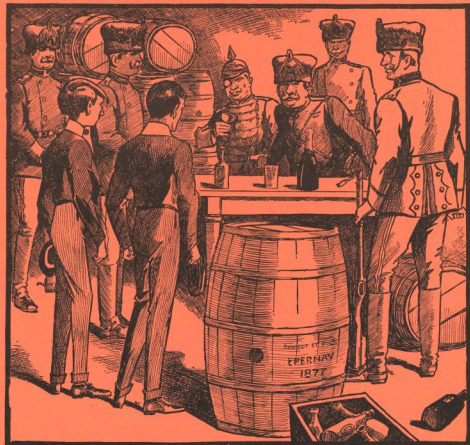
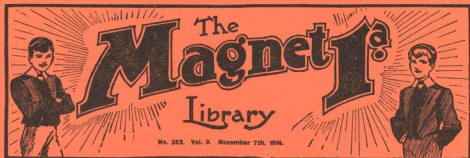


HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN FRANCE

A Magnificent Long Complete Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars. By Frank Richards.



"YOU ARE SPIES!" HISSED THE GERMAN.

(A Dramatic Scene in the Splendid Complete School Tale in this Issue.)

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3

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—PLEASE ORDER TO-DAY

The EDITOR'S WEEKLY CHAT WITH HIS READERS.

FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.

In our next long, complete tale of the chums of Greyfriars the harmony of the old school is disturbed by the intrusion of a surgeon-dentist, whose brutal method of extracting teeth causes something akin to mutiny in the Remove. The man's continued vindictiveness excites suspicion, and Vernon-Smith, in company with Harry Wharton & Co., sets out on the war-path. The dentist is tracked down, and the juniors are amazed to find that they have been the victims of a stupendous jape on the part of a rival school. They succeed in amply avenging themselves, however, and the pseudo dentist's

"REIGN OF TERROR"

is brought to an abrupt and drastic termination.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

P. Mansman.—The age of Fisher T. Fish is 14½.

C. Young (Edinburgh).—There have been numerous cricket and football matches between Greyfriars and St. Jim's. The Friars have generally come out on top, but there is very little to choose between the rival teams.

Tom Brown.—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy is 15 years of age. The character you mention is purely fictitious.

D. K. (Taskerton).—The approximate age of Darrell, Montesth, and Cutts is 17.

Wende.—If you send me your name and address I shall be pleased to send you what you require.

W. G. Grace (Halifax).—Many thanks for your letter and for the appreciative remarks concerning our companion papers. I am afraid the answer to your question is in the negative.

A. B.—I am sorry I cannot help you in the direction you name.

Frank, Ellard (Oban).—Vernon-Smith's Christian name is Herbert. There are nearly forty boys in the Greyfriars Remove.

My best thanks are due to the following readers for their interesting letters and helpful suggestions:

"Sonny" (Ashton-under-Lyne), Gladys E. M. L., "Cherry Major," E. J. Coleman, and D. R. A. (Belfast).

HOW YOU CAN HELP.

Many of the brave fellows who, at great sacrifice to themselves, have enlisted in Lord Kitchener's army, are beginning to find the long evenings in camp inexpressibly dull. The novelty of being under canvas has worn off, and under present conditions a rousing good yarn or something of that sort would be little less than a godsend to them. There has been a long and trying day. Drills, route-marches, and the thousand and one duties of military life have exhausted their energy, and unless the evening hours can be beguiled away in a satisfactory manner, the former flow of cheerful spirits will give place to despondency.

It is up to you, my readers, every one of you, to see that this does not happen. Our Tommies on the Continent have won a great reputation on account of their persistent cheerfulness in face of the gravest peril, and it will be a great thing for the nation as a whole if this fine spirit is kept up at home as well as abroad. It is this cheerful confidence which will place our gallant army on the high road to victory; and those of you who are precluded, on account of your youth, from serving with the Colours, should see to it that such a spirit is maintained.

Have you a relative encamped with his regiment in some remote part of the country? If so, secure an extra copy of your favourite paper each week and forward it to him. He will be more than pleased, for the stirring stories of Harry Wharton & Co. will not fail to act as a fine tonic for the blues. This unselfish action will probably be the means of causing plenty of merriment in a camp whose inmates were on the verge of becoming gloomy and dispirited.

Purchase an extra copy of THE MAGNET to-day, and despatch it to your brother, or friend, or whoever he may be. It will cheer him up as nothing else can, and you will have done your part in sending our soldiers to the scene of action strong, smiling, and fit for anything.

The Editor

A SPECIAL WAR SERIAL!

START IT TO-DAY!



READ THIS FIRST.

A wonderful airship, named the Falcon, is constructed by two brothers, Thorpe and Dick Thornhill. It is offered to the British Government; but they remain indifferent to the Falcon's qualities. Major Seigner, a German officer, manages to steal the Falcon, and despite all efforts made by Dick and his brother, the Falcon is retained by the Germans, who build a fleet of airships of the same pattern. Dick and Thorpe learn of this, and return to England to give the alarm. Dick is sent to warn Colchester and Woolwich, as all telegraphic communications have been cut by the Germans. A force of aliens in London are armed and uniformed by German agents and, commandeering a ferry-boat, make for Woolwich. But the garrison is alarmed by Dick, and the enemy is repulsed. In London the Germans endeavour to capture Liverpool Street Station, so as to ensure the safety of the five hundred thousand German troops already on their way to London via Harwich. Meanwhile, Thorpe Thornhill is valiantly defending the Night Hawk, their second airship, at the dockyards. The Germans manage to enter the shed. "Back, you dogs!" shouts Thorpe, swinging a clubbed rifle. "I'll brain the first man who comes near!"

(Now go on with the story.)

The Rescue Party.

In answer a rifle spat out its messenger of death from behind the foremost German. Another eighth of an inch, and Britain would have received a loss which an army corps could not have replaced, for the bullet skimmed so close to Thorpe Thornhill's head that it sent his cap flying from his head.

With a hoarse, guttural cry he sprang back as Thorpe's clubbed rifle hissed through the air. The next moment a yell of rage burst from the Germans as they saw their leader fall to the ground.

But what can twelve men do against nearly a hundred? Fighting bravely, losing now one, then another of their comrades, the Britishers were forced back before the glistening bayonet-points of the attackers.

"Fight to the death, lads! Do not let them touch the Night Hawk! Help must come soon!" cried Thorpe breathlessly.

But even as he spoke, as though his words had conjured up the assistance he craved, a loud, fearful roar shook the building—the roar of honest, peaceable men aroused to blood-madness—as the foremost ranks of the Arsenal workmen

entered the dockyard gates, to see the bodies of their murdered comrades strewn about the ground.

Like an avenging flood the mob swept onward.

Too late the Germans became aware of this new danger to their rear. They turned, and, wild with terror, poured an ill-directed volley into the closely-packed ranks, then, flinging down their arms, cried for mercy.

In vain. Along the streets leading to the dockyard the workmen had seen the dead and dying forms of women and children, and in the dockyard their own foully-slain companions.

With cries of fury, the mob closed in upon them. There was a brief scuffle, a few gasping, despairing cries, then the crowd clustered, wildly cheering, round Thorpe Thornhill and his gallant companions.

Even as they did so a German—the solitary survivor of the hundred men who had attacked the dockyard—staggered from beneath the feet of his assailants, and, rushing to Thornhill, clasped him round the legs, crying piteously:

"Save me—save me, for Heaven's sake! You remember, I have often waited upon you at St. James's Restaurant?"

Thornhill looked down, and recognised the pale-faced suppliant. It was the same man, although he knew it not, who, in the beginning of this tale, we saw waiting upon Karl Seigner and Stromitz.

"Back, lad! This poor wretch cannot harm us! Give him his life!"

"Kill him—kill him!" came from a score of voices at once.

"I saw my wife lying dead in the streets!" came in harsh, bitter, grief-stricken tones from amongst the surging crowd of workmen.

"And I my children—bayoneted in my own doorway!" cried another.

An angry rush was made at the cowering German; but, clutching him from his knees, Thornhill almost flung him beneath the hull of the airship, where his foes could not reach him.

The first blow the Germans had struck had failed. Was it but a sign of the future, or was it but a brief success for the British, the memory of which would be speedily drowned in disaster?

Nipped in the Bud!

An hour after the battalion detailed for the attack on Woolwich started upon its ill-fated enterprise, the much larger force ordered to seize the London terminus of the Great Eastern Railway entered the precincts of Liverpool Street railway station.

As the groups closed in upon each other they formed up in perfect silence upon the arrival platform and roadway.

For a few minutes nothing was heard but the shuffling of feet, the hoarse, subdued, guttural voices of the sergeants turning the mob of civilians into company upon company, regiment upon regiment, of drilled and highly organised soldiers.

"Bah! These British dogs, lulled by the false security of their invincible Navy, deem themselves secure. There will be a great awakening shortly!" said the general of the Iron Cross grins, as he cast a satisfied glance upon his stalwart battalions.

The general had prophesied an awakening, and it came, but not exactly as he meant it.

Suddenly a bugle rang out, his loud, clear defiance hushing the voices of the German sergeants, causing the officers to turn, while as they drew their swords, and the men to look at each other with glances of vague apprehension.

At the same moment the station was brilliantly illuminated by the bright glare of an electric searchlight.

A strange and, to them, terrible scene was presented to the bewildered eyes of the Germans.

The exits from and the entrances to the station were occupied by Grenadier Guards, grey-coated Territorials, and the Militia battalion of the London Fusiliers.

"You are caught like rats in a trap! An unconditional surrender alone can save you!" came a voice from immediately above the German general.

He looked up, and his sword dropped from his nerveless grasp, for suspended, as it were, between the vaulted roof and the soldier-crammed platform was the Night Hawk, the muzzles of her guns pointed threateningly towards the astounded Germans, and, leaning over her stern, regarding him with a smile of assured triumph, the man whom his Imperial master alone feared—Thorpe Thornhill.

The German general literally quashed his teeth with rage. "Never, Britisher!" he cried desperately in answer to the summons. "It is you who must surrender; it is you who have put your head into the lion's mouth! Fool! You cannot manoeuvre your airship here!"

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"There will be no need, general. If I raise my hand you and your men will be wiped off the face of the earth!" replied Thorpe calmly.

And the German, looking at that stern, determined countenance, knew that the Britisher held his life in the hollow of his hand.

Yet he feared the anger of his master the Emperor, who never forgave failure, more than death, and, turning to his men, cried:

"Men of the German Reserve, fire!"

But ere his order could be obeyed the slaughter commenced.

From the magazine rifles of the infantry, from the Night Hawk's Maxim guns and canister-laden cannon, a hail of bullets mowed down the German ranks.

For five minutes the work of death continued, and when the "Cease firing!" sounded, half the German force lay on the ground, dead or dying, and the survivors, with white, panic-stricken faces, were fleeing in all directions, making vain attempts to pierce the cordon of British soldiers which had been drawn round them, until at last, realising the hopelessness of escape, they sullenly threw down their arms, and, like their comrades at Woolwich, were marched off, prisoners of war.

But Thorpe Thornhill's work was not yet done.

Even as, alighting from his airship, he received, with the modesty of true genius, the congratulations of the British officers as they gathered round him, a bruised and bleeding policeman appeared on the scene, with the ominous intelligence that a flood of East End ruffianism and alien ingrates had been let loose upon the West End of London.

"More work for you, Thornhill!" said the colonel of the Grenadier Guards, turning to Thorpe, when the policeman had delivered his message.

"Rather for you, sir," returned the young inventor. "They have not learnt yet what my airship can do, and the sight of your gleaming bayonets would strike more terror into their hearts than I could without bringing fearful destruction upon them."

"At any rate, whilst I am marching my men through the streets you might fly overhead, and see what the rascals are up to!"

Thorpe nodded, and a minute later had regained his airship.

The German general had been quite right when he said that Thorpe could not manoeuvre his vessel beneath the glass roof of the station. In fact, he narrowly escaped being wrecked against the iron girders as he backed the Night Hawk from her close quarters.

However, he at last reached the open. As he did so a hoarse roar of many voices reached his ears. It came from the neighbourhood of the Mansion House, and thither he turned his ship's head.

A minute later his eyes fell upon a coarse, unruly mob, some of whom had already commenced their work of plunder on the surrounding shops; but the majority were pressing on in an apparently irresistible flood for the greater loot which they believed lay in the West.

To explain how he came about we will return for a few moments to Tom Evans.

With the first grey streaks of dawn, from windswept attic and damp cellar had crept the dark birds of the night.

Westwards they forced their way, gathering recruits from every alley and court, from every squalid and dirty street, until their numbers were swollen to several thousand.

Ever amongst their ranks moved German emissaries, firing the imaginations of their hearers with vivid accounts of the plunder which would be theirs when they sacked the rich mansions of the West.

At the head of the mob marched a burly ruffian, with crime stamped on every line of his fierce, animal-like face, and by his side, his shrill voice rising high above all others, was Tom Evans, whose whole character seemed to have changed. He was now a rioter amongst the rioters.

But as he went he dropped a word here and a word there—little seeds of common-sense, spoken with unfeeling instinct into British ears, but unheard by the alien crew, words which at present received but scant attention, but were destined to bear good fruit in the future.

"I say, mate, the toffs' houses will have to be chock-full o' gold if all this crowd is a-goin' to 'ave a share!" he said, tugging at the other's sleeve.

"Ay, they are that!" returned the other.

"Then it's a pity we British can't have it all to ourselves!" suggested Tom.

The man looked down at the speaker, granted contemptuously, and continued on his way.

But Tom was content. He knew that even if the soldiers were overpowered, and the riches of London at the mercy of the mob, the alien crew would not have it all their own way.

As they reached the Mansion House the roar of guns, intermixed with rifle and Maxim gun reports, fell upon their ears. Their leader halted, and looked inquiringly at one of the German agents who marched by his side.

"Forward, mine friends! Fear not see soldiers; they have already more than they can do, without worrying about us!" shouted the latter, as the mob, following the example of their leader, came to a dead halt.

"What in thunder do you mean?" inquired the standard-bearer.

"It is our good friends the Germans who have come to set you free from the tyranny of the King and the lords who rule over you. But forward! Whilst they are shooting down the British soldiers we can divide the plunder of the West between us."

"Them there soldiers are British, like us 'uns. They're our brothers, our mates, our own flesh and blood!" shrieked the shrill voice of Tom Evans.

"Silence, you brat, and take that!" cried a German, white with rage, aiming a vicious blow with the iron-shod club he carried at the boy, which, if had taken effect, would have put him out of this story for ever.

But ere it could fall the mob's leader, ruffian though he was, snatched the weapon from the other's hand, and with one blow of his tremendous fist stretched him senseless on the ground.

Then, turning to his followers, he cried, in loud, hoarse tones:

"Mates, we've been blamed well fooled! It won't to help ourselves we was to go West, but to help the cursed Germans take our country and our bits of homes from us, whilst we were shot down like dogs by our own countrymen. Here, yonker, jump on my shoulder! We'll let the furrin' brutes know that if we ain't all bloom'n' saints, we're Britishers! Death to the German spies—death!"

"Death to the German spies—death!" shrieked Tom excitedly from his elevated position on the other's shoulder.

"Death to the German spies—death!" was taken up with a fierce, hollow roar that struck terror to the hearts of the alien henchmen.

The British portion of that mob was composed of gaolbirds, murderers, wife-beaters, pickpockets, burglars, the very scum of humanity; but some spark of good is latent in the most degraded breast, and, gallows-birds though they were, within their hearts a spark of Heaven-sent patriotism burnt bright and clear.

In vain the doomed emissaries tried to escape the fury of the storm they had themselves raised, in vain they strove to flee. They were overtaken, hurled to the ground, and trampled underfoot by the infuriated mob.

A Fight in Mid-Air!

It was exactly at this moment that Thorpe Thornhill caught his first glimpse of the mob. He saw the first blow struck; he saw the mob fall upon some apparently peaceable pedestrians.

"Quick, lads! Depress the forward Maxims! The alien scum are killing the British!" he cried, misapprehending the situation.

Eagerly the crew of his airship flew to obey his orders. Another moment, and a fearful mistake would have been committed; but even as the gunner took his seat by the gun he passed with his finger on the trigger, for from amidst the howls of rage and the cries of anguish arose the words we have before mentioned.

"Death to the German spies! Death!"

The gunner looked interrogatively towards his captain. The nodded, and he rose from his seat. They knew the danger was past; they were no longer needed, and a sigh of relief escaped from everyone on board the airship, for they would not be called upon to fire upon their own countrymen.

But the next moment all thoughts of the mob fighting below was banished as a loud report from their right reverberated through the air, and a shell flew shrieking by them, so near that the wind it made sent Thorpe staggering to the side of the vessel as it flew on its course, until it struck one of the tall buildings in Queen Victoria Street, crashing through two floors, and setting the place on fire.

Wonderingly Thorpe looked around him, then his lips were pressed tightly together, whilst a look of grim determination settled on his face, for, skimming swiftly by him some five hundred yards away, with her forward guns still covering the Night Hawk, was the Falcon.

Where she had come from, Thorpe could not imagine; but the reason she was there was not difficult to guess. Seigner had determined that the treacherous attack on London should not fail for want of the additional terror of a bombardment from the air.

It is true the unexpected attack had for the moment chilled even Thorpe Thornhill's dauntless heart, but the feeling was swiftly displaced by one of fierce joy. Now he had his foe before him it would not be his fault if the Falcon's last fight had not been blood.

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NEXT MONDAY—**"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"**

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

Instinctively his crew had hastened to the big guns in the turret, and Thornhill's rapid orders to open fire had barely passed his lips ere the disturbance ceased as though by magic, whilst the crowd watched with gazing mouth and wide-open eyes the combat which was fiercely raging overhead, as the air shook beneath the violent discharges of the Night Hawk's guns, and the no less continuous roar of the Falcon, answering shot for shot.

It was a strange and fearful sight as the two airships circled round and round each other, darting hither and thither, mounting higher and higher, as each tried to get above the other, until at last a loud, thrilling ere burst from the mob as one of the airships was seen to tilt slightly forward, then fall like some tremendous thunderbolt straight towards the earth.

From his perch on the hooligan's shoulder Tom Evans had watched the conflict with breathless interest. His heart had stood still when he saw the descending airship, and the next moment a sigh of relief burst from his lips as he saw her downward descent gradually checked, and a minute later she flew off as quickly as ever, westward.

Doubtless some well-aimed shot had temporarily derailed her machinery; but he asked himself which ship it was that was fleeing from its pursuer—the British or the German?

It was a question that was asked by thousands of people at the same moment by the mob in the street, the startled West Enders who had rushed from their houses in alarm and dismay, and the soldiers hastening through the streets to check the advance of the mob, which, thanks to Tom's ingenuity, had been rendered harmless—for the reader will remember that the two ships were built so much alike that it was difficult to say which was which.

However, Tom noticed that although the pursuing vessel could have dropped shell upon shell upon the other's hull, she did not do so, and he made a shrewd guess that it was to save the houses over which they fled—a consideration which would have had no weight had the German been the conqueror.

Tom's surmise was correct—a well-planted shell from the Night Hawk, bursting near the Falcon's engine-room, had put her engines out of gear. But, fortunately for all on board, it was only for a moment; the next, her fans and wings were working as rapidly as ever, until at last they obtained a fresh grip of the air, and, as we have seen, she continued her flight.

