instead of a yacht. I'd like to punch—I mean, see his face when he found his lovely boat bottled up."

"Me, too, Chingy," gurgled the Eskimo, licking out the dish. "I punches him faces, too, Chingy. I loves punch faces, they so squashy when yo' hits them. Nearly as butterfuls as bacons."

Rupert, with flushed cheeks, looked at the millionaire.

"There's always that big 'if,' Lord," he said.

"Always, Rupert," answered the millionaire, with a shrug of his shoulders, "but I detest running away."

Infinite care and infinite skill had brought the Blue Orchid into the very heart of the delta. She floated on a stagnant pool that was covered with green scum and swarming with leeches. Overhead the branches interlaced, and a dense undergrowth screened her from view on all sides. It was an ideal hiding-place, if not a healthy one. As a precaution against fever, all hands were ordered to report themselves to Thurston regularly for a dose of quinine, an ordeal that made Gan-Waga shed tears. He loathed quinine.

Two days were spent in building a canoe of canvas. It was stoutly ribbed and lined, and it did Joe credit. In the grey of the dawn all was ready. Prout and Joe entered the canoe

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FRANK RICHARDS

Contributes a Splendid, Complete School Tale
in our New Saturday Companion Paper—

"CHUCKLES," 1d.

and waited. From below came the yells of Gan-Waga, who had been forcibly locked up in the galley. Gan wanted to go, but had been denied.

"If we're not back in a week, Rupert," said the millionaire, "carry out my instructions. Make for Para at once and see Dr. Angelinetta. He will know what to do. Filson will be able to look after the engines by that time, and with Maddock and the others, you will not be really short handed. Good luck!"

"Good luck to you, old man! Good luck to everybody!"

"I breaks yo' faces! I killes yo'! Oh, bad 'nough, awful badnesses!" howled Gan. "I murders yo'!"

"Let the poor darling out when he's tame, and be kind to him, Ru," said Ching-Lung. "I'm sorry we can't take him with us. Give him plenty of butter. Good-bye to yez, Barry, me broth of a bhoi! Kape on smoin'!"

There was a cheer, hearty but subdued, as the paddles dipped, and Gan yelled louder than ever. Barry shook his head mournfully, and murmured, as he pretended to wipe the tears from his eyes:

"They have gone, they have gone,
In their little rag-built boat,
And Oi faal as sad and cowl as whin
Oi pawned me overcoat."

Rupert laughed.

"You wouldn't miss your overcoat much in this climate, Barry. Go down to poor old Gan and try to make him happy. We shall have trouble with him now that Ching-Lung is out of the way, I am very much afraid. Down you go! What are you waiting for?"

Barry wore a wistful smile, and was greatly preoccupied in scraping out his pipe. Thurston repeated the question.

"Av yez'll spare me wan minute to make my will, Oi'll be going prisingly, sir," said the boy from Ballybunion. "Or Oi'll go at wance av your honour will lind me a suit of armour covered wid spoikes, a battle-axe, a maxim-gun, a barrerload of bombshells, and a gallon of pizen. Bedad, sir, widout those little precautions Oi wouldn't face that woid Eskimo this blessed minute, not for the Bank of England. Whoy, he'd ate me up! Harrk at ut, sir! Listhen to the swate, gintle things ut's saying! Faith, Oi don't want to doie brained by a saucepan."

"You're the only Irishman I ever met who was a coward, Barry," said Thurston. "I'm ashamed of you!"

Barry took off his coat, folded it up, and laid it on the deck. He counted his money, and placed it, together with his watch and chain, on the garment. Then he shook his head, and, with the look of a man about to be executed, went below. Gan was kicking and hammering at the galley door. Barry procured the hoop of a barrel, a pair of scissors, and a sailor's needle.

"I killes—killes—killes! I killes everybodys!" roared the infuriated Eskimo. "Lemme comes outs! Ooh, bad 'nough—ooh, awfulness! I eats yo' all alives! Ooh, yo' bad 'nough spitefulnesses! Break the places to bitses! I smashes him! Yah—h—h—h! Likes dats, and like dats! Why, yo' locks me ups, hunk? Where my Chingy?"

"He ain't 'alf enjoying hisself, souse me!" remarked Maddock, stepping out of the engine-room. "He's 'aving a 'oliday, Barry. What are you playing at, souse me? Making yourself a new weskit?"

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"It's a weskit for the gintle Iskimo, Ben," explained Barry. "Bedad, Oi've got orders to make him happy. Oi'll sell yez that job, Ben, for nothing, and give yez six-pence back. Will yez take ut on? Whist! Av Oi go in he'll brain me wid the poker, bad luck to ut! so Oi've rigged up this little dodge. Unlock the door, Benjamin darlint, and whin the spalpeen bolts Oi'll clap this sack over him. Are yez ridy? Thin go!"

Maddock cautiously turned the key and grasped the handle. Barry raised the sack ready to trap the Eskimo, whom he expected to see dart out.

"Let her bump, Benjamin!" he whispered. "Oi'll nab him this toime."

The bo'sun threw the door open, and Gan-Waga came like a rocket—headlong into the sack.

Barry O'Roonney fell upon his writhing, yelling captive, and Ben the bo'sun fell upon both of them. In spite of the sack, Gan-Waga succeeded in bringing one of his knees violently against Barry's only nose, and he also succeeded in planting both feet in the small of the bo'sun's back. But he had no chance to speak of.

"At—at—atishoo!" sneezed Barry. "Toie thim cords round his shoulders, Ben, while Oi sit on his spiteful little chest. Murther! He's knocked my poor nose as flat as a pancake under a athame-roller! This is phwat Oi'm towld to be kind to! This is phwat Oi'm towld to make happy! Bless ut, Oi love ut!"

They raised the prisoner to his feet. The barrel-hoop round his ankles made kicking impossible, and as his arms were inside the sack he could not use his fists; but he looked daggers and spears and hatchets, and other things.

"That frock suits him a treat, souse me!" grinned the bo'sun. "He looks real nice, souse me!"

"Whist, whist!" said Barry. "Gan, me bhoi, Oi don't mane to be unkind to yez. Oi'd give yez my last shillin'—for two sixpences—any day. Phwat does the poet say? 'Barry is your pal. He loves yez all the toime, And to smash his swate face wid a poker Would be a deadly croime.' That's phwat the poet says. Promise to be good, swate ducky, and Oi'll let ye out. Whisper but the wurd, and yez are as free as the larks that sing in the poie. Be a good bhoi now, and Oi'll feed yez wid butther on a—Ow, murther!"

The gleaming blade of a knife cut through the sack, and slashed downwards. Benjamin and Barry bolted for their lives. Howling out the war-cry of his people, Gan went after them.

"Hilp—hilp, sor! Hilp!" roared Barry. "Bedad, he'll kill somewan!"

"Drop that knife, Gan! There'll be none of this nonsense here!"

"Only wants to kills Barry O'Lunatics, Ruperts," said Gan, with a sigh. "He no goodfulness. Not lets me, hunk!"

"Well, of all the sauce!" said Barry. "Only wants to kill me, is ut? And this after all the trouble Oi've took thryin' to make the spalpeen happy! Faith, Oi've a good mind to break him into bits the soize of canary-seed! Besoides, ut's Froiday! Oi refuse to be kilt on such an unlucky day!"

Gan shut up the knife and pocketed it. Heaving another sigh, he went below to fill Barry's zinc-lined locker with water. He sat down on the locker to think, and a smile slowly crept over his sad face. There were many things on land that the Eskimo distrusted and disliked, but he was afraid of nothing in the water, from a shark to a wrinkle. Changing his pyjamas for a pair of bathing-drawers, Gan crept on deck. Maddock and Rupert Thurston were asleep, and Barry was looking the other way. Gan swam softly ashore through the evil-smelling water without troubling about the leeches. Filling the bag he had brought with mud and clay, he climbed slowly and quietly into a tall, leafy tree.

Ching-Lung had taught him how to climb trees, and no one had ever had a smarter or more fearless pupil, but the Eskimo had never climbed such a tree as this. It was a giant.

"I go right to the topes," thought the Eskimo. "Dis butterfuls big 'nough. Then I crawls right out, and if the breaks branches—the branches break I falls in the waters. Ho, ho—hoo! All lovelyfuls niceeness!"

Gan went up and up until the branches began to thin. It looked a terrible distance down to the water. Somehow he dropped the bag of mud, but it caught on a branch a good way below.

"Hallo! What yo' names, hunk?" said the Eskimo. "Not knows yo'. Oo' funny 'nough, chaps."

(Another magnificent instalment of this grand serial next Monday.)

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Coker's great jape on the Removites works perfectly up to a point; but then the unexpected happens, and the Fifth Formers have to admit that another triumph for Harry Wharton & Co. is the only result of

"COKER'S PLOT!"

A POPULAR FEATURE.

The series of articles now appearing in our companion paper, "The Gem" Library, under the title, "How to Get On in Canada," are attracting a considerable amount of favourable attention; and many letters of approval of them have been received from parents and guardians, as well as from young people who are themselves contemplating making a new start in life out West.