But Seigner, who commanded the Falcon in person, had had enough of it, and finding that Thorpe Thornhill's manipulation of the Night Hawk was superior to his own, was only intent upon escaping from so dangerous a neighbourhood.

Thornhill, on the other hand, had received almost as big a scare as his enemy, for it was not until he saw the Falcon falling like a stone earthwards that he realised what a catastrophe might follow upon her reaching the earth if the explosives with which her ammunition-room was undoubtedly crammed should go off, carrying death and destruction into the closely-packed streets beneath them; therefore, although he could easily have destroyed his enemy, he refrained from firing, and Seigner, putting on full speed, dashed towards where Kensington and the surrounding districts were hidden beneath a huge bank of black, impenetrable fog.

Seigner had been sent to find out how the intended rising in London progressed. He had heard the firing in Liverpool Street, he had seen clouds of smoke rising from the direction of the Arsenal, and had also heard the infuriated shouts of the mob in the City, from which he had hastily inferred that the three blows his Government had planned had been struck aright, and did not dream for a moment but what they were successful. Therefore, his work done, he was anxious to return safely to where the German army was at that moment disembarking at Harwich, with the information that all was well.

Bitterly he regretted that hatred of Thorpe Thornhill had carried him away to such an extent that by firing the, to him, fatal shot, he should have drawn the Night Hawk's attention on himself.

However, he knew that his stolen airship could do, and, confident that if he could reach the bank of fog he could escape, he continued on his way.

Deeming it unlikely that Seigner would leave the neighbourhood of London until he had accomplished something, Thorpe Thornhill determined to hang closely on his heels. Thanks to his searchlight, he was able to keep the Falcon in view through the fog. It is true he could only see an indistinct, glittering mass in front of him; but that was sufficient, and, entering the coming-tower, he took the wheel.

It was a strange experience, dashing at full speed through the foggy, smoke-laden atmosphere. Now and again he caught a glimpse of some tall shaft, or the roof of a big building, emerging through the fog below like a rock from

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

some black, sullen sea. All around him was a yellowish mist, and far above the sun now and again pierced through the engulfing fog.

With his eye glued on the misty outline of his foe's ship, Thorpe Thornhill stood at the wheel, his hands on the spokes, ready to follow the slightest divergence in the other's course.

"Try and get another knot out of her!" he called down the telephone to the engine-room, for immediately in front of the Falcon the fog appeared growing blacker, and he feared to lose sight of his quarry. He feared to give Seigner a moment's respite, lest he would hurl his shells into the first crowd he met, through sheer lust of blood.

"I can do no more, sir, she is already working her hardest," came from Benson.

But Thorpe scarcely heard him. The Falcon had plunged in 's the denser air, and had vanished as though she had disappeared in space.

However, there was no help for it: he must keep straight on, and risk finding his foe on the other side of the bank of mist, which was now so thick that the searchlight could not pierce it.

However, he deemed himself well above the buildings, and continued his course without slackening speed.

Suddenly a cry fell on his ears from the in the bow of the vessel, who was seen running swiftly towards its stern.

"Half speed! Stop!" he yelled into the telephone receiver, for immediately in front of him appeared a mass of iron girders with a circling top.

"Full speed astern!" he added hastily; but it was all in vain. The airship had too much way upon her; it was also impossible to rise above the obstacle, or to steer to right or left of it, for then the obstruction would catch the airship's wings, and destruction would be certain, whilst if she struck the obstacle full with her bows, although she did not hope to escape without serious injury, her wings might still suffice to bring her gently to the earth.

Loud hissed the fans as they met the air through which the Night Hawk was rushing. For a moment her speed did not seem to decrease, but the next she went slower and slower, until Thorpe was already beginning to hope that she would avoid the obstacle after all, when a cry of alarm came from the forward turret, from which poured half a dozen of the frightened crew, all rushing sternward.

The next moment the airship, now scarcely moving, but still unable to stop her onward flight, passed between a mass of steel rods and enormous girders, then came to a complete stop, with her nose tightly fastened, held amongst the mass of iron into which she had run, and her stern dropping downwards.

And there she hung, suspended on the summit of the Great Wheel at Earl's Court, into which Thorpe Thornhill had inadvertently run.

Dumbfounded by the unfortunate incident which had put his vessel out of action, at any rate, for the time being, Thornhill scrambled from the conning-tower, and looked round him.

As he did so, he shuddered, for the airship was hanging by the spokes of the enormous wheel, at an angle of forty-five degrees.

To move seemed to be to invite destruction, for the slightest slip on that slanting deck would hurl him to the earth. However, by clinging to ringbolts, he dragged himself past a number of his men clinging, terror-stricken, to anything they had grasped at the moment of collision, and reached the skylight of the engine-room, to find Benson still at his post, with one hand on the lever of the engine, and the other holding a handkerchief to a big gash in his forehead, caused by his having fallen headlong against the side of the engine-room.

"How are the engines, Benson?" asked Thorpe Thornhill anxiously, for on the engineer's answer depended the lives of all.

"Thank Heaven, Mr. Thornhill, you are saved! Are the others all killed?"

"No, no! As far as I know, there has been no loss of life at present. But see if the stern fans will work."

Cautiously Benson moved the required lever. As he did so the hull of the airship shook, and Thornhill instinctively tightened his grasp on the ringbolts to which he clung. The next moment he could almost have shouted with joy as he found the deck gradually resuming its proper position, for the swiftly revolving fan was bringing the Night Hawk into position.

"Keep her moving, Benson, whilst I see what damage has been done!" cried Thornhill.

Accompanied by the second engineer and Pat Denver, he went the round of the vessel, and was relieved to find that, save for the forward fan, one wing of which was somewhat bent, and a few dents in the strongly built steel bows, the Night Hawk had received comparatively little injury.

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Still the question remained—when relieved of the support of the wheel, would she maintain her equilibrium?

But there was yet another and a greater danger to face. What if Seigner returned to find them at his mercy in their present position?

"Quick, lads! This wheel is as good as a ladder! Get to earth as quickly as you can!" he cried to his crew.

The men looked suspiciously at each other.

"And you, sir?"

"Never mind me!" cried Thorpe, guessing their thoughts.

"Do, as I tell you."

Reluctantly the men obeyed.

"You will stay with me, Benson!" asked Thorpe. "And you, too, Denver?"

The two men nodded. They guessed their commander's intention, and knew, also, the dangerous experiment he was about to make.

When the last of the crew had reached the earth, Thorpe Thornhill took his place in the conning-tower with Pat Denver, whilst Benson returned to the engine-room. Their faces were very pale; but the pulsations of their hearts were not increased by so much as one beat, as in a hoarse, strained voice Thorpe Thornhill gave the order:

"Full speed astern!"

Loud whirled the engine; rapidly the wings and fans beat the air—all except the forward fan, and that was idle.

For a moment it seemed as though her engines could not move her; but, as a cork flies out of a bottle, so the Night Hawk eventually wrenched herself free from the mass of rods and girders into which she had been wedged.

Now came the crucial moment. Would she maintain a horizontal position long enough to allow her to reach the earth, or would the fact of her forward fan not working cause her to plunge head foremost to the ground?

The question was soon answered. The airship's bows, it is true, gradually dropped, and, had they had double the distance to descend, it is probable she would have rushed headlong to destruction; but, as it was, her descent slackened her wings and the stern fans. She glided to the earth, alighting with scarcely a jar on the open space near the Welcome Club.

Eagerly Thorpe Thornhill's men crowded round him, their faces showing how pleased they were that their employer had brought his airship safely to the ground, for Thorpe Thornhill possessed in a strong degree the rare gift of winning the love of all under him.

"Now, my lads, set to work!" he cried presently. "We must get the Night Hawk in commission as quickly as ever we can! Who knows what mischief the Falcon, under her German masters, may be up to at this very moment?"

The men needed no further inducement to work their hardest. Casts were thrown off, spanners brought into use, and in an incredibly short space of time the injured fan had been removed.

Suddenly Thorpe Thornhill, who was superintending the work, lifted his hand.

"Hark!" he cried. "What is that?"

In a moment all was still, as every ear strained to catch the sound which had alarmed their leader.

The next moment consternation appeared on every face, as louder and louder the familiar hissing noise made by the airship's wings fell upon their ears.

Then through the mist, they saw, high above their heads, the Falcon, ghostly and indistinct in the distance, moving slowly round in wide circles, evidently searching for them.

In one bound Thorpe Thornhill reached the conning tower, and the next the hull of the Night Hawk had assumed the colour of the mist in which she lay.

But had he been in time? It seemed not; for, suddenly ceasing her circling flight, the Falcon rushed through the air towards them.

"Make for the building, lads; we can't offer any effective resistance here!" cried Thornhill, taking in at once the precarious position in which they lay.

"And abandon the Night Hawk, sir?" objected Pat Denver.

Thorpe's heart was heavy within him at the prospect, and yet he answered lightly:

"Certainly, Pat. We can build a new airship, but we can't get new lives."

Reluctantly they retreated into the building, with difficulty persuading the men employed at the exhibition, who had just become aware of the airship's presence, not to crowd round the Night Hawk, and thus betray her whereabouts to Seigner.

(Another splendid instalment of this grand serial next Monday. Order your copy now.)

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LOOKING FOR ALONZO

A Magnificent, New, Long, Complete Tale dealing with the Adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bad News!

"W HAT'S the matter with Toddy?" Bob Cherry asked that question in Study No. 1 in the Remove passage.

And Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, the owners of that celebrated study, shook their heads.

There was something the matter with Toddy. Nearly all the Remove had noticed it. Peter Todd, generally the cheerfulness of fellows, was suffering from an attack of the "blues." Peter Todd was hardly ever known to suffer from the blues. He was thoroughly healthy, and thoroughly cheerful, as a rule. But he had the blues now, and had them bad!

And Harry Wharton & Co.—the Famous Five of the Remove—were naturally concerned about it.

It was true that Peter Todd was, in a way, the rival of Study No. 1. True that he had an extraordinary persuasion that his study—Study No. 7—was top study in the Remove. Which, of course, No. 1 were not disposed to admit for a single moment. But if old Toddy was in trouble, the Famous Five were quite ready to help him out, and back him up, and, in fact, do anything that was needed.

"He's been going about for days now like a bear with a sore head," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully. "There's something up."

"Perhaps he misses Alonzo!" Nugent suggested.

Bob Cherry grunted. Peter's cousin Alonzo had been away from Greyfriars for some time, on a holiday abroad with his Uncle Benjamin. Peter might have missed him—but in the opinion of many of the Remove fellows, Alonzo's absence was not a reason for having the blues—rather the reverse.

"Tain't that!" said Bob.

"Hard up!" suggested Wharton. "I've noticed that he's always hanging about when the postman comes, as if he's waiting for a letter."

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"More serious than that. I should say," he remarked.

"He has been looking off colour for some time," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "Looks as if he has something on his mind. But he hasn't said anything."

"Here he comes!" said Nugent, as the junior in question passed the open door of the study, hurrying along the Remove passage.

"Toddy!"

"Here, Toddy—"

Peter Todd did not reply. He hurried on, apparently not hearing the friendly voices from Study No. 1. He descended THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 352.



Toddy was sitting at the study table, with his back to the door, counting banknotes. Bunter's little round eyes grew large as saucers behind his spectacles. He blinked dazedly at the rustling paper Toddy was counting. Fivers, and one-pound notes, and notes for ten shillings! Bunter was dazed! (See Chapter 4.)

the stairs by the swift and simple process of sliding down the banisters.

"Young man in a hurry!" said Nugent. "What this dickens—Hullo!"

There was a sudden roar from the stairs. Harry Wharton & Co. ran out of the study. On the next landing a fat junior was sitting groping wildly for a very large pair of spectacles. Peter Todd was vanishing down the lower flight of stairs.

"Ow, ow, ow! Yow!" came from the fat junior sitting on the landing. "Ow! Beast! Yow! My neck's broken! On!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter staggered to his feet, and set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and blinked round wrathfully.

"Where's that silly ass?" he roared. "What silly duffer was it came shooting down the banisters and knocking a fellow over? Yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I'll smash him!" roared Bunter. "I'll pulverise him! Where is he?"

"It was Toddy!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "He seemed to

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NEXT MONDAY—**"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"**

be in a hurry! After him, Bunter! We'll come and see fair play."

"Ahem! If it was Toddy, I'll let him off," said Bunter. "I suppose he's going down to meet the postman. Must be a remittance, or he wouldn't be in a hurry like that!"

And the Owl of the Remove hurried downstairs after Peter Todd—not to take vengeance, but to be on the scene when the remittance arrived. Billy Bunter shared Study No. 7 with Peter Todd, and he regarded himself as possessing a first claim upon all remittances that arrived for that study.

"Oh! It's the post again! I said Wharton. "Todd's expecting a letter! Blessed if I know why he should be so excited about it."

"Must be something more important than a remittance, I should think," said Bob. "He may have relations at the front, or something like it. Haven't heard of them, if he has. Let's go down!"

Peter Todd had evidently caught sight of the postman in the Close from his study window. He landed from the banisters in the lower hall, and tumbled over, and picked himself up, and dashed out of the house.

The chums of the Remove followed him, though at a more leisurely rate. Todd ran up to the postman, and caught him by the shoulder.

"Letter for me?" he demanded eagerly.

"Yes, Master Todd."

"Oh, good! Hand it over—quick!" exclaimed Todd breathlessly.

The postman fumbled in his bag.

Peter Todd stood twitching with impatience at the old fellow's slow movements. His face was quite red with excitement.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's the hurry, Toddy? Have you come into a fortune?"

"Rats! No!"

"Got a relation in the fighting-line?"

"No, ass!"

"Then, what's the bother?"

"Be-er-er!"

Peter Todd was not communicative. He stood twitching with impatience while the postman fumbled over the letters.

"I say, you fellows, clear off!" said Billy Bunter, blinking disdainfully at the Co. "You don't come in here at all. Toddy's my pal, not yours, and this remittance—"

"You fat head!" said Bob Cherry, in deep disgust. "We're not after Toddy's remittance. Is it a remittance, Toddy?"

Todd did not answer. His eyes were on the letters that the postman was slowly turning over.

"Of course it is!" said Bunter. "Toddy hasn't had a remittance from his Uncle Benjamin for a long time, owing to this beastly war. Things are being managed rottenly. The War Office ought to be specially careful to keep open postal communications when a chap's relations may be stuck somewhere abroad. We're jolly nearly stony in our study!"

"Here you are, sir!"

"Thanks!"

Peter Todd grabbed the letter from the postman. It was addressed in the handwriting of his cousin Alonzo, and bore a 25-centime stamp of Switzerland. The Removes knew that Alonzo Todd had been in Switzerland with his Uncle Benjamin before the outbreak of hostilities, and since then, of course, there had been no news. Like thousands of other British tourists, the Todds were "hung up" in Switzerland, probably waiting for a chance to get home.

Peter Todd tore the letter open, Billy Bunter watching him with glowering eyes. The junior scanned the letter eagerly, and then gave a groan.

"Ain't it all right?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"All right? No, it's all wrong!"

"Do you mean to say that your uncle hasn't sent you a remittance?" demanded Bunter indignantly.

"Rat!"

"Isn't there a remittance in that letter?"

"Fathead!"

"Well, I call it rotten!" exclaimed Bunter heatedly. "After all this time, to write to you without sending a remittance! Why, I think—Hallo—yow—ow—wharrer you up to? Leggo! Yarooch!"

It was really a superfluous question, for it was only too plain what Peter Todd was up to. He was seizing Bunter by the collar and swinging him round, and then, planting a heavy boot behind him, as forcibly as if he were kicking for goal from the half-way line.

Boff, boff, boff!

"Yarooch! Help! Dragginnoff! He's gone mad! Yow-ow-ew! Help! Fire! Murder!" roared Bunter.

"Take that!" shouted Peter. "And that—and that—and that! I'll teach you to worry me about remittances when me cousin's in danger. And that—and that!"

"Ow! Murder! Fire! Help!"

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"And that—and that—and THAT!"

The chums of the Remove swooped down on Peter Todd, and dragged him away from Bunter. He really looked as if he would do some damage. Billy Bunter tore himself away, and fled at top speed, yelling. Peter Todd panted in the grasp of the Co.

"Let go!" he growled. "You asses, chuck it!"

"Take it easy!" said Bob Cherry soothingly. "Bunter isn't a football, you know, though he's the same shape! Draw it mild!"

"The fat rotten!" growled Peter, calming down. "I—I say—this is rotten—awfully rotten! Poor old Alonzo—poor old Uncle Ben! It's simply awful!"

"Nothing happened to them?" asked Wharton anxiously.

"There aren't any Germans in Switzerland, you know!"

Todd gave a groan.

"They're not in Switzerland now, according to this."

"What's the news?"

"This is a dashed old letter, delayed in the post," groaned Peter. "It's from Alonzo. It was written before the war broke out. And he says—he says they're just going to leave Switzerland, to come home through Germany!"

"My hat!"

"Then they're in Germany now!" said Nugent.

"I—I suppose so!"

"By Jove, that's serious!"

And the chums of the Remove looked very grave indeed.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Todd's Resolve!

PETER TODD'S excitement had died away.

He was looking pale and worried.

In his agitation at receiving that disquieting news it was not surprising that his temper had failed him, and that he had come down with a heavy hand on the Owl of the Remove.

A good many of the juniors had gathered round now, and they all looked serious as they heard Peter Todd's statement.

Alonzo Todd was called the Duffer of Greyfriars, and there was hardly a fellow in the school who had not pulled his leg at one time or another. But they all liked him, and they all felt sympathetic towards Peter. At Greyfriars, Peter had always fought the battles of his cousin, and looked after him, and protected him. But poor Alonzo was out of the reach of Peter's protection now.

"It's rotten!" groaned Peter. "You see, I knew they intended to come home through Germany, and I was anxious to get a letter. I thought they might have heard the news in time to stay in Switzerland. And it's my fault that Alonzo's there at all. I should have gone on that holiday with Uncle Ben myself, only I fixed it up for Alonzo to go, because I thought it would be a good thing for him. And now—" Peter Todd broke off, with a tremor in his voice.

"But that's an old letter," said Wharton comfortingly.

"They may have stayed in Switzerland, after all."

"Then why haven't they come home?" said Peter despondingly. "Lots of tourists have been able to get home since the war broke out. And goodness knows what may happen to them in Germany. The Germans are all spy mad, especially in war time, and they may—they may—" He paused.

"It's rotten!" said Bob.

The juniors understood now why Peter Todd had been in the "blues" for so long. He had been waiting for news from Cousin Alonzo, and it had not come. Now that it had come, it was the reverse of good. If Uncle Benjamin and Alonzo had been caught in Germany by the outbreak of war, there was no telling what might have happened to them, and there would be no certain knowledge till the end of the war. And how long would that be—years, perhaps!

Todd crumpled the letter in his hand, and thrust it into his pocket, and went into the house with a glum brow.

Peter Todd was looking more in the "blues" than ever when the Remove went into the class-room for afternoon lessons.