The writer of the articles, who himself went out to Canada as an ordinary emigrant, and had to climb the ladder of success by his own unaided efforts, is able to give the best possible advice—real practical advice—to all those who are ambitious to do as he has done—to succeed in Canada.

If any of my Magnetites have friends or acquaintances who are likely to be interested in the prospect that Canada holds out to them, they will be doing them an excellent turn by telling them about these splendid articles in "The Gem" Library.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

Will the following readers accept my best thanks for their most interesting letters:

James Kearney (Scotland), W. R. W. (Plaistow), and H. N. (Australia).

E. Maunder (St. John's Wood).—H. Glaisher, of 32, Charing Cross Road, W.C., will supply you with a book dealing with waterfowl.

A. C. (Gillingham) and M. Loftus (Tuam).—The "Magnet" Library was first published February 15, 1908.

F. M. (Gillingham).—Wun Lung first came to Greyfriars in October, 1908.

Harold Schutz (Dewsbury).—A volume of the "Magnet" Library comprises fifty-two issues.

"Young Tasmanian" and George Linley (Australia).—Thanks for letter and suggestion. I will most certainly do my best in the matter, but cannot make any definite promise.

S. Secker (Brighton).—I should advise you to rub your bicycle with a well-soaked paraffin-oil rag, then, with a dry rag, you will be able to bring it up to a nice polish.

W. Calthorpe (Grimsby).—The best thing you can do is to

go in for dumb-bell exercise night and morning. This will tend to develop your chest and shoulder muscles, which should soon cure you of being round-shouldered.

Leslie Kirby (Dewsbury).—A hank consists of two or more skeins tied together.

T. Wishart (Glasgow).—The "Lord Roberts Target Pistols" you mention are obtainable only from the Crown Gun Works, 6, Whittall Street, Birmingham.

"Admirer."—All stories published about Tom Merry which appeared in the "Boys' Friend 3d. Library" are now out of print; therefore, unobtainable from this office.

L. Baker (Eastbourne).—I am afraid that the "Boys' Realm Sports Libraries" containing the stories dealing with the "Maple Leaves" Football Club are now out of print.

CAGE BIRDS.

By Arthur G. Butler, Ph.D., F.L.S., F.Z.S., etc.

Foreign Cage-Birds.

Volumes might be written respecting foreign cage-birds, for of all pets they are the most fascinating. If one desires richness and brilliancy of colouring, the tanagers—fruit-eating finches—and the sugar-birds of tropical America are unsurpassed; whilst among seed-eaters the nonpareil and indigo buntings, and Virginian cardinal of the United States, the pin-tailed nonpareil, parrot-finch, and Gouldian finch of Borneo, New Caledonia, and Australia, with the fire-weavers of Africa, are almost as resplendent. As striking and bizarre birds, the Whydahs of Africa, with their enormously lengthened tail-coverts, are noteworthy; the paradise and pin-tailed whydahs being so cheap as to be within the reach of the humblest bird-lover, and well worth adding to an aviary of mixed foreign finches.

It has been frequently asserted that all good song birds are dull in colouring, and undoubtedly the most charming performer among finches is the tiny grey singing-finch of Africa, its song greatly resembling that of our skylark, and far exceeding that of all other canary finches. Nevertheless the beautiful black-headed siskin is a delightful songster, the gorgeous crimson Virginian Cardinal is no mean performer, the nonpareil and indigo buntings sing very sweetly, the avadavat and cordon-blue utter cheerful little phrases; whilst among the brightly-plumaged insectivorous birds the song of the Pekin nightingale equals that of our blackcap, and the ringing notes of the brilliant hangsters of the New World are most exhilarating. The Persian bulbul (the nightingale of Moore's "Lalla Rookh") is by no means dull in colouring, and the fruit-suckers of the East (Chloropsis), which are showy as parrots, are acknowledged musicians. I have had little experience of drongos, touracous, or toucans, with some other by no means cheap birds, which have to be kept separately, but they are all interesting.

Space fails me to discourse upon the many popular cage-birds of the parrot tribe, birds more maltreated than any in the matter of food; one point, however, cannot be too much pressed upon the public—namely, that each group of parrots requires special food; each seed-eating parrot or parakeet needs its own seed-mixture; some require, in addition, ripe fruits and nuts; the lorries and lorikeets are said, by those who ought to know, to require bread and milk; but to give this to parrots of other groups is often fatal.

The foreign doves, many of which are exquisite in colouring, are rather suitable for aviaries than cages; and, as they are the most quarrelsome of all birds towards their own relatives, it is advisable only to put one pair into an aviary with birds of other kinds; they are quite safe associates for the smallest finches, although so spiteful among themselves.

(Next Week: Another
 Article on Cage Birds.)

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