He was extremely absent-minded in class, his thoughts being elsewhere, but Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was very easy with him. The Remove master had heard of the letter from Switzerland, and he made allowances for the unfortunate Peter's anxious state of mind.

All the fellows, too, were sympathetic, with the exception of William George Bunter. Bunter could not quite forgive Uncle Benjamin for not contriving to send a remittance. Bunter's opinion was that Uncle Benjamin ought to have been able to manage it somehow. But he did not talk to Peter Todd on the subject. Bunter found it very uncomfortable to sit down that afternoon; and he did not want any more.

After lessons, the Famous Five joined Peter Todd in the passage.

"Come down to the footer, Toddy, old man," said Johnny Bull.

Todd shook his head. "It will buck you up," urged Bob Cherry; and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh remarked that the buckfulness would be terrific.

"Thanks! I won't come," said Peter moodily. "I don't feel like a footer. I'm thinking about old Alonzo being in that rotten scrape. I've got to get him out of it, somehow."

The juniors stared at him.

"You've got to?" said Wharton.

"Yes!"

"But what can you do?"

"Blessed if I know yet; but I've always looked after Alonzo, and I'm going to look after him now, when he needs it most," said Todd quietly. "I'm not going to leave him in the lurch."

"But—but what—?"

"I'm thinking it out. He's got to be got home," said Todd firmly. "If there's no other way, I shall go and look for him."

"Go and look for him!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Go and look for him in Germany—when we're at war with Germany!"

"Draw it mild, Toddy, old man!"

"If I could only get some news of where he is exactly," said Todd miserably. "I wouldn't mind the risk. I can speak a bit of German, too. But—"

"You wouldn't be allowed to go, fathead!"

"The Head would be down on you like a hundred of bricks if you suggested such a thing," said Wharton aghast. "You must be off your rooker to think of it, really, Todd!"

"My people would let me go to find Alonzo," said Todd, "and then the Head would have to. And I shall go if I can fix it! I'm thinking it out now."

Todd walked away with his hands thrust deep into his trousers' pocket, his brows corrugated with thought.

He left the chums of the Remove staring blankly at one another.

"Well, that takes the cake!" said Johnny Bull. "Of course, he wouldn't be allowed to go. It's impossible!"

"It would be a jolly adventure!" said Harry Wharton, his eyes glistening. "If he went, I'd ask nothing better than to go with him. But—"

"But it's impossible."

"Yes; I suppose it is."

But the juniors knew that Peter Todd was a determined youth, and they knew, too, his strong affection for the Duffer of Greyfriars. Peter was his protector, and Peter did not mean to leave him in the lurch. And Peter was evidently thinking out that hare-brained scheme of looking for Alonzo in the enemy's country.

A little later, Peter was seen in consultation with Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith had spent a vacation in the South of Germany, on the Swiss borders, and Peter was getting information about the country. The Bounder told him all he knew, but he grinned as he told him. The idea of going to look for Alonzo struck the Bounder as the maddest thing he had ever heard of. But the idea was growing in Peter's mind.

That evening, the Famous Five had gathered to tea in No. 1 Study, with Squiff, the Australian junior, and Mark Linley. The seven juniors were discussing Toddy, when Toddy came in, and closed the door behind him. The expression on his face was very serious.

"Any news, Toddy?" asked Wharton.

"None; only that I've made up my mind."

"To wait and see?" asked Mark Linley.

"No."

"What then?"

"To go and look for Alonzo!" said Peter quietly.

There was a buzz of voices at once.

"You can't!"

"You sha'n't!"

"Your pater won't let you!"

"The Head won't let you!"

"Don't be an ass!"

"Sit down and have tea, and don't talk rot!"

"The rotfulness is terrific, my esteemed Toddy."

Peter Todd listened to that outburst unmoved. The expression of his face did not change.

"It's up to me!" he said.

"Rats!"

"Rot!"

"Have you asked the Head?"

"What's the good of asking the Head?" growled Peter. "He would say no. And when I come to think of it, I'm afraid my father would say no. But when I bring Alonzo back safe and sound, they'll take it smiling. You'll see!"

"But—but you can't do it! You'd have to run away from school—"

"I'm prepared to do that—to look for Alonzo."

"Can't be done, Toddy," said Squiff, shaking his head.

"It's up to us to stop you from making an ass of yourself."

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like that. You'd get the sack if you ran away from school—a flogging, anyway."

"I don't care!"

"We care for you, then," said Harry Wharton. "You're not going."

Peter Todd shrugged his shoulders.

"You can't stop me," he said coolly.

"We could jolly soon stop you by telling a prefect about it!" exclaimed Nugent.

"But you won't do that!"

"Well, I—I suppose we won't!" agreed Frank. "We can't sneak, even about a lunatic for his own sake! But do have a little sense, Toddy! You can't go!"

"I can go, and I'm going," said Peter determinedly. "I'm going to head for Switzerland first. They may have stopped there, after all. The letter I had was from Zurich. I shall take up the trail there and look for them. If they're in Switzerland, all right. If they are in Germany, I shall follow them there, and find out what's become of them. It's up to me!"

"Fathead!"

"I'm not saying anything about it," resumed Todd, "only to you fellows. I know I can trust you. I shouldn't have spoken to you, either, but I want you to help me."

"Help you run away from school!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "No! I won't land you into that. It would get you into trouble. I want you to lend me some money—all you can. I'll settle it all later, of course; but at present I want all I can get. Lord Maulverver has lent me fifteen quid. Wun Lung has handed out five. I want you fellows to shell out."

The chums of the Remove looked at one another. Certainly, if Peter Todd intended to carry out his wild scheme, he would need money—plenty of it. So far as that went, Harry Wharton & Co. were ready to "shell out" their last shilling to help Peter if he really started on his expedition. But it was a serious question whether it was not their duty to stop him by force if need be.

"Look here!" said Wharton desperately. "You can't go! You sha'n't go! And that settles it. You can't get abroad without a passport in these days, anyway."

"I can get a passport."

"The Head will be frightfully ratty."

"Let him!"

"You may get the sack!"

"I don't care!"

"You'll never find Alonzo!"

"I'm going to try."

The juniors looked helplessly at the determined Peter. There was evidently no arguing with him. An idea occurred to Wharton.

"Look here, wait till you can ask advice of somebody older," he said. "My uncle is coming down here to-morrow. He's going to Italy, and he's coming to say good-bye to me. Ask his advice."

Todd shook his head.

"He would call me an ass, that's all!"

"And he would be quite right!" growled Johnny Bull. "The rightfulness would be terrific."

"Nuff said!" exclaimed Todd briskly. "If you chaps don't want to shell out, I'll manage without it. Good-bye!"

"Hold on!" said Wharton sharply. "It isn't that! I don't know whether we oughtn't to go and tell Wingate or Mr. Quelch at once, so that you can be stopped."

"You can't sneak!"

"Well, but—"

"Besides, I should go all the same—sneak out of the dorm. at night, if necessary," said Todd coolly. "You can get me into a row, but you can't stop me."

That was evidently true. Wharton felt baffled. The scheme was utterly harebrained. But Peter Todd had made up his mind, and there was no stopping him.

"Do have a little sense, Peter, old man!" said Bob Cherry. "You really can't do it, you know. You simply can't!"

"Are you going to lend me any tin?" demanded Peter.

The juniors rose to their feet. If Peter was going, the more money he had with him the more successful he was likely to be.

"All right," said Harry. "Mind, we're against the whole binzney, but if you're determined to play the giddy goat, you can have our tin."

"Thanks! Shell out!"

There was a hurried collection in No. 1 Study. Most of the juniors were in funds, and the total amount realised was five pounds.

"That makes twenty-five quid I've got," said Peter; "and I had some of my own, too. And I'm going to try Smithy! Many thanks! Ta-ta!"

"When—when are you going?" stammered Wharton.

"I'm going to-morrow."

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"Better not tell you that, and then you won't know anything about it when the row comes," said Todd.

And he quitted the study. He left the chums of the Remove in a state of mind that was utterly dismayed. To take the extreme step of informing a master of Peter's intention was repugnant to their minds; and even that would not have stopped him if he was determined—as he evidently was. They had to let him go. But it was no wonder that the juniors felt utterly dismayed and uneasy.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Bouncer Takes a Hand!

"YOU'RE dotty!"

That was Vernon-Smith's comment when Peter Todd talked to him after his visit to No. 1 Study. The Bouncer stared blankly at Todd.

"Dotty!" he repeated. "Potty! Off your rocker! You can't go!"

"I've had all that before," said Peter patiently. "Mauly told me so, and lent me fifteen quid. Wun Lung told me so, and lent me five. No. 1 Study told me so, and raised another five for me. Now you're told me so—thanks—and how much are you going to lend me?"

The Bouncer laughed.

"I'll lend you some tin with pleasure, if you're really going," he said. "But I think you're a mad ass!"

"Thanks! How much? Your pater is a giddy millionaire, Smithy, and you ought to be able to stand a good whack. I know you're rolling in fivers, to say nothing of the new giddy banknotes of a quid each. All's grist that comes to the mill. You can take my word, I suppose, that I shall square it all up!"

"Of course I can!" said the Bouncer. "But I think—" "Never mind what you think, old chap. Life's short," said Todd. "How much?"

The Bouncer opened a little russet-leather purse, from which came the rustle of banknotes. The Bouncer's father was a millionaire, and Smithy had as much money as he chose to ask for, and so he was always well supplied. Time had been when the Bouncer of Greyfriars was on the worst of terms with Harry Wharton & Co. and with Peter Todd; but there had been a change since then. They were good friends now, and the Bouncer knew how to be generous. He selected four five-pound notes.

"That do you?" he asked.

"Thanks! That ought to see me through till I find Uncle Ben at least," said Todd. "You're awfully good, Smithy."

"Hold on!" said the Bouncer, as Todd turned towards the door. "Have you laid any plans yet?"

"Yes. London first, to get my passport—then France, and the railway to Switzerland—"

"You think you can get through France, with the Germans there?"

"May have to go round the south, but I shall manage it somehow."

The Bouncer laughed. "Well, there's no stopping you," he remarked. "Blessed if I don't half like the idea, after all! What a thumping adventure!"

"It isn't for that," said Peter Todd glumly. "I'm thinking of poor old Alonzo! You see, he's such a thundering ass that he can't look after himself! Uncle Benjamin is a good sort, but he isn't really up to snuff. And he don't talk German. They may both get into awful trouble! I've simply got to find them."

"And you ain't nervous about going alone?"

Todd shook his head.

"I'm not troubled with nerves."

"But you'd be a chap along with you?" said the Bouncer. "Yes, rather! But there isn't anybody who'd come—"

"Yes, there is."

"Who?" asked Todd.

"Yours truly!" said the Bouncer coolly. "If you're going to look after Alonzo, I'll come and look after you."

He rose to his feet as he spoke, his eyes glistening. The wild adventure just appealed to the Bouncer's reckless and daring nature.

Peter Todd stared at him.

"You can't come," he said.

"Why not?"

"Alonzo's nothing to you, for one thing—"

"Well, he's a Remove chap, anyway, and so am I."

"But you've got no personal interest in the matter. The Head will be ratty with me, but he will make allowances. He wouldn't make any for you. You'd get the sack as sure as a gun if you cleared out of the school without permission."

"I can fix that up with my pater," said Vernon-Smith.

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coolly. "He lets me do anything I like. He would make it all right with the Head."

"But think of the risk!"

"No worse for me than for you!"

"Yes; but—but you can't do it, Smithy! I'd be jolly glad to have you, but it can't be done. I'm not going to allow you to run the risk."

"You can't stop me," said the Bouncer, with a laugh. "I'm coming—if you go!"

"I won't agree—"

"Then I'll call in on Queeky, and tell him to stop you."

"Look here, Smithy—"

"Both or neither!" said the Bouncer. "I tell you, my pater can make it all right with the Head, and this is simply what I want. I've never had a chance of such an adventure before, though I've done some things in my time, too! I'm coming!"

Todd drew a deep breath.

"Of course I'd be jolly glad to have you; you know that," he said. "If you really mean it, Smithy?"

"You'll see that I do. When are you going?"

"No time like the present. To-night."

"Good! Mind, when you're missed at bedtime you'll be hunted for. They'll inquire at the railway-station, and telegraphs for you to be stopped."

"I shall have to escape that."

"No need to. We'll walk down to Courtfield and hire a cab."

Peter Todd whistled.

"That will cost a lot of money—"

"I've got lots of money. It's the best way. Pack a small bag—only the few things you really need—and we'll go," said the Bouncer briskly. "My hat! What a buzz there will be in Greyfriars when they know we're gone!" He rubbed his hands. "I'm ready when you are, Todd!"

Todd's face was much brighter. He had been prepared to start on his wild quest alone, but the prospect of having a comrade with him—and so able and astute a fellow as the Bouncer—bucked him up wonderfully. He reached out his hand and grasped Vernon-Smith's, and pressed it hard.

"You're a brick, Smithy! Then we'll get out just before locking-up!"

"It's a go!"

And Peter Todd left the study to make his final preparations for the journey. The Bouncer, with the utmost coolness, proceeded to pack a little bag with necessities. Ten minutes before he had been finishing his tea, with no thought but to do his preparation as usual that evening. Now he was preparing for a journey that would land him into strange places, very probably into deadly danger. But he was as cool as a cucumber. The Bouncer's love of reckless escapades had more than once landed him in serious trouble. But, at least, this time his motive was good; and he smiled with satisfaction at the thought of the excitement his escapade would cause.

Vernon-Smith had earned the name of the "Bouncer" by his wild and reckless character when he first came to Greyfriars. He had turned over a new leaf. There was little or nothing to be said against him now. But sometimes he confessed to himself that he found it a "bit of a bore." It was as much love of excitement as anything else that had led him into evil in the old days. The evil he had thrown aside, but the love of excitement, unsatisfied, caused a vague dissatisfaction.

His whole nature leaped, as it were, into this reckless adventure. To the consequences the Bouncer gave hardly a thought. If Todd could risk it, he could risk it. The fellow who had the reputation of being utterly reckless and fearless was not to be outdone by Peter Todd! That was how the Bouncer looked at it, and he whistled a merry tune as he made his preparations for that sudden journey.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Rolling in Money!

"M-M-MY hat!" Billy Bunter gasped the words inaudibly. He was astounded. His breath—not that he had very much breath in his fat person—was completely taken away.

Billy Bunter had come into his study with a discontented frown upon his fat face. He had reason to be discontented. He was in his usual impecunious state. Tom Dutton, the deaf junior, and Peter Todd, who shared No. 7 Study with him, generally had the responsibility of providing funds for the study tea. But Tom Dutton was also "stony" now, and Peter Todd seemed to be giving his thoughts to anything but tea. Billy Bunter's hopes had risen at the sight of



"The horsemen reined up, and a young officer signed to the juniors to approach. He was a fair-haired German, with a thick, blonde moustache turned up at the ends. The two juniors approached him with thumping hearts. "Ou allez vous?" he asked. (See Chapter II).

that letter from Switzerland that afternoon. But they had been dashed to the ground again.

There was no tea in No. 7. Bunter had had tea in Hall in case of accidents, but he was ready for another. He had looked into No. 1 Study, where Harry Wharton & Co. were discussing Toddy's new departure in an anxious frame of mind, and were in no mood to be bothered by the Owl of the Remove. Bob Cherry's boot had helped Bunter out into the passage, and he realised that in No. 1 Study there was nothing doing. Then he looked in on Vernon-Smith. Vernon-Smith was packing a bag, and he only paused for one moment to hurl a cushion at Bunter. The hardly-used Owl of the Remove rolled away to his own study in an extremely dissatisfied frame of mind.

And then—

Bunter could not believe his eyes—or his spectacles! He blinked dazedly at Peter Todd!

Todd was sitting at the study table, with his back to the door. He was counting banknotes. So deeply engrossed was

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he in that peculiar task, that he had not heard his study-mate enter.

Banknotes!

Bunter's little round eyes seemed to grow as large as saucers behind his spectacles. He blinked dazedly at the rustling paper Todd was counting. Fivers—any number of them apparently—and quite a wedge of one-pound notes and notes for ten shillings! Bunter was dazed!

This was the fellow who wouldn't stand tea in the study—this fellow who was counting out at least fifty pounds' worth of paper money!

"M-m-my hat!"

"Fifty quid!" murmured Peter Todd. "Jolly good! That will see me through."

Bunter gasped.

"Fifty quid! Oh, crumbs!"

Peter Todd heard that ejaculation, and he looked round quickly, gathering the notes up in his hand.

His expression showed plainly enough that he was annoyed

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at being discovered. He thrust the wedge of notes quickly into his pocket.

"I didn't hear you come in, porpoise!" he remarked.

"Todd! Fifty quid! My hat! Where did you get it?" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, rats!"

"Is it yours?"

Todd grinned.

"Do you think I've been robbing a bank?" he said.

"Then—then there was a remittance in that letter after all—and a whopping good remittance!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "And you said there wasn't! And you were going to keep that all to yourself! Disgusting!"

"Fathead!"

"Well, you're jolly well going to whack out now," said Bunter. "We'll have a ripping feed. My hat! Mrs. Mumble will be surprised at the orders I'll give."

"Righto!" said Todd cheerily. "Run away and give the orders!"

"Hand me some of the notes, then?"

"Rats!"

"Well, come and give the orders yourself, Todd! I'll come with you!"

"Boah!"

"Look here, I suppose you're going to stand a study feed, now that you're rolling in money!" howled Bunter.

"Then there's something wrong with your supposer," said Peter Todd. "I'm not thinking about study feeds now. Buz off!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Clear out! I've got no time to waste," said Peter testily.

"Look here—"

"Outside!"

"I tell you—" roared Bunter. "I—oh—hands off, you rotter—yah—OOOOP!"

Billy Bunter went spinning out of the study, and he careered along the passage, unable to stop himself. Peter Todd proceeded to pack a bag, locking the study door first, to make sure of no further interruptions from the Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter brought up against the passage wall, gasping. He was simply lolling with indignation. His study-mate, whom he had supposed to be stony, was rolling in money. Simply wallowing in it, in fact! Even Lord Mauleverer, the schoolboy millionaire, seldom had so many banknotes as that at once. Even Smiddy didn't roll in cash to that extent—nor Hurree Singh nor Wan Lung! Either Peter Todd had committed a great and successful robbery, or he had had a wonderful stroke of good luck; and in either case Billy Bunter meant to have a share in the loot.

He came back to the door of No. 7 and tried the handle.

"Let me in, Todd!" he shouted through the keyhole.

"Clear off!"

"I'm going to have my whack, you rotter!"

"You'll get one if I come out to you!" growled Todd.

"Clear off and don't bother."

"Look here, you rotter—"

"Oh, seat!"

Bang! Bang! Bang!

"Clear off!" roared Peter Todd, in a voice of great exasperation.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

The door suddenly opened, and Todd came striding out. He caught Billy Bunter by the collar and applied his heavy boot to Bunter's fat person. Bunter was dribbled down the passage like a football, roaring. Then Todd returned to his study.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Boast! Yow! All the same, he's jolly well not going to keep all that money to himself! Blessed if I don't believe he's stolen it somewhere. Where could he get fifty quid from? His people ain't rich! Anyhow, I'm going to have my whack! Ow!"

Bunter hurried away in search of Tom Dutton. Dutton had had his tea in Hall, and there was "nothing doing" in No. 7. Bunter discovered him in the Close, and caught him by the arm in great excitement.

"I say, Dutton, old man!"

"Eh?" said Tom Dutton, staring down at him. "What's the row?"

"Would you like a ripping feed?"

"Eh? Who's tired?"

"Feed!" howled Bunter. "Todd's in funds! I've seen him counting up his money like a rotten miser! Fifty quid!"

"Did? Who did? And what did they do?" asked the deaf junior, looking puzzled.

"Todd!" shrieked Bunter. "He's in funds. He's got heaps of money."

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"Funny? If you mean because I'm slightly deaf—" began Bunter indignantly.

"I didn't say funny. I said money! Todd's got heaps of money!" yelled Bunter. "He won't whack it out, and he won't stand a feed; and we're jolly well going to make him, see? You back me up, and we'll make him shell out. You come with me, and if he don't shell out, we'll snatch him bald-headed!"

"Fat-headed, am I?" said Dutton, putting his hand to his ear. "I may be a little deaf, but I can hear you, Bunter, and if you want a thick ear—"

"It's Todd!" roared Bunter despairingly. "Don't you see? He's rolling in money, and he won't stand us anything—not a scrap."

"Yes, I'm ready for a scrap, you bet; only I could knock you into a cocked hat in two shakes of a lamb's tail, you fat duffer!" said Dutton contemptuously.

Billy Bunter groaned. Tom Dutton's deafness was an affliction—not to himself alone. Mr. Quelch in class made special allowances for Dutton—and he needed them. But Mr. Quelch sometimes found his patience almost overcome. And at such a time as this it was particularly exasperating. Bunter approached closer to the deaf junior and shrieked.

"Am! I tell you he's got fifty pounds!"

Tom Dutton snorted.

"Fifteen rounds! You fathead! I could knock you out in one round, and not half try, either. Anyway, I'll show you! Put up your silly hands!"

"Look here, Dutton—"

"And take that for a start!" said Dutton, giving the Owl of the Remove a tap on his fat little nose. "And that—"

"Yaroooh! Keep off! I tell you—"

"And that—"

"Oh, crumbs!"

Billy Bunter backed away as the incensed Dutton attacked. Dutton was very touchy on the subject of his deafness, and not disposed to be chipped about it. Bunter, certainly, had not been chipping him; but there was no telling what meaning Dutton might attribute to the remarks he imperfectly heard.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, coming along as the angry Dutton assailed the Owl of the Remove.

"Ow! Keep him off! Yaroooh!"

"He says he can stand up to me for fifteen rounds," said Dutton, with a snort. "I'm jolly well going to show him. Take that—"

"Yowp!"

Bunter took to his heels. Tom Dutton snorted disdainfully.

"Silly young ass!" he ejaculated. "Fancy telling me he could stand up to me in a scrap for fifteen rounds! Looks like it, doesn't it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "I fancy he wasn't saying anything of the kind!"

"Do you want a thick ear?" demanded Dutton truculently.

Bob jumped back.

"No, thanks! What's the matter?"

"Well, you'll get one, if you say again that I'm out of my mind!" said Dutton. "I don't like jokes of that kind. I may be slightly deaf—"

"Slightly!" gasped Bob. "Oh, my hat!"

"Eh! What did you say?"

"Excuse me; I'll explain when I can get somebody to lend me a megaphone," said Bob, and he retreated, grinning. Dutton looked after him with a puzzled frown.

"Blessed if I understand him!" he muttered. "What does he mean by talking about a bag of bones, I wonder? As for Bunter, the silly fat duffer, to think he could stand up to me for fifteen rounds! Fifteen rounds! Huh!"

And Tom Dutton dismissed Bunter from his mind with a scornful snort.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Stole Away!

BILLY BUNTER had returned to the Remove passage. He haunted the door of No. 7 Study, like a very fat Pori at the gate of Paradise. He did not venture to attack the door again. He was still feeling the effect of the application of Todd's boot. But he would not depart. Fifty pounds! That astounding sum was in the possession of Peter Todd—his study-mate. And Bunter took it as a matter of course that he should have a "whack" in it, if not the lion's share. He had missed his tea—missed the usual study feed, and here was Todd with fifty quids in his possession. It was simply a crying scandal. Bunter's indignation was at boiling point, and he was not slow to confide his wrongs to all the fellows who would listen to him. Quite a crowd had soon gathered round the door of No. 7.

"What utter rot!" said Bolsover major. "Where on earth

could Toddy get fifty quids from? Even Mauly doesn't have lump sums like that!"

"I tell you I saw it!" howled Bunter.

"Dreamed it, more likely!" said Tom Brown, the New Zealander. "I suppose Toddy hasn't been robbing a bank?"

"He's got fifty quids in banknotes," persisted Bunter.

"Rats!" said Hazeldene.

"Boh!" said Ogilvy.

"Faith, and if he has, sure he ought to stand a stunning feed to all the Remove!" exclaimed Micky Desmond.

"That's what I told him!" said Bunter indignantly. "I say, you fellows, let's make him whack it out. He ought to be made to do the decent thing!"

"But it's all rot," said Bulstrode. "He hasn't got fifty quids in banknotes, unless he made 'em himself. Let's ask him, anyway!"

"He's locked himself in!"

"I say, Toddy!" called out Bulstrode, through the keyhole.

"*Let us in, old man! We want to look at the giddy old!"

There was no reply from within the study. Bulstrode knocked on the door. Tom Brown kicked at it. Skinner shouted through the keyhole. But still there came no reply. Peter Todd was not to be "drawn."

"Why don't you answer, you silly ass!" roared Bolsover major. "Look here, Toddy, if you don't open the door we'll jolly well bust it in!"

"Answer, you ass!"

"Are you deaf?"

Thump, thump, thump!

"Toddy! I say, Toddy!"

Bang, bang, bang!

"Hallo, what's the row there?" asked Vernon-Smith, coming down the passage with a bag in his hand, and his eyebrows on his arm.

"It's Toddy!" howled Bunter. "He's rolling in money, and he won't even stand a study tea. We're jolly well going to make him!"

Vernon-Smith frowned. With that crowd of juniors waiting for Peter Todd outside his study, the junior was not likely to be able to get out of the School House unnoticed. And it was time for the two young adventurers to leave; in a short time the school gates would be locked.

"You'd better clear off," said the Bounder. "It's no business of yours, anyway. Clear off, and don't make such a thumping row! You'll have a master or a prefect up here soon!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Mind your own business!"

"Go and eat coke!"

Thump, thump, thump, thump!

Vernon-Smith bit his lip, and walked on. He could only go down to the gates and wait for Peter Todd. But if the latter came out with a crowd at his heels, the two adventurers were not likely to be able to leave Greyfriars with the necessary secrecy.

Gosling, the porter, was coming out of his lodge to lock up the gates in the dusk, as Vernon-Smith slipped out into the road. The Bounder heard the clang of the gates a couple of minutes after he was outside.

"My hat!" he muttered. "If Toddy doesn't come, I shall miss calling-over, anyway, and— Hallo!"

He started as he was clapped on the shoulder.

"I've been waiting for you, Smithy!" said a cheerful voice.

"Toddy!" ejaculated the Bounder, in amazement.

Peter Todd grinned.

"Yes, here I am! Come on!"

"I—I thought you were locked in your study!" gasped Vernon-Smith.

"So I was," said Todd cheerfully. "But I couldn't come out through that crowd in the passage, so I slithered down by the ivy from the window. I've been waiting for you ten minutes. Let's get off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Bunter's after those quids, and he's got a little army besieging your study!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Let 'em besiege it as long as they like!"

And the two juniors started at a rapid walk for Courtfield town in the growing dusk.

Meanwhile, the crowd in the Remove passage was growing larger and more and more impatient. Peter Todd's refusal to admit them to the study, or to reply to their vociferous demands, had an exasperating effect upon them. As Skinner remarked, it really began to look as if Toddy had come into a handsome remittance, and wanted to keep it all to himself. And Bolsover major remarked that if Toddy was going to be a stingy beast, it was up to the rest of the Remove to teach him the error of his ways.

Bang, bang, bang!

"Open this door, Toddy!"

"Let us in, you silly chump!"

Thump, thump, thump!

"You'll have Queeky up here soon!" called out Harry Wharton, from the doorway of No. 7 Study. "Stop that blessed row, for goodness' sake!"

"Blow Queeky!"

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NEXT MONDAY—**"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"**

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

"We're going to make the cheeky cad let us in!"

"Faith, and it's like his cheek intirely!"

"Cave!" sang our Russell.

"My hat, Queeky!"

The attack on the door of No. 7 suddenly ceased, as Mr. Queek swept into the Remove passage, his gown rustling, and his eyes gleaming with anger.

"What is the meaning of this disturbance?" rapped out the Remove-master.

"Ahem!"

"You—you see, sir—"

"It's Todd, sir," said Bunter. "I—I want to go into my study to do my prep, sir, and—the door's locked, and Toddy won't open it."

"Indeed!" The juniors fell back as Mr. Queek rustled up to the study door. He struck upon the panels sharply with his knuckles. "Todd! Open this door at once!"

Silence!

"Todd! Do you hear me? I command you to open this door!"

Still no reply. The juniors looked at one another with almost scared glances. Peter Todd might refuse to open his study door to a crowd of ruggers; but it was amazing that he should take no notice of his Form-master's sharp command.

"Are you certain that Todd is in the study?" demanded Mr. Queek, breathing hard as he looked round at the juniors.

"Yes, sir. The door's locked on the inside, sir."

Mr. Queek ascertained that that was the fact. He knocked on the panels sharply again with his knuckles.

"Todd, I command you to open this door instantly!"

There was a breathless hush. Surely even the reckless Peter would answer now, and unlock the door! The juniors waited.

But there came no reply from the study. Dead silence followed the Form-master's command, and Mr. Queek's face grew almost crimson with anger.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Two of Them!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. had come out of their study. More than half the Remove were crowded in the passage now. And the fellows were looking very serious.

It was no light matter to disregard the orders of the Form-master in this manner. Tom Brown murmured his opinion that Peter Todd must be "off his rocker," and the other fellows agreed with him. The expression on Mr. Queek's face was a study.

"This is—most extraordinary!" the Form-master exclaimed. "I cannot understand this at all! You are quite certain that Todd is in this study?"

"Saw him go in, sir," said Snop.

"Then it is astounding—simply astounding!" Mr. Queek knocked upon the door once more. "Todd! If you are here, Todd, and if you hear me, I command you to admit me at once!"

Dead silence.

"Something must have happened to the boy," said Mr. Queek, biting his lip. "Perhaps he is subject to fits, or something of that kind. I cannot believe that he would deliberately refuse to answer me. The lock must be forced. Bolsover, you may go and fetch Gosling here—"

"I could open it if you like, sir," said Bolsover major.

"I've got the things in my tool chest, sir."

"Very well, Bolsover; do so."

Bolsover hurried away for his tools. There was a slight buzz among the juniors. They were certain that Peter Todd was in the study, and his refusal to answer Mr. Queek simply astounded them. But his reckoning was evidently at hand.

"I guess Toddy is going to get it where the chicken got the chopper—just a few!" murmured Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. "The galoot must be off his rocker—fairly off, I reckon!"

Bolsover returned in a few minutes. The lock on the study door was not a particularly stout one. In a few minutes Bolsover had forced it open.

Then he stepped aside for Mr. Queek.

The Remove-master flung the door wide open, and strode majestically into the study.

"Todd!"

Mr. Queek stared round the study. For a moment his majesty forsook him. The study was empty!

Mr. Queek turned a far-from-pleasant look upon the astounded juniors in the passage.

"What does this mean?" he said acidly. "There is no one here! You assured me that Todd was in this study—"

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Bunter. "He—he was here, sir!"

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I—I saw him go in! He—he must be hiding under the table!"

"Nonsense, Bunter!"

"P-p-perhaps he's gone up the chimney, sir!" stuttered Bunter.

"Don't be ridiculous!"

"The window's open," murmured Bob Cherry; "the silly ass has scuttled out of the window while these duffers were roving out here."

"There's a letter on the table, sir," said Bolsover major.

"It's addressed to you, sir, and it's in Todd's fist."

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch picked up the envelope. His name was scrawled across it in Peter Todd's large handwriting. The amazed Form-master opened the envelope and took out the letter within, and as he glanced at it he jumped almost clear of the floor.

"Bless my soul! This is—is unparalleled! Bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch strode from the study, the letter in his hand. Some of the juniors caught a glimpse of it as he passed through their crowded ranks. The letter was brief, but it was astounding—at least, to Mr. Quelch.

"Dear Sir,—I feel it my duty to go and look for my Cousin Alonso. I hope you and the Head will forgive me. I feel I ought to go. Respectfully yours,

"Peter Todd."

Peter Todd had evidently written that letter to leave for his Form-master, and then quitted the study by the window. He might have been gone half an hour, or an hour. There was no telling!

"Did you see that?" gasped Fisher T. Fish, as the agitated Mr. Quelch rustled away down the passage, to take that surprising letter to the Head. "He's gone—vamoosed the ranch—gone to look for Alonso!"

"The awful ass!"

"Great Scott!"

"Then he really did mean business," muttered Harry Wharton to his chum. "Oh, the ass! He won't be able to get clear! They'll look for him and bring him back, and he'll get a licking!"

"Of all the duffers, he is about the dullest!" agreed Bob Cherry. "Hallo! There goes the bell for call-over!"

The Removites, excitedly discussing the extraordinary departure of Peter Todd, crowded into Big Hall for roll-call. Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth, took the names, Mr. Quelch being shut up with Dr. Locke just then. There were two places vacant in the ranks of the Remove.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where is Smitty?" Bob Cherry exclaimed.

"He went out a bit since," said Tom Brown. "He came along with his coat on, and a bag, while we were going for Toddy's door."

"What has the ass gone out for just before call-over?" said Bob, puzzled. "I think I'll cut off to his study, and see if he's come in. He mayn't have heard the bell."

The Remove names were not yet being called, and the good-natured Bob slipped out of Hall and ran up the stairs to the Remove passage.

He hurried into Vernon-Smith's study.

There was no sign of the Bouncer there.

"Not come in! My hat! What's that!"

The junior's glance fell upon a sheet of paper pinned on the table. It was not in an envelope. It was an ordinary sheet of impot-paper, pinned down.

Bob's eyes almost started from his head as he looked at it. For this is what was written upon it:

"Whoever finds this, please take it to Mr. Quelch."

And underneath:

"Sir,—I hope you and the Head will excuse me. Todd is going to look for his cousin, and I think I may be able to help him. I am going to try.

"H. VERNON-SMITH."

"My only hat!"

With a dazed expression on his face, Bob Cherry picked up the paper. He understood now why the Bouncer was missing call-over. He was gone—gone with Peter Todd, on a wild-geese chase, to look for Alonso! It almost took Bob's breath away.

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The junior hesitated in the passage, with the paper in his hand. But he decided that he had better carry out the written request of the Bouncer and convey the paper to Mr. Quelch.

He made his way to the Head's study and tapped at the door. He wondered how the two masters would take the information he had for them.

"Come in!" said the Head's deep, kindly voice.

Bob Cherry entered the study.

"What is it, Cherry? Have you brought me the news that Todd has returned to the school?" exclaimed the Head, looking relieved.

"Ahem! No, sir."

"Then what—?"

"I found this in Smitty's study, sir—Vernon-Smith, I mean," said Bob. "He's written on it that he wants it given to Mr. Quelch."

"I don't understand you," said Mr. Quelch, perplexed. "If Vernon-Smith has anything to say to me, I suppose he can come—"

"Look at the paper, sir."

Mr. Quelch impatiently accepted the paper and glanced at it. Then he started violently.

"Upon my word, this is too much!" he exclaimed.

"Mr. Quelch—"

"Read what that impertinent boy has written to me, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch hotly. "Upon my word, I should advise a flogging for both of them!"

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

"You may go, Cherry!" said Mr. Quelch curtly.

Bob Cherry quitted the study, leaving the two masters discussing Vernon-Smith's concise message, with frowning brows. Bob hurried back to Hall, in time to answer the call of his name.

When the Remove came out after calling-over—with Peter Todd and Vernon-Smith marked down as absent by Mr. Capper—Bob communicated his exciting news to the Lower Fourth. It was greeted with a buzz of amazement.

"Smitty, too!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Gone to help Toddy find Alonso?" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Well, that beats the band!"

"Faith, and it bates Banagher intirely!" exclaimed Mickey Desmond. "Sure, they'll be fetched back—and whopped!"

"The whoopfulness will be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a shake of his dusky head.

Wharton knit his brows.

"It's jolly decent of the Bouncer to back up old Toddy in this way," he said. "But they'll never get away! They'll be brought back!"

"Faith, and by the same token, there goes Quelch to fetch 'em back!" said Mickey Desmond.

Mr. Quelch, in coat and hat, hurried down the passage. He vanished into the deep dusk of the Close. There was little doubt as to his mission. He had gone to find and to bring back to the school the two reckless youths who had brought upon so wild an expedition. Most of the fellows started upon so in an hour or so he would return with two expected that in an hour or so he would return with two disappointed and crestfallen juniors in his wake. But Harry Wharton & Co. had their doubts. They knew the resource and determination of the Bouncer; they knew the grim resolution of Peter Todd. And they were not surprised when the hours passed and the evening grew older and there was no news of the missing juniors.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wharton in Luck!

"B EDITIME!" said Wingate, looking into the junior common-room at half-past nine.

An excited discussion was going on in the common-room. Mr. Quelch had not yet returned, and there was no news of Peter Todd or the Bouncer. The escape of the two juniors was now the one topic at Greyfriars.

"Any news, Wingate?" asked half a dozen voices.

Wingate shook his head.

"No. The young rascals have not been brought back yet. Buzz off!"

"Can't we stay down till they come in?" asked Bob Cherry plaintively.

"Boosh! No! Get off to the dormitory!"

The Lower Fourth unwillingly made their way to their dormitory. They were very keen to hear news of the missing

FOR NEXT WEEK:

"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"

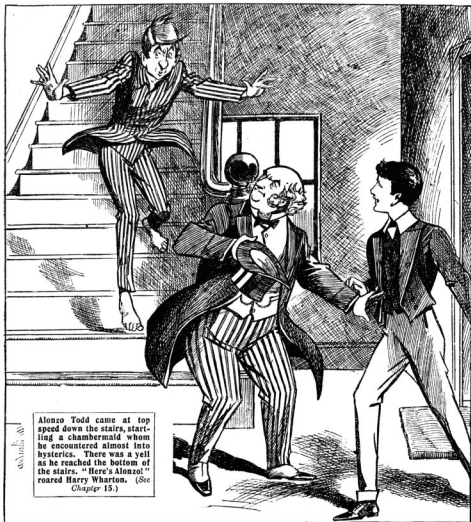
Another Splendid, Long, Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars.

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Order in Advance.

PRICE ONE PENNY.



Alonzo Todd came at top speed down the stairs, startling a chambermaid whom he encountered almost into hysterics. There was a yell as he reached the bottom of the stairs. "Here's Alonzo!" roared Harry Wharton. (See Chapter 15.)

juniors. Most of the Remove held the opinion that Mr. Quelch would come back without them.

Wingate put the light out in the Remove dormitory, and the juniors were left to themselves—but not to sleep. Under the circumstances they were not likely to sleep. The dormitory was in a buzz of voices. Every now and then a fellow would creep to the door and open it quietly and listen. There was only one sleeper, and that was Billy Bunter. Billy Bunter would have slept like a top if the German Army had been marching on Greyfriars. It was nearly eleven o'clock when Squiff, who had been out in the passage in search of news, tiptoed back in great excitement.

"Quelch's come in!" he announced.

"Alone?"

"Yes."

"Then they've got off," said Harry Wharton.

"I saw him come in," said Squiff, with a chuckle. "He was looking awfully rattled. He's jawing to the Head now. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 352.

The Head looks waxy. No sign of Toddy or the Bounder. Good luck to them!"

The Remove settled down to sleep at last. It was evident that the two adventurers had escaped recapture so far. They had the night before them now, and by the morning it was highly probable that they would be too far away to be caught. The journey to "look for Alonzo" had begun.

Harry Wharton & Co. were down in the morning before the rising-bell clanged out. They were anxious for news. But there was no news, only that nothing was known of Peter Todd or Vernon-Smith. Mr. Quelch had spent a long evening searching for them, but had obtained no news at the railway-stations, no news anywhere else. They had vanished as if the earth had swallowed them up.

The Remove-master looked decidedly cross that morning. The Head was frowning when the juniors saw him. It was no wonder that they were disturbed by the escapade of Todd and his companion; but the juniors agreed in wishing

the adventurers luck. Only, as Bob Cherry remarked, it was like their cheek to annex all the limelight in this way.

"This is where we have to take a back seat," Bob remarked to the rest of the Co. "If Toddy doesn't get sacked, he will claim that No. 7 is a top study in the Remove after this. Blessed if I haven't a good mind to go, too!"

At morning lessons that day the Remove were thinking a good deal more of the missing juniors than of their Form work. Where were Todd and Smithy? Had they succeeded in getting out of the country? If they had made for Dover or Folkestone, it was quite possible that they had succeeded in crossing the Channel. But there was no telling. The Removites could only wait for news—which did not come.

To the juniors, the reckless enterprise seemed more or less in the nature of a "lark." But the Head naturally took a more serious view of the matter. What would become of the two schoolboys who had plunged recklessly into a country disturbed by hostilities? During the day careful inquiries elicited the fact that the Bounder had hired a motor-car in Courtfield, and that it had taken him and his companion to Folkestone, and left them there. The Bounder had explained at the garage that they were going to fetch a schoolfellow back to Greysfriars, and there had therefore been no suspicion, as he had been very careful to suppress the additional fact that the said schoolfellow was somewhere in the centre of Europe. The chauffeur had returned without them and could not tell where they had gone. The Head compressed his lips when he heard this news, and promptly telegraphed to Folkestone; but he received no information in return. In that seaside town, crowded and crammed with refugees from France and Belgium, the two boys were not likely to have been noticed. And the Head felt assured that they were no longer there. His opinion was confirmed later, for soon after lessons that day a telegram arrived.

Mr. Quelch was with the Head when he opened it. It was a foreign telegram, and they guessed that it was from the missing juniors.

It came from the French port of Dieppe. And it ran:

"Landed safely. Please excuse us.

"VERNON-SMITH—TODD."

The two masters looked at one another.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head feebly.

"It is—unparalleled," said Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips. "They must be severely punished when—they return."

"If they only return in safety I shall be glad," said the Head, with a sigh. "It is certainly a most inexcusable escapade; yet I can understand, to some extent, their devotion. It is very devoted of them to run these dreadful risks for the sake of a schoolfellow, though, of course, that does not excuse their leaving the school without permission. I must communicate with their parents at once, now. I am afraid there is now no method of bringing them back to the school."

And the Head proceeded to the unpleasant task of informing the missing juniors' people of what had happened.

The news of the telegram was soon known in the school, and Greysfriars was in a buzz with it.

"In Dieppe! The Bounders!" said Squiff. "Too far off to be yanked back now. They'd be off before the Head could get a telegram through to the British consul there. My hat! They may see some of the fighting!" added the Australian junior, his eyes glistening.

"They may fall in with the Germans, and get potted as spies," said Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton was looking very thoughtful. He was expecting his uncle that afternoon, as the colonel had promised to run down and see him before leaving for Italy. And a new idea had come into Wharton's mind. The Famous Prepared an extra special tea in No. 1 Study for the colonel. The Co. talked incessantly of Todd and Smithy as they prepared the feed for the distinguished visitor, but Wharton was silent. He was thinking deeply.

"Penny for 'em!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

Wharton laughed. "I was thinking," he said. "I've got an idea." He paused. "Look here, you chaps, it's up to this Co. not to be outdone by No. 7 Study!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Thinking of going after Toddy?" asked Nugent, with a grin.

"Why not?" said Harry.

"Oh, my hat!"

"My uncle's going to Italy," said Wharton. "Well, why couldn't we persuade him to take us with him part of the way, so that we can look for those duffers? It would be ripping to get a little run into France while the war's going on—what?"

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"Phew!"

"I don't suppose uncle would take the whole family," added Wharton, "but he might take two of us. And we can see that those two duffers don't get into mischief."

Bob Cherry grinned. "Well, try it on your uncle," he remarked. "If he will take anybody, put my name down."

"And mine!" said Nugent.

"And mine!"

"The minfulness is terrific."

"Can't plant the whole gang on him," said Wharton, with a shake of the head. "I'll ask him to take me and another chap, and you fellows can toss up for it."

"Good egg! But I hardly think—Hullo, hullo, hullo! Talk of angels!" added Bob Cherry, as a tap came at the study door.

Colonel Wharton looked in, with a genial smile upon his bronzed face. He shook hands cheerily with the juniors.

"It's awfully good of you to come down, uncle," said Harry. "We—we've got something special to say to you, too. But that will do after tea."

"I have to catch the evening express for Folkestone," said the colonel. "But I shall have a couple of hours here."

"Good! All ready."

The colonel sat down to tea. There was a somewhat quizzical smile upon his face. He could see by the looks of the juniors that there was something "on." On the occasion of the colonel's last visit he had found the Co. in a "stony" state, and had generously rescued them from that hapless condition. But this time funds were ample, and the feed in No. 1 Study was worthy of the best traditions of that famous apartment.

"You are starting to-night, uncle?" Wharton asked, when the colonel had been hospitably provided for.

"Yes. The journey takes a much longer time than usual, in these days," said Colonel Wharton. "The railway service in France is completely upset by the war. I had been thinking of going by sea to Genoa—"

"Better go through France," exclaimed Harry hastily.

The colonel looked at him inquiringly.

"I—I mean, you may see something of the fighting," added Harry.

Colonel Wharton smiled.

"That is not my business now, unfortunately," he remarked. "But for my old wound, I should be at the front now. Perhaps if the war comes nearer home I may be useful after all. However, I have decided to go through France." He looked curiously at his nephew. "What have you in your mind now, Harry? Come, I can see that there is something! Have you had any more financial disasters?"

The juniors grinned.

"Not that this time, sir," said Bob Cherry. "It's something more serious than that."

Harry Wharton told the story of Todd and the Bounder. The colonel listened in amazement.

"The young rascals!" he exclaimed, when Harry had finished.

"But it's jolly plucky of them—don't you think so, sir?" said Nugent.

"Yes, plucky enough; but they ought to be flogged, all the same," said the colonel, pulling at his grey moustache.

"The young rascals!"

"The fact is, uncle—"

"Well?"

"Those two chaps will very likely get into trouble—"

"Extremely likely," assented the colonel.

"They really ought to be looked after—"

"Undoubtedly."

"Well, then, we—we were thinking—ahem!—we had an idea—h'm!"

"Well?" said the colonel grimly.

"You see, we're top study in the Remove," explained Wharton, reddening a little. "It's really up to us to look after the duffers. And—and to look after Alonzo, too, for that matter. We—we were thinking you might—ahem!"

"Might?" said the colonel, with grim inquiry.

"Ahem! Might take some of us over there with you, uncle, to look for them," said Harry, getting it out at last.

"Begad!" ejaculated the colonel.

"You—you see, the Head would say 'Yes' at once if you asked him. Suppose you took me—"

"By Jove!"

"And—and one of the others; we won't ask you to take the lot. Bob's got a claim, really, as his father is at the front now. Might run across Major Cherry somewhere, you know, and—and he would be glad to see Bob!"

"Of course he would," said Bob. "It—it would buck him up no end to see me, you know, while he's slogging at those beastly Germans!"

"I fancy he would be more likely to call me over the coals for taking you into danger, you young ass!" said the colonel.

"Ahem!"

"Well, then, there's Nugent——"

"And what would Nugent's parents say?" asked the colonel.

"Ahem!" murmured Nugent.

He hadn't thought of that; but now that he did think of it, he had a pretty clear idea of what his parents would say.

"Well, Johnny Bull, then!"

"Would Bull's people be likely to give their permission?" asked the colonel, with a grim smile.

"Ahem!"

"Then allow me to suggest my esteemed and ludicrous self, my dear sir," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I have an esteemed claim, because the troops from my own country, the State of Bhanpur, have volunteered to assist the British Army!"

The colonel laughed.

"I am afraid it is impossible, my lads," he replied. "I might take my own nephew, but I could not undertake the responsibility for any others."

"Oh!" said the Co.; and there was a general falling of faces.

"Well, one's better than none," said Wharton. "Take me!"

"Have you thought of the danger, you young scamp? Suppose the Germans advance more than is expected, you might find yourself in the midst of them!"

"That's all right."

"They do not love the English, either. You might be shot!"

"I'll chance it."

"Or you might be stuck in some town that gets itself besieged, and reduced to living on crusts and rats and cats, as they did in the siege of Paris."

"By Jove! How ripping!"

"It wouldn't be quite so ripping when you came to do it," said the colonel, with a smile. "However, I will think of it. I am a good deal concerned about what you have told me of Todd and Smith. As I was going the way they appear to have gone, I shall certainly make it a point to look for them, and send the young rascals back to Greyfriars. I shall see the Head about that, and I will ask him to let you come with me. You may have more influence than I in persuading the young vagabonds to come home. I will point that out to Dr. Locke."

"Oh, you are a brick, uncle!" exclaimed Harry.

"The brickfulness is terrific, my esteemed sir!"

And when that feed was over in No. 1 Study, Colonel Wharton proceeded to visit the Head.

Harry Wharton waited on tenterhooks to hear the result of the interview; but the colonel's expression when he came back showed that it was "all serene."

"I can come!" exclaimed Harry joyfully.

"Yes. Pack your bag—only a few things you must have with you. You'll have to carry the bag yourself," said the colonel. "I will get your name added to my passport. And don't lose any time!"

"Right-ho!"

Harry Wharton rushed off to the Remove dormitory to pack his bag. A crowd of Remove fellows went with him. The whole Form envied his good luck.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Idea!

"TELEGRAM for somebody!"

Harry Wharton was waiting in the School House doorway, his bag already packed. The colonel was with the Head. Dr. Locke had received very gladly his offer to look for the two truant juniors when he landed in Dieppe.

The offer came, indeed, like corn in Egypt, so to speak, to the distressed Head, who could think of no means of recapturing the two reckless young rascals, and bringing them safe back to the school. He was very grateful, and he made no demur about Harry accompanying his uncle, it being understood that Wharton was to be sent back with the other juniors when they were found.

As the colonel had plenty of time at his disposal, he had promised to leave no stone unturned to find them. He was now receiving the final instructions of the Head with regard to Todd and the Boender, and Wharton was chatting with his chums in the doorway, when the telegraph-boy from Friarale came up.

"Master Todd!" said the lad.

"Todd!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Telegram for Todd! My hat! You're a day too late, young shaver!"

"Better take it in to the Head!" said Wharton.

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NEXT MONDAY—**"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"**

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

And the telegraph-boy proceeded to the Head's study. Dr. Locke took the telegram. It was addressed to Peter Todd at Greyfriars, and was a foreign telegram.

Dr. Locke knitted his brows over it when the boy had been dismissed.

"This is for Todd, one of the boys who left the school yesterday," he explained to the colonel. "Perhaps from his cousin abroad. Under the circumstances, I shall open it!"

And the Head opened it forthwith.

The telegram was indeed from Alonzo Todd. It was dated from Zurich, and it ran:

"Maintenant nous sommes en Suisse. Pas d'argent. L'oncle Benjamin va telegraphier pour cela. Au revoir.—ALONZO."

Dr. Locke looked puzzled. The French, of course, did not puzzle him; he read the message easily enough. It ran in English:

"We are now in Switzerland. No money. Uncle Benjamin is telegraphing for it.—ALONZO."

"I really do not know why the boy should send a telegram in French!" exclaimed the Head.

Colonel Wharton smiled as the Head showed him the message.

"It is quite simple, sir," he remarked. "During the war no foreign language is allowed to be used on the telegraph in Switzerland. Every telegram must be in a Swiss language—German, French, or Italian. Alonzo Todd has chosen the one that he probably found easiest of the three."

"Ah! This message relieves my mind very much," said the Head. "The boy's last letter stated his intention of proceeding to Germany with his uncle. Apparently, they have succeeded in getting back into Switzerland in safety, and are only kept there by want of money. I understand that it is very difficult for English people abroad to obtain money now, as letters of credit and cheques are useless, under the circumstances. However, they are safe, and that is a great deal. I will send this telegram on to Todd's family, though doubtless they have received messages also. If that foolish boy had not run away yesterday, he would know by this that his cousin and uncle are quite safe in Switzerland."

"I shall be able to give him the news if I find him," said the colonel.

"Yes, that is very fortunate. Of course, Mr. Todd's position in Zurich cannot be very agreeable, if he has no money, and cannot obtain any," the Head remarked. "The post is very slow and unreliable now."

"And further military operations may cut it off altogether," the colonel remarked.

"Exactly. In fact, colonel, as you are going to a neutral country, adjoining Switzerland, you could send Mr. Todd a remittance quite easily to extricate him from his difficulties, probably much earlier than his bankers could act; and if you would take the trouble, I would place a sum in your hands!"

"An excellent idea!"

Ten minutes later the colonel joined his nephew in the hall.

"Ready, Harry?"

"Quite ready, uncle," said Wharton cheerfully.

"Well, it is time we started."

Quite a little army of Removites marched down to the station to see the captain of the Remove and his uncle off. They crowded on the platform, and waved their caps as the train steamed out.

"Some fellows have all the luck," Squiff remarked, as the crowd walked back to Greyfriars. "I wonder if they'll find Todd, and whether Todd will be willing to come home without his cousin."

"No fear!" said Bob Cherry emphatically. "Todd means business. And he won't get it any the worse for going the whole hog. Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!"

Billy Bunter came up, puffing and blowing from the direction of Greyfriars.

"I say, you fellows, have you heard the news about Alonzo?"

Bob Cherry nodded.

"The colonel has told us about the telegram. Alonzo and Uncle Benjamin are in Zurich. Nothing for you to get excited about that I can see, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter sniffed.

"Don't you? Well, as an old pal of Alonzo's, I'm going to send him a telegram, and tell him we're thinking of him, and all that. I'm going to the post-office now."

The juniors stared at Billy Bunter. For the Owl of the Remove to expend his money in that liberal manner, merely for the purpose of consoling and comforting Alonzo Todd, was amazing.

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

"You—you—you're going to which?" stuttered Bob Cherry.

"I'm going to wire to old Alonzo—"

"Don't you know that telegrams cost twopence a word there?"

"I don't care. It's worth that to buck up an old pal," said Bunter, with dignity. "I'm not so mean about money as some fellows are."

"My hat!"

"Well, it's a good idea," remarked Tom Brown. "Go ahead, Bunter! I'd send a wire myself, now I think of it. Still, yours will do for the lot of us."

"I'll put all your names on it if you like," said Bunter.

"Twopence a time!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Oh, I don't mind."

"Well, it's a good idea," said Bob Cherry. "Blessed if I can understand Bunter coming out like this! But let's get down to the post-office."

The idea of sending a telegram to Alonzo caught on at once among the juniors. It was really a happy thought to assure him that his old friends at Greyfriars were thinking of him at the cost of a few shillings.

"I say, you fellows," remarked Bunter, as he trotted on beside Bob Cherry, in the direction of the village post-office, "this telegram will come to four or five bob, I expect. It will take the whole of my postal-order."

"You don't mean to say that you've really got a postal-order?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Well, I must say Bunter is uncommonly decent!" said Frank Nugent, in wonder. "I take back some of the things I've said about you, Bunter."

The fat junior grinned.

"Oh, that's all right! I know I'm not properly appreciated in the Remove," he said. "But what I was going to say is, my postal-order hasn't arrived yet—"

"Wha-a-nt!"

"There's been a delay in the post, owing to the war," said Bunter, in explanation. "I—I think the German aeroplanes have been interfering with the General Post Office, or something. Anyway, my postal-order hasn't come. But for the sake of sending that telegram to old Alonzo, of course one of you fellows will advance me the five bob—"

"My hat!"

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

"I'll jolly well hand you a thick ear, you fat fraud!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Sent!"

"Under the circumstances, I think it's only decent to send a telegram to old Alonzo," persisted Bunter. "You hand me the five bob, and—"

"And you'll blow it in grub!" growled Bob Cherry. "I know you!"

"Ahem! I—I—"

"Shurrup! We'll club together for the telegram, you chaps, and whack it out," said Bob. "It's a good whozo, though Bunter only thought of it as a dodge for squeezing money out of us."

"Look here, you're not going to borrow my idea like that!" howled Bunter. "You just hand me over the ten bob—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you—"

But Billy Bunter had no time to tell them anything. The juniors fell upon him, and bumped him down in the lane, and left him sitting there gasping. They were led up with William George Bunter. Then they crowded into the post-office to send the telegram. A hurried search through many pockets revealed sufficient cash to pay for quite a long message:

"Alonzo Todd, Hotel Seehof, Zurich.—Buck up, Alonzo! Peter's coming to find you! Keep your pecker up!—Cherry, Nugent, Bull, Inky, Brown, Rolastore, Hazeldene, Ogilvy, Linley, Penfold, Russell, Morgan, Desmond, Wibley, Squiff."

That extraordinary telegram was duly despatched—by a young lady with an exceedingly smiling face—and then the juniors returned in a satisfied mood to Greyfriars. They felt that there was no doubt that that expensive message would have the effect of bucking up the unfortunate Alonzo, stranded in a foreign town far from home.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Start!

"A LL serene so far!" said the Bouncer.

"All serene!" agreed Peter Todd.

Perhaps both the truants felt some little inward uneasiness as to the consequences of their escapade. Otherwise, they were quite cheerful.

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The Bouncer had taken the lead. He had travelled more, and knew more of Continental ways than Todd did, and he could speak French like a native. Peter Todd, who was only anxious to get forward, was glad of his help, and he had to admit that the Bouncer had been very successful so far.

They were in Dieppe. There had been a boat the morning after their arrival at Folkestone, and they had taken it. Owing to the disarrangement caused by the war, the Folkestone boat went to Dieppe instead of to Boulogne, as of old. But it was all the same to the juniors. They landed on French soil. At any other time nobody would have asked to see their passports. But in war-time passports were very much required. But there the Bouncer was equal to the demand. He had an old passport, which he had taken for himself and Hazeldene on an occasion when they had spent a holiday in Switzerland.

Telling Todd to keep "mum," the Bouncer showed that passport for two, and it was not till they had passed the examination that Peter Todd realised that he had borrowed Hazeldene's name for the purpose of landing in France.

"Only a matter of form," said the Bouncer, with a yawn, when Peter, rather uneasily, referred to it. "It's a passport for two boys, and we're two boys, and there you are."

"Your father's name is on it, too," said Peter Todd.

"How did you manage about that? I couldn't understand all that French you were babbling."

The Bouncer grinned.

"I explained that I had got separated from my pater," he explained.

"Oh, Smithy!"

"Well, I have, haven't I?" demanded Vernon-Smith.

"I—I suppose you have!" admitted Peter.

"Well, then, that's all right."

It seemed to Todd that some trace of the Bouncer's old unscrupulousness was beginning to show itself now that he was on his own, and far from Greyfriars. But he refrained from making any remark. The Bouncer was doing it all to help him in his quest, and he was grateful.

It was early afternoon when they landed in Dieppe. They lunched at a restaurant in the shabby coast town—shabbier than ever to the view under the stress of war. The big Casino was closed, and there were crowds of refugees from other parts of Northern France, fleeing from "les Allemands." English and American tourists could be seen "mooning" about the town, waiting for remittances or for friends, or for a boat across the Channel; some of them wildly seeking the British consul, and of course seeking him in vain. But the two juniors did not waste time looking about the dreary town. They made for the railway-station, to inquire for a train for the east. At any other time they could have bocked through to a Swiss station—not so now. The clerk in the booking-office, which was fortunately open, was very polite when he discovered that the two boys were British. But he had little consolation for them in the way of trains.

"Pour la Suisse!" said the Bouncer. And the clerk smiled, and explained in rapid French that there were no trains.

"For Paris, at least, then?"

"Impossible."

"Isn't there a train at all?" demanded the Bouncer.

"Perhaps—to-morrow morning—demain matin peut-être," was the reply.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Todd.

"Might get as far as Rouen," said the Bouncer thoughtfully.

"Voyez! A Rouen—c'est possible—ça?"

The Frenchman grinned.

"Les Allemands!" he replied.

"The Germans at Rouen?"

"Peut-être."

"Perhaps! Oh, crumbs! Come out of this, Toddy!"

We're dished!"

They left the little guichet, and the polite clerk closed down his little glass shutter with a smile. He wondered what two English boys, evidently schoolboys, wanted to get near the scene of war for.

"Looks pretty rotten," said Peter Todd dolefully. "I hadn't thought that we mightn't be able to get a train. Are those blessed Germans this side of Paris, I wonder? Perhaps they've taken the dashed place by this time."

"I shouldn't wonder!" growled the Bouncer. "And the trains don't run through Rouen now, anyway, I think. I wonder whether one could dig up a motor-car in this awful hole of a town?"

ANSWERS



The dangers of warfare are not confined to those in the fighting-line on land. The brave heroes on board our battleships go about their work in constant peril, as our illustration shows. A hostile shell, bursting through the turret of the battleship, may at any moment bring death and destruction to these gallant sons of the sea.

Todd whistled.

"A car! That would come pretty expensive, Smithy, for a long run like this."

"I've got lots of money, and I can raise more in Switzerland when we get there," said the Bounder coolly. "I should only have to call on my father's correspondent in Lausanne. That's all right. Let's go and look."

Peter Todd was looking a little glum. The difficulties of that journey in search of Alonzo were dawning upon his mind now. But the Bounder only became more and more determined as the difficulties increased. That was his way. Opposition at all times had only the effect of making him more obstinate.

"Buck up, Toddy!" he said cheerily. "I foresaw all this if you didn't. With cash and grit we can pull through. This is the kind of a fix that makes a chap come out strong, you know. We'll worry through somehow."

"Blessed if I see how!" granted Todd.

"We'll tramp it if necessary," said the Bounder coolly.

"Tramp it!" gasped Todd.

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"Yes, if it comes to that. And what a ripping adventure, if we fell in with a gang of Prussian Uhlan!"

"What?"

"Or a party of their giddy Death's Head Hussars!"

"I'm blessed if I want to meet any of their Uhlans or hussars," growled Peter. "I don't want a lance run through me, you ass!"

"Oh, they wouldn't hurt us!" said the Bounder airily. "We're only schoolboys, and we can tell them we're looking for a chap. The Germans ain't bad-natured fellows; only, of course, there are bougnans among them—lots of them—as they rope in every man in the country for a soldier. Let's get to an hotel, and inquire for a car."

Motor-cars did not seem common just then. At any other other time, a fluent and fat hotel-keeper informed the juniors, he could have provided them with a dozen cars, if needed, of the very best. But the war—la guerre—

"C'est la guerre!" said the fat gentleman, shrugging his plump shoulders. "My advice to you is to take the boat to-morrow for Angleterre."

NEXT MONDAY—**"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"**

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"We've just come from Angletre, and we're going to Switzerland to look for a chum," said the Bounder.

The Frenchman laughed good-naturedly.
"Mais, but it is impossible. You two boys! Mon Dieu! And there is no car. Perhaps to-morrow morning—yes. But then, to Paris—impossible! Les Allemands! They are all round; they are everywhere! The ten-times-accursed Uhlans! They have no fear; they go everywhere! Ma foi! Every morning I expect them to ride down the Grande Rue of Dieppe—yes."

"Get us a car as far as Rouen, then, and we'll take our chance," said the Bounder.

"Mais—les Allemands!"
"We'll chance that!"
"They love not the British!"
"That's all right."
"They will sense my car!"
"Your car can bolt back if the Germans spot it," said Vernon-Smith.

"Dash it all, we've got to get on! I tell you, we're going to find a pal. Besides, it isn't known for certain that the Germans are in Rouen."

"Ah, they are everywhere! Not in, perhaps, but all round—everywhere! Their cavalry rides so fast, everywhere! The fat gentleman waved his hands, including all points of the compass. "Everywhere! But be it so, I would like to oblige the British. Are they not our allies? To-morrow morning you shall have the car. You can pay?"

"Yes, yes!"
"But if there is danger, the car must turn back. I will so instruct the chauffeur."

"All serene!"
And so it was arranged. And the two adventurers killed time as best they could for the rest of the day, and slept that night in Dieppe. And the next morning the car was ready—a grunting little automobile that had evidently seen service. The Bounder pitted in advance—a sum which showed that the gentle Frenchman was not averse to making a little profit out of his beloved allies the British—and in the sunny morning they started.

THE TENTH CHAPTER. A Glimpse of War!

BUZZZZZ!
Zip-zip-zip!
The little car snorted and grunted and jerked as it sped along the road. But the faces of the two juniors were very clerical. They were off at last. The Bounder had spent money like water. But it was little to the millionaire's son; and the adventure was worth paying for. He had plenty of money, and Peter Todd was well supplied. To be buzzing along in a car in a country rent by the most tremendous war of modern times was exhilarating to the Bounder. It was quite possible that he would not have wholly objected to a sight of the German Army. And it was quite possible that he would see something of them. Even if they were not occupying Rouen, their cavalry was certainly close to the town. And the Uhlans ventured everywhere; sometimes as far as fifty or sixty miles from their main forces.

It was Wednesday morning. That afternoon there was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and the Remove were playing Redclyffe at football. Both the Bounder and Peter Todd were to have played in the Remove eleven. But they were not thinking about football now.

There were signs of the war on all sides as they covered the miles inland. Peasants passed them on the road, heading westward, some pushing hand-carts laden with household goods, some carrying huge bundles. Their faces were grim and despondent. The mere rumour of Uhlans in the neighbourhood had scared them from their homes. They did not want to share the fate of the unhappy Belgian peasants.

Mile after mile!
The two juniors ate their lunch in the car, with a good appetite. But early in the afternoon there came an interruption. The chauffeur had stopped at a wayside "auberge" to quench his thirst, and a seared peasant came along the road at a trot, leading a donkey laden with all kinds of property. He did not stop, but he waved his hand to the chauffeur, and shouted "Les Allemands!" and vanished along the road.

"The Germans!" ejaculated Peter Todd.
He felt a thrill at his heart. Were the enemy close at hand, then? Exactly where they were the juniors did not know. But they knew that they were drawing near to Rouen.

They stood up in the car, and scanned the surrounding country. It was flat, broken up with patches of vegetation and trees. The country seemed deserted.

The chauffeur gulped down his "vin." Then he came to the side of the car, and pointed back down the road they had come.

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"Drive on!" said the Bounder coolly. "En avant! Allez!"

"Mais, monsieur, les Allemands!"

"Blow les Allemands!"

"Comment!"

"En avant!" said the Bounder. "Moi, je n'ai pas peur! And you—et vous?"

The chauffeur grunted. He did not like to admit that he "had fear." But he certainly had. He scanned the road and the surrounding country carefully. But there was no sign of a horseman. The Bounder held up a note for fifty francs.

"Pourboire!" he said. "Allez!"

The promised "pourboire," or tip, settled the matter. The driver climbed into his seat, and the car buzzed on. Vernon-Smith grinned, and Peter Todd looked grave.

"You don't believe the Germans are close to us?" he asked.

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"I shouldn't be surprised."

"Wha-at?" ejaculated Todd.

"You see, their cavalry are beggars for scouting. They'll ride fifty miles away from the main army, looking for chances at the enemy," said the Bounder. "Sometimes they get cut up, and sometimes they get back with information or plunder. I dare say they'd be glad to rope in a French motor-car; spoils of war, you know."

"But, hang it, if they take our car—" began Todd, in dismay.

"Tain't our car! And I've paid that rogue in Dieppe about half the value of it. Serve him right if he loses it, for welshing us," said the Bounder coolly. "Still, I don't suppose the chauffeur will run many risks. He will want to save his skin, if not his governor's car. But we'll keep it as long as we can. When he turns back we shall be stranded on foot."

"My hat!"

"I suppose you're not thinking of turning back!" said the Bounder.

"N-n-no!"

But Todd was very grave. He began to understand now the desperate adventure he had entered into. He was brave, and he was resolute. But he did not share the utter recklessness of Vernon-Smith. The more danger thickened round them, the more thoroughly the Bounder seemed to enjoy the situation. His eyes were sparkling now, and he hummed a gay tune as the car sped onwards. But Peter Todd was silent.

There was a sudden whirl and grind of the car, and it swept round almost in its own length, left the road, and rushed into a rutty lane. The face of the chauffeur was white, and he fairly let the car go. The juniors jumped up and looked back. In the road they had left, through the fringe of trees, they caught sight of shining lance-points in the afternoon sunshine. But the car rushed on too fast for them to see the horsemen.

"My hat!" Vernon-Smith beamed forward and shouted to the chauffeur. "Germans! Les Allemands—what?"

"Oui, oui, monsieur!" panted the driver.

"A German patrol!" said the Bounder coolly. "Jolly sharp of our driver to turn off the road like that! I believe they've followed; but their horses couldn't possibly get up with the car, so it's all right. My hat! What's that?"

Crack! crack! crack!

It was rifle-fire from the distance behind. Whether the Germans were firing at the car or not the juniors never knew. The car was tearing along blindly, and in a few minutes the reports were no longer audible. Through one rutty road after another the car dashed on, till at last the chauffeur halted. He jumped down from his seat, his face wet with perspiration.

He came to the door and jabbered in jerky French. The Bounder shook his head. The driver babbled on faster than ever, adding gesticulations with his hands and feet and head to emphasize his remarks. In a few minutes he looked as if he were performing a new and weird variety of the tango.

"What does it all mean?" demanded Todd at last.

The Bounder snorted.

"He's going back to Dieppe, and won't go forward for love or money," he replied.

"No wonder," said Todd.

"Well, we're not going back. Perhaps we can pick up a country cart somewhere, and get on. If not, we've got Shanks' pony," said the Bounder. "Get out!"

For a moment Peter Todd hesitated. He was hardly enough; but to remain on foot, in a country infested by the enemy; cavalry, seemed to him foolhardy. Yet to return in the car was to give up the journey, and the risk and trouble of getting away from Greyfriars would have been taken in vain. The Bounder was already out of the car, and buckling on his wallet, into which he had packed the barest necessities

for the journey—a change of linen, food and drink, and a few other things.

"The Bounder's face was bright and cheerful. One would have said, from his looks, that he was glad that the chauffeur was deserting them. At last they were entirely 'on their own,' abandoned to their own resources, with only themselves to depend upon. It was a situation after the Bounder's own heart. But Peter Todd, in spite of his keenness to succor Alonzo, could not help an inward feeling that they would have been better off on the footer ground at Greyfriars. However, he followed Vernon-Smith out of the car.

The Bounder handed the chauffeur a handsome tip. In fluent French, the driver implored the juniors to return with him, almost with tears in his eyes. He pointed out that "les Boches," as he called the Germans, would butcher them without mercy, as they were English—would hang them, shoot them, or perhaps burn them alive. Vernon-Smith grinned cheerfully.

"Nous n'avons pas peur!" he exclaimed. "We are not afraid."

And at last the chauffeur drove off, fully convinced that the English were mad, and that these two schoolboys were the maddest of all the English. The car disappeared in a cloud of dust. The two juniors were left alone in a miry lane—in a strange country. Peter Todd stood silent. Vernon-Smith smiled, and took out a pocket-map of the North of France, unrolled it, and consulted it carefully. After a few minutes study of the map, he gave the word to march.

"Where?" asked Todd.

"Keep well south of Rouen," grinned the Bounder. "Keep to the lanes and paths, you see, and as soon as we come to a farmhouse, we'll hire a cart or something. We may be days in getting through. We'll strike for Orleans, that's far enough south of Paris to be quite safe. But what does it matter? Isn't it a ripping experience?"

"Ahem!" said Todd. "Well, you're the guide, and I hope we shall come through all right. We're out to save Alonzo, but it begins to look to me as if we shall want saving ourselves pretty soon. Smithy, old man, we were a pair of giddy goats to come away from Greyfriars at all! I never expected all this!"

"I did!"

"You did, and you came all the same!" said Todd, in wonder.

"Better than grinding Latin in the Form-rooms," said the Bounder. "Better than hanging about the Close, or playing football! This is life!"

"It may be death!" said Todd quietly.

"Who knows?" said the Bounder, with a shrug of the shoulders. And then they marched in silence under the western sun.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER. The Enemy!

CRACK! crack! crack!

The two juniors suddenly halted. They were following a footpath through an open wood, and the moment before the whole countryside had seemed deserted. Not a peasant, not a woodcutter, hardly even a bird was to be seen. They were tramping on steadily, following a path Vernon-Smith had carefully looked out on the map. Suddenly the silence of the wood was broken by that crash of rifle-fire.

"My hat, look!" muttered the Bounder.

At a little distance, in an open glade, they caught sight of the marksmen. They knew the red trousers of a French infantryman. The trooper was crouched behind a fallen log, over which his rifle was levelled. Twenty yards away from him three Prussian Uhlans were riding through the wood. Probably they were hunting for the fugitive—for such the French trooper evidently was. If so, they had found him unexpectedly. As the blaze of rifle-fire broke out the two juniors saw the nearest of the horsemen reel and tumble out of his saddle, and disappear into the bracken. He did not reappear. They knew that he had been instantly killed.

"Good heavens!" muttered Todd, his face going white. In that instant of time a human being had been blotted out of existence. It was war—grim, deadly, savage war!

The other two Uhlans drew rein instantly, but the magazine rifle was spitting lead, and a second man went down heavily beside the first. The third man wheeled his horse and galloped away, and disappeared past the trees.

"Two bagged!" said the Bounder coolly.

"It's horrible!" muttered Todd.

"It's going on all over the North of France at this very minute," said Vernon-Smith. "It's the wish of the Kaiser—bless him! May be going on in England too; soon, for all we know. If they began to treat us as they treat the French now, you wouldn't be sorry to see them potted. Hallo, that chap has spotted us!"

The French soldier had jumped up, and caught sight of the juniors. He raised his rifle as if to shoot.

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MONDAY—"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"

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Peter Todd dodged promptly behind a tree. The Bounder stood his ground, and held up his hand.

"Anglaise!" he shouted.

The trooper lowered his rifle.

"Come on, Toddy, he's warranted quite harmless."

The soldier was signing to them to approach. As they came nearer they could see that his uniform was in rags and his face pale and haggard. He scanned them suspiciously at first, but as soon as he was satisfied that they were really "Anglaise" his face cleared, and he saluted.

"But what are you doing here?" he asked, in his own tongue.

"Going to Orleans," said the Bounder.

The man smiled.

"You will not get there, monsieur. You had better make for the coast. There are Germans everywhere here. I have been separated from my company—I know not how—they have been cut up!"—he clenched his hand—"but we will beat them in the end, the pigs! Have you something to eat? I have not eaten for twenty-four hours."

The two juniors opened their wallets at once. The unfortunate infantryman eagerly devoured ham sandwiches and bread-and-cheese, and washed the food down with draughts of lemonade. Then he thanked them gratefully.

All the time he was eating his eyes were keen on all sides, in dread of a sudden attack. But there was no sign of more Uhlans.

He threw himself down to rest in a thick bush, and the juniors went on their way. It had been a curious experience. They were glad that they had succoured the exhausted soldier, and they felt a curious anxiety as to his fate. Would the lonely man ever emerge from that wood alive?

They tramped on, their eyes well about them, expecting every moment to see the forms of German horsemen. But the countryside remained deserted. They came to a little wooden bridge over a stream, and stopped to refill their bottles. From the wood they had left behind there came a sudden crackle of hurried rifle-fire.

Crack! crack! crack!

Then a loud and piercing cry.

Then silence.

The two juniors looked at one another grimly, sick at heart for a moment. Had Fate already overtaken the unhappy man they had left in the wood?

"Look!" muttered the Bounder. "Here they come—Prussians!"

Out from the trees came a bunch of horsemen. The juniors did not know the uniform they wore, but they knew it was not French. The horsemen, a dozen in number rode directly towards the little bridge where the juniors were standing. It was useless to run; the two mounted men could have run them down in a few minutes. For the first time the Bounder and his comrade were in the presence of the enemy, and they had to see it through.

As the cavalymen rode nearer, they could see that one of them was carrying a French soldier's kepi on his lance. It was a trophy. Behind them in the wood lay the brave fellow to whom it had belonged—stark under the trees!

The horseman reined up by the bridge, and a young officer signed to the juniors to approach. He was a handsome and fair-haired German, with a thick blonde moustache turned up at the ends. There was a scar on his cheek, but his expression was good-humoured. The two juniors approached him, with thumping hearts. The troopers were scowling at them, evidently taking them for French. But the young officer regarded them with a good-natured smile.

"Ou allez vous?" he asked. Then he bent in the saddle and scanned them more closely. "Hein! You are not French! You are English!" His English was perfect.

"Yes, sir," said Vernon-Smith.

"What are you doing here, you English?"

"We were going to Rouen, but our chauffeur was scared, and went back," said the Bounder quietly.

The officer laughed.

"That is no wonder! And you are keeping on by yourselves, hein?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you seen any of the French about here—soldiers, I mean?"

"Only one," said the Bounder.

"Back there in the wood?"

"Yes."

"He will give no more trouble," said the German, with a momentary glance at the kepi on the trooper's lance. "So you are English? What are you doing here at all?"

"Looking for a friend."

"What papers have you?"

The Bounder showed his passport. The officer read it easily, and nodded.

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

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"We are trying to get to Switzerland, to look for a friend who has been stranded there, sir," said the Boudier, trying to speak respectfully, but finding it very difficult.

It was only too apparent that the juniors had seen the last of their money.

"Switzerland!" The Prussian laughed hoarsely. "Ach! You will never get there! You are English spies, and—"

Crack!

It was the report of a rifle from the street. The captain leaped to his feet, and rushed into the inn porch. There was a babel of voices in the street. The juniors, left to themselves for a moment, moved to the window to look out. But the "volets" were closed, and they followed the German troopers to the door. They were unnoticed in the excitement. From the doorway of the village street three or four German soldiers came tramping, dragging a half-dressed man, whose face was white with terror.

The captain rapped out gruff inquiries. Vernon-Smith knew enough German to understand the excited report of the troopers. The French peasant had objected to being turned out of his cabin to make room for the troopers. He had been struck, to bring him to reason; he had snatched a rifle, and fired it—without hitting anybody. Then he was dragged away to judgment.

There was only one judgment in such a case, according to German rules of warfare. The peasant had fired upon soldiers, and the punishment was death!

The juniors, almost frozen with horror, watched the unhappy man dragged by the soldiers against the wall of a house.

"Good heavens! They're going to shoot him!" muttered Todd, through his chattering teeth.

Vernon-Smith clenched his hands hard. He knew it was so. The troopers were already forming the firing-party. Scared peasants looked on with terrible, some in breathless fear—fear that their own turn might be coming.

The doomed man staggered back against the wall, half fainting. The rifles were levelled; the German captain rasped out a word of command. Half a dozen reports rang out as one.

Sick with horror, the juniors watched the man against the wall, and saw him crumple up and slide to the ground, never to move again!

He was dead!

The German captain strode back, cursing, into the inn, and sat down at the table again. The dreadful scene, which had made the two juniors almost physically sick, had had no effect whatever upon the nerves of the Prussian. He resumed devouring his meal, only pausing a moment to rap out a gruff order concerning the juniors.

The troopers seized them, and they were bound hand and foot, and tossed into a corner. The captain gave them one careless, savage glance.

"You are spies!" he said, as he picked his teeth.

"English spies! You will be shot at dawn!"

And he returned to his wine-bottle.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Startling Meeting!

"DIEPPE!" said Colonel Wharton.

It was late upon Wednesday afternoon when Harry Wharton and his uncle stepped ashore in the French seaport.

Harry Wharton glanced round curiously over the crowd of loungers, refugees, hotel touts, and stranded tourists on the quay. He did not expect to see Vernon-Smith and Todd there; but he knew it was quite possible that the two juniors had been no sign of them.

He wondered whether they were still in Dieppe. Colonel Wharton had undertaken to find them if he could, and send them back to Greyfriars. Sending them back would probably not be easy, but finding them first was probably still more difficult. But the colonel proceeded at once to make inquiries.

"They must have eaten here, and perhaps passed the night here," said the colonel. "We may learn something at one of the hotels."

It was the right track. The third hotel at which the colonel inquired was the place where the Boudier had hired the motor-car. In the hotel-yard the little car was now standing, lately returned from its journey. The proprietor, of course, at once remembered the two English boys when the colonel questioned him, and he immediately related all he knew of them, with many excited gesticulations.

The colonel compressed his lips as he listened.

Wharton understood enough of the hotel-keeper's rapid French to follow what he was saying. The English boys had passed the night there, and had taken the car for Rouen on the understanding that it was to come back if there appeared any danger from German patrols. The car had come back—without the boys. The chauffeur had extracted them in vain to return. They had stayed, determined to pursue their way

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on foot, and the driver had brought the car back, narrowly escaping the Uhlans, according to his own account.

"The young duffers!" said the colonel grimly. "They've stranded themselves on foot in a country thick with German patrols. Heaven knows what has become of them by this time!"

"We—we are going to look for them, uncle!" said Harry, hesitating.

"Yes. We cannot leave them in such a fix—the young rascals. You are not afraid of running into the Germans, Harry?"

"No fear!"

"Is the chauffeur here?" the colonel asked the hotel-keeper.

The chauffeur was refreshing himself after his journey, and the colonel was taken in at once to see him.

Gustave, the chauffeur, explained volubly that he had done his best to induce the mad youths to return with him, but they had refused, and he had then no alternative but to save the car without them. He had left them in the Forest de Buc, a few kilometres from the village of Buc, Gustave explained. The colonel looked it out on the map.

"We've got to find the young rascals and bring them back, Harry," he said. "I don't suppose they can have gone very far. We must head for this little place—Buc—and make some inquiries there, and take our chance of falling in with the Germans. I begin to wish I had left you safe at Greyfriars, my boy."

"I'm jolly glad you didn't!" said Harry cheerfully. "How soon can we get off?"

"I must arrange that with the proprietor."

The proprietor was very hard to bring to reason. Having complete proof that the "Rosches" were infesting the roads, he declined utterly to risk his car among them. But argument in the form of French banknotes prevailed. Finally, the worthy gentleman declared that he could not refuse anything to an "Anglais," since the Anglais were fighting so bravely for France. And the colonel having deposited, as security, the total value of the car—to be retained in case of its loss—monsieur at last gave his consent.

Then the chauffeur had to be argued with, and a most tremendous "pourboire" promised for his services to compensate him for risking his valuable skin among the German patrols. Finally, when the colonel had almost exhausted his French and his patience, the car was prepared.

Night was falling when they started.

Harry Wharton sat beside his uncle in the car as they ran at a good speed along the dusky roads, the lights glancing ahead.

The junior's heart was beating with excitement. At Greyfriars at that moment the fellows would be in the Common-room, talking over the afternoon's match with Redclyffe, or discussing the escapade of Peter Todd and the Boudier. And here was he rushing at top speed through a country where, at any moment, the German command to halt might ring out from the shadows. That the German armies were not at hand, he knew; but it was likely—in fact, certain—not German cavalry patrols were scouring the country, to gather in supplies, damage bridges and telegraphs, and terrify the inhabitants. The junior looked out eagerly in the dusky night as the car rushed on, wondering what might lurk in the shadows of the trees.

But the car was not stopped. Mile after mile ran under the swift wheels as the hours of the dark night glided away.

The country was silent and deserted.

They passed through villages that were dark and silent as the grave. Once on a lonely road there was a jangle of adventures, and a group of horsemen loomed up in the darkness, and the driver was alerted. The car halted, and Wharton's heart thumped. But it was a French patrol, and after looking at their papers and ascertaining that they were English, the officer saluted politely, and allowed them to pass. He told the colonel that he was looking for a German marauding band that had passed that way, and asked if he had seen anything of them, and warned him that he would be safer to keep to the coast. Then the car ran on again.

The night grew older.

Gustave had informed them that they were not likely to reach Buc before dawn, even if they were not stopped on the way. Harry Wharton nodded off to sleep after a time, only awaking every now and then at the bumping of the car.

In the small hours the car left the road, and followed a bumpy track, which, in response to a question, Gustave explained was the route to Buc.

There was a faint glimmer in the eastern sky now, as the car glided along the road under the overhanging trees. As yet no Germans had been seen or heard, and Gustave had recovered his courage. He told the colonel that it was a

custom of "those pigs" to vanish after a terrifying visit to a district, and perhaps never return again, fearful of punishment when the French got on their track. Whether they were afraid of the French or not, certainly the raiders seemed to have made themselves scarce.

"Halt!" suddenly rang out from the shadows of the trees. The car buzzed to a standstill.

Wharton woke up suddenly, and rubbed his eyes. He looked out of the car. Lights glimmered among the trees—the reflections of a camp fire. On the road a dozen men were drawn up with levelled rifles, and he caught a gleam of bayonets. The Germans at last, he wondered.

"French," said the colonel quietly.

"Thank goodness!"

A handsome young officer came to the side of the car. He had a bandage over his forehead, but appeared very cheerful and good-natured. He was easily satisfied, and allowed the car to pass, but he warned the colonel that the Germans were in the neighbourhood. He and his men were looking for a band of Uhlans who had set fire to a village and blown up a bridge a few kilometres away. At earliest dawn they would be on the track again. He also gave them news of the fighting in the direction of Paris. The Germans were being smashed up, he confidently affirmed—half of them had been slaughtered, and the other half were dying of hunger. The colonel was politely glad to hear it, and did not express his inward doubts as to the accuracy of the young man's information.

The soldiers drew aside, looking curiously at the car as it passed. Dawn was strengthening over the wood. The road had dwindled to a mere track, and the car bumped heavily and uncomfortably over the ruts. If the growing light the travellers caught sight of the buildings of a village ahead. Gustave turned his sleepy eyes upon his passengers.

"C'est ça!"

"But?" asked the colonel.

"Oui!"

"Good!"

The car ran on, and suddenly halted, with a wild jamming of brakes. Gustave turned a white face round.

"Mon Dieu! Les Allemands!"

The colonel tugged at his grey moustache.

"The Germans! You are sure? C'est sûr?"

"Regardez!" gasped Gustave. "Voilà! Ah, les cochons! Nom d'un nom d'un nom! Allons!"

The car grunted round on the rough track. They were close to the village, and, indeed, had almost run into the Germans. They could see the Uhlans in the village street, and it was evident that something exciting was going on. The colonel, as he looked, saw two troopers emerge from the inn, dragging two prisoners after them. The veteran gave a violent start.

"Stop, Gustave—stop!"

"Monsieur," gasped Gustave, "it is an execution—a firing-party! And they have seen us! Allons! Monsieur—"

The colonel grasped his shoulder.

"Drive on, Gustave!"

"Comment!" gasped Gustave. "Bah, monsieur is mad! They will murder us! The Germans—the Germans! Mon Dieu!"

"Bah!"

Colonel Wharton sprang from the car. His bronzed face was pale and set. He waved his hand to his nephew.

"Keep in the car, Harry. Go back! I must do what I can. But you—"

But Harry Wharton had already leaped from the car. For he, too, had recognised those two prisoners in the hands of the Uhlans, and his face was white as death. The colonel dashed away towards the village, and Wharton followed him fast. And Gustave, with his car grunting and snorting in the deep ruts of the road, striving in vain to back and turn, groaned in anguish of spirit, in the expectation of feeling every instant a German bullet searing through his ribs.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

In the Nick of Time!

THE night had passed—like a nightmare of horror to the two juniors, bound hand and foot, lying on the sanded floor of the auberge of Bac.

They had seen the villager mercilessly shot by the Uhlans; they had heard their own sentence. It seemed scarcely possible to believe it, to believe that that ferocious order could be carried out. Yet they knew it was true.

The Prussian captain had chosen to regard them as spies, and had sentenced them to be shot!

It was life or death to the two unfortunate juniors of Greyfriars: to the Prussian captain it was a matter of everyday occurrence, to which he gave little thought. It was the

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Prussian system. Merciless repression to all inhabitants suspected of resisting the invaders. Instant execution to anyone even remotely suspected of espionage. What were two English boys doing there? The Prussian captain found an answer to that question that suited himself! He had ordered them to be shot at dawn, as coolly as he would have ordered a chicken for his breakfast. To a uniformed ruffian who had taken a part in the horrors of Belgium it was a light enough matter—a trifle light as air. But to the two sentenced juniors the night was a long-drawn-out horror.

They were bound, and in the same inn-room a dozen German soldiers were sleeping. Escape was out of the question.

They could only wait for dawn—and doom!

They could not sleep. Sleep was out of the question for them. When the grey dawn appeared in the sky they were to be shot without mercy.

Boys as they were—mere schoolboys—there was no mercy for them. They knew that children had been killed in the Belgian massacres; their youth could not save them.

Horribly real as it was, they found it difficult to realise it. Slowly, slowly, passed the long hours of the night.

The Prussian captain had gone up to their room, which he had taken for himself. On the floor and the benches of the large room below the Prussian soldiers were sleeping, and grunting in their sleep. They had drunk freely of the wine of the auberge overnight, and it made them sleep heavily. More of them were sleeping in the street outside, and others were keeping watch and ward. They were far in the enemy's country, and there was danger at any moment of a surprise and reprisals by the French troops.

But there was no sound of alarm in the night.

As the grey dawn crept in at the windows of the inn the two juniors looked at one another with haggard eyes.

Each read his own hopelessness and despair in the face of the other.

"Toddly, old man," muttered the Bounder, "I—I'm sorry! It was I who planted this on you. I didn't think we should fall into this!"

"How could anybody think they would be such brutes?" muttered Todd. "It can't be helped, Smittly. We were fools to leave Greyfriars!"

"We were. They mean murder, Toddly!"

"I know they do!"

"There's just a chance that they are only scaring us; I've heard of the demons doing that in Belgium—sentencing a chap, and not shooting him after all," the Bounder said, licking his dry lips. "But—but I think that bullying brute means it. Toddly, old man, we've got to go through it!"

Todd nodded without speaking.

"Keep a stiff upper lip," said the Bounder. "If we've got to face it, it's no good whining. Don't let the curs have the laugh of us!"

Todd set his lips. The long, weary hours of the night had told upon both of them—the dawn found them pale and haggard. But they were resolute. If there was no mercy for them, at least, they would face their fate with courage.

The Prussian captain came tramping heavily down the rickety stairs. He snarled out orders to the trembling hotel-keeper. Then his glance fell on the bound juniors, and he growled an order in German to the troopers.

They were released from their bonds, dragged to their feet, and hurried out of the inn. In the open space before the inn all the Uhlans were collected, and in the distance scared villagers could be seen looking on.

The two juniors were dragged against the wall of the inn. The Bounder turned a haggard look on his companion.

"They mean it, Toddly! Face it like a man, old chap!"

"I'll try!" muttered Todd.

They stood with their backs to the wall, in the growing sunlight of the morning, while the firing-party formed. The Prussian captain stood looking on, twisting his stick pointed moustache, with a grim smile on his hunched features. The shivering innkeeper was preparing his breakfast. After execution, the burly Prussian was going in to breakfast as if nothing had happened.

There was the snorting of a car down the road, and some of the soldiers looked in the direction of the sound. The car had stopped, two forms had leaped from it, and were running upon the scene.

The Bounder gave a start.

"Wharton! And Colonel Wharton! Here!"

Todd's face brightened for a moment.

"They may be able—" he muttered. Then he broke off. It was little likely that the Prussian captain would listen to reason from an Englishman. It was far more likely that the colonel was coming to share their fate.

The Prussian captain sneered at the old soldier in amazement as he came up. Colonel Wharton swept his hand towards Todd and the Bounder.

"What does this mean?" he exclaimed. "It is surely not possible that these two boys—these two schoolboys—are to be injured, sir—"

The Prussian swore savagely under his moustache. "Ach! Gott! Who are you to ask me questions, you pig of an Englisher!" He snarled out an order to his men, and the colonel was instantly seized.

Harry Wharton, hardly knowing what he did, rushed forward, but a burly Uhlan caught him by the collar and dragged him back.

"Don't interfere!" called out the Bounder desperately. "They will only murder you, too!"

The colonel, secured in the grasp of two burly troopers, fixed his blazing eyes upon the bullying face of the Prussian. "I protest against this outrage!" he shouted. "It is sheer murder!"

The Prussian captain grinned. "You have come here to teach me lessons, monsieur! I will show you how a Prussian officer deals with English spies!"

"Spies! You dare to say—"

"Ja, ja—spies!" jeered the Prussian. "English spies!"

"You lie!"

The Prussian turned purple. He rasped out an order in German, and the colonel was dragged to the inn wall beside the two juniors.

"Uncle!" shrieked Harry, struggling in the grasp of the trooper who held him.

The colonel panted. "Keep silent, Harry!"

"The whelp had better keep silent, unless he would join you!" sneered the Prussian captain, and he gave another order. The firing-line formed up.

Colonel Wharton stood like a rock, and faced the row of levelled barrels. To Harry Wharton it seemed as if the whole earth were spinning about him. It had all come so suddenly. Was it possible that those firearms were levelled to take his uncle's life? It was not only possible; it was true. Gustave had had his reasons, after all, for his terror of the Germans.

Wharton, beside himself with rage and horror, shook his fist in the face of the Prussian captain.

"Murderer!" he shouted.

Another rasping order, and Wharton was flung against the wall beside his uncle. In a moment more there would have been a blaze of murderous fire.

Crack, crack, crack! Crack-ack-ack-ack!

It was a sudden burst of firing, but it did not come from the Prussian firing-party. It came from among the houses of the village close at hand. The firing-party swung round, their weapons still undischarged—with bullets whizzing and tearing among them. Half of them rolled over on the ground; the rest, forgetting the prisoners, rushed for cover.

The Prussian captain stared round him furiously, with an oath upon his lips. In the keenness to shed the blood of his victims, he had allowed himself to be taken by surprise.

Nimble soldiers in red trousers were swarming among the scattered houses of the village, firing on the Uhlans from all sides.

Crack, crack, crack, crack!

Even as the Prussian stared round him and yelled to his men a bullet struck him fairly in the forehead, and he fell like a log, and did not move again.

There were guttural yells in German on all sides, wild rushing and tramping, and shouts of triumph from the French, as they swarmed into the village. A dozen Uhlans, clinging anyhow to their horses, went careering away down the road in wild flight. The rest had remained in the village, and those who had not fallen to the hail of bullets had been finished with the bayonet.

The fight did not last three minutes. The prisoners, so narrowly rescued from death, stood gasping, almost overcome with the relief, against the wall of the inn. They were saved. It was like the sudden change of a dream—but it was true. They were saved! The shadow of death had passed from them; it had fallen upon the men who would have been their murderers!

"Heaven be thanked!" muttered the colonel.

"Saved!" said Harry Wharton dazedly. "Saved!"

"Our luck has held good, after all!" said the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith was smiling; he was the cool and unconcerned Bounder again now.

"I don't want to go through it again; but it was an experience—what? My hat! What beggars those Froggies are with the bayonet!"

A handsome young officer, with a bandage on his forehead, came up with a smile and saluted the colonel. It was the officer who had stopped the car in the wood.

"Did I not advise you, monsieur, that you would be well advised to turn back?" he said, with a smile.

"You did," said the colonel; "and now I shall be very glad to take your advice. You have saved our lives, monsieur."

"I am glad I had the opportunity," said the Frenchman.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 352.

NEXT

MONDAY—

"THE REIGN OF TERROR!"

EVERY MONDAY,	The "Magnet" LIBRARY.	ONE PENNY.
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politely. "And we have cut up these Bosches, n'est-ce pas? Ma foi! We have made a clean sweep of the pigs, and I have not lost a man! Had they not been so busy with you, monsieur, they would have put up a better fight. So I owe you my thanks. They may return in stronger force; and we shall hold this village, monsieur. So I advise you to take your car and lose no time."

The advice was too good not to be taken. After thanking the Frenchman again warmly, the quartette crammed themselves into the little car.

Gustave had paused in his retreat at the sight of the French, and he was grinning with delight at having seen a dozen or so of "Bosches" bayoneted. And Gustave trilled a cheery song as he drove away, with really exciting news to tell his friends later in the cabarets of Dieppe.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Alonso at Last!

THERE was silence for some miles as the car buzzed away. But the good spirits of the juniors soon returned. They had escaped from that terrible peril—and, as the Bounder coolly remarked, a miss was as good as a mile. And they had seen something of the war; they would have news for the Greyfriars fellows when they got home. But home was not what they were thinking about now.

"You boys will be in time to catch the boat to-morrow for Folkestone," said the colonel, after a long silence.

The Bounder and Peter Todd looked at one another.

"We haven't found Alonso yet, sir," said Vernon-Smith.

"We came to look for Lenzy, sir," murmured Peter.

"Have you not had enough of travelling, in the present state of affairs, you young rascals?" demanded the colonel.

"Well, we did run it rather fine that time," the Bounder admitted. "But we'll be more careful next time. If we make a wide detour to the south we can get across France without meeting any more Germans. The real trouble is that they cleaned us out of our money, and the troopers collared our things. We could have got the money back, but—"

The Bounder did not finish. With all his nerve, he had not cared to touch the body of the slain Prussian captain.

"Then you are penniless?" asked the colonel.

"About that, sir."

"Then you must go back!"

"Unless you'll help us on our way, sir," said the Bounder coolly. "Otherwise, we shall have to go back—as far as Folkestone. I shall be able to raise money there, and we shall start again—eh, Toddy?"

"What-ho!" murmured Todd.

The colonel tagged at his moustache.

"You are a pair of obstinate young rascals!" he exclaimed. "Your headmaster is angry with you. However, I appreciate your feelings to some extent. Perhaps I can make the matter right with Dr. Locke. He will be greatly relieved to hear that you are found, and will perhaps excuse me for taking you on with me. But, mind, I shall not allow you to go alone again. I think I can arrange to take you to Switzerland to fetch Alonso Todd home. That is all."

"The ripping, sir!" said the Bounder. "We're awfully obliged to you. After starting to look for Alonso, it's up to us to do it. We couldn't go back without him."

"Alonso is still in Zurich, Toddy," said Harry Wharton. "There was a telegram after you left. They're hung up in Zurich, waiting for money."

"Good egg!" said Todd, with a breath of relief. "After what we've been through, I—I really think we should have had to think twice before setting foot in Germany, even to look for Alonso."

The colonel laughed.

"So you were thinking of going to Germany? It is very fortunate for you that you have been stopped in time, then. I will telegraph to Dr. Locke that you are found, and that you will return with Alonso and Mr. Todd. That will be safer than sending you home alone. You would be sure to get into further mischief."

"Hear, hear!" said the Bounder.

The juniors were very well satisfied with that programme.

Colonel Wharton directed the chauffeur to drive on to the southward, instead of returning to Dieppe. At a town some twenty miles from the scene of their narrow escape, where no Germans had as yet appeared, they stopped. Gustave was dismissed with the car and a handsome postboy and a telegram was despatched to the Head of Greyfriars from Dieppe.

Then the party resumed their journey, still keeping southward, in a hired carriage. Colonel Wharton intended to keep his charges at a safe distance from the fighting-lines now,

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A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Our Grand Ferrers Lord Serial Story.



THE UNCONQUERABLE.

A Magnificent Story of Thrilling Adventure

By SIDNEY DREW.

A Flight from the Flood—The Castaways Meet a Human Being at Last—Who is He?

Mist or no mist, it was a fight for life now. The cascade could only be fresh water, and therefore it came from some river, or was the outfall of some upland lake. The adventurers hurried along the edge of the sand. The mist lifted, disclosing a narrow stretch of water.

"Ut's chuck and chance ut!" said Barry. "On ye go!" The water proved shallow enough, and they made the best use of the light, for they did not know when it would fall.

"A ford—a ford!" shouted Prout. "I can see the stakes!"

He pointed forward excitedly to two winding rows of black objects, stakes that evidently marked out a ford passable only at low water. How swiftly the tide ran in they could not tell. They were both without boots, but they dashed over the gravel and through the salt puddles, for the sea was as merciless a pursuer as a pack of Siberian wolves. The fog was kind for once. It wisped away, showing the path to safety. The ford, long dissuad, was full of pitfalls, and the pools on either side were filling swiftly. In silence they pressed on, for death lay behind and was in pursuit.

"Better for our poor fate this sand!" jerked out Barry. "Och, some of them stones had mighty hard hearris! How's the tooties, Tom?"

"By honey, I'm as lame as a one-legged gander!" said Prout. "When do we come to the end of this road of misery?"

"All in good toime, darlint! Save your breath to cool your pates. Ut can't be much—"

Barry tripped over a rope that fastened a crab-pot to one of the stakes. He scrambled up without a word of complaint, though the fall had jarred him.

"Come on, bhoy!" he said gamely. "Where there's crab-pots there's human beings. We'll have plenty of leisure to nurse our poor little fate."

They were flagging. The sand that had been so comforting again gave place to shingle, and the trot became a walk, and the walk a limp.

"By honey, I'm about fed up, Barry; about done!" said Prout. "Don't wait for me, Barry!"

"Oh, kape a good heart inside ye!" said Barry, whose own plucky heart was more than uneasy. "Yonder's the shore!"

"Then make for it!" cried the steersman fiercely. "What are ye waitin' for, triumph?"

"O'm enjoyin' the beauty of the scenery! Let me get howl of your arm, Tom. Bravely, ould lad—bravely!"

The streams of water that rushed between the stakes were deepening and growing swifter. From seaward came a low, deep, humming sound. Barry knew the meaning of the sound, but he did not look back. Prout could hardly crawl. He fell on his knees.

"Go on, Barry, or I'll leave this at you!" he groaned. "Go on! Never mind me, for I'm done!"

Barry laughed, and knocked the boulder out of the steersman's limp hand. Then he caught Prout in his arms, and staggered on and on. The humming grew louder, but Barry heard it only like a man in a dream. Great spots of fire flamed before his eyes, and hammers seemed to be beating against his temples. Then he fell over Prout; but he rose again, and again caught up his burden. Then he looked back and uttered a wild, defiant cry.

One effort more; the last and most desperate of all. The long sea-grass was brushing round his tottering knees. He

laid the steersman down and shook his fist at the white, roaring seethe of water that came hissing over the flats.

"We've bated ye," he yelled—"we've bated ye! Ye brute, ye're just too late!"

The surge hissed against the foot of the sandhill and rolled back baffled. Barry lay still, to gain his breath, holding his throbbing head in his hands. They were not safe yet; they must go higher. Prout was almost helpless—barely conscious. Once more Barry lifted him and fought his way up the slope. When he awoke a lark was trilling merrily above him, and the watery sunshine was creeping through the clouds.

It took the gallant Irishman some time to discover where he was and how he had come there. Prout was snoring, which was an excellent sign. Barry took a view of the surroundings and sniffed his disgust. It was sandhills, sea, scrub, and rock, and desolation. His feet pained him, but they were not badly cut—only very, very tender—and he was unpleasantly cold.

"Oi don't know whether ut's the fashion to wear knickers in this pleasant land," he reflected, "but av ut ain't Oi must set the fashion."

Luckily—like a good sailor—he had not forgotten his knife. He cut his trousers away at the knees, and began to make a covering to protect his feet. The result caused him to grin. He was still grinning when Prout awoke with a half-yawn and half-groan. The steersman grasped the situation more quickly than his comrade had done.

"So we've pulled through, Barry!"

"Faith, did ye ever know the toime when we didn't, ould lad!" asked Barry. "Ut was pull and push, and dhrag and haul, but we did ut! How d'ye like my new boots? Don't they make ye feel envious? Off wid your brocks, and Oi'll make ye a pair loike them. For elegance and comfort, they can't be bated! Shall Oi make ye some?"

"By honey, I don't want you to do all the work," said Prout; "you've done too much as it is, Barry! Don't fancy you're the only cobbler alive!"

The sun grew brighter and warmer. While Prout was at work, Barry went to explore and to rub some of the stiffness off. There was a faint track over the sandhill, leading down to the ford. It wound through the heather and was lost. But there was no sign of smoke nor chimney.

"Well, by honey, what's the best news?" inquired Prout.

"They haven't brought the mornin' paper yet," answered O'Rourke cheerfully, "but Oi'm expectin' it every minute—Oi don't think. Can ye walk?"

"I'll walk on my 'ands rather nor stay 'ere," grunted the steersman; "I'm perished! By honey, let's make a move, if it's only a crawl!"

There was not a soul visible. They limped along the path, if such it could be called.

"D'ye know, bhoy," said Barry, "ut's my belode we're in Oceland."

"It's cold enough for three Iceland," answered the steersman, with a shiver, "but it ain't hilly enough! We've lost ourselves proper, ain't we, by honey?"

Then we'd better offer a reward, darlint, and have some bills printed. Jokin' aside, Tom, Oi wish we could mate somebody, av it was only a policeman, for Oi'm gettin' hungry! By the way, av ye brought any money wid ye?"

"Not a cent!"

"Faith, it's little credit we'll be afther gettin' on our good looks and genteel appearance, Oi'm thinkin'," said the boy from Ballyunion. "Oi don't loike this part of the earth at all! Oi'll climb one of those threes when we come to them, and have a squint round. Hi! Moind your oie! A wolf, bodad!"

It was not a wolf but a very wolfish-looking dog that suddenly confronted them. It stood baying furiously for a moment or so, and then turned tail and sprang into a hollow. A second later the head and shoulders of a man appeared in sight.

The Lost Found!

"The tip-top o' the mornin' to ye, sir!" said Barry genially. "How are ye at all at all?"

The stranger gazed at him in dumb surprise. His face was flat and sallow, and he wore a greasy fur cap on his head.

"Hlo!" he grunted. "Hlo, 'llo! Who you?"

"My friend, Mr. Thomas Prout, and myself, the O'Rourke!" replied Barry, with his most honeyed smile.

"Two shipwrecked sailors, at your service!"

The man came into full view, showing his legs encased in huge sea-boots. He answered Barry's smile with a grin that would have done credit to Gan-Waga. On his shoulder he carried a single-barrelled gun, a good six feet in length.

"O'Rourke!" he asked, pointing to his mouth.

"By honey, he says we're in Hungry!" exclaimed Prout.

"Blest if I ever knew the sea went near that country!"

(Continued on page iv of cover.)

"He's axin' us av we're hungry, ye omádhun!" said Barry. "Ye don't understand your mother tongue! We're starrin', William! Oi say, phwat place is this? Phwat's the name—phwat if ye cáw ut?"

"Skjarvan."

"Never heard of ut," said Barry; "and Oi don't like the name; ut sounds too much like a bad caw! Never mind, Willie; shake hands, for nobody were ever more pleased to mste ye than we are! Show us something to ate, and, begad, Willie, we'll show you how to do justice to ut!"

The stranger looked them up and down. Their appearance seemed to amuse him, for he chuckled. Then he turned and plunged into the hollow.

"So this is where you live, Willie, is ut?" said the irrepressible Barry. "Very noisy—very noise inside—and very fresh and open!"

It was a mere hut, roofed with furze. There was another cluster of huts further away that bore a strong resemblance to Indian wigwams. These were for smoking salmon and other fish. Without delay their new friend handed each of them a fine, freshly-boiled lobster, and then, lying down flat, he proceeded to blow the half-dead fire into a blaze.

"Must have go," he said, "catch died down. Eat what likes—tea, bread, lax—him salmon. Eats all. Soon back, then. 'Tilo—'tilo!"

He whistled to his fierce-looking dog and strode away; but returned to bring out a jar of tobacco and two pipes.

"Willie is either a Lander or a Finn. I take it, Barry," remarked Prout; "but if he was a Dutch-Chinaman, I should like him! By honey, old Schwartz never boiled a better lobster! And I'm goin' to have a fat slice off the stuff he called lax. What's the betting he warn't a thirty-pounder!"

Prout cut a generous portion from a gigantic smoked salmon that hung from a beam. Barry found tea, sugar, black bread, and a tin of condensed milk. There was fresh water in a little pool close by. They boiled the salmon, and then put on the kettle.

"Bedad," said Barry O'Rourke, as he lay back luxuriously with his pipe in his mouth, "ut was nearly worth gettin' shipwrecked to bring out to enjoy a fade as that! Willie is sartin to own a boat. We must look out for poor Job and Mart Arkland, and then see av there's a chance of sendin' a message. Willie can pay himself by keepin' all the loot he can get out of the boat. Skjarvan, he said, wasn't ut? Where's that on the map, Tom?"

"If it's on the map at all, it ought to be cut out with a pair of scissors for owning such a name," said Prout; "it's a regular tongue-twister! I stick to it still that Willie's a Lap or a Finn for choice. Picked up his bit of English as a deck-hand on some British ship. You meet lots—"

The steersman's voice died away, and he dropped off to sleep. Barry was not slow in following such an excellent example. And Barry dreamed that as he and Thomas Prout lay in the scented grass of the old meadow at Ballytun, he saw a lark soaring in a blue sky. Suddenly the lark turned into a flying-machine. From the flying-machine a parachute began to descend, with a human figure dangling from it. The figure was the fat figure of Gan-Waga the Eskimo. As Gan-Waga came nearer he uttered a joyful yell.

"Hooray—hooray!" he shouted. "Look at de two buting sleepies! I see my oles Prouts, wid him big reds neck, and my lovelyfoll Barry O'Loonatics! If I falls on dem I smashes dem flat! Ohni—ohni! Looks at deir nice trousers and doir grandfalle boots! I can't wait no longer, Chingy! I musts hugs dem! Hooray! Yah, yah, yah! Wakes up!"

And then Barry and Prout awoke, and found—at least, Barry did—that it was no empty dream. Gan-Waga was there, dancing and howling with joy. Ching-Lung was there, laughing merrily. Ben Maddock was there, with two tears of happiness sparkling in his eyes; and there, too, was Imp, the big Newfoundland dog, lashing his great tail and barking his delight.

"A purty state of affairs, to be sure," said Barry. "Where's your manners, all of ye? A noise thing to wake a toired man up just when he was gently dhramin' about cowl'd rabbit-pie! Lave me to slape once more. Here, come to me arms, the whole ugly crowd of ye!"

"But, by honey, don't you come near me," cried Prout, his eyes dancing, "for I never associate wi' tramps and low livers."

Here, Schwartz leaned against one of the poles that supported the hut in a semi-delirious condition. He kept jabbering the same pleasing statement over and over again. When Gan-Waga kicked him he merely smiled at that Eskimo, and murmured:

"Dere was soddiches vor breakfast. Gan. Ash, yes, dere was pig, vine soddiches vor breakfast. Lofely soddiches vor breakfast!"

The motor-launch of the Lord of the Deep lay close beside the wreck. Two-thirds of the Unconquerable's coming-tower was visible. To this a ladder had been made fast. Ferrers Lord sat in the stern of the launch. He had suffered a heavy loss, but he was smiling at Ching-Lung, who had just been

giving him a merry account of the finding of Thomas Prout, and Barry O'Rourke.

Then the helmet of a diver rose above the water, and the man slowly climbed and struck the glass three times with his axe. It was the signal that nobody had been discovered in the vessel.

"What do you make of it?" asked Ching-Lung.

"What does it matter, my dear lad? Haul in the rope, and take Honour aboard. Good! We have almost seen the last of her. Poor little Unconquerable! She could not live up to such a name! Fire the signal-gun, please!"

The little weapon barked loudly to call back the searchers. If the sea held the secret of the fates of Martin Arkland and Job Sanday, she held it still, for no corpse had been found either on the sand or under the cliffs of bleak Searan Island. And then a wild crash startled the seabirds, and the lonely fisherman who stood on the cliff, jingling more gold in his pockets than he had ever dreamed existed in the wide world, saw a pillar of mingled smoke and water shoot into the air.

"That is the end of her," said Ferrers Lord. "The Unconquerable is dead! Long live the Unconquerable!"

"In six weeks," said Hal Honour.

"In six weeks, Honour, unless we collapse under the strain, and I do not think we shall. We have exactly six weeks and four days. When we have won the Florida Cup we shall be able to pay back a few old scores."

"What! Do you really intend to build a boat in time to compete for the Florida Cup?" gasped Thurston.

"Yes, and to win it, Rupert! We must not let Paul Guthrey have it all his own way. I hear that his aeroplane is doing marvellous things. He is a rare gambler, and I am not; but he will find plenty of people to take all the money he cares to wager, especially at the last moment."

"So that's the wheeze, is it?" said Ching-Lung, as the door closed behind the millionaires. "I'm a terrible, horrible sort of gambler myself. Wagtail, my bonnie babe, open your ears, and I'll show you how to become rich for life. I bet you a pound of yellow dips, one red herring, and a yard of blubber we beat Paul Guthrey in the great race for the Bluebotle Stakes. Is that a bet?"

"Yo' makes him two red herrings and den dat a bet, Chingy," gurgled the Eskimo.

Ching-Lung solemnly noted down this desperate wager in his pocket-book, and, remarking that he would have to pawn the Imperial jewels to pay it if he lost, he absentmindedly swallowed the book and pencil, took a drink out of the ink-stand, and glided away.

Gan-Waga sat waist-deep in the clear trout-stream, with the little waterfall splashing over his bare shoulders. The Eskimo needed refreshing, for he had sat up very late listening to the thrilling adventures of Prout and Barry as graphically related by the latter gentleman. Schwartz—the dog, not the cook—was vigorously digging in a rat-hole lower down. The pleasant music of the stream and its invigorating coolness filled Gan's heart with peace and roused him to song.

It was an Eskimo song, and the tune was a succession of pops and bangs, like the back-firing of a motor-car. O'Rourke and Mr. Benjamin Maddock, who were taking an early stroll through the dewy mead, paused and turned pale as the silvery music reached their ears.

"Souise me, it's that oily Eskimo a-warblin'!" said the bo'man.

Kowak-ak-wak-gobblion-kwee!" lifted the invisible songster. "La-la-bity-cok!"

Barry clenched his teeth and glared hideously. Gan was no nightingale. Off went Maddock's coat, and up went his sleeves and trousers. He stepped into an adjacent back-water where the soft, slimy fanned weed grew by the bushel, and began to pull it loose. A smile wreathed Barry's pallid lips as, with his fingers in his ears, he watched his comrade at work. There was no lack of weed. In less than five minutes Benjamin had a floating mass of it that weighed a hundred-weight or more. He coaxed the slimy raft out of the back-water into the current. On tiptoe they approached the waterfall, and there, like two wily snakes, they crawled through the thick grass.

"Oh, Barry O'Rourke, he de biggest oles looney dat's ever come from Irelands!" chanted Gan. "Him nose it was a butterfals pink alls over, and him faces it make de poor dogges bark. When I looks at him I say, 'Go and bag yo' heads; oh, do go and bag yo' heads!'"

The mass of weed hovered for an instant on the edge of the fall and then slid over. It smothered the gentle singer. For a time Barry and Maddock could only make out a pair of linked feet kicking and splashing. Then a pair of arms shot into view, and finally the green heap got up on its hind legs and developed a head. Gan looked mildly astonished, but not at all suspicious.

(Another grand, thrilling instalment next week.)

